

WA Inspired
Art Quilts

Series 3

Balbuk's Country

WA Inspired Members for Series 3 Quilts, 2017

Hilary Arber

Roberta Chantler

Meg Cowey

Pat Forster

Elizabeth Humphreys

Stella King

Denise Mallon

WA Inspired Purpose

Our group purpose is to create innovative, high quality art quilts for exhibition, according to agreed-to sizes and Western Australian themes; and to provide each other with constructive criticism on the design and creation of the quilts.

Photographs by Pat Forster except where otherwise acknowledged.

Series 3 Quilts : Balbuk's Country

1. Swan River Crossing c1835 by Hilary Arber
2. River Crossing Right Foreshore by Denise Mallon
3. River Crossing Left Foreshore by Denise Mallon
4. Continuous Crossing by Roberta Chantler
5. Matagerrup by Stella King
6. Heirisson Island, Looking East by Elizabeth Humphreys
7. Marri by Elizabeth Humphreys
8. Food Gatherer by Roberta Chantler
9. Plant Tucker Below Ground by Pat Forster
10. Plant Tucker Above Ground by Pat Forster
11. Yakkan (Long-necked turtles) by Pat Forster
12. Marlee (Swan) by Pat Forster
13. Djildjit (Fish) by Stella King
14. Kwilana (Dolphins) by Pat Forster
15. Unforeseen Future by Meg Cowey



Fanny Balbuk Yooreel,
photograph from the Batty Library

The quilts in Series 3 recognise Fanny Balbuk 1840-1907. Fanny, a Noongar woman, witnessed the occupation of her traditional lands by early settlers. She never let the settlers forget whose land they occupied. One of Fanny's grandmothers, Moojorngul, is buried in the grounds of Government House, or Kooraree. Fanny would stand at the gates of Government House cursing those who lived inside (Ref 1). Fanny's other grandmother is buried beneath Bishop's Grove, the residence of the city's first archbishop, now Terrace Hotel (Ref 2).

There is a story that Daisy Bates took Fanny to a luncheon at the Karrakatta Club, an exclusive club for women in Perth, and Daisy introduced Fanny to all present as their landlady, since she was the original owner of the land on which the club stood (Ref 1)

The information which Fanny gave to Daisy Bates about the traditional Noongar lands in Perth played an important role in the Native Title claim of 2006, when Justice Wilcox of the Federal Court of Australia found that Noongar people held Native Title rights over the Perth metropolitan area and its surrounds. This was the first time native title was found to continue to exist in an Australian capital city (Ref 1). The native title claim has evolved now to be the South-West Native Title Settlement (Ref 3)

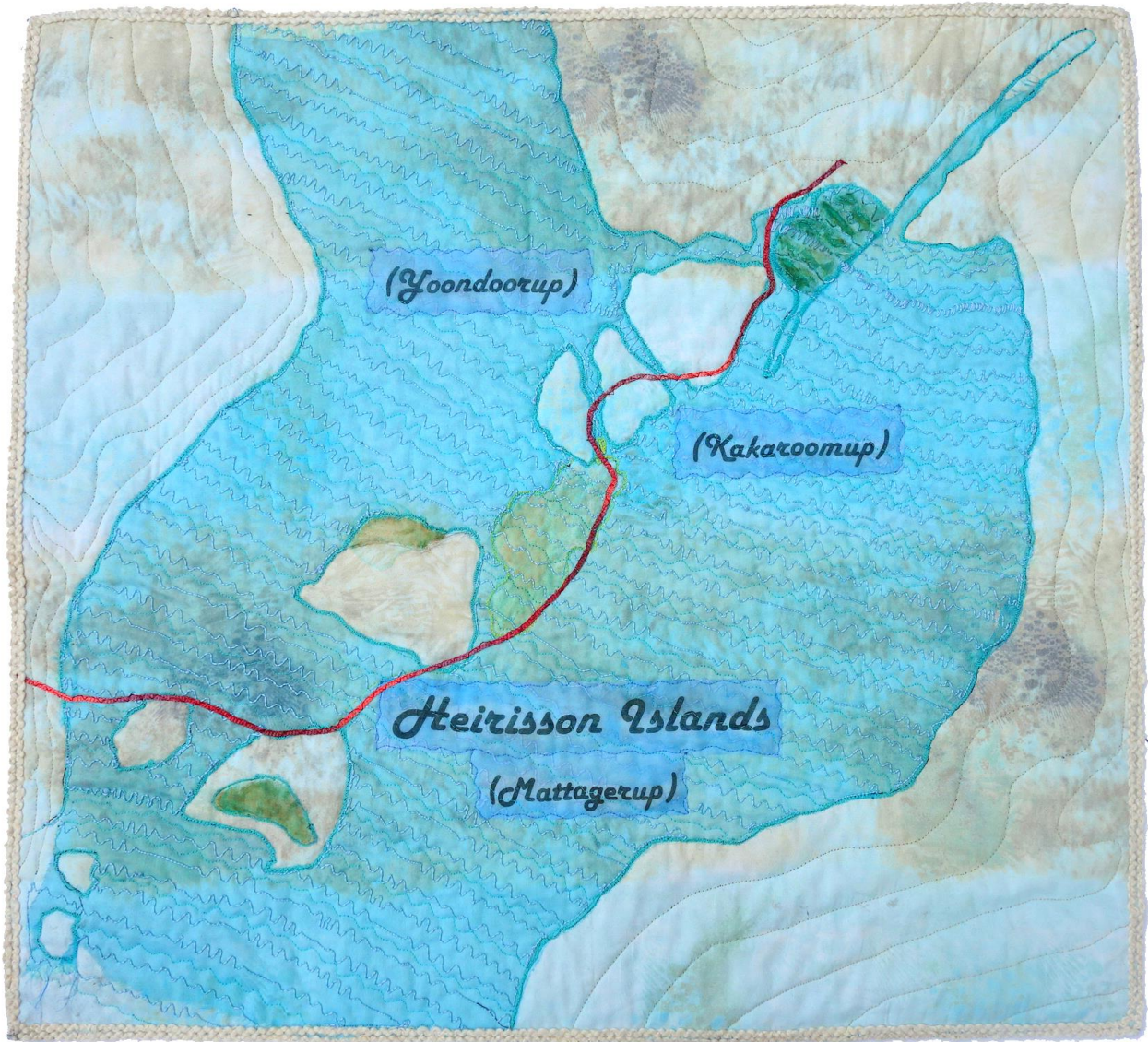
In creating 'Balbuk's Country' quilts, our quilting group, all residents of Perth, chose to represent aspects of the environs that we know and live and which Fanny in all likelihood experienced. We also accommodated information from historic maps and records into the quilts.

Ref 1 <http://www.nyoongartentembassy.com/fanny-balbuk-yooreel.html>

Ref 2 <http://journal.media-culture.org.au/index.php/mcjournal/article/view/1038/%2522h>

Ref 3 <https://www.dpc.wa.gov.au/lantu/south-west-native-title-settlement/Pages/default.aspx>

Balbuk's Country: Swan River Crossing c1835 by Hilary Arber



55cm (wide) x 51cm (high)

Artists freehand interpretation of a plan of a canal and islands drawn by Thomas Watson, 1835. The Heirisson Islands making up the group with the southern larger one called Mattagerup (meaning knee-deep) were a well-used route claiming lives at times, particularly when the river was high and swollen after storms.

Techniques

Free motion machine quilting; organza overlay; bobbin work; machine couching; computer text printing on silk organza.



Context

There was a series of low flat islands covered with mud in the area of the Heirisson Island as we know it (Ref 1). The series was named Heirisson Islands in 1801 after François-Antoine Boniface Heirisson of the Naturaliste who was the first to map the Swan (Ref 2). The area is also acknowledged in early maps as Matagarrup, Mattagerup or Mata-garup, all forms derived from the Noongar word Mata-Gerrup, meaning knee deep (Ref 3).

The area is traditionally associated with the Beeloo (meaning river), Noongar people. They called the river (estuary) Derbal Yaragan. The Matagarup mud flats were the first major crossing point upriver from the river's mouth at Fremantle and were an important seasonal access way over which the Beeloo gave other groups right of passage across the river.(Ref 2)

Early in the settlement, the Perth flats restricted the passage of all but flat bottom boats travelling between Perth and Guildford. It was decided that a canal be built to bypass these, thus creating Burswood Island. In 1831 it took seven men 107 days to do the work. Once completed, it measured about 280 metres (920 ft) in length by an average top width of nearly 9 metres (30 ft) which tapered to 4 metres (13 ft) at the bottom; the depth varied between nearly one metre and six metres. Further improvements were made in 1834. (Ref 4) The canal is depicted at the upper right corner of the quilt.

Settlers had to cross the river at the 'Flats'. Often there were drownings by those attempting to make the journey on foot (Ref 5). In 1833 a dyke was built to block channels between islands with: "duble stake and a wattled fence filled in with clay, three feet above low water and three feet high." (Perth Gazette, 1833, cited in Ref 6). Concern over crossing the river over the Flats in all kinds of weather continued to be widespread and this induced the Commissioner of Roads and Bridges (G.F.Moore) to make a preliminary survey of the Flats. A public meeting followed on Feb 17, 1837 when it was decided to build a bridge across the islands. The first pile was driven into the ground on Nov 2, 1840. (Ref 5). Over the years, dredging and reclamation created a single island (Heirisson), which is now a landscaped reserve (Ref 2).

Ref 1 http://cms.slwa.wa.gov.au/swan_river/community_icon/heirisson

Ref 2 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heirisson_Island

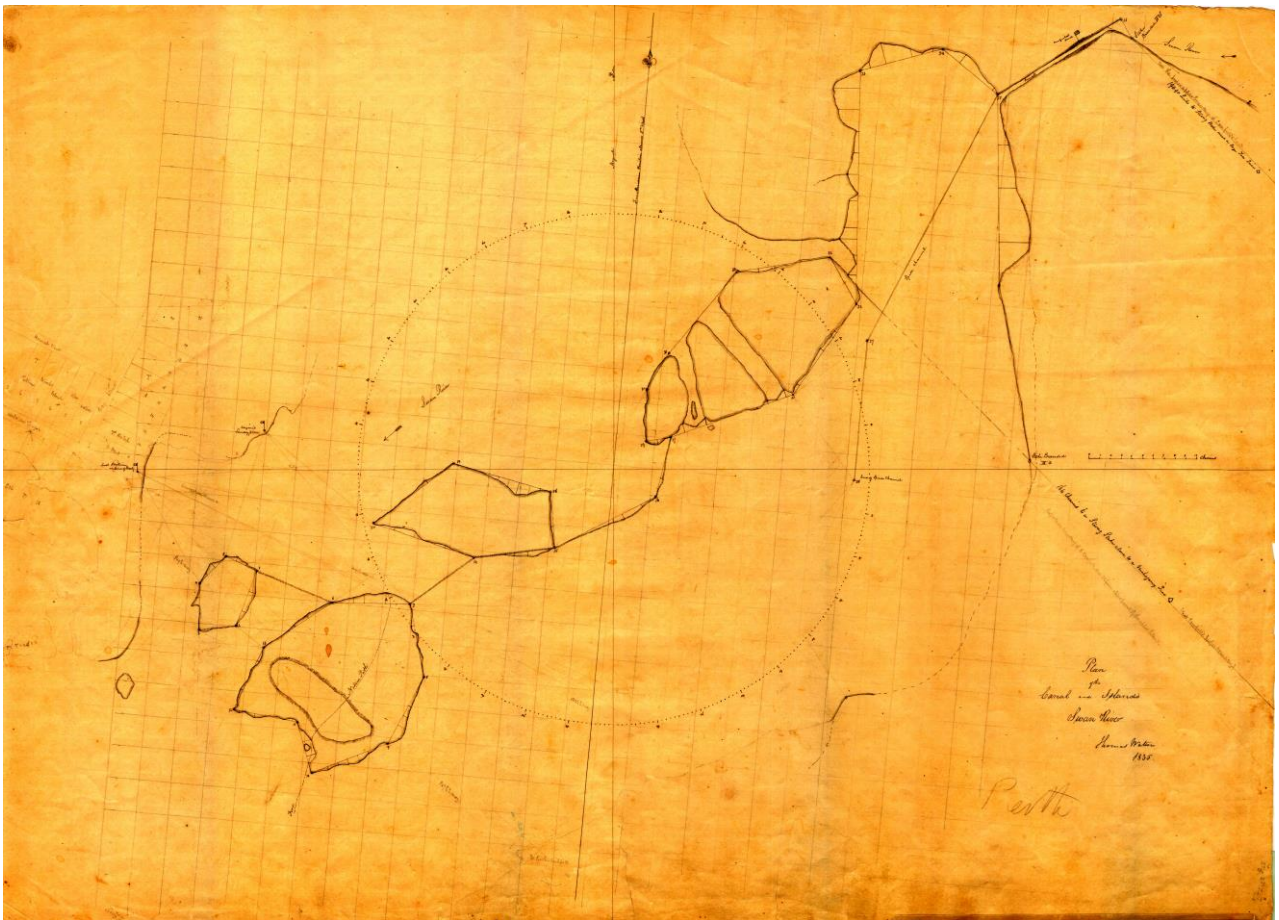
Ref 3 <http://www.daa.wa.gov.au/about-the-department/news/heirisson-island-man-made-or-heritage-site/?epieditmode=true>

Ref 4 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swan_River_\(Western_Australia\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swan_River_(Western_Australia))

Ref 5 Ruth Johnson (1988), The Tranby Hardeys, p. 100, Parmelia Publishing Pty Ltd.

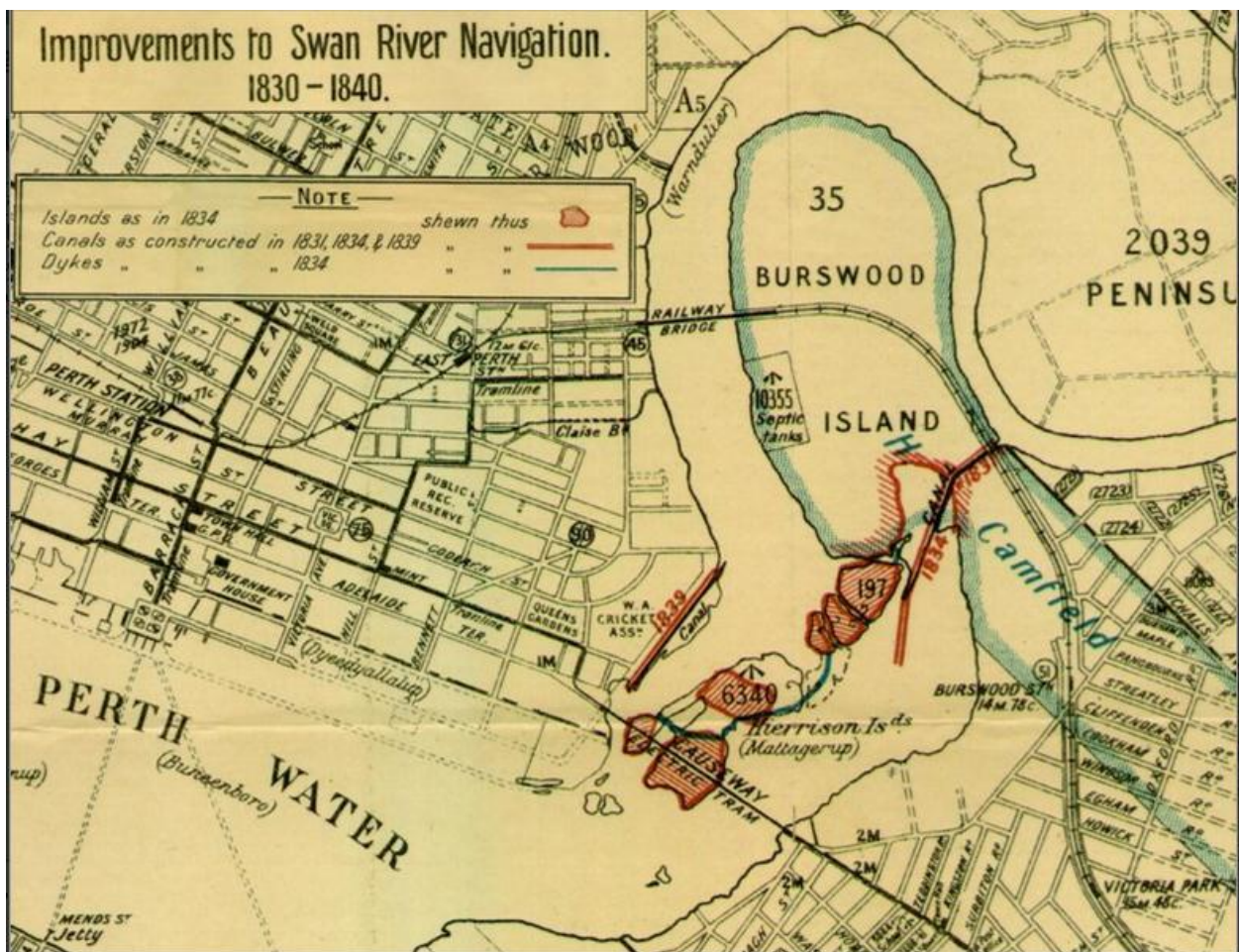
Ref 6 http://cms.slwa.wa.gov.au/swan_river/shaping_perth_water/canals

Historical Maps



Plan of the Canal and Islands, Swan River, Thomas Watson, 1835. State Library of Western Australia

Enlarging the map reveals: the canal (top right); a 'Spade Channel' into the river, starting at the lower end of the canal; a 'Native Path' labelled on the lowest island; and a 'Ford' into the river, starting near the lowest point of the lowest island. Hilary's quilt is based on this map.



Improvements to Swan River Navigation 1830 – 1840, State Library of Western Australia

Source https://water.wa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/5878/claisebrook-in-the-swan-estuary-western-australia-a-synthesis-of-environmental-information-and-historical-retrospective.pdf

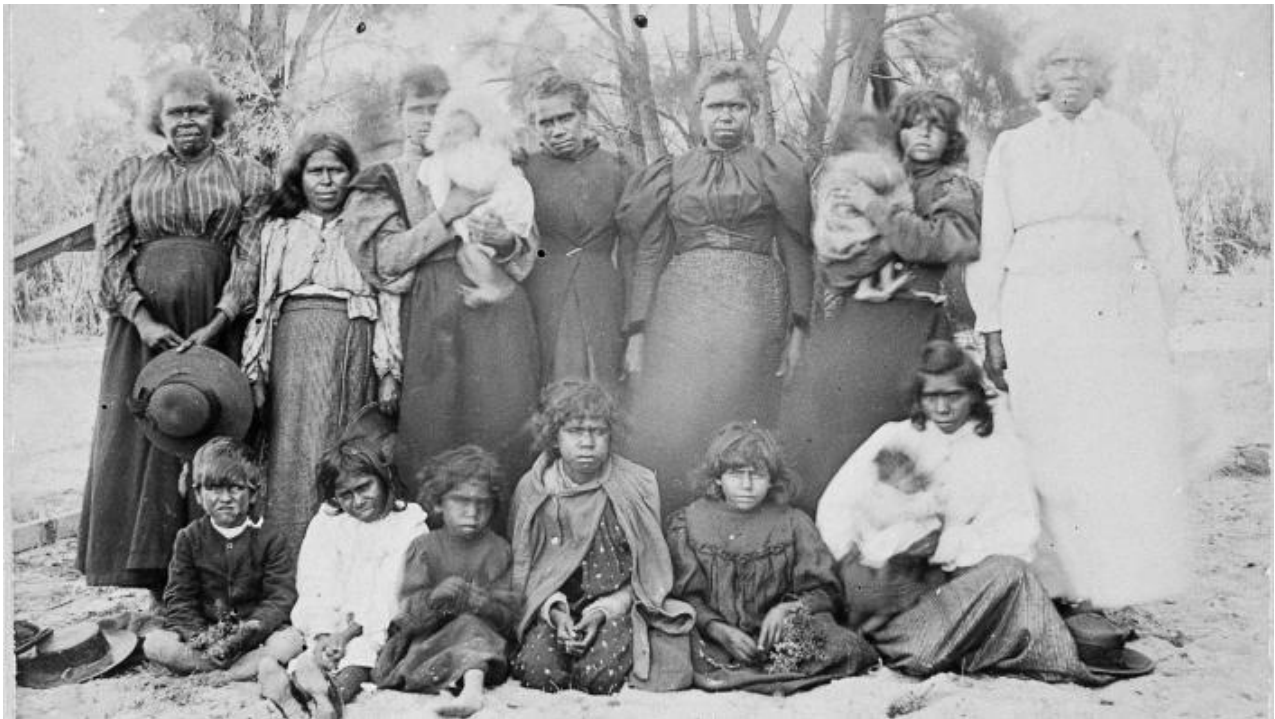
Islands existing in 1834 are highlighted in red.

Canals constructed in 1831 (upper part of Burswood Island canal), 1834 (lower part of Burswood Island canal, and 1839 (Claisebrook) are in red.

Dykes constructed in 1834 are shown with green line between the islands



Map showing Burswood Island and Claisebrook canals and the Causeway, source unknown



Group of Aboriginal women at Perth, including Fanny Balbuk (far right), State Library of WA. 25341P



Group portrait of Noongar men, women, and children, Fanny Balbuk seated on the right in the white dress. State Library of WA 253420PD

Balbuk's Country: River Crossing Right Foreshore by Denise Mallon



39cm square

Long before any bridges were built the major crossing by foot over the river was across the mudflats to an area traditionally known as Matagarup, meaning 'leg deep'.

Techniques

Hand embroidery, machine quilting, Gesso and acrylic paint, beading.

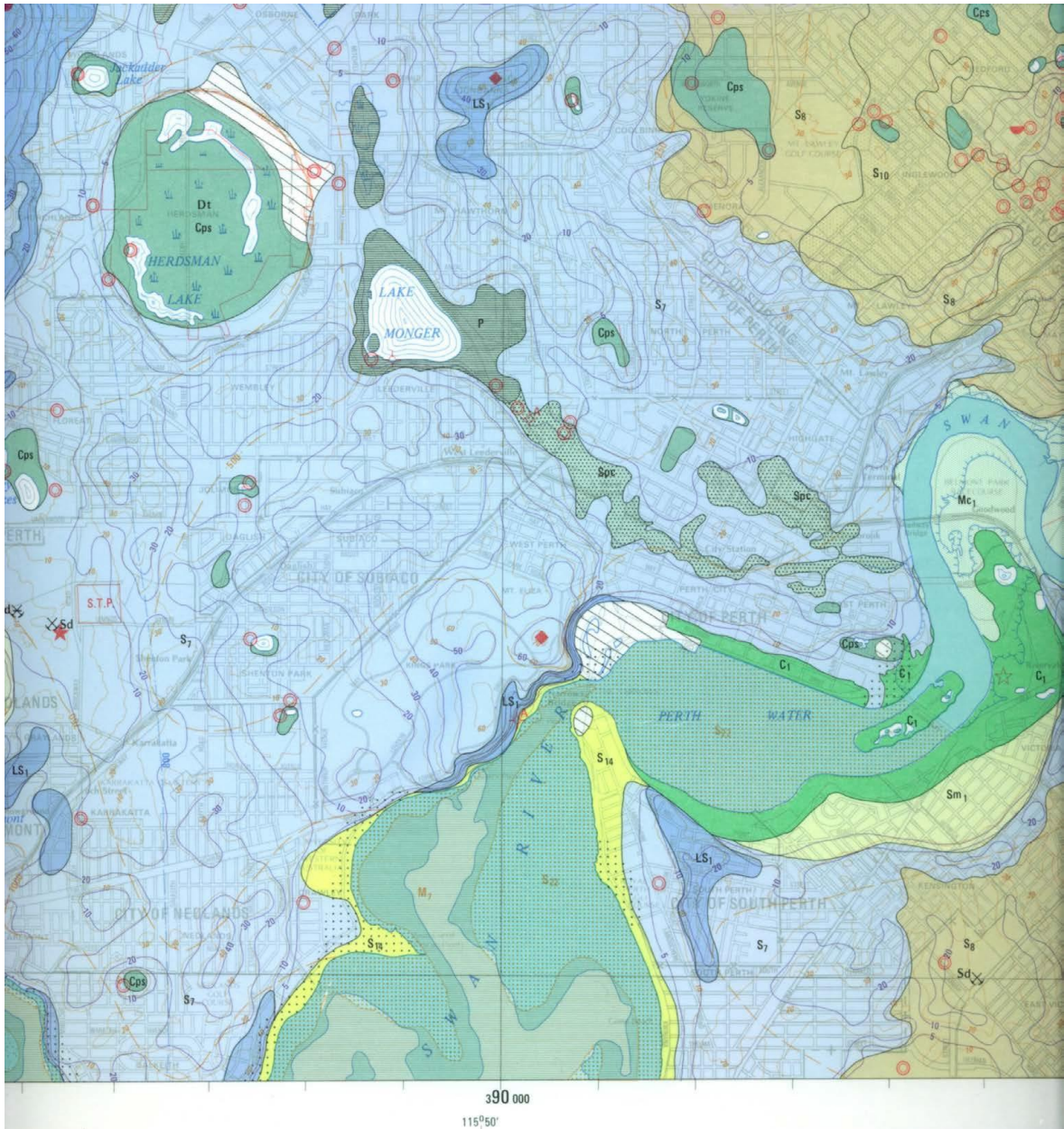


Context

Besides the hazard of possible drowning, there was the menace of cut feet when crossing the mudflats. Botanist Charles Fraser who accompanied Stirling said of them:

The islands on the flats are composed of a rich deposit (sic) carried down by the floods ... from extensive beds of oyster shells, which lie a foot deep in soft mud, our feet became dreadfully lacerated. These flats are extensive, but by employing flat bottomed boats they may be easily crossed. (Fraser, 1827, cited in Ref 6)

The map on the next page shows the location of the oyster shell beds in bright green, along both banks of the river near the mudflats and surrounding the islands.



Gozzard, J.R. (1986). Perth Sheet 2034 II and part Sheets 2034 II and 2134 III, Environmental Geology Series. Geological Survey of Western Australia. Department of Minerals and Energy.

<http://www.cbcg.org.au/Subsoil%20Geology.pdf>

This soil map shows the former wetlands which occupied low lying land between Lake Monger and East Perth. Only Lake Monger, Hyde Park, Queen's Gardens and Smith's Lake remain as surface water bodies

- Cps Peaty clay, dark grey and black with variable sand content of lacustrine origin – Swamp Deposit
- P Peat, black clayey in part, saturated fibrous organic soil – Swamp Deposit
- Spc Peaty sand, dark grey and black quartz sands with variable organic content and common peat lenses, variable clay content– Swamp Deposit
- S7 Sand, pale and olive yellow, medium to coarse grained, sub-angular to sub-rounded quartz, trace of feldspar, moderately sorted of residual origin – Sand derived from Tamala Limestone
- C1 Clay, mid to dark grey, soft saturated, **prominent 0.2m thick oyster shell bed near surface of alluvial origin.**
- S8 Sand, very light grey at surface, yellow at depth, fine to medium grained, sub-rounded quartz, moderately well sorted of eolian origin – Bassendean Sand
- Ls1 Limestone, light, yellowish brown, fine to coarse grained, sub-angular to well rounded, quartz, trace of feldspar, shell debris, variably lithified, surface kankar, of eolian origin. Tamala Limestone
- Hatched – made ground

Balbuk's Country: River Crossing Left Foreshore by Denise Mallon



Photo by Denise Mallon

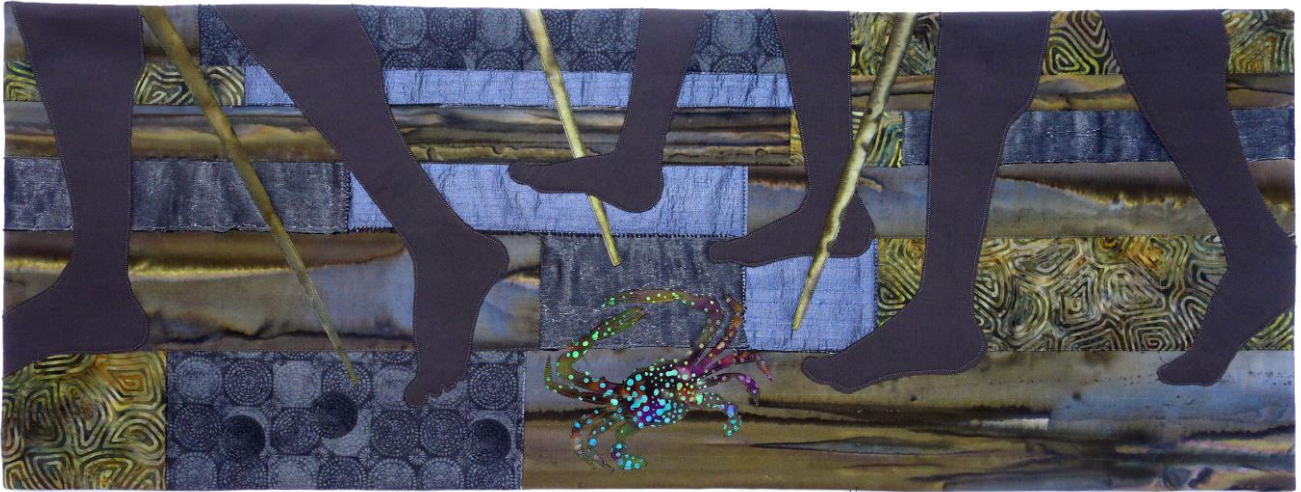
60cm (wide) x 39cm (high).

Before reclamation of the wetlands around what is now Perth City, Fanny, along with other women, would gather food following her traditional pathways before fording the river to the Heirisson Islands.

Techniques

Hand embroidery, machine quilting, Gesso and acrylic paint, beading

Balbuk's Country: Matagerrup by Stella King



80cm (wide) x 30cm (high)

Matagerrup, meaning 'knee deep' was the Noongar name given to the passage of shallow water that enabled Fanny Balbuk and her people to access the islands and mudflats now known as Heirisson Island. The crossing was eventually dredged by European settlers to allow for the passage of vessels up the Swan River.

Materials and Techniques

Collage using commercial fabrics.



Context

An oral history account (2010, Ref 1) indicated that crabs from the Swan River were part of the Noongar diet:

That's a view of the river [taken in Guildford, near Lilac Hill] when it's very quiet and cool and calm. ... Without water we can't live and how important that water was and the river was to Noongar people because it supplied fish and jilgies and crabs and all sorts of things for people, and water.

The sandbar in Freshwater Bay was called Karrakatta meaning place of the crabs. Pelican Point (Bootanup or Booriarup meaning place of the Xanthorrhoea, balga or blackboy tree leaves) was favoured for crabbing (Ref 1).

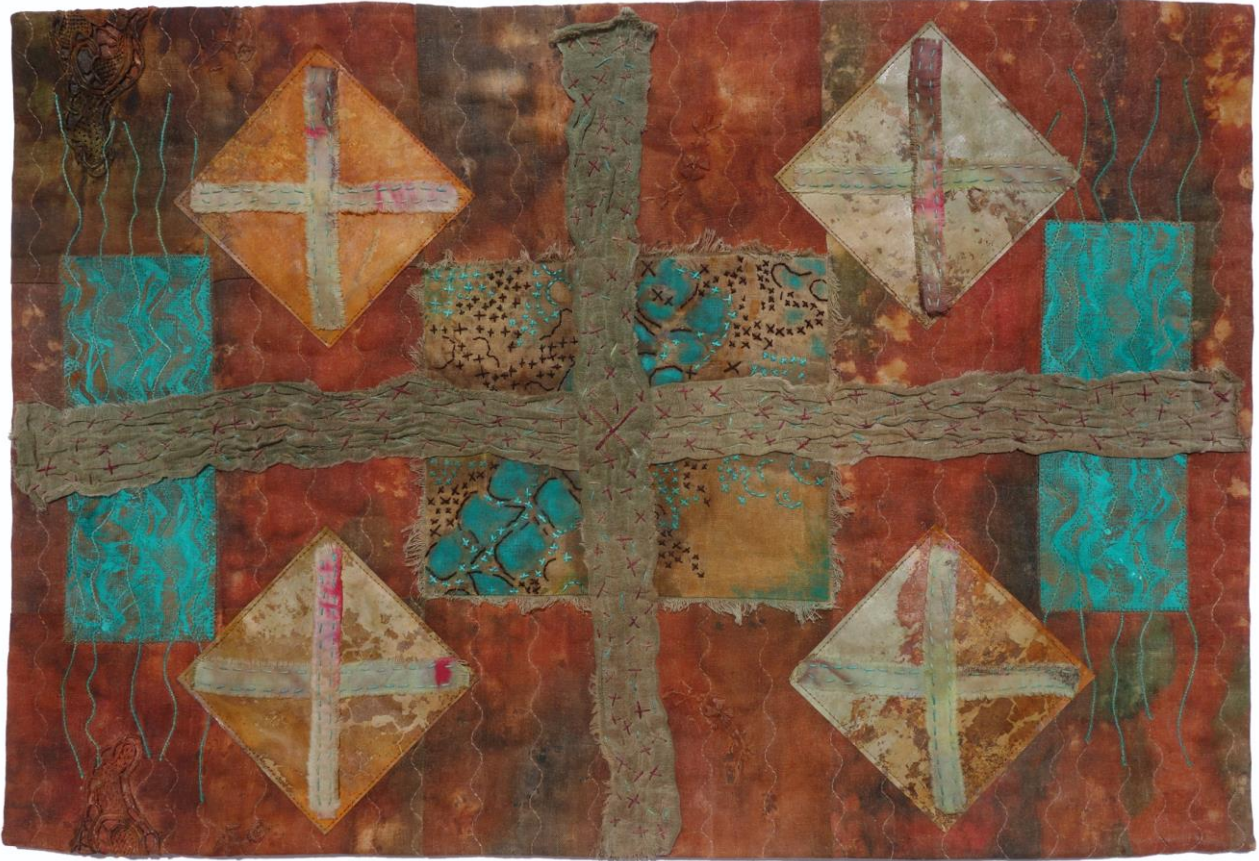
Blue swimmers (*Portunus pelagicus*) are still found in the river, and the best time to catch them is late spring right through to the end of autumn (Ref 2)

Ref 1

<https://parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/downloads/parks/Indigenous%20history%20of%20the%20Swan%20and%20Canning%20rivers.pdf>

Ref 2 <http://silverstories.com.au/crabbing-in-the-swan-river-and-canning-river-perth-western-australia>

Balbuk's Country: Continuous Crossing by Roberta Chantler



58cm x 40cm

Since before European settlement, when the area was known as Matagarup, this part of the Swan River has been used as a crossing point. Now, with the convergence of three main highways on its southern end it is a busy traffic hub giving access to the City of Perth.

Drawing on childhood memories of the construction of 'The New Causeway', my work depicts the mudflats and river channels. The crosses refer to the many interpretations of crossings, some being physical, cultural, nationality, language, religion, race and aspirations that occur daily in this place.

Materials and Techniques

Hand dyed and printed linen, paper and thread. Fabric crayons used for highlights. Pieced and machine quilted. Hand embroidered.



Representing physical, cultural, nationality, language, religion, and race crossings



Balbuk's Country: Heirisson Island, Looking East by Elizabeth Humphreys

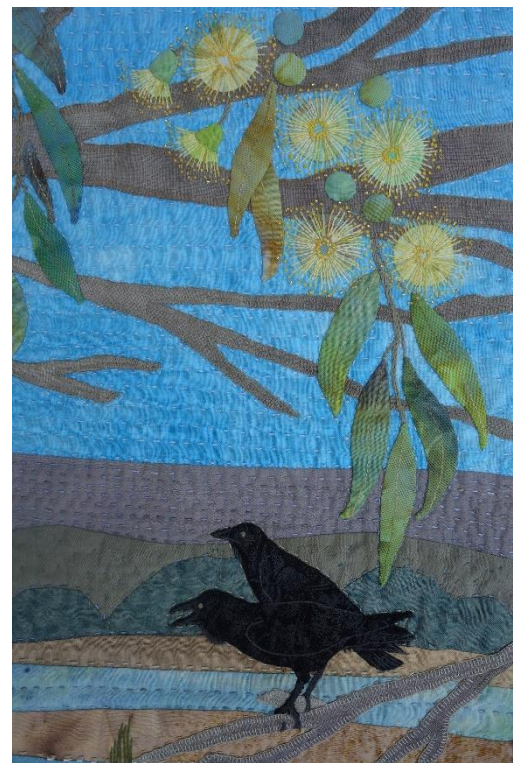
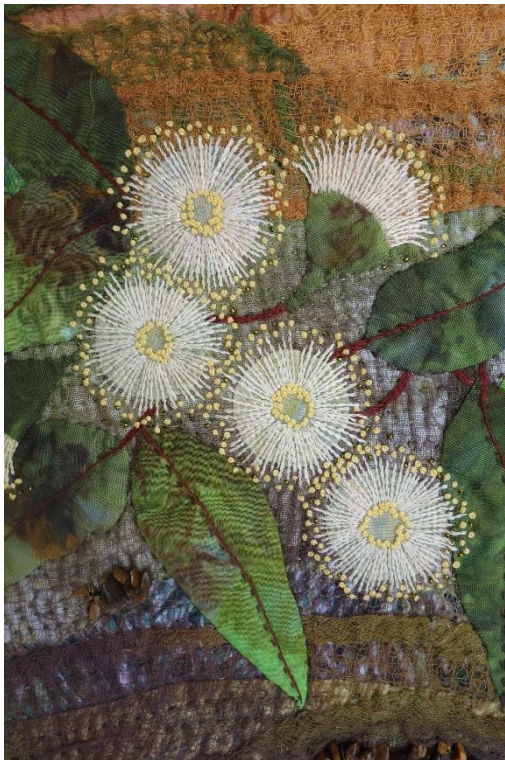


80 cm square 22 Peet Road, Kalamunda, Western Australia 6076 ph.92930050 ,
elizabethhumphreys@iinet.net.au

Inspired by the watercolour paintings made by early European settlers in the Swan River Colony. The quilt portrays the view to the East across the Swan River at Heirisson Island towards the Escarpment. Australian ravens (crows) were of special significance to Fanny Balbuk, and they overlook the crossing.

Materials and Techniques

Hand dyed fabrics and thread, hand embroidery, hand and machine applique and quilting.



Context

Crows (ravens) (warding)

Fanny Balbuk was a Wordungmat, or Crow, meaning crow was the totem of her family group (Ref 1). A totem is a spirit being, sacred object, or symbol that serves as an emblem of a group of people (Ref 2)

As a Wordungma, Balbuk was expected to marry into the Manitchmat (White Cockatoo) group. However, at one stage, she had attached herself to another Crow, and when his sister resented the union and fought her, Balbuk drove her digging stick through the woman's body, killing her instantly (Ref 1).

Swan (cooljaik or guijak)

Black swans were first seen by Europeans in 1697, when Willem de Vlamingh went up the Swan River. Vlamingh sailed with a small party up to near Heirisson Island and named the river *Swarte Swaene-Revier* after the swans. (Ref 3)

Swans are one of the few birds mentioned in historical records as being eaten by Aboriginal people. They was easily taken when it was molting (Grey, 1841 cited in Ref 4), and large numbers of both young and old birds and eggs were also taken when they were nesting (Bunbury, 1930, cited in Ref 4).

Egrets

Based on the lists and descriptions of birds by bird collector Gilbert, egrets were present in the 1800s in South-West Australia which includes Perth. John Gilbert collected birds in the South-West 1839 - 1843 for John Gould's Birds of Australia project. There is no Aboriginal Noongar word for egret (Ref 5). Nowadays, the Great Egret frequents lakes in Perth and along the banks of the Swan, and the Little Egret less so (Ref 6).

Eucalypts

Traditionally, the wood of the eucalypts koodjat (straggly mallee, *eucalyptus petrensis*) and Jarrah (Swan River mahogany) (*eucalyptus marginate*) was used to make doarks (sticks for knocking the tops off grass trees [*xanthorrhoea preissii*]), kitjs (spears), and wannas (digging sticks). Suitable branches from the Jarrah were also used to make spear throwers. (Ref 7).

Oil from eucalyptus leaves was used by Noongar people for medicinal purposes. The leaves were rubbed between the hands and then breathed-in to clear the nasal passages. The leaves of Moitch (flooded Gum) (*eucalyptus rudis*) are sometimes covered in small white spots of manna. Manna is the product of a small mite that gathers on the base of the leaves. Noongars licked the sugary manna directly off the leaves or gathered the substance into a large, sweet lolly to suck on. (Ref 7).

Eucalyptus gum was used for medicinal purposes. Gums from the Marri, Tuart and the Jarrah are a mild anaesthetic. Gums were ground into powder for an ointment on sores, or mixed with water as a tonic for upset stomachs. Ref 7.

Bark from eucalypts was also important. Bark from the Marri, Tuart and Jarrah was often used by Noongar people as the roofing for mia-mias (shelters). Jarrah bark was considered the best for this purpose, as it was easily be made waterproof. In addition, the bark of Jarrah was peeled off in one large, curved sheet and used, for example, for coolamon (shallow carrying dishes). Coolamon carried bush tucker, water and babies. Scarred trees are evidence today that such sheets of bark were removed. (Ref 7).

The blossoms of the eucalypts were used for honey, either by sucking from the flower, or by dipping flowers in water for a sweet drink. Ngoowak (native bees) enjoy the nectar, and Noongars found honey in the hollows of eucalypt branches. The tall eucalypts, including Marri, Tuart and the Jarrah, attract birds which nest in the branch hollows. Noongar climbed the trees to catch the birds or to take eggs to eat. (Ref 7).

Grass trees

Grass trees hosted witchety grubs which Noongar liked to eat. The small white grubs are the larvae of the beetle *bardistus cibarius*. They grubs were found in large numbers, up to as many as a hundred, in the one tree. Grey, an early settler wrote:

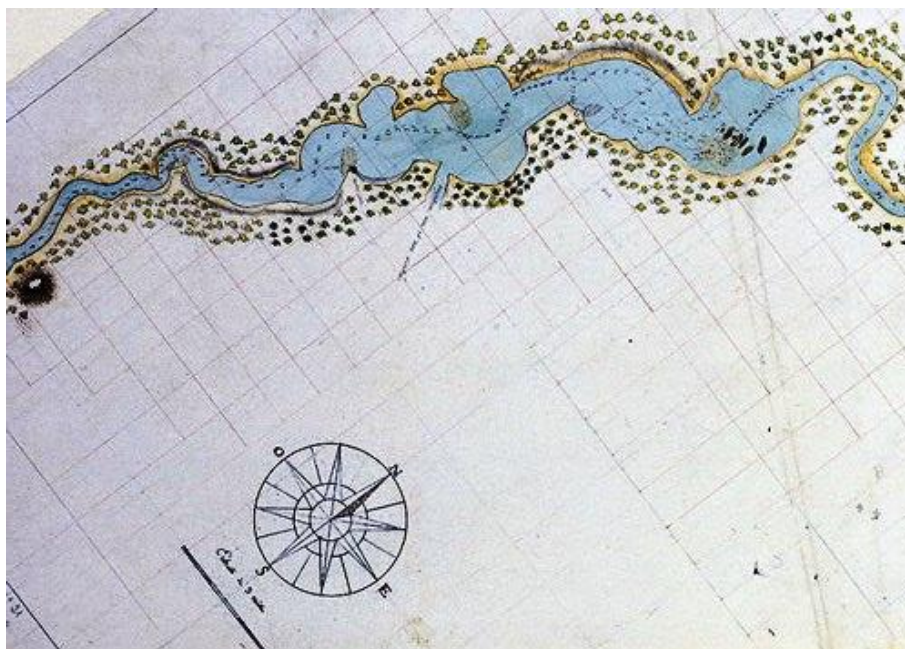
The larvae of *Bardistus cibarius* occur in decayed or rotting trees, and so, to ensure a supply of them, the Aborigines killed the blackboy trees by knocking the tops off them The grubs which were later found in such trees were regarded as the property of the man who had knocked the top off, and were jealously guarded by him (Grey, 1841, cited in Ref 4)

Mudflats and Islands (Mattagerup)

Mudflats around the Heirisson Islands hindered early navigation of the Swan River by Europeans and mediated against impressions of suitability for settlement.

- Vlamingh's ships could not sail up the river because of a sand bar at its mouth, so he sent out a sloop which even then required some dragging over the sand bar. They sailed until reaching mud flats probably near Heirisson Island. Vlamingh was not impressed with the area. (Ref 8)
- In 1801, the French ships *Geographe* and *Naturaliste* visited the area. A small expedition from the *Naturaliste* dragged longboats over the sand bar and explored the Swan River. They reported it was unsuitable for settlement due to many mud flats upstream and the sand bar. (Ref 8)
- In 1827 Captain James Stirling explored the Swan River and was stopped at the Point Fraser mud flats (near Heirisson Island) before sailing further up river: "The Boats took the Ground, and we sought in vain by Walking from Shore to Shore to find a Channel. The only alternative left was to drag the boats over the bank, which was practised for a distance of two Miles, until night overtook us when the increasing tenacity of the mud obliged us to desist." (Stirling, 1827, cited in Ref 9)

The map below is from direct observation after Heirisson's journey by longboat along the Swan River from 17-22 June 1801. Chart soundings along the entire length of his journey are included, and comments on the singular topography of the mouth of the river (the bar). (Ref 10). It is probable that the Canning River entrance is midway along on the right hand side. Heirisson Islands are marked as dots mid-river further up (Ref 11).



The first detailed map of the Swan River, by François-Antoine Boniface Heirisson. State Library of Western Australia

Burning off

Vegetation and the ground at the right/bottom of the quilt shows charring and ash from 'burning off', a practice which is known to have been carried out for eons before white settlement. It made access easier through vegetation, encouraged new growth and therefore new game for hunting, and encouraged the development of food plants. Fire was also used for cooking, warmth, signalling and spiritual reasons. (Ref 12)

Sparse Vegetation

The vegetation depicted in the quilt is relatively sparse, which is consistent with artworks from early years of white settlement and before. For example, the watercolour painting by Frederick Garling, *View from Mount Eliza*, 1827, Janet Holmes à Court Collection.



Frederick Garling, View from Mount Eliza, 1827

Source: <http://www.holmesacourtgallery.com.au/article/fred-garling>

Looking to the East

The Noongar were the broad Aboriginal group to which Fanny Balbuk belonged. They have the Dreamtime story (religion) that the Darling Escarpment (depicted in the background on the quilt) represents the body of a Wagyl (also spelt Waugal) – a snakelike being that meandered over the land creating lakes, waterways, rivers, including the Swan River (Ref 13) and people (Ref 14).

In her obituary for Fanny Balbuk on Jun1, 1907 (Ref 15), Daisy Bates wrote that the hunting grounds of Balbuk's people

stretched from near Gingin in the north to beyond Fremantle in the south, and all along the coast side of the Swan River to some northern and Eastern boundary [towards the escarpment] unknown. In this large area Balbuk's ancestors roamed, hunted, fought and danced for many a generation.

Balbuk as a Wordungmat (Crow) was in the Whadjuk 'clan' which formed part of the Noongar language group but they had their own distinctive dialect (Ref 16). Tindale (1974, cited in Ref 17) explains the Whadjuk's territory as extending:

[From the] Swan River and northern and eastern tributaries inland to beyond Mount Helena; at Kalamunda, Armadale, Victoria Planes, South of Toodyay, and western vicinity of York; at Perth; south along the coast to near Pinjarra.



South-west 'tribal' boundaries after Tindale, 1974 (Ref 17)



Noongar Whadjuk language area highlighted (Ref 18)

- Ref 1 <https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/b/bates/daisy/passing/chapter7.html>)
- Ref 2 <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Totem>
- Ref 3 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_swan
- Ref 4 <http://museum.wa.gov.au/research/records-supplements/records/food-resources-aborigines-south-west-western-australia/accessible-version>
- Ref 5 <https://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/images/documents/about/science/cswa/articles/14.pdf>
- Ref 6 <http://www.bushlandperth.org.au/bushland-treasures/22-treasures-eastern/228-perths-urban-wetlands-our-cormorants-ibis-and-herons>
- Ref 7 <http://www.joondalup.wa.gov.au/Files/Plants%20and%20People%20in%20Mooro%20Country.pdf>
- Ref 8 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swan_River_Colony
- Ref 9 http://slwa.wa.gov.au/swan_river/community_icon/stirling
- Ref 10 <http://slwa.wa.gov.au/treasures/freycinet/swanriver.htm>
- Ref 11 <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=684063>
- Ref 12 <https://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/management/fire/fire-and-the-environment/41-traditional-aboriginal-burning>
- Ref 13 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swan_River_\(Western_Australia\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swan_River_(Western_Australia))
- Ref 14 [http://www.riversofemotion.org.au/sites/default/files/pdf/Rivers_of_Emotions\(FINAL\).pdf](http://www.riversofemotion.org.au/sites/default/files/pdf/Rivers_of_Emotions(FINAL).pdf)
- Ref 15 <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/37393844>
- Ref 16 <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whadjuk>
- Ref 17 Indigenous history of the Swan and Canning rivers
<https://parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au/park/swan-canning-riverpark>
- Ref 18 http://www.wikiwand.com/en/Fanny_Balbuk

Balbuk's Country: Marri by Elizabeth Humphreys



39.5 cm x 79.5 cm

Marri is a common name for the *corymbia calophylla*. In Noongar language it is known as marri, gardan, kurrden, mahree, nandap or ngora (Ref 1). The tree is a much loved species in the Perth area and is well known for its large fruit known as honkey nuts.

These trees were very important in Fanny Balbuk's time. The red gum which oozes from the trunks was valued for its antiseptic qualities and was used for various medicinal purposes as well as being used to tan kangaroo skins for bags and cloaks. Birds nesting in hollows in the trees added eggs for protein in the diet. Marri blossoms were dipped in water to make a sweet drink, and also attracted bees which formed hives in the hollows of the limbs giving a delicious and valuable carbohydrate treat of honey.

Materials and Techniques

Linen and cotton fabrics naturally dyed using Marri leaves, collected near my home, along with fabrics dyed with tea and iron. Marri leaves were used as patterns, traced directly onto the fabrics and appliquéd using the needle turn method.

Ref 1 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corymbia_calophylla

Food Gatherer by Roberta Chantler



31cm x 38cm

When away from camp and while gathering food, women were rarely seen without their digging sticks, which they used in their search for yams and roots as well as for killing lizards and small animals to supplement their diet.

My work depicts an Aboriginal woman walking a well-defined track through a marshy area on such a search.

Materials and Techniques

Fabric dyed with introduced plant from my own garden. Commercial threads. Hand embroidered.

Balbuk's Country: Plant Tucker Below Ground by Pat Forster



49cm square

Roots, bulbs and tubers gathered by the Aboriginal women with digging sticks were a major source of food. They were collected in particular locations until white settlement barred access.

Techniques

Machine pieced, digging sticks hand appliqued, in the ditch quilting, centre free-motion quilted in the shape of typha *Latifolia* rhizomes (catstail reed), free-motion quilting and text which reads *yams and reed rhizomes were staples....women were the harvesters....roots were eaten raw or roasted....white settlement stopped access.*

Border fabrics

Bush Tucker After Rain' by Marlene Doolan showing various root shapes

Sandhill by Anna Pitjari - white dots portray the effect of wind moving over the sand hills

Wild Plum Seeds by Betty Mbitjana.

Context

The plants: Early settlers observed and recorded that roots, bulbs and tubers (rhizomes) were the main sources of food for the Aboriginal people (Ref 1). They included species of *caesia* (herbs), *dioscorea* (yams), *haemodorum* (herbs), *platysace* (woody herbs), *praso-phyllum* (leek orchids), and *typha* (reeds). Women and children unearthed these using digging sticks. They were eaten raw or roasted. .

In a sense, typha was cultivated: "The natives must be admitted to bestow a sort of cultivation upon this root, as they frequently burn the leaves of the plant in the dry seasons, in order to improve it" (Grey, 1841, cited in Hallam 1991). Also of typha, Moore (1884, cited in Hallam 1991) wrote: The natives dig the roots up, roast them, and pound them into a mass, which when kneaded and made into a cake, tastes like flour not separated from the bran.



Some roots had special preparation, to prevent injury, for example the roots of *Haemodorum spicatum* had a hot taste when eaten raw and could cause dysentery. These were roasted, then pounded with a particular type of earth which the women carried in their bags (Grey, 1841, cited in Ref 1).

The table summarises a sample of roots identified near Mingenev in 1967 by Aboriginal women, with scientific names provided by the Department of Agriculture in Perth (Ref 1).

Scientific name	Aboriginal name	Description	Food preparation
<i>Dioscorea hastifolia</i>	worrain	long tuber, grows deep (approx 2m)	cooked in the ashes and pounded
<i>Platysace maxwellii</i>	karno	large number of round tubers on one plant about 0.5m below ground	roasted in the ashes, sometimes eaten raw to quench the thirst
<i>Haemodorum paniculatum</i> .	mutta	tuberous root	hot taste when raw, usually roasted in ashes

Digging sticks (wanna); Both ends were pointed, or one was pointed and the other was blunt (Ref 2).

At Yellagonga Regional Park, Joondalup, digging sticks were made of the wood of the Koodjat (or straggly mallee) (*eucalyptus petrensis*), and Jarrah (or Swan River mahogany) (*eucalyptus marginata*) (Ref 3)

Fanny's Food Sources: The location of Fanny's reed rhizome harvesting swamp was the present Perth Railway Station site (Hallam, 1991). Yams occurred in patches, and settlers used them to indicate arable land, particularly upstream from Perth, including where Fanny was traditionally entitled to enter. Settlers cultivated the land and introduced stock, both of which changed yam availability. For example. Moore (1884, cited in Ref 4) wrote "sheep would eat the above ground vines of the yams". Moore also recorded calling the military when a large group of Aboriginal people gathered to dig yams on 'his' property. Incidents like this meant that women were prevented from harvesting their major staple foods.

Ref 1 The food resources of the aborigines of the south-west of Western Australia

<http://museum.wa.gov.au/research/records-supplements/records/food-resources-aborigines-south-west-western-australia/accessible-version>

Ref 2 <http://www.nma.gov.au/collections-search/atsiaa/results.php?search=adv&type=Digging+sticks>

Ref 3 <http://www.joondalup.wa.gov.au/Files/Plants%20and%20People%20in%20Mooro%20Country.pdf>

Ref 4 Hallam, Sylvia J (1991). Aboriginal Women as Providers: The 1830s on the Swan. Aboriginal History, Vol. 15, 1991: 38-53.

<http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/p72251/pdf/article049.pdf>

Balbuk's Country: Plant Tucker Above Ground by Pat Forster



49cm square

Aboriginal women gathered plant foods in coolamons (shallow dishes) cut from the bark of trees, in the shape depicted in the quilt centre. Above ground foods included seeds, nuts, fruit, fungus, nectar and gum of which some are represented in the border fabric.

Techniques

English paper piecing, hand applique, machined trapunto, in the ditch and free-motion quilting and text which reads *women collected seeds nuts fruit nectar gum fungi...seeds were ground for cakes zamia nuts were soaked.*

Border fabrics

Yuendumu Bush Tomato by Audrey Martin Napanangka showing berries and flowers
Wild Plum Seeds by Betty Mbitjana.



Context

The plants: Early settlers observed and recorded that seeds, nuts, fruit, fungus, nectar and gum were collected and used as foods by the Aboriginal people (Ref 1).

Women collected seeds from the acacia, known as kunart or kwonnart. These were stored and ground when required and made into cakes, which were baked in the ashes. The seeds from the sandal-wood tree

(poilyenum or willarak) were sometimes eaten but they were mainly collected for their oil. The men used this oil for rubbing on their bodies. (Ref 1)

The Zamia palm (*macrozamia riedlei*) was one of the few trees which bore edible fruit and was an important food source. Zamia ‘nuts’ were known as baio, bayio, boyoo, or byyu. They caused vomiting if eaten raw so had special preparation: towards the end of March, when the fruit was ripe, it was collected, soaked in water for a period, and then buried until the pulp was safe to be eaten either raw or roasted (Grey 1841, cited in Ref 1). The Quondong, ‘wild cherry’, ‘small Hottentot fig’, and fruits from a creeper known as kuruba were also eaten (Moore 1884, cited in Ref 1).

Nectar from flowers of *banksia grandis* was used, and the flowers and nectar were known by the same name, mangaitch, mangite, mangyt, moncat, mungat, munghite, mungite, or mungyte. Nectar was also collected from *banksia sphaerocarpa* known as nugoo. The banksia nectar was primarily obtained by sucking the spikes (Moore 1884, cited in Ref 1), but a sweet drink was also made from them. This was done by lining a hole in the ground with paper-bark, filling it with the spikes, and then covering these with water and leaving them to soak. The flowers of *eucalyptus calophylla* (red-gum or marri), known as ngumbit, numbit, or numbrid were used to make a similar drink. Nectar was also sucked from the flowers of *dryandra fraseri* which was known as budjan or butyak. *Banksia grandis* flowered in September and October, *banksia sphaerocarpa* from October till January, and *dryandra fraseri* and *eucalyptus calophylla* in February and March. (Moore, 1984, cited in Ref 1)

Gum known as galyang, kwonnat, manna, meen, or menna was collected from acacia trees and made into cakes, which could be eaten as needed (Moore 1884, cited in Ref 1).

Fungi, including those known as butogo, bwyego, dtalyil, mord, numar, and wurdo were eaten. Other fungi including the common mushroom, were considered inedible. (Ref 1)

The table gives plants identified near Mingenew in 1967 by Aboriginal women, with scientific names provided by the Department of Agriculture in Perth (Ref 1).

Thysanotus patersonii	tjungoori	leaves and flowers of this creeper, were collected and rolled into a ball	cooked in the ashes then ground, green powder was eaten with the root of the York gum
Amyema fitzgeraldii	mistletoe	small dull red berries	berries were eaten
Astroloma serratifolium	murrumburru	small green berries	
Brachysema aphyllum		red flower	flowers sucked to obtain nectar
Banksia sphaerocarpa	nugoo	nectar	Spikes were soaked in water for a drunk. On cool damp days nectar was sucked from spikes.

Coolamon: Traditional coolamon were made by cutting the outline of the bowl into the bark of a tree, then peeling it from the tree in one piece. This process left the tree scarred. After the bark was obtained, it was heated to make it pliable and the ends were folded upwards. (Ref 2)



Photo from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coolamon_\(vessel\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coolamon_(vessel))

Ref 1. The food resources of the aborigines of the south-west of Western Australia
<http://museum.wa.gov.au/research/records-supplements/records/food-resources-aborigines-south-west-western-australia/accessible-version>

Ref 2 Aboriginal bowls. http://www.culturequest.us/aboriginal_tools/baskets_bowls.htm

Balbuk's Country: Yakkan (Long-necked Turtles) by Pat Forster



49cm square

In Fanny's day, long-necked turtles were collected in the swamps by women, were cooked in the shell on a fire, and eaten in the shell after peeling off the soft shell under the body. They were considered a delicacy.

Techniques

Foundation pieced central block, bobbin work turtles, in the ditch quilting, free motion quilting following the contours of the Aboriginal fabric, free-motion text which reads *women gathered lizards, frogs, jilgies, turtles...felt with their feet in the swamp mud...plunged their arms in to their shoulder.*

Border fabric

Bush Tucker by Julie Nabangardi Sheeden

Context

The species of turtle occurring in Southwestern Australia, including Perth, is the South Western Snake Necked Turtle *chelodina (macrodiremys) colliei*, also known as the Oblong turtle (Ref 1). It is a long-necked, freshwater turtle which occurs in swamps.

The turtle has an adult carapace (upper shell) of up to 20 – 30cm which is dark brown or black. Its long neck is almost the length of its carapace with adults thus reaching up to 50cm in length. Hatchlings have a carapace roughly the size of a 20 cent coin. (Ref 2)

There are 5 vertebral scutes In the center of the carapace and out from these are 4 pairs of costal scutes, with 12 marginal scutes around the edge, each side of the shell (Ref 3). This description was the basis for the turtle design for the quilt except edge scutes were not stitched.



The turtles are able to drop their body temperature, slow their pulse rate and use stored body fat instead of eating to survive in hot dry conditions. They sometimes bury themselves in mud or under leaves or logs, conserving body fluids until conditions are more habitable. This ability is known as aestivation. When this occurs turtles can be more vulnerable to predators and human activity such as clearing and ground works. Grey, an early settler wrote

. . . fresh-water turtle are extremely abundant and are in high season about December and January. At this time the natives assemble near the freshwater lakes and lagoons in large numbers; ... I have known two or three of them to catch fourteen turtle, none of which weighed less than one, and many of them as much as two or three pounds, in the course of a very short time. Grey (1841, cited in Ref 4)

These fresh water turtle are cooked by being baked, shell and all, in the hot ashes; when they are done, a single pull removes the bottom shell, and the whole animal remains in the upper one, which serves as a dish. They are generally very fat, and are really delicate and delicious eating. (Grey, 1841 cited in Ref 5)

The season of the year in which the natives catch the greatest quantity of frogs, and freshwater shellfish [crustaceans], is when the swamps are nearly dried up; these animals then bury themselves in holes in the mud, and the native women with their long sticks, and their long thin arms, which they plunge up to the shoulder in the slime, manage to drag them out; at all seasons however they catch some of these animals, but in summer a whole troop of native women may be seen paddling about in a swamp, slapping themselves to kill the mosquitoes and sandflies, and every now and then plunging their arms down into the mud and dragging forth their prey. I have often seen them with ten or twelve pounds weight of frogs in their bag. (Grey, 1841 cited in Ref 5)

Nind (1831, cited in Ref 5) observed:

During the winter and early spring they [Aboriginal people] are very much scattered; but as summer advances they assemble in greater numbers. It is at that season that they procure the greatest abundance of game. It is done by setting fire to the underwood and grass, which, being dry, is rapidly burnt. ... As soon as the fire has passed over the ground, they walk over the ashes in search of lizards and snakes, which are thus destroyed (p. 29) in great numbers, and those which have escaped in their holes are easily discovered.

Aboriginal women were the gatherers of small animals including turtles, together with gilgies (like yabbies), frogs, and lizards. These supplemented the basic carbohydrate staples (roots) which comprised the bulk of their diet. (Ref 5). Daisy Bates wrote that Fanny Balbuk was born on Heirisson Island, and from there a straight track led to the swamp where Perth railway station now stands (photo next page), where she gathered gilgies [and presumably turtles], and vegetable food (Ref 6). As settlement took hold, ‘Through fences and over them. Balbuk took the straight track to the end. When a house was built in the way, she broke its fence palings with her digging-stick and charged up the steps and through the rooms’ (Ref 6). Fanny and her actions are remembered with inscriptions on seats at Point Fraser Reserve near the Causeway.

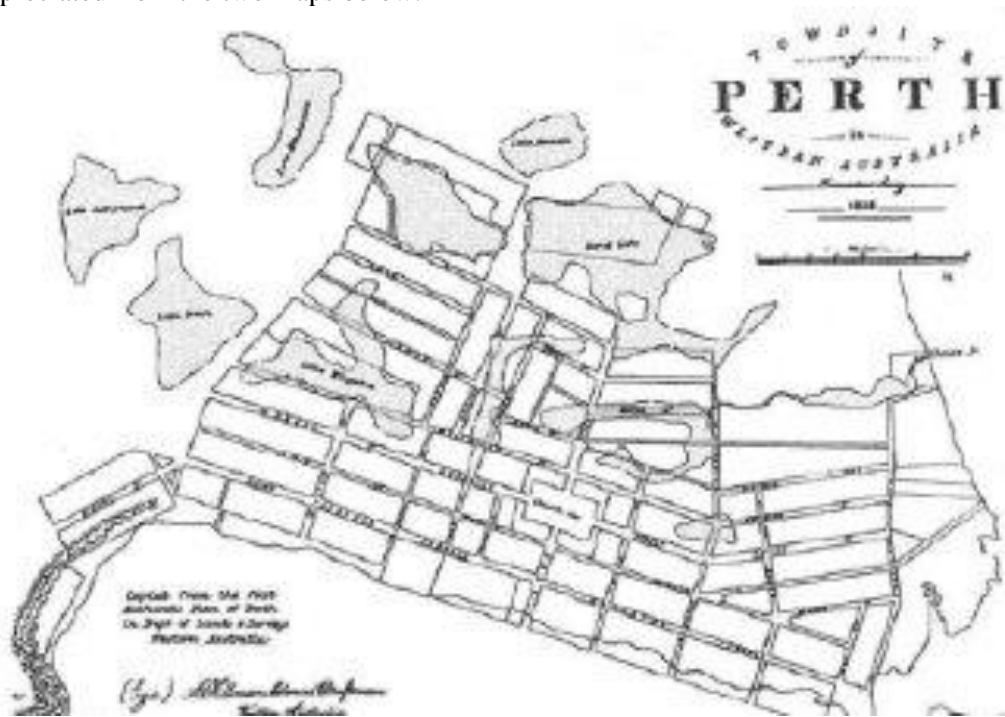


Perth Railway Station, 1881, swamp in front, State Library of Western Australia, accessed from <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-09-21/1.-perth-railway-station-1881.-courtesy-state-library-of-wester/5758764>

- Ref 1 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southwestern_snake-necked_turtle
Ref 2 <http://www.aacewa.org.au/turtlewatch.html>
Ref 3 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turtle_shell
Ref 4 <http://museum.wa.gov.au/research/records-supplements/records/food-resources-aborigines-south-west-western-australia/accessible-version>
Ref 5 Hallam, Sylvia J. Aboriginal Women as Providers: The 1830s on the Swan [online]. *Aboriginal History*, Vol. 15, 1991: 38-53. Available at <http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/p72251/pdf/article049.pdf>
Ref 6 My Natives and I, by Daisy M Bates, *The West Australian*, 12 Feb 1936, p. 23. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/32970216?>

Historical Maps

The settlers intrusion on swamps, the locations where aboriginal women collected turtles and other foods, can be appreciated from the two maps below.



Colonial Draftsman A. Hillman, 1838, plan for Perth shows the wetlands that existed at the time.
 Source <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-07-11/noongar-maps-of-perth-city-released/5589910>



Chinese Gardeners and Market Gardens Perth 1911
 Source <http://museum.wa.gov.au/explore/wetlands/city-development/chinese-gardeners>

Balbuk's Country: Marlee (Swan)

by Pat Forster



39cm square

Black swans (marlee in Noongar language) abounded in the Swan River/Estuary in the 1800s. Together with their eggs, they were important sources of protein for Aboriginal people. Men speared or caught them with a noose. They were plucked before being cooked. Swan numbers decreased dramatically with white settlement and the use of guns.

Techniques

Reverse applique and machine piecing. Freemotion quilting and text which reads *swans and eggs were protein foods....speared or noosed....when moulting or nesting....decimated with guns.*

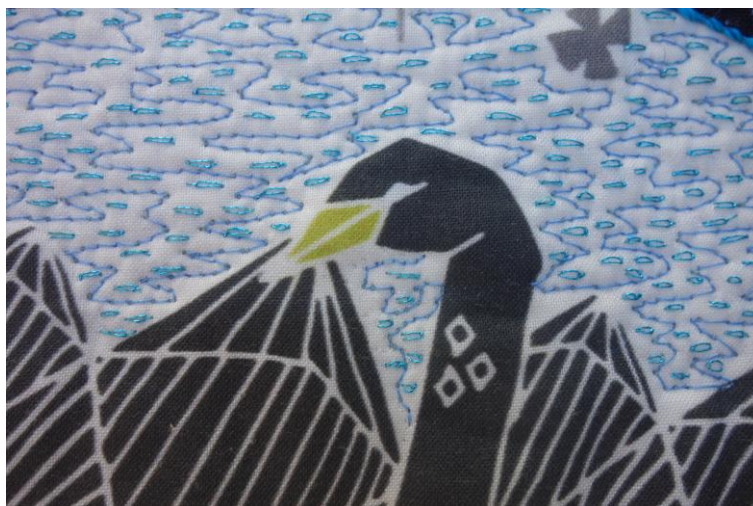
Border fabric

Yalke (wetlands) by June Smith Pengarte.

Context

The Yalke fabric: Spectacular views of various creatures such as birds and frogs, and different vegetation can be viewed in the Yalke or wetlands of Australia, both in dry or wet seasons. In the dry season, vast water mass goes back to permanent wetlands, waterholes etc. and become home for waterfowls and many other migratory birds of Australia. (Ref 1). In 1827, botanist Charles Fraser described the abundant bird life around Point Fraser:

The quantity of black swans, ducks, pelicans and aquatic birds seen on the river was truly astonishing. Without any exaggeration, I have seen a number of black swans, which could not be estimated at less than five hundred rise at once, exhibiting a spectacle which, if the size and colour of the bird be taken into account, and the noise and rushing occasioned by the flapping of their wings, previous to their rising, is quite unique in its kind. We frequently had from twelve to fifteen of them in the boats, and the crews thought nothing of devouring eight roasted swans in a day. (cited in Ref 2)



Grey (1841, cited in Ref 3) wrote that birds "formed a very considerable article of food for the natives, and their modes of killing them are so various that it would be impossible to enumerate them all ". Moore (1884 cited in Ref 3) recorded that emus and bronzewing pigeons were also eaten.

The black swan *cygnus atratus* (cooljaik or guijak) was easily taken when it was moulting (Grey 1841, cited in Ref 2) and large numbers of both young and old birds and eggs were also taken when it was nesting (Bunbury 1930, cited in Ref 2). The birds were either speared or caught with a noose, and were plucked before being cooked (Grey, 1841, cited in Ref 2). Oral history (1975, Doust, cited in Ref 2) has it that water fowl [swan included?] were cooked by first being covered with mud, placed in a hole, and then covered with ashes, where they were left for several hours. When the baked mud was cracked open the feathers

The West Australian commented (cited in Ref 2): A common sight to see boats go into the midst of the birds during their moulting and breeding season, and simply knock them on the head with no more difficulty than is experienced in killing rats in a pit.

Nind (1831, cited in Ref 2) recorded also that "At the spring time of the year, they live principally upon the eggs and young of birds, chiefly of the parrot tribe, but also of hawks, ducks, swans, pigeons, etc." When the eggs were cooked they were placed on end in moderately hot ashes. A small hole was pierced in the upper end to prevent them from bursting (Goldsworthy 1886, cited in Ref 2).

By 1870, hunting on and around the Swan River had severely reduced the numbers of black swans and other birds. The Inquirer reported in May 1874 (cited in Ref 2): Swans, these birds which originally gave its name to our River, have long since ceased to be habitual frequenters of its waters. Occasionally some are seen, or heard flying over-head.

Bans were put on shooting some bird species and in 1892 a closed season July to September was imposed on swan in Perth Waters. In introducing the bill Sir John Forrest said: At present, if a duck or swan happens to show itself on these waters, many persons start off at once with a gun determined to kill it." (cited in Ref 2).

Another approach to preserving the swan population was to establish swanneries for black swans to breed safely and to increase. These were successful, but reclamation around Perth Water saw gradual disappearance of the swan (Ref 2).

Ref 1 <http://mstexaustralia.com/portfolio/yalke-blue-by-june-smith/>

Ref 2 http://cms.slwa.wa.gov.au/swan_river/caring_for_the_river/black_swans

Ref 3 <http://museum.wa.gov.au/research/records-supplements/records/food-resources-aborigines-south-west-western-australia/accessible-version>

Balbuk's Country: Djildjit (Fish)

by Stella King



30cm square

Sea mullet, salmon and tailor caught in a variety of different ways provided a seasonal bounty for Fanny's people.

Material/techniques

Collage on background of pieced hand dyed and commercial fabrics.

Context

All information sourced from

<http://museum.wa.gov.au/research/records-supplements/records/food-resources-aborigines-south-west-western-australia/accessible-version>

Fish were a major source of food for Aboriginal people when living near the coast, particularly during the summer months. They confined their fishing activities to sheltered areas such as lakes, rivers and estuaries. They had no form of water transport (eg Stirling 1826). Nind (1831) wrote

In the mouths of streams or rivers, they take large quantities, by weirs made of bushes, but the most common method is pursuing the fish into shoal waters, and spearing them, or as they lie basking on the surface. During calms, they walk over the mud and sand-banks, in search of flat fish, which are easily detected while lying at the bottom. At night, too, they light torches of grass-tree, and thus see the fish at the bottom, apparently asleep, when they very rapidly spear them. By these methods, vast quantities are taken, but it can only be done in dead calms. Another common method is to sit on a rock, motionless, and occasionally throw into the water pieces of limpet, or other shell-fish, keeping the spear under water until the bait is seized by a fish, when they are almost certain of striking it.

When a shoal of fish was sighted in the shallows of an estuary it was driven towards the shore, the fish penned in with branches and stones, and then either speared or taken by hand. Catching fish in weirs or drives was a group activity in which both men and women took part, and these approaches were used when a large number of people were gathered together. However fish were also speared by individuals in shallow water, or when crossing fords in the rivers. (eg Nind 1831)

In the autumn, when the smaller species of fish approached the shores in large shoals, they surrounded them, and kept them in shallow water upon the flats until the tide fell and left them, when they are easily speared, and very few escaped (Nind, 1831).

Sometimes very large catches were made in fish traps, particularly at the beginning of the winter, when, with the increased rains, the fish returned from the spawning places up stream. At this time Aboriginal people would watch day and night for the fish to come, relieving each other (Paterson, 1896). Moore (1884) observed:

Every hand engaged procured about a dozen [fish], and I think there were ten of them. Nor was this the only shoal they caught that morning, so that they feasted all day to gorging, buried a quantity for another day, and gave us several.

When they caught more than they could eat, they either left them to die (Irwin, 1835), buried a quantity for another day (Moore, 1884) or cooked them and wrapped the flesh in soft bark (Nind, 1831).

The larger fish were cut up before being cooked on the fire, while the smaller ones were either roasted whole on ashes, or were wrapped in soft bark and covered with hot ashes (eg Hammond 1933).

Of species caught, Browne (1856) recorded that, in autumn of Western Australia, including the months of February and March, 'the mullet, salmon and tailor-fish abound'. Neill (1845) wrote that Australian barracuda (sea pike) came into the shallow bays in summer; and being sluggish fish, was easily speared, and was considered excellent food.

There were a number of fish which could be easily caught, but were not eaten, for example King Fish (? *belone gavioides*), as it was believed that green-boned fish were poisonous. Sharks, sting-rays and maiden-rays were sometimes caught, but it seems that this was done mainly for sport as they were not eaten. (eg Nind 1831).

The only by-product obtained from fish was the oil from the mullet. This was used for greasing their heads and bodies (Neill, 1845).

Aboriginal names (from SW of Western Australia) for fish species include knamler (yellow-eyed mullet), kordong (Australian barracuda), madawick (travelly) pining (salmon), ianont and worogut (blue weed-whiting), memon (silver drummer), merrong (flat-head grey mullet), tabeduck (leatherjacket?), tchark (jewfish or mullet) memon (sea sweep)and kordong (a barracuda).

Balbuk's Country: Kwilana (Dolphins) by Pat Forster



78cm wide x 80cm high

The water swells as dolphins breach and frolic on their fishing excursions. A sight that captivated me when I saw it near Heirisson Island, Fanny Balbuk's birthplace, 1840. I presume Fanny also enjoyed the dolphins.

Design inspired by the Dragon of Eve fractal from fractalcurves.com, by seeing dolphins chasing schools of fish – once when I was nearby in a boat; and by a news item and photo in the West Australian Newspaper April 5, 2016 that reported on dolphins playing with a wake-surfer near Burswood, upstream a little from Heirisson Island.

Techniques

One inch squares foundation pieced, hand quilted with a small stitch in the corners of the squares.



From the West Australian, by Wayne Long (Ref 1)

Context

Did Fanny actually see dolphins? Most probably, for they were in the Swan River in the 1800s. Dr Sue Graham-Taylor MA, a conservationist, dolphin expert and professional historian, says the early European settlers of the Swan River Colony camped alongside a group of about 100 dolphins; and before they arrived, dolphins seemed to get along with the local indigenous population, with the two groups working together to herd and catch fish (Ref 1). An oral history record (2010) describing traditional life along the Swan states is in accordance with Dr Graham-Taylor's statement: 'In autumn and early winter, salmon were in abundance and many would be speared as the dolphins chased them into the shallow waters' (Ref 2).

Never-the-less, European attitudes to dolphins in the late 1800s were different to those of Aboriginal people: lawyer Frank Stone voiced his disapproval regarding the dolphins, known then as porpoises, which were helping themselves to the fish in the river. "Porpoises knowing it is quiet, come in and go right round, not caring for steamers or anything else," he told Parliament in the late 19th Century "I am not exaggerating when I say that around Perth jetty I have seen 20 or 30 porpoises chasing fish right to the banks and in fact we are protecting the fish for the sake of the porpoises and sharks." (Ref 1). Formation of a Porpoise Destroying Syndicate was proposed. In 1885, the government set aside £600 to get the idea up and running. The government planned to recoup the funds by selling dolphin oil, then a valuable commodity with various uses, including lighting clock towers. But the scheme never took off (Ref 1).

Noongar people, while living inland in the wetter weather of winter, returned to the coast as interior seasonal lakes dried up (Ref 3). If Fanny didn't see dolphins in the river, she could have seen them along the coast. Today, bottlenose dolphins can often be seen in the Swan and Canning Rivers, and along the coast.

Ref 1 <https://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/wa/a/31267380/swan-river-dolphin-gets-a-jump-on-first-time-wake-surfer/>

Ref 2 <http://www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/perths-clock-tower-doesnt-use-dolphin-oil-anymore-but-theyre-still-not-safe-20150710-gi9hn0.html>

Ref 3

<https://parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/downloads/parks/Indigenous%20history%20of%20the%20Swan%20and%20Canning%20rivers.pdf>

Ref 4 <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whadjuk>

Balbuk's Country: Unforeseen Future

by Meg Cowey



Photograph by Meg Cowey

76cm (wide) x 61cm (high)

Fanny Balbuk persistently defended her right to walk the traditional path from Heirisson Island to her grandmother's burial site, even as white settlement appropriated her lands. If she could have foreseen the development of 100 years, would she have resisted even more determinedly or surrendered in despair?

Techniques

Curved piecing, raw edge appliqué, machine embroidery, present cityscape quilted over the historical landscape.

Materials

Cotton top and back; cotton/poly wadding; cotton, wool and synthetic threads embellishment.

Context

Fanny is remembered through the writings of Daisy Bates. The accounts underpin online entries about Fanny on many websites including the National Museum of Australia, the WA Museum, and the State Library of WA. She is recognised in the name of Balbuk Way, Burwood, adjacent to the Graham Farmer Freeway, by Balbuk Way Park, Burswood, and by text on seats at the northern end of the Causeway. The seats are at one end of a traditional path Fanny walked to get to her food-gathering swamp.



Reed detail

Photo by Meg Cowey



Tree and cityscape detail

Photo by Meg Cowey



Balbuk Way Park, Burswood, is named after Fanny



Sculpture/seat near the Causeway.



Modern Perth

http://cms.slwa.wa.gov.au/swan_river/shaping_perth_water

Outcomes

The Project

Gina Pickering from the National Trust suggested the quilt topic (Heirisson Island at the time of white settlement with Fanny Balbuk being a person of interest). Gina organised for the quilts to be displayed in the City of Perth library, and informed us of other Fanny Balbuk Heritage Festival events.

Quilt Preview

City of Perth Library, April 5, 10am – 11am. National Trust and City of Perth girls, and two descendants of Fanny's family group were present. We shared morning tea afterwards.

Exhibits

City of Perth Library, April 18 - May18, full quilt set

- Jenna Lynch, City of Perth Cultural Officer and Annika Aitken, City of Perth Visual Artist, planned the display and organised hanging rods for the glass cabinets allocated to us
- artefacts we collected were put beside the quilts including a tortoiseshell thread-holder from the Embroiderers Guild, swan feathers, marri bark and honky nuts, and small sewing supplies.
- City of Perth placed flower arrangements in sympathy with our quilts near the quilt display and in the foyer of Council House

QuiltWest 2016, May 24 – 28, nine quilts were entered in the Small Quilt category,

Opening night

April 18, 6pm -7.15pm at City of Perth Festival as part of the opening of the National Trust Heritage Festival. The quilt display was given a high profile and many of the quilts were sold that night.

Multimedia

- Liz's **quilt**, Balbuk's Country: Looking East was featured in the National Trust's printed and online promotion for the Heritage festival
- Gina visited our group to take still and moviephotos. A slide show of 20 photos taken that day was played continuously on the HUGE screen in the library foyer while our quilts were on display
- quilt listing prepared by us was printed by the City of Perth and was available at the library desk.
- booklet distributed at a symposium on May 17 included photos of our quilts and us, and quotes from what we said when photographed
- slide show for the symposium included our quilts and us
- business cards made and distributed by us were available at the library desk
- a school resource pack for primary school students has been prepared on the project

Magazine Articles

Down Under Textiles, Issue 28, .Balbuk's Country feature article

Down Under Quilts, Balbuk's Country: Kwilana (Dolphins) instructions.

Australian Patchwork and Quilting, Bush Tucker Quilts, feature article.