

Southern Kurna Place Names

Background

Kurna Aboriginal people are the Traditional Owners of the Adelaide plains in South Australia. Prior to European settlement they named places using their own language. Some places, e.g. Willunga, are still known by their Kurna name, but most are not.

The Kurna Place Names Project began by creating its own separate website (<http://kaurnaplacenames.com>), a collaboration between four southern Adelaide councils, the SA Geographical Names Unit (GNU) and Kurna Warra Pintyanthi (KWP) (<https://www.adelaide.edu.au/kwp/>). This ongoing project aims to identify and map places with Kurna names and to encourage the use and increase knowledge of these names. It begins with names in the southern Kurna Country.

Research

On behalf of Kurna Warra Pintyanthi and in the interests of the whole Aboriginal community of this region, Chester Schultz is engaging in detailed research into the meaning and local context of Kurna place names at particular locations. His study results have been published successively at the KWP web page (<https://www.adelaide.edu.au/kwp/placenames/research-publ/>), and now also at this Library site by courtesy of KWP. Many of the pdf files have been confirmed at previous KWP committee meetings. Others are marked 'Draft'.

These essays are addressed in the first place to the Aboriginal community via their own serious researchers and those collaborating with them in the retrieval of Aboriginal history and culture. The hope of the author and KWP is that they will absorb the information here, add to it, correct it, and spread it around for the nourishment and strengthening of their community.

There is also a set of password-protected documents containing further detailed information not disclosed in these public documents. If you are a Kurna person, or a researcher, and are interested in these, please contact KWP's sister organization Kurna Warra Karrpanthi (KWK) at admin@kwk.org.au.

The documents on this page are presented in an order which approximates north to south in the southern councils around Metropolitan Adelaide. Each document is organised in five parts. The general reader may concentrate on Parts 1-2 or 1-3:

1. ABSTRACT: a short summary of the main conclusions about the name and the place.
2. LANGUAGE INFORMATION: a summary of the linguistic reasoning about the name.
3. MAIN SOURCE EVIDENCE: dated and listed chronologically to give a historical perspective.

The rest is the main body of the essay:

4. DISCUSSION: a detailed examination of the historical evidence and reasoning which lead to the conclusions outlined in the Abstract.* This part often includes stories and other information which will be new to most readers and interesting or historically important in their own right.

* Some of the Discussions are unavoidably long and technical because they involve primary research in language, history, geography, and culture. They often include new material and new reasoning, and sometimes have to question old data and interpretations.

5. FOOTNOTES: There are usually many of them, to make it clear where each item of information comes from and so enable further research. Some long footnotes explain technical details or reasoning. You do not need to read the footnotes in order to understand the main text.

The pdf documents are all 'SEARCHABLE', i.e. you can find items which interest you by doing word-searches. You can also skim the Discussion to find HEADINGS which interest you.

The author regrets being unable to produce a second set of easy-to-read popular versions. He continues to write new place-name essays as well as a related book-length history of first contact in the area, *Feet On the Fleurieu, Language On the Land*.