

Register of Historic Places and Objects

SHI Number
4671005

The PHA NSW Heritage Register

Item Name: **Lake Gilinganadum and Lake Nadungamba**

Location: **Mt Annan**

Address:

Corner:

Suburb / Nearest Town: Mt Annan 2570

State: NSW

Local Govt Area: Local Government Area:
Camden

DUAP Region:
Illawarra & Macarthur

Historic region:
Sydney

Property Identifier:

Boundary:

Item Type: Landscape

Group: Aboriginal

Category: Place of significance

Owner:

Owner Codes:

Code 2:

Code 3:

Current Use: Botanic Gardens

Former Uses: Law making, pastoralism

Assessed Significance:

Endorsed Significance:

Statement of Significance: The site on which Lakes Gilinganadum and Nadungamba are situated is significant because of its association with the law-making and dispute resolution practices of the Aboriginal peoples of south-eastern Australia. It was the only major inter-tribal law-making site in south-eastern Australia and was a meeting place for Aboriginal groups from all over that region. It is associated with the legend of Yandel'ora, which explains the origin of the place as a site for dispute resolution, known as 'the Land of Peace between Peoples.' The lakes significant in that they also provide evidence of European land use, being created from remnants of dams used by farmers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Historical Notes or Provenance: Lakes Gilinganadum and Nadungamba are artificial lakes, created from dams remnant from the pastoral era. The Aboriginal names of the lakes mean, 'lake of the frog' and 'lake of the child' respectively. The area in which the lakes are located is known by the Dharawal people as Yandel'ora, meaning 'the Land of Peace between Peoples' and was an important site for law-making and dispute settlement for Aboriginal groups in south-eastern Australia. The area in which the lakes are situated is associated with the legend of Yandel'ora (refer additional information below), which explains how the place got its name and why it became the focal point to which peoples came from all over south-eastern Australia to make laws and settle disputes (Personal Communication, Gavin Andrews and Frances Bodkin to Sue Rosen, September, 2000).

Yandel'ora
The Land of Peace Between Peoples

A very long time ago, all the Peoples and all the animals spoke the same language.

And whenever the three sisters in the sky danced in a straight line, everyone would come together to meet and have a great Bunya, a festival to celebrate their friendship. At these great festivals, disputes would be settled, marriages would be arranged, and most importantly of all, laws would be made for all to obey.

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In those days, each nation would take turn to host these great Bunyas, and on this occasion, it was Wiritjiribin, the Lyrebird, who had issued the invitations.

Peoples came from everywhere, Duluma, the Crocodile, made his way down from the salty rivers of the north, and the bad tempered Djunguwaragal, the Devil Dog, trudged through the forests from the south. The ever playful Garal'ga, the black Cockatoos made a wonderful game out of their long journey over the mountains, Bittoorong'burran, the great red kangaroos bounded their way in from the west, while Kulun'aga, the finches, and Bullabulla the butterflies played hide and seek during their journeys.

All the clans of all the Peoples of This Land came together and chose their camping areas. Some were marked with carved trees, some with piles of rocks, some were marked by special plants brought in from their own homelands. But all made their home here for the time of the great Bunya.

Wiritjiribin, the lyrebird, who was the host, chose the highest spot to enable him to watch over his guests and to ensure their comfort.

However, one of the guests was Gilinga, the Toad. He was a very handsome creature who had the most beautiful voice of all creatures in This Land. But Gilinga was a very conceited person.

He was only proud of his good looks, and therefore liked to camp beside still waters so that he could admire his reflection on the surface of the water, but he was even prouder of his voice.

He liked to sit beside the water and sing so that every creature who came to drink could hear his voice and be envious of him. But this time, the Peoples were so excited about meeting each other, that they did not stop their conversations with each other to listen to Gilinga sing. Nor did they stop to tell him how handsome he was.

He became very upset, and looked into the water, just to reassure himself that he was still as handsome as ever.

And as he stared at the reflection of himself, he devised a plan to get even with those who did not stop to admire his good looks or his fine voice. Gilinga hid himself amongst the reeds beside the pond and waited until the first of The Peoples came down to drink.

Gilinga watched, concealed amongst the reeds as Kookaburra and his friend Wombat, chatted happily beside the pond as they occasionally stooped to drink the water. 'Isn't it a pity that Kookaburra is so greedy that he would rather feed himself, than look after his children?' Gilinga said, using the voice of Wallaroo.

Kookaburra and Wombat stopped their chatting and listened to the cruel words. 'Yes, and just look at that fat, lazy Wombat.' Said Gilinga in the voice of Muru'duwin, the Silver Eye. Kookaburra and Wombat departed the pond, silent, and deeply hurt by the remarks they thought were made by Peoples whom they considered to be their friends.

Then, down to the pond came Burra, the Kangaroo, and Didijiri, the Willy Wagtail. 'That Didijiri thinks he is so handsome with his black and white cloak, but he just looks silly.'

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Kangaroo drew in his breath, he knew that Didjiri was very proud of his cloak which he always kept so clean, but he was not at all conceited. Burra, the Kangaroo was about to comfort his friend when Gilinga spoke again, this time with the voice of Gaya'dari the Platypus. 'Burra is so dumb. He couldn't find his way home even in daylight unless he had help.'

Now, Burra, the Kangaroo was very proud of his travelling ability, and of his ability to find his home, no matter how far he had travelled, and to hear his friend Gaya'dari say something like that hurt him deeply. Didjiri the Willy Wagtail, and Burra, the Kangaroo, returned to their camp, their hearts heavy with sadness.

And down to the waterhole came Wangali the Bandicoot, with Naga the honey bee; Wagal the blackfish with Mara'yan, the spider; Yuran'yi the duck, with Bilima the turtle; Magudun the blue tongue lizard, the Kai'ray the bush turkey, and many others, and each overhearing one of their friends saying terrible things about them. Naturally, when they returned to the camping place, they began to argue with their former friends, until Wiritjiribin, the Lyrebird realised that something was very, very wrong.

He went to where Kookaburra and Wallaroo were arguing and asked them what had happened. Kookaburra said that he had gone to the waterhole with Wombat and overheard Wallaroo and Muru'duwin the Silver eye talking about him. Lyrebird then went to where Kangaroo and Gaya'dari were wrestling on the ground, and asked them what happened. Burra and Gaya'dari stopped fighting each other long enough to explain to Lyrebird that they had gone down to the waterhole and overheard the other saying hurtful things about them.

One by one, Lyrebird went to all the Peoples and asked them what had happened. And the answer that he received each time was that they had gone down to the waterhole to have a drink, and that was where they had heard the hurtful things said.

Lyrebird gathered all the Peoples around him, and asked them to come down to the waterhole with him, but to hide and be very quiet. There, Lyrebird bent over the water as if he was having a drink, and he heard the voice of his best friend, Dil'bung, the Golden Finch. 'I cannot imagine why the Lyrebird should be so proud of that stupid tail of his. It is dull and has no colour.' Now, everybody knows that Lyrebird's tail is the way it is because of the first fire. All the Peoples drew breath, because the Golden Finch was standing amongst them, and had not said a word.

Managa, the Eagle, whose sight was better than anyone's swooped down into the reeds and brought out the struggling Gilinga and dropped him at the feet of Wiritjiribin. All the Peoples began to beat Gilinga, until he was black and blue, but Lyrebird stopped them, and explained to them that they were doing exactly what Gilinga had wanted them to do.

They were learning to hate each other.

Meanwhile, all this fuss and bother had awakened the Spirit Woman, who looked down and saw all her Peoples fighting each other. But, by the time she had reached the waterhole, Wiritjiribin, the Lyrebird had made the peace. But she was very angry at having been awakened unnecessarily.

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She punished Gilinga for his deception by taking away his handsome looks, and making him the ugliest creature in This Land. And because he had used his beautiful voice to make trouble, she took it away, too, so that all he could do was croak.

The Peoples were happy at this punishment for Gilinga, and cheered.

Now, the Spirit Woman was in a VERY BAD temper. She turned to all the People, and told them of her disgust with them.

'Of all of you, only Lyrebird sought the Truths. And because you disregarded your obligation to seek the Three Truths, I am going to take from you your ability to speak to each other. In future, you will no longer understand what the others have to say.'

Then she turned to Wiritjiribin. 'Because you sought the Truths, and made the peace, I give to you the ability to speak all languages. Lyrebird will be known as the Peacemaker, and This Land, in which he lives, will be the Land of Peace Between Peoples.'

That is why all The Peoples come to This Land to make their laws and to settle disputes.

And that is why only the Lyrebird can speak all languages.

National Themes:

State Themes: Aboriginal post-contact
Cultural sites
Environment
Law and order
Pastoralism
Aboriginal pre-contact

Study Themes:

Designer:

Maker / Builder:

Year Started:

Year Completed:

Circa: No

Physical Description: Two lakes located in the north-west section of Mt. Annan Botanic Garden. Lake Gilinganadum is situated to the north of Lake Nadungamba. The lakes are artificial, created from dams remnant from the pastoral era and created in a creek and wetland system.

Physical Condition:

Modification Dates:

**Recommended
Management:**

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Further Comments:

Historical Significance: (a) The lakes are significant as they were formed from the remains of dams created in the wetlands / creek bed of the waters referred to in the Dharawal legend of Yandel'ora (refer notes / additional information). The site demonstrates several layers of history, being once part of the Yandel'ora area, or the 'Place of Peace between Peoples', which was an important Aboriginal meeting place used for major law-making, ceremonies and dispute resolution. The lakes as they presently exist demonstrate the phase of European pastoral land use.

The name, Lake Gilinganadum, meaning 'lake of the frog,' is derived from Gilinga, the toad in the legend of Yandel'ora, and thus demonstrates the continuity of traditional Aboriginal naming practices and storytelling.

(b) The site is significant for its association with the law-making tradition of south-eastern Aboriginal Australia. It is linked with the social and cultural law of the Dharawal people.

The site is also associated with significant figures in Aboriginal culture, such as the Spirit Woman, who gave the area the name 'The Land of Peace Between Peoples.'

Aesthetic Significance:

Social Significance: The site is highly valued by descendants of the Dharawal people for its social, cultural and spiritual significance as a meeting place, law-making and dispute resolution site of great importance and as the setting of the Yandel'ora story.

Technical / Research:

Representativeness:

Rare Assessment: The site is extremely rare as it was the only law-making site on the south-east coast of Australia.

Integrity / Intactness: High integrity.

References:	Author:	Title:	Year:
		Yandel'ora (Story as inherited by the Bodkin-Andrews family of the D'harawal Nation)	
	Andrews, Gavin & Bodkin, Frances	Personal Communication to Sue Rosen	2000
	Mylrea, Peter & Blaxell, Don	Mount Annan Botanic Garden, Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney Inc., Sydney	1998

Studies:

Listings:

Custom Field One:

Custom Field Two: Rosemary Kerr of Sue Rosen & Associates, Heritage Assessment And History

Custom Field Three: 6/09/2000

Custom Field Four:

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Custom Field Five:

Custom Field Six:

Data Entry: Date First Entered: 03/07/2001 Date Updated: 21/08/2001 Status: Completed