



Eels

5. As you walk northwards over the bridge, keep an eye out for eels in the water below. Eels were an important source of food for the Burramatta, and there are still plenty of them in the river today.



Parramatta Park

6. Walking into Parramatta Park you will see pockets of open bushland that the Burramatta created using traditional 'firestick burning' methods. Notice the native trees, shrubs and grasses that thrive in the rich alluvial soils, just as they did prior to European settlement.



Along the nearby stream, middens of freshwater shells have been found. Stone axes have been uncovered in the higher grassy area now called the Crescent. The area here was an important trading and meeting point for clan groups in the region, and may also have been a ceremonial ground.

Scar Trees

Keep a lookout for 'scar' trees. Using traditional methods, the clans people removed large pieces of bark to make shelters, small canoes, water containers and food carriers.

If you have time, go for wander around the park to see the wildlife.



Around Town

A. The Annual feasts

Around St John's Church is the site where Governor Macquarie first hosted a gathering of local Aboriginal clans in 1814. This became an annual event. About 300 people from around the region attended. Blankets and food were distributed at these feasts, and awards were conferred.

B. Sentry Box

Take your time to look at this artwork. It provides us with some illuminating insights into Parramatta's military past. All who lived in or near the township during the early period of European settlement – Aboriginals, convicts, soldiers or free settlers – were subject to strict colonial law. The text on the inside of the arch are quotes by an Aboriginal man which was recorded at the time – 'All this my country'.

Further afield

C. Parramatta Girls' Home

Parramatta Girls' Home was established for the 'care and protection' of 'corrupt' girls. The inmates included many Indigenous girls, including some from the Stolen Generations of Aboriginal children. A lot of these girls had experienced poverty or abuse, been orphaned or made state wards.

Discipline in the Home was strict and punishments extreme. It was not uncommon for riots to break out as the girls tried to draw attention to the horrendous conditions under which they lived. The Home closed in 1974.

D. Lake Parramatta

There is ample evidence that the Burramatta people lived here well before the creek was dammed to become Lake Parramatta. There are hand-stencilled paintings, cave shelters, stone flakings, scar trees and shell deposits.



Arrunga Bardo Aboriginal Bush Food Garden

Take a leisurely stroll around this garden established by the local Aboriginal Community and Parramatta City Council. The name means 'calm water' and the three sections contain native plants that were used by the Burramatta people. Follow the tracks to find which plants were used for food, medicinal purposes, weaving or hunting.

Parramatta is located about 6 km north of Parramatta.

Aboriginal culture continues in Parramatta through an active Aboriginal community who are involved in a number of initiatives, such as, bush regeneration, land care, the Aboriginal Advisory committee, and education and cultural projects.

For more information or to find other self-guided walking tours, go to discoverparramatta.com pop into the Parramatta Visitor Information Centre or call 1300 889 714

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PARRAMATTA SELF-GUIDED WALK



BURRAMATTA

Discover Parramatta's aboriginal history, and learn about the Burramatta on this self-guided walking tour.



Discover the story of the Burramatta people; traditional custodians of the Parramatta land.

For perhaps 60,000 years, this area has been occupied by the Aboriginal Darug people. This walk will give you some insights into the Aboriginal history of Parramatta. You'll see areas of open bushland where the Burramatta people lived, met and traded with each other for thousands of years prior to arrival of European settlers in 1788.

Although at times the original inhabitants and new arrivals lived near each other on friendly terms, conflict often broke out. Take a stroll along the river where you'll discover stories of resistance, removal and – sometimes – reconciliation.

Walking Trail 1: 2.5 km, 60 mins



The name Parramatta comes from the Aboriginal word Burramatta, 'burra' meaning 'place' and 'matta' meaning 'eels'.

2. The artwork you see here along the river was designed by artist Jamie Eastwood. It gives a snapshot of the history of Parramatta from before 1788 to the present day from an Aboriginal perspective.

The paintings tell of early conflicts between settlers and the Darug clanspeople, their resistance to colonial domination, the mistreatment of the Stolen Generations, and recent efforts towards reconciliation.

3. As you stand here, imagine the riverbanks in 1788 when Governor Arthur Phillip sailed up here from Sydney. He saw how fertile the land was and quickly declared it suitable for settlement. The Europeans immediately set about clearing the trees and taking ownership of the Burramatta and Darug country.

Having lost access to their traditional sources of food and materials by forced taking of the land, the Burramatta people attempted to reclaim it. There were attacks on settlers, huts were burnt, crops destroyed and stock speared. Life became very difficult and was forever changed.



Riverside Walk

1. The salt water and fresh water met in the Parramatta area, making the river an important place for food, and a place for meeting and trade between the clan groups of the Darug nation. Wander down the pathway to see depictions of traditional Aboriginal foodstuffs, native plants and fishing activities.



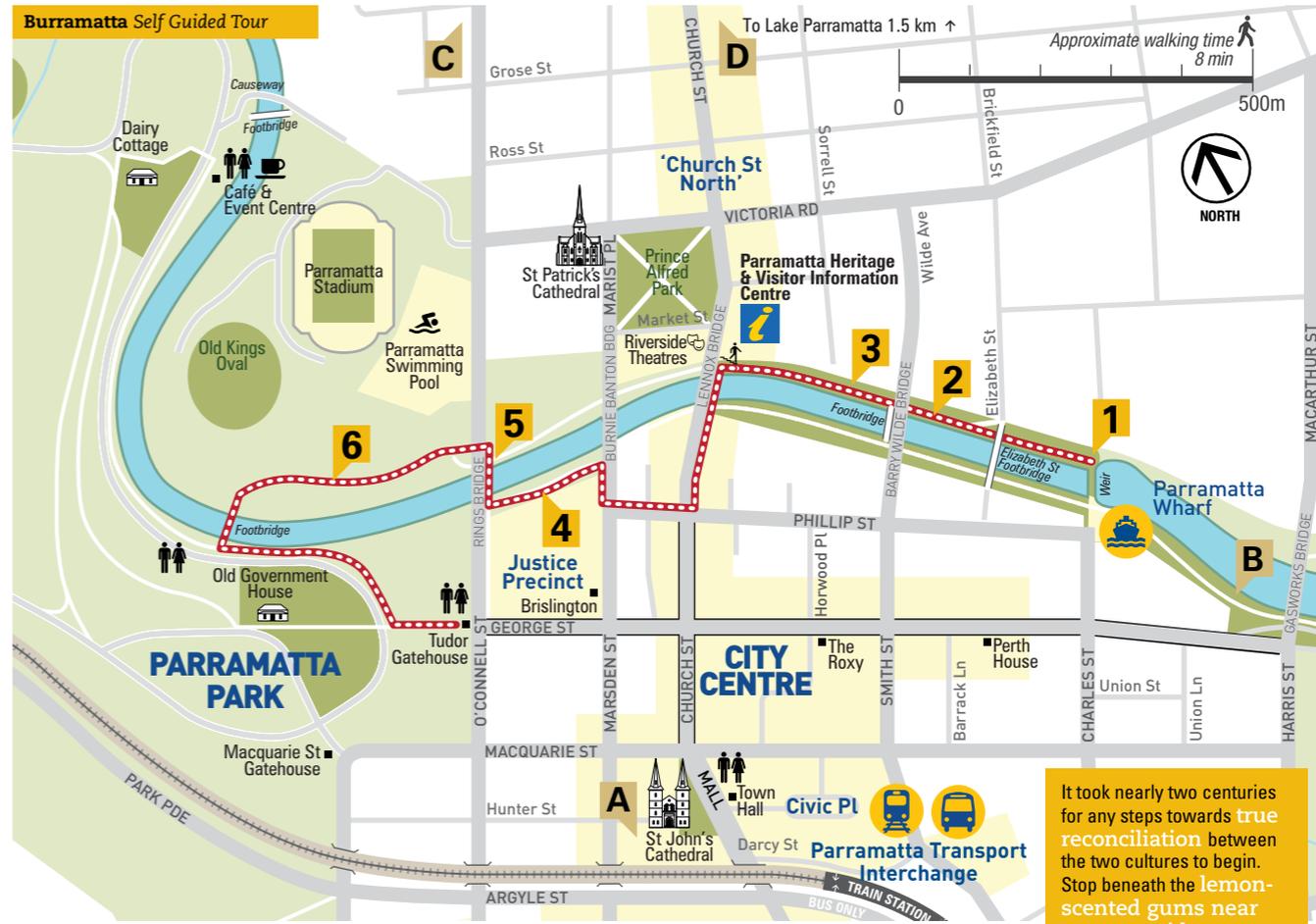
A Warrior Leads the Resistance

The resistance against the colonials was led by the Aboriginal warrior, Pemulwuy. His uncanny ability to launch successful raids became legendary. Through a twelve year campaign he was wounded in several notable conflicts but somehow always recovered.

In 1802 he was shot and killed. His body was decapitated and his head, preserved in spirit, was sent to England. Aboriginal people today are still striving to have his remains returned.

Relations with Colonials

Although sometimes friendly, relationships between the Burramatta people and the colonial settlers were often strained.



It took nearly two centuries for any steps towards true reconciliation between the two cultures to begin. Stop beneath the lemon-scented gums near Lennox Bridge and listen to the Reconciliation Soundscape. The playing time is about 12 minutes.



The Story of Baluderi

4. One young Burramatta man, Baluderi, befriended Governor Phillip and traded the fish he caught for goods from the settlers in the area.

When his canoe was destroyed by convicts, Baluderi sought his Aboriginal customary law for retribution by spearing one of the culprits. Phillip ordered Baluderi be cast out, but later helped the warrior when he became ill. Unfortunately, Baluderi did not recover. He was buried in the Governor's garden at Sydney Cove.

An Extraordinary Woman

Maria, the daughter of Yarramundi, chief of the Boorooberongal clan, was a remarkable and clever woman. She was enrolled in the native institution in Parramatta and was educated in the British way. Maria achieved top marks ahead of many Aboriginal and European students.

At 16 years of age Maria wed Robert Lock at St John's Church in 1824. This was the first marriage between an Aboriginal and a European.

For many years Maria pursued a land grant that was promised by Governor Macquarie. In recognition of her outstanding achievements and her proven abilities, Maria was granted land – being one of the first aboriginal people to receive such a holding.