**Melbourne Walks**

**Aboriginal Melbourne**

Things to see and do to learn about the Aboriginal heritage and culture of Melbourne.

melbourne.vic.gov.au/aboriginalmelbourne

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1. **Sir Douglas and Lady Gladys Nicholls Memorial**
   **Parliament Gardens**

Sir Douglas and Lady Gladys Nicholls were instrumental in the 1967 referendum campaign. They pressed their case for Aboriginal reconciliation well before reconciliation became the popular view. From their humble beginnings of the Gore Street Church in Fitzroy to Government House in Adelaide, their legacy still lives on today. Artists: Louis Laumen, bronze sculpture, and Aboriginal artist Ngarra Murray, ground etching design.

2. **Paving inlay**
   **Parliament House, Spring Street**

This red granite and brass paving inlay uses a painting entitled Ceremony created c. 1880 by Wurundjeri Ngurungaeta (headman) William Barak to reference the past of this site as a traditional ceremonial ground and a meeting place for the people of the Kulin Nation.

Aboriginal artists: Ray Thomas and Megan Evans.

3. **Scared trees**
   **Various locations**

Scared trees are trees that have had bark removed to create canoes, containers, shelters and shields by Aboriginal people. The tree continues to grow around the ‘scar’ creating a unique appearance. Scared trees can be found at the Royal Melbourne Zoo, Fitzroy Gardens and Yarra Park.

4. **Aboriginal flag**
   **Melbourne Town Hall, Collins Street**

On Sunday 27 May 2012, as part of National Reconciliation Week, the Aboriginal flag was permanently raised on Town Hall acknowledging Aboriginal people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the City of Melbourne is located. The Aboriginal flag, created by Harold Thomas, is an official Flag of Australia under the Flags Act 1953. The colours of the flag represent the Aboriginal people of Australia: the red ochre colour of earth and a spiritual relation to the land and the sun, the giver of life and protector.

5. **Birrarung Marr**
   **Yarra River, Federation Square**

Birrarung Marr’s name comes from the language of the Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung people who inhabited this area. ‘Birrarung’ means ‘river of mist’ while ‘Marr’ refers to the side of the river.

This popular park sits on the north bank of the Yarra River next to Federation Square. The park includes some striking Aboriginal art.

**Birrarung Wilam (Common Ground),** river camp installation, interprets stories from local Aboriginal communities, using a winding, textured pathway to acknowledge the eel, a traditional food source for groups camped by the river. Large rocks incised with animal drawings enclose a performance space and, closer to the river, a semi-circle of metal shields
Aboriginal people of Melbourne.

- Particular sculpture representing the Nadim Karam, along with Wurundjeri and storytelling. Gayip is central to many different Aboriginal clans through dance that describes the ceremonial meeting of cultures through migration. One Aboriginal remains in Australia.

- Aboriginal artists: Birrarung Willam (Common Ground) – Vicki Couzens (Gunditjmara and Koorie Whurrong), Lee Darroch (Yorta Yorta) and Treahna Hamm (Yorta Yorta).

- Eel Trap – Fiona Clarke (Koorie Whurrong) and Ken McKean.

- The work consists of 30 carved and decorated recycled pier posts, evoking ancient shield and canoe making techniques. Each pole represents a different aspect of Aboriginal life, history or mythology and, like the trees they came from, are a testament of endurance. Aboriginal artists: Kimba Thompson, Karen Casey, Ray Thomas, Maree Clarke, Glenn Romanis, Craig Charles, Ricardo Iadiga and Treahna Hamm.

- Created by non-Aboriginal artist Bruce Armstrong. Eagle stands a proud 25 metres tall and is made of timber and aluminium. His eyes are made of glass. Eagle is affectionately known as ‘Bunjil’, the Kulin Nation’s creator spirit who appeared as an eagle hawk after creating the land, the lore and its people.

- This pedestrian and cycling bridge, inspired by an Aboriginal eel trap, was designed and created by architects Denton Corkel Marshall and artist Robert Owen.

- Buluk Park was named in 2014 to reflect the geographical heritage of the area. Buluk means ‘wetlands’ in the Wurrung language of the Wurundjeri people. Before the arrival of Europeans, the area now known as Docklands was a vibrant wetland that provided local Aboriginal people with plenty of food and resources that included birds, eggs, small animals and reeds for basket and rope weaving.

- Virginia King’s Reed Vessel acknowledges the history of the site and embraces the themes of migration, passage and survival. The area on which it is located was once extensive tidal wetlands, which provided abundant food and spiritual connections to the area for its traditional owners. The basket-like vessel also symbolises a container in which memories are held – memories of the undeveloped site and its traditional uses, but also of the ocean journeys that have brought early settlers and later generations of migrants to these shores.

- This artwork commemorates the story of two incredibly significant figures in Melbourne’s early history. Tunnerminnerwait and Maulboyheener were born in Tasmania and brought to Melbourne in 1839 by George Augustus Robinson, ‘Chief Protector of Aborigines’ in the Port Phillip District. In 1842, they became the first people to be hanged in Melbourne after they were convicted of the murder of two whale-hunters in the Western Port area during a time of violent conflict between Aboriginal and settler populations. Their stories touch on the establishment of Melbourne, including conflict over land and the history of crime and punishment, the treatment of Aboriginal people in Tasmania and any historical and community links between Port Phillip and Van Diemen’s Land (Tasmania).

- Experimental and empowering, this artwork invites you to discover how the story of Tunnerminnerwait and Maulboyheener informs our knowledge of Aboriginal history and contested narratives of colonisation. Artists: Brook Andrew (Wiradjuri, Ngunnawal and Celtic) and Trent Walter. Photo: Dianna Snape.