

Biodiversity Dreaming

(Past & Future Landscapes in the Bathurst Region 1815 to 2115)

Charles Sturt University, Bathurst Campus: 10th & 11th November 2015

About the conference:

The two-day conference is being organised by Greening Bathurst as part of Bathurst's bicentennial year celebrations in 2015. The Bathurst Region in the period 1815 to around 1850 was more-or-less equivalent to the vast Country of the Wiradjuri Nation. It included the Lachlan and Macquarie River catchments stretching to the Murrumbidgee River, around a quarter of the current area of New South Wales.

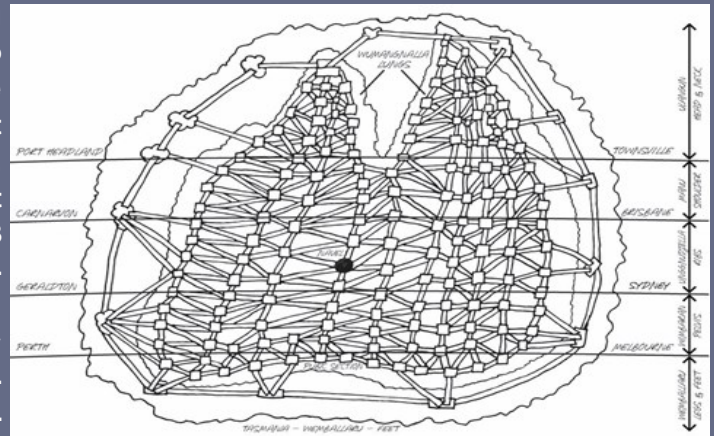
Day 1 will focus on the biodiversity values of the region and how they have changed over 200 years.

Day 2 will focus on the relationship between biodiversity and agriculture. The Bathurst Region hosts Australia's oldest inland agricultural lands.

On both days we will be seeking to imagine how the region's future landscapes might look and function in 2115 and the processes by which such Dreaming might be implemented. We will be drawing on both Wiradjuri and non-Wiradjuri Wisdom in imagining and managing our present and future conservation and agricultural landscapes. We have developed an exciting programme of invited speakers including, landholders, Wiradjuri, historians, scientists, and land managers. Wiradjuri people will be represented by both Key note and plenary speakers. Other would-be participants will be able to contribute via poster papers, or via internet discussions.

Our Inspiration:

The 1814/1815 Bathurst Road (now recognised as Cox's Road) was constructed in 6 months from the Nepean River to Bathurst, passing through Darug, Gundugurra and Wiradjuri Country and their various meeting places. Few Australians know that two Darug men were part of William Cox's Road building team or understand that the road to 'West-more-land' passed through Aboriginal Dreaming trails, storylines, and trading routes — perhaps 20,000 to 40,000 years old. The first European explorers likened the Bathurst Plains to their beloved English park lands, but failed to understand that Wiradjuri lands were contrived, imagined and skilfully managed — cultural landscapes that supported the Wiradjuri lifestyle. David Mowaljarlai's 1993 map of trade routes and storylines linking Aboriginal nations across Australia has been redrawn by Tony O'Neill with permission from Magabala Books. As contemporary Australians we too are creating/have created cultural landscapes for better or for worse — our Dreaming at this conference will help inform land managers about creating landscapes that are sustainable for both conservation and agriculture outcomes. Farmers and graziers have a pivotal role to play since they own and manage most of the land. We also have much to learn from Wiradjuri Wisdom that created those beguiling 1815 landscapes.



Our sponsors and key supporters as of July 2014



For further information contact: Professor David Goldney on 0417460935 or dgoldney@bigpond.net.au