Where do I live?

An Introduction to Local Indigenous People, History and Culture.

KAURNA PEOPLE OF THE ADELAIDE REGION
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>About This Resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Who are Kaurna People?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Kaurna Today</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Kinship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>First Contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>Missions and Reserves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>The Native Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Poonindie Native Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Cultural Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>References</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The ‘Where Do I Live?’ resources are designed to help you learn about the Indigenous custodians, culture, language and history of the local area where you live, highlighting that all Australians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, are geographically connected by the land we live on. Understanding the cultural significance of the land you live on and the history that’s occurred there is one of the first steps you can take to end the disconnect between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians and contribute to a better shared future.

The information presented in the ‘Where Do I Live?’ resources has been collated from publicly available online and published sources. Where available, we’ve sourced this content directly from materials published by members of the relevant Indigenous people group. We’ve provided references where possible, however, we recognise the information contained in the ‘Where Do I Live?’ resources may be contested and it doesn’t claim to be definitive.

For further information about Indigenous language groups, including specific land boundaries or cultural information, we recommend contacting your local Registered Aboriginal Party, visiting a local cultural centre or contacting your local council or state/territory department of Aboriginal affairs.

We warmly invite feedback on our the ‘Where Do I Live?’ resources. If you’d like to contribute additional information, please don’t hesitate to contact our team contact@australianstogether.org.au
**WHO ARE KAURNA PEOPLE?**

*Kaurna meyunna* (Kaurna people) are the direct descendants of the original custodians of the Adelaide region.

*Meyunna*, meaning ‘people’ in the Kaurna language, might actually be a more appropriate name for the people of the Adelaide region. The name *Kaurna* is likely a misnomer derived from the word *kornar*, meaning ‘people’ in the neighbouring Ngarrindjeri language. However, the name Kaurna is now well-established, and the Kaurna community endorsed the continued use of the name in 2013.

**KAURNA TODAY**

Today, many Kaurna people are actively involved in reclaiming their culture, reviving their language and teaching their histories and traditions. Kaurna culture and history are increasingly acknowledged and visible throughout Adelaide.

---

*Street art by unidentified artist, Adelaide, Australia*
Kaurna meyunna Yerta (Kaurna Country) extends north towards Crystal Brook, south along the coast to Cape Jervis and is bounded by the Mount Lofty Ranges to the east. Today this area includes the Onkaparinga, Marion, Holdfast Bay and Yankalilla council areas, as well as the city of Adelaide, which occupies the heartland of Kaurna Country, known as Tarntanya (red kangaroo place).

Prior to colonisation, the Adelaide area was an open grassy plain, the result of hundreds of generations of skilful land management. It offered access to the coast, the Torrens river (known as Karrawirra Pari, meaning ‘red gum forest river’), wetlands, hunting grounds and foraging places.

Kaurna meyunna traditionally moved through their Country according to seasons and ceremonies. During the summer months they lived in Wodji, shelters made from branches and leaves, while in the winter months they built more substantial shelters from grass and earth.

Kaurna meyunna traditionally lived in family groups, who occupied defined territories called pangkarra. Each pangkarra, passed down from father to son, included coastline and ran extensively inland. Traditionally, the coastline was essential for seafood hunting and the inland territories provided food, clothing (made from animal hides) and protection during bad weather. Groups of pangkarra are known as yerta.

Today, Australian law doesn’t recognise the Kaurna people as having legal title to their ancestral lands. As of July 2014, Kaurna people are still waiting on the ruling of a Native Title claim lodged in 2000.
Kaurna meyunna spirituality recognises the connectedness of people with the land, plants, animals and stars.

Muna palti munaintyerlo, or Munaintya, is commonly known as the Dreaming and explains the Kaurna world. Munaintya is a complex and multi layered story that tells of creation, the law and spiritual relationships. Palti means both song and dance, which are intertwined to keep these stories alive. Munaintya involves cultural practice and cultural knowledge layered throughout Country, and teaches Kaurna meyunna to live in harmony with the land and follow the laws. This ensures respect for all creatures who share Country.
Kaurna society is divided into two matrilineal groups, or moieties, Kararu and Mattari. Traditionally, these moieties were composed of a number of totemic clans with reciprocal relationships and responsibilities. Kaurna people also used a detailed series of birth-order names, with different endings for male and female from first-born through to eighth-born (see Table 1).

Today, the Kaurna nation is made up of eight apical ancestor clan groups. An apical ancestor is a common ancestor from whom a clan can trace their descent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Born</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kartamiru</td>
<td>Kartanya ~ Kardiartu ~ Kartani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Born</td>
<td>Warritya ~ Yarraitya</td>
<td>Warruyu ~ Wariartu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Born</td>
<td>Kudnuitya</td>
<td>Kudhartu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Born</td>
<td>Munaitya</td>
<td>Munartu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Born</td>
<td>Midaitya</td>
<td>Midaartu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Born</td>
<td>Marru-tya</td>
<td>Marru-artu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Born</td>
<td>Wangu-tya</td>
<td>Wangu-artu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth Born</td>
<td>Ngadlaitya</td>
<td>Ngadla-artu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth Born</td>
<td>Pawani</td>
<td>Pawani</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

KAURNA

LANGUAGE
Colonial policies and practices discouraged and even banned Indigenous Australians from speaking their languages. Consequently, many Indigenous Australian languages have been partially or completely lost. Although Kaurna people ceased speaking their language in the early 1900’s as a result of colonisation practices and a rapidly declining population, Kaurna Warra (Kaurna language) is well documented. Since 1990, Kaurna people have been working hard to revive their language.

Kaurna Warra (Kaurna language) reflects deep knowledge of the environment and includes a rich inventory of kin terms.

FIRST CONTACT
South Australia is the only Australian state that wasn’t settled as a penal colony. Its founders hoped that as a result, the settlement of South Australia would be less brutal than the other colonies. Influenced by humanitarian movements in London, South Australia’s founding Act even recognised the rights of “any Aboriginal Natives” and their descendants to lands they “now actually occupied or enjoyed”. Despite these good intentions, Aboriginal people’s rights weren’t honoured in practice. The establishment of Adelaide in 1936 had a devastating impact on the Kaurna meyunna nation.
MISSIONS AND RESERVES

Soon after it was founded, South Australia appointed a Protector of Aborigines and reserved land for Indigenous people. Despite these early attempts to ‘protect’ Indigenous people, South Australia soon followed the same pattern of violence and dispossession as other colonies.

In 1856, the office of protector was abolished, and by 1860, 35 of the 42 reserves set aside for Aboriginal people had been leased to settlers. A period of government neglect followed, during which missionaries became solely responsible for the welfare of Indigenous people in South Australia. At the beginning of the 20th century, the South Australian government stepped in once again, pursuing a policy of assimilation, including forced child removals.

Over the following decades, the South Australian government continued to implement legislation that restricted the Kaurna people’s freedoms and denied them rights enjoyed by other Australians. Despite this, Kaurna people have survived the policies and practices of the past and are proudly reclaiming their rights and culture today.

THE NATIVE LOCATION

In 1839, the South Australia Protector of Aborigines established the Native Location (the Location) in Adelaide to “Christianise and civilise” Kaurna people. Land was reserved on the north bank of the Torrens, an area known to Kaurna people as Pirltawardli (brush-tail possum home). Two young German missionaries, Christian Teichelmann and Clamor Schürmann were appointed to oversee the Location.

In 1846, the government forcibly removed Kaurna meyunna children to a Native School run by the Protection Board. The remaining adult population dwindled on the Location until a lack of funding caused the mission to close. The majority of the remaining young people were taken to Poonindie Mission in 1850, and the Kaurna people as a social group were dispersed and displaced.
In 1850, Reverend Matthew Hale established Poonindie Native Institute, located twelve kilometres north of Port Lincoln on the Todd River. Because of its location, most of the Aboriginal residents at Poonindie were Kaurna people.

Unlike many missionaries and superintendents, Hale minimised white supervision over Indigenous people at Poonindie. Hale didn’t force anyone to live on the mission, and sought to provide western education and employment opportunities to those who did choose to live there, hoping that Poonindie would become both self-supporting and self-determining. Many people living on Poonindie soon developed a strong sense of loyalty and belonging to the mission.

The government closed Poonindie in the 1890’s due to pressure from settlers to reallocate the land to white farmers. Despite a long and bitter negotiation, the Poonindie Aboriginal community lost their homes and everything they’d worked for.

For more information about South Australian Aboriginal missions and reserves see the State Library of South Australia’s Aboriginal Missions in South Australia: Guide to resources relating to the history of Aboriginal missions in South Australia

KAURNA

CULTURAL CENTRES

LIVING KAURNA CULTURAL CENTRE

CONTACT: Warriparinga Way
(Off Sturt Road)
Bedford Park, SA 5042
(08) 8357 5900

KAURNA ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY
& HERITAGE ASSOCIATION INC. (KACHA)

CONTACT: Warriparinga
Bedford Park, SA 5042
Lynette Crocker
(08) 8262 1376

TANDANYA ABORIGINAL CULTURAL CENTRE

CONTACT: 235 Grenfell St
Adelaide City SA
(08) 8224 7514

Noarlunga Beach, South Australia
REFERENCES

17. Harris, J. 2013, *One Blood* (electronic resource): Two hundred years of Aboriginal encounter with Christianity, Concilia LTD, Brentford Square, pg. 380-386
18. Harris, J. 2013, *One Blood* (electronic resource): Two hundred years of Aboriginal encounter with Christianity, Concilia LTD, Brentford Square, pg. 402-404