NOTICE OF GENERAL MEETING

The second General Meeting of the Society for 1983 will be held in the Museum Education Building, North Terrace, Adelaide at

8.00PM MONDAY, 25 APRIL, 1983

AGENDA

1. Apologies.

2. Minutes of Previous General Meeting.
   Minutes of the previous General Meeting, held Monday, 28 March, 1983 to be confirmed. A copy of these minutes is attached.

3. New Members.
   The following new members were elected to the Society.
   Rosemary Rae WHITE
   George Randal WOOLMER

4. Papers and Journals.
   Papers and Journals from other Societies and Organizations will be tabled at the meeting.

5. Business.

6. Speaker.
   ANDREW TAYLER will give an address to the Society entitled:

   THE FAR NORTH-EAST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA - AN AUDIO VISUAL PRESENTATION

7. Supper.

MARGARET NOBBS,
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A KAURNA LEGEND

Sadly very few legends have come to us from the Kurna people of the Adelaide Plains.
It is likely that one of the strongest gestures of protest that were made by the Kurna to the invaders of their land was to put an embargo on the passing on of significant spiritual stories. There is therefore, great value in a story like the one printed below. Obviously it is a legend of considerable importance, marking Waterfall Gully as an area of deep spiritual significance - probably associated with the final initiation cycle. Equally obviously the story has suffered considerably during its telling and subsequent retelling. The following tentative comments are offered in an attempt to tease out the significance of the story.

NAMES AND CHARACTERS

Pootpobberrie: No such name is recorded elsewhere. "Putpurendi" is recorded in Teichelmann & Schurmann (1840) as a verb meaning to leap or jump as a kangaroo. The title is presumably a derivative from this stem. Alternatively it may come from "Butto bukki" - to do with antiquity.

Muldarbie: Again not recorded. However in a recent discussion, Lewis O'Brien, a Kurna descendant, provided the information that this meant "mad". In his opinion this is a vital clue, the whole story has been distorted or re-arranged to hide its real meaning, to make it "mad".

Wirrirri-Maldie: Teichelmann & Schurmann give "warra-warra" for doctor or sorcerer. Maldie may come from "Madie" - to do with death.

Mayu: is "meyu" - man.

Weera: is the Wirra people who lived to the North East of Adelaide.

Mindie Munta: nets as recorded.

Ngulta: a man who has received the final series of body marking. This cycle is closely linked with a kangaroo mythology. The cycle began at a site somewhere in the present area occupied by the city of Adelaide. The dreaming route could possibly have followed the line of the Torrens to First Creek and thence to Waterfall Gully.

At the present time no explanation or derivation can be found for any other names in the story. No word is recorded in any vocabulary for the kookaburra, however any of the words given are indicative of the cry of the bird and could therefore have become its proper name as was common.

THE STORY

The opening section is fascinating in that, unlike most other Aboriginal legends, it describes a settlement process rather than one of spirit initiated creation. It also describes a period without Laws and, as such, may have originally been told as a cautionary tale to express the need for Law keeping - and to reinforce the role of the men of high degree.

The Kurna had very strict food taboos that were related to life stages. The content of paragraph five appears to give an explanation and reinforcement of this. It also highlights the need for cooperative living and sharing. It tends to support the Kurna view of the hills as a potentially hostile environment on the fringes of alien territory.

The conclusion of the story contains problems. It is very unusual to find a being changing from one animal state to another. Mayu begins presumably as a kangaroo and ends as a kookaburra. This is possibly where the "madness" referred to earlier comes in. In the telling of the story, parts may have been deliberately omitted or re-arranged to hide spiritual truths.

At this point of time there is little that can be done to attempt a reconstruction. At its base level the story points to several verifiable facets of Kurna culture and highlights the importance of Waterfall Gully to the people.

HOWARD GROOME