

Tonimbuk Charcoal Kiln

This Interpretation Board was funded by a Parks Victoria grant, with research and design input by the Friends of Kurth Kiln and the Friends of Bunyip State Park.

History

One of only two known portable, metal, charcoal kilns in the State, this circa 1940 kiln is believed to be evidence of the Victorian timber industry development.

Documented recollections by Mr G Parker OAM suggest that two groups managed by saw-miller EAC Russell and Tom Williams, established bases in the nearby Camp Road to cut firewood for the domestic market.

The suggestion is that the charcoal kiln was made either by them, or for them to complement their activities with the manufacture of charcoal for industry.

Like the nearby Kurth Kiln (see map) the charcoal it produced would have served as a substitute for petrol during wartime rationing from 1941 to 1948.

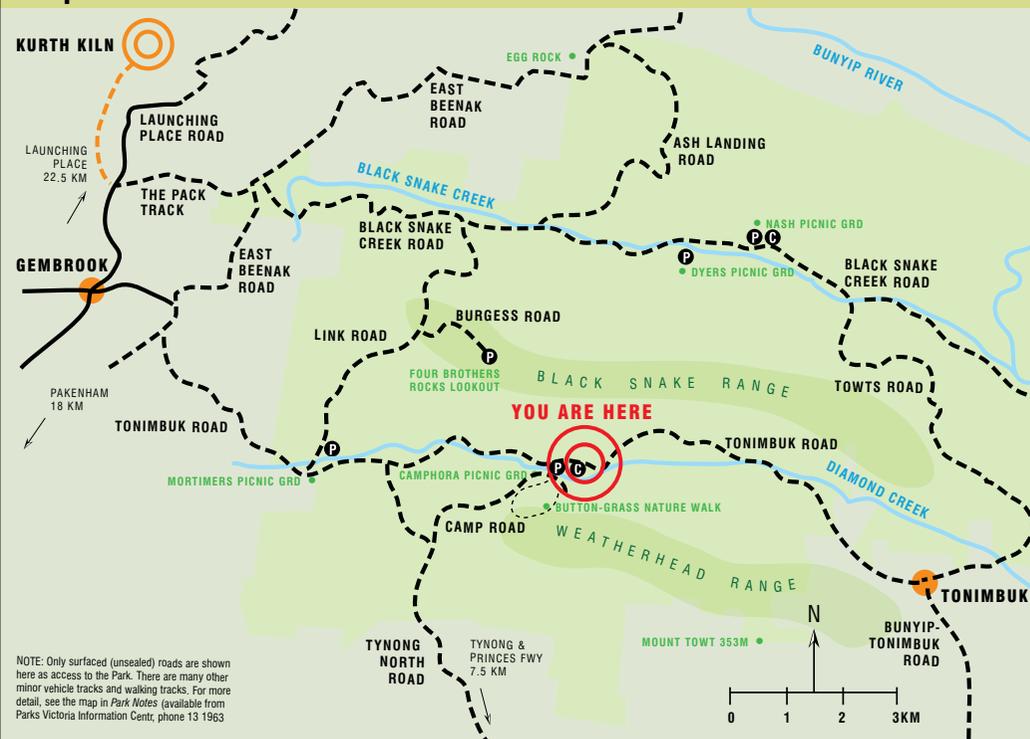
Construction

Constructed from heavy gage angle iron and steel sheeting with welded and riveted joints, the lower sides have now crumbled away and there is nothing left of the floor.

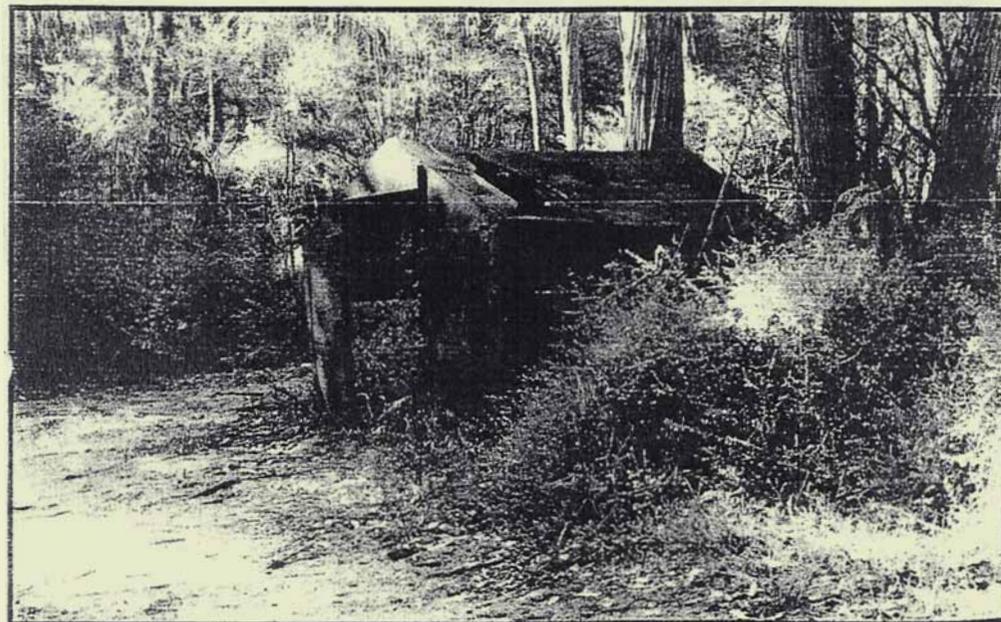
Remnant bricks found buried inside may be an indication of a fireproof base. Although the entrance has no door, heavy anchor points at the frame suggest a substantial cover. The different sized rectangular openings in the roof defy definition.

Remnants of steel skids were discovered during conservation work. These suggest the kiln was originally dragged by bullocks, horses or tractor to locations with large stands of wood suitable for the manufacture of charcoal.

Map of the area



BELOW Historic picture from the Cardinia Shire Heritage Study



Conservation

Site conservation work was completed by Parks Victoria in 2009. These works were undertaken to improve the general aesthetics of the historical site and included construction of a steel frame inside the kiln to stabilise the structure as well as clearing and levelling the area and installing fencing around the kiln to minimise future damage.

The steel work has been treated with rust-inhibiting protective laquer to prevent further deterioration of the metal.

Parks Victoria Information Centre 13 1963
www.parkweb.vic.gov.au

Our Heritage

The *Minark Heritage Victoria* database describes this kiln as 'of high scientific and historical significance'. It is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register and covered in the Cardinia Shire Heritage Study under *Heritage Places*. Bunyip State Park contains many natural, cultural and historically significant places, some of them listed on the map above. The nearby *Button Grass Nature Trail* (created by the Friends of Bunyip State Park in 2000) is a convenient way to appreciate its beauty.

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