

Heritage

The valley has a surprisingly rich and often hidden heritage. Little physical evidence remains of the Bidjigal people. Few of the early settlers left any papers or records for the industries they established such as tanneries, wool washes and poultry farms.

Rock escarpments are graphic reminders of the valley's turbulent past dating back to Gondwana. Fragments of shells from Aboriginal middens, pieces of Chinese porcelain, dry stone walls and sandstone cottages are reminders of our shared history with other societies.



Dry sandstone walls

Along the Undercliffe track are sections of two dry sandstone walls that mark the pre 1885 boundary of Campbell's land. These walls are hard to date as no manufactured materials were used in the construction of dry stone-walls.



Wave Rock

Along the Undercliffe Track is an impressive sandstone overhang blackened by fire. It is a fine example of a large scale set of recumbent cross-beds formed during the Triassic period which began approximately 237 million years ago. This may have been an Aboriginal shelter in pre-European times and more recently was used as simple habitation during the Great Depression in the 1930s.

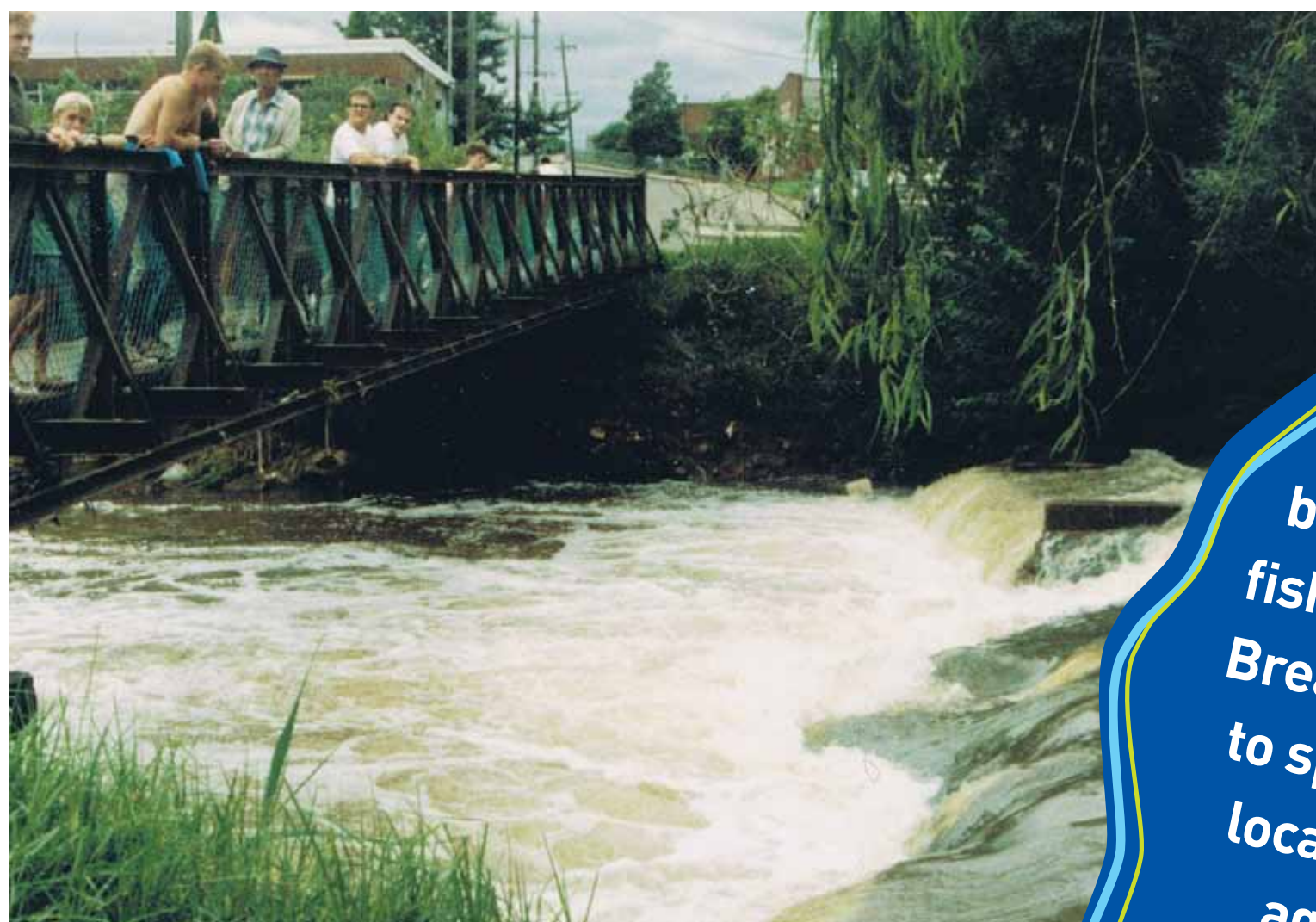


Russell's Pool

Excavated into the rock escarpment is an overgrown, rather murky cement-lined pool, known as Russell's Pool. It's known to have been constructed in the 1920s as a swimming pool by the owner of the Federation House at the top of the escarpment. Today it supports a wide variety of ferns that thrive on the steady supply of water from a soak above the cliff line.

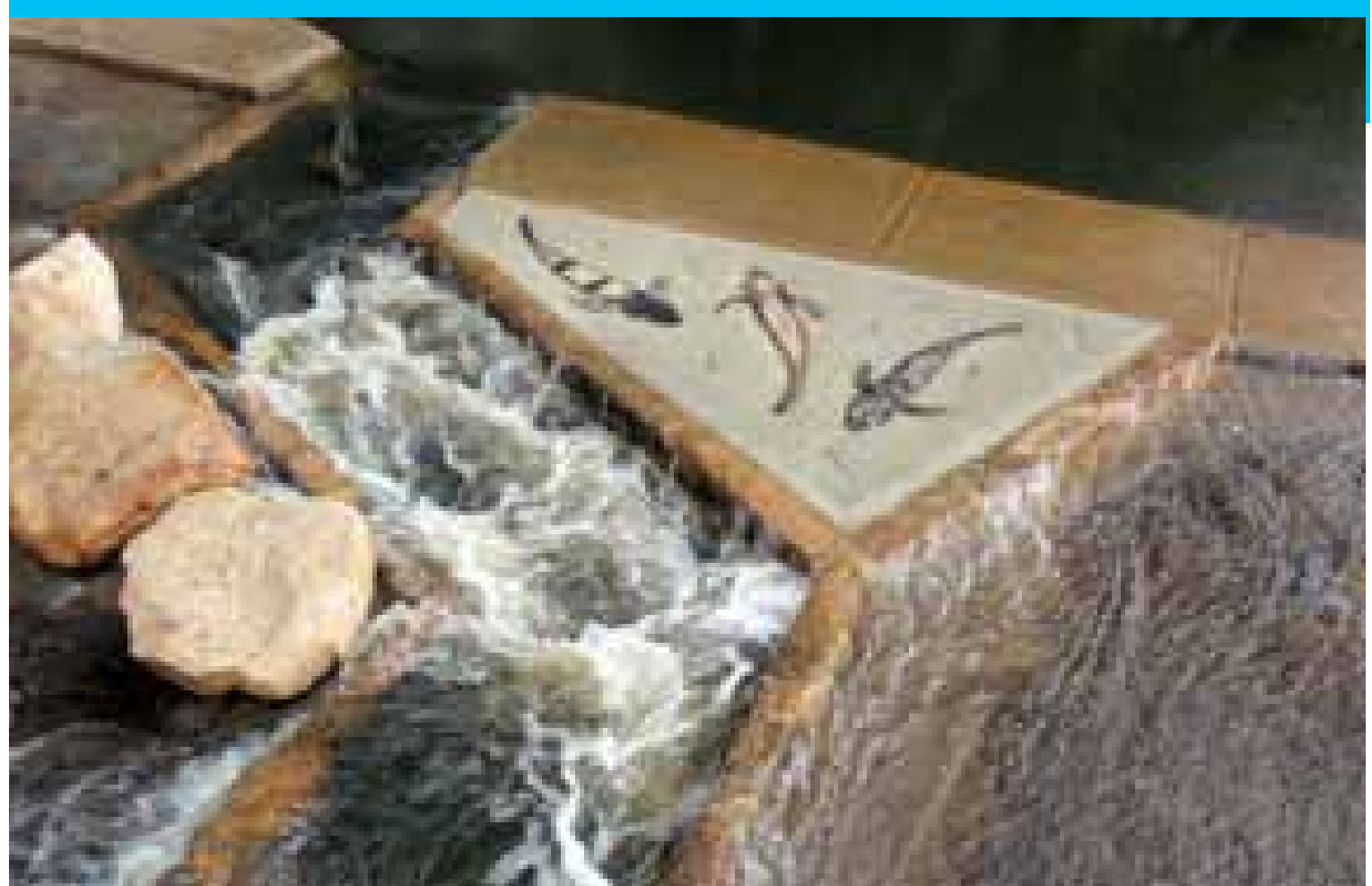


Russell's Pool Photo D. Rankin
Arthur Ellis Photo J. Finlason



Henderson Street weir

The weir separates the estuarine section of Wolli Creek from the freshwater section. It is formed by a sandstone-rubble wall faced with cement. Constructed prior to 1885 it may have been used as a crossing point although details of its history are not known. The weir is a popular location to see ducks and other water birds.



The weir acts as a barrier preventing native ocean fish, such as Sea Bass, Mullet and Bream, from swimming upstream to spawn. To rectify this, in 2010, local Councils and Government agencies built a fishway on the weir to enable fish to travel upstream.

Bowen's Camp

Below Johnston Street, near Bexley North, is a large sandstone construction that remained a mystery for some time after it was discovered in the course of an archeological study of the valley. Further research by a local resident, Arthur Ellis, uncovered Bowen's story.

The construction is the site of a hut built by Andrew Bowen during the 1930s depression. The original building, made with stones, had an extended tin roof sheltering a basic outdoor kitchen. This is where Bowen and his family led a frugal existence. Although employed with the tramway they lived in this way for three years – a reflection of the uncertainty of employment. All that now remains is the extensive stone terracing which was probably built to create a garden and provide space for the dwelling.