

Submission to Yoorrook Justice Commission**From: Anonymous 941****Dated: 5 September 2024****Submission:**

In [REDACTED], when I was [REDACTED], my cousin took me to show me a skull that his step Dad's (my Uncle [REDACTED]) employer had in the "office" of their homestead, South West Victoria. Meningoort Homestead, owned by the McArthur family. He told me it was an Aboriginal skull.

We peered through the window of the office, there was a skull on a bookcase type cupboard. We spooked each other and ran from the homestead. I didn't know the property well, but my cousin told me he knew where there were more bones on the property. He told me that workers uncovered them while excavating an area near a dam, for a new water tank. He said that when the bones were discovered, the work crew were told to cover them back up, stop the work, and to not tell anyone what they had found.

My cousin was a no BS farm kid, who at the age of [REDACTED], was more like one of the adult workers on the property. I asked my father ([REDACTED]) about the skull and bones later in life (maybe around 2005 from memory), as I knew that he knew the place quite well, as his brother worked there for many years, and he too had worked there, not often/casually over the years.

My Dad said he knew of and had seen the skull, which he remembered being on a mantle in the homestead, but disappeared one day according to his knowledge. He was quite disgusted by the fact that McArthur's had it.

He had also heard of bones being uncovered in an existing or new dam excavation at some point over the years, and told a similar story of "covering them up and keeping quiet". Separate of this, my Dad and his brother worked with old Banjo Clarke on the same property in their younger days.

I remember my Dad's stories of defending Banjo on occasion when he felt Banjo was being mistreated by shearing crews or homestead staff. This was before my time, so potentially in the 60's. Dad would always tell me that Old Banjo has more right to here than any of us. I don't know what else to add here. I don't have proof, other than my knowing that these things were shared with and by people who cared, but were fearful of reprisal.

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