

LEX LOCI'S TRAVELS

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An ad-hoc one-pager from The Public Land Consultancy

Lex Loci likes Numbie-Munjie (And Buttlejorrk and Teddywaddy and even Gorrockburkghap.)



What is the fellow talking about? Why, Victorian parishes of course. There are 2914 of them.

Whether Victorians know it or not, every terrestrial bit of the State is in a *parish*, which in turn is in a *county*. The Parish of Numbie-Munjie is in the County of Tambo, which is up Omeo-way, in the Victorian Alps.

Lex concedes that parishes do serve a purpose, archaic though it may be – but he sees no value in counties. Neither plays any political or administrative role, although parishes do contribute to the unique cadastral identifier for every parcel of land.

They also serve to evoke some social memory of Aboriginal languages. As colonial surveyors and land officers spread out across the countryside, they attempted to render Aboriginal words or phrases into English. Sadly, the pronunciation and meaning of words like Numbie-Munjie, Buttlejorrk and Teddywaddy have been largely lost.

As for counties – their names were more likely to reflect the Old Country: Anglesea, Gladstone, Grant, Rodney, Talbot and so forth. These days they serve no purpose whatsoever – even when it comes to cadastral identifiers they are utterly redundant.

One memory of the system of counties survives, in the form of the County Court, in Latrobe Street.

As its eleventh item of legislation, the newly-independent Colony of Victoria enacted the *County Courts Act 1852*. The intention was to set up a number of Courts, each with its own geographic jurisdiction.

This system didn't survive: in 1857 each County Court was given Victoria-wide jurisdiction, and in 1957 they were consolidated into one.

Lex says: Why not give the County Court a more appropriate name? But leave Numbie-Munjie alone. Please.

**See you there!
Lex Loc**