

BUNNA BINDA

Babinda Stories by
MURRAI (Annie Wonga)



" WELCOME TO COUNTRY "

BUNNA BINDA

WELCOME TO COUNTRY

THIS IS MY BULMBA

THIS IS YOUR BULMBA

Murrai means having a friendly and faithful character

Bunṇa Bindṇa means Babinda

Bulmba means Place

FOREWORD

This booklet was published in 2008 by the Wonga Friends' Committee from funding kindly provided by the Cairns City Council as a result of an application by the Babinda Hospital & Community Welfare Inc. and its Chairman Paul Gregory.

We have up-dated and re-printed our original 1994 booklet, in response to requests from the Babinda Community and in keeping with a promise made to Annie's sister, Nancy, to tell the Wonga stories to the community.

The original illustrations by Susanna Job were purchased by the Babinda Hospital & Community Welfare Inc. to celebrate the Babinda Hospital's 75th anniversary and hang at the entrance corridor to the Babinda Hospital. They have received much favourable comment to date.

We would like to thank people who contributed to the original booklet in 1994, viz. Jimmy Martinod, Peter Gersekowski and Keith Fisher, who helped us visit Cassowary Rock, Tom's Rock, Russell River area and Woolanmarroo. Also Frank Antoni for framing, Denise Giddins from the Babinda State School desk top publishing unit, Helen May and the Babinda Hospital & Community Welfare Inc.

Our intention now is, and in 1994 was,
to promote understanding in the community.

We are much older now and we dream of a great circle dance, the essence of which is described in the "Return of the *Dunba Dunba*". Perhaps this is a metaphor, as our own limbs have almost ceased to dance, but our spirits soar and our love knows no bounds. Our yearning is for our young ones and life, to survive in the best possible way. We share a rational faith that love is the much needed social phenomenon at the very core of our natures.

Fellow Australians
Tribe "Homo Sapiens"
We salute you!

We hope you enjoy the stories in "*Bunna Bindja*" as much as we enjoyed putting them together. We hope to print more poems and stories from the Babinda people in the future, so share with us your story – it is unique and your very own.

May we be open to listening to each other – we promise you, it will be enough.

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Annie Wonga	(Storyteller)
Sussana Job	(Illustrator)
Cecily Musumeci	(Facilitator)
	(Publishing Editor)

LIFE'S DANCE

The last woman of her family to remember the story

Told another

She told a group and they told many.

And the many together started to hear humming from a long way off

It became louder – and a rhythm

To the rhythm they started to sway

This way and that – then to move

Round and round.

The sound became their heartbeat and their bodies one

To the centre – renew life

To the centre – nourish life

To the centre – celebrate life.

Back to the wide Circle – becoming still

The rhythm slowly dying

The humming now

The story in each heart.

C. Musumeci

" BUNNA BINDA "
" WELCOME TO COUNTRY "
" THIS IS MY BULMBA – THIS IS YOUR BULMBA "

(*Bunna Bindā* means Babinda)
(*Bulmba* means Place)

THE STORYTELLER

as told by *Murraj* – Annie Wonga

In our custom there is always a storyteller who addresses the family members by their totem names. The storyteller is usually a woman, and passes on the ancestral creation stories, family stories and stories of change, in order to try to make sense of present happenings; and stories of instruction to help the younger family members survive.

In our family, the storytelling was passed down to my Auntie Nellie and then passed on to me. My brothers Fred, Jack and Jimmy, and my sister Nancy and I, have not had any children of our own, so for those interested in our stories, I hand over the role to all of you, so that you may have an unbroken connection to our family and the land as you go forward in life and add your own stories,

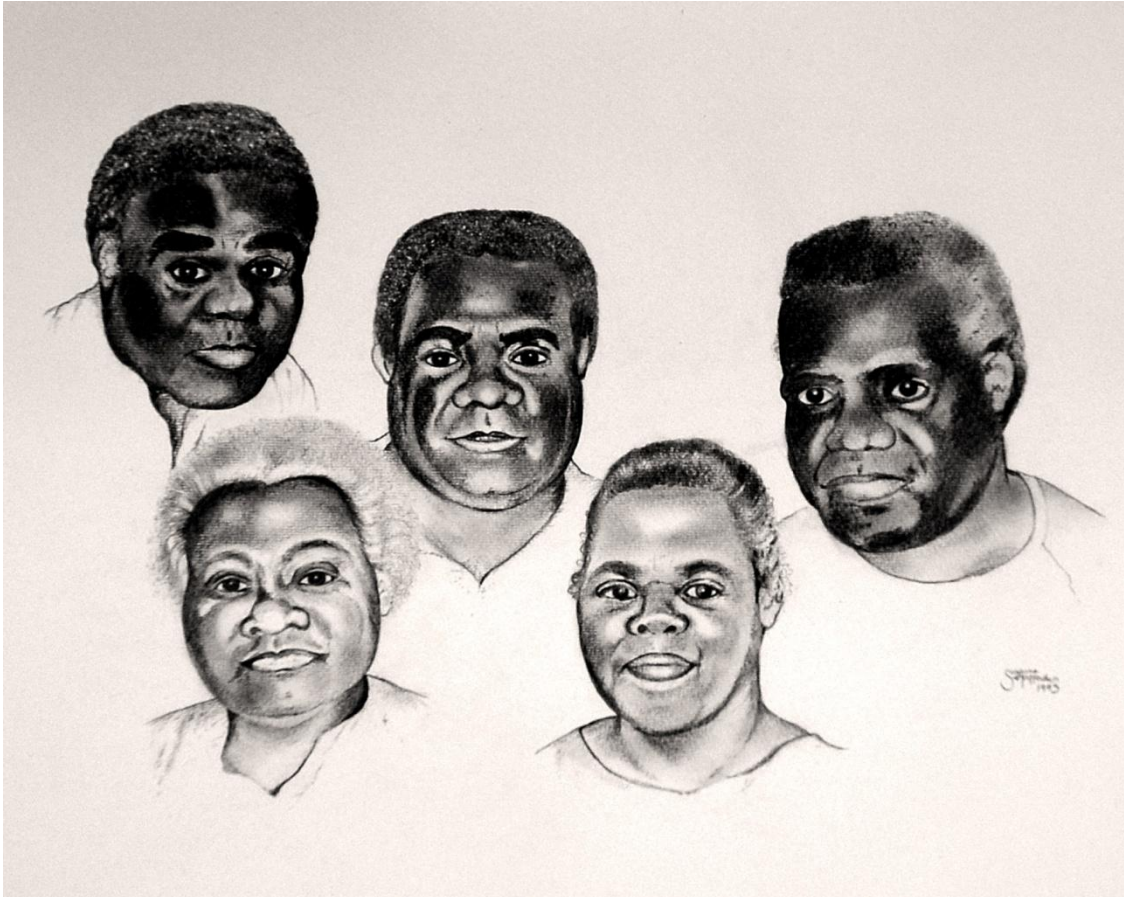
***"so that no matter where you roam
Babinda will be your home
It will occupy a special place in your heart
And comfort you, when you, family and friends are apart."***

This poem hangs on the wall of the Babinda Hospital
and was written by my sister Nancy on the eve of her death.

My brothers and my sister and I have never married
and as the last one of our family, I have listed some details below:-

Fred	Born: 28 th August 1935	Died: 24 th August 2006
Nancy	Born: 9 th September 1938	Died: 2 nd December 1991
Annie	Born: 5 th April 1940	
Jack	Born: 30 th January 1942	Died: 25 th July 1992
Jimmy	Born: 15 th July 1944	Died: 1 st September 1984

THE WONGAS



Left to Right Back: Jimmy, Jack and Fred

Front: Nancy and Annie

TOTEM NAMES

There are Individual Totem names and Clan Totem names.
These were usually taken from the surrounding environment.

The medicine man or the elders gave Totem names to individuals shortly after their birth. The Totem names were danced in by Corroboree. Males danced for the boys and females danced for the girls.

Clan Totem names covered a wide area and included all the people living in that area who came together regularly for exchange of goods, settling disputes; and feasting. Clan elders were appointed to represent these people at clan gatherings.

OUR INDIVIDUAL TOTEM NAMES

Fred	<i>Yulmurri</i>	
Nancy	<i>Gilleba</i>	(soft summer breeze)
Annie	<i>Murrai</i>	(unconditional love and friendliness, e.g. like that found in the dog)
Jack	<i>Gubba Bookai</i>	(Leatherhead – Helmeted Friar Bird)
Jimmy	<i>Byambul</i>	(small whirlpool – eddy)

OUR CLAN TOTEM NAME IS JARRAGA (the scrub hen).

It appears to be spread over a wide area, south from the Pyramid to Daradgee, through the Eubenangee, and east down the Russell and Mulgrave River areas.

Our family has lost the original story, but scrub hen stories, with a few differing aspects, exist in neighbouring families. However, there is agreement that the Pyramid in Gordonvale is the scrub hen mound.

Scrub hens build the biggest nests of any known bird, their eggs are three times the size of a common hen's egg and they mate for life, sharing the mound with other scrub hens. Their eggs were a very valued food source.

The very loud repertoire of sounds made by scrub hens are often heard in the early hours of the morning and sound like crying, cackling or scolding.

MYSELF AND FAMILY

It is a cool misty morning and *Bunna Djiwoudinim* (Babinda Creek) is shrouded in mist as *Boung-un* (the Sun) moves away from the mountain. This mist is lifting quickly from the creek and disappearing into the morning air.

Boung-un is riding *wunghi* (high) in the sky now and it is time for me to rest awhile on the steps. It looks like *Gillyba* (gentle breeze) has arrived as she blows gently across the *Gubby* (road).

While I sit, my thoughts wander to *Bulmba* (our place) so *goo-run* (long ago) when we were *gidde-a-guis* (children) living on the bank of *Bunna Djiwoudinim* (Babinda Creek) with our mother (Minnie), our father (William), our brothers (Fred, Jacky, Jimmy), our half-brother (Tommy Panican), our sister Nancy, and me Annie; and our elders (Dada Dick, Auntie Lucy, Auntie Winnie, Brother Darby, Auntie Nellie, Uncle Jack).

Fred was known as “Billy” in his school days. I shall refer to our elders as Uncles, and Aunties. As for Uncle Jack Bayer, he was Mum’s brother. Mum, Uncle Jack and our maternal grandmother Maggie *Gumbu*, our grandfather Jack *Mudga*, tribal name *Wi Wi*, all came from Daradgee. They were from the *Muchin* tribe.

Uncle Jack married our Auntie Nellie. Auntie Nellie was our father’s first cousin. Dad married Uncle Jack’s sister (Minnie), so first cousins, Dad’s and Auntie Nellie’s married sister and brother.

We never personally knew our paternal grandparents or maternal grandfather. Our paternal grandparents were descendants of the lower Russell River Tribe, the *Wanyurr Majay*. Dad’s parents were known as Billy and Mary *Gumbu* or *Wanger*. Billy’s father, Dad’s grandfather, was called *Buri Buri* meaning fire. Dad identified him as the aboriginal male wearing the elders’ plate in a photograph by the Cairns Historical Society.

Dad was 28 years old when he married Mum by tribal law and our name *Wanger* was changed to Wonga. The changing of our name probably had something to do with the tribal names and languages.

In 1953 we became exempt from “The Aboriginal Preservation Act of 1939” and the name “Wonga” was written on our exempt cards. Auntie Nellie’s maiden name was *Wanger* as well. It was written on her marriage certificate when she married Uncle Jack.

Our mother died when our youngest brother Jimmy was born, and Auntie Nellie looked after us with Dad. For my siblings and me, the fourth generation since the gold rush era, access to full-time schooling enabled us to gain better employment and acceptance. Nancy worked at the Babinda Bedding Company for some time and then looked after the family later. My three brothers worked at the Babinda Mill all their working lives. We have been able to take our place in community life.

Our family refused to leave the banks of the Babinda Creek where we are now. According to Auntie Nellie, Dad's family has always lived here. Townspeople kindly gave us corrugated iron and timber with which we built shanty type buildings with hard clay floors. Johnny Young built us our first home above ground, a corrugated iron and timber structure much like the cane barracks around locally.

Later on we built the masonry block house I live in to-day. I do not remember our ever building the traditional huts, said to be from banana leaves, grass and vine where we are now but when we used to camp at the beach we used to build paper-bark ones. Babinda residents, now gone, told me they remember visiting the grass huts as children.

As the corroborees became banned, the tribes dispersed and became fewer in number, clan meetings ceased. However, a local eye-witness told me of a Babinda group with males in cockatoo head-dresses in the lead with women behind bringing food and making their way to Daradgee for a clan meeting around 1918. He described the men leading in front with paint and cockatoo feathers, boomerang and spears, with the women behind carrying "dilly bags" with food.

Our father's generation could be viewed by some as somewhat excluded from local mainstream social life. However, there was such a "melting pot" of peoples, social life then consisted mainly of visiting one another, and various people grouped together according to certain shared experiences or interests, e.g. country of origin, work, family, gender, wealth, perceived class distinctions.

Similarly, some of Dad's and Mum's family were still alive and they enjoyed being together, especially fishing and camping down the beach. At family gatherings there were often about twenty of us. We used a walking track over the East Russell to North Bramston. Our father was proud of who he was and taught us to be proud also. This made us confident to be on our own and we enjoyed the company of each other. Jack and Jimmie were more extraverted.

All my brothers played football, Rugby League and Aussie Rules. Jack served as president of the Basketball Club and president of the Boorabinda Youth Club. Jack played the guitar as well. Jimmy was the only one of us to drink alcohol and this may have contributed to his accidental death.

The Russell and Mulgrave Rivers with their creeks higher up were full of eels, catfish, black brim and jungle perch and fresh water prawns. *Woolanmaroo* (Russell Heads) and coastal foreshores were important areas of fishing and hunting as well. Above Cassowary Rock is a cave which was once a wet weather camp. Shell middens have been found along the foreshores. Our father was especially attached to this area and spent much time fishing there and visited whenever he could. So much so that he was caught in a flood while fishing and lost his life near Cassowary Rock.

Artifacts, viz. axes and grinding stones have been collected over a wide area and signify the presence of Aboriginal occupation over a long period. Interestingly, it was reported to me that a "T" shaped rock was found in a cave on the slopes of *Choorechillum*.

Our great grandfather, our grandfather and our families were among those aboriginals who bore the brunt of change from the early incursions of cedar-getters, bech-de-mer fishermen, miners of gold and other metals, followed by settlers with cattle, other timber felling and plantations and later smaller land holders and northern frontier settlements. Clashes were reported. Wide spread devastation resulted from disease, particularly the 1918 Spanish flu and opium addiction.

Tribal culture was dispersed from the sheer number of peoples and nationalities that came from all over the world in such a short time. For example, some of the people were Northern and Southern Europeans, Chinese, Malays, Javanese, Arabs, Indians, Polynesians, Kanakas, Torres Strait Islanders. Many were displaced persons who brought little with them but their hands and hope and many were indentured labour. Aboriginal people came to live on the outskirts of town and learnt to survive.

Aboriginal people who could not work or who were viewed to be unable to look after themselves were sent to missions.

Our father lost his parents as a teenager, possibly due to the Spanish flu and he was taken to Palm Island, together with great uncle Bob who was addicted to opium, as well as great aunt Nellie because authorities decided they could not look after themselves.

Mr Tex Turnley immediately applied for my father to be sent back to Babinda to work for him as his house boy and Dad later worked as a gardener at the State Hotel. Mr Turnley, a Canadian, owned a newsagency and billiard room. I worked for Mr Turnley also until he sold the newsagency to a family business. Later, Dad worked at various jobs which included timber cutting and cane cutting. Auntie Nellie worked for Mrs Petersen doing housekeeping.

Our insularity protected us on the one hand, but we failed to marry anyone.

I believe that visual senses and biases are inherent in all our natures and that becoming aware of them will create further understanding. To all those who have come from mixed races and cultures, and that is nearly everyone to-day, embrace the fortitude and courage of your ancestors who crossed those barriers, no matter how harsh that crossing has been.

I believe that the development and demise of the Deeral Co-operative in Babinda was a learning curve for everyone, in that there is not a quick-fix top down solution that suits everyone and sooner or later inherent biases, family, tribal and economic interests will interplay.

So accept and respect all your parts, so that you are centred and be aware of your thoughts and actions as a free and sovereign individual who can go out and learn, create and contribute to your place in the community with understanding and knowledge.

Your history is richer than you think. You are the living proof of life succeeding.

After Nancy's death I became closer to my remaining brother Fred until he passed away after a short illness. I started to seek more company and have been surprised to find how much I enjoy outings and new experiences.

At present, I continue to live in the family home on Babinda Creek and work on Tuesdays at the Information Centre where I have been working for the past 13 years. I have had many enjoyable experiences sharing with people our beautiful place. Also, our entries in the annual harvest festival have been so much fun.

Babinda is a community which has many older people who work as volunteers and I am pleased to be one of them. The volunteers, small businesses, farmers, mill workers and public services work together well. We have much shared history, some over several generations and I am proud of how far we have come in such a short time.

Most Sunday mornings I spend with my friends Dulcie and Nildra at Church.

I walk to town most days and usually see Rebecca and other friends, especially if I sit on Mr Tom Carr's "seat of knowledge" in front of Fantoni's shop. Many people offer me a lift but I usually like to walk. Mr Fantoni often gives me a lift home with my groceries.

I participate in mainstream activities and traditional occasions, such as "Welcome To Country" as called upon to do so. I represent indigenous issues on the Land Council for Babinda and am on the Wet Tropics Consultative Committee.

“The Blessing of The Boulders” by Bishop Malcolm on February 24th 2008 was a highlight for me as I had been trying to arrange this for some time. By this gesture I am asking visitors to respect themselves and place, by taking due care and attention appropriate for a wet tropical area and by staying on walking tracks and behind rails as instructed by the Council so that casualties are halted.

The blessing was part of the celebrations marking the opening of the Boulders walking tracks and area after cyclone “Larry” damage. I enjoyed everyone singing, the youngsters performing, being able to share my language, thoughts and stories, everyone laughing and sloshing through water, determined to stay there, all the while torrential rain pelting down, so typical of Babinda. – the village in the rainforest, the village with a heart.

It was a special coming together which we will remember for a long time.

I can only share my experiences. My parents, siblings and I have always been proud of who we are, but I can say that if you are true to yourself you will be centred and find peace. You will be able, without selling your soul, to love others unconditionally because there is respect for each other.

I am honoured to have been asked to share my family story.

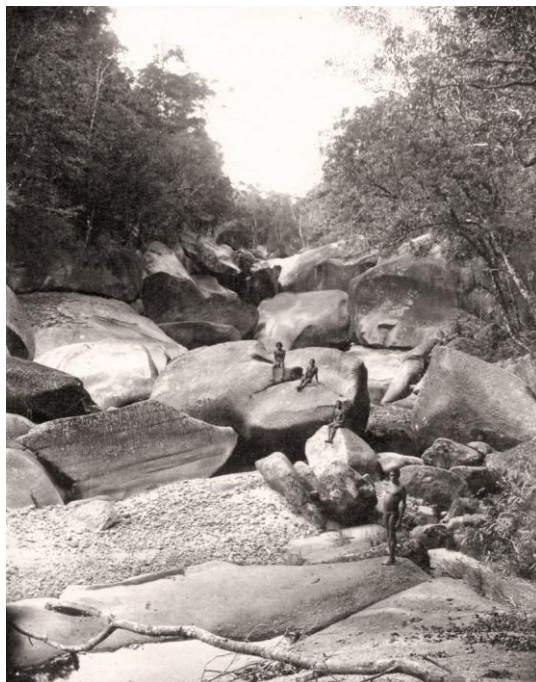
It is not historical as such, but anecdotal, simply me, one human being talking to another. You have a story to tell because you are here. Northern Australia has as many stories as there are and have been people here, largely untold, so enjoy exploring your story and the stories of others so we may lay down the tapestry of who we are and who we are becoming, as Australians and humans together.

Gulling goo now

From *Murraj*, Annie Wonga



Babinda Aboriginal Group
 Male on Left with breast plate believed by my Dad to be his grandfather *Burri Burri*
 (Photograph—Courtesy of Cairns Historical Society)



Aboriginal Group at Boulders
 (Photograph—Cairns Historical Society)



Aboriginal Group at Babinda
(Photograph-Cairns Historical Society)



Aboriginal Group at Babinda
(Photograph—Courtesy of Cairns Historical Society)



Aboriginals fishing at Wallanmaroo
(Photograph—Courtesy of Cairns Historical Society)



1970 Local aborigines and gunya on Babinda Creek, Peever's Road. About 1925

Aboriginal Group at Babinda—Grass Huts
(Photograph—Courtesy of Cairns Historical Society)



My Dad Willie Wonga and his friend Jo Rassip



I am planting a palm for my Dad at Cassowary Rock



The Wonga family home at Babinda

Return of the DUNBA DUNBA (Dance)

Create your own BORA RING (Circle)

We could include one, two or all of the following movements in the great circle dance

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Movement (1): | Respect for Storyteller and Story
<i>Gugulu</i> (Clap sticks) |
| Movement (2): | Respect for Place
<i>Dunba Dunba</i> (Dance) |
| Movement (3): | Respect for each other and understanding of story
<i>Jurra</i> (Thrumming, rhythmic clapping of thighs) |

Movement (1): *Gugulu*—Respect for Storyteller and Story—Clap sticks

Storyteller sits in the middle of circle.
One from the circle goes to the storyteller and hears the story.
For symbolic purposes this is in “seed” form, e.g. “I am the last of my family.”
The recipient takes the storyteller with her and returns to the circle.
The 1st recipient tells the person on the right until it goes right around the circle.
As each person receives the story they begin to hum.
When everyone is humming, start the rhythm – i.e. swaying.
Then the circle moves round and round, becoming faster.
Thrumming becomes faster.
Clap sticks become louder.
Everyone will reach a crescendo, then pause and become slower.
Everyone raises hands and goes to the centre and back three times,
symbolically (1) to renew life, (2) to nourish life and (3) to celebrate life.
Return to circle, become still and start to hum.
Clap sticks slowly stop.
Humming stops.
Quiet movement. (Story in each heart)

Movement (2): *Dunba Dunba*—Respect for Place—Dance

Dance in the Totem (for Babinda this is *Jarraja* Scrub Hen)
Half circle remains using the clap sticks, while other half
becomes dancers using movements and noises associated with the scrub hen.
As scrub hens are very noisy this can be quite exhilarating.
All others present do thrumming.
When dance finishes dancers return to the circle.

Movement (3): *Jurra*—Respect for each other and understanding of story through performance—Thrumming, rhythmic clapping of thighs

This is when the story you have chosen to perform is acted out in more detail. However, when people come together for the first time, each acknowledges the other's diversity and then the commonalities.

"The one and the many."

Dancers choose individual totems of animals or flora, wildlife that has some meaning for them.

Dancers go into the centre performing movements, cries, sounds that represent the totem they have chosen.

Gugulu performers keep clapping from the circle.

Outside the circle participants keep thrumming.

You will find everything reaches a natural crescendo then subsides.

Informal dances are more fun and allow everyone to join in spontaneously.

However, there is no reason

not to choreograph more formal movements if you wish.

When movement ceases and everyone becomes still,

bring everyone closure by singing together a song loved by everyone.

We favour "*I am, you are, we are Australian.*"

You will find a song to suit your occasion.

By now, we know everyone will have enjoyed the *Bunna Bindu Dunba Dunba*.

For many years we have been dreaming of the time when the *Dunba Dunba* (Dance) would return to *Bunna Bindu* (Babinda).

Please join together with us and from all our dreaming, the energy will come to make a great new circle dance that will nurture and inspire us whenever we need to create and sustain our lives.

We humbly suggest that when choreographing your dance, you consider essence of the above three movements, which are concerned with respect for storyteller and story, place, self and each other, because all stories can only be understood within their own context. Each time you create, you are acknowledging the source and creating a larger self in the present.

Aboriginal dances were preparation for fighting, singing, naming and/or instruction. The fighting dances were carried out by males. The others, such as the smoke concert, were more social. We cannot know exactly what the older ones did; it was a different time, place and people. However, we have suggested a circle dance because of its aboriginal connection. There are other circle dances of note, e.g. Greek and Hebrew dances, the singing and dancing troupadours, English Carol rounds, May-pole dancing. So why not an Australian circle dance, perhaps "*The Dance of the Rainbow Serpent*" that could embrace the many elements of our many cultures.

Happy dreaming and may we all have the chance to dance together in the future.



Gumbu Dancers at Post "Larry" Concert at Boulders



Bishop Malcolm and me at Post "Larry" "Blessing of the Boulders"



I am welcoming to Babinda Mrs Roisan Goss,
wife of the former Premier



Information Centre's Float at Babinda Harvest Festival



Councillor Paul Gregory speaking at the “post-Larry’
re-opening of the Boulders



“The Wonga Singers” singing *Green Heart* at the “post-Larry’ concert
L to R: Dulcie, Edgar, Annie, Cecily, Nildra

THE BOULDERS LEGEND



THE BOULDERS LEGEND

This is a creation story
as told by *Murrāi* – Annie Wonga from *Bunna Bindā*

A long time ago, the *Wanyurr Majay* lived and camped along the creek and valley below *Choorechillum* (Mount Bartle Frere). The valley was surrounded by the hills and jungles.

Waroonoo, an elder of our tribe, was married to a young maiden called *Oolana*. One day, not long after the marriage, a wandering tribe entered the valley and our tribe welcomed them and asked if they would like to stay a while.

In that tribe was a very handsome young man called *Dyga*. On seeing him, *Oolana* fell in love with him and he fell in love with her too, but what could he do because *Oolana* was married to *Waroonoo* and *Dyga* was from a different tribe.

After some time, *Oolana* and *Dyga* decided to run away upstream. They had been gone for quite a while. The two tribes began to miss *Oolana* and *Dyga*, so began searching for them upstream. It wasn't long before the two tribes found them camping by the stream. The wandering tribe took hold of *Dyga* and took him away.

Our tribe held *Oolana* firmly, but she broke free and threw herself into the water that had been calm and peaceful. Suddenly the water erupted into a swirling torrent of white foaming water and the ground burst open throwing huge boulders into the air marking the very place of her drowning.

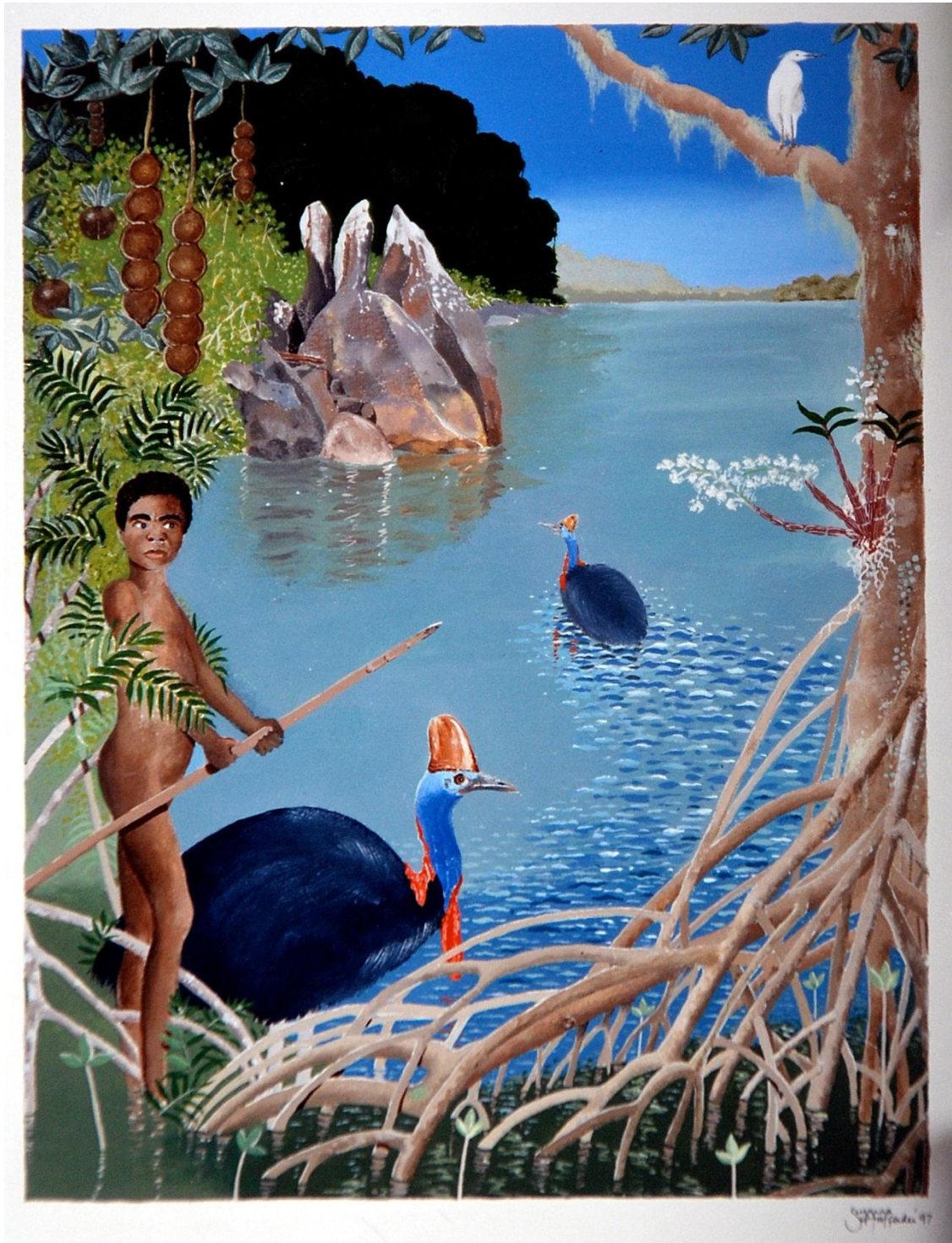
Today the water is calm and peaceful again, but *Oolana's* spirit still remains and she calls for her lover's return. So beware young men, she may call you to her foaming depths.

Young men are more likely to take risks. This story may well have served to warn young tribal men to enter this area with awareness, as we all should.

Tourism has drawn attention to the area and more young men are exposed. It is the highest rainfall area in Australia and therefore heavily forested. The many rocks are covered in moss and lichens and logs are washed down the creek. For everyone's protection, the local council has taken great pains to mark the areas on which to walk and fenced off areas that may be dangerous.

Therefore respect for self and place are paramount.

GHINDAGA



GHINDAGA

This is a creation story of *Ghindaga* and the Cassowary Rock

as told to *Murrai* – Annie Wonga by Auntie Nellie

One day a man came from the valley and walked into the forest.
He had only walked a short distance when he said:-

*"I can't walk through all this without being caught up in the bushes.
Perhaps, I might be able to walk through this forest if I was big and strong."*

So he turned himself into a cassowary.
Now he was able to walk and push his way through the forest.
He walked some distance when he came to the Russell River.

*"Now, how will I get across to the other side of the river?
Well, seeing since I'm strong, I should be able to swim across the river."*

Once on the other side, he continued his journey until he came to the mouth of the river. So he tried to cross the river once again, but on entering the water, he realised that the water was far too deep.

So he returned to the bank of the river again, and as he came out of the water, said:-

"I will rest here always."

He then turned into stone.

To see *Ghindaga* (Cassowary Rock) in *Bunna Bindu* (Babinda),
face up the Russell River with your back to the ocean.
Look a few metres from the bank on the ocean side of the jetty,
approximately 30 metres from the rock at a 22 ½ degree angle.

Ghindaga is not seen today
by those speeding up and down in motor boats in the middle of the river
as it is impossible to see *Ghindaga* from this point in the middle of the river.

Aboriginal people could see, as they were always working close to the shore.

JUBBUN



JUBBUN

This is a creation story of *Jubbun* (The Eel) and Tom's Rock
as told to *Murrai* – Annie Wonga by Auntie Nellie

Now back in the Dreamtime, Aboriginal people had some power, as they could change into anything they wanted, but they had to be very careful as they could easily change into stone just like the man who came down from the mountain. This man had been walking for some time when he said:-

*"This jungle is getting very thick.
I must try and find the creek
because I'm sure I'd be able to travel much faster in the water."*

So he walked and walked until he came to the creek and cried out:-

"At last, I've found it!"

So he entered the creek and turned himself into an eel. Now the *Jubbun* had been swimming for some time, so he came out of the water and changed himself into a man again and he walked along the bank of the creek for a while. On entering the water once again the *Jubbun* swam until he came to the mouth of the creek. Now the mouth of the creek flows into the Russell River. So he came out of the water for the last time and as he looked around he said:-

"I really don't know where I am, but I shall continue on my way."

The *Jubbun* swam all the way down the river until finally he came to the mouth of the river. He thought he would go a little further so swam around Russell Heads, but as he swam a little way along the coast towards the south, the *Jubbun* thought the water tasted quite different.

"Perhaps I should get out of the water and see where I am."

But on uttering these words he immediately turned to stone because the *Jubbun* is a fresh water fish and he had entered the salt water. That is why he is still here today looking out across the ocean, never to return to the fresh water creek again. Today, eels never venture from the creek because they can swim and feed in the fresh water. The creek will never run dry because the *Jubbun* passed this way on his journey to the sea and to his resting place.

The *Jubbun* is revealed when looking from a specific place.
Stand north of the rock, 50 metres and out from the beach in the water,
at a 22 ½ degree angle, or a little closer.
I do not know the origin of the name "Tom's Rock",
but we call it the *Jubbun* meaning the Eel.

BIBBY WOY



BIBBY WOY

Story as told to *Murraj* – Annie Wonga by Auntie Nellie

A man wandered into the jungle, but not too far in. Whilst he was walking, he heard the sound of wailing and crying. He looked through the bushes and saw people in a clearing. They were seated on the ground and crying over a body.

So that the man could have a closer look, he changed into a small bird, flew up into a tree not far from where the people sat. He remained perched in the tree for quite a while and watched the people take the body, draw the knees of the dead man's body up to the chin and then bind the body with vine. The body was placed on a platform under which a fire was built in order to mummify the body as was the custom. This custom did not please the man one bit, so he flew down from the tree.

The people said:- "Where did you come from?"

The man replied:- "Out of the tree from the valley I came and I tell you people,
I do not like what you are doing.
It is not right, so when I visit next time,
I expect to see that the dead are buried
and when I call *Bibby Woy*, from the trees above,
you will rest in peace.
No longer will your spirits walk in this place again."

This is a story about change and how the Storyteller tried to lessen the impact of change so that it would not be so catastrophic. It relates to the change from aboriginal burial rites of mummification to a Christian burial. Mummification had to take place over some time and the beach was preferred as a drier place. Bones were regarded as sacred relics and ancestors were respected. A Corroboree lasted several days.

A body is said to be mummified when it has been placed above a fire for some time and smoked. The body takes on a parched and leathery look, but still retains all facial resemblance for a long period of time.

After this mummification, the head or any part of the body may be carried around in a dilly bag by any member of the family or a relative, to show their deepest respect for a loved one.

An Easter Story

This is a copy of a pen and ink illustration by Sussana Job,
of an Easter story written for the children of Babinda.

Sussana woke in the early hours one morning
and sat on a rock in her rainforest backyard,
where she was visited and serenaded by several scrub hens.

It was from this encounter and her intuitive understanding
during her time with Annie over three years,
that she was able to realise
this stunning visual interpretation of the Easter Story
which now hangs on the wall at the Babinda Hospital.



MURRAI'S GIFTS

For the old ones, the beginning was the dreaming.
From the dreaming came the force and the power.

It shaped the creative ancestors.
They moved across the vastness from dreams to actions.

Their actions created the landscape, mountains, rivers,
the natural elements, the earth,
the sun, the moon and the stars,
the plants, the animals,
man and woman.

When their force and power was spent
they rested within their creations as though a seed.

And so there was, a point in time,
when the tribes' consciousness
began to expand into the dreaming.

At the foothills of *Choorechillum*,
Gubba Booki was chief of his family clan.

He knew the secrets of her great waterways
to *Woolanmarroo* (Russell Heads) and the sea.

He called this place *Bunna Bindu*.
His dreaming was the giant scrub hens *Jarraja*.

Into the great *Bora Ring* they circled.

Movement measured to the rhythm of the *Gugulu* (clap stick).
To learn and create in the *Dunba Dunba* (dance).
Round and round,
accompanied by the *Jurra* (thrumming) fast and slow.

The loyalty of their mate building together the big mound.
The care to incubate life and nurture the young.
The nourishment of eggs in the rainy season.
The foods and work of the seasons.

The joyous calls of laughter, the sorrow of death.
Timely precautions against dangers.
The clash of an overwhelming culture.

One day,
of his family there was the last generation,
and the last woman.

The *Bora Ring* was no more.
The *Dunba Dunba* (dance) became but just a memory.

The last woman worships God whose Son's message is love.
Still, she remembers the Dreamtime Totem *Jarraqa*,
and *Jarraqa* is still dear to her.

One Easter,
Murrai made her own eggs.
To her they were a symbol of the eggs of *Jarraqa*.

She distributed them to her friends
and to the other people of *Bunna Bindā*.

She thought that perhaps together
the dance of life may be learnt anew;
to hear the songs and energies of the earth,
with its harmony and mystery, the connectedness
and interdependence of all things,
the joy of work for its own sake.

That *Jarraqa* might be included in people's hearts,
especially when undertaking endeavours of endurance and special meaning.

That in time, some people of *Bunna Bindā*
might give *Jarraqa's* eggs to one another,
to celebrate occasions of special merit,
that each egg would be a Symbol of Love.

Murrai knew that if all this happened, her family would live on always.

LANGUAGE

Our language has intonations, rolling consonants and vowels which are not easily translated into English. It is spoken softly, has rhythm and metre, is easy to listen to. Some words may have similarities to words in other tribes, but our language remains distinctly our own. It is almost gone now. Some of the words we remember are:-

Place Names	<i>Bunna</i> (water) <i>Binda</i> (shoulder)	Shoulder of water
	<i>Bunna Binda</i>	Babinda
	<i>Bunna Djiwudinim</i>	Babinda Creek
	<i>Choorechillum</i>	Mount Bartle Frere
Distance	<i>Gungaree</i>	Far away
	<i>Nucka</i>	Down river
	<i>Wangi</i>	Up high
	<i>Darrgin</i>	Garfish
Fish	<i>Good a bar</i>	Mud Cod
	<i>Gulby</i>	Cat Fish
	<i>Guloon</i>	Jew Fish
	<i>Gweer</i>	Fish in general
	<i>Jubbun</i>	Eel
	<i>Julki</i>	Pippies
	<i>Jungee</i>	Prawns
	<i>Yungogur</i>	Black bream
	<i>Bichoo</i>	Hawk
	<i>Ghindaga</i>	Cassowary
	<i>Gin-gin gee</i>	Willy Wag Tail
	<i>Gulboo</i>	Black bird grey beak
Birds	<i>Gulboo</i>	Brown bird grey beak
	<i>Munga Munga Jaroi</i>	Kookaburra (laughing bird)
	<i>Jarois</i>	Birds
	<i>Jarraga</i>	Scrub hens
	<i>Wowan</i>	Scrub turkeys
	<i>Bichical</i>	Turtle
	<i>Bin Bin</i>	Bandicoot
	<i>Buchire</i>	Hair of dog and cat
	<i>Muppi</i>	Wallaby
	<i>Goodadie</i>	Goanna
	<i>Goodagar</i>	Dog
	<i>Goondoi</i>	Snake
Animals	<i>Moogin</i>	Rat
	<i>Nigel</i>	Possum
	<i>Wougoun</i>	Worm
	<i>Yarraman</i>	Horse

Miscellaneous

Biguin Finger Nail
Bing-gee Belly
Binna Burra Ear
Boungoo Knee
Bow-woo Back
Bunna Water
Burree Fire/Firewood

Dearah Teeth
Doolaboo Westerly Wind
Ductuloom Moon
Doongoo-Jungun Silly

Gadja Man Spirit
Goom-mun One
Goot-tul Cold
Grookai Neck
Gulla Spear
Gulling I'm gone
Gumba Rain
Gungi Break

Jibba Liver
Jiggeroo Storm
Jillin Coal/Ember
Jub-boo Dirt
Julloo Blunt
Jurru Sharp

Mindel Tick
Mounguin Sore
Mulla Arm
Munga Munga Laugh
Mundi Hand

Oring That
Rouboo Robe
Unjell Light
Yeerwah Wind

Binda Shoulder
Binju Sour
Bookul Dark
Boung-un Sun
Bunda Mountain
Burra Burra Fly

Din-ull Egg
Doungoo Head
Dunba Dunba Dance

Ghinna Foot
Goo-run Long
Gounga Nose
Gub-bye Track
Gullbun Axe
Gulling-Goo I'm going
Gumbee Clothes
Gurra Bunna Wet Season

Jigger Binna Falling Star/Comet
Jilli Eye
Jub-bee Hat
Juborai Stone
Jurrah Side

Minji Fresh Meat
Muchjull Cook
Mullum Soup
Munghun Mouth
Ninna Sit

Quinkin Lady Spirit
Roomba Woonun Sleep soundly
Wubboo Outside
Yurra gai Sand