

Gummingurru in the cultural landscape: a young boy's perspective

TEACHER'S GUIDE

by Fiona Bengtsson & Warren Venaglia

in association with the University of Queensland and

Gummingurru Aboriginal Corporation

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Introduction

Stone arrangements sites are usually associated with some form of ritualistic ceremonies. Consequently, they are usually constructed of stones that can be carried easily by an adult and are placed in formations that depict either simple arrangements such as circles (or Bora Rings), or more complex shapes such as animals or astral bodies. These arrangements hold a ritual significance to the Aboriginal traditional owners of the Gummingurru area – the Jarowair (Bell 1986, as cited in Leslie and McFadden 2006; Ross 2008, p.91).

In relation to other stone arrangement sites in southeast Queensland and the Greater Darling Downs, the Gummingurru Aboriginal Stone Arrangement is significant because it is the most eastern stone Bora site located not only on the Darling Downs but also in southeast Queensland (Ross 2008, p.93). Physically the site is approximately 3 kilometres north of the township of Gowrie Junction on the Old Homebush Road (appendix 1); Gowrie Junction is situated approximately 15 kilometres north-west of the city of Toowoomba, all of which is encompassed within the Toowoomba Regional Council local authority boundaries.

The site was purchased in 2003 by the Indigenous Land Corporation, a federally funded national organisation that purchases land of significance to hand back to Aboriginal people (Ross 2008, p.96). The day to day management of the site is the responsibility of the Gummingurru Aboriginal Corporation (Thompson 2004, p.1) with Mr Brian Tobane as the on-site caretaker and one of the custodians (Ross 2008, p.97).

The site is comprised of 4.8 hectares of land and associated infrastructure such as housing and an education and interpretation centre (Thompson 2004, p.5), and of course the stone arrangements which are formed into various images of animals, plants, circles and astral bodies; with the main feature being the male initiation Bora Ring (Ross 2008, p.93).

The site was previously known as the Meringandan Stone Arrangement or the Cawdor Stone Arrangement and was renamed in 2000 when a portion of the site was handed back to the Gummingurru people (Ross 2008, p.96).

Cultural Significance

The Gummingurru Aboriginal stone arrangement site is a culturally significant component of the physical, social and spiritual heritage landscape of the Jarowair people of the eastern Darling Downs and it needs to be interpreted within that context (Ross 2008, p.93). Not only is this site associated with at least 3 others within a 3 kilometre radius, it also associated with the Bunya Mountains.

Gummingurru was a male initiation ceremonial site and a gathering place for other Aboriginal groups travelling from areas as far away as Moreton Bay, the Sunshine Coast and the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales through to the Bunya Mountains for the triennial Bunya Nut Festival (Thompson 2004, p.7). But Gummingurru was much more than a stopover place. Corroborees were also performed here to develop alliances between groups, settle disputes and establish marriages (Ross 2004, p.93; Winterbotham 1959, p.33).

The other cultural sites that are associated with Gummingurru are: the camp sites located beside Franke Creek; the women's ceremonial place at the end of Otto Road; scarred trees that marked the boundaries of Gummingurru; at least one ochre pit on Gowrie Lillyvale Road; the Bunya Mountains; and the traditional travel routes associated with those groups visiting from other areas and travelling onto the Bunya Mountains (B. Tobane 2009 pers. comm., 17 April).

The arrangements of different sized basalt rocks on the Gummingurru site variously form pathways, rings and mounds of ceremonial significance. The arrangements have been interpreted as totemic, or yuri, symbols such as fish, turtle, carpet snake, emu and bunya nut (Ross 2008, p.93). It is thought ceremonies included allocation of yuris and education on the individual responsibilities associated with caring for country (B. Tobane 2009 pers. comm., 17 April).

Gummingurru has not been an active ceremonial site since late in the 19th century. In the 1950s the traditional owners of the area were relocated to Palm Island and other Aboriginal settlements throughout Queensland. Today Gummingurru is a centre for learning about Aboriginal culture and reconciliation that is open to visits from education groups (Thompson in Ross 2008, p.93; Miller 2009).

The current Jarowair custodians have re-established active management of the site. This includes redefining the existing yuri figures by lifting (vertically, but not moving them horizontally) and revealing buried rocks, and creating new yuri images with other rocks available on site which they argue to be their right to leave a living legacy for the next generation in the Aboriginal community (Ross 2008, p.99; Miller 2009).

The centre is open to visits from school groups by contacting the Gummingurru Aboriginal Corporation caretaker, Brian Tobane, for further information, or refer to the Gummingurru web site www.gummingurru.com.au.

Activities and Learning Pack

The Key Learning Areas (KLA) for the activities outlined in these notes relate to those described in the Essential Learning by Year Junctures for Year 5 students (Appendix 2) as developed by the Queensland Studies Authority (Queensland Studies Authority 2009).

The activities presented allow students to have opportunities to know, understand and be able to do; and can be tailored to suit any curriculum that is common across all schools in Queensland and can be specified for each of the key learning areas. It is recommended that the activities be completed in the sequence listed.

'Gummingurru in the cultural landscape' learning pack consists of three parts:

- 1) Teacher's guide,
- 2) activity sheets and
- 3) a place story clip.

These particularly focus on the cultural context of Gummingurru from a child's perspective.

- 1) Teacher's guide: This guide gives an overview of the Gummingurru site in the context of Jarowair culture. A reproducible map is included, as well as answers to the activities. The documents in the reference list give detailed information on other aspects of the Jarowair culture and Gummingurru site interpretation, as well as other useful learning tools.
- 2) Activity sheets: Activity sheets consist of a comprehension exercise, word-find and grid drawing. These activities may be adapted to suit other age groups.
- 3) Story clip: The 5 minute story clip is told from the perspective of a 10 year old Australian boy of European heritage. Many of the photos have been taken at Gummingurru. Others are generic and have been sourced from Flickr's creative commons site for non commercial use (*Flickr* 2009). The clapping sticks soundtrack and others can be downloaded free from www.peacesongs.info (Peace Songs Tapestries 2009).

Activity 1 – Viewing Gummingurru Place Story Clip

This activity has been designed as a 5 minute audiovisual presentation to be viewed prior to the site visit. The story is narrated by a 10 year old boy to help the audience identify with experiences a 10 year old Aboriginal boy may have been involved in at Gummingurru, such as preparing for his first initiation ceremony, learning about country and hunting.

Instructions – Gummingurru Place Stories clip presentation

The presentation is located as the file '*Place Stories*'. To access the program follow these steps:

Step 1 – Find and select the '*Place Stories*' folder;

Step 2 – Select and open the file Gummingurru story clip FB_WV.exe;



Step 3 – To run the Story Clip select '*play*' and wait for the clip to load, adjust volume to the desired level;

Step 4 – When clip has finished playing select close and then close again to exit the file.

Activity 2 - worksheet "What we know about Gummingurru"

This worksheet is designed to check comprehension of information in the story clip prior to visiting the site. The students will have a more enriched learning experience at the site with some basic understanding of Gummingurru and the cultural landscape.

Solution:

Gummingurru was a special **initiation** site for Aboriginal people. Only **men** and **boys** were allowed at this place. Lessons were taught at Gummingurru with the help of **stone arrangements**. Other Aboriginal cultural places in the area include **ochre pits**. Men and women camped **together** by the creek while in the Gummingurru area. Aboriginal people travelled by **walking** from as far away as **New South Wales** to enjoy the bunya feast at **the Bunya Mountains**. The Jarowair people hunted **kangaroo** for **food**. They used **fire** to help them care for country. Now Gummingurru is a special place where **all** people can learn about **Aboriginal** culture and caring for country.

Activity 3 - Gummingurru Site Visit

The visit to the Gummingurru Aboriginal Stone Arrangement site presents an opportunity for students to directly experience Aboriginal culture in physical, spiritual, cultural and historical contexts. Gummingurru can only be visited by prior arrangement with the custodian Brian Tobane, who will accompany groups through the facility and provide interpretation of the stone arrangements. The Visitors' Centre is also available for interpretation activities. For information on how to arrange for a visit, see the website (www.gummingurru.com.au).

Students need to walk carefully without disturbing the arrangements of stones in any way. Risk minimization measures are recommended, including sturdy closed-in footwear, hats, water and sunscreen.

The Gummingurru landscape map, 'Location of Gummingurru Stone Arrangement in the cultural heritage landscape', will assist students during the visit to understand Gummingurru in relation to other nearby sites. Navigation skills using the map may be practised when visiting nearby sites. These are all accessible by bus and observable from the roadside.

Based on the Place Story Clip, think of any questions you may have for Brian during your visit to Gummingurru.

Activity 4 - Gummingurru Word Search

Words have been included which may help to stimulate thinking of aspects of Aboriginal culture that took place around Gummingurru. Particular inclusion has been made of words pertaining to Gummingurru from a boy's perspective.

Solution:

```

+ + S N A K E + + + + + R +
O F + + + L + + + S + + E I +
+ C I H T + + + + + P C C A +
+ U H R U Y + + + T O E C W +
+ L U R E N R + + N R + A O +
S T O N E S T O C E + + B R +
+ U R R U G N I M M U G U A +
+ R + A + + L O N E + + L J S
L E A R N I N G + G M + L + Y
+ + + + A Y + K A N G A R O O
+ A + T I N I T I A T I O N B
+ R I L A N I G I R O B A + U
C O U N T R Y + + R U + R M +
N B U N Y A W H T A P Y E + +
+ + + + + + + + + + + R + +
    
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(Over,Down,Direction)
 ABORIGINAL (13,12,W)
 ARRANGEMENT (10,14,N)
 ART (4,8,NW)
 BORA (2,14,N)
 BOYS (15,11,N)
 BULLROARER (13,6,S)
 BUNYA (2,14,E)
 CABUL (13,4,S)
 CEREMONY (13,3,SW)
 COUNTRY (1,13,E)

CULTURE (2,3,S)
 EMU (13,14,NE)
 FIRE (2,2,SE)
 GUMMINGURRU (12,7,W)
 HUNTING (4,3,SE)
 INITIATION (5,11,E)
 JAROWAIR (14,8,N)
 KANGAROO (8,10,E)
 LEARNING (1,9,E)
 MEMORY (11,9,NW)
 MEN (10,7,N)

OCHRE (1,2,SE)
 PATHWAY (11,14,W)
 RECONCILIATION (14,1,SW)
 SNAKE (3,1,E)
 SPEAR (10,2,SE)
 STONES (1,6,E)
 TURTLE (2,6,NE)
 YURI (12,14,NW)

Activity 5 - Grid Drawing 'A boy at Gummingurru'

This activity practices mathematical concepts of shape definition and perspective. It also provides a medium for visual art expression. Once the grid drawing is completed, it may be decorated using the spectrum of traditional ochre colours, being white, black, brown, yellow, red and orange.

Activity 6 – creative arts 'Caring for country'

Students may work in groups or as a class to put together a dance which tells observers something to remember about caring for country. It is suggested that students use a mix of modern technology sourced on the internet as well as using materials sourced in the natural environment. Peace Song Tapestries has Aboriginal audio tracks available for free download (Peace Song Tapestries n.d.).

It is anticipated students will gain an understanding of cultural development in terms of materials available, alternative methods for communicating and the experience of group work.

Essential learnings activities

KLA	1. story clip	2. worksheet " What we know about Gummingurru"	3. site visit to Gummingurru	4. worksheet "Gummingurru wordfind"	5. worksheet "A boy at Gummingurru"	6. creative arts "Caring for country"
English						
	They identify how people, characters, places, events and things are represented in particular or chosen ways.	They identify how people, characters, places, events and things are represented in particular or chosen ways. This includes considering whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges, peoples, places, events and things have been included or excluded in texts.	They identify how people, characters, places, events and things are represented in particular or chosen ways. Students recognise how English develops their capacity to participate or work effectively in their communities.	They identify how people, characters, places, events and things are represented in particular or chosen ways. This includes considering whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges, peoples, places, events and things have been included or excluded in texts.		
HPE						
			Students use their enthusiasm for physical activity and curiosity about health and personal development to explore how the dimensions of health are influenced by personal, social, cultural and environmental factors.			Students use their enthusiasm for physical activity and curiosity about health and personal development to explore how the dimensions of health are influenced by personal, social, cultural and environmental factors.

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Maths						
			They conduct mathematical activities and investigations- space (mapping)		Defining features, including edges, angle sizes and parallel lines, are used to make accurate representations of shapes	
SOSE						
	They develop awareness of relationships between people, and between people and places. They identify social and environmental values in local and national contexts. Students recognise the ways in which Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people are distinctive and are connected to other people and to specific places over time.	Students use their experiences of people, places, systems and environments to make connections to their own experiences. They identify social and environmental values in local and national contexts. Students recognise the ways in which Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people are distinctive and are connected to other people and to specific places over time.	Students use their experiences of people, places, systems and environments to make connections to their own experiences. They develop awareness of relationships between people, and between people and places. They identify social and environmental values in local and national contexts, and develop their capacity to participate and work effectively in their communities. Students recognise the ways in which Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people are distinctive and are connected to other people and to specific places over time.	Students recognise the ways in which Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people are distinctive and are connected to other people and to specific places over time.	Students recognise the ways in which Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people are distinctive and are connected to other people and to specific places over time.	Students use their experiences of people, places, systems and environments to make connections to their own experiences. Students recognise the ways in which Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people are distinctive and are connected to other people and to specific places over time.

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Technology:						
	Students explore the designed world and recognise that they can be both users and creators of technology. They identify and understand the characteristics of a range of resources (information, materials and/or systems) and assess their suitability for a specific purpose and context.					Students explore the designed world and recognise that they can be both users and creators of technology. They identify and understand the characteristics of a range of resources (information, materials and/or systems) and assess their suitability for a specific purpose and context.
ICTs						
						Students use a range of ICT functions and applications in purposeful ways. They develop the knowledge, skills and capacity to select and use ICTs to inquire, develop new understandings, transform information and construct new knowledge for a specific purpose or context.

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Arts:						
	They develop their aesthetic understandings of arts elements and languages.		They develop their aesthetic understandings of arts elements and languages. Students recognise that past and present experiences of artists influence the ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges, peoples, histories, cultures, protocols and relationships are represented and valued in Indigenous arts works.		They develop their aesthetic understandings of arts elements and languages. Students use their creativity, imagination and senses to express their observations, values and beliefs in personal and community contexts through Visual Art. They create their own arts works and present and respond to their own and others' arts works, considering different audiences and different purposes. Students recognise that past and present experiences of artists influence the ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges, peoples, histories, cultures, protocols and relationships are represented and valued in Indigenous arts works.	Students use their creativity, imagination and senses to express their observations, values and beliefs in personal and community contexts through Dance, Drama, Music, Media and Visual Art. They develop their aesthetic understandings of arts elements and languages. They create their own arts works and present and respond to their own and others' arts works, considering different audiences and different purposes. Students recognise that past and present experiences of artists influence the ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges, peoples, histories, cultures, protocols and relationships are represented and valued in Indigenous arts works.

KLA	1. story clip	2. worksheet " What we know about Gummingurru"	3. site visit to Gummingurru	4. worksheet "Gummingurru wordfind"	5. worksheet "A boy at Gummingurru"	6. creative arts "Caring for country"
Science						
	They understand that science is a way of constructing new knowledge and that it is based on observations of, and inferences from, the natural world. (eg Aboriginal use of fire for hunting and land management)					

(Queensland Studies Authority 2009)

Additional Resources

More detailed information on Gummingurru, Aboriginal culture and heritage can be accessed at the following web sites or documents.

Australian Heritage Council, www.ahc.gov.au

Condamine Alliance, provides advice and possible funding options to protect environments, www.condaminealliance.com.au

Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts; Australian Heritage, www.environment.gov.au/heritage

Discovery Education 2008, viewed 10 April 2009, Discovery Education , <http://school.discoveryeducation.com/>

Queensland Studies Authority, *Indigenous perspectives support material*, www.qsa.qld.edu.au/

Ross, A 2008, 'Managing meaning at an ancient site in the 21st century: the Gummingurru Aboriginal stone arrangement on the Darling Downs, southern Queensland', *Oceania*, vol. 78.

South East Queensland Traditional Owner Alliance Limited, www.seqtoa.com.au or www.regionalnrm.qld.gov.au/about_new/who_does_what/seqtoa.html

The Aboriginal Culture site looks at Aboriginal life at the time of European arrival, www.aboriginalculture.com.au

The Gummingurru home page has links to resources and site history, www.gummingurru.com.au

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Create: Communicate: Collaborate, accessed 18 April 2009, www.placestories.com

Flickr 2009, 'Creative commons', viewed 10 April 2009, <http://www.flickr.com/creativecommons/>

Miller, M 2009, 'Site keeps secrets of the past hidden', *The Chronicle: This Weekend*, 18 April, p. 1-3.

Peace Song Tapestries n.d., 'Sound Bank', viewed 17 April 2009, <http://www.peacesongs.info/soundbank/index.html>

Queensland Studies Authority 2009, 'Essential learnings', Queensland Studies Authority, Viewed 25 April 2009, <http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/learning/7261.html>

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State Library of Victoria 2009, 'Collections', State Library of Victoria, viewed 19 April 2009, <http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/collections/index.html>

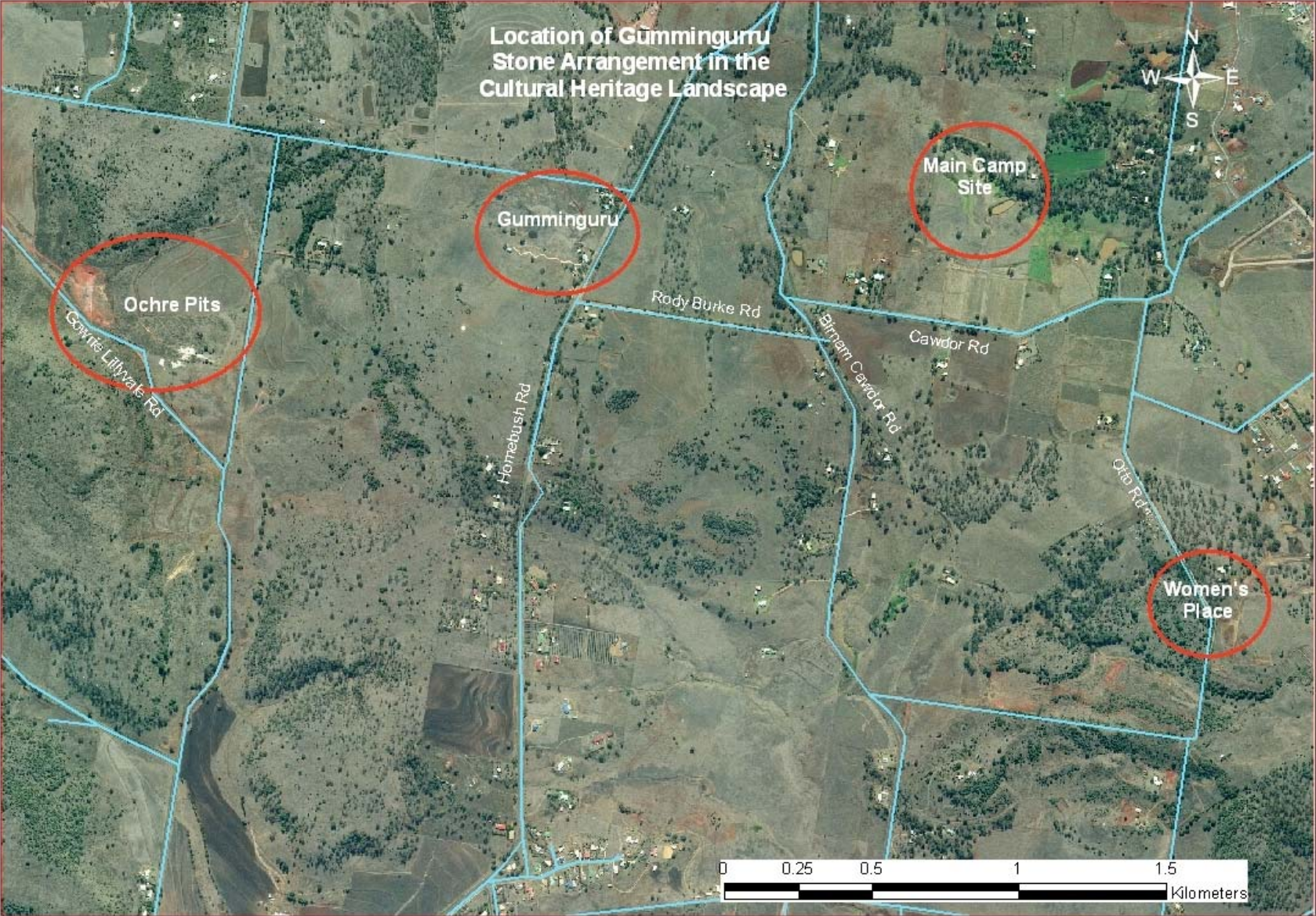
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Thompson, B. 2004, *Gummingurru Stone Arrangement Cultural Heritage Management Plan*, Unpublished document for the Gummingurru Land Trust.

Toowoomba Regional Council 2009, *Location of Gummingurru Stone Arrangement in the Cultural Heritage Landscape*, Toowoomba (Map).

Winterbotham, L.P. 1959, "The Gaiarbau Story as recorded by Winterbotham and transcribed by Winterbotham in 1959", reprinted in *Queensland Ethnohistory Transcripts: Some original views around Kilcoy, Book 1 – the Aboriginal perspective*, Archaeology Branch, Queensland, 1982.

Appendix 1. Location of Gummingurru within the Cultural Landscape (Toowoomba Regional Council, 2009).



Appendix 2. Narration for Place Story Clip

Giddy I'm Tom. I want to tell you about Gummingurru and some of the Jarowair Aboriginal culture.

Gummingurru is a really special place not far from where I live in Toowoomba. It's special for lots of reasons.

Gummingurru is a learning place run by a group of Aboriginal people.

This is Brian who is Jarowair. He looks after the place and will help you understand better when you visit.

Gummingurru used to be an initiation place for the Jarowair people, where boys not much older than me were made into men in secret ceremonies.

No women were allowed anywhere near, nor girls either. Boys were buddied up with the older men to learn from them.

All the important stages of growing up were marked, such as choosing a job or trade, learning more responsibilities and getting married. The ceremonies included scarring the boys' bodies using sharp stones. Ouch!

Over the hill from Gummingurru are some small quarries where ochre was collected to make paint for the ceremonies. There are two different colours there, red and cream. Black was made using crushed up coals.

The women and girls had their own secret site not far away on the next hill. Between the two ceremonial sites was the campsite for everyone, down by the creek, right near a little waterfall.

Gummingurru is also not far from the Bunya Mountains. You can see them from the ochre pits.

Every few years when the bunya nut harvest was huge, Aboriginal people from all over went to the Bunyas to have a feast together.

They walked from as far away as the Sunshine Coast and New South Wales. That's a long way!

It was pretty important to go through the ceremonies at Gummingurru. The boys could then go on to participate in the men's big festival ceremonies at the Bunya Mountains.