Indigenous Significance

Bogimbah Mission – K'gari (Fraser Island)

Bogimbah Mission on K'gari (Fraser Island) is historically significant to Badtjala (Butchulla) people because this area was used for detaining and severely limiting Badtjala and other Indigenous people's self-governance, universal freedoms, and human and native title rights between 1897–1904 under the then Queensland Government's Aborigines Protection Act 1897.

Understanding Country

Place

This place of dysfunctional assimilation and cultural control operated as a temporary detainment area for some Badtjala people and others as a sandy transit location prior to being forcefully removed to other parts of Queensland.

This place evokes many strong and powerful feelings for Badtjala. It is a place that reminds Indigenous people of their powerlessness in asserting their self-governance, universal freedoms, humanity and inherent native title rights to country under the 'protective' authority of a group of non-Indigenous people.

Bogimbah Mission's location is a reflection of a 'mindset'—of a failed violent relationship between non-Indigenous people and Indigenous people. It is a local 'out of sight, out of mind' solution to the unresolved issues of cultural diversity and social cohesion.

The inability of both parties to come to a shared understanding of differing values, attitudes, world views, spiritual beliefs and governance systems severely compromised living harmony and any chance of peaceful co-existence on country. The 'bad business' of this place is part of an ongoing healing process supported by 'old people' spirits at place.



Bogimbah Creek on K'gari (Fraser Island)

Photo: Shawn Wondunna-Foley

Living Connections

It is a place situated on country, on the western beach of K'gari (Fraser Island) adjacent to Bogimbah Creek.

There is little physical evidence of the Mission today and the daily activities that once occurred.

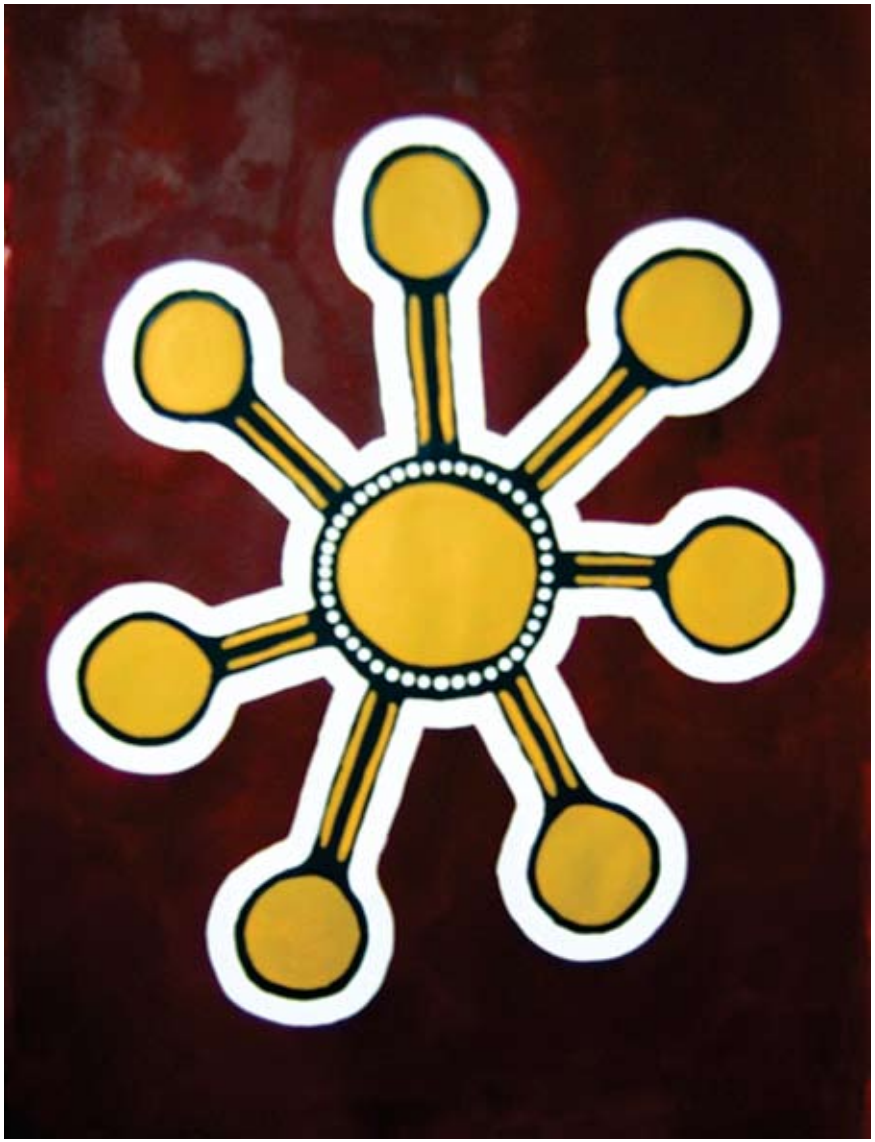
While Badtjala people seldom visit the exact mission site, the telling of stories about this place and time in history are passed down by way of oral tradition.

With every new generation of Indigenous young people it is an opportunity to reminds us all, that with every action in life, we have 'choice'. We have a choice to listen to our inner spirit, stand up for what's good for our people and country, and travel along an Indigenous way.

Badtjala people are engaged in a continuum of healing to address past injustices that non-Indigenous people committed against them. It is a creative track that uses the example of the Bogimbah Mission as a source of inspiration to be culturally and spiritually mindful and create an Indigenous lifestyle centred in a greater sense of Indigenous wellbeing.

Living now is our positive future.

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7 Indigenous ways by Shawn Wondunna-Foley, ink and synthetic polymer on paper



Family life on K'gari (Fraser Island) by Shawn Wondunna-Foley, ink and synthetic polymer on paper