Indigenous Significance

Fish Trap (Stone) - Booral

This place at Booral, Hervey Bay is historically and culturally significant to Badtjala (Butchulla) people because it is an important focal point for catching fish, collecting eatable marine life and evidence of sustainable living practices used by Badtjala people on country.

Understanding Country

Place

The Fish Trap's simplicity of design and construction showcases Indigenous people's ingenuity. Efficient use of local coastal resources provide support for family wellbeing and nurturing a living prosperous Indigenous community.

Badtjala people see the area as a place that supports Indigenous peoples' living connection with the sea and the mangroves.

This place is recognised as a communal gathering area for the catching of fish and the collecting of other marine life. It is also a beginning place for demonstrating cultural principles of sharing and giving towards others in need of support, or the principles of 'use only what you need'.

The Fish Trap is an enduring symbol of a seasonal relationship between Badtjala and sea country through the sustainable use of eatable marine life. It is, an example of local Indigenous people working collaboratively together to resolve and action a long-term sustainable solution.

Looking after self, family, community and country is inter-related and the Fish Trap affirms this Indigenous living principle.



Fish Traps, Booral

Photo: Shawn Wondunna-Foley

Living Connections

This place lies within the tidal zone of the beach and easily accessible on foot. The large stones have been laid in adjoining half moon-shaped ridges to form the walls for the Fish Trap. They act as a 'safe' holding pool while the tide is receding.

This physical structure provides a complementary social and cultural backbone for Badtjala and the Indigenous community today. This is in the form of a learning place for the teaching of Indigenous knowledge and the inspiration for cultural programs and artworks.

Badtjala continue their tradition of honouring the 'old people', (ancestral spirits) while at sea and catching fish like karbunya (mullet), brim, tulara (whiting), flathead, sole fish and using other marine life from various locations on country.

This place is evidence of Badtjala's diverse connection to sea country. With every stone laid, there was purpose, a clear intent to make a lasting contribution to the greater good of the community and, hence, ensure families' survival on country.

Changing tides — refreshing lives.

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Gung (Water), by Shawn Wondunna-Foley, 2007,
ink and synthetic polymer on paper



Fish in trap, by Shawn Wondunna-Foley, 2007,
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