



# MAKING OLD MARKINGS NEW

**Arts  
north  
west**





Arts North West acknowledges  
Aboriginal people as the  
traditional custodians  
of the lands we work on.

We recognise the strength, resilience and  
capacity of Aboriginal people  
and respect Aboriginal Elders  
past and present.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are  
warned that this publication may contain images and  
names that may relate to deceased persons.



## LANDSCAPE

*"Like sentinels of time immemorial, the granite tors stand out, guiding us through the landscape as markers in our history, protecting giant notice boards of rock art for all to see.*

*Land is our mother, we come from the land, when we die we go back to the land, it's our supermarket, our calendar, our shelter. It records and holds the secret stories and tales of our people."*

## ROCK ART

*"We had no written down history, our story is in the land, some of our story is told through rock art such as this, painted on a granite parchment, it can't be changed.*

*Our story is written in the land, we have sacred and special places, look after story, look after Country, it look after you, that's how we have survived for over 70,000 years."*

Uncle Bob Faulkner  
Anaiwan Elder





# THE PROJECT


*Making Old Markings New* is a professional and skills development project for Aboriginal Anaiwan and Kamilaroi artists funded by Create NSW through the Aboriginal Regional Arts Fund.

*Making Old Markings New* aims to rediscover traditional Aboriginal mark making techniques from the New England North West region. Visits were made to several rock art sites in the New England region including Wattleridge, Mt Yarrowyck, Goonoowigall and Boundary Rock to observe the important protocols and view the traditional mark making, symbols and techniques that make the New England North West region unique. *Making Old Markings New* also visited the Australian Museum to view the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collections, and in particular, artefacts of the region.

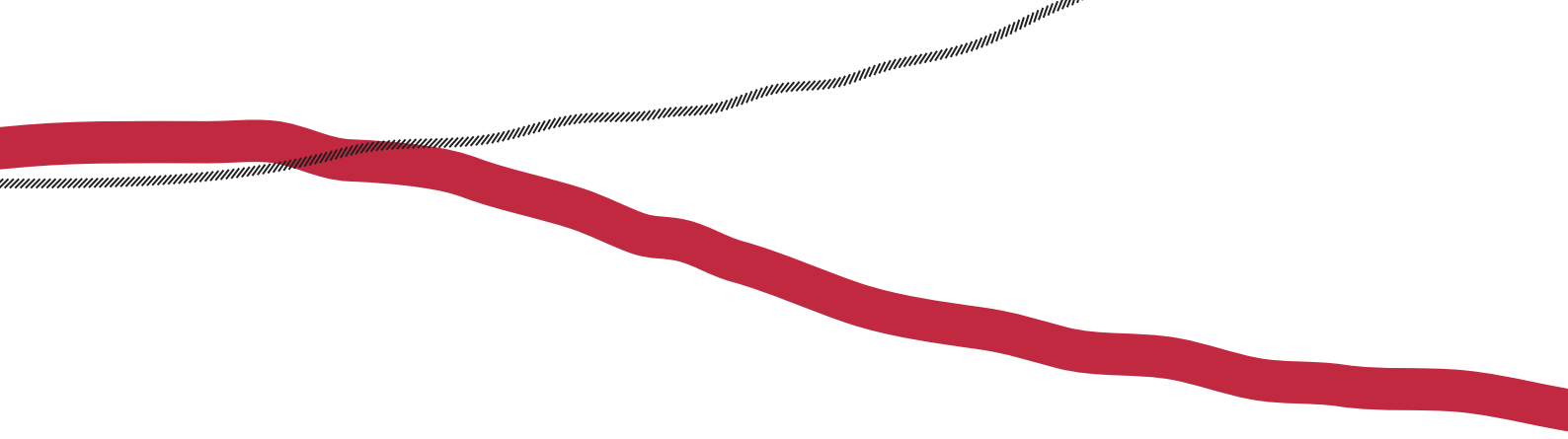
Firstly I would like to thank the Elders who gave their time and knowledge - Uncle Bob Faulkner, Tamworth LALC and Banbai Nation. I would also like to acknowledge artists Rod McIntosh (Tenterfield, NSW), Lorryne Riggs (Ashford, NSW), Adele Chapman-Burgess (Glen Innes, NSW) and Nick Levy (Armidale, NSW), and archaeologist June Ross from the University of New England for their participation in this project which was superbly managed by Pene Riggs of 2 Rivers Pty Ltd. Thanks also to Sharni Jones and Rebecca Fisher from the Australian Museum for their expertise.

*Caroline Downer*

Executive Director  
Arts North West









# WATTLERIDGE

## BACKWATER, NSW 2365



The Banbai people were formally recognised as the Traditional Owners of the Wattleridge Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) in June 2001 when the IPA was gazetted. The IPA lies thirty-five kilometres north-east of the New England township of Guyra, and covers 648 hectares. The only recorded axe-grinding groove sites and documented art sites in the local area are found on Wattleridge.

The main rock art site is located in a granite overhang nestled on a ridge in dense bushland. A scar tree has been recorded nearby which may have been used for a large shield, a coolamon or a canoe. The art has been painted using bold red ochre strokes and has been placed on the ceiling and back walls of the rockshelter. Motifs include hand stencils, bird tracks and an image identified as kukra (echidna in Banbai language). Kukra are abundant in the area and were a sustainable food staple in the past. The presence of the painting of a kukra demonstrates the significance of this animal to the Banbai people both as a food source and as their totem.











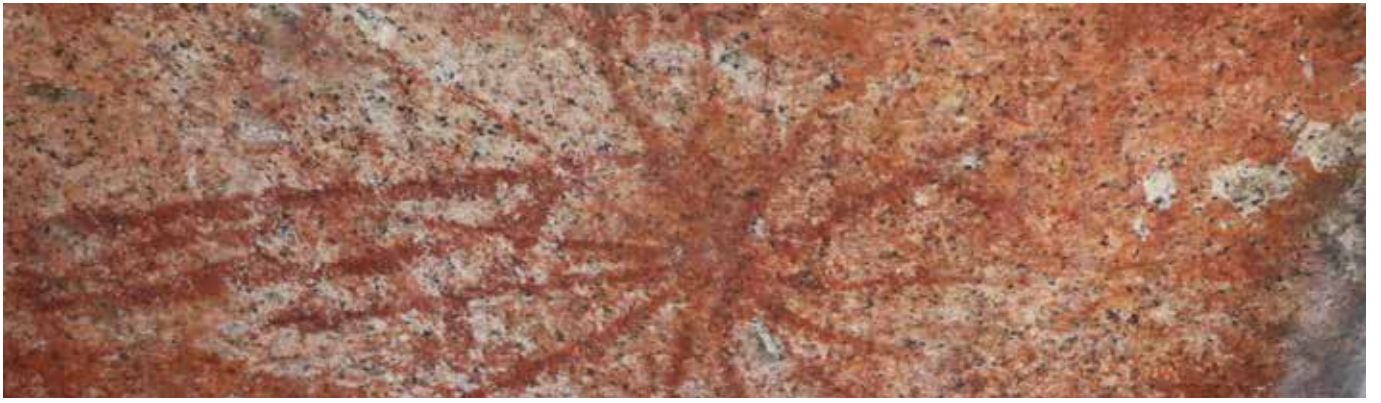
# GOONOOWIGALL

## INVERELL, NSW 2360



Goonoowigall was gazetted as a State Conservation area in 2005 and is located in bushland five kilometres south of Inverell. Goonoowigall is part of the territory occupied by the Jukembal Aboriginal people whose descendants lived in the area near Sheep Station creek until the early 1960s. The Aboriginal meaning of Goonoowigall is thought to translate as “plenty of rock wallaby and water”. The main painting site is located on the underside of a large granite boulder on a steep rocky hillside. Consecutive waves of artists have selected the same natural panel on the rockface on which to paint meaning that some of the later paintings partly obscure earlier ones. Overpainting of a single rockface suggests that the site was particularly significant and that adding paintings was an important practice in the past. The dominant motif is a starburst – a series of lines radiating out from a central point, a motif that is not commonly found at other art sites in the region. There are a number of these motifs but they vary in size. Other motifs include a large oval, bird tracks and sinuous lines, all painted in red ochre.







# BOUNDARY ROCK

## MOONBI, NSW 2353



Boundary Rock is located near Moonbi, north east of Tamworth. The dramatic panel of rock art is painted in red ochre on a large granite boulder and depicts figures, lines and circles, all typical of other rock art assemblages over the northern tablelands. The meaning of the story depicted has been passed down using Songlines and records that Boundary Rock was a meeting place where tribes from different nations conducted ceremonies. It is believed the images on the rock tells the story of the boundary between nations and depicts a ceremony taking place with the circles being the ceremonial areas and the stick figures representing the people. Similar rock art sites nearby were excavated in the 1960s with radiocarbon samples demonstrating that Aboriginal people have been using rock shelters in the area for at least 800 years. Rock art would have been added to Boundary Rock during visits to the site.











# MT YARROWYCK

## YARROWYCK, NSW 2358



Mount Yarrowyck is located to the west of Armidale in the traditional territory of the Anaiwan. It was gazetted as a Nature Reserve in February 1983 in order to protect the significant rock art site and the natural environment around Mount Yarrowyck. The red ochre paintings are found on a single sloping panel on the underside of a large granite boulder at the foot of the mountain. Images include bird tracks, circles lines, dots and human-like figures. The predominance of bird tracks has led some Traditional Owners to suggest that the site may have been an important Bird Dreaming site but the particular species is not known. The paintings remain in excellent condition despite their exposure to the elements indicating that they are likely to have been painted relatively recently, perhaps sometime in the last few hundred years or so. In the past, both Mount Yarrowyck and Boundary Rock had bora grounds (ceremonial grounds) located nearby highlighting the importance of each of these areas.





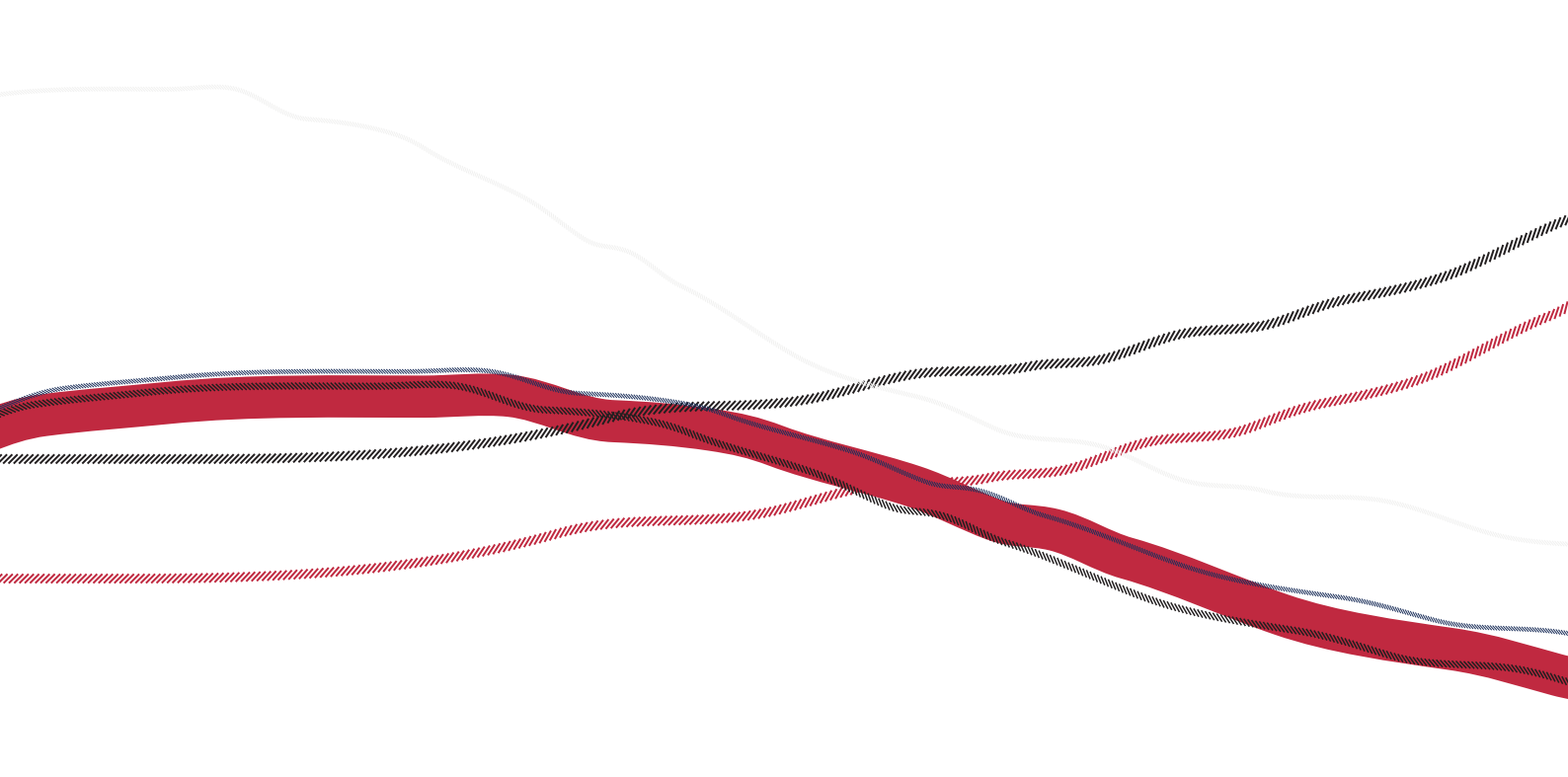
# THE AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM SYDNEY, NSW 2000



All images and object information including object provenance has been supplied courtesy of  
The Australian Museum.








The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collection consists of three disparate focus areas; A collection of over 20,000 cultural objects from diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, a rich repository of over one million Aboriginal archaeological heritage materials providing a rich source for community cultural research and academic research. The active repatriation of ancestral remains and secret/sacred material, in line with federal and state legislative requirements and adherence to strict cultural protocols.

Whilst we acknowledge past colonial museum collecting practices, today, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collections are closely interwoven with

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities' ongoing connection to living culture. The teams' custodial responsibilities include collection activation through the facilitation of appropriate Aboriginal-led engagements to create a new shared experience for Aboriginal communities, artists', students and also with Museum staff.

Enshrined within each cultural object is a living breathing 'ancestral spirit' or 'inter-generational' cultural memory hidden within a deep complex layer of cultural identity, ceremony, language, untold stories, truths and metaphysical spirit. We welcome Community to engage in a reciprocal exchange with us and share in ways we can truth-tell our past, our present and our shared future.

Sharni Jones  
Manager  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collection  
The Australian Museum







*Boomerang, New England, wood, 77.5 x 5.4 x 1.0 cm, Australian Museum Collection (E051221)*  
*Boomerang, New England, wood, 76.0 x 5.8 x 0.9 cm, Australian Museum Collection (E051223)*





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*Shield, Merrywinebone, wood, 52.5 x 15.8 cm Australian Museum Collection (E031413)*  
*Club, Moree, wood, 70 x 1.6 cm, Australian Museum Collection (E058815)*

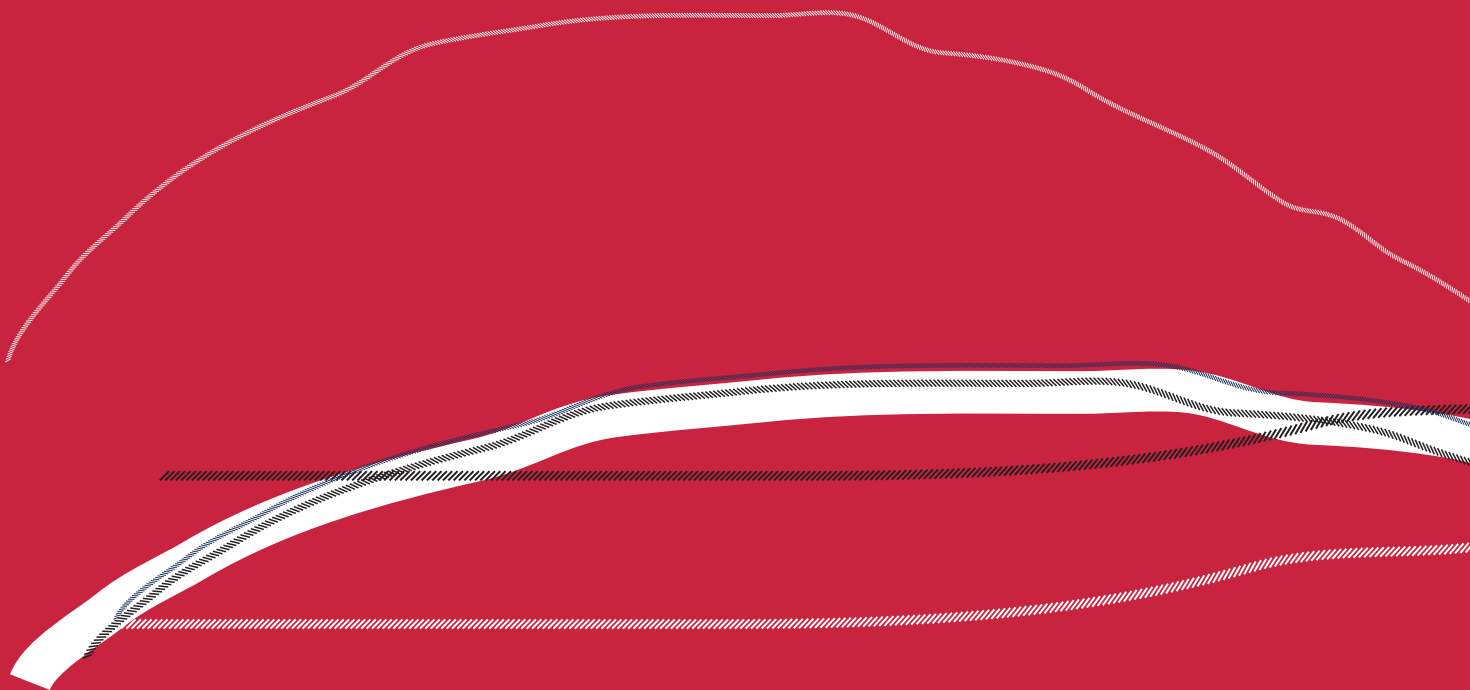






*Boomerang, Walcha c. 1896, wood, 70 x 6 cm, Australian Museum Collection (E081019)*  
*Club, Moree, wood, 82.5 x 5.8 cm, Australian Museum Collection (E051210)*

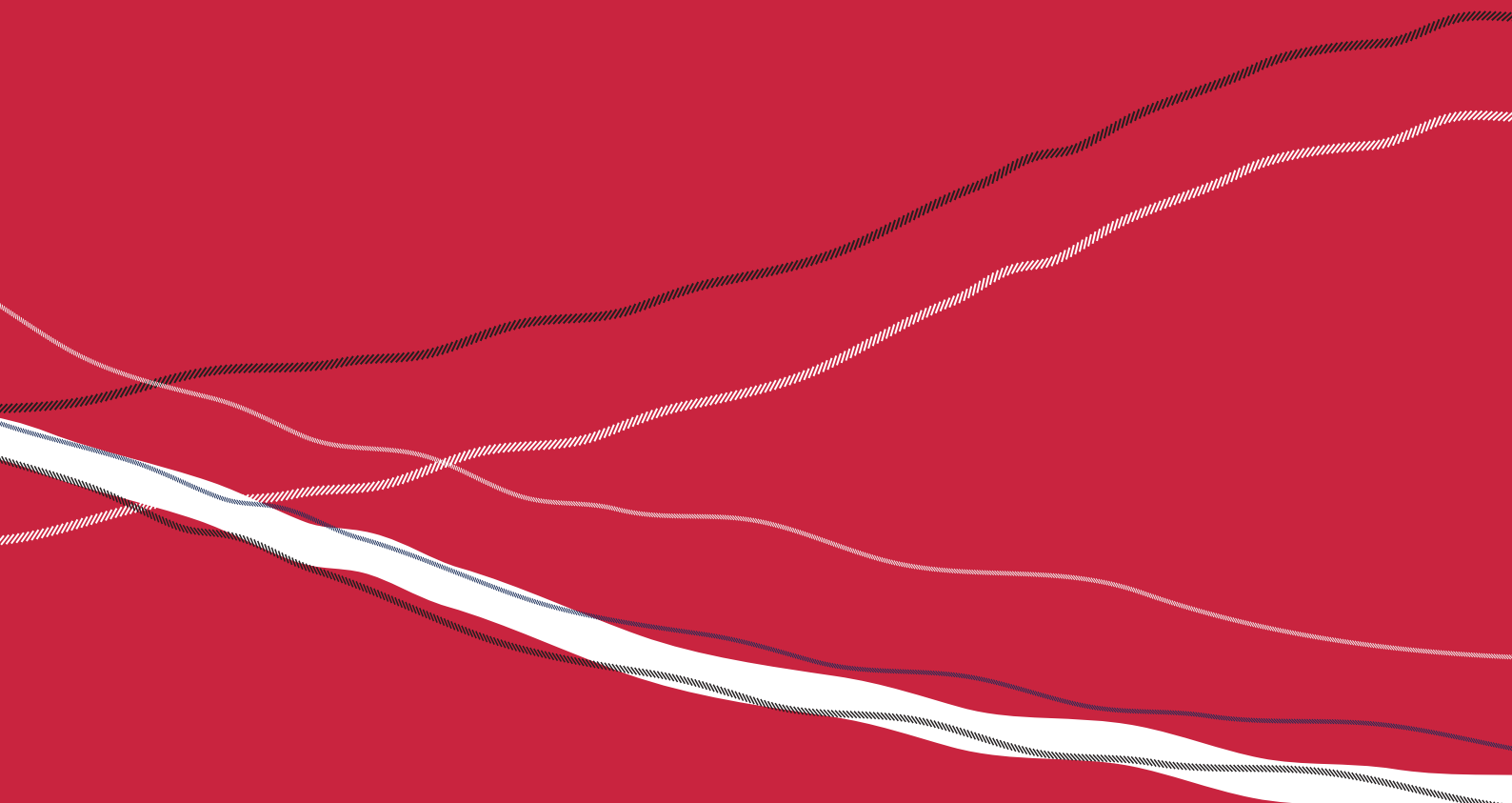




# ARTS NORTH WEST

Based in Glen Innes, Arts North West is the regional arts development organisation for the New England North West of NSW. Arts North West is supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW and the partnership of twelve local government authorities.

Arts North West facilitates the development of arts and cultural projects and initiatives across the New England North West of NSW, building a rich cultural landscape in the region and increasing participation in arts and cultural activities. We play a vital role in building cultural community capacity, through advice and advocacy, through substantial professional development provision and with the forging of key partnerships and networks throughout the region.







PO Box 801  
Glen Innes NSW 2350  
office@artsnw.com.au  
02 6732 4988

[artsnw.com.au](http://artsnw.com.au)

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