



Emblematic Turtles

Turtles represent Aboriginal culture and they were always an important food. Here we see the small long-necked river turtles arriving on shore. They would travel upstream to lay their eggs in the breeding season. The boomerangs signify the Bundjalung people's hunting traditions. Their hands and footprints can be seen against the orange earth.

Food Animals

Kangaroo, Wallaby, Carpet Python and Goanna were all important traditional foods. The hunter's hands — seen on right and left of the panel — would clap loudly to make noise. More noise would be made by banging the ground or the boomerang. This clamour would have chased the animals out enabling them to be caught.



The Hunt

In the past the largest goanna (possibly the one Europeans call a "Lace Monitor") was hunted for food. Here we see how the spears they used would have been propelled by a special barbed or hooked throwing-stick. The stick sent the spear further and with greater accuracy. The lines of dots against the blue background represent the many intersecting trails covered during a hunt.

Feeding the Community

Two of the brothers have returned from the hunt. Each bears a wallaby as food for their people. The villagers would have been waiting in their distant campsite. If the prey had been near enough a spear would have been used. But if the prey escaped it would then have been caught with the boomerang.



Welcome

- Jingi Wahla
This invites people from the residential estates to the west to come and enjoy the beach. Old and new inhabitants meet and two cultures mingle. On the right side are the routes travelled and animals encountered by indigenous custodians when they came to the beach. On the left side we see the fast-moving Green Tree Snake representing the land of Australia.



Rainbow Serpent

The tunnel's ceiling is dominated by a monumental Rainbow Serpent. This emblem represents the entire Aboriginal Nation. It includes all the tribes scattered over the continent of Australia with Uluru at the nation's centre. Every tribe will use this Rainbow Serpent emblem in their paintings.

WELCOME JINGI WAHLA

ANGELS BEACH BLACK HEAD RECONCILIATION TUNNEL MURALS

Designed and painted in 2004 by Bundjalung artists
**Susan Anderson, Vivienne Simpson, Priscilla Sutor
and Stephen Sutor**

Aboriginal sites represent a spiritual reality — a strong link that joins individuals to ancestors, mythology and Dreaming. Sites are the places from which each person came and to which their spirit returns after death.

Murals in the tunnel tell the story of the Three Brothers — Yarbirri, Mamoon and Burrung who were the ancestral founders of the Bundjalung Nation (for the full story see the plaque on the wall at each entrance).

They depict scenes from the customary lives of the original inhabitants of the beach whose direct descendants are now Traditional Custodians and Native Title Claimants.

Whoever we may be — Aboriginal, European or from countries elsewhere in the world — when viewing these murals we gain a glimpse into the history of this ancient and beautiful place.

We hope that through appreciation of this history the cause of reconciliation will be promoted and that those who use the beach will be led to respect it as befits the recognised, significant cultural heritage site that it is.



The Reconciliation Tunnel is located 4km from the Tourist Information Centre via Hill Street, and 5km via the Tourist Drive (Shelly Beach Rd).

The Murals Project was funded by a NSW Attorney General's Department "Beat Graffiti" grant, administered and supported by Angels Beach Dunecare volunteers, Ballina Shire Council Open Spaces & Reserves Staff and Council Painters. Additional sponsorship in 2004 was provided by Mitre 10 Ballina, Dulux Australia and Watty Australia.

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Today Angels Beach is a sacred site because of a tragic massacre in the mid-19th century.

A remembrance plaque has been erected on a rock 250 metres south from this tunnel along the cyclepath, near Gundi Conference Centre.



Birth of the Bundjalung Nation

Yarbirri, Mamoon and Burrung arrive in their bark canoe at Bullinah (Ballina) following the storm. Reunited with their grandmother they will go North, South and West, setting up Laws by which the people will live.



Camping, Travel and Celebrating

One brother and his family camp on a hillside inland from Flat Rock. This northern end of the beach is the site of many buried, ancient middens. Dots in the outer frame represent tribes and individuals travelling over their country. Favourite foods — Kangaroo and Echidna — are seen in the outer frame. Travellers from all over would meet here every year for feasting, initiation ceremonies and other celebrations.



Fishing

The many footprints around this panel represent all the Bundjalung people who have walked down to the sea to fish. They first called to the dolphins ('tapping the water') in their own language. The dolphins came and helped them catch the fish while the seabirds watched from overhead.



The Four Elements

Wind, Fire, Earth and Rain are four elements that make up the Bundjalung world. Each one is represented by its special arrangement of dots. The four waves stand for Wind, the semicircle for Fire, the full circle for Earth and the spiral for Rain. The Bundjalung clans are represented by the handprints all over this panel. All indigenous clans recognise these same symbols.



Toolmaking

In the past tools and instruments had to be made for hunting, preparing food, and to use in the corroboree. There were boomerangs, spears and didgeridoos. Blue hands around this panel represent Elders, who must preside over important matters like making tools and weapons.



Night Dreaming

An Elder would be watching the night sky, his body decorated with special designs having magical power to call in the night spirits. The spirits would speak and their messages come down to earth.



Massacre

Two Elders watch as the terrible events unfold. Afterwards the bodies of the dead were thrown off the headland (Black Head, South-East of this tunnel). The panel shows the



spirits of the dead rising up from the beach. In the corners are painted black hands covered in their own blood. People trying to escape fled north along the beach, hiding among trees. Those who died before they could reach safety would later be buried in the hind-dunes. The central shield stands for Indigenous people and the white dots link their family members — Mother, Father and Children. The Aboriginal colours of red, yellow and black stand against the blue background of sea and sky.

Beach of Plenty

Facing the sea to the East, the blue wings of this tunnel show some of the plants, animals and fish of this area. Awards won by the Beach are on display.



Hunting and Fishing

In the background we see Angels Beach with a green headland at each end. One of the three brothers can be seen hunting and fishing on the dunes with his family. He has been making himself a fishing net while his woman holds a spear, watching with her child. Grass-trees ('Black Boys' or 'Xanthorrhoea' to Europeans) represent Bundjalung land.



Gifts from the Sea

This frame shows some of the varied food available from the sea, the estuary of the river and North Creek. They would have caught Mullet, Bream, Crabs, Pippies, Oysters, 'Water Cobras', Prawns and other good tucker. This abundance of food helped make Angels Beach a major centre of customary usage, and a meeting place for the clans of the whole region.

Medicine and Food

Green rainforests surround this panel and in the middle we see the range of local foods and medicines those forests provided. Other food would have come from the beach, the river and the nearby Chickiba Lakes that lie directly West from here.



Tools

Many hand-fashioned tools were used for hunting and other purposes. They are pictured here alongside the local foods and animals. In the centre, the sun rises over the sea to shine on all the Bundjalung Land. Both the sea and the land are surrounded by closed lines of dots that represent the tribes and individuals travelling everywhere over this, their country.



Reconciliation

This panel gives this place its name. On the left and right we see a white man facing a black man in friendship. In the middle a black hand clasps a white hand in reconciliation. People who visited the tunnel during the painting have left their handprints for posterity. Many of the visitors were local children, who watched the artists creating the work and supported them with fun and friendship.

