



**MULOORINBA MAP**  
A tour of the Aboriginal stories  
and objects in Newcastle Museum

**Opening hours**  
10am-5pm Tuesday - Sunday  
(Every day during school holidays)

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The City of Newcastle acknowledges that we are on the traditional country of the Awarbukarl and Worrimai peoples. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land.

Designed by Jasmine Craciun  
Newcastle was presented as a scatter of stars to show the importance of place, and as a representation of the different suburbs of Newcastle and the Hunter. The star symbol is used to signify the different parts of Newcastle, each connected through special stories and people.

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**Newcastle Museum**  
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## 1 The Arches

Aboriginal people lived rich, healthy lives; hunting and gathering, trading and socialising at corroborees and ceremonies. They ate shellfish, whales, possums, wallabies, kangaroos and emus. Dreaming stories connected places and communities. Biraban, the eagle hawk, is revered in this region.



1968/20, /22, /24, /25, 1979/34, 1993/337

Stone tools were used by Aboriginal people for grinding seed, chopping wood, preparing food and to process animal skins. Coal tar medicine and chert were traded south to Victoria in exchange for the hard volcanic stone used in these locally made axes, representing complex trade routes during these times. The Awarbukarl word for stone axe is *bukko*.

## 5 Beaumont Street

Before the arrival of Europeans the Beaumont Street area was known to the traditional owners, the Awarbukarl, as *Ahwar-tah Bulboolba*, 'flat it is, Wallaby place'. The area consisted of sand flats covered in tea tree scrub which provided an abundance of wildlife for hunting. Water came from two creeks, the Styx to the west and Cottage Creek to the east. Intense industrial activity and suburban growth from the 1830s on destroyed much of the archaeological evidence of Awarbukarl life, but the culture and dreamings continue.

## 6 Link Gallery

Merv Maynard was inducted into the Aboriginal and Islander Sports Hall of Fame for horse racing.



L2011.2

## 2 Faces Wall



The Wallarah Hotel, today known as the Catho Pub, made national headlines when Ted and Dorothy Wotherspoon became the nation's first Aboriginal publicans in 1971.



Biraban (c.1800-1846) Emily Heath King Billy, circa 1900



Merv Maynard (second from the left) was a Worrimai man and a talented jockey who rode for Sir Frank Packer, the Sultan of Jahor and won the Queen's Cup. Merv retired from racing in 1994 at the age of 66.



Dave Sands was a Dunghutti man born in 1926 at the Burnt Bridge Aboriginal Mission near Kempsey.

## 3 Newcastle on the World Stage



William (Nip) Simon born in Forster NSW and Harold Maher born in Karuah NSW, served together in the First World War in the 20th Battalion.

## 4 Play

Dave Sands began boxing in Newcastle in 1943. By 1946 he had claimed the Australian Middleweight and Light-heavyweight crowns. Dave won the Empire Middleweight crown in 1949 and returned home from England a national hero. Dave Sands recorded 97 wins in 110 professional bouts, 63 by knockout. He held the British Empire Middleweight crown, the Australian Heavyweight, Light-heavyweight and Middleweight titles.

## 7 Fishing Tree & Kuueeyung



2002/1

This tree was used by generations of Worrimai people to find schools of fish near Bagnalls Beach.

Kuueeyung, traditional bark canoe, was the main form of transport on our waterways and used for fishing.

## 8 Supernova

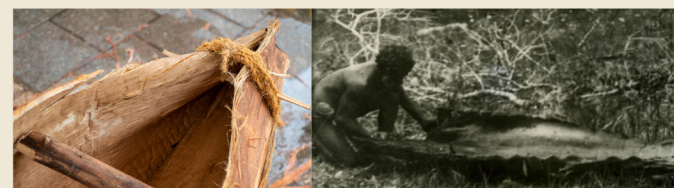


Image (right) courtesy of Cultural Collections, University of Newcastle

The Kuueeyung is made from the Punnah, Stringybark tree, and is an amazing example of Aboriginal peoples' knowledge of materials handling and engineering skill.

## 9 BHP

The BHP steel works represented a place of employment and opportunity for many Aboriginal people. After the Second World War, Aboriginal people were employed across the works in a variety of roles, including engine drivers, crane operators, boiler makers and blast furnace workers. At a time when racial prejudice was experienced, BHP gave Aboriginal people the same responsibilities, rights and pay as their non-Aboriginal work mates.

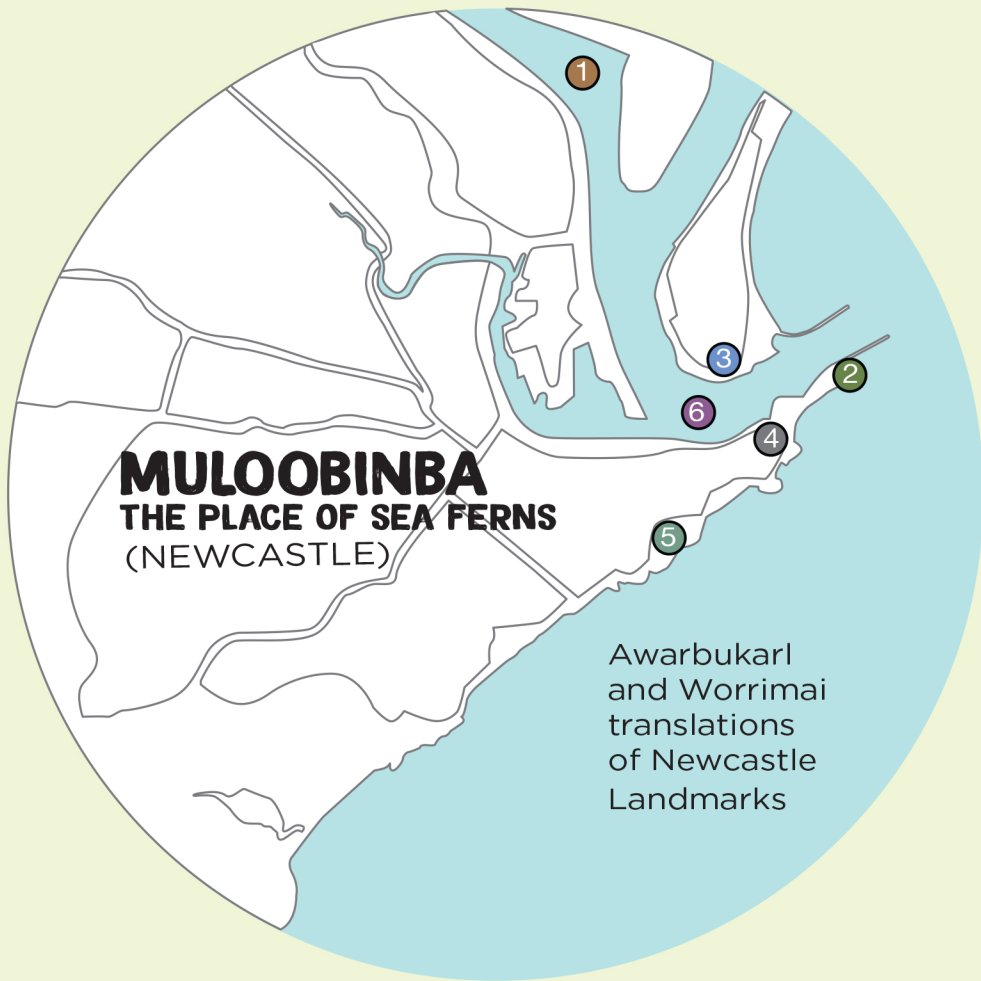


## 10 Coal

Coal was an important resource for the Awarbukarl people for thousands of years. It was collected and distilled for tar and oil to make disinfectant, liniment and medicines. In the late nineteenth century white settlers in the Wollombi region traded with Aboriginal people for coal tar based medicines.

The Awarbukarl people believed that a long time ago a great darkness came over the land. The darkness came from a hole in a mountain and blocked out the sunlight. After the people discussed how to bring back the sunlight the elders decided that they needed to cover up the darkness with rocks, sand, branches and bark. After the darkness was covered many generations walked on the ground pressing the earth and darkness together, which created coal.





## Places

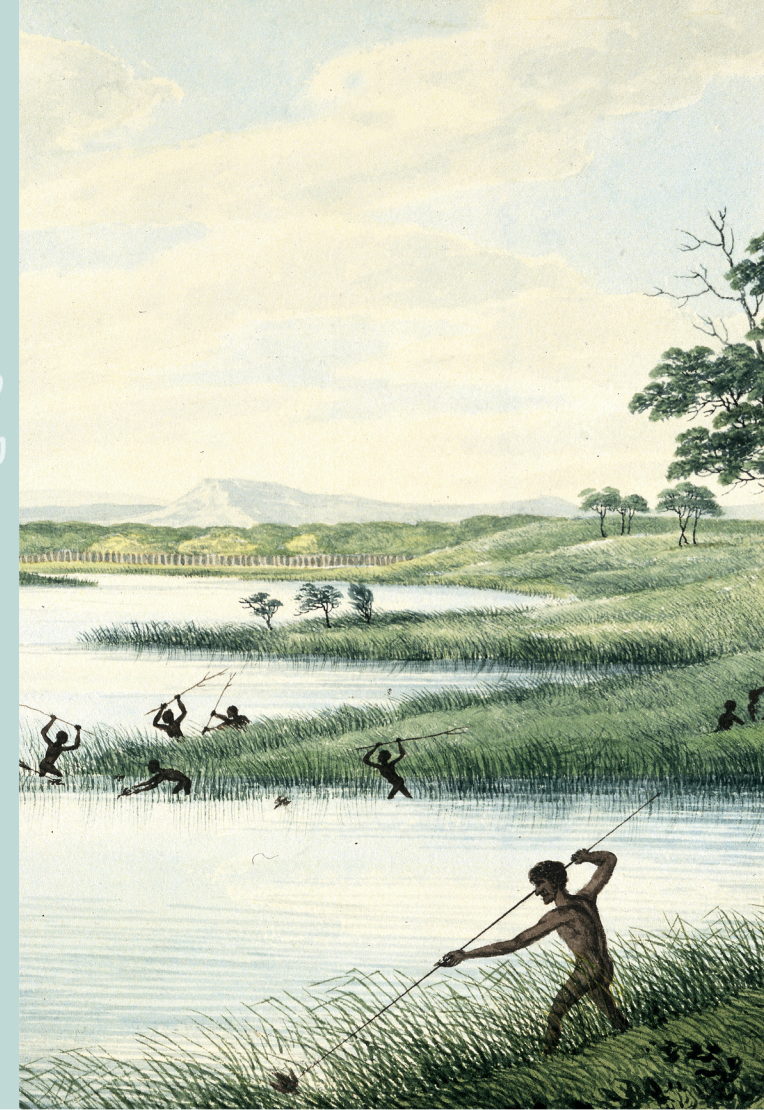
- ① Coquun  
The Hunter River  
(South Channel)
- ② Whibayganba  
Nobbys Headland
- ③ Burrabihngarn  
Pirate Point
- ④ Tahlbihn  
Flagstaff Hill
- ⑤ Khanterin  
Shepherds Hill
- ⑥ Yohaaba  
Port Hunter

## The Land

This land was once a prehistoric subtropical forest and coastal swamp that has gifted Newcastle and the Hunter with the legacy of coal. Coquun (The Hunter River) and the Pacific Ocean have provided maritime resources, from fishing and whale feasts to the State Dockyards and international trade.

Our city is well known for natural landmarks like Whibayganba (Nobbys). Local dreaming says there is a notorious kangaroo that lives there who was banished and when he crashes his tail against the earth, it makes the rocks fall and the ground tremble. The Awarbukarl people believe this to be the cause of earthquakes.

Joseph Lycett *Aborigines hunting water birds in the rushes* (detail) 1813  
Image courtesy of the National Library of Australia



## Museum Site

The land on which Newcastle was built is called *Muloobinba*. It means 'the place of sea ferns'. Currently, there is no archaeological evidence of the way Aboriginal people used the Newcastle Museum site pre-white settlement but we do know that this land was not underwater. Recent excavations just west of the Museum on Hunter Street have uncovered rich and diverse evidence of Aboriginal people's occupation and community.

We want to gain more knowledge about the Newcastle Museum site. The land and its stories are significant and we will continue to pursue research about this ancient land we have built upon.

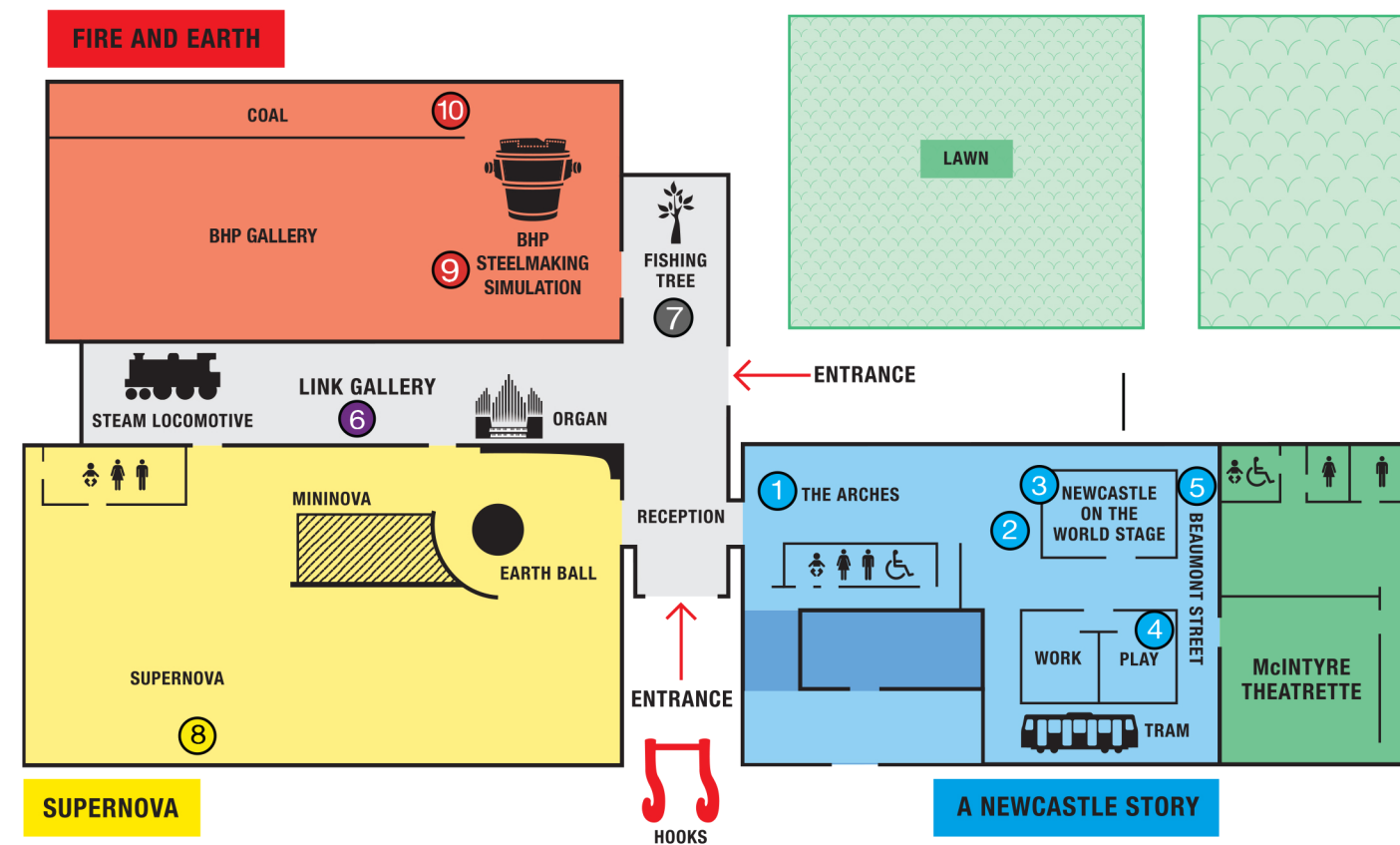
## People

Newcastle, the Hunter Valley and Central Coast Region were populated by six nations, the Awarbukarl, the Worrimai, the Birripai, the Wonnarua, the Gringai and the Darkinyung.

Newcastle Museum is dedicated to honouring the traditions and diversity of Aboriginal people and cultures. This map will guide you through some of the significant local histories of our Aboriginal people, exploring themes of work, leisure, and culture and highlighting some of our most cherished objects in the Museum collection.



Joseph Lycett *Aborigines Resting by a Camp Fire near the Mouth of the Hunter River, Newcastle, NSW* (detail) 1775-1828 Courtesy National Library of Australia



- ① The Arches
- ② Faces Wall
- ③ Newcastle on the World Stage
- ④ Play
- ⑤ Beaumont Street
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- ⑧ Supernova
- ⑨ BHP
- ⑩ Coal