

Katjiraka

The known Clan History of the Buluwai Tribe

As remembered, researched and written by

Dianne Brim

Introduction

It was back on a Friday, on the Eleventh day of June 2010, that I was surprised by an unexpected visitor, an Elder, Mr Roy Gray, from Yarrabah. I had heard of him throughout the years, had read his name in books and as an informant on genealogies. I had even heard of him personally from my mum, who lives in Newcastle, New South Wales, but I had never met Roy until he was at my gate around 12 noon on that very afternoon.

I invited Roy inside. Hesitating, he was more concerned that my dog Stumpy, a Smithfield Blue, would bite him on the way through to the front door. But as I told him, my dog looks vicious, he'd probably lick you to death, he does his job very well indeed; and yet, I had never known him to bite anyone invited into his yard.

'Your mother reckon you're a hard person to get in contact with', he laughed nervously, 'I called around earlier, but no-one was at home', he added. I knew he had come a long way to see me.

Inside my home and sitting at the kitchen table, formal introductions were made as this was the first time we had officially met each other.

Offering a cup of tea, I was very curious, intrigued as a matter of fact, at the unexpected surprise visit.

Roy explained to me that he had spoken to my mum in Newcastle and that she, had mentioned to him, that I had continued to do research on my family tree and our tribal history, particularly here in the Cairns district.

We got to talking about family and where we are all tribally connected, but because of 'the way things were', our family links were broken. Somehow yet, we always instinctively knew where we belong and who our family were. Personally, I was honoured that an Elder sought me out to try and put pieces of a jig-saw puzzle together.

'You should write a book about Speewah' Roy said. Writing a book about my people, the Buluwai people, was something that I had always wanted and needed to do, and now, an Elder, had formally asked me to do just that; to write the unwritten, unknown history of my people. I knew there were no more excuses for me not to, after all, Roy was prepared to help in any way that he could.

'We need to tell people the truth about our side of history', 'some Traditional Owners aren't getting a say about things, they're being forgotten', he said. I agreed with him because I knew all too well how my people are denied our inherited right to care for our land. Two hours later, telephone numbers exchanged, Roy left, promising to return with his wife, for she too, would be very interested.

I began thinking where I should start, what I should write, but in reality, I knew the only thing I could do was to write the unbridled truth about my family's history and experiences. After all, I had the best teachers anyone could ask for, my Elders, the dignified old people, those whose clear and direct stories were told from a generation who lived the life.

Map 1



Norman B Tindale 1938 - Cairns & Hinterland Tribes

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Map 2

Photo titled 'Queensland Aboriginals'

Standing at rear, third from left is Toby Brim. The background mountain scenery appears to be taken at the Barron Gorge, Queensland.

Photograph courtesy of Ngoonbi Co-Operative Society, Kuranda.

Buluwai Bulmba: My Country, My Home

From a time so ancient, the Great Southern Land has always been the only home of the Australian Aboriginal. Every part of Australia was and continues to be occupied by its chosen people, and this is according to tribal boundaries that were suitably divided and named long before anyone can fathom or theorise.

From all the sovereign tribal nations that occupy this land Australia, and of all the tribes that continue to respect their boundaries as it remains to be, here in the far north of Queensland, my people are Buluwai and we have lived on our traditional land for thousands of years before James Cook and the term 'Terra Nullius' came to be.

Above Gimoy, the city of Cairns, in an area of approximately 500 sq. km, Buluwai is one of the many Aboriginal tribes whose connected boundaries make up the Gimoy and Atherton Tableland district. As an Australian is from Australia, an American from America, so are the Buluwandji from Buluwai and the Djabugandji from Djabugay.

Buluwai country can be seen as dense rain forest in some areas, especially around Ngoonbi, Kuranda and Din Din, the Barron Gorge;

yet, there are areas that can be described as savannah. Ngoonbi traditional meaning is platypus and Kuranda is home for the platypus.

Our cold, clean waters originate high in the mountains of the Lamb Range as it snakes its way down through steep gorges and waterfalls forming into creeks which flows into the Barron River. Eventually the Barron River flows out into the warm coastal sea waters not far from Gimoy.

Every tribe is separated by either mountain ranges or rivers, and these ranges or rivers are those unmovable natural boundary landscape markers whose visual and spiritual presence cannot be ignored or changed by modern man.

Between Buluwai traditional lands and our neighbours Djabugay to the north, flows the Barron River boundary that separates us. Following the Barron River from Ngoonbi, down through Din Din, the Barron Gorge, heading towards the east coast, our boundary stops at Bidda, where Freshwater Creek unites with the Barron; the Irrikandji or Yirgay people are our eastern and coastal neighbours.

Long ago there were two Story water Yaba, brothers, named Damari and Guyala, they were sons of Buluru. Damari was a Maladamban, a Clever Man, who liked making life difficult for people, especially his brother Guyala. Where Damari was foolish, hard hearted and impulsive; Guyala was the opposite. One day Guyala was trying to make Biri, fire, but his Gimala, his firesticks were no good, so he asked Damari to help him. Damari laughed and said to his brother, 'you want me to help you make fire?'; 'I'll show you how to make fire'. The ground moved, it rumbled then exploded, it spat out fire and rock from deep below, forming a mountain. 'Why make a mountain when I only wanted fire?' Guyala asked. Damari got angry, he couldn't control himself, and he struck his brother's head. Saddened by what his brother had done, 'I will leave this world for you', Guyala said to Damari as he rose up into the Djin.gal, the sky, transforming into a Seahawk.

At Bidda not long after, Damari feels all alone; his brother is gone so now he decides to stop and play with Ganyarra, the crocodile. Many times before, Ganyarra who had no Didda, teeth, would make Damari laugh by biting, or tickling his leg with his toothless gums. But this

time, when Damari offered his leg, Ganyarra had teeth and bit off the lower part.

Shocked and losing blood quickly, Damari crawls up Garndal Garndal, Stony Creek. He lays down in a weakened state, for he knows death will soon arrive.

As he took his last breath, Damari body began to change and now he became the landscape and his head is transformed into Bunda Damari, or Glacier Rock as it is now called.

From Bidda, following south along the base of the range, Buluwai boundary veers westward, from Skeleton Creek near White Rock, and our boundary goes up and over the mountain towards Tinaroo where our southern and tableland neighbours are the Idindji, or the Idi people.

There were clans who had their own particular area that were separated by gullies or small creeks. Clan areas can be described as similar to suburbs in a small city like Cairns. Suburbs or Clan areas have houses, campsites, which are occupied by family groups. All combined, suburbs or Clan areas make up a city or tribal nation.

Within Buluwai country is Bunda Dibandji or Bare Hill as it is now known, and this place is thousands of years old. Bunda Dibandji is where galleries of ochre Rock Art have been painted that depicts a lifestyle that is no longer practiced.

It is the place where my people 'Birthing Site' are located and it is also the place where, tucked in a cave away and separated from our maternity hospital, is the Initiation Site that was used for men's business.

Nestled under a huge rock at Bunda Dibandji, sits a naturally formed stone alcove that rests on pure, fine white sand. This is the place where generations of my family were born and my family DNA has long been absorbed into Buluwai land.

A huge rock overhang protects the Birthing site from the weather and its underside portrays another gallery of ochre hand drawn figures of women and children.

Another Buluwandji Story is that of an ancestral warrior whose name was Kunindooran. One day Kunindooran was out hunting for Dulbill, wallaby, to take back to the clan for Ma, food, and after trying for most

of the morning, he had no luck. Kunindooran got Butcha Gurri, tired, he had no energy and so, decided to have a lay down and rest before trying again.

In the meantime two sisters were also out looking for Ma when they spotted a Bundarra. Knowing how dangerous Bundarra can be in the rainforest, the sisters decided to push Bundarra out into the open country, making it easier to kill. The sisters knew it was against our Law for women to make fire, but they did it anyway.

Once lit, the fire quickly got out of control and they couldn't gwout or put the fire out, they couldn't stop Guyurru, the wind, from spreading it further. As the fire spread Kunindooran awoke to the smell of smoke and to find he was trapped inside walls of fire; he could not find a way out.

Kunindooran was very badly burnt and was barely alive when the two sisters found him; the sisters knew what they had done and now Kunindooran lay suffering, dying because of them.

Taking Kunindooran to a place of healing, the two sisters nursed the badly burnt warrior, trying to save him, but after the third day

Kunindooran died; his soul travelled and he became a part of the land where his face can be seen as part of the huge rock that protects our Birthing Site at Bunda Dibandji. The two sisters were punished by eternally bound in stone, they stand above overlooking Bunda Dibandji.

As part of the Rock Art is a painting of a yellow skin woman and her brown skin baby that has hair that look like dreads. This woman can only be a European because she is not painted brown like other Bama women and white ochre was used for 'special' art. Yellow ochre was the only appropriate colour for her. This yellow skinned woman, her status within the clan, was important enough for her image to be drawn as part of recent Buluwandji history.

A natural Religion

Buluwandji religion credits creation of our country to Buda Dji, the Rainbow Serpent, whose masterful handiwork moulded and shaped the land. It is our name to what many other religions around the world interpret as their 'Higher Being', their God.

From the clouds and beyond, Buluru is another Creator God, the Law Giver, the same authority that was given to the Biblical Moses. All living creatures are the sons and daughters of Buluru, for it is the children of Buluru who are the guardians, the protectors, the upholders of the balance of the land and the waters that were created by Buda Dji.

Nature's landscape are our religious monuments, our environs is our church and we walk with Buluru anywhere, any time and any place, for it is a religion that cannot be worshipped once a week.

Bama understood we had no right to change what Buda Dji had already created to perfection, to alter the land because of greed was altering or interfering with the cycle and we would be punished with bad weather and loss of natural resources for being so self-important.

Every member of the clan is fit and when the clan started on their seasonal run, the Elders led by a discipline instilled over thousands of years of continuing practice. Bama knew certain foods grew in certain areas, so migrating seasonally made accessing a variety of food far more practical than being bound to one area.

Katjiraka seasonal run was *'live on edge of scrub from Kuranda to Bilu/Bihu and then to Little Mountain Tjiripadji (Lambs head, Djirr Bagi), to Mt Bartle Frere'* in Ngatjan country.

A tree wasn't seen as something that pleased the eye or needed to be cut down, we saw three uses for that one tree: food, tools and medicine. Amongst the variety of native fruit, Candlenut trees provided nuts as part of a nutritional diet. The oil from the Candlenut was massaged into the body to encourage strong muscles from birth, while its leaves were used as plates to eat off. Canoes and paddles could also be cut from its trunk.

The leaf base of the Yagal, Pandanus, were used to make baskets, and its trunk also made rafts. Black boy, Bulnyan, its' stalk made firesticks and spears, because it was light and straight. For children, the curled up bark rings could be worn as ear-rings or joined together to make necklaces or else burnt to repel mosquitos.

Where the land is respected for the gifts that Buda Dji and Buluru had provided for us, the same is said for our waters. Our *'Story Waters'* are respected as a living entity that sustains life.

Where people perform rituals for their religious beliefs, before taking fish you had to introduce yourself to the living waters. Rubbing a smooth white river stone, Walba, in both armpits, throwing the stone in the waters, softly speaking language, you have introduced yourself with your personal scent, you have paid respect and now ask the living waters to be generous. With only taking what is needed, you always leave the last fish behind to say thank you.

Moiety, Marriage and Law

Here in the Gimoy district, Bama tribes are defined by their moiety and tribal moieties determine customs, hunting skills, food source and Marriage Law.

In Buluwandji culture, moieties can be directly attributed to Damari and Guyala. Damari represented the Wet Side, Gurrabana, and Guyala represented the Dry Side, Gurraminya. Buluwai is Dry Country, Guyala, from the mountains, while the Irrikandji are Wet Country, Damari; the Bama on the coast.

Young men and women cannot marry into their own moiety. Any future partners had to be the opposite so as to ensure pure bloodline. 'Pure bloodline' means a full blood Buluwandji that has had six or more generations of other tribal bloodline being filtered out before starting back at the beginning again. It is another cycle where Bama has to know where their ancestors came from and who their family is.

Mixed blood, half caste, and octoroon are some scientific English words that describe a full blood Aboriginal whose blood has been mixed with introduced Caucasians. Nonetheless, Aboriginal blood takes precedence over any other introduced bloodline here in Australia.

Bama did not marry because someone looks good, a handsome or pretty trophy to show off or compliment you. Marriage with a neighbouring

tribal clansman, clanswoman, guaranteed continued civil and trade relations.

In a hunter gatherer society, all members have a duty to the whole of the clan through each of their inherited skills and mobility; hence, pure bloodline reduced the risk of an incapacitated child being born. In times of emergency, it is understood the whole clan could not be sacrificed for one person.

Marrying into another tribe meant that children from that marriage were taught their introduced neighbouring customs and languages apart from their own. A child could end up speaking a number of languages given the tribal background of each mother. Knowing and speaking different languages ensured safe passage through neighbouring lands, because somewhere along the mother's line, you are family. Hence, Katjiraka safe passage into neighbouring Idindji and Ngatjan country.

Modern women when married, take their husband's name and live away from their family, so it is with Buluwandji women. Buluwandji women left their homeland and lived in their husband's tribal territory.

Within the Buluwandji patrilineal clan, Katjiraka, every generation of males has to come from one source, the Apical Male Ancestor. So every generation of males born after the Apical Male Ancestor, calls each other 'brothers', for they are all the same, the 'Taipan' clan, Katjiraka.

Knowing your family is something that is not written, it has to be experienced, or remembered by an individual. Bama define all brothers and sisters of your parents as not only your uncles and aunts, but they are also classed as your mum and dad. All children from your uncle and aunts are your brothers or sisters; commonly known as cousin brother or cousin sister.

All brothers and sisters of your grandparents are your grannies and Grandchildren are also called grannies. There is no such thing as a half brother or sister because a person cannot choose which half. Nor is there any such thing as first, second or third relation removed, because you are either family or you're not.

Bama understood the responsibilities attached to marriage and the continuation of the family line, our survival knowledge and how children were treated and educated was very important in keeping the

clan structure, its strength, and its future. Adoption into a clan is another obligation where children have no parents.

Divorce was never heard of and when the husband died prematurely, it was the responsibility of the next eldest brother to 'responsibly' look after and provide for the widow and children. It is also the responsibility of the eldest siblings, or usually the whole clan who cares for the little ones, thus ensuring the clan unity still remains intact.

In any culture, social 'Laws' are set and are expected to be abided by its citizens. It is Laws that ensure that society function within boundaries and individuals clearly understand their station in life.

Where time and date is important to some, Bama 'Laws' were set millenniums ago; older than the Ten Commandments. Bama 'Laws' did not tolerate greed, lying, coveting, stealing, individualism, murder, as these offences were crimes against the people as a whole and really, they serve no purpose in life.

Bama didn't have jails or correctional centres because people knew that punishment for their crimes was exact and effective. An offender knows

that 'Laws' were set down long before his time, but once he chooses to break the Law, he then chooses his punishment.

There weren't any such thing as a re-offender, pleading your case or asking for mercy. It was rude for an offender to ask for forgiveness especially when they knew from the beginning what their individual role in society was.

Buluwandji 'Trespass Law' is what we all do today; we cannot enter a man's property unless we are given permission to do so. To enter uninvited is disrespectful to the land owner and punishable by Law. A tribe has no obligation to allow you into their borders unless they considered it urgent or relevant business. Sometimes you had to wait for days for permission to enter.

Rather than trespassing, a designated 'Common' ground, akin to a modern civic park, is where neighbouring tribal clans could all meet in a particular area to talk about trade, discuss intertribal business and sometimes camp.

Totems and Business

Within the Buluwai nation, every clan had a Totem that represented that particular family group. It is the same as European Family Crests and Kilt patterns, as being a specific clan's emblem.

Apart from a clan totem, each person had a personalised totem that represented them as an individual and each person had responsibility to their totem. Responsibility for your totem meant you could not unnecessarily eat or harm that particular plant or animal.

It is necessary in the act of hunting and gathering food as part of tribal life, it is the unnecessary killing or destroying that altered the balance and was seen as being detrimental to the clan's future food source. A person didn't maim or kill another living thing for pleasure, for fun, nor for an ignorant perception of dominance.

From our Elders, totems were given to children from the time they could walk, and their totem was either based on their character or there was some outside physical attraction to that person.

My Elders gave my daughter Marita her totem of Bunundah, Water Fairy or Mermaid, because no-one could get her out of the water, my son Ben's totem is Gurrungga, the Kookaburra, because he laughs a lot and

my nephew Keiffer's totem is Budjigal because a beheaded turtle latched onto him.

As with all ancient cultures before written words, Bama used their symbolic totems on Rock Art rather than a person's name. So when I see a Snake or Cassowary, Bundarra foot that is drawn on rock art, I know these symbols represent my great grandparents.

Modern people have a Christian and Surname, Bama had one name; their birth name. A person's birth name could not be duplicated like Peter, Paul, Mary, etc. A person was a unique individual recognised by their name, their totem, their clan, their tribe.

Bama also use unspoken language. This language is based on facial expressions, hand gestures and different types of whistles and calls. Facial expressions that included the eyes and lips and also hand gestures are used where there is visual contact with another person but distance doesn't allow for direct conversation.

In the past, whistles and calls were used for hunting parties, whereas today, different types of whistles, calls, and unspoken language are used when camping on country or in overly crowded places such as city

streets, night clubs or business meetings. A particular type of whistle or call will belong to a certain person. Given a situation, it is possible to have a conversation without talking.

Every person is a representative of their clan, so the expectation of social conduct, the responsibility of the continued tribal practices and educating the young in the various stages of life meant no individual could interfere or comment on the business being taught.

Where a woman cannot teach men personal business, their songs, their ritual practices or hunting skills, a man is the same, he cannot teach in matters of womanhood. And as such, the inner workings of Men and Women's business are exactly that; the business of men and women.

**The historian may be
reasonable,
but history is not.**

Louis Pauwels & Jacques Bergier,

The Morning of the Magicians

'BRIM' FAMILY TREE

As told by Toby Brim and recorded by Norman Tindale 1938 at Mona Mona Mission

Once spoken ... Now written

According to a good friend of mine, Archaeologist, Ms Fay Agee, the Rock Art at Bunda Dibandji, Bare Hill, is dated to be older than the Egyptian Pyramids. Now, although very young compared to other Rock Art throughout Australia, or even the world for that matter, these pieces of art are my clan's written claim to Buluwai country and the history it continues to hold.

From my family tree, my great great grandfather's name was Merikum and he was the youngest son of five children. Merikum wife was called Marukeidji and she was an Idindji woman who came from the Mulgrave River on the coast.

To understand or go beyond this time is impossible because this history was never recorded or archived on paper.

Across the mountain range in Buluwai country, my great grandparents' main campsite or family home was at Speewah, and during the varying

seasonal changes, and attending ceremonies, another main camp site was located near Tinaroo that was closer to Idindji and Ngatjan country.

Bibi:yungan, or babies, were conceived allowing for the traditional hunter gatherer lifestyle and the abundance of seasonal food source. On average, a five to seven year age difference between children was common practice because mothers had to consider the distance and terrain between each campsite, let alone the stamina required to carry a baby on the hip, arms or back. The seasonal weather changes and the population of the clan had to be taken into account as well.

Merikum and Marukeidji had six children, and my great grandfather, Tji:Auwin, the youngest son, is written to be estimated as being born around 1867, '*south of Mareeba at south extremity of tribe range*'. From his photograph and inconsistencies of official records, I personally believe Tji:Auwin to be born earlier and so from this, 1852 will be used in my book as Tji:Auwin birth year.

Tji:Auwin elder siblings were Tjaimuru, Tjinaru:l, Konjimai and Kujpidji.

After Tji:Auwin came Kuru'ki, the last child to Marukeidji. From the

spelling of names I presumed the 'Tj's' were boys and the 'K' names were girls, so there were three boys and three girls.

By the time Tji:Auwin was born, Gatcha or white people, with their short occupational presence in Australia, had already made their intentions felt. Like wildfire, news of Gatcha encroachment quickly spread and it was only a matter of time before they moved onto Buluwai traditional land.

88 years after the arrival of the first fleet in New South Wales, 1876 in far north Queensland, Tji:Auwin was around 24 years of age and Gimoy, by population growth, was officially founded and renamed Cairns. A year later, about 20 km west of Ngoonbi, Kuranda, came a Gatcha man called John Atherton who established his homestead in Guluy country and called it Emerald End. It wasn't long before John Atherton gets the reputation amongst the Buluwandji as a *'very bad man'*.

Where abundant bush food was hunted and gathered, in little time it was practically gone, trees cut and land cleared allowing introduced cattle to roam and graze unhindered. Providing food for the clans became harder and harder, the barbed wire surrounding prime real estate ensured clans had begun to starve.

Tji:Auwin, was tribally married and his wife is named Annie Annie who came from the Bilwon area, which is in Djabugay traditional land. Annie's father is called Julputai and her mother is called Kal:uwara, and according to written record, Annie is an only child.

Toby and Annie first two sons are born, one of the two sons we do not know his name, however, the name 'Oscar' has always been known as being one of the brothers.

According to a pioneer descendant, Old Man Tommy Punch before he died, there was one time when Annie was nursing her child and John Atherton pushed her into a campfire leaving her burnt on the side of her body, and naturally the boy was also very badly burnt. Toby couldn't retaliate because he knew he'd be shot; Atherton only needed an excuse.

John Atherton was so detested by the Buluwandji and neighbouring tribes, that one day while mustering his cattle in the ridges near the Clohesy River, a tomahawk was thrown at him which opened up the side of his head.

It was during August 1881 at the Clohesy River, one and a half years after Atherton wrote to the Colonel Secretary complaining about his loss of

cattle, that Sub-Inspector Carr informed the Commissioner of Police, that troopers had to '*disperse*' the Buluwandji for killing Atherton's cattle.

Adding in also, '*A hill northwest of Tolga, called Bones Knob, is a grim reminder of the revenge the early pioneers took on the dusky owners of the land ...*', '*Sub-Inspector Douglas and his troopers frequently sallied forth to 'disperse' the Stone Age tribes who were fighting a losing battle against the white invasion*', and '*in the early days of Mareeba, old **John Atherton, red-shirted and bearded**, was a familiar figure, riding up the street on a small jack donkey*'.

At this time, Toby is around 29 years of age, and yet another 'dispersal' is so bad that it leaves Toby no choice but to tell Oscar and his brother to '*run for their lives*'. As a father he knows that his sons have been taught well and they know how to live off the land.

The two boys couldn't run south because there were too many Gatcha occupying land there, so they run north towards Cooktown. This is the last time Toby and Annie see their two eldest sons.

On the run, somehow Oscar and his brother became separated, where and when this happened is not known. One brother ended up being adopted into a clan at Hopevale and his last name became 'Charlie'.

After years on the run, Oscar maybe the young boy Augustus Glisson, a Station Manager near Camooweal, took in. Apparently in Cooktown during 1887, the Police got the boy for Glisson, and he was estimated to be around twelve years old. Oscar was taken by a steamer into the Gulf of Carpentaria, then put on a horse to ride the rest of the distance to Rocklands station. It was observed that Oscar *'was badly burnt at a young age'*.

It was commonly known that red shirts were worn to disguise blood, so, Oscar's first sketch of 'Sub Inspector and Police/Troopers', in particular the man in the red shirt and the red smudge against his head, this sketch looks to be Sub-Inspector Douglas or Carr, the Police and John Atherton at the 1881 Clohesy River 'dispersal' raid.

Two years before selectors started taking up land in Ngoonbi, Kuranda, 1883 Walter Hill Veivers moves his family to Speewah, and builds his homestead where Merikum campsite is located. Although my ancestors are forced back into the dense rainforest to relocate close by, observation noted that Walter Veivers was definitely not like John Atherton.

Many Bama took on the surname of Gatcha who they worked for and who they considered to be good, decent people. Many years before Atherton and the Veivers family arrival on the tablelands, in Idindji country just south of Cairns, in the subdivision of Gordonvale, a Cecil Meredith Brimm lived and he had a relative named Oscar. Tji:Auwin must have had some connection to this BRIMM family because he took on the surname Brim and called himself Toby. The name 'Toby' possibly came from a Mrs Toby who fossicked for gold near Stoney Creek around that time.

In any case, Toby Brim is the name the Veivers family descendants recall and acknowledge. Tjinaru:l, Toby's older brother, on the other hand was called Darkie.

In Idindji country during the early 1890's, timber was needed for many reasons in the new colony. A logger named Charles le Grand and his crew of timber getters were at Behana Creek, which is not far from the Mulgrave River and Gordonvale. Looking for the best trees to select and fell, they happen to spot some Bama women fishing by the banks of the creek.

After watching the women for a while, they noticed there was one woman in particular who seemed unusually different from the others; apparently this woman, oddly enough, had European features.

Struggling to capture her, Charles le Grand and the others took her back to their logger's camp and what their intentions were, are unknown. Up close, this European looking Bama woman was thought to be aged in her 20's and according to eye witness accounts, she couldn't speak a word of English.

Apparently, she indicated she was European like le Grand. At the time, it was thought that she must have had a baby back at the 'blacks' camp, for she somehow escaped and disappeared back into the dense rainforest, never to be seen again. A reward was offered but it was never claimed.

It was some time later that an old ship wreck was discovered at the mouth of the Mulgrave River and although the Idindji people said that all of the survivors were killed, it was generally accepted that the copper skinned woman at Behana Creek was saved as a baby and reared by the Idindji tribe.

In knowing Marukeidji came from the Mulgrave River and given Buluwandji Marriage Law, there is a strong possibility that the copper skinned Behana Creek woman and the yellow skin woman drawn in ochre at Bunda Dibandji, may be the same person. And, if this is indeed the case, then she would have been married into the family and she had a child with dreads.

In the meantime, land continued to be taken up in and around Ngoonbi and Buluwandji people, their campsites were quickly being moved away or being destroyed. Shields, weaponry were either kept as souvenirs or burnt to hide the evidence.

In keeping with disregarding Bama traditional place names, Ngoonbi was filed as being the 'official' beginning of Kuranda in the year 1888; Toby is aged around 36 years of age. Kuranda street names such as Barang and Coondoo are registered, yet they are not Buluwai words, nor are they from any tribe of this local area.

At Redlynch there lived a man named Andrew Banning. He must have also been a good man because the surname 'Banning' was adopted by one of Toby's brothers', Jimmy Low (Oipee), who had a son named Peter

Banning. Jimmy, like another brother Tommy Durston, had the same father as Toby, Merukan, but not the same mother.

Lookouts and Campsites were strategically located on the eastern range overlooking the coast and with a good view over the Cairns inlet. They were, after all, husbands, fathers, warriors; they were those who protected their turf.

Tjaimuru camp is at Dina:ru, Toby's camp is above the falls at Garndal Garndal, Banning's camp was located past Bunda Damari on top and near Number 1 or 15 Tunnel depending on which direction you are travelling.

From the mountains, the steel tracks could be seen coming from Cairns, where the population continued to grow fast. The tracks wound its way around Redlynch passing just below one Burial Site on the eastern side of Lamb Range near where Number 2 tunnel is now located. This burial site catered for other Buluwai clans and small tribes such as Djinbandji that escaped massacres and lived at Redlynch. The Djinbandji are a small tribe of Tableland Idindji and Buluwai descent.

Trampling over, blasting with explosives, posing for photos, Buluwandji Story Water sites were desecrated by Gatcha who had no consideration or respect for anything associated to Bama. Ancient walking tracks are given brand new names and claimed as an historic achievement.

From higher lookouts than Toby's at Stoney Creek, my people could only look on in disgust, shock and disbelief as the Railway Bridge and line forged on and the face of Bunda Damari changed forever. The fifteen railway tunnels built along the railway line, served the other purpose of being a convenient hideout for Bama who were escaping dispersal.

'Dispersal' was the polite English word that, in Buluwandji experiences and mindset, didn't mean scatter, this word became more commonly and readily associated with the other English word, 'massacre'. The 'dispersal' of Banning's camp was an armed raid where the survivors had to hide in a tunnel until everything had quietened down. And when it was safe enough to travel, the remainder of the camp headed down the mountain, using their walking tracks as guides. It was at Redlynch where they found refuge.

Having escaped 'dispersal' or being forced to Mona Mona Mission, the Banning family exclusion from a mission ensured our Buluwai language and its mixture of Idi and Djabugay, continued to be spoken.

A rock formation that stand stately next to the railway line near Bunda Damari are known locally as Rob's Monument and they too, have a story.

This Buluwandji story is of two young lovers, who by custom and Marriage Law could not be together. Their feelings for each other were too strong; they couldn't see each other every day and pretend to not care. They decided to run away so that they could be together, forever. Knowing they would be missed in the camp, they sped away on foot as fast as they could, but when they came to the steep side of the gorge, they knew there was nowhere for them to go. Rather than going back to face punishment, they jumped to their deaths. Rob's Monument is a reminder of Marriage Law and punishment.

By 1890, the railway line continues to be built and it keep cutting its way further and further into Buluwai country, using the banks of the Barron River as a natural guide. At Mantaka, home of the black man, this area was called Welcome Pocket by settlers and it even had a small school.

From Mantaka and further along is Myola and another large camp was located there. In 1891, George Hobson's '*gashing to death with scrub knives*' at Myola saw Toby Brim's brother, Tjinaru:l being arrested, and on trial for murder.

In the Cairns Circuit Court, 02nd February 1891, Tjinaru:l defence argued that '*They had not the slightest evidence against the prisoner.*' And that '*Men living out in the bush like the deceased carried their life in their hands. They beat the blacks one day, treated them well the next, cut and bruised them and abused the highest feeling they had, and aroused their sexual jealousies. In this district we have not taught the blacks the sanctity of human life, and now the blacks are getting scarce it is rather late in the day in a trial like this to begin their education. The jury would look upon the prisoner as a white man – they would not be giving this man justice unless they dealt with him precisely as they would with a white man. We have not been careful enough with the blacks in the past, and cannot be astonished at what they do.*'

The Judge commented that '*There were some people he was sorry to say, who looked upon the blacks as superior animals, only fit to be abused and shot down. The jury had to be perfectly satisfied about the confession, if not, they were required to give the prisoner the benefit of the doubt.*' Oddly enough, a

member of the jury was C le Grand, probably the same man who captured the copper skinned woman at Behana Creek.

The trial was mentioned in 'The Cairns Post', 04th April 1891, however, instead of execution, Tjinaru:l was sent to St Helena, a penal island, near the mouth of the Brisbane River. There were a number of petitions pleading for Tjinaru:l to be released, however, it was not until the Jubilee celebrations, that he was eventually transferred from St Helena to Fraser Island - another penal island, only bigger.

1895, Toby is aged around 43 years of age. Atherton asked the Buluwandji to drive a herd of cattle for him, after which he promised to give them a bullock for payment. Striking a deal, the Buluwandji drove the cattle and when they returned, went and saw Atherton for their payment.

Atherton reneged and gave them a horse instead of the promised bullock. The Buluwandji weren't happy at all because they didn't eat horse, and quite easily, one bullock would have fed the people.

Rejecting the horse, the Buluwandji took the bullock anyway then travelled to Guwala, Old Speewah, to have the bullock killed and prepared for cooking in the ground.

Heating the stones for Bayngga (Kupmurri, Hungi), a small girl named Buttercup, who was named after one of the Veivers cows, burnt her hand on the hot stones. Buttercup was quickly taken down to the creek to let the cold water cool her burns.

From down the creek, Buttercup and her nurse could hear the melee from where they had just left. Atherton had accused the Buluwandji of stealing a bullock and the troopers, believing a white man, needed no excuse to enforce the full extent of their Law. John Atherton was indeed a very bad man.

As Cairns grew, Bama was either being shot, or forced out and onto missions while their traditional land was being taken and cleared for settlers and or, their introduced cattle. There was never any offer of a Treaty, any agreement of sorts, nor any agreed section of our land set aside for the newcomers to live their new lives.

Furthermore, it didn't matter if Bama were working for Gatcha and their boss protested, their forced removal saw Bama mission bound regardless. Business is business in 'slave' labour hire. Pioneer businesses who paid good wages lost out to the Government approved Church Missions.

In the meantime, and once described as '*too cunning*' because he '*refuses to go to Native Police*', Tjinaru:l, Darkie, apparently escaped from Fraser Island.

Born in 1899, the Veivers family had a young son whose name was Walter Thron. A few years later, my grandfather Binnanewan, Cecil Brim, was born and the Veivers family gave him the nickname 'Bundle'. Toby is around 47 years of age.

1902 Archibald Meston, a Southern Protector of Aboriginals in Queensland, writes a complaint about Darkie's escape even though he was properly released. '*... if he had been informed of Darkie's escape from Fraser Island he could have sent trackers to intercept him before he got to Bundaberg.*'

Tjinaru:l, Darkie, only had one home, Buluwai country, which is where he was recaptured, in Kuranda, and formerly arrested in Cairns. This time,

they send him to an Aboriginal mission called Durundur, in Queensland and Meston states, *'I sent him to Durundur where he will be quite contented. He knows who he is dealing with now'*. By March 1905, Durundur had closed and Tjinaru:l is again, far from home.

Toby and Annie have two other children, two daughters, the eldest is named Middy, older than Cecil, whilst the other, her name is not known because; *'when she was small, the family were on their way to Tinaroo when a storm suddenly hit. Outside of Tolga waiting for the storm to pass, the family took shelter under a large tree. Lightning struck the youngest sister, and she was killed instantly'*.

04th March 1909, an Oscar Brimm is mentioned in the Cairns Morning Post under the heading *'The Station Tragedy Who Killed Nellie Duffy?'* Oscar is a 19 year old stockman at Carpentaria Downs.

1913 marks the year John Atherton dies at his homestead at Emerald End. The damage this one person had done in such a short space of time would forever be burnt into Katjiraka memory and spoken of throughout three generations as oral history. Kuranda pioneer

descendants also carry down their own oral history just like Bama and they know more than they say or write down as local history.

1913 is also the year my Koko Yimigi grandmother, Dinah Fullerton, was kidnapped from her traditional land. On horseback *'with only the clothes on her back'*, Dinah was taken straight to Mona Mona Mission and became one of the first three inmates.

During 1915 a campsite near the Barron Bridge was used by Bama workers who were employed either at Hunter's Hotel or Street's Coffee Plantation. Kuranda and the Barron Falls were being promoted as the 'Winter Playground of Australia', 'The Riviera of the Commonwealth', with delightful 'Tea Gardens' at Fairyland.

Yet all the while at Garndal Garndal, Stoney Creek, behind barbed wire, Buluwandji families still had their camp site near the water fall and half naked, waved at the passing train, much to the unexpected surprise of it's shocked, refined travellers. By October the same year the workers in Kuranda, by Government order and with eager Police compliance, were removed and sent to Mona Mona Mission.

Early 1916, another 'dispersal', sees Toby 64, his wife Annie, and their son Cecil, being hidden by the Veivers family in their Speewah homestead barn. When it was safe, two of the Veivers brothers escorted Toby and his family, under armed guard, safely to Mona Mona Mission. They are the last Katjiraka, the dispersal is complete, apart from Tjinaru:l (Darkie) and Banning at Redlynch, there are no more Buluwandji living on our traditional lands.

From 1883 when Walter Hill Veivers and his family first moved to Speewah until Toby Brim's forced removal during 1916, thirty-three years had passed of natural assimilation without Government and religious interference.

Gone are the times where 'we get um food in the scrub – plenty fruit and anything; live on edge of scrub from Kuranda to Bilu/Bihu and then to Little Mountain Tjiripadji, Mt Bartle Frere; where my father died'.

Tragically, Toby's father Merikum *'was killed from falling from a tree at Mt Bartle Frere'* and Marukeidji, Toby's mother, *'drowned in White Rock by flood' ... '.*

For all Toby knows, is that his eldest brother Tjaimuru is *'dead'* at his campsite *'at Dina:ru'*, and his children, are either dead or at Yarrabah Mission. Tjinaru:l *'went to Brisbane long time ago'* for killing a cruel whiteman, while his sisters Konjimai, Kurupidji and Kuruki are all *'dead'*. His two eldest sons Oscar and his brother are gone, but he still has his wife Annie and their youngest son Binnanewan, Cecil.

'Suffer the children that come unto me'

During 1892, Yarrabah Mission had already opened its doors and this place across the inlet of Cairns, had in time, already taken on more than any mission could handle. 21 years after Yarrabah Anglican Mission opened, 1913, the Seventh Day Adventist Church opened their only mission in Queensland, Mona Mona, just a few kilometres north of Kuranda on Djabugay land.

Continued usurpation of Bama land led Gatcha to bestow the title of *'King'* upon those who they perceived to be leaders of tribes. Akin to the Israelites exodus out of Egypt, the appointed *'King'* was expected to lead their people peacefully onto a mission, thus leaving their ancient traditional land vacant for the invaders to move in.

In reality the 'King Plate' meant a clan group had a King not the entire tribe because one person could not speak on behalf of the whole, especially when there is a Council of Elders.

With authority from a new, introduced culture and Government, and under the guise of saving the natives from their wretched, immoral lives, missions were the socially acceptable out of sight, out of mind establishments that housed innocent children kidnapped from their families or survivors of massacres.

Three years after my grandmother Dinah was kidnapped, 1916 from the mountains in Buluwai country, my great grandparents Toby, Annie and my grandfather Cecil began their new, unwanted lifestyle on Djabugay traditional land. From this moment on, the remnants of my clan become 'historical' Djabugay traditional owners because we were forced there.

A section of the mission is set aside for the Old People who are considered 'wild' because they are straight from the bush and are very culturally strong. Incarceration doesn't stop corroborees, customs being practiced or language being taught, in the grand scheme of things, the

Superintendents figure it's just a matter of time because when the Old People are gone, then all should be forgotten.

Toby erects his bayu on a small hill site where behind his camp, fresh water and native foods are still within range and he can see all that is around him. Cecil is the last young Katjiraka male and importance is placed on him to marry and have many children.

Traditionally Bama doted on their children, they are the future of any family and everything that is taught to them, culture, language, Law, is done by their parents, their family, the Old People, the Elders, and all members of their clan as a unified lifetime educational system. This education, and learning, never stops.

An untraditional marriage and aged 25, on March 06th 1927, Cecil marries Dinah Fullerton and within 16 months, their first child, a daughter is born, her English name is Marita and her tribal name is Wurringah. This first generation of children born at Mona Mona, do not have birth certificates.

1928 at Mona Mona, another woman Emily Hobbler gave birth to a son, whom she called Leonard Earl. He became the eldest son of eleven more

brothers and sisters. Leonard becomes more commonly known as Lyn and he calls himself a Djinbandji. The birth of Marita Brim and Lyn Hobbler represent a future Tribal 'arranged marriage' according to custom and Law.

At Mona Mona Mission, regardless of a church marriage, employment and a home, parents saw their children taken off them when they reached the age of five and placed into the 'Little Girls' or 'Little Boys Dormitory'. This was to further ensure that culture or language could not be taught to children by their parents in the comfort of their own home.

The living conditions for the children in the dormitories were harsh. Marita was taken and placed in the dormitory by the time her brother, Warren was born during 1932.

Remembering being placed into the dormitory, Marita couldn't understand why she was taken from her parents when they lived as a family. She used to cry herself to sleep, fretting, and it was only because some of the bigger girls used to console her that she felt better and she

was able to get through the ordeal. Marita's limited education was extended to Year 8, thereafter, she worked in the laundry of a pub in Atherton and her wages sent directly back to the mission.

Lyn would say how he and other boys would be so hungry because the Binju tea (no sugar or milk) and small servings of Porridge wasn't enough. Porridge in the morning was an exercise on how many weevils you could spoon out of a bowl. *'There were times', 'we used to wait at the bottom of the kitchen drain pipe to see what vegetables would be washed down the sink by the Superintendents family'. 'Other times, we would use a safety pin and cotton and go fishing for Bikka or Gudebah down at the water hole, small fry, that we'd use to make fish soup in a rusty can'.*

'But, we knew how to make fire', he would further add, to make it clear that they were self-reliant even at a very young age. Later, the floor swept Sanitarium Weet-Bix that were fed to cows in Newcastle, New South Wales, would also be fed to Bama children at Mona Mona. Lyn's

education ceased after Year 5, his first job was Mail boy where he delivered and collected the mail from Oak Forest, usually on horseback.

My father Ivan was born in 1934, and his job as a child was to collect water for his grandparents, Toby and Annie. My father remembers as a four year old when Norman Tindale arrived at Mona Mona documenting names, tribes, children, taking photos and drawing maps.

The Australian Government knew from Tindale's work in 1938 who survived massacres and the tribal areas Bama came from, his informants after all, where the primary sources that came straight from the bush.

Cecil and Dinah other children apart from Marita, Warren and Ivan, were Milton, Ruth, Eunice and Ross. There was a younger son who died in 1945, his name is not known, and the youngest daughter Annette who died as a baby.

Being one of the oldest full blood Aboriginal man, an Elder at Mona Mona Mission, this is the last and only chance to record Buluwai, and our clan for future generations. The dances, the language, the culture, there was no more knowledge for Toby to pass on.

Every day Toby could see his homeland in the distance, knowing he could never go back and probably never understood why some Gatcha couldn't find it in their heart, the simple act of sharing.

Traditionally when it was the Elders time, they weren't sent away to live out their days in a strange place and away from family. The Elders had their say, their rights, and above all, their dignity in passing. No-one had the right to dictate how loved ones chose to travel from their earthly existence.

Toby Brim's family and his ancestors are buried the traditional way, in Buluwai country; but on a mission, he had no choice. On the 23rd October 1941, Toby Brim passed away at Mona Mona Mission, he is aged around 89 years.

15th December 1946, Lyn Hobbler married Marita Brim in a 'multiple wedding' at the mission. This tradition is an American custom given the Seventh Day Adventist was Ellen G White. In America, Ellen G White

apparently had visions from God which led her to come to Australia with her surviving twin son William, as Henry had died.

It was eventually in Newcastle, Awabakal country in New South Wales, where the Seventh Day Adventist eventually set up their colleges Avondale and Lilydale and the *Sanitarium* brand Weet-Bix factory.

February, 1947, tired from a very long train trip, my mother Phyllis Darcy was met at the train station by Cecil Brim. She had arrived at Mona Mona Mission direct from Newcastle in New South Wales. She was eight years old – a stolen generation.

Exemption = Freedom

A person's character, their ability to earn an income, to save money, to keep a respectable home, all of this and more, determined if 'Exemption' was granted for applicants; that, plus the Superintendents discretion.

Exemption meant that we, the *Ab Origine*, the ones '*from the beginning*' were able to walk 'freely' in our own country again, the same country we walked without restrictions, just 50 years prior. With our green 'Passport' in hand, we were allowed into that mysterious, strange land called white society. And if an Aboriginal didn't have their Passport, their Green Card, they were jailed and then back to the mission they went.

Since Toby and Annie Brim were buried at Mona Mona Mission in the old cemetery, Cecil and Dinah saw no reason for being at Mona Mona. 1955, they were given Exemption and they quickly left, Cecil erected a large tin shack at Oak Forest for their younger children Ruth, Eunice and Ross to live.

Oak Forest became the transitional point where family could stay until they found their own homes back in Buluwai country. My parents briefly stayed there when they left the mission, Uncle Milton and his family eventually lived in a wooden house across the road where behind them on top of a hill, lived the Gatcha family Chirio.

Up the road a little way, Uncle Edgar Davis, who was permanently blinded by touching a plant called 'finger cherry', lived with his family not far from my granddad. 'Finger cherry' look like cherries but they are dangerous.

By this time my parents Ivan and Phyllis were married and, Sharon, the first of their 4 children was born in 1956, next Henry 1958 and Willie 1960. Sharon, from a very young age was the eternal mother who looked over her younger siblings with a fierce tenacity. She had a

natural talent for nursing, and or medicine. Henry was born with a touch of polio, the old people fixed his legs and he ran like the wind. William Cecil Brim was chosen by our ancestors a very long time ago; he was born naturally gifted in many ways, old and new.

Lyn and Marita Hobbler and their two sons, Earl and Elvin, received their Exemption in 1960 and they eventually moved to a house in Marshall Street, Machans Beach which they rented with other members of the Hobbler and Levers family before relocating back to Kuranda.

A year later was a time of sorrow and happiness, grandma Dinah passed away at Oak Forest and was buried at Mona Mona Mission and my family received their Exemption. In the year 1962 when I was born, Mona Mona Mission had already closed its doors, even though officially, its closure was 1963.

At the Oak Forest property, 1968 my grandfather was given approval for a 'Special Lease' for his family shack on his mother's country, and payment of £2 was annual for 30 years. From Oak Forest to Mantaka my grandfather then moved to his house next door to his oldest son Warren, his wife Winnie (Riley) and their family of eventual 16 children.

Whilst working for the Forestry Department, in 1969 the Member for Tablelands, Mr E Wallis-Smith, had a conversation with Grandad Cecil and asked how old he was given he was still employed. Grandad replied that *'he thought he was in his late 60's but was finding the work very demanding'*.

By September the same year, Walter Thron Veivers of the Speewah original family, writes a Statutory Declaration stating *'he was born at Kuranda on 7th August, 1899'* and he has *'known Cecil Brim since he was seven years of age'* and *'he considers him to be two years younger'* than himself. In July 1970 a pension was finally granted.

In 1983 my grandfather, Binnanewan, Cecil William Brim, aka: William Cecil Brim, his life in this time came to an end, and from what I know and seen of my grandfather, he lived an extraordinary life.

PHOTO GALLERY

