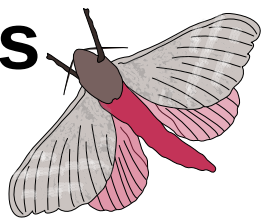


In Brief : Cairns Regional Claim Native Title Tribes



In Cairns region, the Frontier Wars started over 80 years after the first British ship arrived in Sydney 1788; then taking decades for the colonial frontier to move up through Queensland to reach the far north. Atherton 1875, Cairns 1876, Port Douglas 1877, Emerald End 1877 and Kuranda 1888 townships were "Established" by the colonial invaders, displacing the former settlements of Bama people across the region. See T.Bottoms Bama Bulmba (Aboriginal Rainforest Homelands) 2018 map below.



Bama families at Mona Mona Mission, c ____

Decades of Frontier Wars saw the massacre of most Bama living from coast to tablelands: by disease, guns, poison, fire and imprisonment. The Bama population was reduced to only hundreds, the survivors then forcibly removed from their homelands and incarcerated at Yarrabah 1893 and Mona Mona 1913 Aboriginal Missions.

From 1913 Mona Mona Mission, Djabugay country north of Kuranda, was home to people from Djabugay and neighbouring Kuku Yalanji, Muluridgi, Buluwai, Yirrgay, Gunggay, Yidindji, Ngadjan and Mbabaram tribes. The mission was repository for people surviving the massacres and remained open for generations (49 years), finally closed it's dormitories in 1962 due to plans for damming Flaggy Creek.

The generational dislocation and disruption of Bama families and tribal culture was catastrophic. When the mission closed, the *Mona Mona Descendants* were relocated to Kuranda, Koah and Mareeba where the following generations continue to reside.

In 1938-9 Norman Tindale and Joseph Birdsell travelled with their wives by truck on an expedition from the SA Museum to visit and record an anthropological *time capsule* of 150 Aboriginal tribes across Australia. Tindale created genealogies of Aboriginal families, for up to three generations, and recorded the Bama people living at Mona Mona.

In the Wet Tropics rainforest, Joseph Birdsell noted a separate grouping where *"Physical characteristics of the Barrinean type, in addition to diminutive stature, include the un-Australian characteristic of crisp curly hair."* The Ngatjan tribe were living at Lakes Barrine and Eacham on the tablelands.

The BIRDSELL GROUPING (12 tribes of short-statured/pygmy people): *Ngatjan, Mamu, Wanjuru, Tjapukai, Barbaram, Idindji, Kongkandji, Buluwai, Djiru, Djirubal, Gulngai, Keramai*

In 2012, this grouping was recognised in the World Heritage listing as Aboriginal Rainforest People:

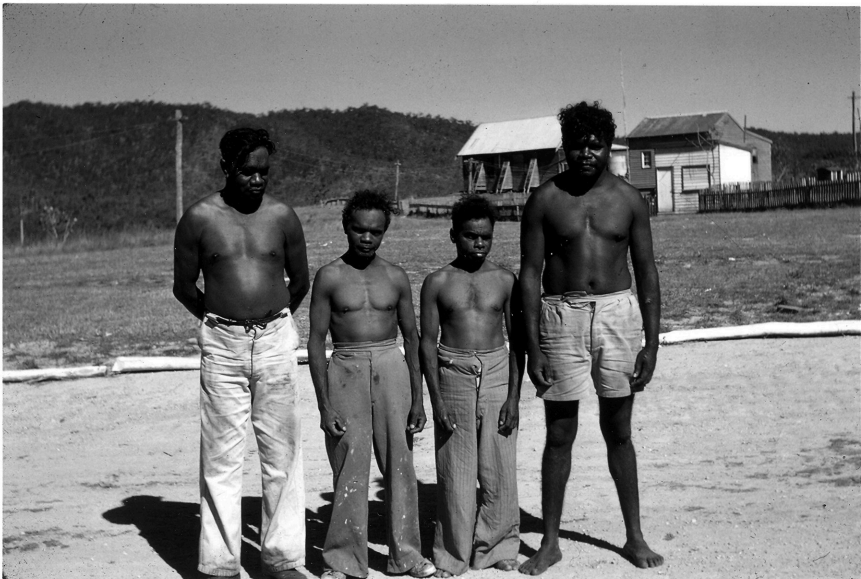
Joseph Birdsell, height 186cm, with twenty-four-year-old male of the Kongkandji tribe, height 140cm. Taken at Mona Mona Mission, 1938



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Special thank you to FNQ historian Timothy Bottoms for preserving extensive Bama history in books, maps, videos and interviews.

Short-statured Bama men centre, at Mona Mona Mission, c ____



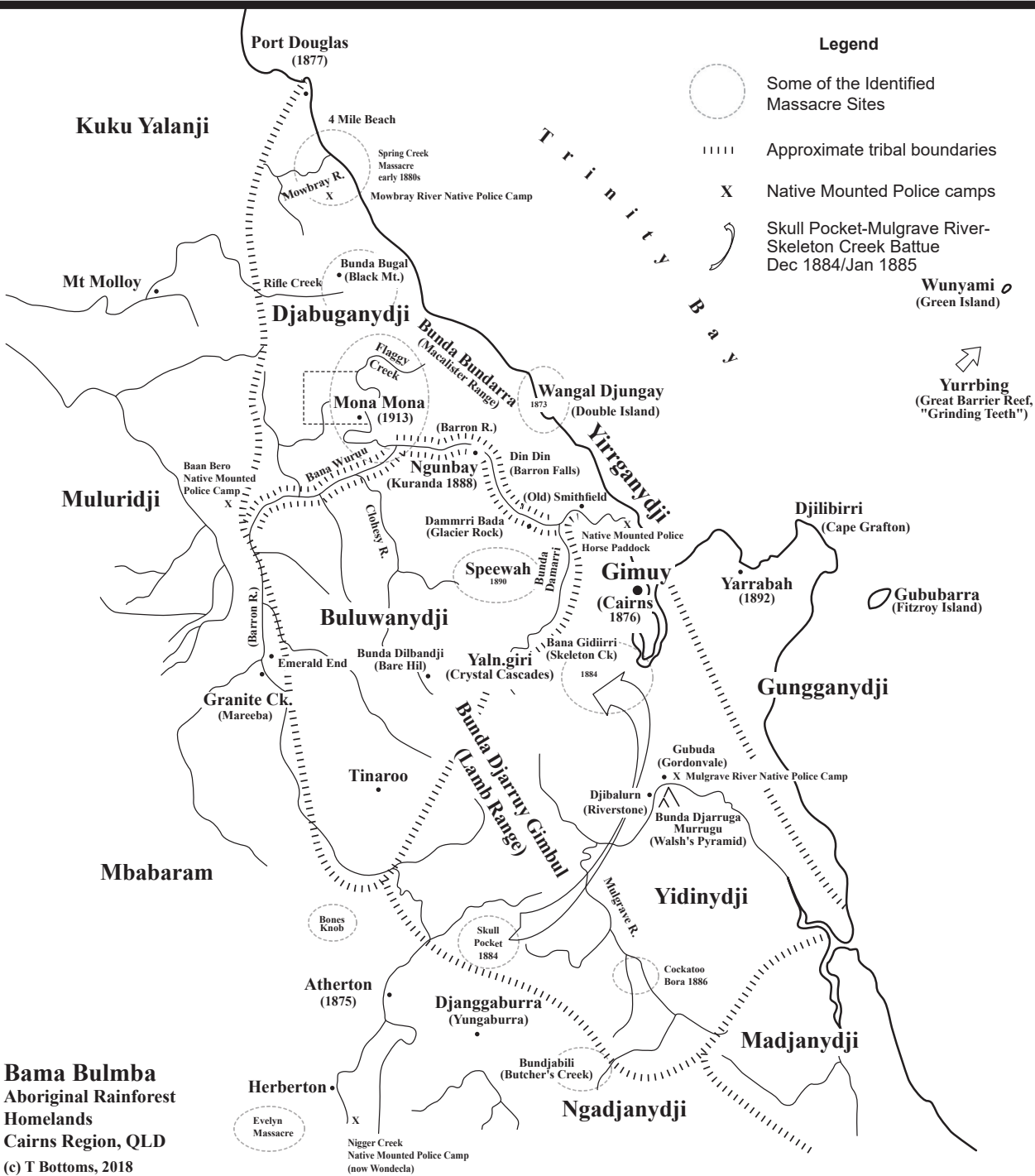
SIDE
A

Wet Tropics National Heritage listed for Indigenous heritage values

The Aboriginal Rainforest Peoples of the Wet Tropics of Queensland have lived continuously in the rainforest environment for at least [6]5,000 years and this is the only place in Australia where Aboriginal peoples have permanently inhabited a tropical rainforest environment.

The Aboriginal Rainforest Peoples developed a distinctive cultural heritage determined by their dreamtime and creation stories and their traditional food gathering, processing and land management techniques.

Reliance on their traditions helped them survive in this at times inhospitable environment. The distinctiveness of the traditions and technical innovation and expertise needed to process and prepare toxic plants as food and their uses of fire is of outstanding heritage value to the nation and are now protected for future generations under national environmental law.



In Brief: Cairns Regional Claim Native Title Sides A/B is part of the series *Aboriginal Rainforest Peoples History Project*.

Please email buluwai.corp@gmail.com for enquiries, suggestions, correctons or further information.