

INSIGHTS INTO STONE

Approaching Artefact Biographies from Jiigurru, Northern GBR (Lizard Island Group)

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What makes a story so epic?
How do feelings of Country inform the way we tell a story?
How does this influence the stories and narratives we co-create & co-interpret?

In 2009, Dingaal Traditional Owners worked with archaeologists to unveil pottery sherds, contact artefacts[1], and three Ground Stone Ancestors lying in wait, beneath the surface at Mangrove Beach, on Lizard Island. This was the beginning of something epic...



Elder, Grandfather Johnny Charlie with dredge, Mangrove Beach, 2009.

In 2025, my story aims to highlight the journey of these Ground Stone Ancestors from deposition to the point when they entered my hands. By employing an object biography, I have chosen to weave story telling into the technical elemental components of this research. However, in fusing an object biography with portable X-Ray Fluorescence (pXRF) and 3D scanning, I have gone on a journey with these Ground Stone Ancestors. In my research journey I have learnt new ways of generating knowledge in direct co-creation with Sea Country alongside elemental and technical analyses. Through the specific use of Indigenous narrative creation and my archaeological skillset, I have sought to provide agency to the artefacts, the source community, and the researcher. This reflexive and heart-centred approach, I believe, allows for Indigenous-student-led archaeological research to further embody what we hope may reflect *best practice* and *co-design principles* in future Indigenous-student-led research.



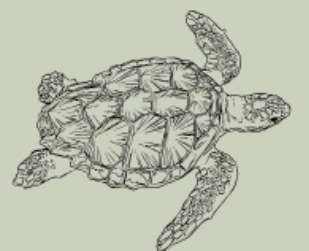
Bruker s1 Tracer Analysing Ground Stone Ancestor, La Trobe, 2025.

Dingaal People were connected across the Coral Sea and to the mainland since time immemorial

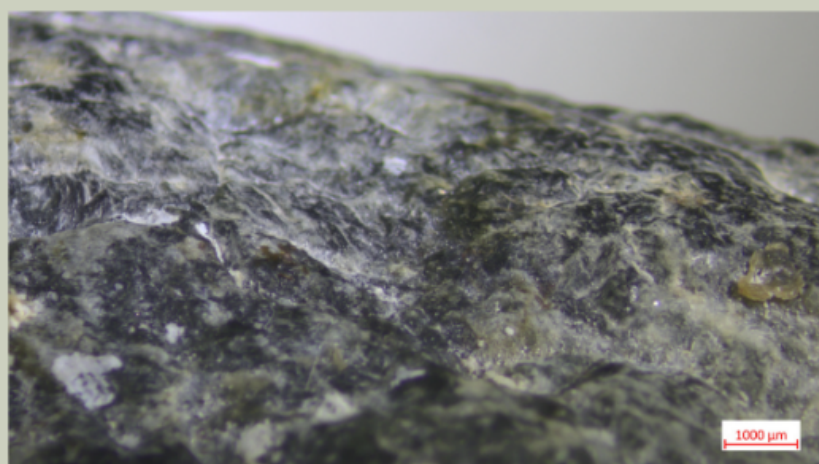


Colonial intrusion dislocated Dingaal from their Sea Country

Dingaal work with archaeologists to (re)awaken deep connections with Sea Country

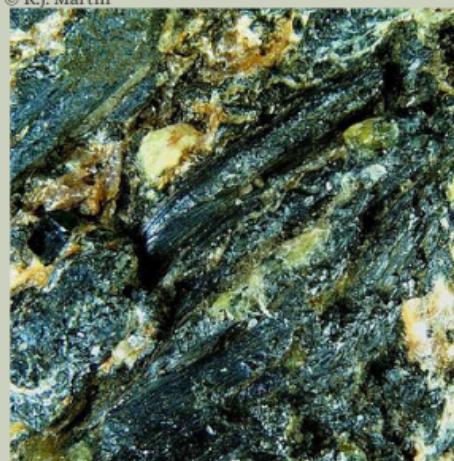


Archaeological partnerships and student led research incorporate meaningful co-design principles

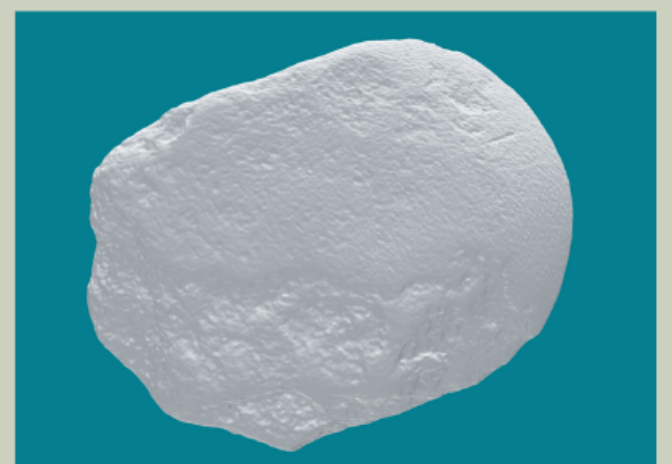


Ground Stone Ancestor, 71. Magnified on stereoscope at 1000µm. Image JCU, 2025.

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Serpentinite specimen ID: H18-UYR, 2025.



3D Spider scan of Ground Stone Ancestor 71. Credit, La Trobe, 2025.



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Kalkadoon Woman
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