



kakadu[®]
NATIONAL PARK

Visitor centres

Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Bowali Visitor Centre.

The Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre shares the culture of Kakadu's people, while the Bowali Visitor Centre tells visitors about the landscapes and wildlife of Kakadu.

The Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre and the Bowali Visitor Centre have galleries with local arts and crafts for sale.

The fittings in the Warradjan Gallery were inspired by the weathered and sculptured ironwood trees of the Northern Territory.

Inside the centre, the exhibits are placed at a variety of levels throughout the display, rewarding the curious. We wanted these skills of observation to enrich the visitor's outside experience of Kakadu.

Rosemary Simons,
Rosemary Simons Design



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- 1 Welcome to the Bowali Visitor Centre
- 2 Seasonal activities are very popular, so arrive before the start time to secure your place

2



For more information or to plan your trip visit
kakadu.gov.au



Australian Government
Parks Australia



Ngurrimrei nguddinan dja nguddi bekgan ngaddberreh gunbolk dja culture.

Come, look and feel our culture.

We tell you stories that have been told to us by our old people. They go on and on. The passing down of stories is our Bininj book. Traditional Owner, Murumburr clan

Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre

THE CONCEPT

It came from Aboriginal people. The Bininj/Mungguy Traditional Owners of Kakadu National Park wanted to tell their story for a long time. People from Murumburr, Mirrar Kundjeyhmi, Badmardi, Bunitj, Wurrkbarbar, Mardin, Bolmo, Girrimbitjba, Manilagarr, Worgol and other clans contributed to the Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre project.

The Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre lies within the Murumburr clan estate where the Kundjeyhmi language is spoken. Kundjeyhmi is the main language used in the centre, although Jawoyn and Gagudju also appear. Through the displays and exhibits you can gain an understanding of the relationship bininj/mungguy have with their families and their land. Bininj/Mungguy and their country are inseparable.

It is hoped you find visiting the Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre an exciting and memorable experience.

SITTING IN CIRCLES

In the early stages of the cultural centre project, Bininj/Mungguy came together to discuss the building design, its role and its facilities.

At most Bininj/Mungguy gatherings, people sit in circles. During an early meeting Bininj/Mungguy decided that a circular building would reflect this way of communication. It was decided that the cultural centre needed to be round like people sitting together.

At later meetings Bininj/Mungguy saw the round shape as being like a warradjan (pig-nosed turtle). So the building design developed into the Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre. Discussions about the design started in 1989, with specific planning beginning in 1992. The architects were Australian Constructors Services of Darwin, with display and gallery designed by Rosemary Simons and David Lancashire Design. After comprehensive consultation and research involving Traditional Owners, Parks Australia staff and authorities such as George Chaloupka, the display was completed in 1995.



3 Warradjan (pig-nosed turtle) inspired the shape of the Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre building



4 The cultural centres are places for the whole family to enjoy



5 Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre

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6 The seasons depicted in stone at the entrance of the Bowali Visitor Centre

THE DISPLAY

Bininj/Mungguy, park staff and the designers, worked closely together to determine exactly what Bininj/Mungguy wanted to say and how they wanted to display their story.

During the process Mandy Muir made a key statement 'Our land is our life'. This became the theme of the display. It all began to take shape after many drawings, plans, models and drafts of the text were considered.

In the Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre Bininj/Mungguy have displayed many of their important stories, especially those from the creation era when the Nayuhunggi (first people) created the land, plants and animals and gave people laws to live by.

Visitors are invited to move through the display as a Rainbow Serpent creation ancestor moves through the country travelling first through the lowlands during the dry season, then into the stone country during the wet.

All the artefacts you see were made by bininj/mungguy people, and great care has been taken to collect and construct the display features such as the goose hunting platform, dilly bags, pandanus baskets, and paintings.

NAMES AND IMAGES

In Bininj/Mungguy culture, it is often not appropriate to display the names or images of deceased people.

Some displays may contain labels that cover the names and images of people who have passed away. Please respect the wishes of Kakadu's Traditional Owners and leave the names and images covered.

These protocols can vary from area to area and

family to family. In some cases family members may provide permission for the names and images of the deceased to be displayed after a period of time.

Bininj/Mungguy — please be aware that at Bowali and Warradjan visitor centres there may be names or images of deceased people. These names are only displayed with family permission.

Please do not take photos inside the Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre



8 The display tells visitors about the landscapes and wildlife of Kakadu. Along the way there's a bit of water to accompany you

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9 Local Aboriginal communities make gifts and art at the Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre



Bowali Visitor Centre

At Bowali visitors are invited to journey through Kakadu's habitats as the South Alligator River meanders through the landscape from source to sea.

Bowali Visitor Centre presents two views of Kakadu, the 'Gukburleri' (Aboriginal) and 'Guhbele' (non-Aboriginal) views. It is hoped that visitors will leave the display understanding more about the park and realising that we all have a responsibility to look after this country.

Bowali lies within the Mirrar Gundjeihmi clan estate and is named after the creek which runs through the area.

We Aboriginal people welcome you to our country. This visitor centre tells you about our country.

Nawadgadji Nabadmardi, Badmardi clan

THE BUILDING

The architects, builders and display designers worked closely with Traditional Owners and Parks Australia staff to create our visitor centre. Two years were spent on consultation, planning and design. It then took one year to build.

Rammed earth walls, ironwood floors and natural stone features help blend the 168 metres long Bowali Visitor Centre into Kakadu's landscape. A formalised billabong and creek bed are incorporated in the Centre to catch and drain the monsoonal rains. Wide verandahs offer a close relationship with the bush setting and generous shade. The roofline and alignment encourage air flow.

The building is constructed from local materials sourced by the Djabulukgu and Gagudju Aboriginal Associations and park staff. No rainforest or imported timbers were used.

The building won numerous awards when officially opened in August 1994.

- 1994 — Northern Territory Chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects — Tracey Memorial Award and People's Choice Award
- 1994 Royal Institute of Architecture — 'Sir Zelman Cowan Award' for National Civic Building
- 1994 — 95 BHP Sheet and Coil Products and Metal Building Industries — Award of Excellence
- 1995 Northern Territory Brolga Award — Tourism Development Projects.

For more information contact

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