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Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

Saturday 29 October 2022

Ngurunderi comes alive next to new Granite Island Causeway

A sculpture of Ngurunderi, one of the great Creation ancestral beings of the Ngarrindjeri Nation, has been unveiled next to the new Granite Island Causeway.

The 3.6-metre-tall sculpture was commissioned as part of the \$43 million South Australian Government-funded Granite Island Causeway Project.

Standing on top of a granite boulder, which was locally sourced and donated by the City of Victor Harbor, the sculpture was designed by renowned Ngarrindjeri artist Kevin Kropinyeri and built by local Adelaide artist Karl Meyer.

The Ngurunderi Creation story is specific to the area the Ngarrindjeri and Ramindjeri call Pultung (Victor Harbor), Kaiki (Granite Island) and Longkuwa (The Bluff).

Ngurunderi travelled to Ramindjeri country where he was in pursuit of his two wives who had eluded him. When he heard his wives splashing and playing in the direction of Kings Point, Ngurunderi threw his club (Plonggi) down in anger, creating Longkuwa. At Pultung, Ngurunderi threw his spear (Kaiki) into the sea to create Kaiki (Granite Island). Ngurunderi walked over to Kaiki and made a shelter from granite boulders. This place is now called Panggari Marti (Umbrella Rock).

The sculpture builds on several Aboriginal-specific art outcomes delivered as part of the project, including artwork along the entire length of the new Causeway deck, interpretative wayfinding signage, and a number of other specific features along the new Causeway, landings and plaza. The artwork acknowledges Ngarrindjeri–Ramindjeri culture, language, creation stories and truth telling.

The decommissioning works of the old Causeway are nearing completion, with the viewing platforms anticipated to be operational later this year.

Quotes attributable to Kyam Maher

The Granite Island Causeway Project has not only secured the long-term future of a South Australian landmark but has also delivered a structure that is rich in cultural significance.

Although many South Australians have fond memories of Granite Island and the Victor Harbor area, prior to this project, little was portrayed about how culturally significant the region is to the recognised Traditional Owners, the Ngarrindjeri–Ramindjeri People.

In addition to the Aboriginal artwork that has been etched into the Causeway, the sculpture of Ngurunderi marks the cultural significance and history of the Ngarrindjeri and Ramindjeri nations across the Fleurieu Peninsula.

Every time you visit Pultung, Kaiki and Longkuwa and see the fantastic sculpture of Ngurunderi next to the new Causeway, you will be reminded of how Ngurunderi shaped the landscape of the area.

We thank the Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation, City of Victor Harbor and of course the talented Kevin Kropinyeri for their collaboration in delivering this significant sculpture.