

Basic Detail Report



North East Queensland Coast Indigenous Canoe

Vessel number

HV000510

Description

There is little recorded data with the records for the North East Queensland Coast Indigenous Canoe, however other research confirms a similar style of craft was recorded around Mapoon, on the north west of the Cape York Peninsula. Observations of the North East Queensland Coast Indigenous Canoe's structure provide an interesting comparison to other types. The bark or timber material is very likely to be eucalyptus tetradonta, commonly found across the northern Australian landscape and known to be used in other forms of bark canoe construction throughout the region. The sheet appears to have been inverted so that the smoother, more water resistant inner surface is on the outside of the canoe, and the rougher exterior becomes the inside. The two ends are quite similar- the sides of the bark have been brought together at the top, and the bark has been cut on either side with a slight rake to the stem, although it is not clear when the cut is made to give that profile. The end is then sewn together with a vine; the sewing is very even and close together to help make the joint watertight. The joint may have been filled with gum, resin or even mud to help caulk the joint. The shape of the hull is supported and strengthened along the top edge with branches, sewn to the bark in a series of moderately spaced stitches. Each side has two branches lapped on top of each other which is a feature not recorded on other Indigenous canoes that also have a form of gunwale stiffening using thin branches. The branches keep the sides quite high and it retains a similar freeboard or depth throughout its length. Although relatively small, at 2.3m long and about 500mm wide, it has sufficient volume for a person of small stature to use, and would have been suited to calm waters on rivers or estuaries along the coast. The craft is not on display at Queensland museum, and kept in storage with some additional internal structure holding its form in place.

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 2.36 m x 0.48 m (7.74 ft x 1.57 ft)