

# Timeline Singleton

The Hunter Valley is a coastal river basin once covered by sea in the form of a huge gulf. Over countless millions of years, layer upon layer of silt, vegetation, marine sediment and rock forming materials fill the gulf, then these layers compress, fold and weather to form the Valley.

The Hunter River emerges in the Mount Royal Range to meander a 468km journey through the Valley, with 41 tributaries joining its course along the way. Closer to the coastline, the river splits into channels creating small islands, ponds and wetlands before entering the Tasman Sea through the harbour at Newcastle.

For thousands of years, the Hunter River's life-giving waters have sustained the Wonnarua/Wanaruah People with a rich variety of plants and animals to provide food, medicines, dyes, fibres and wood.

With the arrival of Europeans, the Hunter River became a roadway for commerce, exploration, and fostered agricultural industries.

The Hunter River, represented here in its many moods and seasons, connects us all.

Through culture, stories, people, places and events, the River of Time gathers us all.



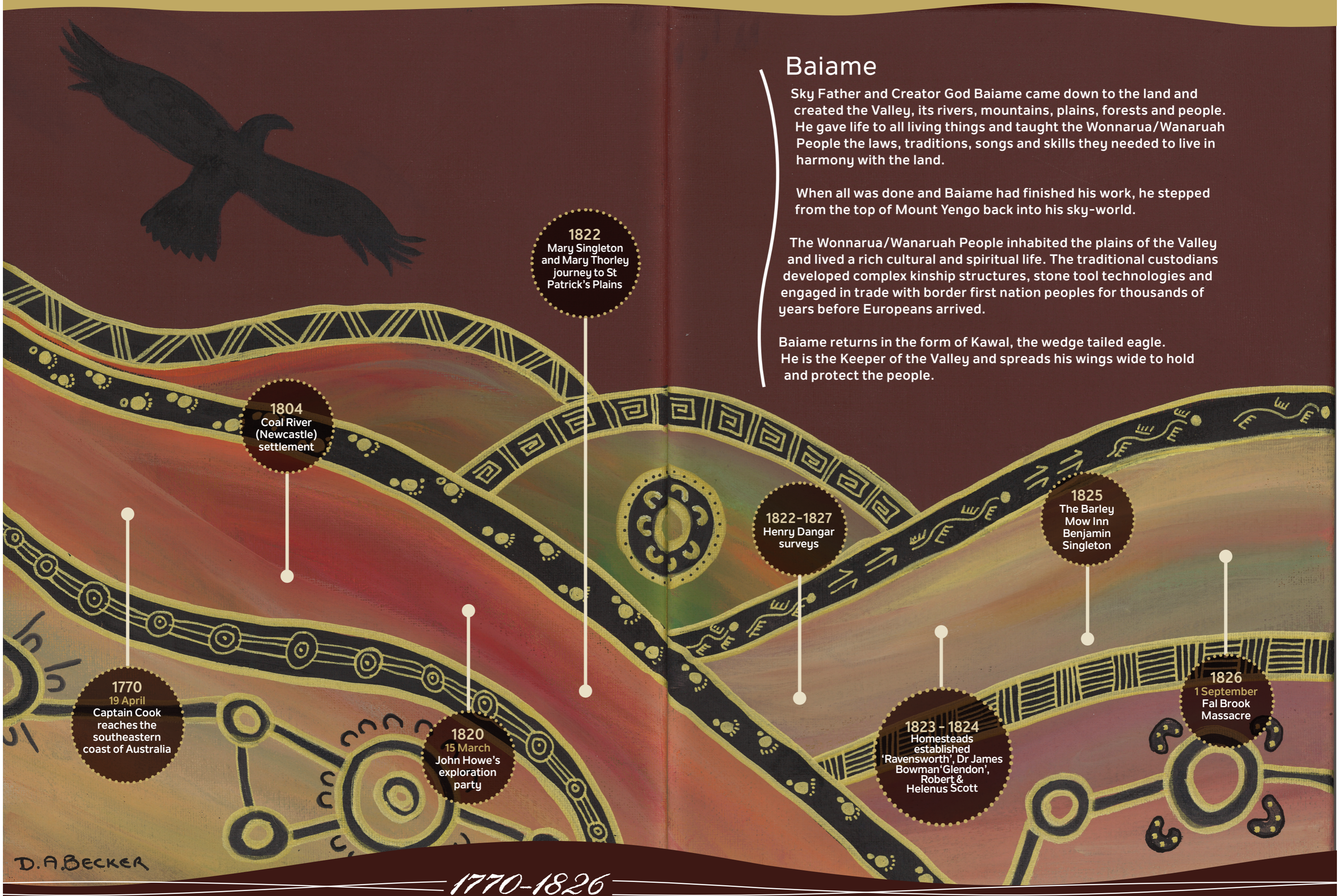
## Baiame

Sky Father and Creator God Baiame came down to the land and created the Valley, its rivers, mountains, plains, forests and people. He gave life to all living things and taught the Wonnarua/Wanaruah People the laws, traditions, songs and skills they needed to live in harmony with the land.

When all was done and Baiame had finished his work, he stepped from the top of Mount Yengo back into his sky-world.

The Wonnarua/Wanaruah People inhabited the plains of the Valley and lived a rich cultural and spiritual life. The traditional custodians developed complex kinship structures, stone tool technologies and engaged in trade with border first nation peoples for thousands of years before Europeans arrived.

Baiame returns in the form of Kawal, the wedge tailed eagle. He is the Keeper of the Valley and spreads his wings wide to hold and protect the people.



1822  
Mary Singleton  
and Mary Thorley  
journey to St  
Patrick's Plains

1804  
Coal River  
(Newcastle)  
settlement

1822-1827  
Henry Dangar  
surveys

1825  
The Barley  
Mow Inn  
Benjamin  
Singleton

1770  
19 April  
Captain Cook  
reaches the  
southeastern  
coast of Australia

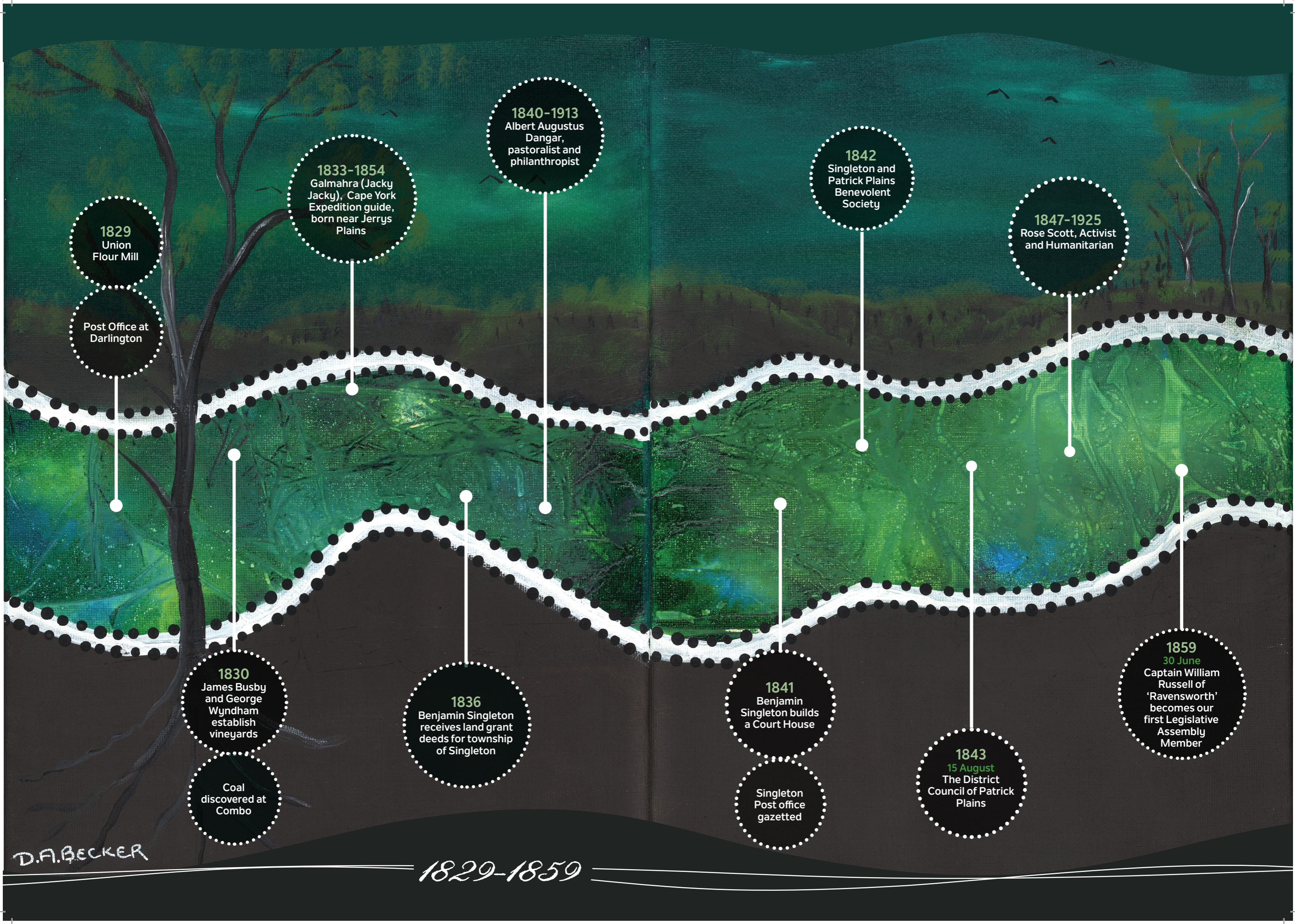
1820  
15 March  
John Howe's  
exploration  
party

1823 - 1824  
Homesteads  
established  
'Ravensworth', Dr James  
Bowman 'Glendon',  
Robert &  
Helenus Scott

1826  
1 September  
Fal Brook  
Massacre

D.A. BECKER

1770-1826



1829  
Union  
Flour Mill

Post Office at  
Darlington

1833-1854  
Galmahra (Jacky  
Jacky), Cape York  
Expedition guide,  
born near Jerrys  
Plains

1840-1913  
Albert Augustus  
Dangar,  
pastoralist and  
philanthropist

1842  
Singleton and  
Patrick Plains  
Benevolent  
Society

1847-1925  
Rose Scott, Activist  
and Humanitarian

1830  
James Busby  
and George  
Wyndham  
establish  
vineyards

Coal  
discovered at  
Combo

1836  
Benjamin Singleton  
receives land grant  
deeds for township  
of Singleton

1841  
Benjamin  
Singleton builds  
a Court House

Singleton  
Post office  
gazetted

1843  
15 August  
The District  
Council of Patrick  
Plains

1859  
30 June  
Captain William  
Russell of  
'Ravensworth'  
becomes our  
first Legislative  
Assembly  
Member

D.A. BECKER

1829-1859

1860  
Commercial coal  
mining  
at Rix's Creek

1863  
7 May  
Railway  
comes to  
Singleton

1866  
5 March  
Alexander Munro is  
elected Singleton's  
first Mayor

Mechanics  
Institute built at 74  
George Street

1866-1975  
Singleton Municipal  
Council

1868  
The Northern  
Agricultural  
Association

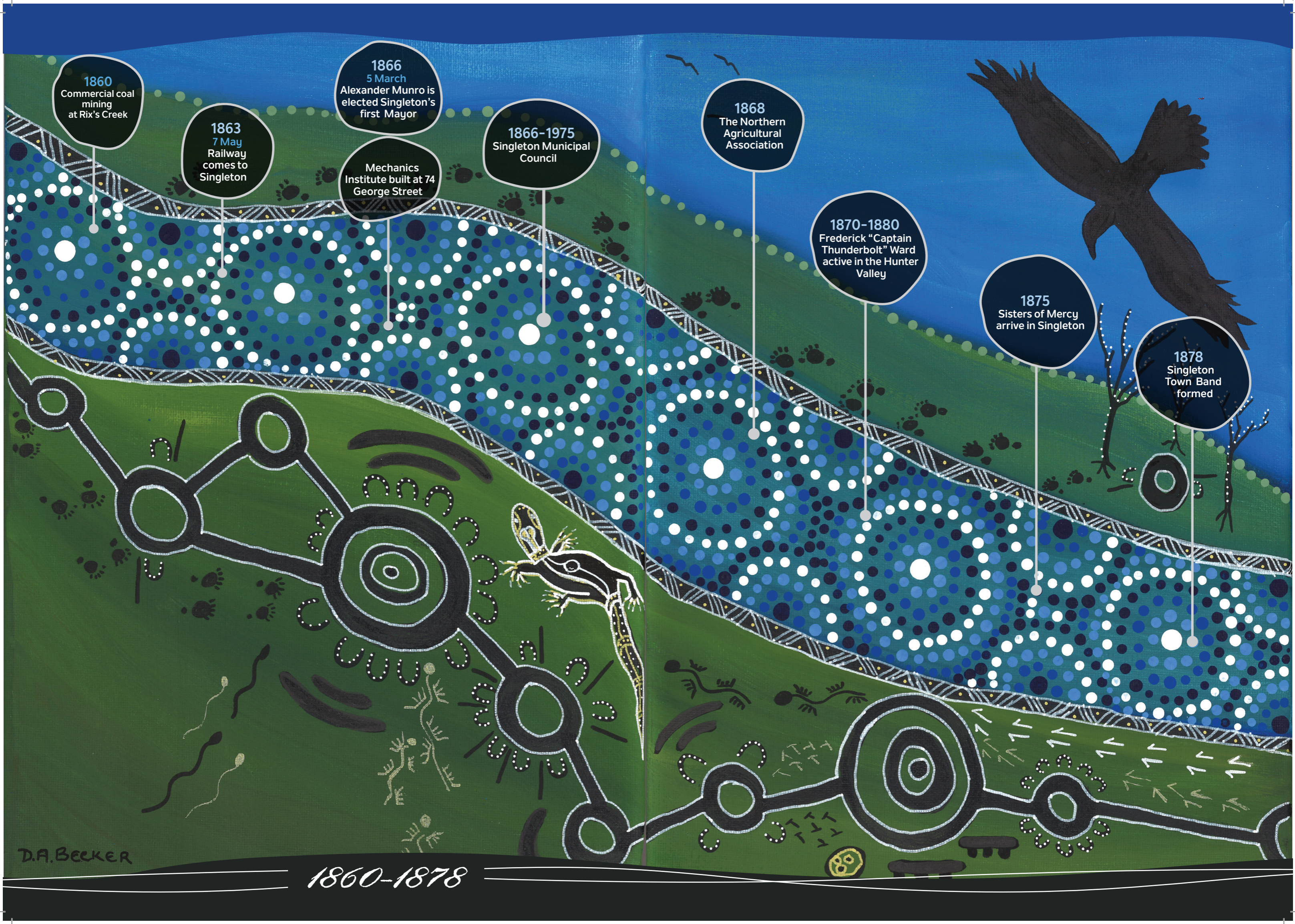
1870-1880  
Frederick "Captain  
Thunderbolt" Ward  
active in the Hunter  
Valley

1875  
Sisters of Mercy  
arrive in Singleton

1878  
Singleton  
Town Band  
formed

D.A. BECKER

1860-1878



1881  
Alexander Munro  
imports a gas works  
from England

1885  
The Municipal  
District of South  
Singleton

1886  
Singleton Fire  
Brigade formed

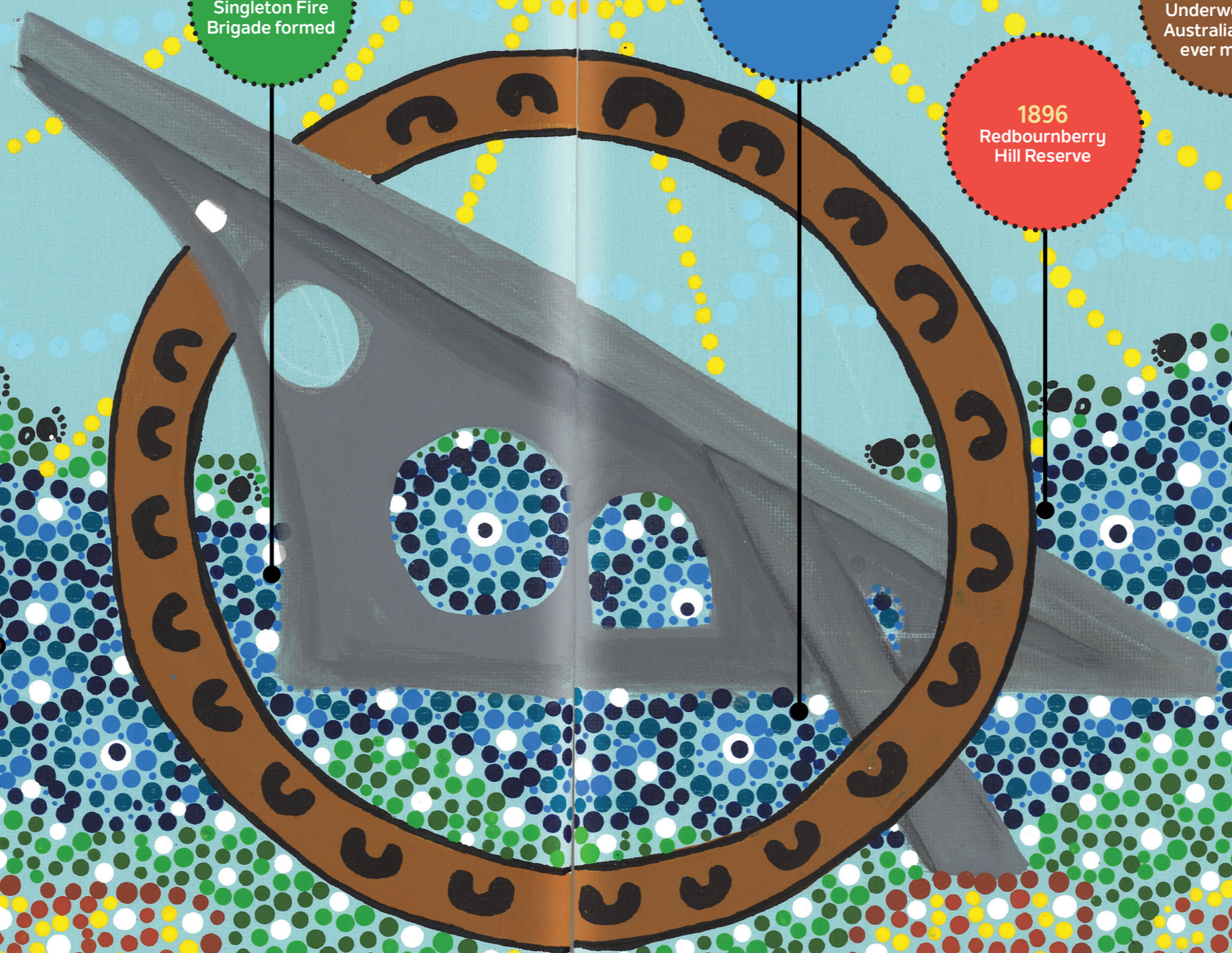
1893-1923  
The St Clair Mission

1896  
Redbournberry  
Hill Reserve

1900  
Jimmy  
Governor, Joe  
Governor and Jack  
Underwood spark  
Australia's largest  
ever manhunt

1905  
Singleton  
Aboriginal  
Children's  
Home

Dunolly Ford  
Bridge



D.A. BECKER

1881-1905

1906 - 1975  
Patrick  
Plains Shire

1914-1918  
WWI. One quarter  
of Singleton's  
population enlists

1914  
Red Cross League  
Singleton and  
Jerrys Plains

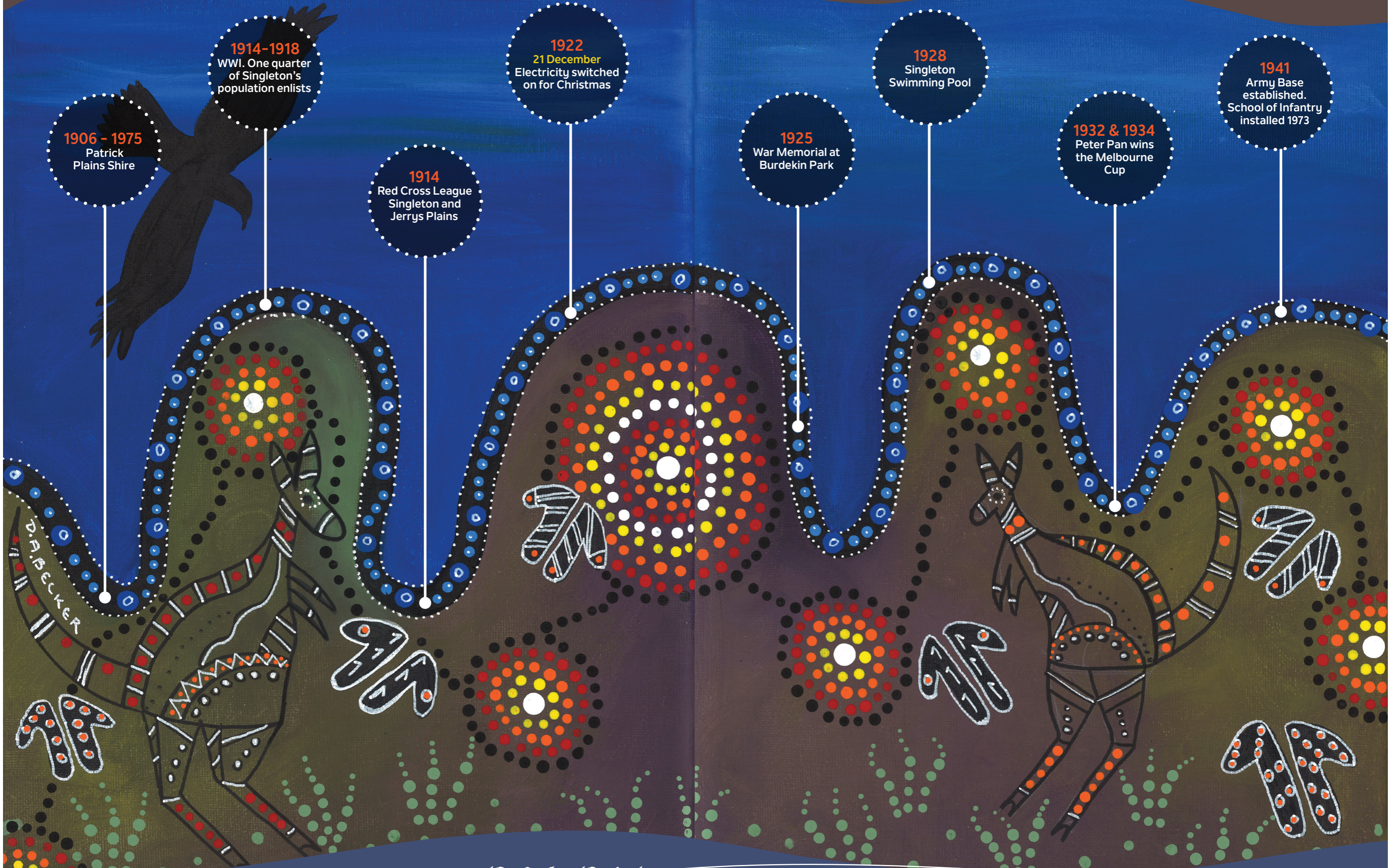
1922  
21 December  
Electricity switched  
on for Christmas

1925  
War Memorial at  
Burdekin Park

1928  
Singleton  
Swimming Pool

1932 & 1934  
Peter Pan wins  
the Melbourne  
Cup

1941  
Army Base  
established.  
School of Infantry  
installed 1973



1906-1941

1955  
The worst floods on record devastate Singleton

1973  
First Hunter Valley Wine Show at Showground

1976  
Singleton Shire Council proclaimed

1982 & 2019  
Repatriation of Aboriginal Ancestors at Wonnarua/Wanaruah Park

1986  
New Singleton Crossing Bridge opened

1996  
11 December Singleton Hail Storm causes \$500m dollars damage

1999  
Operation Safe Haven houses Kosovar refugees at Singleton Army Camp

2006  
Singleton awarded NSW Tidy Town of the Year and the National Spirit of Australia Award

2016  
Baime Cave Heritage Listing

2017  
Singleton Crafters set a World Crochet Record

2018  
Girls Academy established at Singleton High School

2020  
Back to Singleton 2020 Bicentenary

D.A. BECKER

1955-2020

## About the Artist

Inspired by the richness and diversity of the Hunter Valley and its beautiful river, Debbie Becker is an award winning Artist whose work has been collected both locally and internationally.

As a descendant of the Wonnarua/Wanaruah People, Debbie's work has evolved with guidance from the Elders, combined with extensive study of the "Great Masters". This fusion of traditional and western influence produces work that is both highly evolved and incredibly expressive.

The use of traditional symbols and application of modern techniques allows Debbie to not only explore her own culture, but also, to share her journey with others.

## Cover Artwork "Yarning Out, Community"

This painting portrays my interpretation of Singleton, my love of the river and the valley. A story from the beginning of Baiame to the present time.

From the mountains to the river, large grassed areas, farming, coal mining, Army and our community circles that interconnect, from traditional symbols to more modern interpretations, this painting contains them all.

Aboriginal art uses traditional symbols which can be read in many ways. Even the secret, sacred parts of a Dreaming can be painted but still remain hidden from us.

The Artist remains the keeper of secrets and the only person who will fully understand the hidden meaning.

## Timeline Artworks

### 1. In the Dreaming

The story of Baiame, using symbols, while traditional colours echo the Baiame cave paintings at Milbrodale.

### 2. Deep River Dreaming

The lush green valley being nourished by the river, with her deep cool water flowing from high in the ranges down through the valley to the sea, sustaining life as she flows.

### 3. Valley of Plenty Bush Tucker

Wonnarua/Wanaruah People live a symbiotic existence with the plentiful wildlife and fauna of the valley.

### 4. Meeting Place and Community

The Sundial cornerstones the many people gathering together in the sporting fields and play spaces along the river; with vivid colours of land, sky and water.

### 5. Kangaroo Dreaming

Dreamtime stories are told to build knowledge and understanding of how country, animals, and people came to be. Kangaroos are plentiful along the banks of the river and feature in many Dreamtime stories.

### 6. In the Dreaming

The Dreamtime is eternal, time out of time, forever ending and beginning.

## Further Study

Singleton Public Library, Family History Society Singleton Inc. and Singleton Historical Society & Museum Inc. together hold an extensive collection of resources relating to Singleton's unique and diverse history with publications and research services available from any of these organisations.

**The websites listed below are a small sample of the many useful internet resources freely available to the public.**

### Australian Army Infantry Museum

<http://www.infantrymuseum.com.au>

The custodian of Infantry Corps history, its customs and traditions.

### eHive

<https://ehive.com> search "Singleton"

Web-based collections from museums, societies and private collectors.

### Free Settler or Felon

<https://jenwilletts.com/index.htm>

Over 180,000 references to people and places of the Hunter Valley.

### Hunter Living Histories

<https://hunterlivinghistories.com>

Deep time researchers of the Hunter Region, through geological origins, arrival of Aboriginal People, European migration and to the present.

### Family History Society Singleton Inc.

<http://family-history-society-singleton-inc.org>

### Singleton Historical Society & Museum Inc.

<http://www.singletonmuseum.com.au>

### Singleton Library Local History Databases

<https://www.singleton.nsw.gov.au/236/Library>

### State Library of NSW Indigenous Services

<https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/about-library/services/indigenous-engagement>

Celebrating and sharing stories of Indigenous Australia, and helping to locate and prioritise Indigenous voices in the Library's collections.

### Trove

<https://trove.nla.gov.au>

Books, images, historic newspapers, maps, music, archives and more.

### University of Newcastle Cultural Collections

<https://livinghistories.newcastle.edu.au>

Photographs, publications, video, audio, people, collections, manuscripts, wine labels, timelines, data sets, events.





**SINGLETON**  
COUNCIL

Timeline Singleton is a Back to Singleton 2020 Commemoration Project, produced by Singleton Council with the assistance of numerous community groups, organisations and individuals from across the Singleton LGA. The Booklet is intended as a resource for all members of the community young and old to use as a reference to spark individual study on the subjects contained within.

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