

Ningeroongun and Barrajanda

(Mount Cougal's Twin Peaks)

A story passed down many generations

Gwyla, a great Yugambah hunter of long ago, had two wonderful hunting dogs – Ningeroongun and Barrajunda. They were trained to chase kangaroo close in to the camp for capture. One day, Gwyla and his nephew Burrajum entered the neighbouring Logan territory and the dogs caught a kangaroo rat. The dogs then saw and chased a kangaroo and were trying to run him towards Gwyla and Burrajum. The kangaroo jumped into a lagoon.

Two girls, getting water from the lagoon, saw the hunting dogs' shadow and told their people who were camped not far away. All the men came over and succeeded in running the two dogs into a net. The dogs fought so fiercely that they were killed as the men endeavoured to secure them. Gwyla and Burrajum heard the commotion and ran towards the lagoon. When Gwyla saw that Ningeroongun and Barrajanda were dead, he was terribly distressed and wept. "Don't cry, Uncle," said Burrajum; "I will cut a vine." This is the rainmaking ceremony.

The people who had killed the dogs were much afraid. After Burrajum had cut the vine. The clouds gathered and the rain commenced. Rain continued to fall more and more heavily day after day; the creeks and rivers rose to torrent, great landslides scarred the mountain and buried all the people of the tribe.

When the skies cleared, the mountains had been reduced to little more than hills and ridges. In the meantime Gwyla and Burrajum had taken the remains of Ningeroongun and Barrajanda over the big range to Wollumbin (Mt Warning). There they buried the two dogs, one under each of the two little peaks east of Wollumbin. Ever afterwards the two peaks were known as Ningeroongun and Barrajanda. These are the two twin peaks of Mount Cougal.

This story warns those who seek to take away possessions of others. It looks at traditional boundaries and influence that cause destruction of land and people. Water falling from the sky is a powerful force that determines land formation and nurtures the environment.

