

The Storyplace

The Shed ①

Kojonup is the first Shire with a million sheep. The panels of coloured sheep ear tags identify the age of the sheep in a seven year cycle, and the markings show the farm business' unique identification codes.

Shearing equipment may have changed over the years, but shearing remains essentially the same- often the place where the first interaction between workers occurs. As one Noongar shearer explains: "It's a place where anyone can work, from any culture. You're part of a team, but it's even closer, like a family." Brian Johns

Weigh yourself on the wool scales or slide down the race - just like a sheep

The Workshop ②

The inventiveness and resourcefulness of local people, the ingenuity that results from living far from a hardware shop, and the impact of technological innovations are illustrated in the Workshop.

Pump water on the fire ute, call up a friend on the fire radio or try your hand at welding and activate the film.



Farm Diversity ④

There is much diversity in the farming district, with reliable rainfall its most precious commodity. "Kojonup's different because you can grow almost anything here." Peter Anderson

Select a short film from the touch screen or watch a "slide show" of photos collected for this project.



Acknowledgement Wall and Reserve House ⑤

Past policies and attitudes of the Governments and the Wadjela people towards the traditional owners of the land are revealed in the form of a series of letters.

The Reserve House is recalled as an early home for many of the present Noongar people (1930's-1970's), and despite happy times, reserve living held many rules foreign to the rest of the community.

Kitchen ⑥

Today, all kitchens are the same - the hub of any home, and "we all shop at the same supermarket" (Darlene Collard), although an occasional treat of bush food is available for those who know how to harvest and cook it.



School Bus ⑦

Those who have travelled for thousands of kilometres to and from their school will remember the fun on the bus. Many Wadjela and Noongar people still recall beginning their education in one of Kojonup's 27 small district schools that were dependent on the ebb and flow of population.

Children will love the interactive school bus activities. Reminisce or compare your own school day stories with those shared in the scrapbooks.

Landscape ⑧

The local fossils reveal how ancient is the land, while the feather of the rare red tailed cockatoo and the salt encroaching up the tree trunks remind us of the vulnerability of the wildlife and the land itself.



Town and People ⑨

A true sense of community is created by a continual gathering of its people for social and sporting activities.

The drawers contain children's games of past eras and other elements of social life in the district



Sporting Champions ⑩

"When people go to the pub, and after a few beers they become a sporting legend in their own right." Craig McVee We acknowledge our legends on the screen and the sporting wall.

The Bush ⑪

The dramatic Fire Sculpture with its blackened branches, new growth and also overhead the half burnt paddocks shows the significance of fire to our people. Fire and smoke hold a special place in Noongar customs and beliefs, and the very essence of the bush requires these elements for its re-generation. When clearing of land was permitted, fire became an essential tool. Volunteer bush fire brigades still function today to ensure safety in the district.



The Bush ⑪

"Pull up a stump" and discover the significance of the local bush as a source of life and meaning to the people of Kojonup. The tammar skin rug speaks of the vulnerability of all indigenous animals and plant. But its story also reminds us of the interdependence of the community.



For Guided Tours: Jack's Noongar Tours available. Jack is famous for his storytelling and knowledge of bush tucker and medicine. Charges apply.

The Kodja Place has a policy of recycling and sustainability. If you do not wish to keep this brochure, we would appreciate its return to the desk.

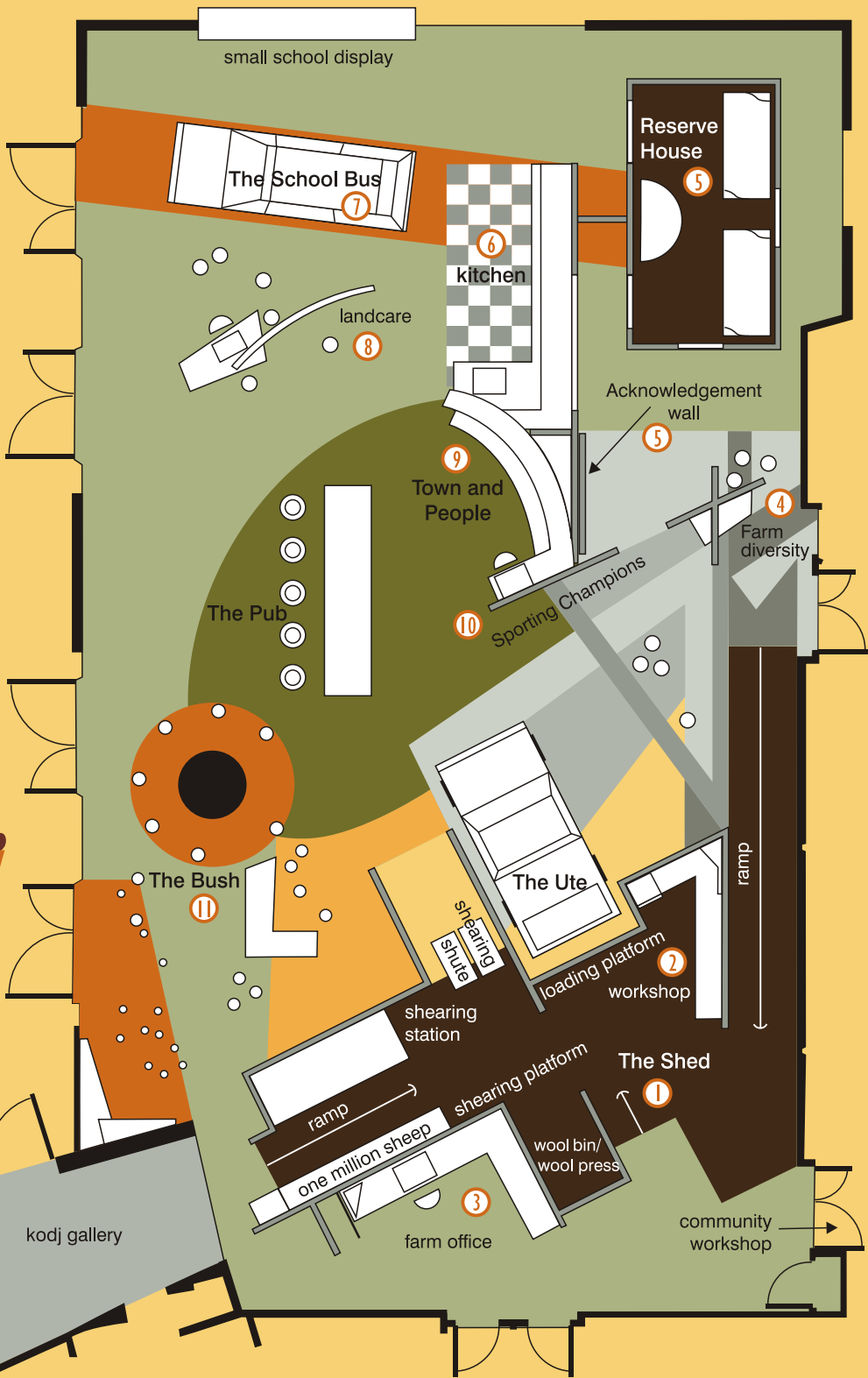
“one story, many voices”

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Self-guiding brochure for The Kodja Gallery and The Story Place

The Kodja Place
Kojonup, Western Australia

This guide will assist you to experience for yourself the significance of displays within the Kodja Gallery and the StoryPlace. Discover local products in our shop and then go out and spend some time in the Rose Maze. Staff members are available to answer any of your questions.

“one story, many voices”

The Kodja Place is a fascinating window through which the many paths that have led to the vigorous and vital district of Kojonup can be seen. Entertaining and often challenging, the Kodja Place demonstrates the merging of the threads: racial, cultural, historic and economic, that binds the community together. From the inception of the project, the Noongar community requested that their stories be told alongside those of the Wadjela (non-indigenous) community.

The displays are multi-layered. Tools, photographs, and narrative tell the immediate account while technology, art, architecture and the landscape and Rose Maze add to the experience.

It is the “real Australian story” for it tells the story of all its people.



The knife point plough leaves its mark on a simple grinding stone - two tools from two eras, linked together in the story of this land.



Tools

The use of tools within our environment, from pre-European times to the present day has changed the land use and has impacted on landscape.



The spears, boomerangs and meero have been identified as those used by local indigenous people in the past. Grinding stones were valuable tools for seed processing, stone flakes for cutting and whittling and ceremonial stones continue to carry their secrets within. The doak, a 50cm long stick, was thrown to stun small marsupials which formed part of the staple diet of the people of this area. With the coming of the European, rabbit was added to the diet and wire snares to catch gilgies, possums and kangaroos replaced traps made from natural fibres.



The Gastrolobium species of York Road, heart leaf and prickly poison created problems for introduced animals such as sheep, and settlers employed a variety of ways of keeping track of their wandering animals.

Poison grubbing with a mattock helped to slowly reduce the danger.

The Kodj Gallery

Noongar Seasons- Mural

Painted by Craig McVee

The story is about the Mardjit (snake) who in local mythology created the water holes, streams and creek beds. Aboriginal people believe that there are six seasons instead of four:

Birak	Summer	mid December to mid February
Bunura	Autumn	mid February to mid April
Djeran	Windy	mid April to mid June
Makuru	Winter	mid June to mid August
Djilba	Windy	mid August to mid October
Kambarang	Spring	mid October to mid December

The water holes show the changes during the different seasons. On the outer edge of the mural the colours are of skies and the inner sections are of changes in the land. For example, the bottom water hole represents a dry river crossing after the summer dry.

The eggs of the mardjit represent new life.

The small dots represent the White man (Wadjelas) exploring new and unfamiliar countryside. They extend beyond the mural, becoming larger as the Wadjelas began to make an impact on the land.



Floor Markings

The imprints of three vulnerable, but surviving, bush animals can be tracked up the Gallery. The floor colours reflect the change in landscape, from Ochre red to the pale colour of summer stubble.

The three solid lines crossing the Gallery represent the moving stories of Yoondi, a local Noongar, Elizabeth, a British settler and Maria, an Italian settler. They extend across the courtyard and into the Rose Maze where the stories unfold.



The Kodj

The pivotal exhibit, the Kodj, an authentic Noongar stone axe, is central to the Kodj Gallery as the source of the district's name: Kodj- "axe"; up- "place of water": Kojonup.

This authentic kodj (pronounced korch) is a double-axe made of two pieces of dolerite, coarse-grained basalt that was quarried and traded from sites such as one just west of Kojonup. One stone is sharp, with a cutting edge honed by chipping rather than grinding, and the other blunt. The sharp stone was used for cutting and the other for pounding or clubbing. The kodj was made using a resinous glue from Xanthorrhoea gum, ashes and kangaroo "poo". Heated resin was placed on one stone and a hardwood handle inserted and sandwiched with the second stone. The axe heads were then bound to the handle using kangaroo sinew.

The kodj was an all-purpose tool. Young men would use a pair of kodj to climb trees in search of possums, honey or eggs, cutting footholds with one axe and using the pointed haft of the other, stabbed into the bark, to draw themselves higher. A marked tree near the local Barracks Museum shows an 18-metre kodj climb.

This kodj has been loaned by the Museum of Western Australia to the Kojonup Aboriginal Corporation for exhibition in The Kodja Place.

Clearing was an essential criteria for settlers to retain their provisional land holdings, so scrub was slashed and trees were scarred or poisoned using Arsenic Pentoxide and later cut with saws, bulldozed and finally burned.



Money was needed to buy property or sustain a living. One source of funds was working to shape wooden sleepers using the cross cut saw and the wooden or steel maul which, with a wedge, could split the logs to the correct size.



Others found work harvesting the brown mallet - Eucalyptus astringens, which contained a natural tanning agent for leather-work - felling the trees and using a hoe and stripper to remove the tannin-rich bark.



Guenter's Chain

The 100-link surveyor's chain chinked across the landscape, marking out a patchwork of land ownership and roads - meticulously measured in links, rods and perches. The chain measures 66 feet or 20.11m from end to end. Fences divided the land and the Noongar people who were locked away from their land and food sources found it necessary for their survival to join in the development of farms.



Rose Maze

Among the many varieties of Australian bred roses are the stories of three women- a Noongar, and a British and Italian settler. While the characters themselves are fictitious, the stories are based on revealing interviews of local women and careful historical research.

