



Indigenous Culture in the Upper Murray

Tools at Tumbarumba Museum Questions

For thousands of years, our Indigenous people had to use the landscapes around them for food, water, shelter and to make fire. Today, we can go to stores and buy the tools we need. Aboriginal people had to use the elements and make the tools they needed.

1. You will notice that the variety of tools or implements that Ron showed Stacey at the Tumbarumba Historical Society Museum were made of stone. Why is this?
2. What is the very important point that Ron made about Indigenous objects?
3. Ron made reference to a stone tool on display where the stone is believed to have come from the Khancoban area. Khancoban is approximately 80 kilometres from Tumbarumba. Other stone tools found in the Tumbarumba district have been manufactured from "Tumut greenstone" that originates from Honeysuckle Creek, a tributary of the Tumut River near Granite Mountain. What does this suggest?



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Tools at Tumbarumba Museum Answers

1. Stone tools and implements, unlike wooden tools, are very durable and are therefore over represented in museum collections. Many tools and implements such as boomerangs, nulla nullas (clubs), woomeras, spears and throwing sticks were made of non-durable materials and did not survive.
2. When stone tools and implements are removed from their natural state without a proper study by qualified people, their 'provenance' or history can be quickly lost. It is illegal to disturb historical Indigenous sites, even if the site consists of a single implement. Should you or a member of your family find something that looks obviously fashioned by the human hand, then it is best to leave it undisturbed and contact the relevant government authority (see internet).
3. Certain types of stone were highly prized for their tool-making properties. Because of this they were carried or traded or distributed over a wide area. An example of this is Mount William greenstone or 'diabase' that was mined from an Indigenous quarry near Lancefield, Victoria. Implements fashioned from this stone have been found as far away as South Australia and central New South Wales.

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These sheets and accompanying clips were supported by Murray Local Land Services through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme and Catchment Action NSW.



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