

Aboriginal Dreaming Story of Gaanha-bula (Mt Canobolas) as told by Uncle Neil Ingram, Wiradjuri Elder.

“This story was passed on to me by my Elders:

A long time ago there were three brothers. The elder brother was Gaanha-bula, the middle brother was Wahluu and the younger brother came from Mt Macquarie, near Carcoar. Gaanha-bula is the traditional name for Mt Canobolas. *Gaanha* meaning shoulder and *bula* meaning two. Two shoulders. *Wahluu* is the Traditional name for Mt Panorama. It means young men's initiation site.

And the story goes like this:

Gaanha-bula and his brother Wahluu both fell in love with a beautiful young woman (Migay). Because she showed more interest in Wahluu, Gaanha-bula became jealous of his brother and challenged him to a spear throwing competition - the winner takes the prize and gets to marry the young woman.

They lined up a target. Gaanha-bula threw the first spear but missed the target. Wahluu then threw his spear but also missed the target, even though he was closer to the target.

On the second throw they both missed the target again. When they had the third throw, Gaanha-bula got awfully close to the target but Wahluu threw his spear and hit the target.

Before Wahluu could turn around to claim his prize, Gaanha-bula hit him in the back of the head with a club (bundi). Wahluu fell to the ground. This made the spirit ancestors angry, they made the ground erupt and lava spill out over Wahluu's body where he was laying on the ground. This is the shape of the mountain (Mt Panorama) as it stands today.

Gaanha-bula, full of fear, then fled the site and travelled back to his home at Mt Canobolas. The spirit ancestors were angry with him, for killing his brother. They struck him and made the ground erupt and lava poured out over his body where he laid, which is a constant reminder of what happened.

The moral behind this story is not to hold a grudge or jealousy, rage, and anger in your heart and not to commit murder against another person.

Mt Canobolas is a men's initiation site and a place used for corroboree and ceremonies (burbung). The Wiradjuri people camped on the mountain during these major ceremonies.

To the Wiradjuri people Mt Canobolas is a place of spiritual connection through worship of Baiame (the Creator God and Sky Father).

Scatters of stone tools and engravings can be found near the peak, along with remnants of cultural activities that took place. During the cold winter months, possum furs were made into cloaks and blankets for warmth. Traditional fire burns were used to manage the vegetation on the mountain and surrounding area to encourage important traditional food and medicine growth.

Such dreaming stories are known by some Wiradjuri people with a strong traditional connection to Orange and Bathurst. The public are not aware of these stories.

Mt Canobolas is still a spiritual and significant place today for the Wiradjuri people. We need to preserve, protect, and respect this special place.”