

Mourning Ceremonies

Aboriginal Mourning Ceremonies

The belief held by many Aboriginies is that they come from the land plays a great importance when discussing ceremonies about death.



It is believed that when a person dies, their spirit goes back to the Dreaming Ancestors in the land if the correct ceremonies rituals are conducted. Special dances and wailing songs are seen and heard in times of death or mourning periods.

The beliefs associated with death are different from language group to language group. Therefore ceremonies associated with death also vary from language group to language group. In some places it was believe that a person's spirit merged with their Ancestral Beings or the sacred or totemic site associated with them. In some areas it is believed that a person has two spirits, one was harmless and the other lived a separate existence but could still harm the first.

Some Aboriginies bury their dead some cremate them, some place the bodies on platforms or in trees or caves to conceal them. Many different practises are performed to ensure that the spirits of the dead would not cause mischief or sadness within the language group. In many places mounds of dirt, bark, sticks and other natural objects were built between the grave and campsite to ensure that the bad spirits of the dead didn't haunt the living.

A person's possessions and weapon's are often disposed of or buried with them during the ceremony. In some areas burial poles are erected at burial grounds or stencil markings and paintings would show where loved ones were buried in caves. Ceremonies last days, weeks and even months depending upon the beliefs of the language group. During these ceremonies often strict language rules apply. With close family members restricted to not being able to talk for the whole period of mourning.

Many Aboriginies talk of sorry business when discussing death to avoid sacred details. Often after a person has passed away the use of their name is forbidden.

If there are members in the same language group with the same name it is often changed.