

Tour Stop 4: Constellation Audio Transcript

Kumeyaay historian Michael Connolly Miskwish created the concept for the large circular mosaic at the park. The mosaic is a mirror image of the summer night sky, showing the constellations as if reflected from above. Symbols representing Kumeyaay constellations contain the European equivalents inside. For example, the bird is *Shaii* or Buzzard, and the stars inside represent the European constellation of Virgo. The lighter color that runs across the mosaic represents *Maay hetat kur*, backbone or spine of the sky – the Milky Way. Near the center of the mosaic is a symbol for *Kwellyap Ketuul*, the North Star. A sand painting design was chosen since the artwork is located on the ground. Sand paintings traditionally include symbols for geographic features as a type of mapping. Four circles along the outer ring represent key features that frame the location of San Diego. Beginning in the upper right and moving clockwise, these are: *Witay Chap*, San Jacinto Peak; *Kuchamaa*, Tecate Peak; *Mat hasil ewik kakap*, the Coronado Islands; and *Kwaras*, Catalina Island. The outer ring orients us to the cardinal directions: red for North, white for East, blue-green for South, and black for West. Together, the symbols and colors of this mosaic represent the time and place that traditional Kumeyaay lifeways changed forever – when Spanish colonists arrived in San Diego.