ABORIGINAL HERITAGE OFFICE

Education Program Report

Five Year Review
2010-2015

Written and compiled by the Aboriginal Heritage Office
Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Manly, North Sydney, Pittwater,
City of Ryde, Warringah and Willoughby Councils.
Acknowledgements

This report would not be possible without the co-operation of the following people and organisations.

The Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council,
The Aboriginal community of the region,
The local community of the region,
NSW Heritage Branch
The Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities,
The NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service,
NSW Office of Environment and Heritage,
Councillors and Council Staff,
Aboriginal Heritage Office staff and consultants,
Aboriginal Heritage Office volunteers and interns.

Cover page: AHO staff, consultants, interns and volunteers in action during 2010-2014.
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The AHO would like to share with you some enjoyable comments from a Year 3 class.

The AHO also been gratified to receive these various quotes from Council employees.

Many Schools have also taken time from their busy schedules to thank the AHO.

Community Members have taken the time to thank the AHO.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report provides information on the Aboriginal Heritage Office Education Program from 2010 to the present. It shows how the objectives of the Education Program are being implemented through the various roles of the Education program, the importance of education in the protection of Aboriginal heritage and a review of the possible reasons behind damage to Aboriginal heritage.

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Aboriginal Heritage Office (AHO) is a joint initiative by Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Manly, North Sydney, Pittwater and City of Ryde, Warringah and Willoughby councils, in a progressive move to protect Aboriginal heritage.

The most important goal of the AHO is to provide a role model for local, state and federal governments to show that Aboriginal heritage is important to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and that it can be effectively protected for future generations using the AHO’s management strategies. An essential element of this is community and staff training and education. The other component is proper care, monitoring and management of known Aboriginal sites. These are both elements that have been neglected in the past.

Many people are surprised when they learn how many sites there are in the northern Sydney region. There are hundreds of sites literally staring people in the face, as they walk around the bushland and foreshores. Rock shelters with shell middens, archaeological deposits, rock paintings and engravings are common and are thousands of years old.

Too often the AHO sees willful or ignorant damage on Aboriginal sites and signage. Can we keep these sites under lock and key or install security cameras? This type of security, even if it were possible, can cause even more damage. The implication of something sacred can create separateness between the object and the observer and a lack of understanding of their nature or the people who produced them creates even less value in the observer.

Education is a key to changing this. With over 200 years of continuing destruction of Aboriginal sites the AHO education program has never been more important. Most people have little idea of the rich Aboriginal heritage and history of their own area or even how the Aboriginal people lived within the local environment and through the education programs the AHO provides a way to help dispel this ignorance.

While always a core component of the AHO program, in 2011 the Education Officer Position was extended to full-time to meet the growing local demand and need for education to teach about Aboriginal heritage and culture. This has allowed an extensive Education Program to be executed.
1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE EDUCATION PROGRAM

The main objective of the Education Program is to develop and implement community education activities and events aimed at increasing the collective knowledge of Aboriginal cultural heritage. By increasing the community’s knowledge of Aboriginal cultural heritage, the participating Councils and the AHO believe Aboriginal heritage will be more highly valued and the community will take a more active role in site protection and preservation.

Another objective is to ensure that consultation and communication between all stakeholders is maintained. The AHO liaises and works closely with the Aboriginal custodians of the land, the Metropolitan Land Council (MLALC) and the Aboriginal community. The AHO also supports the objectives of the Northern Sydney Aboriginal Social Plan. All stakeholders in the 2010 Social Plan identified the need to use culturally appropriate programs to heighten Aboriginal cultural awareness within the non Aboriginal population and to “increase the involvement of Aboriginal people in the design and development of Aboriginal education programs…..for both Aboriginal and non Aboriginal students,” and to do this “In partnership with local Councils to facilitate community events and gatherings to promote cultural heritage and identity within contemporary society.” (Coombes, S 2010:45).

1.3 THE SCOPE OF THE EDUCATION PROGRAM REPORT

Within this report are documented the varied roles of the Education Program in community and within schools and the value of the AHO in the field providing a community connection through
cultural education programs, information and events. The report discusses how education is a valuable tool in increasing the knowledge of Aboriginal heritage and culture and in protecting Aboriginal heritage. The report also demonstrates how the AHO is an example of a continuing tradition of Indigenous people caring for country, using available technology, resources, knowledge and human interconnections.

The report touches on the following components:

- review of possible reasons behind the damage of Aboriginal heritage
- school and community presentations – verbal or through multi media,
- guided bush walks for schools and community,
- guided tours of the AHO Museum and Keeping Place,
- production of community competitions,
- production of education materials,
- updating of the website with current events and downloadable material,
- support for social and educational Aboriginal cultural programs for Councils and community,
- regular release educational newsletter,
- support for Guringai Festival program,
- support to community and schools for acknowledging significant dates on the Aboriginal calendar,
- resource for school and university students completing major works, masters and honours programs,
- attendance at outdoor festivals, celebrations and civic events with an education stall or a public address,
- attendance at schools and community groups to provide an Acknowledgment of Country, and
- administration component.

Also shown in the report are the results of these various arms and how they are received by the community and schools.

Group visit to the AHO Museum & Keeping Place, Northbridge
In the development of the Education program the AHO has completed a review to understand the reasons behind site damage and the ways to address this within our Education Program. What is underneath the destruction of Aboriginal heritage?

There are many factors that have worked together to place Aboriginal heritage seemingly at the bottom of the priority list. Following below is a discussion of the main causes of damage to Aboriginal heritage and how education is seen as the key to changing the outcomes for our heritage.

### 2. SITE DAMAGE AND VALUE OF EDUCATION

The creation of an Education Program was part of the vision of the original Memorandum of Understanding that was signed back in 1999 when the partnership of Councils was entered into. Education has always been valued by the AHO as important for the protection of heritage sites.

The AHO has developed and implemented public education activities and events suitable for a range of audiences and providing Aboriginal and non Aboriginal people a way to approach with issues, concerns or questions. It is believed that this achieves a better understanding of existing Aboriginal cultural heritage and the complexities of site management and is a way to their continuing protection.

In our lives everyday there are things from our past that we treasure; our grandmother’s brooch, the box that our grandfather constructed and old letters and photographs. These things connect us to our family or tell us where we come from. Aboriginal heritage sites provide Aboriginal people with a connection to their ancestors and their past and provide all Australians a connection to Australia’s history. Australasian Legal Information Institute (AustLII), refers to a release by the Reconciliation Council which documents the right of every person to fully exercise “culture, heritage, religion and language, both individually and in association with others,” that is inherent in our constitution. The release goes on to say that “Recognition and protection of cultural rights are essential to the enjoyment of individual rights and the achievement of social justice.” (AustLII, 2014: 5)

These heritage sites are now in the hands of all Australians. Aboriginal people represent the oldest culture in the world, the first custodians of Australia and form the fabric of our unique identity as a nation.

### 2.1 GOVERNMENT POLICY

Policy decisions made by governing bodies since the colonial era have been a powerful influence on Aboriginal peoples’ ability to protect and maintain their heritage: the original premise of ‘terra nullius’ allowed colonists to ignore Indigenous land management and cultural practices in place of European traditions. This notion underpinned all future decisions on Australia’s natural
environment and a ‘disregard for the conservation of Aboriginal places and landscapes within this

Social policy impacted greatly on the protection of Aboriginal sites. The forced removal of Aboriginal
children and adults and their subsequent relocation, sometimes thousands of miles from their
traditional Country, effectively took their power base away. Removing Aboriginal people from
cultural knowledge systems and their connection with Country and the denial of the transmission of
these knowledge systems and places associated with their spirituality by forbidding the use of
language, song, stories and dance broke down the continuous connection to heritage sites.
Continuous connection to Country is a premise of Native Title legislation. Without freedom of
movement or the ability to speak out and share the knowledge of these places it became impossible
to protect them.

“Power produces knowledge. Power and knowledge directly imply one another. There is no power
relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not
presuppose and constitute at the same time, power relations.” (Foucalt, 1997:33).

Even when wider society tried to take positive action to help Aboriginal people, self-determinist
policies largely resulted in Aboriginal people’s inability and struggle to participate in society which
gave non-Aboriginal people license to continue to dictate what was best for Aboriginal people.
Henry Reynolds speaks of the process of ‘inverse racism...automatically taking the Aboriginal side in
public debate, speaking not just of them, but for them’. He goes on to say ‘it was prejudiced
nonetheless. It clouded judgement and led to a special pleading, double standards and a measure of
hypocrisy, although we didn’t realise it at the time’. (Reynolds, 2000: 50).

A lack of control of Indigenous peoples’ affairs and having other voices speak ‘for us’ has contributed
to the loss of Aboriginal heritage. Australia over the last few decades has seen Aboriginal people win
greater involvement in managing their heritage, including having senior positions overseeing
Aboriginal heritage management. “We need an improved understanding and respect for Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander cultures, heritage, languages and traditional knowledge.” (Austlii, 2014:5).

The land has been changed forever through lack of understanding of our sites and land management
practices. Albert Mullet (Mullet in Birkhead et.al, 1991:45) asks “Why has it taken so long to ask
about and show respect for 40,000 years of wisdom, culture and experience?”

As an Aboriginal office one of the most important goals of the AHO is to provide a role model for
local, state and federal governments to show that Aboriginal heritage is important to both Aboriginal
and non-Aboriginal people and that it can be effectively protected for future generations using the
AHO’s education and site management strategies. Having Aboriginal people in the key roles has
been an important component of the AHO’s success as it is Aboriginal people making decisions
about Aboriginal heritage from an Aboriginal perspective, something that has been lacking for most
of modern Australia’s history.
2.2 IGNORANCE AND RACISM

Racism towards Aboriginal people is a very real cause of damage to Aboriginal heritage, which is evidenced by some of the slurs scratched or painted into Aboriginal heritage places. Racism is underpinned by historical, social, political and economic factors. Adam Goodes, Australian of the Year, believes education is the key to change as does AFL team mate Lance Franklin. Even high profile Australians still make inappropriate remarks born from this lasting legacy. For example, Eddie McGuire, football commentator, made some racist remarks about Goodes on radio last year, and after going through an education process has acknowledged his mistake. In all of these discussions education about Aboriginal heritage and culture is the key to a deepening understanding of Aboriginal people and the legacy that Australia holds with cultural heritage sites.

Uncle Allan Madden said about the Belrose site below, "There's no doubt that this damage was deliberate". He went on to say "This site is part of the heritage not just of Aboriginal people but all Australians. This is heartbreaking. A piece of art hundreds of years old has been destroyed in a matter of hours. We need to continue to educate the community and rely on people's decency and goodwill to keep a look out over our sacred places" (Madden in Lahey 2004: 5).
Uncle Allan Madden’s comments again show that education is the key to breaking down attitudes to heritage sites. The AHO through our work educating about the local area, the Aboriginal people that lived there and the legacy they left encourages a knowledge and understanding of the heritage sites.

A recent program on Radio National can perhaps throw some light on this subject. The program looked at the work of Richard Sylvan and Val Plumwood who are two of Australia’s great intellectuals. Working in environmental justice they saw that merely the recognition of something that is valuable risks us being a voyeur staring at the other, in this case Aboriginal heritage, and saying this is really valuable and then nothing else changes. The “mere recognition of value is not enough to action a change”. When we see what is in front of us and understand it, it then becomes deserving of our respect. (Val Plumwood 2014)

In cases of racism and ignorance or simply not caring, the AHO sees a vital tool in encouraging a wide knowledge base within community and schools fostering a deepening understanding of the local original inhabitants and the legacy they have left of their way of life found in the heritage sites.

2.3 ENVIRONMENTAL

Archaeologist Val Attenbrow of the Australian Museum states that damage and destruction of extremely vulnerable sites can occur if “visitors are not aware of the nature of the physical evidence
and of activities that can be detrimental.” Attenbrow goes on to say that site protection is important as too many Sydney sites have been “disturbed or defaced.” She stipulates that “visitors can help slow down the degradation, disturbance and destruction of the archeological evidence at sites by avoiding certain activities and being aware of the impact that their visit could cause.” Val Attenbrow continues by recommending: not to collect anything, not to touch pigment images, not to write or carve into any part of the rock surface, not to dig into the soil or deposits looking for cultural material in rock shelters or in loosening from the soil, be careful where you tread so as not to wear away carvings or break down midden shells, avoid using any objects that may disturb or damage the physical evidence eg. Camera tripods or other sharp metal objects, to keep to the formed tracks and walkways and to stay outside the barriers provided. Building campfires too close or within rock shelters can also cause irreparable damage (Attenbrow, 2010: 162-163).

It can also been seen here that Education about the damage that can be caused by us inadvertently is important. Many do not know that simple things like not walking on engravings with shoes can make a great difference. Education within schools and community groups can lead to a strong local knowledge base of the issues of site protection. The AHO addresses these topics in our presentations and walks and talks, as well as in its management plans, reports and training program.

2.3.1 EROSION

Aboriginal heritage is also at risk from natural processes such as erosion. Rising sea levels and flooding behavior, wave action from storm surges, wave action from boating traffic and the effects of salt water can cause substantial damage to vulnerable coastal sites. Coastal areas are where middens, artefact scatters and burials may be found in rockshelters, harbour foreshores, estuaries and on the open coast in the sandstone areas. The potential for their survival depends on the history of the disturbance, for example, foreshore reclamation, sandmining, urban development and resort facilities have serious impact on coastal sites. The Aboriginal Heritage Office released a Coastal Erosion Report in 2014 researching and providing education on what were once anecdotal concerns. The results of this report spoke of the need to review boat speed restrictions, no wash zones and the building of sea walls to protect vulnerable sites. The certain outcome of predicted sea level rises makes most protection measures temporary at best (AHO, 2014).

Council workers can inadvertently damage Aboriginal heritage with the construction of tracks and pathways, realignment of sewer pipes, digging of post holes for fences, erecting notices and interpretive signage and bush regeneration practices. Works can also lead to ongoing issues of erosion, increased visitation and so on (AHO, 2009).

The AHO works to provide each member Council with the skills, the resources, and tools to best manage Aboriginal heritage in their area. The AHO holds regular Aboriginal Sites Awareness training for Council rangers, planning and assessment staff and bush care staff. Council employees who work in close proximity to sites, after training often have the ability to discover unrecorded sites. Staff training covers topics such as identifying and understanding Aboriginal heritage sites, culture, politics, legislation, guidelines in site management and responses required when finding a site.
2.4 CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions of the value for education in the protection of Aboriginal heritage can be seen above in these well documented reasons for site damage. These reasons are complex to say the least, but as can be seen by the words from many others, Councils and the AHO, placing the emphasis on education is the key to a growing awareness of Aboriginal people, cultural practices and the protection of existing evidence of sites that show our use and connection to Country. What is also apparent is that the AHO Education Program has to continue its endeavour to reach out to all sectors of the community. The following documents the Education Program and its broad reach within the community and schools through its many programs and our passionate efforts to teach about Aboriginal Heritage and culture and site protection.
Table 2: Roles of the Education Program in Council and Community
The AHO would like to thank the Councils and their employees for their support of the Aboriginal Heritage Office and its Education programs. The Education Program was busy as usual this year and has grown with the demands of teachers to address their curriculum and the growing awareness of Aboriginal culture. As the AHO has travelled within partner Council areas visiting schools and community groups we have been welcomed kindly and met interested and inquisitive children and adults. The breadth of questions asked, the wide eyes and the embarrassment of ‘not knowing’ Australia’s Aboriginal cultural heritage has made all that we do humbling and gratifying. The AHO can see that these education programs make a difference to increasing Aboriginal heritage and culture knowledge our aims to site protection and the receptiveness of schools and community show this.

The AHO takes the role of community educator very seriously. The general policy has been to provide presentations, walks, talks and events free of charge as a service of Councils. This policy was reviewed and agreed to again by the Steering Committee in June 2011 and in subsequent years. The AHO is continuing with its long term strategy to increase awareness of Aboriginal heritage in the region and our staff are always accessible and approachable and do their best to provide a group with the best service for their event. The Education Program is implemented in all 8 member Council areas. In 2013 – 14 Financial Year the Education Program has completed 184 various presentations and has spoken to over 10,000 people. The following sections provide information on some of the key activities.

### Totals Number of Presentations, Walks, Tours and Work Completed in Council Area 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council Area</th>
<th>Presentations, Walks, Tours</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Willoughby</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warringah</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryde</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittwater</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ku-ring-gai</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lane Cove</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manly</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Sydney</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.1 PRESENTATIONS

Presentations occur in all 8 member Council areas. Over the past 5 years presentations have taken different forms and are varied to suit the audience. Presentations cater for the needs and accessibility of the venue and include multi-media presentations or more simple ‘show and tells’. Multi-media presentations consist of a PowerPoint presentation, spoken dialogue and presentation of artefacts that the children may handle. If the school or community group has no facilities this can be adapted to a spoken dialogue with presentation of artefacts only. Most schools now have the facility of a Smart Board and school children are very visually oriented and retain focus on the interesting PowerPoint. The presentations examine Aboriginal heritage and culture pre 1788 and post 1788, with historical and current images and representations. The presentations generally start with an introduction of the AHO and the Councils that support the Education Program followed by an introduction to the Aboriginal Flag. An example of a present structure is given below:

ABORIGINAL HISTORY PRIOR TO 1788

This is an important and popular subject and provides a context for the Aboriginal heritage theme and an understanding of Aboriginal culture of today. The subjects discussed are:

LANGUAGES OF AUSTRALIA

The 500 to 700 hundred language groups and dialects are looked at using an Aboriginal language defined map of Australia. Also spoken about are the areas of existing fluent language speakers and how Sydney can only rely on word lists for our language which is open to interpretation.

CLAN GROUPS

The clan groups of the Sydney area and the community or schools local area are then introduced. Children can practice saying the clan names and any known meanings of clan names are discussed.
In this discussion we can also mention the family structure of a clan and how everybody lived together and shared resources and care for each other and Country.

A SHORT HISTORY

Images of early paintings and drawings of Sydney Aboriginal people are shown. The fact that there were no cameras is mentioned here. We discuss the area where these Aboriginal people lived, their names and their subsequent role in Sydney life post 1788. We look at the features of the paintings of these people, i.e. the use of ochre and meaning, body decoration and mode of dress, tools and weapons that are depicted, hunting techniques, fishing techniques and images of karribiree. The presentation then examines a short history of the local Aboriginal people and the inter-relationship between the people, the land and spiritual beliefs. We look at shelter, tools, the way of farming and living within the environment and the seasons and the type of bush foods.

ABORIGINAL HISTORY POST 1788

This subject examines the two viewpoints of settlement and invasion and the changes to Aboriginal life that the First Fleet brought. Early drawings and paintings are shown demonstrating the dramatic change to the Aboriginal lifestyle and environment and Aboriginal connection to Country. Questions can be asked to school groups about the changes they see in the paintings they think the First Fleet created e.g. removal of bushland, erection of fences, building of houses, loss of access to water resources and loss of access to other traditional resources. Depending on the age of children or type of community group present, subjects such as disease, displacement, land management practices, frontier wars and genocide can be mentioned. The story of the great Bediagal warrior Pemulwuy is told. Through a gained understanding of the Aboriginal people and the historical context we can better understand the current heritage situation.

ABORIGINAL CULTURE IN THE PRESENT

The main subjects that are discussed include what has survived and what may be seen in the local environment. This can include shelters with art and this is demonstrated with the presentation of photos of hand stencils, ochre paintings and charcoal drawings. Also shown through photographic evidence are the shell middens that are found all around the local coast and water ways. The presentation allows discussion of their age, why they are important and what they may contain. Further discussion involves what may be found on an open camp site such as stone tools and other artefacts. Images of archaeological work in the field showing flags and images of stone tools are presented. We discuss that these may have been found at the site with the flags and can talk about trading routes that have been revealed by the finding of these stones. The presentation then shows photographs of visible heritage in the environment i.e: rock engravings, mundoes, axe grinding grooves and scar trees. We discuss how these are created by the Aboriginal people in the area and we have open discussion on how we can work together to protect them.
HERITAGE VALUES

The presentation then looks at heritage values and allows the AHO presenter to talk about and show through pictorial evidence how the Councils and the AHO work together caring for our sites and building infrastructure to protect the sites. This is shown with photographs from different Council areas presenting viewing barriers and viewing platforms. We then discuss how the school or community group can help to protect the sites with photos of the AHO on-site with schools and community showing how we can reduce the impact to sites ie: children and adults with shoes off on a rock platform, behind barriers and also standing on viewing platforms. Introduced at this point are photographic images of damaged sites, followed by a mention of the laws, fines that are in place and the importance of the law. All groups learn that Aboriginal sites are protected by law. The presentation then mentions the AHO Museum and Keeping Place and the varied work the AHO does.

3.2 BUSHWALKS

Walks are conducted on Council reserve land across the northern Sydney area in differing environmental zones. The subject matter spoken about depends on the reserve visited and the visible heritage on the tracks. This may include shell middens, bush tucker, medicine and tool plants, rock engravings, axe grinding grooves, mundoes, ochre stencils and paintings or charcoal drawings. Bushland walks introduce participants to the heritage sites and the natural environment. Groups are able to see, touch, smell and sometimes taste bush tucker. They can see an engraving, stencil or painting and view how it was created while learning the story of its unknown ritual or cultural meaning. They also may use a Council protective barrier and learn about the protective measures used to safeguard the engraving or painting. Actual physical education promotes a large number of questions and a deep and lasting understanding of the heritage of the site or track and all Aboriginal heritage.

There are excellent walks in each partner Councils used by schools and community. An example some popular reserve tracks include:

‘GADYAN TRACK’ BERRY ISLAND, NORTH SYDNEY COUNCIL

Gadyan Track is an easy grade loop walking track that includes signage about the original Aboriginal inhabitants of the area. The AHO has assisted during the recent upgrade of this track for the new viewing platforms and for text for the updated graffiti proof signage. The previous signs were occasionally willfully or ignorantly damaged by graffiti, although vandalism on this track is rare.

Gadyan Track is an excellent educational resource for how the Cammeraygal people lived in the bushland harbour environment and surrounds. Even though the people themselves have been
displaced, evidence of their recent occupation is still visible. Signage at the start of the track gives a broad overview of the Cammeraygal people and the changes that colonialism brought.

Shell middens, that are fast being eroded, are visible as one enters the track. The AHO has assisted North Sydney Council in carrying out work to try and protect the middens as the walk has many joggers completing the circuit. Shell middens show evidence of the diet of the Aboriginal people in that place. We can imagine and visualize the Cammeraygal men catching fish from the rocks with multi pronged spears and the Cammeraygal woman tending a fire and managing children while guiding the canoe with great skill. The Cammeraygal woman would have gathered, from the rocks around the Island and foreshore, the shell fish which is still visible at low tide. Countless meals of oysters and other shellfish were consumed here, and the evidence lies before us. It is very easy to imagine the Cammeraygal lifestyle as one looks over the harbour and the sunny sandy bays. Rock shelters are visible across the beach. Here families may have taken shelter during heat, wind or rain to cook up shellfish and other seafoods into a feast.

Bush Tucker and resources are very visible in the many different grass, heath and acacia plants that fill the Track. Large Sydney red gums reveal bird, insect and animal homes and food sources.

One then approaches a viewing platform recently reconstructed by North Sydney Council. Visible here is an engraving showing the outline of a large creature enclosing an open circle and a boomerang shape pecked from the sandstone rock. Engraving sites like these allow conversations of protection of Aboriginal heritage. North Sydney Council should be commended on the work they have done to protect this site and allow all to view and learn from it. Sadly the story of the engraving was never recorded so we are left to wonder about its cultural meaning and the cultural or ritual reason for its creation. Nearby are axe grinding grooves that demonstrate the trading of volcanic stone to this area, and the making and sharpening of axe heads.

Sydney’s Aboriginal art sites number in their thousands and they ‘represent the largest unified body of art so far established... found in a large cosmopolitan city anywhere in the world...” (Jenny Munro, Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council).

Sites such as Berry Island and Gadyan Track are part of Australia’s heritage and help to demonstrate the rich Aboriginal culture that once existed in the Sydney region prior to European occupation.
They also document a past which underwent rapid change. The track helps educate the Australian community in providing educational insights into the life of Aboriginal Australians and the importance of protecting the sites. It is our responsibility to ensure that sites, such as on Gadyan Track, Berry Island, continue to survive into the future and are protected as part of Australia’s heritage. Education programs associated with this track are a key component to its protection and the protection of other sites.

**GULGADYA MURU, WARRINGAH COUNCIL**

Warringah Council has worked with the AHO to promote an educational Aboriginal self guided walk named Gulgadya Muru - grass tree path. This is an extensive walk around Manly Dam. The walk is surrounded by bushland providing many examples of bush tucker and resources for tools and weapons. It is an exciting walk moving up to the ridge tops along a band of sandstone and down to the water environment.

The walk has an accompanying brochure which shows 5 Information Points where one can stop and observe and learn a fact about Aboriginal heritage at that point. The remains of open campsites, the visible axe grinding grooves and the trees, plants and water ways that provided tools, medicine and abundant food allow a deep understanding of a past lifestyle which is very easy to imagine in this beautiful bushland setting.

![Rock overhangs (left) and grass trees (right) provide discussion points, Manly Dam.](image)

Travelling within Country, learning, experiencing the tastes, looking at the tools, looking at ways of shelter and learning the close connection to Country and the life of Aboriginal people here encourages questions on ways of helping to protect heritage. Discussions of the laws surrounding heritage, simple environment ways of protecting heritage and discussions of joining the Volunteer Sites Monitors are introduced. Education through this track is important in learning about heritage values, a past way of living and encouraging a deeper understanding and familiarity with the local clan.

Please see quotes in Appendix.
One of the AHO’s more significant examples of the recognition and respect of Indigenous culture, social values, customary practices and aspirations can be seen through the establishment of a Keeping Place and Museum in the office. In 2008 the office moved to a new location in Northbridge with a new large space which allowed the establishment of a number of exhibits that slowly expanded in scope to house over 14 cabinets filled with Aboriginal artefacts, historical documents and materials as well as displays, DVD shows and even a model rockshelter. The Museum and Keeping Place received many visitors from community groups to large School and University groups as well as international delegations. It always received exemplary reviews from visitors.

Unfortunately in February the museum had to be packed up and our relocation to Manly, to smaller premises with space restrictions has meant that many things have not yet been able to be displayed. The Museum exhibits are changed regularly and materials are loaned out. The following is an example of some of the current exhibits.

Through appropriate and effective displays a link to the cultural past, present and the future is exhibited.

**THEME 1 PAST**

**HOMININS**

This cabinet shows Fossil Hominin Skulls from the present to 3.5 million years ago. Life-like skulls tell the story of the period of evolution to today’s ‘Modern Man’. Modern man is demonstrated by an Aboriginal skull. This cabinet supports current G-Nome research of Aboriginal people being the first modern man to walk out of Africa. It also allows the free expression of the curiosity of people to see whether the Aboriginal skull is different to a European skull which has been a topic of interest since colonisation.
DREAMTIME, DREAMING, ALCHERINGA, TOTEMS & KINSHIP

This cabinet allows the discussion of the cultural heritage of Aboriginal People. It explains the beliefs of Aboriginal people in the origins of their world by creation spirits, Ancestral beings or supernatural events. Viewers are reminded that all cultures have their own ‘creation stories’. The display explains how the present generation of Aboriginal people connects directly with the dreaming through ritual song, dance, stories and connection to their heritage sites. The display also allows discussion of the governing inter-relationships between the people, the land and spiritual beliefs and how this manifests in the present in the protection of Aboriginal sites. The cabinet introduces and promotes discussion on totems and the multi-level kinship system which identifies skin groups, totems and language groups which explains behavior and obligations to food sharing, shelter, marriage, spiritual protection and caring for sacred sites.

THE PEOPLE

Photographs of early drawings by the first fleet artists demonstrate cultural characteristics of the people. They show us the use of the environment to create head-dresses of feathers, gum, teeth, small jaws of animals and use of animal pelts, ochre, showing cultural ways of painting the body and how tools and weapons were made and used. This discussion allows connection and a growing intimacy to the early Aboriginal people and the use of their names as people who were part of Australia’s history. This introduction of familiarity may help against racism and the destruction of Aboriginal sites and signage born of ignorance.

LANGUAGES MAP

A large language map shows the number and names of language groups across Australia. Here we can talk of the fact that all maps are different. We talk about how the spelling, boundaries and even existence of Aboriginal clan and language names changes with each historian or researcher. The map shown is a Norman B Tindale map from 1974. The 500 to 700 hundred language groups and dialects and the areas of existing fluent language speakers are spoken about and shown. The map also facilitates the discussion of the loss of languages and how Sydney can only rely on word lists which are open to interpretation.

MUSIC AND RITUAL MUSIC INSTRUMENTS

This cabinet reveals “Didgeridoo” is a European name and how the use of the name Yidaki is most commonly used and comes from Arnhem Land. The AHO talks about how the Yidaki originated from Northern and Central Australia. We can show and discuss how the instrument was made and speak about how it is used in ceremony accompanied by singing and the playing of clap sticks. Also on display in the cabinet are several different sets of clapsticks and several bull roarers. We can then talk about the connection of the artefacts to the people, the Country and spiritual or ritual beliefs. These are some of the more familiar artefacts to people from other cultures.
TOOLS AND WEAPONS AND A PRESENTATION OF SPEARS

These displays show cultural artefacts and are very popular. Several cabinets demonstrate the many shapes and sizes of tools. A presentation of the many kinds of spears, shields, battle clubs, different kinds of boomerangs and weapons and tools leads a discussion of their make and function depending on their geographical or clan origins. This facilitates discussion of the use of country for tool making and how land was managed by Aboriginal people to promote hunting.

WOMENS CABINET

This cabinet shows a presentation of artefacts that woman and children used to gather and collect food such as digging sticks and coolamons. Discussion centres on woman as the primary food gatherers and fishers. Also shown are head dress and necklace ornamentation. Discussed with this cabinet are cultural weaving and ornament making practices and possible ritual decoration ie: cicatrices. The AHO can also talk about use of different areas of the environment as a source of food or materials for basket weaving and tools.

NOWE OR CANOE

A full length replica bark canoe is shown. The AHO talks about the materials from the environment that were used and the method of nowe construction. We examine photos of scar trees which are Aboriginal heritage items and are left in the environment after the taking of bark for the nowe, coolamon or shield. Also discussed are the sustainable fishing practices of the men and women.

CHANGES OF COLONIALISM

Several displays demonstrate how the colonists saw and related to Aboriginal people. A replica and history of the English Uniform, including gun, and a collection of English travelling necessities are also shown. A ‘Sorry Wall’ displays photos of the capture and chaining of Aboriginal people. Another wall display shows excerpts from 1st Fleet diaries and their impressions of the land and the Aboriginal people. Educational signage is provided on the Aboriginal, European and Academic perspectives of colonisation.
A video is displayed that is titled ‘Frontier’ that provides an overview of what is mentioned in all the above displays.

**THEME 2 PRESENT**

**STONE ARTEFACTS**

This cabinet shows artefact examples of the stone tools and weapon technology of Sydney’s Aboriginal people. This popular cabinet introduces the geology of Sydney and opens discussion on use of stone tools, the northern and western trading networks to procure them and how stone tools can be found today in many areas in Sydney and on old open Aboriginal camp sites eg: Blackmans Park.

![Sandstone landscape (left) and model fish trap with rising and falling water (right).](image)

**DIORAMA OF SANDSTONE LANDSCAPE**

This is an important diorama designed and made by the AHO that reflects the geology of Sydney and how Aboriginal people put this to best use. The diorama provides a model of how Aboriginal people lived within the sandstone landscape and provides an easy means to demonstrate where Aboriginal heritage may be found in the landscape today, why it is found here and the importance of knowing where to look for these places to aid in protecting heritage.

**DIORAMA OF FISH TRAP**

This AHO-built diorama is an interactive display which demonstrates a tidal rock fish trap and the method of construction using rocks from the environment. A demonstration of how tides were harnessed to work the fish traps is conducted by the intake and release of water into and from the diorama. We can then discuss Aboriginal knowledge of the environment and where such traps may be found as heritage items and where they are still being used in other areas of NSW.
DIORAMA OF OPEN CAMP SITE

This AHO-built diorama demonstrates Aboriginal heritage sites that can be found in the environment through the traditional Aboriginal way of living with the environment. The AHO also talks about the protection of these demonstrated sites. Shell middens, stone tool quarries, scar trees, axe grinding grooves, rock engravings, wooden artefacts, gunya construction and hunting are all represented in this diorama. Here we can demonstrate traditional ways of living and Aboriginal heritage and where it may be found in the environment.

A SHELL MIDDEN DISPLAY

An AHO constructed display which replicates a cross section of a shell midden. The display allows discussion of where a shell midden may be found and the type of shells, bones or other artefacts that may be found in it. This allows discussion of protection, age, description of shell middens and the possible ways of protecting shell middens.

Example of an excavated archaeological site (left) and tools and weapons (right).

THEME 3 FUTURE

EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

The museum also holds a wealth of educational material. This takes the form of brochures and flyers. These may include subjects such as Aboriginal Sites Awareness, the Sydney Language, information on the Aboriginal Heritage Office, flyers on the Free Schools Program, flyers on the Volunteer Site Monitors Programs, local walking tracks and also museum handouts which give an explanation and educational material about what is in each particular cabinet. All of this material has educational value and the general public, if they wish, are encouraged to take material home. Also in the Museum and Keeping place are transcripts from First Fleet diaries and descriptions of the local area. Other published information on broader social or educational issues is provided in a large folder format for reading while attending the museum. Depending on the month in the year the Museum and Keeping Place may hold and deceminate information on various festivals eg. Guringai Festival, Survival Day, Heritage Festivals.
3.4 PUBLIC ADDRESSES

The AHO is frequently asked to speak on Aboriginal heritage and culture at large and small Council and community occasions. These presentations may address in part, the particular occasion at hand or they may be a broad ranging cultural and heritage discussion.

Eg: Council Precinct Committees, Rotary Clubs, Progress Societies, Cubs, Scouts and Girl Guides groups, environmental groups, bush regenerators and including the University of the Third Age (retirees), the Harbord Branch of the Australian Labor Party, Probus Clubs, Wahroonga Cubs, Dee Why Scouts, Harmony Day at Ku-ringai Council and Cammeray Public School, the opening of community facilities for Aboriginal people in Ryde, Lane Cove Catchment Day, Kelly’s Bush and the site of the first ever Green Ban, Lane Cove River Trip, Lane Cove Gallery, Live Interview ABC 702 Drive Richard Glover, Castle Cove Primary School to name a few.

3.5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND WELCOMES

"Acknowledgement of Country" is a way that all people can show respect for Aboriginal culture and heritage and acknowledge the traditional Custodians, the ancestors and the spirits of that particular Country.

A “Welcome to Country” is conducted by the Traditional Custodians of the Land, usually a senior representative of the local Aboriginal community. However, this is dependent upon the location of the event and the practice of the community. It is usually a person who is known by the community and holds the respect of the community. Welcome to Country is a traditional practice of special significance. Europeans would not let someone unknown into their house without first talking to them and welcoming them at the front door. Local groups would have their own customs and protocols about and around Welcome. Rhoda Roberts, spoke of Acknowledgement and Welcome in this way:

‘The head of indigenous programming at the Sydney Opera House, Rhoda Roberts, said she was "somewhat dismayed" by ceremonies in which Aboriginal custodians welcome people to their land and the acknowledgement of country that is said as a sign of respect. "It's difficult. I think what's happened is that everyone's got excited about doing the right thing and being PC," she said. Ms Roberts said these ceremonies were often conducted in a perfunctory way. "I say tokenism in that it's wonderful you're doing it but I often feel you don't have any heart for it," she said. "I want to put the spirit and the heart into it." ‘..Ms Roberts said it was not enough to pay lip service to the traditional owners of the land. In acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land, Ms Roberts said people should be able to explain what it means to them: "Or is it something you just say because you're PC? "Now the next phase of it is to actually understand the spirituality of it."(Roberts in Taylor 2012)
The AHO ensures that time for an address occurs at the Welcome or Acknowledgment so there is a learning process and the event is not simply tokenistic.

Acknowledgements and Welcomes have been given at large Civic and Council occasions and School assemblies. The AHO also provides wording and advice on Acknowledgement and Welcome. Examples given this year include: Acknowledgement of Country and Talk - Brewarrina Exchange, Warringah Council; Welcome and Talk - Ryde Youth Services Hub; Acknowledgement and Talk - Youth Congress at Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability; Presentation and Acknowledgement - ICMS Quarantine Station Manly; Acknowledgment and talk- Cammeray School Harmony Day and Acknowledgment of Country and Address for the Consecration of the War Memorial North Fort Manly.

3.6 STALLS

The AHO hosts information stalls at public events. Stalls are usually part of festivals, expos or may be an open day or Aboriginal cultural day at a school or community event. Stalls allow the answering of questions and the dissemination of Educational Material and presentation of activities or small gifts about Aboriginal heritage. Material given out includes brochures and flyers on Language, Your AHO, Awareness of Aboriginal Sites, Bush Regeneration and Awareness of Aboriginal Sites, Free Schools Program, call for Volunteer Site Monitors and also various brochures on Council Walking Tracks or current events. Stalls may also have AHO stickers and other give aways, an activity with water hand stencils and a tool and weapons display. Stalls are a good training ground for interns. AHO presence at stalls provides a relaxed and easy way for the general public to approach us and promotes a wide variety of questions from the general public and school or community groups.

Some examples of stalls that have been held are; Ocean Care Day (Manly Council), Duffy’s Forest Bush Care Day (Warringah Council), Northbridge Centenary Games (Willoughby Council), Back to the Bay Day (Manly Council), Food and Wine Festival (Manly Council), Sustainability Day (Pittwater Council).
3.7 EDUCATIONAL BROCHURES, FLYERS & NEWSLETTERS

BROCHURES AND FLYERS.

All brochures and flyers promote learning on Aboriginal heritage and cultural learning.

Brochures and flyers are designed to inform and engage the reader and are given away to visitors to our Museum and Keeping Place and at events. AHO Brochures are also free to download off our website. Brochures and flyers are taken to some public presentations and given out at all AHO stall presentations. Some are also given to organisations for NAIDOC week public displays, library displays or other Aboriginal cultural display days. The AHO also promotes material from other sources eg: Willoughby Heritage Festival, Guringai Festival, Ryde Council Bennelong Project.

Your Aboriginal Heritage Office brochure.

Brochures may include topics such as Language, Awareness of Aboriginal Sites, Bush Regeneration and Awareness of Aboriginal Sites, Your AHO and also various brochures on Council Walking Tracks. Flyers available may include information on the AHO Free Education Program and the Volunteer Site Monitor Program. Also included are education flyers discussing the topic on display in each cabinet of the Museum and Keeping Place. After visiting the museum guests are able to take their learning home with them. This reinforces the educational impact of the Museum and Keeping Place and of heritage and culture. All brochures and flyers promote learning on Aboriginal heritage and cultural and protection of heritage and culture.
EDUCATIONAL ARTICLES IN YARNUPINGS

The AHO produces a periodic Newsletter ‘Yarnupings’. This is designed to be entertaining, informative and educational. Information from each member of the AHO team is added to Yarnupings. The Education program has written articles on boomerangs, Aboriginal military service, possum skin cloaks and Country to name a few. Some of the articles included from other members of the AHO team are articles on sites awareness, damage to sites, regrooving, volunteer stories and other stories about what the AHO has been doing. Yarnupings always features a Track of the Issue, a recipe from our interns or staff, jokes, quizzes, quotes, poetry and a movie review. Yarnupings may also have an article written by our interns about their experience of working at the AHO or from ex staff members of the AHO recounting their tales of work in the field.

Appendix 1 Example of an AHO Brochure
Appendix 2 Example of a Museum and Keeping Place Flyers
Appendix 3 Example of an Education Article in Yarnupings

3.8 COMPETITIONS

To engage with the schools and community in a broader way the Aboriginal Heritage Office has conducted several competitions open to schools and community on the subject of Aboriginal heritage and culture. Below are examples of some of the competitions that have been run.
POSTER COMPETITION

The Aboriginal Heritage Office asked schools to design a poster aimed at promoting the protection of Aboriginal heritage in their region. This request ran as a competition and was promoted throughout all schools in the 8 member council region. The AHO offered four prizes in 2 primary school categories and 2 secondary school categories. Members of the AHO Steering Committee were the judges. The very special prize of a beautiful handcrafted Yidaki or Didgeridoo was presented by Mayors or a councillor from the Council region of the 4 winning schools. The yidakis were presented to the student and are to be kept at the school and will make an exciting presence in the school band and culture for many years to come. The student was also presented with a Winners Certificate.

See Appendix 4 Junior School Winner of Poster Competition

AHO LOGO COMPETITION

The AHO decided they would like a new logo on all their uniforms, correspondance and brochures. The AHO invited students and residents from across the 8 member council region to submit a design for its new logo. The competition call went out to all schools in the 8 member council area and was advertised in local newsletters, the AHO community data base and received editorial in the Koori Mail. The logo competition attracted many entries from across the region. Members of the AHO Steering Committee were the judges. The winner in each of the 3 categories was awarded a brand new nikon coolpix waterproof camera.

See Appendix 5 for Community Winner of Logo Competition

DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION

The burgeoning technology for making short films and documentaries simply and easily at home inspired the AHO to create a documentary competition. This was to engage all entrants to research and think on Aboriginal heritage and culture. The AHO invited students and residents from across all partner Council member areas to create a 2-3 minute documentary. The documentary created was requested to be on one of the following topics: Aboriginal history, heritage, sites or culture. The AHO looked for a creative work that brought to life the Aboriginal heritage of the local area. A prize of an Apple iPad was given.
The documentaries that were produced were all well-thought out, passionate and approached the subjects from many angles. There was one clear stand out winner. Their film ticked all areas for interest and for all material that was included. The film was also exemplary for other reasons including, camera work and audio included. Two honourable mentions were given.

3.9 EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL AND SIGNAGE FOR COUNCILS AND COMMUNITY

EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

The AHO is often asked to provide educational material or signage for Councils and community. The importance of this opportunity is to spread a heritage or cultural message of the local people and the heritage of the local area. Sometimes this will demonstrate the AHO and the work the office does. Some examples of material provided include:

- writing the Aboriginal heritage section of The Coal Loader Sustainability Learning Guide which included learning outcomes and references,
- providing articles for church newsletters, progress association newsletters and heritage association newsletters,
- providing educational material for an area of study.

EDUCATIONAL SIGNAGE

The AHO is often asked to provide factual heritage and cultural information for signage in various locations in the 8 member council area. Following are some examples of signage. Signs for Gadyan Track: new and updated text was provided by the AHO for the educational signage around this Aboriginal walking track. This new signage is important as it provides current information and allows a deepened understanding of the Aboriginal people and their heritage in the area. The signs will be made of the highest graffiti proof material as past signs were willfully or ignorantly damaged.

Wording and pictures for the new signage at Blackman’s Park provided heritage and cultural knowledge of the area as an open camp site. Across our 8 member council area many acknowledgement signs are being created in business foyers, offices, schools and bush tucker gardens. Many schools and community groups have asked for appropriate wording for the original custodians of their area for the completion of acknowledgement plaques or signs. Some examples of signs are; signs for school bush tucker gardens: Wenona Girls, Redlands Girls, Abbotsleigh Girls and signs for offices: Salvation Army Offices.

See Appendix 7 Sign examples for Gadyan Track and an Acknowledgement sign.
3.10 SUPPORTING COUNCILS AND COMMUNITY ACKNOWLEDGING SIGNIFICANT DATES

AHO acknowledges all significant dates on the Aboriginal calendar. These dates include National NAIDOC Week, National Close the Gap Day, Harmony Day and Mabo Day to mention a few. The AHO has been asked by Councils to provide a public address for example; Closing the Gap Public Talk North Sydney Council, Closing the Gap Talk Wenona School; Mabo Day Talk Weaving Bridges Warringah & Manly Councils, Harmony Day Cammeray Public School, NAIDOC Week talks across many schools and councils.

Other ways of bringing to community information about the Aboriginal Significant Dates are by providing educational articles in our Yarnupings Newsletter, providing information on our website and updating the website What’s On to provide brief information about the meaning and the actual date. The AHO also displays posters outside the Museum and Keeping Place. The AHO will also provide information if requested.

The AHO represents each member Council as part of the Guringai Festival. The Guringai Festival is an important cultural festival and has within its dates Sorry Day, Mabo Day, Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week. These are cultural occasions when the wider community is encouraged to learn about Aboriginal culture and heritage. The AHO has conducted walks, talks and presentations broadly across the 8 member Council area.

Appendix 6 Examples of AHO work during the Guringai Festival

3.11 SUPPORTING ABORIGINAL PROGRAMS FOR COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY

The AHO supports social, artistic and educational programs run by Councils and Community for Aboriginal people. Some urban Aboriginal people of Sydney have a dislocation from their cultural background and Aboriginal community organisations believe that strengthening cultural bonds improves educational and life outcomes. It is just as important for new migrants to understand about the traditional custodians of Sydney and learn about our heritage. Examples of support given are; supporting Councils in their Sister Council relationships with Aboriginal Communities – Warringah Council and Brewarrina Council, Manly Council & Gunnedah Council, Kari Aboriginal Resources, Koori PEET Programs, Serco Immigration Services, Show Me the Way Aboriginal Education Service, Lomandra School, New Horizons – Tribal Dreaming, Musica Viva Datiwuy Dreaming Program, Abbotsleigh Grace Cossington Gallery ‘ Black Art White Walls’ Exhibition, Lane Cove Council and Tribal Warrior Program, Lane Cove Gallery and the ‘ Home on Country’ exhibition.
3.12 RESOURCE FOR SCHOOLS & UNIVERSITIES

The Aboriginal Heritage Office is regularly contacted by students from Secondary Schools completing major works and University Students completing thesis work. These students have as their topic Aboriginal heritage and culture. The AHO has also had continued involvement with proactive schools. Killara High School is a very active school in Aboriginal heritage and culture and in 2014 had 3 students who sought out the AHO in completing Major Works on; Heritage Protection, Connection to Culture - City and the Community and Education and Aboriginal Students. The AHO supports all students who contact us. The high demand from Pre School students cannot be met as the AHO program works is with students from Year 3 and up. Students undertaking thesis work has included media students creating a radio program on Gadyan Track and arts students creating a play on post colonisation. AHO has also given presentations at UTS and Macquarie University.

3.13 WEBSITE

The AHO website is an important point of contact for the office and is often the first point of contact. All members of the AHO team contribute to the website. The website is a valuable resource for students, school teachers and community. Some enquiries can be directed to the website for information. On the website freely accessible and for download is information on proper care, monitoring and management of known Aboriginal sites, a photo gallery, information for community and site volunteers and many sections on education. Below are the main features of the website:
WEBSITE HOME PAGE

Information on:- The home page introduces the subject of heritage and culture and the role of the Aboriginal Heritage Office in heritage protection, education and the community.

Member Councils: The home page also shows the corporate logo of the member Councils that support the AHO and enables links through to each council’s website.

Contact Information: Also from the home page one can see the contact us link referring to contacting the AHO. This page provides a location map and address of the AHO, public transport information to find your way to the AHO and a contact form to contact the AHO.

Videos On: A video about the AHO can also be accessed here.

ABORIGINAL SITES

Information on: Aboriginal Sites. Identifying Sites, Potential Site areas, Legislation, Excavation Display

Downloadable Brochures on: Aboriginal Sites and the Law, Aboriginal Sites Register, Sites Awareness, Bush Regeneration and Aboriginal Sites

Videos on: The Aboriginal Heritage Office Heritage and Culture
EDUCATION


Downloadable Brochures on: Your Aboriginal Heritage Office, Languages, Schools Flyer and Galuwa Inyun Bulga, Garadi Track, Mana Badangi Walking tracks

Videos On: Museum and Keeping Place, Sites and Sounds Video

VOLUNTEER SITE MONITORS

Information on: all information relating to Aboriginal Sites. Information on Volunteer Site Monitoring

Downloadable Brochures: All Aboriginal Sites brochures and a Site Report Form

Videos On: Volunteer Introduction Video

3.14 ADMINISTRATION

The AHO also spends much time in the office on essential administrative tasks. The AHO fields calls and emails from many sources. Enquiries are broad ranging and can be about booking the AHO or questions about language, culture, naming, clan boundaries, re-grooving, protocols, elders, artefacts, acknowledgements, finding family, burials, bush tucker gardens and more.

The other administrative sectors to the Education Program include administrating all bookings by creating diaries, whiteboard entries, calendars and completing an administrative worksheet that gets sent to the booker. The Education Program maintains a
schools database for the 8 member Council areas. Also an extensive Education report is maintained which documents school name, contact details, the number, year and age of the students and the type of presentation given. The AHO also facilitates the visit of students and clients to the Museum and Keeping Place.

See Appendix 8: Example of Administrative Worksheet

![Bar chart]

Table 2: Education Program activities across LGAs 2014

3.15 OBSERVATIONS

The AHO walks, talks, presentations and resource material have been widely acknowledged by the children, school teachers, principals and the broader community as important educational tools. The AHO uses facts that are reliably supported and thanks the community for understanding the importance of trying to find the most reliable information and not relying on misinformation to just fill the void. An initial unexpected outcome of the Education Program is that the AHO has been informed by teachers that many feel they themselves have learnt extensive information from the material presented by the AHO. The information provided gives the schools and the wider community a good foundation to build their lesson plans or future learning on. In northern Sydney there is a dearth of reliable information but a plethora of unsubstantiated information.
The AHO has also been informed that the information given is in keeping with the school curriculum. Community groups involve a broad cross section of the community and the response has been overwhelmingly positive with many questions and groups from the older generations responded often with their stories of heritage they have seen as a child and their sadness that they are only now learning about Aboriginal heritage and culture in their later years of life. The questions from all age groups show the keeness to learn and understand and also the disbelief of the evidence of heritage destruction. This face to face talking and connection will continue to be important and the AHO has now to turn to new technologies to reach people who cannot reach us face to face and to increase our reach.

Although the AHO website is a well used resource with free downloadable material, the burgeoning of ‘smart’ technologies is the next area for the AHO Education Program to progress. The growing demand for instant accessible information is apparent in the hand held devices and interactive apps are becoming commonplace. Accessing these different kinds of media resources and others such as radio, social media and on line print media is our next exciting vision.
**Aboriginal Heritage** - The Aboriginal clans who once occupied this area left important evidence of their past and way of life before colonisation. The sites are of significance to the Aboriginal people because they are evidence of the past Aboriginal occupation of Australia and are valued as a link with their traditional culture. There is also great scientific value in these sites. By studying the shells, stones and bones, we can learn a great deal about past environments, what plants and animals were used by people, what tools they used and how they survived. Aboriginal heritage is not only sites but is deeply linked to a holistic view of the environment, its plants, animals, landscapes and people.

**Country** - “This is the land of dreaming, a land of wide horizons and secret places. The first people, our ancestors created this Country in the culture that binds us to it.” Hetti Perkins Art and Soul Study Guide 2013:16

**Shell Midden** - Mounds built up over 1000’s of years from meals of shellfish. Found on ocean coasts, estuaries, rivers, inland lakes. They contain—shell bird, fish, animal teeth and bones, campfire charcoal, stones and flakes, the remains of tools sometimes. Differ in shape and size, a few scattered shells, meters thick deposit buried beneath vegetation.

**Axe Grinding Grooves** - These are grooves resulting from the production or sharpening and maintenance of an edge ground tool. These sites are generally located near creeks or rock pools.

**Mundoes** – These tracks comprise carvings of human footprints on the rocks. There is a wide variety of these tracks from adult and child size tracks to exceedingly large even gigantic tracks that some historians, see McCarthy( Artists of the Sandstone 1969:749) purport to be the tracks of an ancestral beings. Mundoes also vary in creation from simple oval shapes to footprints, sometimes carved with verticle bars within them, sometimes with different numbers of toes and some with the toes carved within the footprint outline. These footprints may lead from one site to the next where development has not occurred. “Mundoes are the most common motif in the Sydney basin”. Frederick McCarthy, Artists of the Sandstone. Vol 4 Ch.15 pg.749

**Rock Carvings** - Sydney is built on the geological formation of Hawkesbury sandstone. The rock carvings are found on the tops and sides of ridges and across plateaus where flat expanses of sandstone are found. They may depict men, woman, possible ancestral beings, sea mammals, terrestrial mammals, birds, reptiles, animal and human tracks, fish, invertebrates and plants, weapons, hunting and fishing devices, utensils, implements, designs, ceremonial objects, circles and ovals and are large number of micellaneous and unfinished carvings.

**Ochre Stencils and Paintings and Charcoal Drawings** - Aboriginal paintings are found on the ceilings and walls of rock shelters, which occur wherever suitable rock surfaces and outcrops exist. Figures include humans, kangaroos, emus, echidnas, grid patterns, animal tracks, boomerangs, axes, hand stencils and other motifs. Paintings are drawn or stenciled by spraying from the mouth white, red, yellow and black pigments. Charcoal drawings are also common.

**Stone Artefacts** - Flaked and ground edged tools made from facture-resistant stone which were often traded and show evidence of long distance travels. Used to shape wood, bark bone and as knives to cut meat or animal skin or to form spear-tips. Volcanic stone created an axe head honed to fine edge and attached to a wooden handle.

**Scar Trees** - Scarred trees sites are evidence of bark and wood that has been removed from trees. The trees can be divided into three groups, 1. Bark removal for use eg. Coolamons, shields, canoes, shelters 2. Wood removal for use eg Boomerangs and other tools 3. evidence of climbing footholds
eg. hunting for possums. The tree was not killed by these methods and therefore scarring is evident. **Archeological deposits** – These site types may be evidence of past occupation in the form of open camp sites, middens and rock shelters. The evidence that people have lived here before is revealed in scatters of stone tools, evidence of fireplaces and food remains in the form of shells, bones and plant seeds. Also found can be ashes from fires, weapons and sometimes human burials. **Cicatrices** - refers to new tissue that forms over or inside a wound during healing creating raised scars on the body. This was more than just decoration.


Attenbrow, V. 2010. Sydney’s Aboriginal Past - Investigating the Archaeological and Historical Record. UNSW Press.

Australiasian Legal Information Institute 2014, Council for Reconciliation, Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Rights, 2.Land Culture and Heritage. 


By Hyde, D. University of Queensland, Radio National Sunday 5.30 pm 20 Apr 2014


Reynolds, H. 2000 Why Weren’t We Told: Penguin Australia


APPENDICES

QUOTES

THE AHO WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU SOME ENJOYABLE COMMENTS FROM A YEAR 3 CLASS.

These ‘stories’ were sent to the AHO by their teacher who had followed up an AHO visit by asking the children to write down their favourite memory from the presentation; They all started with “Thank you Ranger Karen”

“I found your speech and power point very interesting, I like the weapons the most. I learnt about the Aboriginals”

“Thank you for teaching us so much. I learnt 68 lines of information. I counted them”

“I heard not to mess up the painting because we cannot redo them and I like how they painted it, it look cool...I learnt a lot”.

“Thank you for coming to talk to us I found all of it very interesting it blew my mind”

THE AHO ALSO BEEN GRATIFIED TO RECEIVE THESE VARIOUS QUOTES FROM COUNCIL EMPLOYEES

“It was so great for the young people to be able to spend time with you. Thanks so much for your support with the program, I’d love to be able to work with you again in the future”
Kate Munro Youth Development Officer - Human Services and Facilities Manly Council 24.4.2013

“We had some great feedback from the lady’s who attended the workshop. Many commented on how much they enjoyed your talk and how generous you were with them. I know that the kids really enjoyed their time at the gallery and it was a great testament when it was difficult to get them to leave. It has been a pleasure working with you.”
Felicity Martin Centre & Gallery Manager Lane Cove Council 6.03.14

“Really interesting interview with Richard Glover - I will be looking at trees with fresh eyes. Nice of you to make an effort to give the councils a positive plug - we don’t get many!”
Sandra Moore Communications Manager North Sydney Council 31.10.2013
“I just wanted to say many thanks for taking the time to show our staff around the Heritage Office yesterday. Tami, Kathy and Venitia were really blown away by the space, the work that you all do and what an extraordinary resource the office is.
Eilis O’Beirne Festival and Events Manager Willoughby City Council 21.3.13

“I think everything about the exhibition was terrific – I really thank you for all of the educational content you put in – to my mind it really made the exhibition”
Carol Sinclair Manager, Community Services Lane Cove Council 6.03.14

MANY SCHOOLS HAVE ALSO TAKEN TIME FROM THEIR BUSY SCHEDULES TO THANK THE AHO

We appreciated your added perspective and informative approach.
Denise Paine Balgowklah Heights Public School 30.4.14

“I’m sorry it’s taken me so long to reply but Thank you again for your time taking us to Gumbooya reserve and speaking with us. You were wonderfully helpful and I really appreciate it.”
Nicky Nyland Killara High School 6.2.14

“I would like to thank you on behalf of our school for your Acknowledgement of Country. It was wonderful to also hear you explain the history of the flag and its importance.”
Kate Westoby Cammeray Public School 12.12.13

“Thank you for talking with the students. I asked them the next morning what they learned and they remembered lots of different bits of information. They were very concerned about the rock art being skateboarded over and also told me about other whales and images in their areas. They are now much more aware of the issues involved in heritage.”
Glennis Mowday Glenaeon Secondary School 17.9.13

Thank you for coming to our school today and for giving such a great overview to the students. The presentation was very appropriate and informative. It is such a great service to offer the community – thank you!
Renee Old Teacher Northcross Christian School 7.5.14

It was absolutely pleasure to have you at our cub meeting last night. As I can tell you all the cubs very much enjoyed the Aboriginal culture and history presentation. I guess it was just not only fun but also very educational for the cubs and the leaders too! I had great positive feedbacks from both cubs and leaders. You definitely possess the skill to captivate 8-10 years old for an hour!!! You were very kind to take time answering all the questions raised by the boys and girls of the cubs. Thank you again and hope to visit the Aboriginal Museum in not to distant future.
Moyeen Kabir Cub Scout Leader, West Pymble Group 29.10.13

COMMUNITY MEMBERS HAVE TAKEN THE TIME TO THANK THE AHO
We participated today in a meeting and heritage walk with Karen Smith. Her presentation was very informative, and interesting - and she even showed great resourcefulness in dealing with the failure of the Manly Library to be open as scheduled!

The heritage walk was really fantastic. Karen's knowledge of the flora and fauna around Manly was interesting, funny, and informative. Our sense was that the (roughly) 16 people who walked with her all found the experience to be really fun and very educational. We both certainly did - it was a great way to spend the day, and we learned a lot about aboriginal heritage, how the area around Manly was before European settlement, and how important preservation is today.

So we just wanted to let you know how interesting the day was for us, how much we enjoyed Karen's way of sharing her knowledge with us, and we hope you will do more such events!

Mark and Jean McPeak Ultimo 23.04.12
APPENDIX 1 EXAMPLE OF AHO BROCHURE

An Aboriginal Heritage Office has many responsibilities, one main aspect of the role is to give the Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people involved with Council an avenue of approach to discuss issues or concerns they may have. An important part of the AHO is to communicate with school groups and teach children in areas of understanding to appreciate the unique culture of the Aboriginal people.

The AHO now has a museum and education centre that is open to the public on weekdays only. Arrangements for further information please do not hesitate to contact the office.

Aboriginal Heritage Office
Phone: 03 9949 8802
ahoh@montaith-prov.nsw.gov.au
www.aboriginalheritage.org

APPENDIX 2 EXAMPLES OF MUSEUM FLYER HANDOUTS

Women
Coola mano
Made from bark of tree or shaped from the knot of a tree.
Used for:
- Gathering food, seeds and shells;
- Mixing ochre;
- Fire ceremonies;
- As a cradle for a baby.

Digging stick
- Hard wood pole sharpened at one end.
- For digging in the ground roots of trees and under grassroots.
- Used to dig earth ovens and strip bark of trees.

Weapons
Boomerang
- Comes in many shapes and sizes depending on their geographical or tribal origins and their function.
- Returning.
- Hunting.
- Used for:
- Hand to hand combat, hunting,
- Throwing.
Have you ever met Gary Oakley from the Australian War Memorial? He is the hard working Aboriginal Liaison Officer at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. Working with the support of Veterans Affairs, AIATSIS, National Archives, the Indigenous Affairs section of the Australian Defence Force and various other State archives and private collections, he is slowly putting together the history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the wars from the Boer War to the present which is, and will be, housed at the Australian War Memorial. His work is revealing other benefits with people locating family in Defence Force records. I thank him for the information he has provided to me.

Many Aboriginal people who tried to enlist in the First World War were rejected on grounds of race. As this was up to the Recruiting Officer, who had the final say, those that persisted found that some were able to join. They found the AIF treated them as equals, they were paid the same as white soldiers and were generally accepted without prejudice while in uniform, except for the Torres Strait Islander Battalion who were paid less. When one conscription referendum had been lost in the early 1900s, restrictions against race were eased. A Military Order stated the following “Half-Castes may be enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force provided that the Examining Officers are satisfied that one of the parents is of European origin.”

It is not known why so many Aboriginal people wanted to join the war but loyalty and patriotism played a part and also the thought that they were protecting their land and community. There was the incentive of a wage and the thought that after the war equality would have continued. Many Aboriginal servicemen experienced equal treatment for the first time in their lives in the army but upon returning to civilian life they were treated with the same discrimination and prejudice as before.

The army began to employ Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory in 1933 but conditions were similar to pastoral stations with long hours, poor housing and diet and low pay. During the war, when the army took over control of settlements from the Native Affairs Branch, conditions greatly improved. Adequate housing and sanitation, fixed working hours, proper rations and access to medical treatment in Army hospitals became available.

At the start of the Second World War, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women increasingly enlisted or were conscripted, but in 1940, the Defence Committee decided that the enlistment of Indigenous Australians was “neither necessary or desirable”. When Japan entered the war the need for manpower forced this to change. The Torres Strait Islanders formed the first ever totally Indigenous unit, the Torres Strait Islander Light Infantry Battalion, but always sergeants and above were white. By 1944 almost every able bodied male in the Torres Strait had enlisted. By proportion to population, no community in Australia contributed more to the war than the Islanders of the Torres Strait.

The RAAF sited airfields and radar stations close to missions that could provide labour. Aboriginal people in defence work were working on construction sites, army butcheries and on army farms. They drove trucks, handled cargo, worked as aids in hospitals and provided general labour around camps.

Over 50 Aboriginal men were recruited in 1942 and served as a guerilla force for scouting and reconnaissance in Arnhem Land, a tradition that is still carried on today by the Aboriginal people of the Regional Force Surveillance Units. Hundreds of Aboriginal people served in the 2nd AIF and the militia, hundreds also dying, some as POWs. The first Japanese POW captured in WW2 by Australians was captured by two Aboriginal men.

After the Second World War the army reimposed restrictions on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enlistment but in 1949 all race restrictions were lifted. Since then Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have served in the Korean War, Malaya, Borneo, Vietnam and nearly every other Peace Keeping operation that Australia has sent personnel to. Today the Australian Defence Force has taken onboard that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are a valued part of the Defence Force of Australia and recruit Indigenous Australians for both uniformed and civilian sections in the ADF.
APPENDIX 4
WINNER OF POSTER COMPETITION FOR YEARS 5-6 TALEISHA SUTHERLAND-ROBINSON
RYDE PUBLIC SCHOOL

APPENDIX 5
WINNER OF LOGO COMPETITION COMMUNITY WINNER ANNE HARDEN WILLOUGHBY
Walk, Talk and Create at the Coal Loader

10am - 3pm, Saturday 31 May
Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability,
2 Balls Head Drive, Waverton
FREE EVENT

The day will begin with an Acknowledgement of Country, then a women’s basket weaving workshop, children’s art workshop, screening of Through Indigenous Eyes (a short film by students from Monte Sant’ Angelo Mercy College, North Sydney) traditional afternoon tea and a walk and talk on Aboriginal Heritage by the Aboriginal Heritage Office. Bookings essential for workshops and walk.

Bookings essential:
Kylie Davies on 9936 8100
www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au

Turranburra

6pm - 8.30pm, Thursday 29 May
Lane Cove Library, Library Walk,
Lane Cove
FREE EVENT

The Aboriginal Heritage Office will hold a presentation about Aboriginal heritage and culture. See how Aboriginal people lived in the environment and the importance of heritage sites. The current generations have a very important responsibility to look after what has survived and to care for this shared heritage otherwise these sites will be gone forever. Refreshments provided.

Enquiries:
Lane Cove Council on 9911 3591
APPENDIX 7
EXAMPLES OF EDUCATIONAL SIGNAGE

Imagine this Scene in 1787

The Cammeraygal, like other groups around the shores of the harbour, caught fish from the rocks or from bark canoes.

The women used lines baited from soft bark fibres and hooks sharpened and filed from iron or bone shell. They did not boil the hook but split a handful of fresh fish or shellfish (their favourite was the gudgeon or Sydney Luckly) into the water near the rock which, being sharp, also acted as a lure.

The women usually fished from canoes drifting on the quiet waters of the bay, sitting with their baskets or young children with them. To European observers, the precarious balancing act of handling children, keeping a fire going (built on packed clay in the bottom of the canoe) and catching fish, all in a floppy bark canoe, was most difficult andrequired great skill.

The men used multi-pronged spears made from the hollow stems of the goona tree, pieces of varying hard wood and baskets of sharpened claws of horse or shell. They fished from the rocks, in the shallows, or from canoes out in the harbour.

They sometimes lay across the canoes or along the edge of rocks with their faces submerged to see the fish more clearly.

The women would then spear the fish with the spears or catch the fish with their hands. They also collected fish from the rocks. Shellfish were also an important food source, gathered from beaches or rock pools from the rocks. They also ate crabs, lobster and other seafood.

Having collected their food, families would light a fire to boil it immediately, perhaps at the nearest rock shelter. After cooking, they throw the shells and bones onto a hearth by rubbish heaps (called a middens), usually just outside the drip-line of the overhang.

Over many years these heaps became quite large in favourite camp spots.

Acknowledgement of Country

This Acknowledgement of Country is dedicated to the Gadigal of the Eora Nation, the traditional custodians of this land, and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge the Gadigal people for their deep connection with this land, and the Gadigal for their self-determination and passion to protect and maintain the natural and cultural heritage of their Country.
APPENDIX 8: EXAMPLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE WORKSHEET

Worksheet

Contact Details of School or Group

- **Name:**
- **School/Group Name:**
- **Phone:**
- **Email:**
- **Address:**

Aboriginal Heritage Office Contact Details

- **Name:** Karen Smith
- **Phone:** 9920 8206
- **Phone on the Day:** 0409 465 480
- **Email:** Karen.Smith@northsydney.nsw.gov.au
- **Address:** 1 Pittwater Road Manly

Details of Activity

- **Date:**
- **Time & Duration:**
- **Numbers:**
- **Age:**
- **Year:**
- **School/Track Name:**
- **Meeting Place:**
- **Amenities:**
- **Special Notes:**

On Site

- Always carry water
- Sun Protection: Hat, sunscreen, sunglasses
- Insect & Tick Protection
- Insect repellent, long sleeves and pants

Key

- **Stairs**
  - **Formal:** Constructed stairs, hand rail
  - **Informal:** Natural rock
- **Gradient:**
  - **Steep:** Climbing mostly
  - **Level:** Flat, little climbing

- **Suitable for Wheelchairs, Walkers, Strollers:**
  - **YES**
  - **NO**