Bo-rā-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go

Yesterday Today Tomorrow

An Aboriginal History of Willoughby

Jessica Currie

Willoughby City Council in association with the Aboriginal Heritage Office Northern Sydney Region

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WILLOUGHBY CITY COUNCIL

Australian Government

Aboriginal Heritage Office
Northern Sydney Region

Bo-rā-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go Yesterday Today Tomorrow: An Aboriginal History of Willoughby

Written by: Jessica Currie, Willoughby City Council Library Services, in association with the Aboriginal Heritage Office Northern Sydney Region.

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Cover Image: Northern Escarpment, Castlecrag, overlooking Sugarloaf Bay.
Source Bryan Smeath © Willoughby City Council

Title: The title for this book is from the vocabulary compiled by First Fleet Judge advocate, David Collins (1798 [1975] p. 507). Lieutenant Philip Gidley King (1790 p. 401) stated that the informant was Woollarewarre Bennelong.

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PLEASE NOTE
This book contains reference to deceased persons and human remains which may cause pain and anguish to members of the Aboriginal community.

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Many different people have contributed to the success of this project. First and foremost, the Consultative Committee that provided guidance throughout the project. Members of this committee included Cr Kate Lamb, Cr Wendy Norton, Cr Stuart Coppock, Cr Phillip Hickie, David Watts (Aboriginal Heritage Manager), Frances Sims (Library Services Manager), Kerry Counsell (Local Studies Librarian) and Cameron White (NSW Heritage Office representative).

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Introduction

Willoughby City Council has a long commitment to acknowledging and learning more about the Aboriginal contribution to both Willoughby City and the greater area. On behalf of Council, it gives me great pleasure to introduce Bo-rā-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go Yesterday Today Tomorrow. After many months of painstaking research Jessica Currie has produced a permanent written and pictorial record of the Aboriginal history of the Willoughby area from Creation through to the present day.

Bo-rā-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go Yesterday Today Tomorrow is a Willoughby City Council Project developed in consultation with the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council and funded by Willoughby City Council and the Australian Government Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts through the Indigenous Heritage Programme.

The Project was managed by the Library Services Branch of Willoughby City Council, under the supervision of the Aboriginal Heritage Office North Sydney Region and supported by all Willoughby City Councillors. I would like to pay particular thanks to the Consultative Committee for their commitment and guidance and to commend all those responsible for the necessary research, comprehensive preparation and final publication. Importantly this book would not have been possible without the contribution of many Aboriginal people who gave time and told stories to help bring Willoughby's past to life.

I hope this book will become a well used resource not only by the people of Willoughby, but also by many schools, universities, neighbouring Councils and anyone who has an interest in researching the history of Willoughby from its earliest times.

Bo-rā-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go Yesterday Today Tomorrow is important in helping us to both embrace and respect our past. I hope readers will appreciate and understand its importance in making Willoughby what it is today and in moving forward to a future of better understanding of what makes Willoughby special. This book will give readers an insight into an aspect of our past that is little known or understood.

In conclusion, I would like to dedicate this book to Dharawal Elder Aunty Beryl Timbery Beller who sadly passed away on 19th March 2008 before this book could be published. Aunty Beryl was a major supporter of and contributor to Bo-rā-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go Yesterday Today Tomorrow.

Councillor Pat Reilly

Preamble

There is a broad gap of history on this vast continent. Most Australians do not even attempt to understand that people with language, customs, rituals, technology, religion and boundaries have occupied this land for tens of thousands of years.

The concept that this continent prior to Europeans was unoccupied and claimed to be Terra Nullius is simply nonsense. Australia has always held a unique culture that still to this day encompasses the entire continent. No culture on this planet stagnates. Cultures across the globe adapt every day to the climate, impacts from neighbouring cultures, technology and even invasion by hostile groups far from their borders.

Aboriginal people over the past 24 decades have simply adapted to the changes of the land. An Aboriginal person is no longer living as they were 240 years ago. Some old ways are practiced to this day but not without having some changes added or subtracted to the practice.

This beautifully written book has been put together to narrow the gap in understanding a small part of Australian history and heritage. The history and heritage in the Willoughby Council area is a large part of all the residents of the area and also extends to the entire community of Australia.

David Watts
Aboriginal Heritage Manager
Lane Cove, North Sydney, Manly, Ku-ring-gai, Pittwater,
Warringah & Willoughby Councils

Author's Note

Willoughby City Council is fortunate to have a rich history of Aboriginal culture and heritage. The areas around Middle Harbour and the Lane Cove River contain invaluable remnants of an ancient culture that tell stories of lives long since gone. Shelters, art, engravings, middens and various artefacts that have been found in the Willoughby area, together with other sites on the North Shore and the greater Sydney region, create a cultural landscape that gradually emerges as we attempt to visualise what Aboriginal life would have been like over tens of thousands of years ago.

It is important to recognise that there are two very different perspectives representing Aboriginal history, the Aboriginal version and the European account. There is no better example of this than the complete clash of ideologies between the Aboriginal people of the Sydney region and the British colonisers of 1788. Due to the different ways of recording history, the written form of the European perspective often dominates the oral versions of the Sydney Aboriginal people. The word "invasion" used in the text is written from the Aboriginal point of view in order to give a voice to the Aboriginal perspective. The complete disruption to the lives of the Aboriginal people severed a culture that had evolved over many generations. The speed with which the Aboriginal people were displaced or ravaged by disease would have had a significant impact on the sharing of oral stories.

A great deal can also be learnt through archaeological excavations and through an analysis of those heritage sites that remain, having somehow survived the urban sprawl. The journals of the early colonisers also provide an important source of information,

although, their observations were often tainted by a lack of cross-cultural awareness, thereby leading to misunderstandings and misconceptions. Furthermore, inconsistencies in spellings have not been amended and reflect their use in historical documents.

This publication includes quotes from Aboriginal women obtained through interviews for the purpose of inclusion in this project. Traditionally these women come from various places around New South Wales, and while they have not been able to speak on behalf of the Cammeraygals, their inclusion attempts to give a voice to Aboriginal people where that connection has been lost. The importance of recognising the knowledge that they hold should not be underestimated. Their stories provide not only an Aboriginal perspective but also a women's perspective on Aboriginal life, culture, heartache and triumph.

When reading this book it is important to remember that there is still a great deal of mystery surrounding the lives of the Aboriginal people of the Sydney region. What the book hopes to do is to encourage the reader to try to imagine what it may have been like in the Willoughby area prior to the arrival of the British. Where there are gaps in knowledge regarding certain aspects of Aboriginal history, we need to accept that we will never truly know the whole story.

This publication also includes some fictional short stories, to help the reader see situations through the eyes of the Aboriginal people and not through the eyes of a British colonist or an archaeological reconstruction. They attempt to bring the Aboriginal cultural landscape to life so that we may try to visualise what life would have been like for the Cammeraygal people, their neighbours and for their ancestors in Willoughby and the greater Sydney region.

Imagine

Imagine Sydney with no roads, no houses, no Harbour Bridge. A landscape untouched by European ideologies. The magnificent Sydney Harbour with picturesque bushland and sandstone outcrops undulating toward the rocky foreshore… no white people.

This is a story of the Cammeraygal people and their ancestors. They once lived on country we now know as Willoughby. Their boundaries were not as ours are today and at the time of the British occupation in 1788, the country they traversed also encompassed areas including Ku-ring-gai, North Sydney and Lane Cove (Figure 1).

Prior to the arrival of the British, Willoughby and the surrounding areas were rich in natural resources that the Cammeraygal were able to make use of day-to-day. They engaged in complex customary interactions within their clan and with their neighbours and left behind many clues to their ancient culture and heritage. To the extent that the evidence allows, this story will take you back to the time of creation, and on a journey that follows the lives of the Cammeraygals over many, many centuries.

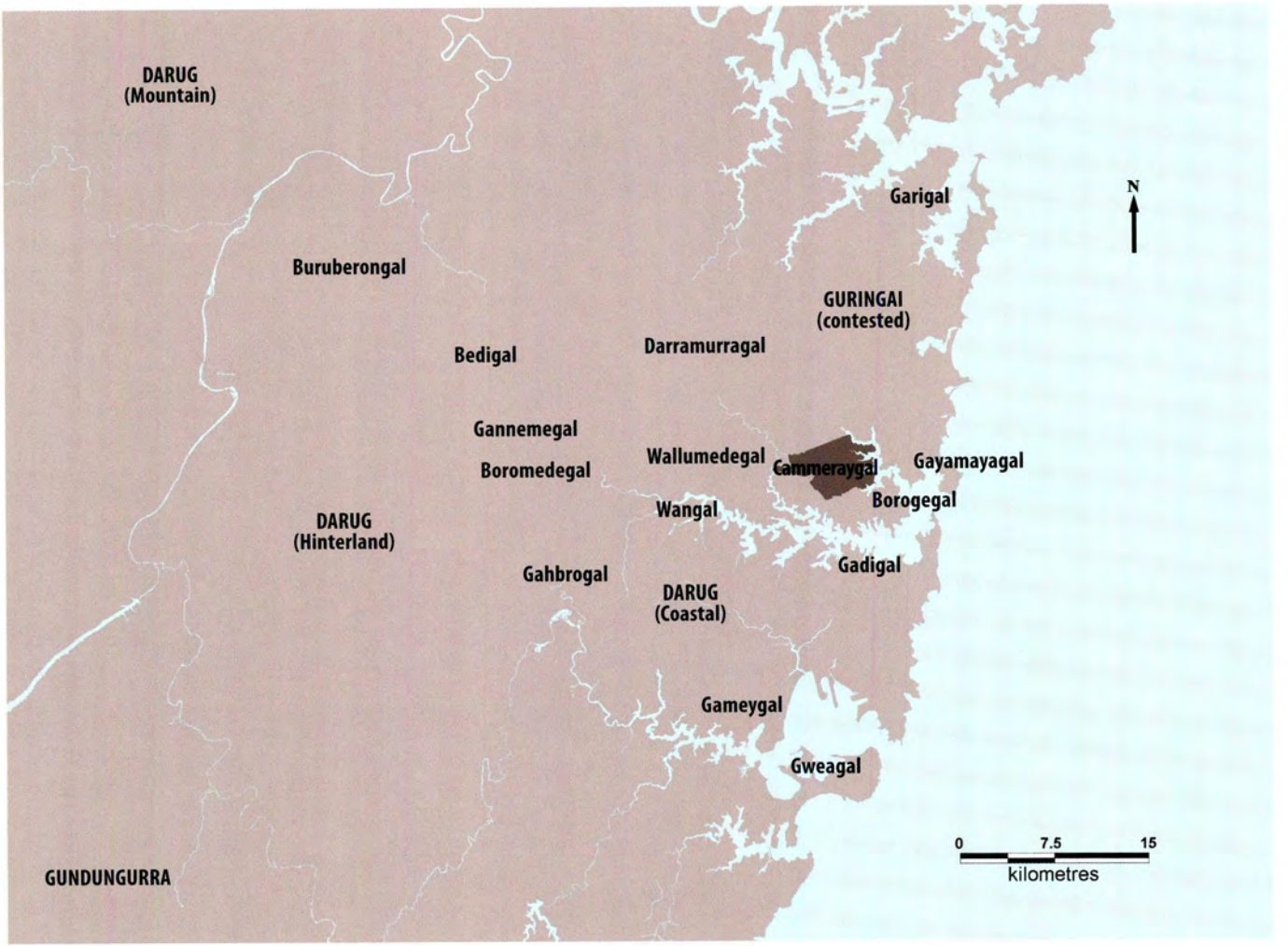

Figure 1. Map of Aboriginal clan names (lower case) and language nations (upper case) at the time of the British occupation in 1788. Willoughby Local Government Area is shaded dark grey. (Source: Willoughby City Council, based on Attenbrow, 2005 [1])

Creation

In the beginning, when the Dreaming began, the great sky spirit Baiami came down and created the land and sea and mountains and rivers. He created the plants and the animals, each with their own specific purpose. He also gave life to the traditional owners who today remain the custodians of the land. It is their responsibility, as it was their ancestors', to care for mother earth and respect her, and she will take care of them in return. Baiami also established the laws and the rich customs, as well as the relationships between the people and their totems. His pathway of creation became the Dreaming of an ancient culture.

Stories of Baiami and other traditional knowledge have been passed down through families from generation to generation in the form of songs, dance, art, stories and ceremony over tens of thousands of years. Signs still remain today of the great sky spirit Baiami. His image is carved deep into the sandstone high on the hilltops. His mundoes (footprints) indicate a pathway, to where? That knowledge is now lost. As the Aboriginal population in the Willoughby area was severely diminished following the British occupation in 1788, oral accounts of the Cammeraygal available to us today are all but non-existent.

The story of Baiami is similar across much of New South Wales, along the east coast and into the centre of the State, although different Dreaming stories are used to tell the tales in ways that are relevant to that landscape and to its people. What is common to all stories is the innate faith that Aboriginal people have in their great sky spirit Baiami. In other parts of Australia there are other known creator beings, each having their own stories.

... from time immemorial, we believe as Aboriginal people, Australia has been here from the first sunrise, our people have been here along with the continent, with the first sunrise. We know our land was given to us by Baiami, we have a sacred duty to protect that land, we have a sacred duty to protect all the animals that we have an affiliation with through our totem system ... It's never been something that I've ever felt the need to question in my life ... it's just an innate faith in what I was told by my old people

[Oral stories are] critical for our people, because our history, our stories are based on oral traditions, we had no written law, written word or written language, our language is all there but it's all an oral based tradition, so orally, all of my defining characteristics, for example, what I know of the world, come from an oral based background, from what my old people tell me, from my parents, from a whole range of people.

Jenny Munro

Prehistory

Archaeological evidence in the Northern Territory has shown that Aboriginal people have been occupying Australia for at least 60,000 years.[2] It is believed that the earliest inhabitants travelled to Australia from Southeast Asia during a period of lower sea level and over time people migrated and spread across the continent.

If we look back 40,000 years or so in the Willoughby area, we see a very different landscape. The ridgelines spur down into a deep valley toward a great meandering river that flows up to 80 metres[3] lower than the harbour that we know. Jagged sandstone headlands tower over an unfamiliar valley floor. The tributaries of Middle Harbour and the Lane Cove River supply fresh clean water as they gouge their way through the sandstone landscape on their journey to meet this great river. The vegetation is not unlike what it is today and it is not difficult to imagine that there would have been many megafauna roaming across mother earth, feeding upon her abundant resources.

Figure 2. The paper like bark of a Melaleuca tree. (Source: AHO)

While it is difficult to determine how the ancestors of the Cammeraygal people lived so long ago, we do have knowledge about the resources that would have been available to them. Mother earth would have provided an abundance of marine and freshwater resources that could have been collected along the rocky foreshore. What is also known for certain is that there was also an abundance of fruits, seeds, nuts, grains and nectars available from the many plant species that were present around 40,000 years ago. Seeds, fruits, nuts, rhizomes and tubers would have been important components of their staple diet. Some parts of plants would have required special preparation to remove any poisons, however, the seeds of all native grasses are edible.[4] The Melaleuca tree, whose paper like bark has many uses including use as a shelter, wrapping, containers and fire lighting, was also present at this time (Figure 2).

It is not known exactly what methods would have been employed to utilise the resources available in the Sydney area so long ago. Tools made from bone or other organic materials such as wood disintegrate over 3-4,000 years and it is very unusual for such items to be discovered at archaeological sites today.[5] However, it is likely that the men used wooden spears and the women wooden digging sticks. The spear and the digging stick are the two most basic and important tools that Aboriginal people may have used around 40,000 years ago.

The archaeological evidence in other parts of Australia around 40,000 years ago shows that Aboriginal people were using large stone tools known as core tools and scrapers. These were shaped by chipping a large pebble or stone to create a working edge for use as a hand held tool. These kinds of tools were most likely used as wood working tools or for chopping. Quartz and basalt river pebbles were commonly used for making hand held tools due to the strength of the compound. The basal gravels of the Nepean River were deposited approximately 47,000-43,000 years ago by a river that was much larger and with much greater stream power than the river that we see today.[6] These gravels would have provided an important source of hard stone for the Aboriginal populations of the Sydney region. Access to hard stone resources would have been important to the ancestors of the Cammeraygal people as the soft composition of the sandstone and shale that dominates the coastal landscape would not have been suitable for tool making.

Evidence of Aboriginal occupation in the Sydney area including Willoughby around 40,000 years ago is yet to be found in the archaeological record. However, by analysing the distribution of archaeological sites in Sydney and across Australia is it widely accepted that Aboriginal people were likely to be living in the Sydney region around this time, possibly in the Sydney Harbour valley and on the coastal plain. A reconstruction of the way they may have lived can only be based loosely on evidence from other areas and knowledge of the types of resources that are known to have been available to them at that time.

From around 30,000 years ago, the environmental conditions changed dramatically along with the resources that would have been available to the ancestors of the Cammeraygal people. As the world plunged deeper into the heart of an Ice Age, the sea level fell to perhaps 120 to

130 metres lower than its present level around 18,000 years ago.[7] The Sydney coastline was around 15-20 kilometres further east, across the plain now known as the continental shelf (Figure 3). The water that flowed from the tributaries feeding Middle Harbour and the Lane Cove River were most likely intermittent in their journey toward the great river that joined the sea. Over many generations and many thousands of years, the Aboriginal people of the Sydney region would have had to adapt their lives to the changing environmental conditions.

Figure 3. Distance of Willoughby from the coast 18,000 years ago. (Source: Adapted from Australian Museum Online)

Drier conditions prevailed along the southeast coast of Australia as the inland became increasingly arid. The declining rainfall and a significant temperature decrease would have affected the distribution and growth of much of the vegetation across Australia. This would have been a stressful period, as all living things would have had to adapt or perish in the wake of much harsher environmental and climatic conditions. During this period the range of megafaunal species was in decline,[8] which may also be partially attributed to the extremities of the colder climate.

During the arid period it would have been necessary for the people to adapt their use of tools and resources to make better use of what was available. Overall, there was a decrease in the availability of plants that produced the essential fruits, nuts, seeds and grains that would have been in abundance at earlier times. It is during this harsh period around 30,000 years ago that the emergence of grinding stones in the archaeological record of the arid zone provides evidence for the development of a strong seed grinding economy.[9] A study at Cuddie Springs, in the arid zone of eastern Australia, has suggested a possible link between the increase of seed grinding and a decrease in other resources due to the cooling climate.[10]

An occupation site at Parramatta with charcoal from ancient campfires has been dated to approximately 30,000 years ago, making the site the oldest known Aboriginal occupation site in metropolitan Sydney.[11] Dates ranging from 30,000 years to around 3,000 years suggest that Aboriginal people had been using the site throughout this period, for tens of thousands of years. There is also an Aboriginal occupation site at King's Table in the Blue Mountains, with dates of approximately 22,000 years and 14,500 years.[12] It is also possible that there were populations living in the Sydney area, including Willoughby, during this time, although evidence of their occupation is still lacking. As the sea level rose again over thousands of years and it began to stabilise near its present level around 6,000 years ago,[13] the first real evidence of Aboriginal occupation in the Willoughby area appears in the archaeological record. It is likely that the rising sea would have destroyed many of the earlier sites, while others remain intact, in situ, in a watery grave.

Imagine ... A winters' day

In Cammeraygal country, 6000 years ago. A cold, grey, winter morning. A family from the Cammeraygal clan is gathered under the shelter of a sandstone overhang a little way up the hillside from the banks of the Lane Cove River. The men wander off into the woodland carrying their spears, it's time for them to go hunting, time for them to catch some tucker to feed the rest of the clan. While the men are hunting, the women tend to the children. With small children perched on their shoulders, clinging tightly to their hair with tiny fingers, and the older ones running along behind, the women head off from the camp also in search of food. In the colder months the women knew how to search the moist areas of the landscape for plants that have edible roots and tubers. To reach the roots in the earth the women use digging sticks that would often be made out of the wood from the tea tree. The women would have shaped the wood using stone tools with a sharpened working edge. While on their foraging expedition, the women spot the grasses they are in search of, and using their digging sticks, they begin to burrow into the earth. Today the tubers they're seeking are deep. The women have to dig tirelessly into the earth before reaching what they're searching for. While they are working they're telling the children stories, stories of Baiami, stories of creation. They are also explaining to the children how to recognise the plants that are edible, and importantly, those that are not.

Figure 4. Angophoras on the rocky hillside. (Source: AHO)

After many hours of foraging the women have accumulated a good collection of tubers for the family to share. They gather together what they have found, place them in their coolamons and carry them home for the family to share. When they arrive back at the rock shelter the men have already returned. Four men are sitting together in a circle taking turns trying to get the fire started. They are quickly rubbing and twisting a stick between the palms of their hands over a soft wooded base. Each man has his turn and then passes it on to the next man. The process is long, however, eventually smoke begins to appear and finally a spark lights. The men place some stringy bark over the sparks as kindling. As it catches alight they blow softly on the fragile flame. The men then tend to the fire, building the flame to a more substantial blaze. Behind one of them lies their catch from the hunt, a small wallaby. When the fire grows stronger one of the men throws the wallaby onto it to slowly roast. The women then place their tubers into the embers around the edges of the fire. As the family waits for their meal to cook they huddle around the great fire under the rock shelter to stay warm. They tell stories until their food is roasted and ready to eat. When the meat is cooked, one of the men uses a sharp hand-held stone to chop the wallaby into pieces for the family to share. When the family has eaten their meat and the tubers they collect more wood for the fire then settle back down around the fire to keep warm against the cold winter elements.

Figure 5. The rocky foreshore of Middle Harbour. (Source: AHO)

Early evidence of Aboriginal occupation in the Willoughby area

From around 6,000 years ago the Lane Cove River and Middle Harbour were no longer freshwater but brackish tidal estuaries leading to a magnificent harbour. As the climate and landforms changed, populations would have had to mobilise and adapt to the changing environment once again. A strong saltwater culture would have developed in response to the changing climate. Whether Aboriginal people were living in the Willoughby area prior to this time is unclear. It is from 6,000 years ago that the evidence of occupation in the area becomes strong.

Knowledge about the lives of the Cammeraygal people and their ancestors of the North Shore becomes clearer as clues are revealed from archaeological sites. Archaeological evidence provides an insight into the earliest confirmed and undisputed Aboriginal occupation of sites in the Sydney region. The excavation of middens has provided many answers to questions regarding the use of resources in the past.

Figure 6. Scribbly gum in the foreground and a rock shelter in the background. (Source: AHO)

A midden is the name given to a mound of shells that have previously been eaten and discarded by Aboriginal people. It is the preservative nature of the calcium carbonate in shells that has allowed such a long record of occupation to be preserved. When excavated, these sites often contain clues to the previous use of resources such as animal bones and stone artefacts. As the fish and shell fish were often broiled over an open fire, ash and charcoal is also often contained within the midden. Charcoal from different layers of the excavation site can be dated using radiocarbon dating techniques allowing an analysis to be made of any changes in resource use or occupation at a particular location over time.

Figure 7. A midden on the shore of Middle Harbour. (Source: AHO)

Excavations of a midden in a large rock shelter at Cammeray in Middle Harbour have established that Aboriginal people were occupying this area from around 6,000 years ago.[14] This is the earliest known occupation date on the North Shore. From an analysis of this rock shelter on a slope overlooking Middle Harbour, it is known that the Aboriginal people were undoubtedly using certain species as food. As would be expected at an estuarine location, large quantities of marine species were represented. Of the nineteen shell species recorded in this midden, 97% comprised Sydney cockle, rock oyster, hairy mussel and the spiny oyster.[15] Each of these is common in the intertidal zone of estuaries such as Middle Harbour. Animal

remains are less evident as would be expected at a shoreline site rich in marine resources. The faunal remains that were identified were kangaroo/wallaby, potoroo and rats/mice.[16] Snapper was the only fish species identified.

Members of the general public often underestimate the significance of a midden site believing it to be merely a pile of left over shells. This is an unfortunate misunderstanding, as all sites are considered significant to Aboriginal people today. Many middens have also been known to contain human remains and it is seen as extremely disrespectful to disturb a burial site. As previously highlighted, middens also provide a significant amount of archaeological information about the previous occupants of the site.

From 7,000 – 3,000 years ago has been widely recognised as being a period of unparalleled cultural change in Australian prehistory.[17] Smaller and more intricately detailed stone artefacts began to emerge during this time and became more frequent in the archaeological record. The appearance of what are called backed artefacts such as points, blades and tulas, along with other more localised variations, have revealed a significant change in tool technology. Traces of resin on the artefacts found from these times reveal that sharpened stones were often glued onto wooden handles. This is referred to as hafting.

Edge ground axes or stone hatchets (Figure 8) began to occur in the archaeological record on the south east coast of Australia around 3,500 years ago. The stone hatchet was often made from a basalt pebble, which may have been brought into the area from somewhere like the Hawkesbury River where the pebbles were common.

Figure 8. Stone hatchet. (Source: Paul Ovenden © Australian Museum, 2002)[18]

The pebble was ground down to create a sharp edge by rubbing it against sandstone while rinsing it with water regularly. The stone axe head would then be attached to a wooden handle by using resin and twine or animal sinew. Grinding grooves can still be found in the Willoughby area in close proximity to water sources or waterholes (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Axe grinding grooves. (Source: AHO)

Explanations of the exact cause of such a simultaneous widespread change in technology have been largely speculative. One of the strongest theories suggests that these artefact assemblages are associated with rapid or constant environmental change resulting in a high mobility of settlements and the colonisation of new landscapes.[19] This theory is supported by the likelihood that it would have taken the environmental conditions and resource availability a considerable amount of time to stabilise once the sea level and climate had stabilised. For these reasons it may have been necessary for the Cammeraygal and other Aboriginal populations to adapt their technology in order to ensure more reliable methods for using the resources that were available.

A small quantity of stone artefacts from an excavation of a midden site at Castle Cove in Middle Harbour were analysed and have been dated to around 1,650 years ago.[20] The analysis indicates that quartz, quartzite and silcrete were being modified for use as tools at this time. One of the quartzite artefacts found has a retouched edge indicating

use as a tool and traces of resin indicating hafting onto a wooden handle. The shell fish retrieved from this site were again primarily Sydney cockle, rock oyster, hairy mussel and the spiny oyster.[21]

Silcrete and indurated mudstone artefacts are not uncommon at Aboriginal sites in Willoughby and other Sydney locations, however, the parent rocks are not found in the Willoughby area. Silcrete and indurated mudstone artefacts therefore provide evidence of trade and movement of clans around the landscape. One known source of silcrete is from an outcrop near present day Plumpton Ridge on the Cumberland Plain in Sydney's west. A source of yellow indurated mudstone is known in the Hunter Valley and a source of grey indurated mudstone is found in the catchment of the Warragamba dam.

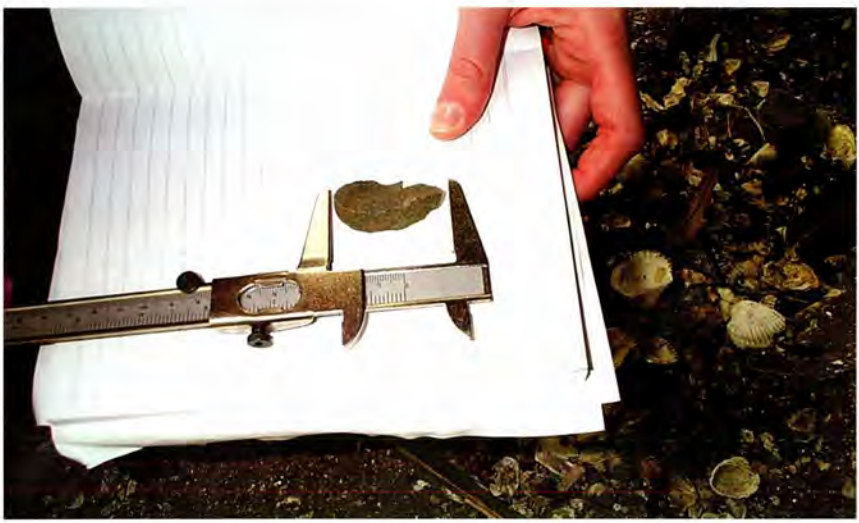

Figure 10. Measuring an artefact found at a midden site. (Source: AHO)

Imagine … A Bondi point production line process[22]

A young man wanders along the banks of the Deerubin (Hawkesbury River), searching for the perfect pebble. He scours the banks and picks up a pebble. He rotates it in his hands to view it from every angle then tosses it back into the river. He continues along the bank keeping a watchful eye on the pebbles beneath his feet. He spots an angular cobble with a gentle flow of water rippling around it and with anticipation collects it in his hand holding it high for a closer look. It appears to be just what he is looking for although every stone is unique and not all can be tamed to suit the requirements of the stone worker. To try his luck the young man strikes the cobble slightly off centre with another stone. He produces many large flakes from the original stone and then carries these back to his campsite (Figure 11. A).

Back at the campsite he makes himself comfortable, as making a point is a lengthy process in which many mistakes can be made. Using another stone he gently chips away some small pieces from the edge of one of the flakes he carried from the river (Figure 11. B). From here he is able to strike some long narrow flakes by sharply striking the edge of the original flake (Figure 11. C). He analyses these carefully then sets the appropriate ones to his side and tosses the others in another direction. He repeats the process with the other flakes and accumulates a small pile of elongated flakes ranging from 2.5 –3.5 centimetres long that are suitable for becoming a useful tool.

To be suitable for the next stage, which is referred to as backing, the flake requires one straight edge or a gentle curving margin. To administer the final touches the man holds the flake in place resting on a large stone then uses a second stone to gently squeeze small chips away from the edge of the flake (Figure 11. D). Several break in the process and are discarded, however, many survive the final trimming and retouching phase. He carefully analyses each of the points he has shaped and makes any final retouches. He now has a small collection of Bondi points that are suitable for many uses.

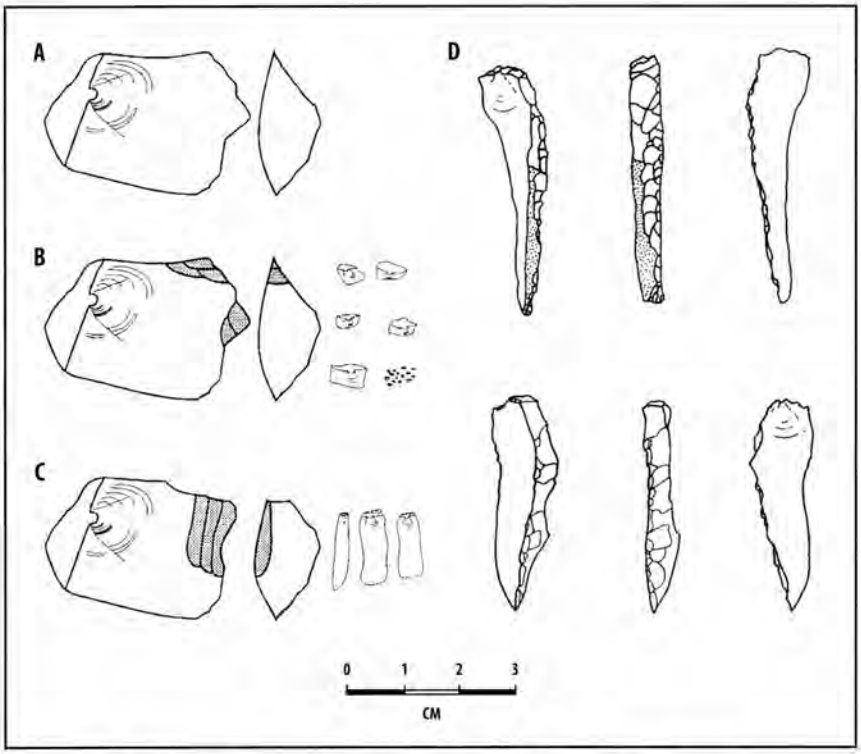

Figure 11. Stages in the production of a Bondi point. These tools are called Bondi points because they were first discovered at an archaeological site at Bondi. (Source: Adapted from Hiscock, 1993)

Contact

April 1770

The clans' people gathered in groups along the shoreline of Kamay[23] (Botany Bay) and watched in awe at what they thought was a great white bird swimming on the horizon. The bird swam closer and moved slowly into the bay. The figure was the British tall ship the Endeavour under the command of Lieutenant James Cook. Unbeknown to the clans' people of the Sydney region, the events that were about to unfold would bring them to a crossroads that would set their ancient way of life on a new path and change their lives forever.

> As we approached the Shore they all made off except 2 men, who seem'd resolved to oppose our landing. As soon as I saw this I order'd the boats to lay upon their Oars, in order to speak to them; but this was to little purpose, for neither us nor Tupia could understand one word they said. We then threw them some nails, beads, etc., a shore, which they took up, and seem'd not ill pleased with, in so much that I thought

> that they beckon'd to us to come ashore; but in this we were mistaken, for as soon as we put the boat in they again came to oppose us, upon which I fir'd a musquet between the two, which had no other Effect than to make them retire back, where bundles of their darts lay, and one of them took up a stone and threw it at us, which caused me firing a Second Musquet, load with a small shot; and altho' some of the shot struck the man, yet it had no other effect than making him lay hold on a target. Immediately after this we landed. Which we had no sooner done than they throw'd 2 darts at us; this obliged me to fire a third shot, soon after which they both made off, but not in such haste but what we might have taken one; but Mr. Banks being of Opinion that the darts were poisoned, made me cautious how I advanced into the Woods. We found here a few hutts made of the Barks of Trees, in one of which 4 or 5 small children, with whom we left some strings of beads, etc. A quantity of Darts lay about the Hutts: these we took away with us. 3 Canoes lay upon the beach, the worst I think I ever saw.

Extract 1. Captain James Cook Sunday 29 April 1770.[24]

This quote from Cook's journal (Extract 1) clearly highlights the Aboriginal people opposing to him coming ashore. It was only through the use of gunfire that they were able to force their way onto the beach. During the mere eight days that he was at Kamay (Botany Bay), each of Cook's attempts to make contact with the Aboriginal people was met with similar resistance. Cook speaks specifically of huts, canoes, tools, weapons, fishing, hunting and the use of fire clearly indicating that the clans' people were living a well-established life. This one quote also tells how from the first time Cook stepped ashore, Aboriginal weapons were stolen. Theft was not known among

the Aboriginal community as tools, weapons, huts and even canoes were left in situ until the next time that they were needed. The theft of weapons would have caused great animosity on behalf of the Aboriginal people towards the British from the very beginning.

Terra Nullius

One of the purposes of Cook's voyage was to explore the coastline of the Great Southern Land. If the land was found to be uninhabited he was under instructions to take possession in the name of the King of Great Britain. If the land was found to be inhabited he was to negotiate with the natives on tracts of land that could be claimed. Cook's journal clearly indicates that much of the east coast of Australia was inhabited. Yet when he reached the tip of the east coast of Australia he claimed possession of the entire east coast in the name of the King of Great Britain. This was due to the British definition of land ownership. To the British, land was considered to be owned if there were buildings on it and it was being farmed for agricultural purposes. Cook's thinking did not allow for an alternative cultural system of boundaries, habitation and landuse practices.

> ... they were so ignorant they thought there was only one race on the earth and that was the white race. So when Lieutenant James Cook first set foot on Wangal land over at Kundul which is now called Kurnell, he said oh lets put a flag up somewhere, because these people are illiterate, they've got no fences. They didn't understand that we didn't need fences ... that we stayed here for six to eight weeks, then moved somewhere else where there was plenty of tucker and bush medicine and we kept moving and then come back in twelve months time when the food was all refreshed ...
>
> **Aunty Beryl Timbery Beller**

January 1788

> We found the natives tolerably numerous as we advanced up the river, and even at the harbour's mouth we had reason to conclude the country more populous than Mr Cook thought it. For on the Supply's arrival in the bay on the 18th of the month they assembled on the beach of the south shore to the number of not less than forty persons, shouting and making many uncouth signs and gestures. This appearance whetted curiosity to its utmost, but as prudence forbade a few people to venture wantonly among so great a number, and a party of only six men was observed on the north shore, the governor immediately proceeded to land on that side in order to take possession of this new territory and bring about an intercourse between its new and old masters.
>
> **Extract 2. Captain Watkin Tench, January 1788.** [25]

When Captain Arthur Phillip arrived in Botany Bay on 18 January 1788, he raised the British flag on the less populated north shore to avoid the more highly populated southern shore (Extract 2). He immediately deemed it unsuitable for the 1024 people on board the First Fleet and set about to explore Port Jackson and Broken Bay to the north. Over 21, 22 and 23 January 1788, Phillip and a small party explored Port Jackson. During this short visit Middle Harbour was mapped, however, the extent beyond The Spit was not discovered at this time. Within days Phillip had sought and founded a more suitable location at Warrane (Sydney Cove), on the southern shore of Port Jackson. On 26 January 1788 Phillip transferred his fleet to Warrane.

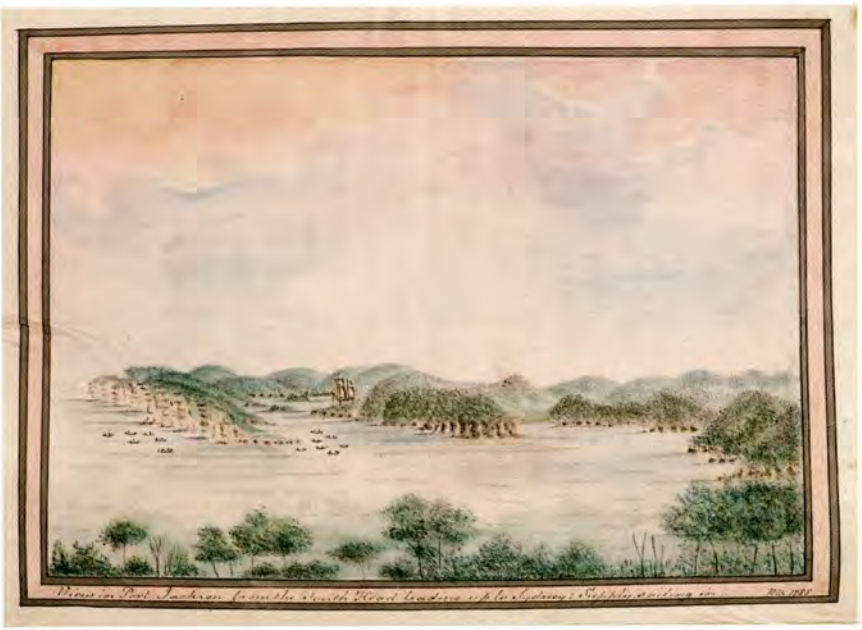

Figure 12. Port Jackson from the South Head leading up to Sydney: Supply sailing in. (Source: Bradley, Courtesy of the Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales)

Within days the fleet were disembarked and trees were felled almost immediately to clear space for the tents, infrastructure and agricultural gardens needed to accommodate the new settlement (Extract 3).

> The landing of a part of the marines and convicts took place the next day, and on the following the remainder disembarked. Business now sat on every brow and the scene, to an indifferent spectator at leisure to contemplate it, would have been highly picturesque and amusing. In one place a party cutting down the woods; a second setting up a blacksmith's forge, a third dragging along a load of stones or provisions; here a officer pitching his marquee, with a detachment of troops parading on one side of him, and a cook's fire blazing up on the other. Through the unwearied diligence of those at the head of

> the different departments, regularity was, however, soon introduced and, as far as the unsettled state of matters would allow, confusion gave place to a system.

Extract 3. Captain Watkin Tench, January 1788.[26]

The landing of the first fleet at Warrane resulted in the displacement of the first Aboriginal people in the Sydney region and the loss of the Cadigal clan's access to important natural resources. There was no consideration that Warrane was an important place for the Cadigal people who inhabited that area. As the settlement spread, the Cadigal clan would have been forced into their neighbour's country in search of food and resources potentially causing hostility between the clans. Meanwhile, back at Botany Bay, two French ships under the command of Captain La Perouse opened fire killing an estimated twenty Aboriginal people.

Warrin gà[27] (Middle Harbour) explorations & interactions

The initial survey of the northern arm of Port Jackson was undertaken by John Hunter and William Bradley on 28 and 29 January 1788. Their expedition encompassed areas around Middle Head, Bradley Point, Spring Cove and Manly Cove, however they again failed to notice the full extent of Middle Harbour, presuming it to be only a cove. They met with many natives along the way who beckoned them ashore where they shared food, sang, danced and laughed together. The Aboriginal people appeared confident and relaxed and often left their weapons behind while the British kept their muskets near in case of retaliation. During this survey expedition the British were able to persuade the Aboriginal men to allow them to communicate with the Aboriginal women who were usually kept at a safe distance and under armed guard by watchful men with spears in hand.[28]

The harbour beyond the sand spit (The Spit) was not discovered by the British until sometime around 10 April 1788, by a group of seamen from Governor Phillip's own crew (Extract 4). On 14 April 1788 Captain Hunter traced the northern most branch of Middle Harbour in order to determine if it were connected to Manly Lagoon which they had located the day previous.[29]

> one night shooting the seen [seine /fishing] at the head of Middle Harbour, as we supposed, and shifting a long a rising sandy beach towards the north side, we found a narrow entrance, and going over the bank of sand, we discovered an other branch running to the westward, full of coves, though we ware as far as this beach when surveying with the Governor but did not discover the entrance to this branch. When we return'd, we inform'd the Governor, and he came down, and it was surveyed likewise.
>
> **Extract 4. Seaman Jacob Nagle.** [30]

Prior to an official survey of the upper reaches of Middle Harbour being undertaken, an overland expedition commencing at Manly Cove was carried out between 15 and 18 April 1788 to forge a trail between Manly Lagoon and Middle Harbour. This expedition was to determine the connectedness of the two watercourses and to seek land suitable for agriculture. What they discovered, however, was that the high ridgeline of the Frenchs Forest area divided the two. Whilst walking over the ridge top the party came across extensive Aboriginal rock engravings. Once the party reached Middle Harbour Creek, Lieutenant Ball and two exhausted men left the group. They crossed the creek and returned by foot to the north side of the harbour by walking across Cammeraygal country and the land we now know as Willoughby.[31] Hunter's map clearly illustrates the path

taken, marked as "Lieut. Balls Track" (Figure 13). This appears to be the first documented passing though Cammeraygal country.

Having met up with Middle Harbour Creek and walked upstream some way, the remaining group searched the western slopes of the Middle Harbour catchment and up through what would now be the Ku-ring-gai Council area prior to returning down Middle Harbour Creek to Middle Harbour where they were met by boats to take them back to Sydney. The lands traversed around the Middle Harbour creek area were steep and rugged. The group returned having found no suitable land for agriculture. Other than the sighting of rock engravings, there is no mention of having come across any Aboriginal people during this expedition.

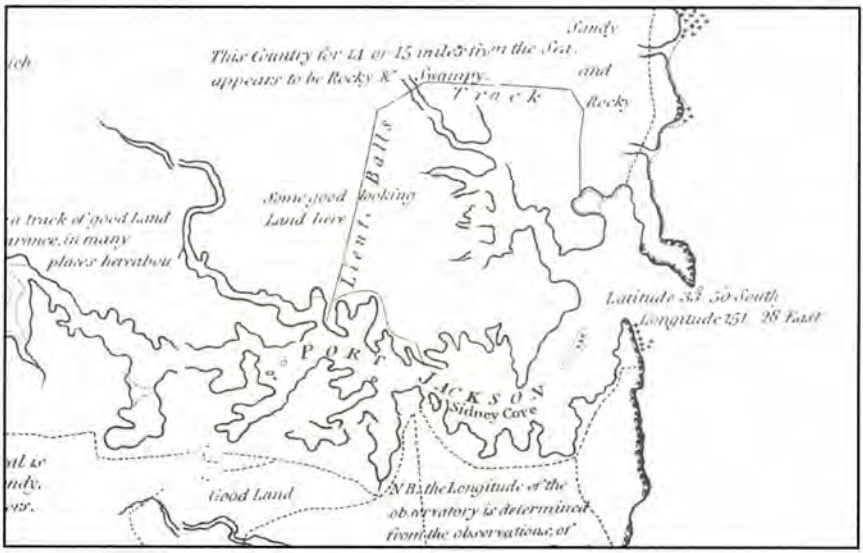

Figure 13. Map illustrating the route taken by Lieutenant Ball across Cammeraygal country in 1788. (Source: Hunter, 1793 [1968])

A more detailed survey was undertaken of Middle Harbour between 21 and 24 April 1788. During the survey the grave of a cremated Aboriginal person was discovered. Governor Phillip ordered that it be exhumed to determine the method for farewelling the dead (Extract 5). It later became known that burials were also customary in the Sydney area.

> On a point where we landed, found the earth thrown up in the manner of a Grave, which we turned up & found the ashes of some deceased person & by the burnt wood laying near it we suppose it to have been consumed on that spot, the ashes appear'd to be heap'd together on the surface of the ground & cover'd with earth, some pieces of bones were found not quite consumed but too much so to know what part of the body they belonged to: from a greater quantity of the ashes at one end than at the other, I suppose the body to have been laid at length before the fire is applied to the Pile & conclude that they dispose of the dead in the same manner.

Extract 5. Lieutenant William Bradley, 22 April 1788.[32]

Bradley also describes interactions with an old man that they met in Middle Harbour during this survey (Extract 6). Extract 6 indicates that while some Aboriginal people were keen to interact with the British, many others were still avoiding the strangers.

> as we went up we saw one Old man setting upon the rocks by his canoe, at about ½ flood we got nearly to the fresh water in the boat: when we returned we found the Old man with our people, they entertained him with dancing, combing his hair & beard & shew'd him how to smoke a pipe, two or three whiffs perfectly satisfied that part of his curiosity, & set him

> coughing. We gave him roasted Oysters which he eat as fast as he could get them & on giving a bunch of them roasted he open'd them with his thumb as easy as we could with a knife. He got in the longboat & examined every part of her attentively. All the Natives in this part of the Harbour, except the Old Man were very shy & would not come near us we did not find any Huts, they were in Caves formed by shelving rocks, at the outer part they make a fire which serves both for roasting their Fish & giving them heat during the night.

Extract 6. Lieutenant William Bradley 24 April 1788. [33]

Turranburra[34] (Lane Cove River) explorations & interactions

Few explorations of the Lane Cove River have been documented. Governor Phillip, John Hunter and William Bradley surveyed a part of the Lane Cove River on 2 February 1788, however, they were unable to encourage the local Aboriginal people to interact (Extract 7).

> We did not meet with any Natives again till this day, at day light saw several canoes in the Cove we were surveying, they all fled some out of the Cove & others up to a Cove. (Lane Cove) We could not by any means get these People near us, Having occasion to go to the bottom of the inner Cove where several of them had gone w their Canoes, they thought we were following them & push'd up a Creek to avoid us.

Extract 7. Lieutenant William Bradley 2 February 1788.[35]

Lieutenant Ralph Clark gives a more detailed account of his interactions with Aboriginal people along the Lane Cove River in February 1790 (Extract 8).

Fine clear weather – went up the Harbour in my Boat and went into Lane Cove where I was Yesterday to See Dourrawan and Tirriwan the two Natives that I exchanged the hatchet with Yesterday for their two Spears – I had not gone far up the cove before I Saw the Smook of their fires for which I rowed not Seeing anything of them – I Cald to them for I was certain that the[y] could not be a great way from me – the[y] Soon Answerd me I then got out of the Boat (Davis) my Convict Servant who was in the Boat with me begged me not to goe on Shore – he is one of the greatest Cowards living – I cald to them again when I got to the fire for the[y] had run into the bush on their Seing the Boat pulling towards them – the[y] could See me although I could See nothing of them – on their Seing that it was me who had given them the Hatchet Yesterday the[y] came down to me – the[y] had left Some Muscle on the fire to roast which the[y] both begged of me to eat Some of – before I left the Boat I desired Ellis and (Squirs) my other convict Servant that Should the[y] attempt to throu any of their Spears at me or them to fire without waiting for my Orders but when the[y] found that I had offered them no harm yesterday the[y] came to me without any weapons – I made Ellis, Davis and Squirs come on Shore to them – Davis trembled the whole time – I herd the crying of children close to me – I asked them for to goe and bring me their (Dins) which is there woman and I would give there woman Some bits of different coulerd cloath which I had brought on purpose to give to them – the[y] made me to understand that there were no women there -- I then asked them to goe and bring me down the [*] which is their name for child – Dourrawan went and brought a Boy a bout 3 Years old on his shoulder – the child was as much frightend at use as Davis was at them – I then desired Tirriwan to goe and

bring me down one of his children as Dourrawan informd me that he was the father of the child he had brought down and that his woman the mother of his child was (poc) dead of the (mittayon) Small Pox – Tirrawan brought down a Boy much a bout the same age as the other – Tirriwan child was not quite Recovered from the Small Pox – I asked him for his (din) he Said that She was up in the wood given a Young child the (nipan) the Breast – I gave each of the children a bit of Red cloath – I asked them if the[y] would give me the children for my hatt which the[y] Seemed to wish most for but the[y] would not on any account part with there children which I liked them for -- the Governor has often asked me as the Natives Seemd not So much afraid of me as the[y] are of every body else to take one of them and bring them in – Yesterday and to day I might with great ease and without running any danger have taken these two men but as I told Ellis when he asked me if I did not intent to take them I told him that it would be very Ungenerous to take them for after the[y] had place Such confidence in use that I could not think of doing it for if I had taken them both what would become of there young children the[y] must have starved – after Staying with them fro about two hours I got into the Boat and left them and went up the cove about six miles – the[y] were much afraid of our Guns – I eat one of there Muscles which made me very Sick – in coming back the[y] cald to use to come on shore but it beginning to grow dark I wished to get home – I therefore did not goe on shore to them – the[y] are very fond of asking your names – I told them mine Yesterday which the[y] recollected and called me by today …

Extract 8. Lieutenant Ralph Clark 15 February, 1790. [36]

Cammeraygal people and their neighbours

Imagine this ...

It is the dawn of a clear summer morning. A family from the Cammeraygal clan lie sleeping in a rock shelter along the shoreline of Middle Harbour. As the dawn breaks they rise from their sleep and talk among themselves. The children run and laugh and mimic the actions of the older members of the clan. After a time, the women and children wander down to the rocky shore and start looking about. The women use their sharpened stone tools to remove the oysters from the rock while the children have fun trying to catch the crabs that dart between the boulders. The men join the women and children and walk with their spears out into the water. They watch the water very carefully with their spear held up close to their ear ready to hurl at any sign of a fish worth eating. They chew pieces of oyster and spit it into the water to attract the fish then they stand patiently, waiting. Wait ... there ... look ... Splash! He hurls his spear deep into the water and it floats back to the surface with a snapper thrashing about on the end of it ... Success!

After a couple of hours the family have gathered quite a collection of fish and shellfish. They retire to a small headland on a bend in the cove and start a small fire on which to cook their meal. The oyster shells and fish bones are then disposed of in an accumulating mound of the family's meal scraps. After a rewarding meal the family lie back under the trees along the shore and peacefully doze as the breeze blows gently across the water.

Figure 14. Middle Harbour shoreline. (Source: AHO)

As the southern shore of Port Jackson was slowly developed, on the northern shore the Cammeraygals were able to continue their way of life for a little longer before the British settlement began to affect them directly and significantly. The clans from the northern shore would have watched the progress of the settlement with interest while going about their daily business of fishing, hunting and collecting shellfish.

At the time of the arrival of the British the Cammeraygal people moved about country traversing what is now known as Willoughby, Lane Cove, Ku-ring-gai and North Sydney Council areas and a large proportion of Mosman too.[37] Cammeray is the name of the area to which the people belonged and gal refers to the people from that place. For women the word leon is placed at the end and they are referred to as Cammerayleon.[38] It is believed that the Cammeraygal clan may

be named after the camy, which is the generic name for a spear in the sydney area.[39] The Borogegal clan is believed to have occupied the Bradley Head area[40] and the western side of the Lane Cove River is believed to be the home of the Wallamedegal people of the Darug language nation. It has been long accepted that the Cammeraygal clan are part of the Guringai language nation, however, there are also claims that the Darug language extended through this area.[41]

The interactions and connectivity between Aboriginal people and the environment had allowed them to develop a rich and diverse culture whilst utilising the landscape's abundant natural resources. The sandstone environment provided shelter in the form of rock overhangs of various sizes and shelters were also constructed from the bark of trees. Their complex customs were a fundamental component of day-to-day life among their families and between neighbouring clans. A strong system of kinship provided many of the guiding laws on family structure, social and cultural interactions and environmental responsibilities. They were proficient in the use of resources from the ocean, the estuaries and the land.

The Cammeraygals and the many other clans in the Sydney region would have had many reasons to interact with each other including trade, to pass through country and for ceremonial purposes. Dancing was often associated with ceremonies accompanied by the sound of singing and the timely beating of clap sticks. Two such occasions known to bring many clans together were for feasting on a beached whale and the tooth evulsion initiation ceremony of young boys journeying into manhood. Interactions between clans would also occur as the young women went to live with their new husband's clan. Rival clans also gathered to engage in armed conflict, often for the purpose of payback retribution.

Judge Advocate David Collins recorded his own recollection of the Cammeraygal people as described in the following quote (Extract 9). He noted that there were many Koradji among the Cammeraygal clan, other wise known as clever men or medicine men.

> We have mentioned their being divided into families. Each family has a particular place of residence, from which is derived its distinguishing name. This is formed by adding the monosyllable Gal to the name of the place ... Those who live on the north shore of Port Jackson are called Cam-mer-ray-gal, that part of the harbour being distinguished from others by the name of Cam-mer-ray. Of this last family or tribe we have heard Bennillong and other natives speak (before we knew them ourselves) as of a very powerful people, who could oblige them to attend wherever and whenever they directed. We afterwards found them to be by far the most numerous tribe of any within our knowledge. It so happened, that they were also the most robust and muscular, and that among them were several of the people styled Car-rah-dy and Car-rah-di-gang, of which extraordinary personages ...
>
> To the tribe of Cam-mer-ray also belonged the exclusive and extraordinary privilege of exacting a tooth from the natives of other tribes inhabiting the sea coast, or of all such as were within their authority. The exercise of this privilege places these people in a particular point of view; and there is no doubt of their decided superiority over all the tribes with whom we were acquainted. Many contests or decisions of honour (for such there are among them) have been delayed until the arrival of these people; and when they came in, it was impossible not to observe the superiority and influence which their numbers and their muscular appearance gave them over the other tribes.

> These are all the traces that could ever be discovered among them of government or subordination; and we may imagine the deference which is paid to the tribe of Cam-mer-ray to be derived wholly from their superiority of numbers; but this superiority they may have maintained for a length of time before we knew them; and indeed the privilege of demanding a tooth from the young men of other families must have been of long standing, and coeval with the obedience which was paid to them: hence their superiority partakes something of the nature of a constituted authority; an authority which has the sanction of custom to plead for its continuance.

Extract 9. Judge Advocate David Collins. [42]

Following is an excerpt from David Collins' description of the physical appearance of the Sydney Aboriginal people (Extract 10).

> In general, indeed almost universally, the limbs of these people were small; of most of them the arms, legs and thighs were thin ... Both men and women use the disgusting practice of rubbing fish-oil into their skins; but they are compelled to this as a guard against the effects of the air and of mosquitoes, and flies; some of which are large, and bite or sting with much severity ... To their hair, by means of the yellow gum, they fasten the front teeth of the kangaroo, and the jaw-bones of the large fish, human teeth, pieces of wood, feathers of birds, the tail of the dog, and certain bones taken out of the head of a fish, not unlike human teeth ... On particular occasions they ornament themselves with red and white clay, using the former when preparing to fight, the later for the more peaceful amusement of dancing ... Both sexes are ornamented with scars upon the breast, arms, and back, which are cut with

> broken pieces of the shell they use at the end of the throwing stick. By keeping open these incisions, the flesh grows up between the sides of the wound, and after a time, skinning over, forms a large wale or seam … As a principle ornament, the men, on particular occasions, thrust a bone or reed through the septum nasi, the hole through which is bored when they are young. Some boys who went away from us for a few days, returned dignified with this strange ornament, having, in the mean time, had the operation performed upon them; they appeared to be from twelve or fifteen years of age … I have seen several women who had their noses perforated in this extraordinary manner

Extract 10. Judge Advocate David Collins. [43]

Ochre was widely used for body and artefact decoration, particularly for ceremonial purposes. Burial ceremonies were one such occasion when red and white body decoration was noted.[44] Other ceremonies, including the young boys' tooth evulsion initiation ceremony, also included the use of white ochre for face and body decoration.[45]

In the case of both burials and cremations, personal belongings were often placed alongside the body, perhaps their spear, fizz-gig, woomera, dilly bag or coolamon or even their canoe. Both events were cause for major ceremony with participants painting their faces with red and white ochre decorations.

It is also customary to not speak the name of the deceased, as that would prevent the spirit being carried on to the next place. If another person shared the same name then they would be required to use another name for a certain period of time.

For burials, mounds would be decorated with branches or grasses. Similarly, with cementations, the ashes would also be formed into a mound with decorations of bark and branches. [46] Bodies would sometimes also be placed into the cavities of rock shelters and many have been exposed within sand dunes during storms that have caused the dunes to erode. After death, they believed that they moved on to another place (Extract 11):

> On their being often questioned as to what became of them after their decease, some answered that they went either on or beyond the great water; but by far the greater number signified that they went to the clouds.

Extract 11. Judge Advocate David Collins. [47]

Women had particular roles within the clan. They were the ones who did the fishing using a line made from plant fibre and a hook made from a shaped and sharpened shell. They fished from canoes made from the bark of a tree and shared their catch with the rest of the clan. Sometimes their catch was cooked immediately over a fire in the middle of the canoe that was burning over a bed of sand, clay or wet grass (Figure 15). Very young children were also often seen in the canoes with their mothers despite the canoe floating only centimetres above the water.

The women also did the gathering of food such as berries, roots, rhizomes, leaves, tubers, seeds and nectar. They also knew how to remove toxins from certain plants so they were safe to eat. They made their own tools such as digging sticks, stone tools, fishing lines and fishing hooks, fishing nets, woven item such as dilly bags and those made from bark such as coolamons and carrying baskets.

Particular women have particular roles, particular functions in the community. Every part of your life those functions, those roles change … Rules were just taught orally, word of mouth, what I learnt from my mother, what I learnt from my grandmother, my sisters, my aunties, all of the women have taught me … The people that have the right to practice ceremonies are the ones that pass ceremonies down, they have a system where they decide who they pass the knowledge down to, and I'm not privileged in how it works but those women older than me are. I'm not in a position to ask them, I wouldn't presume to be so arrogant as to ask them. When it's time for me to know they will tell me …

Jenny Munro

Figure 15. Aboriginal family fishing, ca. 1790.
(Source: Sir Joseph Banks Electronic Archive, State Library of New South Wales)

There were many other specific women's activities in the Sydney region. For some the meaning is known, while others may never be known due to the disruption of knowledge systems. As traditional Aboriginal knowledge is handed down orally there are not always documented explanations for certain customs. Even where the early European settlers have made written accounts of what they had seen and learnt, there have been many interpretations and misinterpretations coming from a European perspective with very little understanding of Aboriginal culture at the time.

One custom, for which the true meaning was never satisfactorily determined, was the removal of the first two joints of the little finger. David Collins describes this procedure and the meaning given to him at the time (Extract 12).

> The women are, besides, early subjected to an uncommon mutilation of the first two joints of the little finger of the left hand. The operation is performed when they are very young, and is done with hair, or some other slight ligature. This being tied round at the joint, the flesh soon swells, and in a few days, the circulation being destroyed, the finger mortifies and drops off. I never saw but one instance where the finger was taken off the right hand, and that was occasioned by the mistake of the mother. Before we knew them, we took it to be their marriage ceremony; but upon seeing their mutilated children we were convinced of our mistake; and at last learned, that these joints of the little finger were supposed to be in the way when they wound their fishing lines over the hand. On our expressing our disgust of the appearance, they always applauded it, and said that it was good. They named it Mal-gun; and among the many women whom I saw, but

> very few had this finger perfect. On my pointing these out to those who were so distinguished, they appeared to look and speak of them with some degree of contempt.
>
> **Extract 12. Judge Advocate David Collins.** [48]

This explanation remains controversial and is one of the big mysteries of Aboriginal saltwater culture.

During childbirth, men were not permitted to be present and the women were required to leave the camp accompanied by other women who would provide assistance. Cold water would be poured onto the woman's abdomen and a piece of string would be tied around her neck with the other end being rubbed on the lips of one of the other women until they bled (the same process was performed for headaches). Once the baby had been delivered the umbilical cord would be severed with a sharp tool. It is also known that the umbilical cord would be singed prior to removal with a Kangaroo bone bound with sinew at one end and heated over a fire. A baby would be carried around on a bed made from paper bark until it was old enough to sit astride her shoulders and hold onto her hair. [49]

Watkin Tench became particularly taken with the beauty of a Cammeraygal woman named Gooreedeeana. Extract 13 describes Tench's meetings with Gooreedeeana.

> The women are proportionally smaller than the men. I never measured but two of them, who were both, I think, about the medium height. One of them, a sister of Baneelon, stood exactly five feet two inches high. The other, named Gooreedeeana, was shorter by a quarter of an inch.

But I cannot break from Gooreedeeana so abruptly. She belonged to the tribe of Cameragal, and rarely came among us. One day, however, she entered my house to complain of hunger. She excelled in beauty all their females I ever saw. Her age about eighteen … Her mouth was small and her teeth, though exposed to all the destructive purposes to which they apply them, were white, sound and unbroken. Her countenance, though marked by some of the characteristics of her native land, was distinguished by a softness and sensibility unequalled in the rest of her countrywomen, and I was willing to believe that these traits indicated the disposition of her mind. I had never before seen this elegant timid female, of whom I had often heard; but the interest I took in her led me to question her about her husband and family. She answered me by repeating a name which I have now forgotten, and told me she had no children. I was seized with a strong propensity to learn whether the attractions of Gooreedeeana were sufficiently powerful to secure her from the brutal violence with which the women are treated, and as I found my question either ill understood or reluctantly answered, I proceeded to examine her head, the part on which the husband's vengeance generally alights. With grief I found it covered by contusions and mangled by scars. The poor creature, grown by this time more confident from perceiving that I pitied her, pointed out a wound just above her left knee which she told me was received from a spear, thrown at her by a man who had lately dragged her by force from her home to gratify his lust. I afterwards observed that this wound had caused a slight lameness and that she limped in walking. I could only compassionate her wrongs and sympathize in her misfortunes. To alleviate her present sense of them, when she took her leave I gave her, however, all the bread and salt pork which my little stock afforded.

> After this I never saw her but once, when I happened to be near the harbour's mouth in a boat, with captain Ball. We met her in a canoe with several more of her sex. She was painted for a ball, with broad stripes of white earth, from head to foot, so that she no longer looked like the same Gooreedeeana. We offered her several presents, all of which she readily accepted; but finding our eagerness and solicitude to inspect her, she managed her canoe with such address as to elude our too near approach, and acted the coquet to admiration.

Extract 13. Captain Watkin Tench.[50]

Imagine ... Fishing

A woman stands on the shore of a small cove looking over the water. The estuary is narrow and deep and large boulders protrude from the steep rugged hillside. The sun is shining down in the valley but it won't last long because it's such as narrow gully. She has two children, one is small and is attached to her breast and the other is an older boy who is drawing a turtle in the sand with a long stick. An older woman, her aunty, sits on the sand next to a fire and both are watching the other women who are down stream a little way fishing from their canoes. The men are out hunting and won't be back for some time. This woman has stayed behind because her fishhook is broken and she needs to make a new one before she can join the others. She looks through her dilly bag and pulls out a couple of turban shells she has been holding onto for just the purpose

Figure 16. Shell fish hook. (Source: Paul Ovenden © Australian Museum, 2002)[51]

of making a new fishhook when she needed. She chooses a shell that she thinks is the right shape and then sits herself down on a sandstone face that is rising sightly through the sand. With her baby sleeping soundly beside her wrapped warmly inside sheets of soft paperbark she chips away at the shell and rubs the tip of the shell onto the sandstone. The shell is very hard and takes a long time to wear down, it's very tiring work. Once the shell has been worn down sufficiently into a crescent shape she takes a small sandstone file from her dilly bag to put the final touches to the fishhook. She very carefully files the edges until they're smooth and sharp and pays particular attention to the delicate barbed tip. Once she is happy with the hook she tightly fastens her line made of fine string to the end of the fishhook. Now she is ready to join the other women.

She calls the boy over to help her and together they scoop up some sand from the beach and make a pile in the middle of the canoe. Next they collect some small sticks to make a fire on top of the pile of sand so as not to burn the canoe itself. The woman then takes a smouldering stick from the fire on the beach and carefully lights a fire in the canoe. The woman removes a couple of oysters from a rock and then picks up her baby and places it gently into the canoe. She then steps into the canoe where the baby lies sleeping and gestures to the boy to stay on the beach with his aunty. The rim of the canoe sits dubiously only an inch from the surface of the water. The boy is not happy about being left behind, but his aunty has stories to teach him while they are alone. The woman uses a piece of bark to paddle towards the other women. It is a good day for fishing and the women have already caught many fish as they chatter among themselves.

As the woman chews on an oyster she winds the end of the fishing line around her hand and tosses the hook into the water. The shiny shell hook will attract the fish and she spits the chewed oyster into the water as burly. It's not long before the fish are biting and she pulls in her line to find a small snapper thrashing on the end. She carefully removes it from

the hook and tosses the fish straight onto the fire. While it is cooking she throws her hook and line back into the water. She calls out to the boy on the shore that she won't be long. While she is waiting for the fish to bite she eats the fish that has just been cooked and then tosses the head, skin and bones overboard. She waits patiently for quite some time before the fish start biting again but when they do she is swift to pull in her line. This time she has made a good catch, it's big and the women decide that they now have enough to feed the clan. She takes the fish off the hook and tosses it straight onto the fire. She then collects up her hook and line and places them back into her dilly bag. She paddles back to where the boy waits with his aunty and drags the canoe back onto the shore along side the canoes of the other women. With many fires burning along the beach the women cook their fish while waiting for the men to return.

Figure 17. Different stage of shell fish hook production. (Source: Paul Ovenden © Australian Museum, 2002)[52]

Figure 18. A Family of New South Wales. (Source: Blake after King *In* Banks Papers, nla.pic-an7691834, Courtesy of the National Library of Australia)

The men of the clan were responsible for hunting animals and catching fish. Four different types of spears were used in the Port Jackson area, each with its own purpose. There would also be as many as four sharp stone or bone points attached to the tip of a spear depending on its purpose. As with the women, the men also fished from canoes as well as around the rocky foreshores. Other weapons included woomeras (spear thrower), shields and boomerangs. Each weapon would be made from the wood of a particular tree that has the right properties to ensure the durability of the weapon. Boomerangs were often made from the root of a tree. Various tone and bone tools were also used. Even though images such as Figure 18 do not accurately depict the facial features of the Aboriginal people they are supposed to represent, they do provide important information. This picture shows the man carrying a spear, club and shield and the woman carrying a fishing line, which is consistent with early accounts of the division of labour. The woman is also carrying a woven dilly bag and a small child on her shoulders and the young boy is carrying some smaller spears and a piece of burning bark should they need to light a fire.

Animal traps were used further inland made from sticks and woven pieces of twine in which an animal could get into a trap and not be able to escape. One report in the early journals also describes an Aboriginal person lying still across a rock, holding a fish up in his hand waiting for a bird to land and then grabbing the bird that swoops down to take the fish.[53] Whilst very different to European means, Aboriginal people of the Sydney area had developed very effective methods for obtaining food.

When the British invaded the Sydney area the clans' men were often cautious to keep the women away from the British men. On one occasion the women hid behind trees and rocks when the British were nearby while the men came closer to observe the strangers.[54]

The men of the clan demonstrated their physical dominance in many ways. Scenarios such as that recalled by Tench (Extract 15) describe men sneaking into areas where another clan is sleeping and violently dragging a woman away to his own clan country.

> 'But the wound on the back of your hand, Baneelon! How did you get that?'
> He laughed, and owned that it was received in carrying off a lady of another tribe by force. 'I was dragging her away. She cried aloud, and stuck her teeth in me.'
> 'And what did you do then?'
> 'I knocked her down, and beat her till she was insensible, and covered in blood.

Extract 14. Captain Watkin Tench, December 1789. [55]

The reciprocity of the marriage arrangement, the whole concept of when someone comes into the family they have obligations to the family, they didn't even take that into account when they saw how we conducted our relationships, they just thought that it was a way to use and abuse women. And that's what they did, there was no understanding, there was no concern about any reciprocation in relation to, marriage arrangements for example, and that was part of how we survived as groups, you know, some very crucial marriages at particular times ensure a clan groups survival, if your clan's weak, the normal thing would've been to marry into a larger clan group, so you ensure that whatever foods or whatever is available, to all of you, because you become connected to the wider clan group, through the marriage.

Jenny Munro

While the violence that sometimes took place is not denied, many marriages were not violent as first perceived. It is now known that there is a highly structured relational kinship system among Aboriginal families that was not recognised during the early stages of the British colony.

The men of the Cammeraygal clan also feature very prominently in the tooth evulsion initiation ceremony performed on the Sydney clans. Judge Advocate David Collins, of the First Fleet, describes the ceremony in great detail having been permitted to watch one such event at Farm Cove from 25 January to 3 February 1795. The ceremony occurred over two days, however, the congregation lasted for over a week. He describes how the days preceding the arrival of the Cammeraygal people, who were to perform the operation, were spent clearing and preparing the site and the evenings were spent dancing. Costumes made from grass, ochre body decorations, singing, dancing and intense role-play were all part of the ceremony which concluded in the removal of a front tooth (Extract 16).

> They now commenced their preparations for striking out the tooth. The first subject they took out was a boy of about ten years of age: he was seated on the shoulders of another native who sat on the grass ... The bone was now produced which had been pretended to be taken from the stomach of the native the preceding evening; this, being made very sharp and fine at one end, was used for lancing the gum, and but for some such precaution it would have been impossible to have got out the tooth without breaking the jaw-bon A throwing-stick was now to be cut about eight or ten inches from the end; and to effect this, much ceremony was used. The stick was laid upon a tree, and three attempts to hit it were made before it was struck. The wood being very hard, and the instrument

a bad tomahawk, it took several blows to divide it; but three feints were constantly made before each stroke. When the gum was properly prepared, the operation began; the smallest end of the stick was applied as high up on the tooth as the gum would admit of, while the operator stood ready with a large stone apparently to drive the tooth down the throat of his patient. Here their attention to the number three was again manifest; no stroke was actually made until the operator had thrice attempted to hit the throwing stick. They were full ten minutes about this first operation, the tooth being, unfortunately for the boy, fixed very firm in the gum. It was at last forced out, and the sufferer was taken away to a little distance, where the gum was closed by his friends, who now equipped him in the style he was to appear in for some days. A girdle was tied round his waist, in which, being white, had a curious and not unpleasing effect. The left hand was to be placed over the mouth, which was to be kept shut; he was on no account to speak; and for that day he was not to eat.

Extract 15. Judge Advocate David Collins. [56]

Rock engravings

As the British explored the lands around the harbour they often came across expanses of sandstone with engravings of animals or human-like figures, many of which survive today. The engravings were made by pecking holes around the outline of an image and then joining the holes together by rubbing or wearing down the rock between them with a hard stone. The exact meaning of much of the rock art in the Sydney region is not known due to the displacement of the Aboriginal people at the time of the British occupation. Engravings of sharks are still present in the Willoughby area, though they are susceptible

Figure 19. Rock engraving. (Source: AHO)

to erosion and other natural weathering processes. It is possible that sharks were particularly important to the Cammeraygal people, or perhaps they were a fairly regular food source due to their numbers in the waters that the Cammeraygal frequented. Whales, fish and stingrays are also commonly depicted in the rock engravings of other sites in the surrounding North Shore and Northern Beaches areas. As would be expected, clans from further inland would be less likely to depend on marine based resources and therefore have less reason to represent them in their various styles of art. Consequently, rock art in inland areas rarely depict the marine animals that are commonly found at coastal rock engraving sites.

Other images regularly depicted in the art of the Northern Sydney region include land-based animals such as kangaroos, wallabies and emus. People and spiritual beings are also commonly represented along with ceremonial wares and tools and weapons such as spears, shields, digging sticks and boomerangs. Large engravings of the great sky spirit Baiami, his wife Birrahgnooloo and his son, alternatively known as his brother, Daramulan, can be found across the Sydney region with remarkable sites within the Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park. These sites are each extremely important in terms of ongoing cultural and heritage significance.

Art

Aboriginal charcoal and ochre artworks are often well preserved in sheltered rock overhangs where they are most frequently seen. Drawings and stencils in charcoal and red, white and yellow ochre are common at sites in Willoughby. These include white ochre fish and hand stencils, a red ochre eel, charcoal drawings of spirit figures and many others the subjects of which are no longer distinguishable. It is not known exactly why these drawings and stencils were made, however, there have been many suggestions. One possibility is that it was for fun, as an enjoyable pastime. Another reason is that they have some kind of spiritual symbolism. It may also be that they drew images of food they caught, or hoped to catch. It has also been suggested that hand stencils have been made by visitors to the area as some kind of greeting. The existence of a site near to Willoughby containing a stencil of three human feet in a rock shelter makes interpreting the meaning of such art even more difficult.

A source of high quality red and white ochre is known at North Head,[57] however, exactly what sources were used by which clans is not known. Trading of high quality ochre was common between clans and previous studies have shown that, like stone and other geographically specific resources, ochre can be traded over long distances.[58]

Imagine ... Creating hand stencils

A family arrives at a rock shelter late in the afternoon. It is still very hot and the children are playing in the water a couple of metres below the shelter. The men get to work starting a fire in order to cook the fish that the family has just caught. The women look through the contents of a coolamon picking out the best pieces of white ochre and then call the children to join them.

Figure 20. Hand stencils in the Willoughby area. (Source: AHO)

One of the aunties places a piece of white ochre into her mouth and begins chewing it. The children do the same. The aunty chews it for quite some time to remove any lumps and to make sure it is a smooth consistency. She can feel the grit between her teeth as it contains tiny grains of sand too small to see with the naked eye. The children screw up their faces in disgust as they too can feel the grit of the ochre grinding on their teeth. The aunty moves down toward the water and scoops a handful of water into her mouth and continues to chew the ochre. The children do the same as the white paint begins to dribble form the corners of their mouths. It is now becoming a more runny consistency. She motions to the children to watch as she places her hand onto the wall of the shelter. With her fingers spread wide she spurts the white ochre paint leaving a dense spray of ochre over her hand and the wall of the rock shelter. She spurts the remaining paint in her mouth over her hand and is now satisfied that her work has been done as it should be. With the children still looking on, she removes her hand from the wall leaving the white ochre paint to provide the stencilled outline of her hand. The children are trying not to laugh as they move closer and place their hand against the wall. They each spurt their ochre leaving a fine spray outline of their little hands. The children giggle and pull faces as they all have white ochre running down their chins. The aunty then moves back to the water to wash her hand and her mouth as the children follow behind her screaming as one of the boys tries to spurt ochre into the faces of the girls. The aunty tells them to hush as she tells them a story of the significance of the handprint and why they create them. This is a story we will never know.

Plant and Animal Resources

By the time the British arrived, the Aboriginal people of the Sydney area had developed a myriad of methods for obtaining food and medicine from the abundant plant resources. Tools and weapons such as spears, digging sticks, woomeras and boomerangs as well as canoes and coolamons were also being made from the variety of plants that were available.

There are many plants native to the Willoughby area which once had a diversified landscape of mangrove lined estuaries, fern covered gullies, casuarina, coachwood and eucalypt varieties together with blue gum forest lining the ridges atop the magnificent sandstone outcrops and plateaus.[59] With 90% of the Willoughby area now cleared for development, many native plant and animal species are no longer found in the area.[60] Periodic burning of the bushland by Aboriginal people kept certain areas clear for travelling and allowed for the natural regeneration of various native plant species. For many species heat, smoke or charring by flames are required to stimulate the reproductive processes. Fire and smoke were also used as a hunting technique to force animals out of their refuge in the undergrowth or out of trees. Table 1 lists a sample of plants from the Sydney region and describes the ways in which they were utilised.

Figure 21. Bloodwood. (Source: AHO)

Figure 22. Dianella. (Source: AHO)

Figure 23. Warrigal spinach. (Source: AHO)

Table 1. A sample of Sydney's plant resources.[62]

Properties	Plants
Sweet nectar	Banksia, Grass tree, Callistemon, Angophora, Bloodwood eucalyptus
Edible seeds	Wattle, All native grasses
Flour from seeds	Burrawang (toxin leached prior), Lomandra, Wattle, Eucalypt varieties
Edible fruit / berries	Black fruit, Bush cherry, Dianella, Geebung, Lilly pilly, Mountain pepper, Eucalypt varieties
Edible leaves / shoots / fronds	Bracken fern (roasted), Cumbungi (steamed), Tree fern (heated to remove toxins), Warrigal spinach
Edible leaf base	Lomandra, Grass tree
Edible roots	Wild parsnip, Yam
Edible rhizomes	Bracken fern (roasted to remove toxins), Cumbungi (roasted)
Relieve colds / coughs / headaches / runny nose	Native sarsaparilla, Silky heads Melaleuca (leaves crushed, boiled or burned to release oils can be inhaled)
Antiseptic	Bracken fern, Silky heads
Fire	Banksia cones
String / fibre	Cumbungi grass, Flame tree and other Acacia varieties
Weaving	Lomandra
Glue / resin	Xanthorea / Grass tree
Spear shaft	Xanthorea / Grass tree
Oil	Eucalypt varieties
Digging stick	Leptospermum / Tea tree
Canoe / shield / club / Coolamon	Eucalypt varieties
Boomerang	Often made from a tree root

Figure 24. Xanthorea or grass tree. (Source: AHO)

Possums, sugar gliders, frogs, bandicoots, snakes, water dragons, turtles, echidnas, goannas and over one hundred and twenty species of bird can still be found in the Willoughby area. However, kangaroos, wallabies and emus, which once roamed Cammeraygal country, no longer remain as their habitat has disappeared.[62] Many of these animals would have provided the Cammeraygal people with an important food resource at certain times of the year, particularly during colder months when fish were scarce. Animal bone was often shaped for use as a tool such as a spear tip. Skins would be used to make cloaks for colder weather, and sinew, often from the tail of a kangaroo, would be used as a strong binding twine.

Figure 25. Geebung flower. (Source: AHO)

Encroachment

The days are growing colder and shorter and the summertime is long since gone. A family from the Cammeraygal clan huddle around a fire on the shore of Middle Harbour creek. They are sharpening their spears and preparing their fishing lines. Today they are hoping to catch enough fish to feed the family. In these colder days though, fish are scarce and the family relies heavily on the roots of plants and small animals that they may be able to catch. But today they are in want of fish!

They get in to their canoes and slowly paddle their way down the creek towards the entrance of Middle Harbour where their ancestors have been fishing for thousands and thousands of years. As the women sit in their canoes with their lines cast, some of the men are walking around the rocky shore with their spears held high at the ready, eyes cast firmly on the water. Many hours pass but few fish are caught. The men are becoming frustrated and the children are hungry. Then, from around the headland, a long boat comes with some of those white skinned strangers from Warrane (Sydney Cove). The family watch them intently from the other side of the harbour. They don't see too much of the strangers around these parts, but they've heard stories from the other clans, stories of the strangers overtaking Cadigal lands, and fishing and hunting wherever they want without first seeking permission- punishable crimes according to Aboriginal law! The strangers cast their net over the side and drag it for a small distance. In a short time they haul in the seine (fishing net) collecting a small quantity of fish that are taken on board the long boat. They cast the net again and haul in a second quantity of fish in no time at all.

The Cammeraygal family are still watching, and they're becoming anxious as they watch the strangers take the fish. Who do they think they are to come and take so many fish from their water, when they themselves are in desperate need of fish to feed the hungry family?

Two Cammeraygal men decide to go and talk to the strangers. They take their spears and paddle towards the long boat. When they are alongside, the men try to explain, in their native tongue, that their family need those fish and that the strangers have no right to them. They explain that the women are hungry and that the children a growing weaker. But the strangers don't understand. They can see that the men are angry, but they don't know what they're saying.

As the strangers are unarmed they are feeling vulnerable to attack and begin to row away. But the Cammeraygal men want their fish back and chase them. They wave their spears fiercely at the strangers and grab hold of the long boat reaching for the fish. After seizing many of them the men jump back in their canoes and begin to paddle away. The strangers swiftly row around the headland and disappear from sight. Meanwhile, the Cammeraygal men return to their family who have been watching anxiously from a distance. Together they head back to camp to broil the fish and share it amongst the family. The men are feeling confident in themselves and think that they taught those strangers a good lesson. They don't think they'll be back again!

Early conflict & disease

Initial interactions between the British and many Sydney Aboriginal clans including the Cammeraygals were for the purpose of trade. The British often traded strings of beads, nails and other trinkets for tools and weapons. Food resources, especially fish catches, were also shared and traded between the two. There are many examples of times when the Aboriginal people were friendly and helpful to the British, sharing their food, showing them where to find water and displaying a friendly curiosity towards each other. However, there are also many examples of animosity and anger between the Aboriginal people and the strangers (Extract 16).

> A few days after we had been robbed of our fish, we ware shooting the sean [seine / fishing] in a large cove opposite the cove that we had been robed of our fish. One of the natives came over in his bark canoe and seemed verry friendly. We knew him to be one of them that robed us on the other side. The sargent had put his gun up against one of the trees with the cartridge box hanging to the gun and took a walk up the woods. I took a cartridge out of the box and poured it into his

> hand, which they generally carry with them, I motioned to him to put the fire to it, which he did, but the flame, smoke, and the powder flying in his face and the burning of his hand, he gave a spring and a hollow that I never saw equeled and run to his cannoo and put off, sum times paddling with one hand and then the other until he got to the other side. The laughter and noise alarmed the sargent, and wanted to [k] now what was the matter, but we did not tell him until some time afterwards.

Extract 16. Seaman Jacob Nagle. [63]

To make the situation worse, the inequality of the weapons representing the two cultures ensured that any attempts by the Aboriginal people to defend their property and resources were extremely difficult. Bradley describes one such event where one man with a gun was able to fend off 50 Aboriginal people with spears (Extract 17).

> The Man usually employ'd shooting for the Ship; was near the Middle Harbor suddenly attack'd attack'd (sic)by the Natives with stones, he did not see them till a stone passed close to his head, looking round he saw 3 of them with Clubs & spears advancing toward him, he gave them the contents of his Musquet which then was loaded with small shot, this they did not mind only by standing still & gave a shout, in a very short time He saw 50 of them had got together & were advancing towards him wt. spears & clubs making a great noise; He was now well prepared having loaded with large Buck shot while they were collecting: He stood his ground to receive them, letting them advance to within about 50 yards fired among the thick of them, two fell, the others ran off

immediately taking their two dead or wounded Companions with them, the Man being alone did not follow them.

Extract 17. Lieutenant William Bradley 26 September 1789.[64]

On many occasions' weapons, tools and other equipment were stolen by the British, despite rules of the settlement being established to discourage this.[65] Fishing in certain waters and collecting food and resources from Aboriginal land without permission was also considered to be theft according to Aboriginal law. As payback was an integral part of the Aboriginal system of law, those responsible were required to be held accountable and face the appropriate punishment.[66]

[Artefacts] were all acquired illegally, all stolen. It's the white man's system of law that says if you steal you have to pay for the stealing. It's just that when it concerns them stealing something they don't want to pay the price … You know, the first recorded conflict between white and black was a young boy being killed in the river at Ryde and Aboriginal people retaliating. If you understand our people and our law, payback was an integral part of our system. It wasn't something that was initiated and used carte blanche by everyone. It was something that a select part of our community were privy to the ways of, the kurdachja's, the clever fellas, you know, our system of law, our way of living would've just been turned on its ear.

Jenny Munro

There are many accounts recalled in the early journals that recognise that violence towards the British was in retaliation for the mistreatment of the Aboriginal people (Extract 18).

> Capn Campbell going to the SW arm with Boats to bring down rushes for thatching his House, on landing at the place where two Convicts had been left with a tent for the purpose of cutting those rushes, he found the Tent but not the Men, finding some blood near the Tent the followed it to the Mangrove bushes where they found both Men dead & laying at some distance from each other; One of them had 3 Spears in him & one side of his head beat in: The other Man had no apparent wound but a blow on the fore head.
>
> ... The Governor with a party went to the place where the two Men had been killed by the Natives, the boat returned leaving them in a Natives path which they meant to follow until they met with the Natives. The Officer who was in the boat called at the Lt Governors farm as he returned & was there informed that a Convict had killed one of the Natives some days before by cutting him across the belly with his knife, I have no doubt but this Native having been murder'd occasioned their seeking revenge & which proved fatal to those who were not concern'd. They have attack'd our people when they have met them unarmed, but that did not happen until they had been very ill treated by us in the lower part of the Harbour & fired upon at Botany Bay by the French.

Extract 18. Lieutenant William Bradley, 31 May 1788.[67]

With the types of events described in Extract 18 occurring frequently, and members of the new colony regularly under threat, Governor Phillip devised a plan to force a communication between the two (Extract 19).

> Tired of this state of petty warfare and endless uncertainty, the governor at length determined to adopt a decisive measure by capturing and retaining them by force, which we supposed would either inflame the rest to vengeance (in which case we should know the worst, and provide accordingly) or else it would induce an intercourse, by the report which our prisoners would make of the mildness and indulgence with which we used them. And farther, it promised to unveil the cause of their mysterious conduct, by putting us in possession of their reason for harassing and destroying our people in the manner I have related. Boats were accordingly ordered to be got ready and every preparation made which could lead to the attainment of our object.

Extract 19. Captain Watkin Tench, 1788.[68]

The kidnapping of Arabanoo, Bennelong & Colby

On 31 December 1788 Governor Phillip ordered Lieutenants Ball and Johnson "to seize and carry off some of the natives."[71] The following quote (Extract 20) describes the scenario of capturing Arabanoo, the first Aboriginal person to be brought into the British settlement by force.

> The boats proceeded to Manly Cove, where several Indians were seen standing on the beach, who were enticed by courteous behaviour and a few presents to enter into conversation. A proper opportunity being presented, our people rushed in among them, and seized two men. The rest fled, but the cries of the captives soon brought them back, with many others, to their rescue, and so desperate were their struggles that in spite of every effort on our side, only one of them was secured; the

other effected his escape. The boats put off without delay and an attack from the shore instantly commenced. They threw spears, stones, firebrands, and whatever else presented itself at the boats; nor did they retreat, agreeable to their former custom, until many muskets were fired over them.

The prisoner was now fastened by ropes to the thwarts of the boat and, when he saw himself irretrievably from his country men, set up the most piercing and lamentable cries of distress. His grief, however, soon diminished. He accepted and ate of some broiled fish which was given to him and sullenly submitted to his destiny.

Extract 20. Captain Watkin Tench, 1789.[70]

After several months of being kept at Sydney Cove, Arabanoo succumbed to smallpox and died in May 1789. Governor Phillip immediately ordered that another native be taken at the first opportunity,[71] although it was not until November 1789 that Bennelong and Colby were seized in a manner similar to that of Arabanoo (Figure 26). Colby escaped two weeks later, leaving Bennelong alone at Sydney Cove. By April 1790, the trust between Governor Phillip and Bennelong had grown and Bennelong was released from his shackles and allowed to walk freely around the settlement. A great deal was learnt from Bennelong about the customs and culture of the Aboriginal population.

Over many years Bennelong and Colby, who returned to the settlement by choice, came and went freely from the settlement bringing family and friends to meet the Governor and to stay for days at a time receiving fish, clothing and other resources when required.

Figure 26. Taking of Colbee & Benalon (original spelling). (Source: Bradley, 1786-1792, Courtesy of the Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales)

Bennelong's wife Barangaroo was a member of the Cammeraygal tribe and she and Bennelong used to travel over to the north shore regularly. It was difficult for the early settlers to understand the relationship between Bennelong and the Cammeraygals. On many occasions he tried to encourage the Governor to send his troops to kill all the Cammeraygals, yet on other occasions he would be seen talking with them on the north shore.[72] It was also the Cammeraygals that Bennelong was with when Governor Phillip was speared.

One explanation may be given by an observation by Collins that wives "are always selected from the women of a different tribe, with whom they are at enmity ..."[73] which could be mean that Bennelong had responsibilities towards his wife's clan despite his own conflicts.

Tench also describes occasions when Bennelong openly stated his hatred of the Cammeraygal people (Extract 21).

> When he recounted his battles, 'poised his lance, and showed how fields were won,' the most violent exclamations of rage and vengeance against his competitors in arms, those of the tribe called Cameeragal in particular, would burst from him. And he never failed at such times to solicit the governor to accompany him, with a body of soldiers, in order that he might exterminate this hated name.
>
> **Extract 21. Captain Watkin Tench, December 1789.**[74]

Disease

By 1790, merely two years since the establishment of the colony, it is estimated that over 50% and possibly as much as 90% of the Aboriginal population had died as a result of a smallpox epidemic (Extract 22).

> In the year 1789 they were visited by a disorder which raged among them with all the appearance and virulence of the small-pox. The number that it swept off, by their own accounts, was incredible. At that time a native was living with us; and on our taking him down to the harbour to look for his former companions, those who witnessed his expression and agony can never forget either. He looked anxiously around him in the different coves we visited; not a vestige on the sand was to be found of a human foot; the excavations in the rocks were filled with the putrid bodies of those who had fallen victims to the disorder; not a living person was any where to be met with. It seemed as if, flying from the contagion, they

> had left the dead to bury the dead. He lifted up his hands in silent agony for some time; at last he exclaimed. 'All dead! All dead!' and then hung his head in mournful silence, which he preserved during the remainder of our excursion. Some days after he learned that the few of his companions who survived had fled up the harbour to avoid the pestilence that so dreadfully raged ... On visiting Broken Bay, we found that it had not confined its effects to Port Jackson, for in many places our path was covered with skeletons, and the same spectacles were to be met with in the hollows of most of the rocks of that harbour.

Extract 22. Judge Advocate David Collins.[75]

In areas such as Cammeraygal country on the North Shore, where displacement and encroachment had been minimal until now, disease struck a devastating blow to the Aboriginal population forcing many clans to retreat across their neighbour's boundaries seeking passage and refuge from the disease ravaged region. With the loss of so many people and the temporary abandonment of large tracts of land, new groups were formed as the survivors returned and re-established a functional system once again. While many Cammeraygal people did survive and return to their land, those who regrouped around the Ryde area became known as the Kissing Point Tribe.

There are many theories as to how small pox entered the Aboriginal population although none have been proven.[76] The most controversial theory is that the British intentionally introduced it, perhaps through the distribution of contaminated blankets. On the other hand, contaminated goods may have been distributed inadvertently. What makes the cause of the epidemic so curious is that the only member of the First Fleet who suffered from the disease was an American

Indian. It has been supposed that the European members of the First Fleet had either been immunised or were immune through previous exposure or though genetic evolution. One other theory is that it spread from the Macassans in South-East Asia. While the cause of the disease is not fully understood, there can be no denying that its impact was a catastrophe of the highest order, resulting in mass depopulation.

Another disease that is believed to have been introduced by the British is the venereal disease gonorrhoea. Gonorrhoea has a sterilising effect that diminishes a person's ability to reproduce. So not only was there mass depopulation from small pox, but venereal disease would have hampered any small chance that there was to rebuild the population levels.[77]

Settlement and resistance in the early Hunters Hill landdistrict

For many years, the northern shore of the harbour stretching from Pennant Hills across to Manly and Dee Why was known as the land district of Hunter's Hill. The entire western section of the district was called Lane Cove. The County of Cumberland was proclaimed by Governor Phillip on 4 June 1788, although the Parish of Willoughby was not declared until 1835, at which time Willoughby also included the area now known as Lane Cove. For these reasons, the exact location of many historical events describing recollections from the early areas of Lane Cove and Hunter's Hill cannot always be pinpointed. A historical map indicates that land grants in the area now known as Willoughby were granted to members of the NSW Army Corps as early as 1796 (Figure 27). However, due to the ruggedness of the terrain, settlement of the area was slow. Settlement including land clearing and the construction of fences would have caused major disruptions to the lives of the Cammeraygal people. By 1796 the

Figure 27. Land grants on the North Shore by 1796. (Source: An extract from a map drawn by Bryan Thomas, 1978, based on the Plan of the Settlements of NSW by Charles Grimes, Surveyor, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales)

displacement of clans was widespread across Sydney as the British settlement expanded. An extensive Aboriginal track on the north shore was now on its way to becoming the Pacific Highway of today.

Initially it was timber-getters who exploited the tall forests of the North Shore, followed by more permanent farms being established for agricultural purposes, including orchards. Middens were also dug up in order to produce the lime used in building construction. The Lane Cove River became an important route for the transportation of goods to and from Sydney town. However, as the farmers began to build worker's cottages and fences around their new land grants in the Hunter's Hill land district, isolated settlers became extremely vulnerable to attack by the remaining Aboriginal population.

Simultaneously, conflict was occurring right across Sydney with isolated farmers and lone travellers regularly under attack. Frequently numbering in the hundreds, hordes of Aboriginal men, often led by the infamous Pemulwuy, boldly defended their country by plundering farms and killing the occupants in the Hawkesbury River, Georges River, Prospect Hill and Parramatta areas.[78] Pemulwuy was also known to have led resistance against settlers in Lane Cove in 1796.[79]

In response to the continuing attacks on settlers, in 1801, Governor King issued orders that any Aboriginal people in the Parramatta, Georges River and Prospect Hill districts were to be fired at on sight.[80] Pemulwuy's attacks on settlers only increased, forcing Governor King to offer a reward for the capture of Pemulwuy, dead or alive.[81] In 1802 Pemulwuy was shot dead by two settlers. His head was amputated, place in a bottle of preservative and shipped back to Joseph Banks in England for research purposes.[82] There his head remains even today, despite ongoing efforts to have his remains repatriated back to Australia for an appropriate burial.

Conflicts continued nonetheless, with Pemulwuy's son Tedbury often leading the charge. Lane Cove was no exception, and on 2 September 1804, the following report was posted in the Sydney Gazette:

> The Natives have during the last week been very troublesome about Lane Cove – On Tuesday and Wednesday a party visited the farm of Mr Wilshire, where they bound the labouring servants, and seemed disposed to remain until expelled by famine. The poor men's store allowance they unbound one, and obliged him to cook; potatoes, vegetables, and such articles of poultry as had accidentally fallen in their way affected in the fete, and the first day they devoted to mirth and jocularity. Accounts, however, reached town the next morning; and Mr Wilshire immediately prepared to render assistance to his servants. Accompanied by several persons armed with firelocks, he arrived at the farm in the afternoon, and was welcomed by shouts of defiance from the barbarous ranks, who formed into subdivisions, and anticipated triumph with the brandished spear. A blank discharge proved of no other efficacy than to provoke them to irony, so that any attempt to repel them by intimidation only, promised to encourage their excesses. A discharge of shot convinced them of the danger of maintaining their position, and they fled precipitately to an eminence, where they were joined by a prodigious number, unperceived before, having taken with them all the servants' necessaries and bedding. The men supposed, that at various intervals during the period of their captivity, the number of natives must have exceeded 200. Shortly after their expulsion from the farm they dispersed and may not, it is hoped, return.

Extract 23. Sydney Gazette, 2 September 1804.

Similar events occurred on the North Shore over many years as seen in the report below from the Sydney Gazette:

> A number of the natives, supposed 80 or 90 at the least, a few days since made their appearance at Lane Cove, and committed depredations on several farms. As these hordes are known to belong, mostly, if not all, to the more retired tribes, it is difficult to propose a remedy to their mischievous and truly horrible incursions; for while they attack in sufficient numbers to over power any force that a single settler can bring against them, they have the advantage of security by the distance of their accustomed places of resort, whether they may retire without the possibility of being pursued.- The necessity of settlers and others travelling in company as much as circumstances will permit has become generally obvious, and affords an effectual protection against the attacks of bush-rangers, as well as the natives, who are known never to attack a force capable of resisting or punishing their temerity. As soon as the maize is off the farms it is likely the present hordes of offenders will retire, but not before, as this is the only grain they can make use of, and it affords so strong a temptation to them that the plunder of the corn fields has in every instance furnished a prelude to their barbarities.

Extract 24. Sydney Gazette 30 March 1810.

The invasion by the British resulted in widespread retaliation. Aboriginal people defended their land in a style similar to guerrilla warfare by planning attacks carefully and utilising all the resources available to them. Despite the Aboriginal population being outnumbered and having technologically inferior weapons the war continued for many decades.[83]

The imposition of European culture and values

In 1814, under Governor Macquarie, an announcement was made regarding an experiment proposing the "civilisation" of a sample of Aboriginal children, to be housed at an institution at Parramatta (Extract 25). The announcement also mentions the proposal to provide land to selected Aboriginal people for agricultural purposes. This proclamation is the first attempt by the Government to remove Aboriginal children from their families and impose European cultural values with the aim of intentionally overriding their existing traditional cultural values. The children were not allowed to speak their native language and were only able to have contact with their families at the annual Christmas feast.

> HIS EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR having long viewed with Sentiments of Commiseration the very wretched State of the Ab-origines of this Country; having resolved in his Mind the most probable and promising Means of ameliorating their Condition, has now taken the Resolution to adopt such measures as appear to him best calculated to effect that Object, and improve the Energies of this innocent, destitute, and unoffending Race.

With this Anxiety to make an Experiment so interesting to the Feelings of Humanity, and to endeavour to ascertain how far the Condition of the Natives may be improved by the Application of such Means are within his Power, HIS EXCELLENCY feels that he is making an Acknowledgement to which they are in some Degree entitled, when it is considered that the British Settlement in this Country, though necessarily excluding the Natives from many of the natural Advantages they had previously derived from the animal and other Productions of this Part of the Territory, has never met with any serious or determined Hostility from them, but rather a Disposition to submit peaceably to such Establishments as were necessarily made on the Part of the British Government on the Formation of this Settlement.

With a view, therefore, to effect the Civilization of the Aborigines of New South Wales, and to render their Habits more domesticated and industrious, His Excellency the GOVERNOR, as well from Motives of Humanity as of that Policy which affords a reasonable Hope of producing such an Improvement in their Condition as may eventually contribute to render them not only more happy in themselves, but also in some Degree useful to the Community, has determined to institute a School for the Education of the Native Children of both Sexes, and to assign a Portion of Land for the Occupancy and Cultivation of adult Natives, under such Rules and Regulations as appear to him likely to answer the desired Objects; and which are now published for general Information.

Firstly, That there shall be a School for the Aborigines of New South Wales, established in the Town of Parramatta; which of

HIS EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR is to be Patron, and Mrs MACQUARIE, Patroness …

Forthly, That the main Object of the Institution shall be the Civilization of the Ab-origines of both sexes …

Sixthly, That this Institution shall be an Asylum for the Native Children of both sexes; but no Child shall be admitted under four, or exceed seven Years of Age.

Seventhly, That the Number of Children to be admitted in the first instance, shall not exceed six boys and six girls; which Numbers shall be afterwards increased, according to Circumstances …

Eighthly, That the Children of both Sexes be instructed in common, in Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic; That the boys shall also be instructed in Agriculture, Mechanical Arts, and such common Manufactures as may best suit their Ages, and respective Dispositions; That the Girls shall also be taught needle-work: For all which purposes, Instructors, properly qualified, will be employed …

Tenthly, That a Portion of Land shall be located for the Use of Adult Natives, who shall be invited and encouraged to cultivate it; and that such Assistance shall be rendered them for that Purpose by Government, and may be deemed expedient …

Eleventhly, That the Committee shall meet Quarterly at the Town of Parramatta, on the first Wednesday in each succeeding Quarter, for the Purpose of inspecting and auditing the

> Quarterly Accounts of the Manager; and also of examining the Pupils as to their Progress in Civilization, Education, and Morals; and how far the necessary Attention has been paid to their Diet, Health, and Cleanliness ...
>
> Forteenthly, That no Child, after having been admitted into the Institution, shall be permitted to leave it, or to be taken away by any Person whatever (whether parents or relatives), until such Time as the Boys shall have attained the Age of SIXTEEN Years, and the Girls FORTEEN Years: at which Ages they shall be respectively discharged ...

Extract 25. Sydney Gazette 10 December 1814.

As a part of Governor Macquarie's plan to civilise the Aborigines, a parcel of prime agricultural land at Georges Head was presented to sixteen Aboriginal families (Extract 26).

> On Tuesday last, at an early hour, HIS EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR and Mrs MACQUARIE, accompanied by a large party of Ladies and Gentlemen, proceeded in boats down the Harbour to George's Head.
>
> The object of this excursion, we understand, was to form an establishment for a certain number of Natives who had shown a desire to settle on some favourable spot of land, with a view to proceed to the cultivation of it. – The ground assigned them for this purpose (the peninsular of George's Head) appears to have been judiciously chosen, as well from the fertility of the soil as from its requiring little exertions of labour to clear and cultivate; added to which, it possesses a peculiar advantage of situation; from being nearly surrounded

on all sides by the sea; thereby affording its new possessors the consult opportunity of pursuing their favourite occupation of fishing, which has always furnished the principal source of their subsistence.

On this occasion, sixteen of the Natives, with their wives and families were assembled, and His EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR, in consideration of the general wish previously expressed by them, appointed Boongaree (who has been long known as one of the most friendly of his race, and well acquainted with our language), to be their Chief, at the same time presenting him with a badge distinguishing his quality as "Chief of the Broken Bay Tribe," and the more effectually to promote the objects of this establishment, each of them was furnished with a full suit of slop cloathing, together with a variety of useful articles and implements of husbandry, by which they would be enabled to proceed in the necessary pursuits of agriculture: - A boat (called the Boongaree), was likewise presented them for the purpose of fishing.

About noon, after the forgoing ceremony had been concluded. His EXCELLENCY and party returned to Sydney, having left the Natives with their Chief in possession of their newly assigned settlement, evidently much pleased with it, and the kindness they experienced on the occasion.

Extract 26. Sydney Gazette 4 February 1815.

Bungaree was a proud Chief and walked freely among the European settlements with his copper breastplate exhibiting his status over others (Figure 28). Bungaree and other Chiefs were chosen and appointed by the Governor with their land often outside their traditional country.

Figure 28. Bungaree. (Source: Augustus Earl, 1826. Courtesy of the Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales)

Those chosen to be Chief were done so according to their usefulness and good relations with the colony and the Governor himself, and to ensure peaceful relations between the two groups. However, this method of appointing a Chief was contrary to the traditional system and caused much tension between those appointed and the original inhabitants of a particular area. This also meant that the Chief did not always have the respect and cooperation of the group he was expected to represent.

The families lived at Georges Head for many years, however, the agricultural project quickly fell into disarray, with crops abandoned for the more traditional methods of fishing and hunting. The families travelled long distances when necessary, on foot and by boat, to Parramatta and Sydney town. When Bungaree left Sydney in 1817 to sail to north-western Australia with Phillip Parker King, his family and the others returned to Broken Bay, forsaking the Georges Head site. On many occasions over the following years, Bungaree and the other families returned occasionally to Georges Head when it suited them to do so. Bungaree and his wives Matora and Gora Goosberry (Queen Goosberry) appear in many written encounters on the North Shore during the early to mid 1800's. Cora Goosberry's father was a Cammeraygal man. Bungaree and Goosberry's son, Long Dick, also frequented the North Shore and interacted with the British settlements.

People such as Bungaree, Bennelong and Coleby are reported as being on friendly terms with the European invaders. The Europeans provided them with food, clothing, boats, housing, land, tools, an alliance against enemies and even granted them a higher status over their fellow clans people (as in the case of King Bungaree, Chief of the Broken Bay Tribe). In many ways it would have been difficult to resist such luxuries as those that were offered, however, it is almost

certain that these men did not comprehend the future impacts that the Europeans were to have on their families and their country.

In 1814, 1820 and 1822, Port Jackson played host to a series of visiting Russian ships. Having established their astrological observatory on the North Shore, the Russians documented many of their interactions with Aboriginal people from the area. Whilst it is suggested that many of the North Shore interactions occurred with members of the Cammeraygal tribe,[84] as previously mentioned, Bungaree, of whom the Russians often write, is known to have relocated to the north shore from the Broken Bay area. Despite ongoing conflict, Aboriginal people continued to live a subsistence way of life on the North Shore in areas not yet cleared for timber or agriculture. Over the years, traditional Aboriginal culture began to assume small elements of European culture and technology.

In 1816 the government began distributing blankets to the Aboriginal population on an annual basis. Names, place of birth and place of residence were recorded when blankets were distributed, thereby enabling the government to compile some statistics on the remaining Aboriginal population, known as the Blanket Returns. In 1820, the Russian, Simonov, describes Aboriginal women on the north shore wearing blankets like a toga, wrapped around their bodies and tied around their necks with string.[85] Having been instructed that they would not receive any work or assistance in Sydney town if not wearing clothing, tattered clothes or a blanket often provided the only means for covering their bodies.[86] In another adaptive use of the blanket, the Russian, Rossiysky, describes the blankets being used to wrap babies that would then be tied to the backs of the women.[87]

By the 1820's, stone axes were still known to be used, yet iron axes were becoming a popular and highly sought after tool. The use of

European fish hooks and lines had become widespread, however, the use of a seine had not yet become common.[88] Trade between the Aboriginal population and the Europeans occurred frequently, with fish being the primary resource provided to the colony by the Aboriginal people. Aboriginal men were occasionally provided with a boat on the condition that they shared their fish catches with the colony.[89] Alcohol and tobacco were also indulged in from the early period of settlement. By the 1820's and 30's, drinking and smoking was causing unsocial behaviour and conflict within some Aboriginal communities. Bellingshausen describes his observations of the impact that working for the British colony was having on the Aboriginal people on the North Shore in 1820 (Extract 27).

> Boongaree and his family have a boat, given by the government; and other New Hollanders have likewise been given boats by inhabitants of Sydney on the condition that they surrender part of their daily catch of fish. They go out in these boats every day, fish at the mouth of the bay, and then hasten back to the town to surrender the due portion of the catch; the remainder they exchange for drink or tobacco. Returning from the town to their dwellings on the northern shore the natives pass by our sloops, and every evening they went back drunk, shouting awfully and threatening each other. Sometimes their quarrels ended in a fight ... One morning Boongaree came to the sloop to barter fish for a bottle of rum. To my question, 'Who broke your head?', he replied with indifference, 'My people when they were drunk'. It was clear enough from this how much power he had over those whom he called his people.

Extract 27. Bellingshausen, 1 May 1820.[90]

Corroborees were also still known to occur on the North Shore in 1820. Having survived disease, famine, violence and displacement, the North Shore Aboriginal population exhibited great resilience to continue many of their traditional activities more than 30 years after the initial invasion by the British. Simonov describes his encounter with a corroboree late one night in 1820 (Extract 28).

> One other time when I had finished my habitual labours and was going to my tent, having sufficiently admired the spectacle of the night sky, I suddenly heard wild sounds. They were carrying to the coastal cliffs, where I was quartered, from the nearby woods. I had been intending to enter another magical world, that of dreams, but curiosity obliged me to enter the woods.
>
> The silver sickle of the moon was already rolling down the dark vault; Banksia were casting lengthy shadows on their green surrounds. A soft, cool breeze fingered their leaves, whispering something to them, sporting with them. Then, far off among the trees, a little light appeared. The closer I drew to it, the clearer grew the discordant din of the sounds which I had caught. Finally, there was revealed before me an assembly of New Hollanders. Here was another ball, with all its revelry.
>
> But what, in truth, is one to call a gathering of men and women, some of whom dance to the measured beat of music while others, sitting around fires, gaze at them – while not forgetting their refreshments, given them by Providence? The ballroom was vast and was roofed by the blue vault of the starry sky. Along its sides stood trees which were marvellous to us – such as may be seen only in hothouses in Moscow, St Petersburg, Kazan'. There, they are labelled 'From New Holland', and are tiny specimens besides. As for the floor, it was fresh, velvety meadow; for illumination, there was the

> flame consuming dry switches at the centre of the circle of sitting guests. Refreshments consisted of fish and mussels. Cooked on the spot on the burning twigs. Costumes? Oh, do not ask about costume, for I shall be forced to reveal that my neighbours, men and women, wore no attire. But, for all that, they were flaunting and showing off their strange conical coiffures, and had covered their body and face with patches of red ochre. Their music consisted of the sound of two small sticks, which the single musician beat time with, and of his loud voice as he sang a dissonant song. The dancers stood before him in a single line. They jumped at each blow of sticks, and hummed: prrs, prrs, prrss.

Extract 28. Simonov, 1820.[91]

In 1834, the year before the Parish of Willoughby was proclaimed, Aboriginal families were still living on the north shore. Naturalist and Quaker missionary, James Backhouse, describes his observations of Aboriginal people residing on the North Shore who were still employed readily in fishing for sustenance, yet were also clearly engaging with the British colony (Extract 29).

> After dinner we crossed to the north shore of Port Jackson, and had a walk in the bush … On returning, we passed a family of Aborigines, sitting round a small fire: and one of them had a dirty piece of flannel about her neck: she said she had been very ill. They had three children, that seemed from five to eight years old; one of which, at least, was a half-cast. They had also several dogs and a cat. Some men belonging to them were fishing; and three fish were lying near their fire. They said, one of the men had gone to town to buy bread, but they were afraid he would spend the money on drink … They spoke English

> tolerably, and gladly accepted a few pence to buy bread. Their whole appearance was degraded and very forlorn.
>
> **Extract 29. Quaker James Backhouse, 23 December 1834.**[92]

The observation clearly suggests that the group of Aboriginal people Backhouse met with were concerned about the effect that alcohol was having on the lives of their family members. In January 1835, James Backhouse again met with an Aboriginal family on the North Shore and describes the impact of tobacco and alcohol on even the small children (Extract 30). Backhouse also clearly links the degraded state of the Aboriginal family to the influences of the European settlement.

> In the evening, we went to the north shore and again fell in with a group of the Aborigines, that we met there a few days since. They were now sitting around a fire smoking, not excepting a little naked boy, about two years old, who seemed as busy with his short pipe as any of the company. They often obtain in Sydney, the washings of the rum-casks, which they call "bull", and get intoxicated with it. In this state they quarrel among themselves, notwithstanding they are very peaceable towards the white population – A group of these people, as they are seen, degraded by contact with a population of European extraction ...
>
> **Extract 30. James Backhouse, 20 January 1835.** [93]

Tracks and Fences

She is wandering across her country, with her blanket wrapped tightly around her shoulders as the cool autumn wind blows. The land she once knew is now barely recognisable. She walks along the same track that her family have always walked; yet everything looks different now. Her kinfolk's track is lined with fences, a separation, a divide between herself and the old ways. No longer can she visit the waterhole nearby where they used to camp- no longer can she pick the fruits nor dig for roots where her aunties taught her how. The great trees are gone- instead she sees rows of new trees- foreign to this soil.

As she wanders along the fence line she remembers how it used to be. She remembers when her family were still here- before her mother died- before her brother died- of the disease that killed so many. She remembers when they were a part of a fierce united clan and she remembers her father standing strong. Her father was once respected by all, friend or foe, in the times when the Cammeraygal were confident and commanded respect from all who came near. He was powerful and known well for throwing a spear further and with more force than any other man they knew. But his spear was no match for the white man's gun, or the white man's laws, or the white man's fences. These fences hold her in, these fences lock her out, but the track that once her family travelled with pride and without fear remains, as they walked their country, not knowing the changes that were coming their way.

Figure 29. Gooseberry Widow of King Bungaree. (Source: Ferneyhough ca. 1836. Courtesy of the Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales)

As time goes by in Northern Sydney

As time went by, recorded information regarding Aboriginal people living around the northern Sydney area became sparse. For instance, there is a handwritten note in the Stanton Library records stating that long time resident of Rocky Point, Jimmy Edwards, met with some Cammeraygal people at Balmoral when he was a child walking home from school in the 1840's, yet there is no explanation as to where this statement came from.[94] John Skinner Prout also painted two pictures of Willoughby Falls around the same time that have Aboriginal people in them. One is of an Aboriginal man stalking kangaroos and the other is of an Aboriginal person sitting at the base of the waterfall with a blanket around their shoulders (Figure 30).

Despite the declining numbers of Aboriginal people in the Willoughby area and surrounds, the annual distribution of blankets brought large groups together again regularly on the North Shore. In 1860, Agnes Bennett recalled that hordes of "Blackfellows" would come to Sydney from the country and camp at Cremorne Reserve at Christmas time in order to receive their annual gift of a blanket.[95]

Figure 30. Aboriginal person sitting by Willoughby Falls.
(Source: John Skinner Prout ca. 1843.
Courtesy of the Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales)

In 1868, a Corroboree was held as part of a celebration held at Clontarf in honour of the visiting Duke of Edinburgh. Up to 200 Aboriginal people were brought in from other areas of Sydney especially for the event, however, an assassination attempt on the Duke's life overshadowed the significance of the Corroboree which did not even make the news at the time.[96]

Granny Lewis or "Biddy Bungaree", born around 1805 and a member of the Broken Bay tribe, lived with her husband, German born John Lewis, and their children, at Murramurra Creek in the Hawkesbury region. She lived here until she died in 1880 and has still has descendents living in the northern Sydney area.

Near Mosman Bay, one hundred years after the initial European occupation of the Sydney area, one man known as Tarpot was living in a cave and making a living catching fish and doing odd jobs. A claim that Aboriginal people were living in the Beauty Point area in Middle Harbour up until 1910[97] may also be referring to Tarpot.

There are many people in the Sydney region who can trace their lineage back to their Aboriginal heritage and who have always stood strong and proud of their cultural background. The La Perouse Aboriginal community and the Darug descendants are examples of this. It is most likely that many people of Aboriginal descent in the Sydney area are unsuspecting of their true heritage. As the generations went by, many people spent much of their lives, and in some cases the whole of their lives, without ever knowing that their true heritage was Aboriginal.

Removal, Assimilation & Citizenship

In 1883 the Aboriginal Protection Board was created with powers to establish reserves and direct Aboriginal people to live on them. Over the years that followed, reserves were established in the vicinity of Sydney and surrounds in places such as Field of Mars, Sackville, Kogarah, Penrith, Windsor, Plumpton, La Perouse, Lake Macquarie, Burragorang Valley, Lithgow, Hunter Valley, Maitland, Singleton and St Clare. When Australia became a Commonwealth and celebrated its Federation in 1901, the Aboriginal population were believed to be a dying race and were not classified as citizens.

From the late 1800's various state laws provided for the removal of "half-caste" children and some "full-blood" children from their families. In 1937, a policy of assimilation authorised the removal of all "half-casts" who were to be officially assimilated into white society. Children were either placed into institutions or adopted or fostered into white families. In the institutions the children were to be educated and trained to be useful to society with skills such as housekeeping and labouring. Homes such as the Parramatta Girls Home (closed 1974), the Cootamundra Girls Home (closed 1968), Kinchela boys home (closed 1969) and many church run institutions were later revealed to have inflicted harsh physical and emotional abuse on the children under their so-called care and protection.[98] The children who were removed from their families became known as the Stolen Generation.

One member of the Stolen Generation, Lucy Willerri, otherwise known as "Black Lucy," was born in 1858 and relocated to the North Shore in 1914. Lucy was a member of the Burri people from the Burdikin River, Northern Queensland. During her time living in the Lane Cove, Hunter's Hill and Gladesville areas, Lucy performed

the domestic duties that she had been trained in. Resident Anne McNally recalled her memories of Lucy when she stated that:

> More than anything I remember her pride in her people and her love of the bush and all its creatures. Lucy would show us plants and berries that you could eat, where the best tadpoles were and how to catch lizards and snakes.[99]

Despite a small two-bedroom cottage being built for her, Lucy chose to continue living in her humpy by the creek. Lucy died in 1928, aged 70. It is likely that there were many other Aboriginal girls and women performing domestic duties for families on the North Shore around this time.

In the 1967 referendum, 90.77% of the Australian population voted "yes" to alter the Australian Constitution to allow Aboriginal people to officially become citizens. Soon after, many of the children's institutions were closed and in 1969 the Aboriginal Welfare Board (formerly the Aboriginal Protection Board) was disbanded.

More recent times

The Willoughby community moves towards embracing Aboriginal history, heritage and ongoing culture

In the decades following the 1967 referendum, the number of Aboriginal people living in Sydney increased significantly. The 1971 census reveals that 24% of the NSW Aboriginal population lived in Sydney[100] and by 1982 it was 45%, of which 80% had migrated.

Between 1952 and 1971, the Australian Indigenous Ministries magazine, Dawn, published photographs and stories about Aboriginal people living on the North Shore and of associations such as APEX, Rotary, Lions and the Royal Far West Children's Home, that sponsored Aboriginal people in rural areas to travel to Sydney for holidays and sporting programs.

One person who regularly featured in Dawn is David Kerin (Figure 31), a student at St Pius X School, Chatswood, who in 1961 became the first blind Aboriginal person to pass the Leaving Certificate in NSW.

For the last two years of his Sydney schooling, David attended St Pius X School at Chatswood while still living at St Edmund's. Mixing with sighted boys at St Pius's, David gained much of the knockabout confidence that children get in normal living and playing together. His mates at Chatswood, too, helped him a great deal in his studies.

Extract 31. Dawn, March 1967.[101]

David was born in Tennant Creek, Northern Territory, and became blind at age four when he contracted conjunctivitis in both eyes. At age six, David moved to St Edmund School for the Blind at Wahroonga. After completing the Leaving Certificate, David travelled to London to study Physiotherapy at the Royal Institute for the Blind. After five years studying, David returned to Sydney and in 1968 took up a position at the Bankstown District Hospital.[102]

Figure 31. (left) The Principal of St. Edmund's, Brother Adams, advises David Kerin on the use of the Braille Machine. (Source: Dawn, April, 1962)[103]

In 1965, at age fourteen, Evonne Goolagong (Figure 32) left her home and family in Barellan, central west New South Wales, and moved to northern Sydney to concentrate on her tennis career. While living with her coach, Vic Edwards, Evonne attended Willoughby Girls High School where she completed the School Certificate and was also named Student of the Year in 1968.

> Evonne is remarkably devoted to tennis. She began to show promise when she was seven years old, and tennis is the only thing she wants. She wants to get to the top of the tennis world to justify the faith of her friends at Willoughby High School, her foster-parents Mr and Mrs Edwards, and her family at Barellan. And she believes in her own ability.
>
> **Extract 32. Dawn, March 1968.**[104]

In 1971, at age nineteen, Evonne won Wimbledon, the French Open and the British Hard Court Championships and went on to win 92 tournaments in total. Evonne has also won many awards including Australian of the Year (1971), Willoughby City Council's Citizen of the Year Award (1973) and was inducted into the Order of Australia (1982). Since retiring from tennis in 1983, Evonne has dedicated much of her time towards encouraging young Aboriginal children to realise their potential in the sporting arena, particularly with tennis.

Figure 32. A champion threesome- doubles partners Patricia Edwards and Evonne Goolagong, with father-coach Vic Edwards. (Source: New Dawn, December, 1970)[105]

When the old Willoughby City Council administration building in Victoria Avenue was constructed in the 1960's an indigenous mural was commissioned to be designed for the façade of the building. In 1967 the ceramic mural titled "Yothi Lifting up the Sky" was installed measuring three metres wide and three stories high with motifs and style adapted from Northern Australia (Figure 33). The mural was made by non-Indigenous artist Bryam Mansell whose success has been described as being due to "the fact that he has a genuine respect and affection for the aborigine and is always eager to improve his knowledge of the old aboriginal artists."[106] At the time it was acceptable among the non-indigenous community to appropriate Aboriginal art, whereas these days strict copyright laws restrict the misuse of Aboriginal intellectual property.[107] Despite being non-Indigenous himself, Mansell recognised that "Every Stone Age painting tells a story and every design has a meaning, meanings that western artists are often unable to express."[108]

Figure 33. A section of the Yothi Lifting up the Sky by Bryam Mansell. (Source: Paul Storm, Willoughby District Historical Society, 2008)

In Willoughby and the surrounding areas, there are now many well-established groups doing their part to encourage an acknowledgment of the past and promote a greater understanding of Aboriginal culture, history, heritage and a need for social justice. This can be seen through the community's involvement in many ways. In 1997

hundreds of people showed their support for the reconciliation cart which travelled from Naremburn to North Sydney, recruiting people to imprint their hands on the pavement along the way with plant-based paint. Also in 1997, at the request of Willoughby City Council, the City of Willoughby Ministers Association organised the Combined Churches Celebration of Reconciliation and Hope at the Willoughby Town Hall. The event was held in order for Willoughby to contribute to saying sorry to the Stolen Generation and to help resolve division within the community.[109] In 1998, The Haven Amphitheatre, Castlecrag, with the support of the Harbour to Hawkesbury Reconciliation Group, held a Concert for Coexistence as a part of the Willoughby Spring Fair. The event, which attracted 350 people, combined indigenous and non-indigenous performers with some of the proceeds going to Biala Aboriginal Girls Hostel at Allambie Heights. A Welcome to Country preamble now also occurs at many events occurring in the Willoughby area.

Ray Martin, formerly of Willoughby's Channel Nine studios, has been an advocate for Reconciliation for many years. Being of Aboriginal descent himself, Ray served a ten-year term on the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation and was also involved in the Corroboree 2000 activities. One activity included the People's Walk for Reconciliation across the Sydney Harbour Bridge which attracted an estimated 150-250, 000 supporters.

Willoughby City Council has also been involved in the annual Guringai Festival since 2003. It has now grown to involve ten Councils, several reconciliation and community organisations, Taronga Zoo and the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority. The two month long festival incorporates the National Day of Healing (Sorry Day), Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC week which are celebrated across Australia. Past festival themes have included, "Corroboree,

Culture, Community," "Honouring The Ancestors" and "Belonging: People and Place." Willoughby City Council is active in organising and promoting activities, bush walks, forums, Indigenous art shows, writing competitions and performances that are regular features of the Festival. The City of Willoughby Cultural Policy 2004-2008 also states that the general community wanted to have Willoughby's "Aboriginal history and heritage woven into the fabric and cultural life of the city.[110]

Figure 34. Aboriginal Heritage Office staff teaching school children how to do an archaeological dig. (Source: AHO)

Willoughby City Council also jointly funds the Northern Sydney Region Aboriginal Heritage Office to oversee the protection of Aboriginal heritage sites within the Council's boundary. This is the only office of its kind working at a local government level. With 148 Aboriginal heritage sites in Willoughby alone, ranging from rock engravings, art, axe grinding grooves middens, rock shelters and a possible fish trap, these sites warrant careful attention and appropriate management. The Aboriginal Heritage Office also runs an education program conducting walks and talks for the community including specialised school visits (Figure 34). An Aboriginal Social Planner is another position that Willoughby City Council jointly funds to ensure that appropriate services are provided to Aboriginal people residing in the northern Sydney area and to encourage networking.

In 2005, Willoughby City Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council who are the custodians of the Sydney area. The MOU is aimed at promoting effective consultation, open communication and reconciliation via a non-legal framework. The document provides a guideline for Council to work effectively with members of the Aboriginal community in a way that promotes understanding and respect.

Willoughby City Council is also active in supporting the display of Aboriginal artworks in public places. Local indigenous artist, Shane Haurama (Figure 35), has produced many artworks in the Willoughby City and North Sydney Council areas. Shane's work includes the carved totem pole in Mowbray Park, the mural in Bicentennial Reserve and a large canvas painting of a sea of fifty hands representing the fifty years of NAIDOC week. Although totem poles are not traditionally from the Sydney region, Shane, who is a descendent of the Raw Raw people in the Torres Strait, sought permission to recreate certain symbols in his work.[111] The mural in Bicentennial Reserve is a combination of styles and themes relevant to different parts of

Figure 35. Bicentennial Reserve Mural, Artist Shane Haurama. (Source: WCC)

Australia, the Torres Strait Islands and a more localised Willoughby and Cammeraygal focus. The panel representing the future depicts Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people working together and seeking true reconciliation.[112]

Also supporting Indigenous art, students from Willoughby Community Preschool and Willoughby Public School have also painted murals with the assistance of visiting Indigenous artist.

> They're [Willoughby City Council] really supportive and I'm really quite happy that they're willing to help ... not (only) full blooded but Indigenous (people) none-the-less ... there's some really beautiful artwork out there ... To me it [art] means ... it means a lot of things, it means spiritualism ... self identity and ... I just love doing it ... its just like ... the spirits just like come into me and just makes me want to do it.
>
> **Indigenous artist Shane Haurama**

Another way to promote cross-cultural awareness and understanding among the general community is through Sister Service relationships. Willoughby Community Preschool has developed two very special Sister Service relationships. The first is with Gainmara Birrilee Preschool in Brewarrina. Through this relationship the children attending Willoughby Community Preschool have communicated with their Aboriginal friends by sending letters, making

Figure 36. Students at Willoughby Community Preschool with Director Dianne Minnett and Frayne Barker, visiting Director from Gainmara Birrilee Preschool in Brewarrina, 2007. (Source: Minnett, 2007)

gifts and also sending photographs.[113] During 2007, the Directors also participated in a cultural exchange program and visited each other's preschools (Figures 36 & 37).

Figure 37. Willoughby Community Preschool Director Dianne Minnett visiting with students from Gainmara Birrilee Preschool in Brewarrina, 2007. (Source: Minnett, 2007)

Willoughby Community Preschool's second Sister Service relationship is with Murawina Childcare Centre in Redfern. In 2007, a busload of twenty preschoolers, aged from nine months to five years, accompanied by their teachers, visited Willoughby Community Preschool for the day. The children and staff from both centres sang and danced together and the children from Murawina performed indigenous songs and dances for the Willoughby students. In another example of support for Aboriginal students, Northbridge Rotary is sponsoring a prize for the Aboriginal girl and boy who score the highest marks in the 2007 NSW Higher School Certificate.

Willoughby City Council shares a Sister City Relationship with Bingara, Gwydir Shire Council. This relationship was initiated in 1995 to help raise the awareness of drought and country life. A number of initiatives have come from this relationship and since 2000 Willoughby City Council Open Space staff have travelled to Bingara to assist with planting programs at various Landcare sites, including the Myall Creek Massacre site (Figure 38). Northbridge Public School have

Figure 38. Willoughby City Council Staff at the Myall Creek Massacre site in 2001. (Source: WCC)

grown seedlings from seeds collected in Bingara, which have then been returned to Bingara for planting by schools and community groups. Furthermore, Willoughby City Council purchased additional signage that was installed at the Myall Creek site in 2007. The Myall Creek Massacre occurred at Myall Creek Station on 10 June 1838. Twenty eight Aboriginal men, women and children were murdered and their bodies burned. For the first time, white men were tried for crimes against Aboriginal people and seven were hanged for their atrocities.

Moving forward

Although a lot of progress has been made towards rectifying the wrongs of the past, there is still much to be done. With Prime Minister Rudd finally saying "Sorry" to the Stolen Generation on behalf of the Federal Government and the Parliament on 13 February 2008, the healing process can move on. In the Willoughby area and surrounds, there is a strong network of people and organisations addressing Aboriginal issues through reconciliation groups, support groups, heritage site protection and community education. The community continues to embrace the Aboriginal heritage and culture of the Cammeraygal people and of Aboriginal people across Australia, who have left their mark on the cultural landscape in many ways. Oral stories, art, engravings, middens, stone tools, grinding grooves and waterholes as well as journals from the early settlers, combine to reconstruct a story about the lives of the Cammeraygal people and of Cammeraygal country and their nation.

Today, Aboriginal people maintain their strong connection to country, as their ancestors have done since time immemorial. A combination of traditional and contemporary culture allows them to live their culture day-to-day with the same core values of the kinship system to guide them.

In my upbringing I was taught to use the kinship system to ensure that I did not marry the wrong person in my Aboriginal community, care for the cultural connection to land and sea, (follow the rules in broader society) as I learnt that only staying true to my Kinship values I will be safe and connected to mob. Kinship comes with responsibilities to and for my community and Totems.

I have a traditional sister who has shown me a broader Kinship system through the care of children, Elders and that has now impacted on how I approach life. There is a opportunity to be more in tune with mother earth through Kinship. I think that I was given a watered down version due to the colonisation process but the same core values are very strong today.

Sue Pinckham,
Northern Sydney Aboriginal Social Plan Project Officer

Figure 39. Yidaki Didg performing at Willoughby City Council Chambers in recognition of Prime Minister Rudd's apology to the Stolen Generation, 13 February 2007. (Source: AHO)

And the dreaming stories were just handed down verbally, and those dreaming stories still go on today, we still tell them to our children … Aunty Beryl, tell me about this, tell me about that. Especially the stars, when it's a nice day and we're sitting outside in the night I explain to them about the stars being our brothers and sisters and the moon being our father, and tomorrow when you wake up you'll see our mother the sun. it still goes on … I'll explain and I'll keep explaining to the children of today how the stars move, and different positions they're in. And that was passed from my grandparents to me and I'll pass them down to my grandchildren. And it's not only the Koori kids that come here, it's non-indigenous children too that know these stories, and they pass them on.

Aunty Beryl Timbery Beller

Chronology of Australia's Aboriginal History

1770 Captain Cook visits Botany Bay and later claims the whole of the East Coast of Australia in the name of the King of Great Britain.

1788 Captain Arthur Phillip and the First Fleet arrive at Botany Bay and then establish the first penal colony at Warrane (Sydney Cove).

1790 Bennelong and Yemmerrawanie are sent to England. Yemmerrawani dies in England, Bennelong returns in 1795.

1803 Colonies are established at Port Phillip near Melbourne (abandoned 1804) and the Derwent River Tasmania. Hostilities in Tasmania increase.

1813 Explorers cross the Blue Mountains following Aboriginal tracks.

1815 The Parramatta Institution for the education of Aboriginal children is established.

1816 Governor Macquarie announces regulations controlling the free movement of Aboriginal people.

Five areas are set aside for Aboriginal people to engage in agriculture with provisions provided.

1819-20 Expansion of the colony into present day Queensland and west of the Blue Mountains into Wiradjuri country, leading to large-scale conflicts.

1827 Settlement in the Tamworth area. Kamilaroi people are dispossessed and a mission is established at Lake Macquarie.

1829 Colony established in Perth.

1830 The Black Wars in Tasmania begin – 2,200 men form a "Black Line" in an attempt to round up the remaining Aboriginal population on to the Tasman Peninsular- Only two are caught, an old man and a young boy.

1835 Battle of Pinjarra, Swan River- Governor Stirling leads a party to attack 80 Aboriginal people. At least 14 Aboriginal people are killed and one white man.

The only attempt at a treaty takes place at Port Phillip Bay, Melbourne.

Governor Bourke did not honour the treaty.

The Dunghutti people of the north coast, who previously occupied 25,000 hectares, are confined to 40 hectares on Bellwood Reserve near Kempsey.

1836 Port Phillip District is established. Colony of South Australia founded.

1836-1837 In regard to the mistreatment of Aboriginal people, a select committee of the British House of Commons claims that Genocide is occurring in the colonies.

1838 Slaughterhouse Creek massacre, Vinegar Hill. 60-70 Aboriginal people are killed.

Faithful massacre, Owen Hills, Victoria-approximately 10 Europeans killed by Aboriginal people.

Myall Creek Massacre, 28 Aboriginal people were killed including women and children. Seven white men were charged with murder and hanged. The Border Police were formed in response.

Poisoned flour is left in shepherd's huts on 'Kilcoy' in the expectation that dispossessed Aboriginal people will steal the food. There were also reports of poisoning in the West Melbourne and Moreton Bay areas.

1842 The first Native Police are established in the Port Phillip district and are later also used extensively in NSW and Queensland.

1845 Approximately 50 remaining Aboriginal people from the Sydney and Botany Bay areas were camped on Botany Heads.

1857 The Jiman people kill 11 Europeans at Martha Fraser's Hornet Bank station, Dawson River, central Queensland.

1860 Board of Protection established in Victoria, continues until 1957.

1861 19 Europeans attacked and killed by Aboriginal people at Cullin-la-ringo station near Emerald, Queensland.

1867-1868 The Aboriginal cricket team tours England.

1868 150 Aboriginal people are killed in the Kimberley resisting arrest.

1869 A settlement is established in Darwin.

1870's The first Aboriginal children are enrolled in public school.

1874 Maloga Mission is established in Victoria.

1876 Truganini dies in Hobart. The Tasmanian Government does not recognise the heritage of people of Aboriginal descent and claims that the last Aboriginal person has died.

1880 South Australia introduces a Protection Policy.

1881 A Protector of Aborigines is appointed in NSW with the power to create reserves and to force Aboriginal people to live on them.

1882 The Garden Palace, built to house the Sydney International Exhibition of 1879, burnt down destroying approximately 3000 ethnographic items including all public owned artefacts of the Sydney Aboriginal people.

1883 The Aboriginal Protection Board is established in NSW and increases the powers over those that live on reserves.

The Minister for Education, George Reid, stops 16 Aboriginal children from attending a public school because the parents of the white children objected.

1886 The Western Australian Aborigines Protection Act provided for a Protection Board.

The Victorian Protection Act excludes "half-casts" from their definition of an Aboriginal person, those living on stations are forced to leave their home and families.

1890 Settlement in the Kimberly is prevented for 6 years by Jandamarra, an Aboriginal resistance fighter who declares war on the European invaders.

1890's Western Australia gives increased law enforcement powers to its justices of the peace who can sentence Aboriginal people to three years gaol or 24 lashes for offences such as stealing a sheep.

1897 The Queensland Aboriginals' Protection and Restriction of Sale of Opium Act provided the power to establish reserves and appoint protectors.

Jandamarra, Kimberley's resistance fighter and 19 former Aboriginal prisoners who he had freed were all shot dead.

1901 Australian becomes a federation. No Aboriginal people are involved in the founding of the Commonwealth, they were not consulted or allowed

to vote on the Federation proposal and Aboriginal people were not counted in the census.

The first federal election was held. Aboriginal people who had voted in South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania as well as women in South Australia and Western Australia voted in the first federal election.

The White Australia Policy was introduced which assumed that the Aboriginal population was a dying race and that those remaining should be assimilated into the Anglo-Saxon Christian society.

1902 The Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902 extended the vote to all women but denied it to Aboriginal people.

1904 Queensland Government establishes Cherbough, an Aboriginal community 30km from Gympie.

1905 The Western Australian Aborigines Act is passed. Reserves are established, a protector is appointed and rules governing Aboriginal employment are established.

1909 The NSW Aborigines Act is introduced due to conflict within public schools. Aboriginal schools were established on the request of the European community. There were 22 Aboriginal schools in 1910, 35 in 1920 and 40 in 1940.

The NSW Aborigines Act makes it illegal for "half-casts" to live on reserves and increases powers to remove children for training as domestic servants.

1910 In the Northern Territory, the Aborigines Protection Act gives the Protection Board legal control over Aborigines on stations and reserves.

1911 The South Australian Aboriginal Act is introduced.

1912 Maternity Allowance is introduced but does not include Aboriginal women.

1915 The NSW Aboriginal Protection Board is empowered to remove and apprentice Aboriginal children from reserves without a court hearing.

1918 Northern Territory Aboriginal Ordinance rules that Aborigines cannot possess or supply alcohol or methylated spirits, cannot come within a

set distance of licensed premises, cannot carry firearms, cannot marry a non-Aboriginal person without permission and cannot have sex with non-Aboriginal people.

The Ordinance also forbids mining on Aboriginal Reserve Land

1925 A Mission is established at Oenpelli in Central Australia. The Aboriginal Community went on to run a water buffalo farm and sell X-ray style bark paintings.

1928 Conniston Massacre in the Northern Territory. 32 Aboriginal people are shot by Europeans in retaliation of an attack on a European Dingo trapper and a station holder. A court of inquiry finds that the Europeans retaliation was justified.

1929 The Queensland Protector of Aborigines recommends to the Federal Government the idea of assimilating Aborigines into white society, although this has already been happening unofficially under many guises.

1930 Suggestions are made in Victoria and NSW to have Aboriginal representation in the lower house of Federal Parliament. The King is petitioned but the attempts are unsuccessful.

1934 The Arnhem Land Reserve is declared.

1935 A mission is established at Yirrakala, Gove Peninsular, Northern Territory.

1937 A State and Federal combined conference is held. Assimilation of some Aborigines is adopted as official policy. All half-casts are to be assimilated, Aborigines not living a tribal life are to be educated and all others are to stay on reserves.

The Aborigines Progressive Association is established.

1938 The Aborigines Progressive Association (APA) declares a Day of Mourning 26 January on the 150th anniversary of the invasion by the British. The APA also holds the first Australian Aborigines Conference, which appeals to give Aboriginal people full citizenship.

Aboriginal people are trucked to Sydney to participate in a re-enactment of the British landing of 26 January 1788. They are threatened with starvation if they do not participate.

The NSW Government officially changes their policy of protection to a policy of assimilation.

Albert Namatjira holds his first exhibition in Melbourne. All 41 works are sold in three days.

1940 The Aborigines Protection Board is replaced with the NSW Aborigines Welfare Board. The education of Aboriginal people is transferred to the Department of Education, which takes control of reserve buildings and begins to provide trained teachers.

1940's Most Federal social security benefits are extended to Aboriginal people.

Aboriginal people in Western Australia protest over increased mining activities and concern for their land.

1942 Darwin is bombed by the Japanese. Many Aboriginal people are relocated and stay in camps for many years before being transferred home. Aboriginal people in Arnhem Land make up a special reconnaissance unit in defence against the Japanese.

1943 In NSW, an amendment to the Aboriginal protection legislation provided for Aboriginal representation on the Aboriginal Welfare Board. Walter Page and William Ferguson from the Aboriginal Progressive Association are appointed.

1945 Aboriginal workers on a cattle station near Port Headland, Western Australia, strike over poor pay. They then form a co-operative and begin successfully mining alluvium wolfram.

An investigation finds that Aboriginal workers on a cattle station in the Northern Territory are receiving poor pay, inadequate housing, water and sanitation facilities.

1948 Aboriginal people are defined as Australian citizens according to the Commonwealth Citizenship and Nationality Act.

1949 Aboriginal ex-service men allowed to vote.

1950 Formal schooling of Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory begins.

In NSW, Aboriginal children are assimilated into public schools, so long as all other parents agree. The parents right to veto this is removed in 1960.

1953 Nuclear testing is conducted on Maralinga lands at Emu, South Australia. Many Aboriginal people suffer radiation sickness.

Under the Northern Territory Welfare Ordinance all Aboriginal people become wards of the government.

1954 The Australian Capital Territory Aboriginal Welfare Ordinance is passed.

1956 Nuclear tests are again conducted at Maralinga, South Australia.

1957 Nuclear tests occur at Maralinga again despite the presence of Aboriginal people being documented.

Many Aboriginal welfare and civil rights organisations are merged to establish The Federal Council for the Advancement of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI). FCAATSI are instrumental in the 1967 referendum.

The National Aboriginal Day Observance Committee (NADOC) is established. In 1991 the title was changed to include Islanders and became NAIDOC.

1962 The Commonwealth Electoral Act was amended to give all Aboriginal people the right to vote.

1963 Mineral explorations at Gove Peninsular in Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, lead many elders to draw up a petition on bark and present it to the Governor General in Canberra. The petition is rejected due to insufficient signatures. Mining was permitted with royalties paid to the Aboriginal community.

Police evict Aboriginal people from Mapoon in Queensland and burn down the settlement to make way for mining by Comalco.

BHP sign an agreement with the Church Missionary Society at Groote Eylandt, Northern Territory, to provide lump sum payments and royalties for use of the land by BHP.

1964 The Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (AIATSIS) is established in Canberra.

1965 The last known group of Aboriginal people living an independent and traditional life in the desert, the Pintubi people in the Northern Territory, are relocated to Papunya and Yuendumu.

The Freedom Ride takes place where 30 Sydney University students, led by Aboriginal law student Charles Perkins, travel around northern and western NSW to protest against the discrimination facing Aboriginal people.

1966 The Wave Hill walk-off. Aboriginal stockmen and women protest against working conditions and establish a camp at Watti Creek and demand the return of their traditional land. This battle by the Gurindji people continued for seven years.

The South Australian Prohibition of Discrimination Act is the first in Australia and prohibits discrimination based on race or colour, discrimination through employment, accommodation, public facilities and legal contracts.

The South Australian Lands Trust Act is the first to provide land ownership and compensation to dispossessed Aboriginal people.

Charles Perkins and Margaret Valadian are the first Aboriginal law graduates.

1967 In the 1967 referendum 90.7% of Australians voted "yes" to allow Aboriginal people to be counted in the National census and that the Federal Government could implement legislation and share responsibility for issues relating to Aboriginal people in the states. All states, except Queensland, abandoned laws that discriminate against Aboriginal people.

1968 The Aboriginal Study Grants Scheme begins to promote better educational, economic and social levels.

The desecration of the Weebo site in Western Australia leads to the establishment of the Aboriginal Heritage Act in 1972.

The Commonwealth Office of Aboriginal Affairs is established and becomes the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in 1972.

1969 A delegation of Aboriginal people travel to New York to present a statement to the Office of the UN Secretary General.v

1970 Some Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory went back to their

traditional way of life in places that became known as outstations and homeland centres.

1971 The Aboriginal Flag is designed by Harold Thomas of the Arrente people and is flown for the first time on National Aboriginal and Islander Day. The flag features three colours, the black represents the Aboriginal people, the red represents the earth and the blood that has been shed and the yellow represents the sun.

The Gove Land Rights Case takes place following the bark petition as a group of elders take Nabalco and the Federal Government to court over the establishment of the mine near Yirrakila, Gove Peninsular, Arhnem Land. The Northern Territory Supreme Court determined that Aboriginal people did not own the Arhnem Land Reserve and thereby had no jurisdiction to stop the mining.

The Queensland Aborigines Act is established. Many restrictions on Aboriginal people on reserves remain unchanged including cultural customs being banned and reading material, mail, recreation, marital and sexual relations being censored.

NSW Aboriginal Legal Service is established.

First Aboriginal person in parliament as Neville Bonner fills a casual Senate vacancy. Neville is elected as a member of the Liberal party in Queensland in 1972.

Evonne Gooloogong wins Wimbledon at age 19.

1972 Aboriginal Tent Embassy established on the lawn outside Parliament House in demonstration for Land Rights.

1972 Gough Whitlam and the Labor government come into power. Whitlam created the first Federal Ministry for Aboriginal Affairs and increased the Aboriginal Affairs budget.

1974 The Aboriginal Affairs Act 1974, overrode the Aboriginal Affairs Act 1967 and the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs is abolished. State run departments are established.

The Aboriginal Land Fund Commission is established to buy land for Aboriginal corporate groups.

1975 The Commonwealth Racial Discrimination Act comes into force.

Leasehold title is given to the Gurindji people in the Northern Territory.

The land titles of NSW missions and reserves area handed over to the Aboriginal Lands Trust.

1975-1976 The Ranger Uranium and Environmental Inquiry looked into the effects of Uranium mining on Aboriginal people. Despite health concerns being raised, mining was allowed to continue.

1976 The Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act is passed, enabling traditional Aboriginal land to be granted to the Aboriginal Lands Trust. Later in the year, under the new Act, Justice Fox recommends that the traditional owners of the Alligator River region be granted land.

The Pitjantjatjara Land Council is formed.

1977 NSW Anti-Discrimination Act established.

NSW Land Council established.

The first land claim commences at Borroloola.

1978 Pat O'Shane becomes the first Aboriginal barrister.

The Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Ordinance comes into force, for the protection of sites from trespass and desecration.

1979 The first attempt is made in court to challenge the idea that Australia had been an uninhabited land that had been settled. This is unsuccessful.

Aboriginal Support Group Manly Warringah Pittwater is formed.

1980 The Aboriginal organisation Link-Up was formed to reunite Aboriginal people who were removed from their families.

The radioactive contamination of Aboriginal people in South Australia, as a result of British atomic testing, gains media attention. Many people die and up to 1000 people suffer from symptoms such as sight loss and skin irritations.

The National Federation of Land Councils is established.

1981 The Pitjantjatjara people are granted land under the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act (SA).

1984 A Royal Commission into the British Nuclear Tests commences.

1985 Uluru is handed back to the traditional owners.

1987 The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody commences.

1988 January 26. The Tent Embassy was re-established near Mrs Macquarie's Chair as Tens of thousands of Aboriginal people came from all over Australia to celebrate their survival over 200 years

The second Aboriginal cricket team tours England.

A Human Rights Commission report states that conditions in some Aboriginal communities are worse than third world countries.

1989 The Bangarra Dance Theatre is founded in Sydney.

1991 The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation is formed having received cross-party support.

The Aboriginal Land Act 1991 and the Torres Strait Land Act 1991 are legislated in Queensland.

The Tasmanian Government rejects the idea of Land Rights legislation.

1992 The Mabo case. The High Court of Australia rules that Australia never was terra nullius- land belonging to no-one, and that native title does exist over certain types of land including some Crown Lands, national parks and reserves.

Prime Minister Keeting makes a speech acknowledging past wrongs at the launch of the International Year of Indigenous People at Redfern.

The Torres Strait Island flag is designed.

1993 The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIS) was established in response to the Aboriginal Deaths in Custody and National Inquiry into Racist Violence reports.

The Wik people from the Cape York Peninsular in Queensland make a claim for native title.

1994 The Native Title Act becomes law.

1995 In the Wik case, the Federal Court ruled that pastoral leases under Queensland law extinguished native title. In response, the Wik people

appealed to the High Court.

A National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families begins.

The national Deadly awards began as an annual event recognising the achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the community, sport, music and entertainment.

1996 The Wik Decision found that pastoral leases did not automatically override native title and that the two may be able to co-exist, and where they cannot, the rights of the pastoral lease holder will be upheld.

1997 The Dunghutti people, with assistance from other stakeholders, negotiate the first successful claim under the Native Title Act.

The Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families, was presented to Federal Parliament.

At the Australian Reconciliation Convention around 100 delegates turned their backs on Prime Minister Howard while he was delivering a speech.

ANTaR (Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation) is established in response to the federal governments move to role back native title rights.

1998 The Native Title Amendments Act, other wise known as the Ten Point Plan, puts further restrictions on land rights claims and created the Native Title Tribunal to manage claims.

26 May, The first National Sorry Day marks one year since the Bringing Them Home report was released. The Federal Government does not participate and does not believe that they should say sorry for the actions of previous governments.

2000 28 May, the People's Walk for Reconciliation across the Sydney Harbour Bridge took place as a part of Reconciliation Week. An estimated 150-250,000 people participated.

The Aboriginal Heritage Office, Northern Sydney Region, is established- the first office of its kind to work alongside local government.

Cathy Freeman wins the women's 400 metre sprint at the Sydney

Olympics.

The Prime Ministerial Joint Statement on Aboriginal Remains is launched by the Prime Ministers of Australia and the United Kingdom to facilitate the return of Aboriginal remains in United Kingdom public collection institutions.

2001 The annual Guringai festival in northern Sydney commenced. The festival is held over two months and incorporates Sorry Day, NAIDOC week and Reconciliation week.

2003 On 26 January, the first annual Yabun concert is held in Sydney to celebrate Indigenous survival.

2004 The Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership was established to guide reforms for economic and social Indigenous policy.

A riot is sparked in Redfern after an Aboriginal teenager dies while being followed by police.

The Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination is established to coordinate Indigenous programs and services at a federal level.

2005 ATSIC was abolished by the federal government.

National Sorry Day is renamed the National Day of Healing.

2007 The NSW Government releases the NSW Interagency Plan To Tackle Child Sexual Assault in Aboriginal Communities 2006-2011.

The Northern Territory Emergency Response Taskforce was established and the federal government sent the army in to many Aboriginal communities, supposedly to bring an end to child abuse.

2008 13 February, Australian Labor Prime Minister Rudd says "Sorry" to the Stolen Generation with the bipartisan support of the Coalition led by opposition leader Brendan Nelson.

The previous chronology has been compiled from a variety of sources. For further information on the chronology, its sources, and of Australian Aboriginal history please visit the following websites:

Australian Museum Online
www.amonline.net.au

Timeline – Pre-Contact
www.dreamtime.net.au/indigenous/timeline.cfm

Timeline – Contact History 1500 – 1900
www.dreamtime.net.au/indigenous/timeline2.cfm

Timeline – Contact 1901 – 1969
www.dreamtime.net.au/indigenous/timeline3.cfm

Timeline – Contact 1970 – 2000
www.dreamtime.net.au/indigenous/timeline4.cfm

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
www.aiatsis.gov.au

Dawn and New Dawn publications
www1.aiatsis.gov.au/dawn/index.htm

Aboriginal Heritage Office Northern Sydney Region
www.aboriginalheritage.org

State Library of New South Wales
www.sl.nsw.gov.au

National Library of Australia
www.nla.gov.au

Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council
www.metrolalc.org.au

Endnotes

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3 Chappell et al., 1996, p.228.
4 Stewart & Percival, 1997.
5 Attenbrow, 2005, p.86.
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28 Whole paragraph from Bradley, 1786-1792 [1969], pp.70-73.
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31 Bradley, 1786-1792 [1969], p.101.

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33 Bradley, 1786-1792 [1969], p.102.
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37 Attenbrow, 2005, pp.22-25.
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39 Vincent, 2006, p.10.
40 Attenbrow, 2005, p.24.
41 For a good analysis of the different languages and their possible boundaries see Attenbrow, 2005, pp.22-29.
42 Collins, 1798 [1975], p.453.
43 Collins, 1798 [1975], pp.456-458.
44 Collins, 1798 [1975], p.502.
45 Collins 1798 [1975], p.466.
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48 Collins, 1798 [1975], p. 458.
49 Collins, 1798 [1975], pp.464-465.
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"So when Lieutenant James Cook first set foot on Wangal land over at Kundul which is now called Kurnell, he said oh lets put a flag up somewhere, because these people are illiterate, they've got no fences. They didn't understand that we didn't need fences ... that we stayed here for six to eight weeks, then moved somewhere else where there was plenty of tucker and bush medicine and we kept moving and then come back in twelve months time when the food was all refreshed ..."

Aunty Beryl Timbery Beller

The late Aunty Beryl expresses one of the many misunderstandings between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perceptions of historical events in Sydney. This book, which places Willoughby into its context within the greater Sydney region, provides a dual perspective on the Aboriginal history of the area. By following chronologically, the story begins with Creation and takes the reader on a journey through prehistory and then the early contact period. But at this point the Aboriginal people do not fade away from the landscape. Rather a story of survival and adaptation unfolds as Aboriginal people, their culture and heritage have come to be embraced.