



Part 4 Australia today

Australia is one of the world's oldest land masses.

It is the sixth largest country in the world.



Australia today

In these pages you will learn about what makes this country so special. You will find out more about our culture, our innovators and our national identity. In the world today, Australia is a dynamic business and trade partner and a respected global citizen. We value the contribution of new migrants to our country's constant growth and renewal.

The land

Australia is unique in many ways. Of the world's seven continents, Australia is the only one to be occupied by a single nation. We have the lowest population density in the world, with only two people per square kilometre.

Australia is one of the world's oldest land masses. It is the sixth largest country in the world. It is also the driest inhabited continent, so in most parts of Australia water is a very precious resource.

Much of the land has poor soil, with only 6 per cent suitable for agriculture. The dry inland areas are called 'the outback'. There is great respect for people who live and work in these remote and harsh environments. Many of them have become part of Australian folklore.

Because Australia is such a large country, the climate varies in different parts of the continent. There are tropical regions in the north of Australia and deserts in the centre.

Further south, the temperatures can change from cool winters with mountain snow, to heatwaves in summer.

In addition to the six states and two mainland territories, the Australian Government also administers, as territories, Ashmore and Cartier Islands, Christmas Island, the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Jervis Bay Territory, the Coral Sea Islands, Heard Island and McDonald Islands in the Australian Antarctic Territory, and Norfolk Island.

World Heritage sites

More than 11 per cent of our continent is protected Indigenous land, a reserve or a national park that is managed for conservation according to international standards. Seventeen Australian sites are listed on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage List.



Australian Fossil Mammal Sites in South Australia and Queensland



Gondwana Rainforests of New South Wales and Queensland



Kakadu National Park in the Northern Territory



Fraser Island off the coast of southern Queensland



Great Barrier Reef in Queensland



Lord Howe Island off the coast of New South Wales



Greater Blue Mountains west of Sydney



Heard Island and McDonald Islands in the Australian Antarctic Territory



Macquarie Island to the south of Tasmania



Purnululu National Park in Western Australia



Sydney Opera House



Wet Tropics of Queensland



Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens in Melbourne



Tasmanian Wilderness



Willandra Lakes in New South Wales



Shark Bay in Western Australia



Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park in the Northern Territory

We encourage you to broaden your experience of Australia by visiting these and other amazing landmarks. You can walk the desert or the shore, the mountains or the rainforests. Every step you take is a step closer to belonging to this vast and vibrant land.

A vast country

The vastness of Australia has given rise to innovation and invention.

In the early days, people in the outback sometimes had to travel for several days to visit the nearest doctor. Many children in the bush lived too far away to attend day schools.

Outback families found the isolation hard to bear. Large cattle stations could be thousands of square kilometres in size. Women and children who lived there might not see another person for months. There were no telephones and people felt extremely isolated and vulnerable.

These were problems that great Australians solved through ingenuity and innovation.

The pedal radio

In 1929, Alfred Traegar, from Adelaide, designed the first pedal-powered radio. Users could keep a two-way radio going by pushing the pedals with their feet. Lonely homesteads, remote mission stations and Aboriginal communities all benefited from this invention. Isolated women could now make friends with each other across the airwaves.

The pedal radio helped to establish two great Australian institutions, the Royal Flying Doctor Service and the School of the Air.

The Royal Flying Doctor Service

Reverend John Flynn lived and worked with people in remote communities. His idea was to bring the doctor to the patient in the outback as quickly as possible, by air. He received help from the government, the airline Qantas and charitable donations. The Royal Flying Doctor Service began in 1928 but there were still people in remote places who could not call the service. The introduction of the pedal radio ensured that people in more isolated stations could call for a doctor as soon as possible.

The School of the Air

Until the 1950s, children living in isolated places had to attend boarding school or complete their lessons by mail.

Adelaide Miethke, Vice-President of the Royal Flying Doctor Service in South Australia, realised that the Flying Doctor radio service could also help children at home talk with their teachers. The Alice Springs service began to air these two-way lessons in 1948. The School of the Air was formally established a few years later. Australia's School of the Air has also helped many other countries to set up their own similar programs.

The old pedal radio has now been replaced with high frequency receivers, but the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia and the School of the Air continue to serve and benefit the people in Australia's remote communities.



Children studying through the School of the Air in New South Wales

Australia's identity

Australia's identity has been shaped by our unique heritage, our culture and the enterprising character of our people.

Sport and recreation

Many Australians love sport and many have achieved impressive results at an international level.

We are proud of our reputation as a nation of 'good sports'. Australian sportsmen and women are admired as ambassadors for the values of hard work, fair play and teamwork.

Throughout our history, sport has both characterised the Australian people and united us. From early settlement, sport provided an escape from the realities of a harsh existence. Even during wartime, members of the Australian Defence Force organised sporting competitions to help relieve the stress of the battleground.

Sport also provides a common ground that allows both players and spectators to feel included and a part of something that is important to Australian society.

Many Australians participate in team sports. Cricket, basketball, netball, hockey and the football codes are among the most popular.

Swimming, tennis, athletics, golf and cycling are popular recreational activities. They are also sports that Australians excel at in international competitions. Other popular physical activities include bushwalking, surfing and skiing.

Australians also play and love to watch football (also known as soccer), rugby league, rugby union and Australian Rules football. 'Aussie Rules' is a uniquely Australian game.

Australia is especially proud of its international successes in the game of cricket. Australian and English cricket teams have had an intense rivalry since the late 19th century.

The Melbourne Cup, 'the race that stops the nation', is one of the richest and most challenging horse races in the world. The first Melbourne Cup was held in 1861. The first Tuesday in November, Melbourne Cup Day, has been a public holiday in Victoria since 1877.



Ian Thorpe, five-time Olympic gold medallist



Member of the Australian Women's National Football team

Sir Donald Bradman (1908 – 2001)

Sir Donald Bradman is the greatest cricket batsman of all-time and is an Australian sporting legend.

Raised in Bowral, New South Wales, Donald Bradman played his first game of cricket for the Australian team in 1928.

He was slight but amazingly quick on his feet. On his first tour of England in 1930, he broke nearly all the batting records. By age 21, he was already an Australian legend.

On Bradman's final tour in 1948, his team became known as 'The Invincibles', as they did not lose a single match they played against England.

Sir Donald Bradman, known as 'The Don', is recognised as the world's best ever batsman. His test batting average was 99.94.



The Arts

Australia has a vibrant arts scene that includes the nation's Indigenous cultural traditions and rich assortment of migrant cultures. All forms of the Australian visual and performing arts, including film, art, theatre, music and dance, draw admiration both here and overseas.

Literature

Australia has a strong literary tradition which started with the storytelling of Indigenous Australians and continued with the oral stories of the convicts arriving in the late 18th century.

Much of Australia's early writing is about the bush and the difficulties of life in such a harsh environment. Writers such as Henry Lawson and Miles Franklin wrote poems and stories about the bush and the Australian way of life.

An Australian novelist, Patrick White, received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1973. Other popular modern day Australian novelists include Peter Carey, Colleen McCullough and Tim Winton.

Judith Wright (1915 – 2000)

Judith Wright was an outstanding poet, conservationist and campaigner for Aboriginal rights.

She is one of Australia's best loved poets. She expressed her love for Australia and its people in her poetry. She was awarded many prizes including the Encyclopaedia Britannica Prize for literature and the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry. She was a member of the Australian Conservation Committee and the Aboriginal Treaty Committee.

Judith Wright is remembered for her skill as a poet and for advancing Australian literature and social and environmental reform.



Theatre and film

Australian plays, films and filmmakers are recognised and loved here and overseas. Australian actors such as Cate Blanchett and Geoffrey Rush, and filmmakers such as Peter Weir have won many international awards for their excellence in film.

Art

The most recognised Australian works of art are the iconic Indigenous paintings and the 19th century bush scenes of painters such as Tom Roberts, Frederick McCubbin and Arthur Streeton. In the mid 20th century, artists Russell Drysdale and Sidney Nolan depicted the harshness of the outback in bold colour. More recently, Brett Whiteley gained international acclaim for his unique and vivid style.

Music and dance

Australians have embraced and excelled in all areas of music and are internationally recognised for their contributions to classical, country and rock music. The most immediately recognised, purely Australian sound is that of the didgeridoo, the ancient instrument of the Aboriginal people.

Australian dance has flourished due to the efforts of great dancers and choreographers such as Sir Robert Helpmann, Meryl Tankard and Stephen Page.

Scientific achievement and invention

Australians have a strong record of scientific achievements and advances in the fields of medicine, technology, agriculture, mining and manufacturing.

Nine Australians have been awarded the Nobel Prize for scientific and medical discoveries.

Scientific achievers have also received Australian of the Year Awards. In 2005, the award went to Professor Fiona Wood, who developed a spray-on skin for burns victims. In 2006, the award went to Professor Ian Frazer, who developed the cervical cancer vaccine. In 2007, Professor Tim Flannery, a leading environmental scientist, received the award.

Professor Wood and Professor Frazer both migrated to Australia from Britain. Professor Frazer's co-inventor was the late Dr Jian Zhou, who migrated from China and also became an Australian citizen.



Conductor and recent citizenship conferee Vladimir Verbitsky with the Western Australian Symphony Orchestra

Professor Fred Hollows (1929 – 1993)

Professor Fred Hollows was a passionate ophthalmologist (eye doctor) who helped restore eyesight to over one million people in Australia and developing countries.



Fred Hollows was born in New Zealand. In 1965, he moved to Australia and later became the head of an Eye Department at a Sydney hospital.

He believed strongly in equality for all people and helped set up the first Aboriginal Medical Service. There are now 60 across Australia.

By 1980, Fred Hollows was travelling all over the world to help set up eye health programs in developing countries. He became an Australian citizen in April 1989.

Professor Hollows's good work continues through his wife, Gabi, and The Fred Hollows Foundation.

Australians of the Year

Since 1960, the Australian of the Year Awards have celebrated the achievement and contribution of leading Australians. Anyone can nominate an Australian from any walk of life for an award. Australians of the Year are people who have excelled in their work and served the nation.

2016	David Morrison AO <i>Equality advocate</i>	2000	Sir Gustav Nossal AC CBE FAA FRS <i>Research Biologist</i>
2015	Rosie Batty <i>Family violence campaigner</i>	1999	Mark Taylor <i>Test Cricket Captain</i>
2014	Adam Goodes <i>AFL player and community leader</i>	1998	Cathy Freeman <i>World and Olympic Athletics Champion and Indigenous Ambassador</i>
2013	Ita Buttrose AO OBE <i>Media icon</i>	1997	Professor Peter Doherty <i>Nobel Laureate in Medicine</i>
2012	Geoffrey Rush <i>Oscar-winning actor</i>	1996	Doctor John Yu AM <i>Paediatrician</i>
2011	Simon McKeon <i>Social entrepreneur</i>	1995	Arthur Boyd AC OBE <i>Artist</i>
2010	Professor Patrick McGorry <i>Mental health expert</i>	1994	Ian Kiernan OAM <i>'Clean Up Australia' Campaigner</i>
2009	Professor Michael Dodson AM <i>Indigenous Leader</i>	1992	Mandawuy Yunupingu <i>Indigenous Leader</i>
2008	Lee Kernaghan OAM <i>Singer, Musician and Founder of 'Pass the Hat Around' Tours</i>	1991	Archbishop Peter Hollingworth AO OBE <i>Social Justice Advocate</i>
2007	Professor Tim Flannery <i>Scientist, Author and Conservationist</i>	1990	Professor Fred Hollows AC <i>Ophthalmologist</i>
2006	Professor Ian Frazer <i>Clinical Immunologist</i>	1989	Allan Border AO <i>Test Cricket Captain</i>
2005	Professor Fiona Wood AM <i>Plastic Surgeon and Burns Specialist</i>	1988	Kay Cottee AO <i>Record-breaking Solo Yachtswoman</i>
2004	Steve Waugh <i>Test Cricket Captain and Humanitarian</i>	1987	John Farnham <i>Singer and Musician</i>
2003	Professor Fiona Stanley AC <i>Paediatrician and Epidemiologist</i>	1986	Dick Smith <i>Adventurer and Philanthropist</i>
2002	Patrick Rafter <i>US Open Tennis Champion and Founder of 'Cherish the Children Foundation'</i>	1985	Paul Hogan AM <i>Actor</i>
2001	Lt General Peter Cosgrove AC MC <i>Chief of the Australian Army 2000-2002</i>	1984	Lowitja O'Donoghue CBE AM <i>Indigenous Leader</i>

Their achievements make us think about what more we can do to contribute to our great country. The awards now include Young Australian of the Year, Senior Australian of the Year and Australia's Local Hero.

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| 1983 | Robert de Castella MBE
<i>World Marathon Running Champion</i> | 1971 | Evonne Goolagong Cawley AO MBE
<i>Wimbledon and French Open Tennis Champion</i> |
| 1982 | Sir Edward Williams KCMG KBE
<i>Commissioner, Australian Royal Commission of Inquiry into Drugs</i> | 1970 | His Eminence Cardinal Sir Norman Gilroy KBE
<i>First Australian-born Cardinal</i> |
| 1981 | Sir John Crawford AC CBE
<i>Architect of Australia's Post-War Growth</i> | 1969 | The Rt Hon Richard Gardiner Casey Baron of Berwick, Victoria and of the City of Westminster KG GCMG CH
<i>Governor-General of Australia 1965-69</i> |
| 1980 | Manning Clark AC
<i>Historian</i> | 1968 | Lionel Rose MBE
<i>World Boxing Champion</i> |
| 1979* | Senator Neville Bonner AO
<i>First Aboriginal Senator</i> | 1967 | The Seekers
<i>Musical Group</i> |
| 1979* | Harry Butler CBE
<i>Conservationist and Naturalist</i> | 1966 | Sir Jack Brabham OBE
<i>World Motor Racing Champion</i> |
| 1978* | Alan Bond
<i>Entrepreneur</i> | 1965 | Sir Robert Helpmann CBE
<i>Actor, Dancer, Producer and Choreographer</i> |
| 1978* | Galarrwuy Yunupingu AM
<i>Indigenous Leader</i> | 1964 | Dawn Fraser MBE
<i>Olympic Swimming Champion</i> |
| 1977* | Sir Murray Tyrrell KCVO CBE
<i>Office Secretary to the Governor-General</i> | 1963 | Sir John Eccles AC
<i>Nobel Laureate in Medicine</i> |
| 1977* | Dame Raigh Roe DBE
<i>Country Women's Association Leader</i> | 1962 | Alexander 'Jock' Sturrock MBE
<i>Skipper of America's Cup Challengers</i> |
| 1976 | Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop AC CMG OBE
<i>Military Surgeon</i> | 1961 | Dame Joan Sutherland OM AC DBE
<i>Soprano</i> |
| 1975* | Sir John Cornforth AC CBE
<i>Nobel Laureate in Chemistry</i> | 1960 | Sir Frank MacFarlane Burnet OM AK KBE
<i>Nobel Laureate in Medicine</i> |
| 1975* | Major General Alan Stretton AO CBE
<i>Commander of Darwin Relief Operation after Cyclone Tracy</i> | | |
| 1974 | Sir Bernard Heinze AC
<i>Conductor and Musician</i> | | |
| 1973 | Patrick White
<i>Nobel Laureate in Literature</i> | | |
| 1972 | Shane Gould MBE
<i>Olympic Swimming Champion</i> | | |

*Between 1975 and 1979 the Canberra Australia Day Council also recognised an Australian of the Year.

The post nominals noted after the award recipient's name were current at the time the award was received.

Australian currency

Our currency depicts people and icons that are important to Australia. The famous Australians chosen to appear on our currency are people who have shown initiative and great talent in the areas of social reform, science, politics, military accomplishment and the arts.

Old and New Parliament House



The \$5 note shows both Old Parliament House and New Parliament House in Canberra.

Queen Elizabeth II (born 1926)



Queen Elizabeth II is Australia's Head of State. She is the Queen of Australia and of the United Kingdom and lives in England. She has been a strong, stable presence throughout her long and popular reign.

Dame Mary Gilmore (1865 – 1962)



Dame Mary Gilmore was an author, journalist, poet and campaigner for social reform. She is remembered for her writing and for speaking on behalf of women, Indigenous Australians and poor people.

AB 'Banjo' Paterson (1864 – 1941)



Andrew Barton Paterson was a poet, songwriter and journalist. He wrote under the name 'Banjo' Paterson and is remembered for 'Waltzing Matilda', the most famous folk song in Australia.

Reverend John Flynn (1880 – 1951)



Reverend John Flynn began the world's first airborne medical service, the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia. He is remembered for saving many lives by bringing health services to remote areas of Australia.

Mary Reibey (1777 – 1855)



Mary Reibey was a pioneer businesswoman in the colony of New South Wales. After arriving in Australia as a teenaged convict settler, she became a respected leader in the community.

Edith Cowan (1861 – 1932)



Edith Cowan was a social worker, politician and feminist. She was the first female elected to any Australian parliament.

David Unaipon (1872 – 1967)



David Unaipon was a writer, public speaker and inventor. He is remembered for his contributions to science and literature, and for improving the conditions of Aboriginal people.

Sir John Monash (1865 – 1931)



Sir John Monash was an engineer, administrator and one of Australia's greatest military commanders. He is remembered for his leadership, intelligence and eloquence.

Dame Nellie Melba (1861 – 1931)



Dame Nellie Melba was a world famous soprano. Known around the world as the 'Queen of Song', she was the first Australian singer to become internationally renowned.

National days and celebrations

Australia's national holidays reflect our Judaeo-Christian heritage and celebrate the milestones that have shaped the Australian identity since European settlement.

Fixed dates

New Year's Day 1 January

We celebrate the start of the new year.

Australia Day 26 January

We celebrate what it means to be Australian and remember the arrival of the First Fleet at Sydney Cove in 1788.

Anzac Day 25 April

We remember the landing of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) at Gallipoli during World War I. We also honour all Australians who have served and died in conflicts.

Christmas Day 25 December

A gift-giving day based on the Christian celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

Boxing Day 26 December

Part of the Christmas celebration.

Variable dates

Labour Day or Eight Hour Day

Celebrates the Australian workers' win of the eight-hour work day – a world first.

Easter

Commemorates the Christian story of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Queen's Birthday

Celebrates the birth of Australia's Head of State, Queen Elizabeth II. This celebration is held on the second Monday in June in every state and territory except Western Australia.

Other public holidays

Other public holidays are held in different states, territories and cities. For example, the Australian Capital Territory has Canberra Day, South Australia has Volunteers Day and Western Australia has Foundation Day.

Important non-public holiday dates

Harmony Day 21 March

A day where all Australians celebrate our cultural diversity.

Australian Citizenship Day 17 September

A day where we celebrate the common bond represented by Australian citizenship and reflect on the role we play in shaping our country's future.



Walangari Karntawarra Aboriginal artist, teacher and performer.

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Australian people

Australia has a population of about 24 million people and one of the most diverse societies in the world. Indigenous Australians make up 2.5 per cent of the total population. Over one quarter of Australia's residents were born overseas, and have migrated from over 200 countries. The diversity of the population provides Australia with a rich variety of languages, beliefs, traditions and cultures.

Australia's formal ties with Great Britain have diminished over time but the influence of Great Britain survives in Australia's institutions. It also survives in many of our values and, of course, in our national language. While over 200 different languages are spoken at home and in the community (including many different Indigenous languages), English is an important part of our national identity.

Australian people take pride in Australian citizenship, which is the single unifying bond in our diverse society. Australian Citizenship Day is celebrated on 17 September each year. On this day, Australians publicly affirm their loyalty and commitment to Australia. It is a day for all Australian citizens to reflect on the role we play in building our nation and shaping our country's future.

Australia's economy

Australia has a stable and competitive economy. We value our vibrant and skilled workforce. The quality of life enjoyed by people in Australia is one of the highest in the world.

Dick Smith (born 1944)

Dick Smith is a leading Australian businessman, adventurer and philanthropist.

Dick Smith made his first fortune in his electronics business. He has used his wealth to advance Australia. He started up an Australian-only food company and he has invested millions of dollars to help keep companies Australian-owned.

He was named Australian of the Year in 1986 and has won an award for technical advancement and environmental preservation. He was the first person to cross Australia, and the Tasman Sea, in a hot air balloon. He is known for his adventurous spirit, his success in business and his deep love of Australia.



The market

Australia's stable and modern financial institutions and strict tax and trading regulations give certainty to business activity. The service industry, which includes tourism, education and financial services, form nearly 70 per cent of Australia's gross domestic product (GDP).

Australia's economic stability makes it an appealing destination for investment. Australia's stock market is the second biggest in the Asia-Pacific region after Japan's.

Trade

Australia's largest trading partners are Japan, China, the United States, South Korea, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. We are a major exporter of wheat, wool, iron ore, minerals and gold. We also export energy in the forms of liquefied natural gas and coal. Our economy is open and trade has always been a vital part of our economic prosperity. Australian exports recently totalled well over \$200 billion.

Mining

Australia is rich in natural resources such as coal, copper, liquefied natural gas and mineral sands. These are in high demand, especially in the developing economies in Asia.



Australia's largest export sector is minerals and fuels

Australia as a global citizen

Australia is proud of its role as a good international citizen. We show this by helping those less fortunate than ourselves around the world.

Australia's international aid and humanitarian efforts

The Australian Government's international aid program supports developing countries to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development. We provide this support in our region and around the world by assisting people and governments.

Australians show enormous generosity when disasters occur in our country or overseas. We also donate regularly to countries that experience ongoing suffering. Australia's commitment to our aid program reflects this feature of the Australian character.



Australian relief operation in Indonesia after the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami

Australia's active participation in international forums

Australia has been an active member of the United Nations (UN) from its beginning in 1945. Under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, Australia provides protection for people who have been identified as refugees under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention. We also contribute to UN peacekeeping efforts and humanitarian and emergency responses for developing countries, and have a strong involvement in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

In 1971, Australia became a full member of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The OECD aims to improve economic, social and employment conditions in its 30 member countries and in other developing countries. At the same time, the OECD aims to expand world trade.

Australia strongly supports closer cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. Australia is an active member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF).

Dr Catherine Hamlin AC (born 1924)

Dr Catherine Hamlin is a gynaecologist, renowned for saving young Ethiopian women from a life of suffering.



Since 1959, Catherine Hamlin has worked in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia helping women with the childbirth injury known as 'obstetric fistula'. Women with this problem cannot control their bodily functions and so they are made outcasts from society.

Catherine and her husband established the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital. Their efforts have meant thousands of women are able to return home to lead full, healthy lives in their villages.

In 1995, Dr Catherine Hamlin was made a Companion of the Order of Australia, the highest Australian award. She continues to work for the women of Ethiopia.

Australia today is a vast and growing country, proud of its achievements in sport, the arts and science. We value the quality of life of our people, but we are always aiming higher.

Through international aid and development assistance, Australia has carried its sense of fair play beyond the sports field and into the global community.

Australian Nobel Laureates

Australia is renowned for scientific and medical research. Eleven Australians have been made Nobel Laureates in these fields.

Professor William Bragg (1862 – 1942) and Lawrence Bragg (1890 – 1971) Physicists.

William Bragg (father) and Lawrence Bragg (son) were joint winners of the Nobel Prize in Physics 1915, 'for their services in the analysis of crystal structure by means of X-rays'.

Sir Howard Walter Florey (1898 – 1968) Pathologist.

Born in Adelaide, South Australia, Howard Florey received the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 1945 (jointly) 'for the discovery of penicillin and its curative effect in various infectious diseases'.

Sir Frank Macfarlane Burnet (1899 – 1985) Medical Scientist and Biologist.

Born in Victoria, Frank Burnet was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 1960 (jointly) 'for discovery of acquired immunological tolerance'.

Sir John Carew Eccles (1903 – 1997) Physiologist.

John Eccles was born in Melbourne and received the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 1963 (jointly) 'for discoveries concerning the ionic mechanisms involved in excitation and inhibition in the peripheral and central portions of the nerve cell membrane'.

Professor John Warcup Cornforth (1917 – 2007) Chemist.

John Cornforth was born in Sydney and received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry 1975 (jointly) 'for his work on the stereochemistry of enzyme-catalyzed reactions'.

Professor Peter Doherty (born 1940) Immunologist.

Peter Doherty was born in Queensland and received the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 1996 (jointly) 'for discoveries concerning the specificity of the cell mediated immune defence'.

**Professor Barry Marshall (born 1951) Gastroenterologist and
Doctor Robin Warren (born 1937) Pathologist.**

Barry Marshall and Robin Warren were joint winners of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2005 for their discovery of 'the bacterium *Helicobacter pylori* and its role in gastritis and peptic ulcer disease'.

Professor Elizabeth Helen Blackburn (born 1948) Biologist.

Elizabeth Blackburn was born in Hobart and received the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2009 (jointly) 'for the discovery of how chromosomes are protected by telomeres and the enzyme telomerase'.

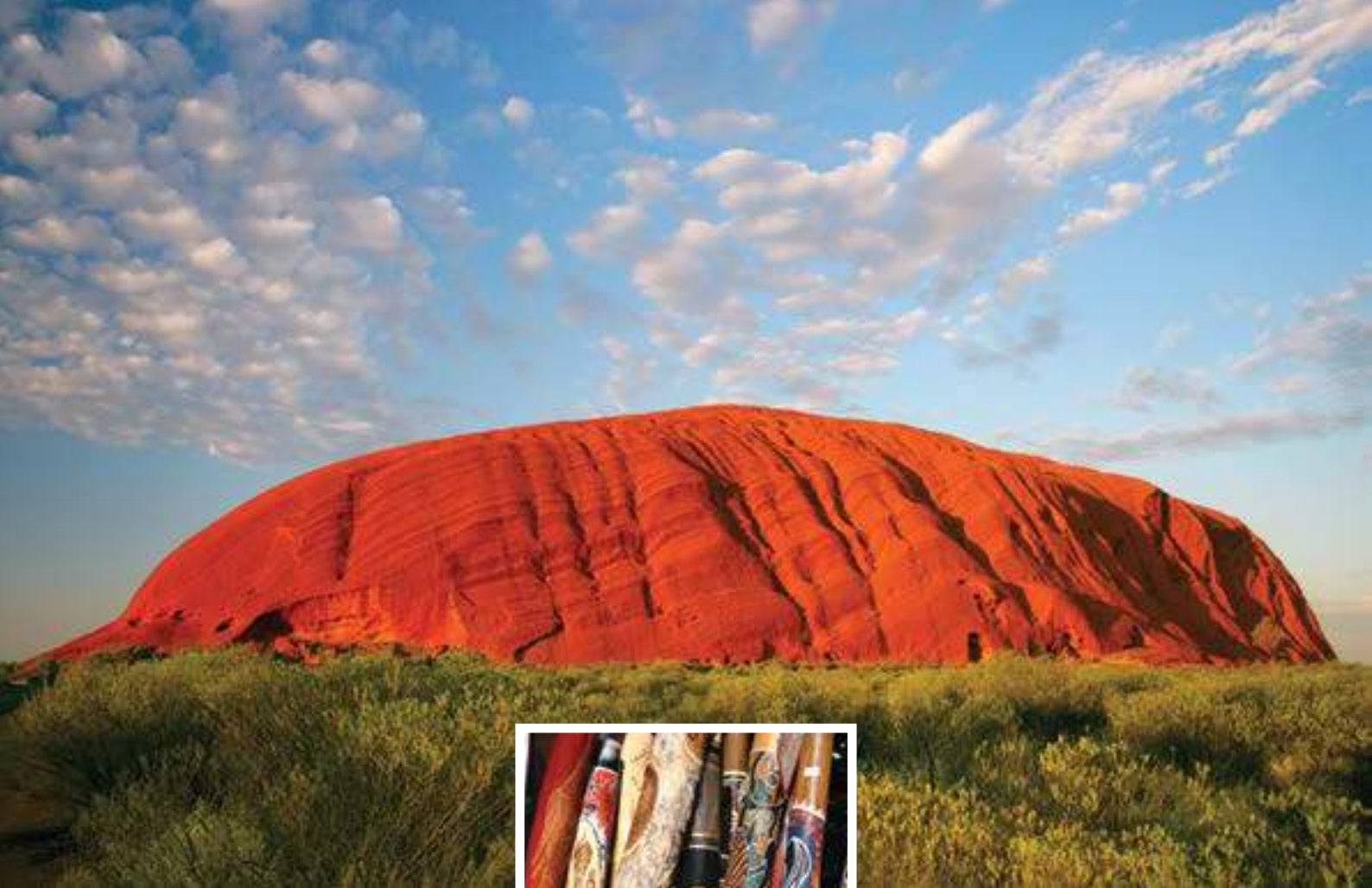
Professor Brian Schmidt (born 1967) Astronomer.

Brian P. Schmidt received the Nobel Prize in Physics 2011 (jointly) 'for the discovery of the accelerating expansion of the Universe through observations of distant supernovae'.

Australia also has one Nobel Laureate in Literature.

Patrick White (1912 – 1990) Novelist and Playwright.

Born in London to Australian parents, Patrick White was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1973 'for an epic and psychological narrative art which has introduced a new continent into literature'.



A close-up photograph showing several wooden spears or boomerangs. They are intricately decorated with traditional Indigenous Australian patterns and designs in various colors, including red, white, and black. The objects are arranged vertically, showing their textured surfaces and detailed artwork.

Part 5

Our Australian story

*The Indigenous cultures of Australia
are the oldest continuing cultures in the world.*

Our Australian story

This brief history of Australia is by no means the full story, but it will give you an idea of the events that have shaped our country and our culture. For thousands of years the land was inhabited and cared for by the Indigenous people. The arrival of the First Fleet in 1788 meant their world would change forever. Over the past 200 years, Australia has learnt many lessons about equality and human rights on its path towards multiculturalism and reconciliation. The reforms we have made mean that the Australian community that you are now joining is one where every person feels included and valued.

Indigenous Australians

The Indigenous cultures of Australia are the oldest continuing cultures in the world. Australia's Indigenous people have lived here for between 40 000 and 60 000 years.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures differ from each other. They have their own languages and traditions.

Historically, Aboriginal people are from mainland Australia and Tasmania. Torres Strait Islanders are from the islands between the tip of Queensland and Papua New Guinea. Torres Strait Islanders share many cultural similarities with the people of Papua New Guinea and other Pacific islands.

Languages

Before British settlement, over 700 languages and dialects were used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. About 145 languages are still used today. There was no written language. The oral histories of the Indigenous cultures are extremely important because they tell the story of the people and the land. For example, stories such as those explaining the flooding of Port Phillip Bay in Victoria refer to an actual event that happened 10 000 years ago.

The Dreaming and Indigenous arts

Different Indigenous clans have their own name for what we, in English, call the 'Dreaming'. The Dreaming, or Dreamtime, is the system of knowledge, faith and practice that guides Indigenous life. It shows people how they should live and how they should behave. People who do not obey its rules are punished.



Kakadu Aboriginal art

The stories of the Dreaming were told to children by their parents and elders. These stories taught the children how their land came to be shaped and inhabited, and how to behave and why. The stories also gave the children valuable practical lessons, for example, where to find food.

Indigenous music, song and dance tell stories of the Dreaming and everyday life. When Indigenous people sing and dance, they feel a very deep connection to their ancestors.

The original forms of Aboriginal art were rock carvings or paintings and ground designs. Some of these are 30 000 years old. People from Central Australia painted with dots and circles representing the land or stories from the Dreaming. Those in the northern parts of Australia painted figures of humans, animals and spirits.

The Dreaming continues to be important to Indigenous people today.

The first Europeans to Australia

Early European exploration

In the 17th century, European explorers discovered parts of what they called 'Terra Australis Incognita', the unknown land of the south. In 1606 a Dutchman, Willem Janszoon, charted the western side of Cape York Peninsula at the northern tip of Australia. At about this time, a Spanish ship lead by Luis Vaez de Torres sailed through the strait at the north of the continent.

Later in the 1600s, Dutch sailors explored the coast of Western Australia. The Dutch called this land 'New Holland'.

In 1642, Abel Tasman discovered the coast of a new land that he named 'Van Diemen's Land' (now Tasmania). He also charted thousands of miles of Australian coast. His incomplete map of New Holland shows that he believed the land was joined to Papua New Guinea in the north.

William Dampier was the first Englishman to set foot on Australian soil. In 1684, he landed on the north-west coast. The land was dry and dusty so he did not consider it useful for trade or settlement.

Captain James Cook

The east coast of Australia was not explored by Europeans until Englishman James Cook reached it in 1770 in his ship, the 'Endeavour'. Cook had been sent by the British Government on a voyage of discovery to the South Pacific. He charted the east coast and landed at Botany Bay, just south of modern Sydney. James Cook called this land 'New South Wales', and claimed it for King George III.



Abel Tasman's map of New Holland, 1644

Convict transportation

Australia is unique in that most of its first European settlers were convicts. After the United States of America achieved independence, Great Britain could no longer send its convicts there. British prisons became very crowded. When the convict numbers grew too large, the British Government had to find a new place for them. In 1786, Great Britain decided to send the convicts to the new colony of New South Wales. This was called 'transportation'.

The first colony

The first governor of the colony of New South Wales was Captain Arthur Phillip. He brought the first fleet of 11 ships safely from Britain to the other side of the world. He took great care over the feeding and welfare of the convicts and very few died on the voyage.

Captain Phillip led the First Fleet into Sydney Cove on 26 January 1788. It is on the anniversary of this day that we celebrate Australia Day each year.



The First Fleet sailed from Britain, arriving in Sydney Cove in 1788

The early years

The early years of settlement were very hard. Governor Phillip made sure that people didn't starve by putting everyone on the same rations, including himself and his officers. His common sense and determination helped the colony survive those first difficult years.

The hard work of the early settlement was done by the forced labour of the convicts. They were flogged if they did not work hard or if they ran away or got drunk. If they committed a serious crime, they were sent to a remote settlement or hanged. Convicts who completed their sentences became free men and women and moved into the community to work and raise families.

New opportunities

The first European population of Australia was made up of English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish people. The Scottish, Welsh and Irish had often been at war with the English in the past, but in Australia, the four groups lived and worked closely together.

Convicts and ex-convicts began to find new opportunities in the colony. The military officers used their time to make money by trading and employed convicts and ex-convicts to help them. Soon, some of the ex-convicts were setting up businesses on their own as merchants. Other ex-convicts did well as farmers, tradesmen, shopkeepers and publicans. Ex-convict women also did well in business and in many ways enjoyed more freedom than women in England.

Caroline Chisholm (1808 – 1877)

Caroline Chisholm was a leading social reformer who improved the situation of single women in the early colonies.



Caroline came to Australia with her army officer husband and five children in 1838. She helped the migrant women who were living on the streets of Sydney. Within a few years, she set up 16 migrant women's hostels around the colony.

Caroline worked hard to improve life on the ships for the people travelling to the colonies. She also arranged a loan plan for destitute people to help break the cycle of dependence and poverty.

Today, many of Australia's schools are named after Caroline Chisholm. She was known as 'the migrant's friend' and is remembered for her tireless efforts to help people start a new life.

An enlightened governor

Along with Governor Phillip, Governor Lachlan Macquarie holds an important place in our early history. He governed the colony of New South Wales between 1810 and 1821. He developed the colony as a free settlement, not a convict colony. He improved farming practices and built new roads and public facilities. He encouraged the exploration of Australia.

Macquarie also put money into education and respected the rights of former convicts. He gave some former convicts jobs as judges and public servants.

Governor Macquarie is honoured in history for the positive changes he made to the colony. The Macquarie University in New South Wales is named after him.

Our convict heritage

After Macquarie's term, it was thought that the Governor's position was too powerful for one man, so in 1823 the New South Wales Legislative Council was formed to advise the next Governor. The Legislative Council then tried to reform the colony so that convicts were properly punished and did not live too well. However, it could not shut off all the opportunities for convicts living in New South Wales and the other colonies established around Australia in the early 19th century.

All together, more than 160 000 convicts were transported to Australia. Great Britain stopped sending convicts to New South Wales in 1840, to Tasmania in 1852 and to Western Australia in 1868.

The children of the convicts had always been free, so the divisions between ex-convicts and the settlers gradually disappeared. From the 1850s, the colonists were governing themselves and wanted to build respectable societies. The colonists became ashamed of their convict past and did not talk about it. About a century later, this feeling of shame changed. Australians came to be proud of their convict beginnings and many people are now pleased to find a convict ancestor.

In this spirit of acceptance, Australians have become a people who don't care much about a person's family background or past behaviour. We take people as we meet them and give people a 'fair go'.

Indigenous people after European settlement

It is estimated that there were between 750 000 and 1.4 million Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia at the start of European settlement. Their numbers included about 250 individual nations and over 700 language groups.

When they first settled in Australia, the British Government did not make a treaty with the Aboriginal people. The Indigenous people had their own economies and an ancient connection to the land. The Government could not recognise this because there were no such systems or beliefs in Europe. Aboriginal people did not grow crops or set up homes to stay in one place as the British did, so the Government thought they had no sense of ownership. The Government felt free to take over the land.

Fatal impact

The early governors were told not to harm the Aboriginal people, but the British settlers moved onto Aboriginal land and many Aboriginal people were killed. Settlers were usually not punished for committing these crimes.

Some Aboriginal people and European settlers were able to live peacefully together. Some settlers employed Aboriginal people on sheep and cattle farms. Governor Macquarie offered Aboriginal people their own land for farming and set up a school for Aboriginal children. However, very few Aboriginal people wanted to live the way the settlers lived. They did not want to lose their cultural traditions.

We don't know how many Indigenous people were killed in the battles over land but we do know that hundreds of thousands of Aboriginal people died. The biggest killers of Aboriginal people were the diseases that the Europeans brought to the country. The loss of Aboriginal life was catastrophic. In Victoria in the 1830s, the Aboriginal population was about 10 000 people. In 1853, only 1907 Aboriginal people were counted.

Historical milestones

Inland exploration

In New South Wales, the early colonists faced extreme hardship. Very little of Australia is fertile country. The Aboriginal people had learnt to manage and live in this environment, though they too suffered in times of drought.

The first great barrier the Sydney settlers faced in exploring inland was the mountain range 50 kilometres to the west of Sydney, the Blue Mountains. In 1813, three men, Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson, finally crossed the mountains. The road and railway across the Blue Mountains still follow the route they took.

On the other side of these mountains the explorers discovered open country which was good for raising sheep and cattle. Further inland, however, they came across dry, desert country. They had trouble finding water and carrying enough food to survive. The German-born explorer, Ludwig Leichardt, disappeared while trying to cross the continent from east to west in 1848.

In 1860 Burke and Wills set out from Melbourne to cross Australia from south to north. They led a large expedition but their crossing was very difficult. Burke and Wills were not experienced bushmen. They received expert help from the Aboriginal Yandruwandha people but both explorers died on their way back. Although Burke and Wills failed to complete their expedition, their story is remembered in art and literature. It is a tragic example of the harshness of our land.



Burke and Wills expedition across Australia, 1860

Settlers and pioneers

Even when the settlers had good land, life was very hard. After periods of flood or drought, farmers would often need to start again. By 1838, wool was Australia's primary export and if there were droughts or if the overseas wool prices fell, settlers would lose their livelihood. However, people picked themselves up and battled on. The 'Aussie battler' is the name we give to a person who survives such hard times. The Aussie battler represents the Australian fighting spirit and resilience. Male and female pioneers are honoured for their courage during these hard times. Women often had to keep the business or farm going when the men were away or had died.

It was during these harsh early years that Australia's spirit of mateship began. It was strong among the men who travelled through the outback, shearing and droving. Settlers also helped each other out of difficulty. This tradition is still very much a part of Australian life, for example, thousands of people volunteer to fight bushfires each year.

The gold rush

The discovery of gold in New South Wales in early 1851 has been described as the 'discovery that changed a nation'. Shortly after, gold was also found in Victoria, a newly independent colony.

By the end of 1852, 90 000 people had travelled to Victoria from all parts of Australia and all over the world to search for gold.



Gold was discovered in the colonies of New South Wales and Victoria in 1851

The Eureka rebellion is remembered as a great democratic moment in Australia's history. At the Ballarat goldfield in 1854, the gold diggers held a large protest against the harsh way the government officials ran the goldfield.

Government troops would be very rough with the diggers when they collected the licence fee to dig for gold. On 11 November 1854, 10 000 people gathered at Bakery Hill, Ballarat, to adopt a charter of basic democratic rights. They wanted to be able to dig for gold without needing to pay for an expensive licence. They also wanted to be able to vote for people to represent them in the Victorian Parliament.

A small group built a stockade at the Eureka diggings and flew their rebel flag with the Southern Cross on it. The government officials sent soldiers to attack the stockade on the morning of 3 December 1854. The gold diggers were soon overpowered and about 30 were killed.



Eureka flag

When the rebel leaders were put on trial for high treason, no jury would convict them. A Royal Commission found the government was at fault and many of the miners' demands were met. Their wish for political representation was also granted. Within a year, Peter Lalor, the leader of the rebels, became a member of the Victorian Parliament.

Over the years, the Eureka rebellion has become a symbol of protest and our belief in a fair go.

The gold rush changed Australia in many ways. During the gold rush years, the total population of Australia increased from 43 000 in 1851 to 1.7 million in 1870. The first railways and telegraphs were built in the 1850s to link the growing populations.

Large gold deposits were found in all colonies except for South Australia. The economy was flourishing and gold overtook wool as our most valuable export. By around 1890, it is possible that Australia had the highest standard of living in the world.

The squatters and the farmers

From the early days of the colonies, people known as 'squatters' had taken over vast areas of land to farm. Although they did not usually have to pay for this land, the squatters considered it their own. After the first gold rushes were over, there was a great struggle to take this land back from the squatters.

In the 1860s, the Government wanted to sell the squatters' land to working men and their families to farm. The squatters tried to keep as much land as possible for themselves by claiming many leases, especially those in the best positions.

The new farmers faced a difficult environment and until the railways were built, were far from markets. The opportunity to earn high wages in the cities always made life on the land and working for little reward, unattractive.

Farmers did well in South Australia however, and the Australian tradition of inventing machinery to make farming easier began there. The stump-jump plough (1870s), for example, allowed rough land to be easily cleared for crop farming.

Migration in the 1800s

In the early 1800s, English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish settlers were the main groups in the colonies. Their heritage was the basis of the new nation. Australia's pastimes, cultural activities and religious practices were the same as those of the United Kingdom. However, there were also small groups of migrants from Europe and Asia. European arrivals in the 1800s included Italians, Greeks, Poles, Maltese and Russians as well as French settlers working in the wine industry. These were mostly young men seeking work and fortune, or seamen who had deserted their ships.

Chinese migrants began arriving in Australia after 1842. Their numbers grew after the discovery of gold and there were racial tensions on the goldfields. This sometimes led to riots against the Chinese, such as those in Bendigo in 1854. The racial tensions resulted in the first restrictions on immigration in Victoria in 1855 and New South Wales in 1861.

After the gold rushes of the 1850s, most Chinese returned home. Among those who stayed were the Chinese market gardeners who supplied much needed fresh fruit and vegetables in areas where water was scarce.

From the 1860s, people from Iran, Egypt and Turkey came to operate camel 'trains' through outback Australia. Along with the Indian cameleers, they were loosely referred to as 'Afghans' largely because of their similar dress and common religious beliefs in Islam. These cameleers were regarded as 'pioneers of the inland'. About 4000 Indians and 6000 Pacific Islanders also worked in the sugar and banana industries in Queensland.

From the 1880s, workers from Lebanon arrived in Australia. Many Lebanese were involved in the fabric and clothing industries. Lebanese families came to own most of the draperies in country Australia, a tradition that continues today.



'Afghan' cameleers in outback Australia

Aboriginal reserves

After the early battles between the Aboriginal people and settlers for land were over, the Aboriginal people lived on the edges of society. Some worked on outback sheep and cattle stations for very low wages. The colonial governments set up reserves where the Aboriginal people could live, but these areas did not allow the Aboriginal people to live their traditional life. They could not hunt and gather as they wanted to.

In the late 1800s, the colonial governments took away Aboriginal rights. They told the Aboriginal people where to live. They told them who they could marry and they took many Aboriginal children away from their parents. These children were sent to 'white' families or government orphanages. These practices no longer exist but they remain a cause of deep sadness for the Aboriginal people and for many Australians.

Suffrage

'Suffragettes' was the term used around the world for women who campaigned for the right to vote in elections. During the 1880s and 1890s, every colony had at least one suffrage society. Suffragettes collected thousands of signatures on petitions to present to their colonial parliaments.

Women in South Australia won the right to vote and seek election to parliament in 1895. Women in Western Australia won the right to vote in 1899.

In 1902, Australia was the first country to give women both the right to vote and the right to be elected to the Australian Parliament. Indigenous women (and men) were not granted the right to vote until 1962.

Edith Cowan became the first female parliamentarian when she was elected to the Western Australian Parliament in 1923. It was not until 1943 that a woman, Enid Lyons, was elected to the Australian Parliament.

Catherine Spence (1825 – 1910)

Catherine Spence was a writer, preacher, feminist and suffragette.

Catherine Spence migrated to Australia from Scotland. She wrote prizewinning novels about Australian life as well as schoolbooks.



She helped set up an organisation to help homeless children and supported new kindergartens and government secondary schools for girls.

She was the first woman to stand for parliament and received many votes, but she did not win her seat. In 1891 she became the Vice-President of the Women's Suffrage League of South Australia.

Catherine Spence is a symbol of what a woman can achieve, even in restrictive times.

Federation

The colonies had developed separately, but by the late 19th century a common sense of national belonging had developed. This feeling was expressed in the words of 'Advance Australia Fair'. This song was written by Peter Dodds McCormick and first sung in Sydney in 1878. It is now our national anthem.

Towards the end of the 19th century, two attempts were made to bring the colonies together. In 1889, Sir Henry Parkes called for a strong new nation to be formed. The Australasian Federation Conference was held in 1890 to discuss the idea of an Australian federation.

After some delays, the move towards federation gathered speed in 1893. Electors chose the members of the next constitutional convention. Electors voted in two rounds of referendums to accept the Constitution. The fact that the federation process was based on the wishes of the people shows how progressive Australia was.



Federation Day in Brisbane, 1901

The British Government agreed that Australia could govern itself and the first Australian Government was sworn in before a huge crowd in Sydney's Centennial Park on 1 January 1901. The Prime Minister of the new nation was Edmund Barton, who had led the movement for federation in New South Wales.

Australia was now a nation but still within the British Empire. It did not acquire full powers over defence and foreign affairs until 1931. Though national feeling had grown, the sense of being British was still strong.



Sir Edmund Barton

The birth of political parties

By the 1880s, the workers in Australia had built up strong trade unions. In the hard times of economic depression and drought, these unions held strikes to protect their wages and conditions. The workers then turned to politics. In 1891, they created the Labor Party.

The Labor Party's first job was to win back and improve workers' wages and conditions. Middle-class people lived more comfortably than the workers but they understood the workers' situation. Official boards were created to set wages and to prevent strikes. In 1907, the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration determined a minimum wage at a level so that a working man, his wife and three children could live in 'frugal' comfort.

As the Labor Party grew, all the other parties combined into a Liberal Party in 1910. This party has had many names. Between the wars, it became the Nationalist Party and then the United Australia Party. In 1944 the Liberal Party we know today was founded. This followed a conference held by Robert Menzies which involved many of the non-Labor parties. Sir Robert Menzies went on to become Australia's longest serving Prime Minister.

After World War I, the Country Party was formed to advance the cause of farmers. Now known as the Nationals, it usually acts in coalition with the Liberal Party.

The *Immigration Restrictions Act 1901*

The 'White Australia' policy became law when the *Immigration Restrictions Act 1901* was passed in December 1901. This restricted immigrants from working in Australia and restricted the migration of 'non-white' people.

Anyone with a non-European background had to sit a dictation test of 50 words in a European language. Members of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, the barrister William Ah Ket and leading Chinese businessmen made public protests, but these did not succeed in changing the law.

Chinese, Indians, Pacific Islanders and peoples from the Middle East were largely replaced by migrants from southern Europe in the newly federated Australia, but their cultural contributions were already part of Australia's social identity.

World War I, 1914–1918

Apart from conflict between settlers and the Aboriginal people, Australia has had a remarkably peaceful history. There have been no civil wars or revolutions. Generations of Australians remained very loyal to the British Empire.

However, as a European outpost close to Asia, Australia also felt vulnerable, especially after Japan became a great power. We relied on the British Empire and its naval strength to defend us. Australia fought in both world wars to keep the British Empire strong and to protect ourselves.

Australia entered World War I in August 1914, and in 1915 took part in an attack on Germany's ally, Turkey. The men of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (Anzacs) were given their own part of the Gallipoli Peninsula to attack.

They had to climb steep cliffs while being shot at by Turkish troops. Somehow, they got up the cliffs and dug in, although many young men died. Australians at home took tremendous pride in the spirit of the Anzacs.

The anniversary of the landing on Gallipoli (25 April) is now a national holiday. It is called Anzac Day.

After Gallipoli, the Australian forces fought on the Western Front in France and Belgium. It was here that they got the name 'diggers' because they spent so much time digging and fixing trenches. Led by their commander, Lieutenant General Sir John Monash, the Australian diggers won great victories in the last battles against Germany.

Australian servicemen and women also served in the Middle East, participating in the defence of the Suez Canal and the Allied conquest of the Sinai peninsula and Palestine.



Gallipoli Peninsula during World War I

Simpson and his donkey – John Simpson Kirkpatrick (1892–1915)

John Simpson Kirkpatrick was a serviceman and is an Australian legend.

As Private John Simpson, he served at Gallipoli in the ambulance medical corps as a stretcher bearer. It was difficult to carry stretchers through the hills and the valleys. Against army orders, he used a donkey, named Duffy, to help transport the wounded soldiers back to safety.

Day and night, hour after hour, they would risk their lives travelling between the fighting and the beach camp.

Private John Simpson had arrived at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. He was killed just four weeks later by enemy machine guns. Servicemen at the beach camp watched in silent sadness as Duffy, still carrying an injured soldier, trotted towards the beach without his young master by his side.



The Anzac legend

The Anzac tradition was forged on 25 April 1915 when the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula in Turkey.

It marked the start of a campaign which lasted eight months and resulted in some 25 000 Australian casualties, including 8700 who were killed or died of wounds or disease. The bravery and spirit of those who served on the Gallipoli Peninsula shaped a legend, and 'Anzac' became part of the Australian and New Zealand language.

In 1916, the first anniversary of the landing was observed in Australia, New Zealand and England, as well as by troops in Egypt. In that year, 25 April was named 'Anzac Day'.

By the 1920s, Anzac Day ceremonies were held throughout Australia and the states had designated Anzac Day as a public holiday. Major war memorials were built in the capital cities, and monuments in cities and towns across the nation remember the young men and women killed in that and later conflicts.

Anzac Day is now a day to honour all those who have served in wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations. It is not really a military celebration. It does not honour victories - the Gallipoli campaign was a failure. It honours the qualities of ordinary servicemen and women: mateship, endurance and humour in the face of adversity. Today, Anzac Day is commemorated in Australia and around the world. Returned Australian servicemen and women from World War II and other conflicts, as well as peacekeepers and veterans from Allied countries, all march proudly in Anzac Day parades.



Anzac Day Dawn Service at Gallipoli

The Great Depression, 1929 – 1932

The Great Depression was a time of extreme hardship for the people of Australia. It started at the same time as the collapse of the New York Stock Exchange, but there were other factors that also led to the Depression. These included a fall in export prices and sales, a fall in overseas loans and government spending and a fall in construction. By the middle of 1932, almost 32 per cent of Australians were out of work.

The Depression's impact on Australian society was devastating. Without work and a steady income, many people lost their homes. They were forced to live in makeshift shelters with no heating or sanitation. Some fathers deserted their families or turned to alcohol. Working-class children started leaving school at 13 or 14 years of age. Many women worked in basic jobs as well as looking after their children and homes on their own.

At the time leading up to the Depression, the Australian Government did not have a central unemployment program. Apart from charities and some private organisations, poor people had to rely on employment projects and public works projects.

The economy started to improve in 1932 but, in many cases, the damage to families could not be repaired. During the Great Depression, the vital role of Australian charities and volunteers was emphasised.



A soup kitchen during the Great Depression

Sir Charles Kingsford Smith (1897 – 1935)

Sir Charles Kingsford Smith was a daring pilot, aviation pioneer and an Australian hero.

In World War I, Charles Kingsford Smith fought at Gallipoli and flew with Britain's Royal Flying Corps.

His greatest achievement was making the first crossing of the Pacific Ocean from California to Queensland in 1928. When his plane, the Southern Cross, finally arrived in Australia, 25 000 adoring people were there to cheer for their hero 'Smithy'. He was knighted for his services to aviation in 1932.

Tragically, in 1935, he went down with his plane on a flight from England to Australia and was never found.

Sir Charles Kingsford Smith has been called the world's greatest aviator and he is remembered for giving the people, in the midst of the Depression, a true Australian hero to look up to.



World War II, 1939 - 1945

In World War II, Australians fought for the Allies in the deserts of North Africa and many other places. In North Africa, they fought in a long siege by the Germans and Italians in the town of Tobruk. The enemy called them the 'Rats of Tobruk' because they were cornered and had to eat whatever food they could find. The Australians fought and survived these tough conditions and so they adopted this name for themselves. The siege showed that these men had the fighting spirit of the World War I diggers. The soldiers themselves knew that they had a great tradition to live up to.

After Japan launched its war in the Pacific, the Australian servicemen and women came home. Before they could return though, Papua and New Guinea needed to be defended. This enormous task was handed to regular soldiers and to young conscript soldiers who were poorly trained. They fought the enemy in the jungle, along a steep, muddy trail known as the Kokoda Track. The Australian troops stopped the Japanese advance and the Kokoda Track has joined Anzac Cove at Gallipoli as a place of pilgrimage for many Australians.



A wounded soldier on the Kokoda Track helped by a Papuan carrier

When the Japanese took the great British base at Singapore in 1942, 15 000 Australian troops were among those who were captured and taken to work on the Thai-Burma Railway. It was during the construction of the Thai-Burma Railway under the Japanese during World War II that thousands of Australian and British prisoners of war died.

One of the sharpest Australian memories of the war is the cruel treatment of these men by the Japanese. Although Australian prisoners of war did their best to look after each other, with officers and men treating each other as equals, many Australians died.

Remembrance Day

As well as Anzac Day ceremonies, Remembrance Day is also a day on which Australians remember those who have served and died in war. At 11am on 11 November (the 11th month) each year, Australians pause to remember the sacrifice of the men and women who died or suffered in wars and conflicts, as well as all those who have served. We wear a red poppy on this day.



Red poppies have been used as a symbol of remembrance since World War I

The Australian Defence Force has recently been engaged in conflicts in East Timor, Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan and has taken part in UN peacekeeping operations in many parts of the world, including Africa, the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific region.

Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop (1907 – 1993)

Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop was a brave and caring surgeon and an Australian war hero.

During World War II, Weary was an Army surgeon. He and his fellow men were captured by the Japanese and taken to Burma to work on the Thai-Burma Railway. This was very long and hard work.

As their commander, Weary spoke up for his men and as their surgeon, he spent long hours healing them. He was tortured in the camp but defiantly continued to serve.

He was knighted in 1969 for his contribution to medicine. When he died, 10 000 people lined the streets of Melbourne for the state funeral of the hero they called 'The Surgeon of the Railway'.



They only stayed a short time in the camps but they learnt something about the land and the people. After the war, many returned to Australia as immigrants.



A European migrant arriving in Australia

Post-war refugees

After the war, Australia brought in migrants from other European countries to build up the population. Millions of people had fled Nazi Germany or were unable to return to their homelands now occupied by Soviet Russia. Approximately 170 000 of these displaced persons were accepted into Australia to begin a new life.

There was also an acute shortage of labour in Australia. The Australian Government believed that population growth was essential for the country's future. Healthy adult migrants under the age of 45 years could travel to Australia for £10 and their children could travel for free. Nationalities were, however, still restricted to those from the United Kingdom and Europe.

To revitalise Australia, the Australian Government started work on a bold scheme in 1949 to catch the waters of the Snowy River before they flowed to the sea in eastern Victoria. These waters were diverted to flow inland for irrigation and to be used to generate electric power. It was a massive project that took 25 years to complete. Seventy per cent of the workers on this project were migrants.

Migration in the early 1900s

In the period between the First and Second World Wars, restrictive conditions for entry into Australia remained. However, there was a growth in the migration of people, especially men, from southern Europe. They brought with them skills, education and their own cultural values. They helped develop Australia's rural industries and built roads and railways. Skilled Italian stonemasons made a significant contribution to the construction of our public buildings and residences.

At the end of the 1930s, Jewish refugees began to arrive from Europe. They were escaping the threat of Nazi Germany. They came from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland. Many were highly educated and talented refugees who contributed greatly to Australian cultural life.

Seventeen thousand Italian soldiers captured in the Second World War were held in prisoner of war camps in Australia. They were treated fairly.

The Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme

The Snowy Mountains Scheme is an important symbol of Australia's identity as an independent, multicultural and resourceful country.

It is the largest engineering project in Australia. It is also one of the largest hydro-electric schemes in the world.

The scheme supplies water that is vital to the farming industries of inland New South Wales and Victoria. Its power stations also produce up to 10 per cent of all electricity for New South Wales.

Only 2 per cent of the Snowy Mountains Scheme is visible above the ground. It consists of 16 major dams, seven power stations, a pumping station and 225 kilometres of tunnels, pipelines and aqueducts.

Work on the scheme began in 1949 and was finished in 1974. More than 100 000 people from over 30 countries worked on the project. Seventy per cent of these workers were migrants. After the project was completed, most of the European workers stayed on to live in Australia, making a valuable contribution to Australia's multicultural society.

The Snowy Mountains Scheme is situated in Kosciuszko National Park, New South Wales. The effects of the project on the environment have been closely watched. The scheme has meant that, in some places, the Snowy River now only carries 1 per cent of the water that it carried before.

For the good of the environment, the Victorian and New South Wales governments have agreed to restore the river's flow to 28 per cent.



Workers on the Snowy Mountains Scheme

Treatment of Indigenous people

In the 1940s and 1950s the Australian Government policy on Aboriginal people changed to one of assimilation. This meant that the Indigenous people were told to live as the non-Indigenous population lived. This did not work because Aboriginal people did not want to lose their traditional culture.

In the 1960s the policy changed to integration. Most men in Australia gained the right to vote in the 1850s, but Commonwealth voting rights were not extended to all Indigenous Australians until 1962. With integration, Aboriginal people were given civil liberties but they were still expected to adapt to non-Indigenous Australian culture.

Further change came in 1967, when more than 90 per cent of Australians voted 'YES' to allow Aboriginal people to be counted in the census. This referendum was a historic milestone. It showed that the vast majority of Australians wanted Indigenous people to be included and given the same rights as everyone else.

This opening up of Australian attitudes, and strong Aboriginal protest at the time, led the way for a policy of Indigenous self-determination in the 1970s. The Australian Government came to recognise and agree that Indigenous Australians should have a say in their own political, economic, social and cultural development.

Migration - a gradual change

In the 1950s and 1960s, the Asian community, churches and social groups all protested to end the 'White Australia' policy.

In 1958, the Australian Government dropped the dictation test and in 1966 Australia opened the door for selective non-European and skilled Asian migration. Eventually Australians everywhere recognised the value of including all nations in our migration program. The 'White Australia' policy ended in 1973, and the country was on the path to multiculturalism.

In 1973, the Australian Government removed all racial qualifications to immigration. In 1975, after the Vietnam War, Australia accepted record numbers of Asian refugees and migrants.

These people were mostly from Vietnam but Chinese and Indian migrants also started arriving in large numbers.

Since 1975, Australia has accepted refugees from many war-torn countries including Bosnia and Herzegovina, and from countries in the Middle East and Africa. Today, our migrants come from all over the world.

Australia has become a nation of all the lands; one of the great successes of the modern world. Since 1945, 6.5 million people have come to Australia. Over one quarter of Australians were born overseas.

Migrants have chosen to come to Australia and to share our common set of values. They add to the rich tapestry of Australian life.

Inclusion

Australia is now a multicultural society where every individual's right to practise his or her beliefs and follow cultural traditions within the framework of the law, is respected and protected.

Australia today has an active policy of inclusion, where every person of every race feels a part of our society. This policy runs through all aspects of the Australian culture. It is part of our educational curriculum from early childhood through to university and is practised in our workplaces and the service industry.

The right of every individual to be treated equally and without discrimination is defended by the Australian Human Rights Commission and government anti-discrimination agencies in every state and territory. Racial discrimination is publicly condemned and a crime under the law.

Australia has become a multicultural society of harmony and acceptance. It is a country where migrants, Indigenous people and others born in Australia can feel free to pursue their goals in peace. It is a place where past conflicts and resentments can be left far behind.

Dr Victor Chang (1936 – 1991)

Dr Victor Chang was one of Australia's best heart surgeons.

Victor Peter Chang Yam Him was born in China in 1936 and came to Australia when he was 15 years old.

He worked at St. Vincent's Hospital in Sydney where in 1984 he set up the first centre in Australia specialising in heart transplants. In 1986 Victor Chang was made a Companion of the Order of Australia, the highest Australian award.

Victor became concerned about a shortage of donors so he started designing an artificial heart, which was almost finished when he was tragically killed in 1991.

A new research centre has been set up in his memory. He is remembered for his expertise, his optimism and his innovation.



Albert Namatjira (1902 – 1959)

Albert Namatjira is one of Australia's great artists who founded a school of painting that continues today.

As a young Arrernte man, Albert showed a natural gift for painting.



He had very limited formal training but his watercolour paintings of the Australian country were very popular and all sold very quickly.

He and his wife were the first Aboriginal people in Australia allowed to become citizens. This meant they could vote, enter a hotel and build a house wherever they liked. Albert's Australian citizenship highlighted the fact that other Aboriginal people did not have these rights.

His life showed non-Indigenous Australians the injustice of racist laws and contributed to changes for Aboriginal people.

Eddie Mabo (1936 – 1992)

Eddie Mabo was an activist and spokesperson on Indigenous land rights.

Eddie Koiki Mabo was born on Murray Island, on the traditional land of the Mabo clan. From an early age, he was taught exactly which trees and which rocks marked the boundaries of his family's land.



It was not until many years later that Eddie learnt that his homeland was considered Crown land under Australian law and did not belong to his family. He turned his anger into action and took his test case to court on behalf of the people of Murray Island.

In 1992, after many years, Eddie's case was won in the High Court. The Mabo decision ruled that if Indigenous people could prove that they had a historic and ongoing traditional connection to their land, they could claim ownership of that land if it was otherwise unclaimed. This decision has seen the return of large areas of land to their original owners.

Eddie Mabo is remembered for his courage and for gaining land rights for Indigenous Australians.

Indigenous people – two decades of change

Aboriginal protest over land rights had been brought to public attention in the 1960s with the Gurindji Strike at Wave Hill cattle station in the Northern Territory. Aboriginal stockmen, led by Vincent Lingiari, walked off the job at the cattle station. Their protest was about pay and working conditions, but it turned into a demand for land rights. Their actions led the way for Eddie Mabo and others to fight for Indigenous land rights.

Under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* Aboriginal people were granted vast areas of outback Australia. In the early 1990s, the High Court's Mabo decision and the *Native Title Act 1993* recognised that Indigenous people had a claim to land based on their own traditional laws and customs. Over 10 per cent of the Australian land mass is now covered by native title determinations. Here, aspects of traditional society still survive. Indigenous culture continues to flourish and is widely admired by the broader community.

In May 1997, the 'Bringing them home' report was tabled in the Australian Parliament. The report was the result of an inquiry into the removal of large numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families. These children came to be known as the 'Stolen Generations'. As a result of the report, thousands of Australians showed support for their Indigenous fellow Australians by marching together on the first national 'Sorry Day' in 1998.

The Apology to the Stolen Generations, 2008

On 13 February 2008, the Australian Prime Minister made a national apology to the Stolen Generations in the Australian Parliament. He spoke on behalf of all Australians. He said sorry for the way Indigenous Australians had been treated in the past. He said sorry especially for the way that Indigenous children had been taken from their parents.

The speech was aired on television and radio stations. Thousands of Australians gathered together in public places and in their workplaces to listen to the 'Sorry' speech. The speech officially listed past injustices and apologised for them. This was an important step towards the healing of the Indigenous people and to making sure that these injustices would never happen again. The Sorry speech was an important step forward for all Australians.

Today, the invaluable contribution of Indigenous people to the Australian identity is recognised and celebrated. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people hold leading positions across the Australian workforce, including the justice system, politics, the arts and sports. The MARVIN program, an Aboriginal innovation in digital animation, has won multiple awards and is being used in educational and business institutions in over twenty countries around the world.



Skywriter writes 'Sorry' over Sydney

In conclusion

These pages have given you just a glimpse into our Australian story. You might find that this new knowledge has opened up your awareness of your environment. You might start looking at the dates on old buildings and placing them in a historical context. When you are offered a poppy to wear on 11 November, you will know that it is to remember our fallen servicemen and women. When you meet Indigenous Australians, you will have a sense of the ancient cultures that guide them. We urge you to expand your knowledge by using local resources and through travel. The more you know, the more you will notice.

We welcome you to Australian citizenship and invite your full participation in our peaceful democratic country.

Glossary of non-testable section

ambassador

a person who represents or promotes a country or an activity

board

a group of people chosen to make decisions, for example about how a company should be run

boarding school

a school where students live at the school and do not return home for the whole school term

bush

the Australian countryside still in its natural state

cattle station

a large farm where cattle are kept for beef production

charter

a formal written statement of rights and responsibilities

clan

a group of people, related by blood or marriage, who share the same territory

common ground

a shared area of interest

conscript soldier

a soldier who did not choose to join the defence force but who had to join in a time of war

Crown land

land belonging to the government

curriculum

a course of study

destitute

not having money or a way of getting money

didgeridoo

a musical instrument of the Aboriginal Australian people made from a long hollow log

fair go

a reasonable or equal chance for everyone to do well

fair play

participating well in a group effort, following the rules for everyone's benefit, good team work

fallen servicemen and women

servicemen and women killed in war or battle

forge

to build or create

gross domestic product (GDP)

the value of all goods and services made within a country in a year

heatwave

very hot weather that lasts for more than two days in a row

high treason

a serious criminal offence which involves an attempt to overthrow the government

iconic Indigenous paintings

art that is unique to and representative of the Indigenous people

land mass

an area of land

milestone

an important event in history

native title

the traditional rights that Indigenous people have to land and waters, decided within the Australian legal system

oral history

people's spoken memories of what happened in the past

pioneer

one of the first settlers, an achiever in the early days of colonial settlement

political representation

being represented by a politician in the parliament

reserve

an area of land set aside by the government for Aboriginal people to live on

sentence

the length of time a criminal serves as punishment

set wages

to decide on how much employees must be paid for their work

social reform

making improvements to society gradually, rather than by revolution

state funeral

a funeral paid for by the government to honour a citizen who has made an important contribution to the nation

stockade

a defensive enclosure made with wooden posts and stakes

stockmen

men employed to look after cattle

strike

when employees stop working, for example, to protest against an employer's decision

suffrage

the right to vote in public elections

sworn in

to be accepted into public office in a formal ceremony

tabled

to be officially presented for discussion or approval in parliament e.g. a report is tabled

walk of life

social class or background, job, position

For more information

Australian citizenship

To obtain more information about how to become an Australian citizen, visit the Australian citizenship website at www.citizenship.gov.au.

Australia

You can obtain more information about Australia at your local library. The following websites may also provide further information:

- About Australia www.australia.gov.au/about-australia
- Australia in Brief www.dfat.gov.au/aib

Australian Government programs and services

You can obtain information about Australian Government programs and services from www.australia.gov.au.

Federal MP or Senator

Your local federal MP or a Senator for your state or territory has a range of information about Australian Government programs and services.

A listing of MPs and senators can be found at www.aph.gov.au.

Australian Government organisations

You can obtain more information about Australian Government organisations referred to in the resource book from the following websites:

- Australian Defence Force www.defence.gov.au
- Australian Electoral Commission www.aec.gov.au
- Australian Federal Police www.afp.gov.au
- Australian Human Rights Commission www.humanrights.gov.au
- Australian Sports Commission www.ausport.gov.au
- Australian Taxation Office www.ato.gov.au
- Australian War Memorial www.awm.gov.au
- Reserve Bank of Australia www.rba.gov.au

Non-government organisations

You can obtain more information about non-government organisations referred to in the resource book from the following websites:

- Bradman Foundation Australia www.bradman.com.au
- Hamlin Fistula www.hamlinfistula.org
- Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia www.flyingdoctor.org.au
- School of the Air www.schoolair-p.schools.nsw.edu.au
- Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority www.snowyhydro.com.au
- The Fred Hollows Foundation www.hollows.org.au
- UNESCO World Heritage Centre whc.unesco.org
- United Nations www.un.org
- Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute www.victorchang.edu.au
- Volunteering Australia www.volunteeringaustralia.org

Other

Search the following websites for more information on the following topics:

- Australian Constitution www.aph.gov.au
- Australian of the Year Awards www.australianoftheyear.org.au
- 'Bringing them home' report www.humanrights.gov.au
- Commonwealth parks and reserves www.environment.gov.au/topics/national-parks
- Famous Australians: The Australian Dictionary of Biography Online Edition <http://adb.anu.edu.au>
- List of Bills currently before Parliament www.aph.gov.au/bills
- Parliament of Australia www.aph.gov.au
- Parliamentary education services www.peo.gov.au
- Public Holidays www.australia.gov.au
- The Apology to the Stolen Generations www.australia.gov.au

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- p60 - 'Afghans' and their camels working in inland Australia (ref: A6180:25/5/78/62)
- p67 - Personalities - Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop in his office, 1986 (ref: A6180:1/9/86/12)
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- p52 - Indonesian women greeting Australian Defence Force personnel during the relief operation in Aceh, Indonesia after the tsunami, 30 December 2004, photograph by Dan Hunt (ref: nla.pic-vn3510861)
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