

# BARANI BARRABUGU YESTERDAY TOMORROW

SYDNEY'S  
ABORIGINAL  
JOURNEY



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*Think before you bin this guide.*

After reading, pass it on to  
someone else who might find  
it useful or recycle it.



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**ABORIGINAL PEOPLE HAVE  
ALWAYS LIVED IN THIS  
PLACE WE CALL SYDNEY.  
THIS BOOKLET HIGHLIGHTS  
SYDNEY'S ABORIGINAL  
JOURNEY:  
ITS PLACES, ITS HISTORY,  
AND ITS PEOPLE.  
BARANI / BARRABUGU  
(YESTERDAY/TOMORROW)  
CELEBRATES A LIVING  
CULTURE IN THE HEART  
OF THE CITY.**

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# **BARANI BARRABUGU**

Barani / Barrabugu (Yesterday / Tomorrow) is the first expression of the Eora Journey, a major project within the Sustainable Sydney 2030 strategy. The City of Sydney is committed to acknowledging, sharing and celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. This booklet is a first step in reasserting the Aboriginal histories of this place.

The City's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel was established in 2008 to provide advice to Council on matters of importance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the City of Sydney. Members of the Panel have worked closely with the City's History Program to develop this booklet, and I congratulate them for their contribution.

We can all be proud of Barani / Barrabugu (Yesterday / Tomorrow) because it enriches our understanding of the many layers in the history of Sydney. I encourage you to use this booklet to explore the culture and history of our great city.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clover Moore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Clover Moore MP  
Lord Mayor of Sydney

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**OVERVIEW OF SITES IN SYDNEY ASSOCIATED WITH HISTORIES OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE**

- Early Contact
- Civil Rights
- Education
- Working Life
- Sport and Leisure
- Performing Arts
- Visual Arts



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# EORA JOURNEY

Aboriginal people have an unbroken and ongoing connection with the City of Sydney. Barani / Barrabugu (Yesterday / Tomorrow) reveals some of these associations, their histories and their cultures.

The original inhabitants of the Sydney city region are the Gadigal people. Despite the destructive impact of first contact, Gadigal culture survived. As the town of Sydney developed into a city, the Gadigal were joined by other Aboriginal people from elsewhere in New South Wales, to live, work and forge relationships within the urban Aboriginal community. Aboriginal people in our city have a devastating yet profound past (barani) and a diverse yet shared future (barrabugu). They're 'black, proud and deadly'.

## CULTURAL ADVICE

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this publication contains names and images of people who have died.

The City of Sydney gratefully acknowledges the people and organisations that have given permission to reproduce the images in this booklet. Every effort has been made to trace and acknowledge copyright, and to obtain permission from the individuals or their descendants whose images are used within this booklet. If you have any further information about the people depicted, please contact the City of Sydney's History Program.

Translations of the Sydney language used throughout this booklet are derived from Jakelin Troy's book *The Sydney Language* published in 1994.

The Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council is the custodian of Aboriginal culture and heritage within the Sydney region. For more information, visit Metro's website at [www.metrolalc.org.au](http://www.metrolalc.org.au)

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## HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

This booklet provides histories of sites in the City of Sydney local government area that are associated with the histories of Aboriginal people.

Each of the sites is connected with a historical theme that expresses an aspect of cultural life in Sydney – these are colour coded throughout the booklet and on the maps. Together the sites and themes provide a layered narrative of the lived experience of Sydney's Aboriginal people.









### WANT TO GET OUT ON THE STREETS?

Four precinct maps covering Sydney's inner city area identify the location of sites. While all the sites have historical significance, many have changed or disappeared. Others are private buildings or educational facilities that are not suitable to visit. The numbers for these sites are circled with a dotted line.

Sites that are worth visiting are symbolised with an unbroken line around the numbers.

Major institutions where you can further encounter Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and history in the city are marked with a magnifying glass and are listed in the Visitor Experiences section of this booklet.

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**BEREWALGAL** PEOPLE FROM A DISTANT PLACE  
**MUBAYA** SPEAK AN UNKNOWN LANGUAGE  
**YURIDYUWA** SIT NEAR (TO SIT NEAR ANYONE)

## EARLY CONTACT

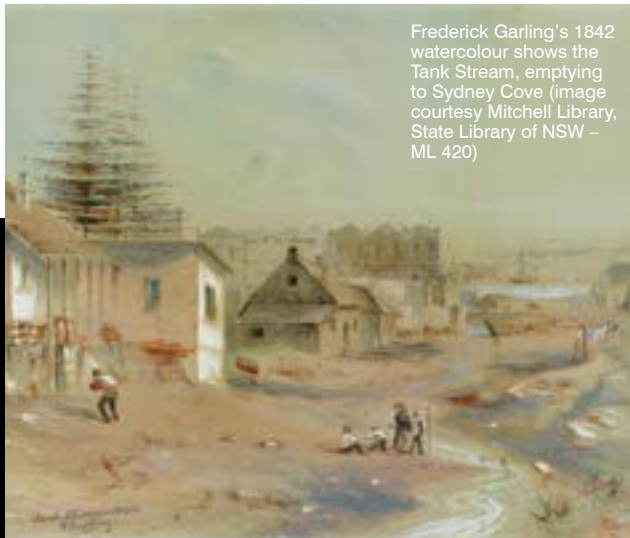
ABORIGINAL PEOPLE HAVE ALWAYS LIVED IN SYDNEY. FOLLOWING THE ARRIVAL OF THE FIRST FLEET IN 1788, THE BRITISH ENCOUNTERED ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AROUND THE COVES AND BAYS OF PORT JACKSON. THE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES HERE SHOWED ENORMOUS RESILIENCE AND GENEROSITY TOWARDS THE BRITISH WHO TOOK THEIR LAND.



Excavation at Sheas Creek in 1896  
 (photograph courtesy Australian Museum)

### 01 SHEAS CREEK (ALEXANDRA CANAL), ALEXANDRIA

The earliest recorded excavation of an Aboriginal archaeological site in Sydney was uncovered on the banks of Sheas Creek in 1896 during construction of the Alexandra Canal. Artefacts included incised skeletal remains of a dugong and stone tool fragments. They were donated to the Australian Museum and have been radiocarbon dated to over 6,000 years old.



Frederick Garling's 1842 watercolour shows the Tank Stream, emptying to Sydney Cove (image courtesy Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW – ML 420)

02

## THE TANK STREAM, SYDNEY

The watercourse named the Tank Stream was an important source of fresh water for local Aboriginal people living in Sydney before the arrival of European settlement. As the 19th century progressed and the population of Sydney grew, the Tank Stream was first polluted and then channelled and diverted underground into a series of drains and pipes. It is now hidden beneath the streets of the city.

Fifty-four worked stone artefacts were discovered in 1996 during excavations for the construction of the City Recital Hall at Angel Place, which was built above a section of the Tank Stream. This archaeological discovery shows that Aboriginal people had, for centuries, camped alongside the stream to flake river pebbles to make stone tools for fishing and hunting. Look out for the display of artefacts in the City Recital Hall foyer.

A small exhibition about the Tank Stream, including an excavated segment of the original brick-lined oviform drain, can be found in the basement of the General Post Office building. Enter directly under the clock tower.

03

## CAMP SITE, LILYVALE, THE ROCKS

Before European settlement, the rocky ridge above the western side of Sydney Cove were thickly vegetated, its highest points covered with a dense forest of blackbutts and angophoras. During archaeological excavations for a hotel in The Rocks in 1991, remains were found of an Aboriginal fireplace and a meal of rock oyster, hairy mussel, snapper and bream. These remains were dated to about 340 years before British landfall on Australia's eastern coast.



John Lewin, 'Fish catch and Dawes Point Sydney Harbour', c1813 (image courtesy Art Gallery of South Australia – 899P30)

## 04 DAWES POINT/TAR-RA, THE ROCKS

The Aboriginal name for the peninsula on the western side of Sydney Cove is Tar-Ra. It is also known as Dawes Point because it was the site of an observatory built in April 1788 by Lieutenant William Dawes of the First Fleet. He lived and worked here, and with a young Aboriginal woman Patyegarang, compiled the first dictionary of the local Aboriginal language of Sydney.

Large flat rocks at the tip of the peninsula, directly underneath the southern approach of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, were said to have been used by local Aboriginal people as a place to cook fish.

Parish Map of St Philip showing Dawes Point in 1835  
(image courtesy State Records of NSW – AO Map 286)



## 05 BENNELONG POINT / DUBBAGULLEE, SYDNEY

Dubbagullee, the peninsula on the eastern side of Sydney Cove, was the site of a brick hut built for Bennelong by Governor Arthur Phillip in 1790. Within two years, Bennelong set sail for England with his young kinsman Yemmerrawanne and Governor Phillip. Shortly after his return three years later, Bennelong's house was torn down.

This peninsula, named in honour of Bennelong, has retained significance as a gathering place for Aboriginal people.



Bennelong Point  
viewed from  
Dawes Point in  
c1804 (image  
courtesy Mitchell  
Library, State  
Library of NSW –  
V1 / 1810 / 1)



06

## LAKE NORTHAM, VICTORIA PARK, GLEBE

Blackwattle Creek was once a tidal watercourse that extended from its marshy headwaters at Glebe towards the suburbs of Redfern and Waterloo to the south. A remnant of this creek, Lake Northam, which is within Victoria Park, is a reminder of the natural environment inhabited by Aboriginal people before the arrival of the Europeans.

Sydney's landscape was greatly modified throughout the 19th century. The foreshores of the harbour were reclaimed, and the waterways in and around the inner suburbs, including Blackwattle Creek, were harnessed for use by industry as well as being diverted underground to allow for residential development.

Victoria Park was the site of the Tent Embassy protest against the Sydney Olympics in 2000, and has been the venue for Yabun, an annual festival held on 26 January, showcasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, since 2002.



Frederick Terry's watercolour landscape showing Grose Farm in the 1860s, the site of today's Sydney University with Victoria Park and Lake Northam in the foreground (image courtesy Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW – ML 315)

The turning of the first sod for the new railway station at Prince Alfred Park in July 1850, as depicted by John Rae (image courtesy Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW – ML 244)



07

## PRINCE ALFRED PARK (CLEVELAND PADDOCKS), SURRY HILLS

Prince Alfred Park, earlier known as Cleveland Paddocks, was an Aboriginal camp site until the mid 19th century. Sydney's Aboriginal people lived here, west of the city centre, until the coming of the railway in 1855 and the subsequent use of the park as the showground for the Agricultural Society. Sydney's Aboriginal population had been earlier pushed to the fringes of the city, away from their traditional camping grounds around Sydney Cove at The Domain and Woolloomooloo.

## 08 THE AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM, 6-8 COLLEGE STREET, SYDNEY

The Australian Museum is Australia's oldest natural history museum. It was established in 1827 when the British Colonial Office authorised a museum in NSW for the collection of 'rare and curious specimens of natural history'.

Today, it has a rich collection of Aboriginal artefacts from Sydney and NSW, many of them donated by local citizens in the 19th century. It also has millions of specimens of fossils, minerals, plants and animals.



Shell fish hooks (*bara*) from the Sydney region (photograph by James King, courtesy Australian Museum)



## 09 HYDE PARK SOUTH, SYDNEY

Until the mid 1820s, Aboriginal people travelled from all over Sydney, and as far away as the Hunter and the Illawarra, to gather at a ceremonial contest ground to the south of the city. The exact location of this site of ritualised conflict settlement and resistance is unclear. Described as lying between the road to Botany Bay and the Brickfields, it was probably near Hyde Park South.

Bloody fist fights involving up to 100 people, spearings and beatings were used to resolve conflicts at the Brickfields contest ground. These were observed and recorded by visiting Russian sailors in 1814, and again 10 years later by the French explorers Dumont d'Urville and Rene Lesson.

John Rae's 1842 view of Hyde Park South (image courtesy Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW – DG SV\* / Sp Coll / Rae / 20)



A portrait of Bennelong c1793 (image courtesy Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW – DGB 10)

## 10 THE SITE OF FIRST GOVERNMENT HOUSE, CNR PHILLIP AND BRIDGE STREETS, SYDNEY

Sydney's first Government House overlooking Sydney Cove was built for Governor Arthur Phillip in 1789. The building and its grounds were an important place of early contact and cross-cultural exchange between Sydney's Aboriginal population and the colonists, as expressed through the relationship between Bennelong, a Wangal man, and Governor Phillip.

In November 1789, Bennelong and another Aboriginal man, Colebee, were captured at Manly under Phillip's orders and were held at Government House. Yet Bennelong maintained cordial ties with Phillip after he escaped. He often dined at Government House with his wife Barangaroo, and a number of Aboriginal people were buried within the gardens at his behest. They included Barangaroo and her infant daughter Dilboong, and Ballooderry from the Burramattagal clan near Parramatta.

## 11 THE DOMAIN AND ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, SYDNEY

The Governor's Domain was proclaimed by Governor Lachlan Macquarie in 1812 to provide a parkland setting for First Government House. The grounds were much more extensive than today, taking in the Royal Botanic Gardens and extending to Woolloomooloo Bay to the east.

Aboriginal explorer Bowen Bungaree, his mother Cora Gooseberry and their extended family camped here, at a spot near Centipede Rock at Woolloomooloo, through to the 1840s. They were regularly seen at the wharves at nearby Circular Quay, selling fish and oyster catches, and demonstrating how to throw boomerangs.

By the 1940s, the Domain had become a site of protest for Aboriginal people. Jack Patten and William Ferguson, both key members of the Aborigines Progressive Association (APA), were gifted orators and regulars at Speakers Corner in the Domain in the 1930s. Their political agitation was instrumental in shaping the resolution that was read at the Day of Mourning Conference on 26 January 1938 at Australian Hall.

A ceremony at Farm Cove (*Yoo-long erah-ba-diang*) depicted by James Neagle in 1798 (image courtesy National Library of Australia – nla.pic-an14340273-8)



George Peacock's 1845 view of Customs House with The Rocks in the background (image courtesy Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW – DG 38)



12

## **CIRCULAR QUAY / WARRANE, SYDNEY**

The Aboriginal name for Sydney Cove as recorded in a number of First Fleet journals, maps and vocabularies, was Warrane, also spelt as War-ran, Warrang and Wee-rong. This place is highly significant to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people as a site of first contact between the Eora and the Berewalgal (meaning people from a distant place: the Europeans).

Warrane and Sydney Harbour were integral to the everyday lives of the Eora people. The men speared fish from the shoreline, while the women line-fished from their nowies (canoes). The Berewalgal gathered local knowledge about the Eora people and their fishing spots through observation and interaction.

Historical records show that a group of Aboriginal people were camping at the Government Boatsheds at Circular Quay from the 1830s through to the 1880s. The camp was disbanded in 1881 and its residents moved to La Perouse, in the lead up to the formation of the Aborigines Protection Board.

**MAWA GRASP – TO TAKE HOLD**  
**WALAMA RETURN OR COME BACK**

## **CIVIL RIGHTS**

THERE WAS A GROWING POLITICAL ACTIVISM WITHIN SYDNEY'S ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY OVER THE 20TH CENTURY, WHICH LED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUPPORT SYSTEMS AND FACILITIES FOR URBAN ABORIGINAL PEOPLE. THE SUBURB OF REDFERN WAS A PARTICULAR FOCUS FOR ACTIVISM AROUND CIVIL AND LAND RIGHTS FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE.



**13** **ABORIGINES WELFARE BOARD,  
CHIEF SECRETARY'S BUILDING,  
121 MACQUARIE STREET, SYDNEY**

The Chief Secretary's Building on Macquarie Street was the meeting place for the now notorious Aborigines Welfare Board until the Board's abolition in 1969.

The organisation was formed in 1883 under its original name, the Board for the Protection of Aborigines. Its purpose was to make recommendations about the conditions of Aboriginal people living in NSW. Under the *1909 Aborigines Protection Act*, it became responsible for administering Aboriginal stations and reserves throughout NSW and for providing food, clothing and housing for the people living there.

The Board could control where Aboriginal people lived and worked and because it was authorised to remove Aboriginal children from their families, it was instrumental in the creation of the Stolen Generations. The Aborigines Welfare Board was reconstituted in 1943 to include two Aboriginal members for the first time.

Arthur Ferguson and James Morgan, new members of the Aborigines Welfare Board in 1964 (photograph courtesy Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW – GPO 2 25653)

14

**BIDURA, 357 GLEBE PT ROAD, GLEBE  
ROYLESTON, 270 GLEBE PT ROAD, GLEBE**

*Bidura* was a grand residence designed and built as a family home by architect Edmund Blacket. It was purchased by the NSW Child Welfare Department in 1920 for use as a 'home' for female wards of the state. Nearby *Royleston* fulfilled the same purpose for boys.

Many held here were Aboriginal children who were forcibly separated from their families. These children would later be known as the Stolen Generations. In 1973, *Bidura* was stormed by women liberationists in protest about the brutal conditions for female wards in state institutions. In 1980, residential facilities were closed and a new building was constructed at the rear to house a children's court.

*Bidura* and *Royleston* were two of a number of residential homes established in the 20th century for the care and control of wards of the state in NSW. They housed children up to the age of 18 who were assessed by the children's court as being uncontrollable, delinquent or neglected. Both these places have significance for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children who were removed from their families. They are remembered as places of punishment and isolation, as acknowledged in the *Bringing them Home* and *Forgotten Australians* reports.



*Bidura* in 1973  
(photograph courtesy Bernard Smith Collection, City of Sydney)

Australian Aboriginal Progressive Association emblem (courtesy John Maynard and State Records of NSW)



*"We aim at the spiritual, political, industrial and social. We want to work out our own destiny. Our people have not had the courage to stand together in the past, but now we are united, and are determined to work for the preservation for all those interests which are near and dear to us."*

Fred Maynard, quoted in the *Daily Guardian*, 24 April 1925

### 15 ST DAVID'S HALL, 17 ARTHUR STREET, SURRY HILLS

The Australian Aboriginal Progressive Association (AAPA) was an all-Aboriginal political organisation formed in Sydney in 1924 by Fred Maynard. He had been involved in the Coloured Progressive Association, a group active in Sydney between 1903 and 1908, and was profoundly influenced by Marcus Garvey and the African-American civil rights movement in the 1920s.

The first of four highly successful AAPA conferences organised by Maynard was held at St David's Hall in Surry Hills in April 1925. The conference had an attendance of over 200 delegates from around the state, and was integral in the movement towards self-determination among Aboriginal people in NSW.

The conference at Surry Hills is considered to be the first civil rights convention of Aboriginal people in Australia. Maynard's work with the AAPA in the 1920s paved the way for the Day of Mourning Conference in 1938.

### 16 AUSTRALIAN HALL, 152 ELIZABETH STREET, SYDNEY

*"...we appeal to the Australian nation of today to make new laws for the education and care of Aborigines, we ask for a new policy which will raise our people to full citizen status and equality within the community."*

Excerpt from the Day of Mourning resolution read by Jack Patten, 1938

This was where Aboriginal rights activist Jack Patten read the resolution on citizenship rights at the Day of Mourning Conference on 26 January 1938, which only Aboriginal people were allowed to attend. Activists including Patten, William Ferguson and William Cooper were protesting against the celebrations for the Sesquicentenary year of European settlement in Australia.

Australian Hall is considered by many to be the birthplace of the Aboriginal civil rights movement in Australia. In the 1990s, a legal battle was waged by the descendants of the original activists and their supporters to recognise the social and historical significance of the building. It was listed on the State Heritage Register in 1999 and added to the National Heritage List in 2008.



Jack Patten reading the resolution at the Day of Mourning in 1938 (photograph courtesy Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW – MLQ059/9)



National Aborigines Day celebrated with speeches in Martin Place in 1963 (photograph courtesy Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW – GPO2 23086)

## 17 MARTIN PLACE, SYDNEY

An annual protest event was inaugurated following the Day of Mourning demonstration at Australian Hall in 1938. Known as Aborigines Day, it was held each Sunday before Australia Day.

In 1955 it was decided to move this commemoration day to July as a way of also celebrating Aboriginal culture and heritage. Martin Place was the site for rallies and events as part of this event from the early 1960s.

National Aborigines Day was the forerunner of National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week, which continues to be held annually across Australia in the first week of July.

18

## FOUNDATION FOR ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS, 810-812 GEORGE STREET, SYDNEY

The Foundation for Aboriginal Affairs was established in December 1964 to provide assistance to Aboriginal people living in Sydney. Although it was originally intended as a non-political and non-religious organisation, it soon became an important stepping stone in the push towards community-control within Sydney's Aboriginal community.

The 'Foundo' helped with housing, employment, education, welfare, and legal, medical and financial assistance. It was administered by Aboriginal people including Charles Perkins, Chicka Dixon and Ken Brindle, but non-Aboriginal people were also involved in its operations and helped with fundraising events including dances.

The Foundation for Aboriginal Affairs bought a building at 810-812 George Street for its headquarters, which was officially opened in October 1966 by Eric Willis, then the Chief Secretary of NSW. The organisation folded in 1977 due to a lack of funding and a general shift towards Aboriginal-run and administered organisations.



Harry Williams (left) and Chicka Dixon at the Foundation for Aboriginal Affairs in the mid 1960s (photograph courtesy Robert Hallams Collection, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW – SLIDES 53 / 1442-1456)



### 19 ABORIGINAL HOUSING COMPANY, THE BLOCK, REDFERN

There has always been an Aboriginal presence in Redfern because it is centrally located, housing was once relatively cheap, and it was close to industry and jobs in South Sydney.

During the 1930s Depression, many extended families moved to the area around Caroline, Eveleigh, Vine and Louis Streets, which became known as 'The Block'. The local population continued to increase, especially following the 1967 Referendum on Citizenship Rights which saw the abolition of NSW's reserve system, which put pressure on housing in Sydney. In the early 1970s, squatters occupied vacant terraces on The Block as a political and practical response to overcrowding and homelessness.

The Aboriginal Housing Company was formed in 1973 by Aboriginal leaders and supporters. It bought the first six houses on The Block with a grant from the Whitlam Labor Government, and acquired the last house there in 1994.

The Aboriginal Housing Company is now seeking to redevelop and revitalise The Block as part of the Pemulwuy Project.

The Aboriginal Housing Company's Redfern Housing Project under way in 1974 (photograph courtesy National Archives of Australia – Series A8739, Item A1/8/74/74)

### 20 ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICE, 142 REGENT STREET, REDFERN

The Aboriginal Legal Service was established in December 1970 to provide free legal assistance to Aboriginal people living in Sydney. The service was intended to counteract disadvantage and discrimination faced by Aboriginal people, especially those unable to afford legal advice.

Hal Wootten, a professor at the University of NSW, organised for law students and practising lawyers to contribute their expertise and time, while members of Redfern's Aboriginal community ran the administration of the organisation and acted as field officers. Key foundation members were Gordon Briscoe, Paul Coe and Gary Williams.

The Aboriginal Legal Service was originally based in a shopfront on Regent Street in order to provide greater community access. In more recent times, it moved to an office on Elizabeth Street in Redfern. The service was an embodiment of a generation of Aboriginal people's desire to control their own destiny, and has since provided a model for the establishment of over 60 similar community legal services throughout Australia.

Redfern's Aboriginal Legal Service in 1980 (photograph courtesy National Archives of Australia – Series A6180, Item 16/4/80/33)





Clients at the  
Aboriginal Medical  
Service in 1974  
(photograph courtesy  
National Archives  
of Australia –  
Series A8739,  
Item A2/8/74/23)



## 21 ABORIGINAL MEDICAL SERVICE, 36 TURNER STREET, REDFERN

The Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS) was set up in July 1971 to provide free medical support to Aboriginal people living in Sydney. It was the first Aboriginal community-run medical service in Australia, and had a holistic approach to health care from the outset.

Its formation was a response to health issues among Aboriginal people newly migrated from regional NSW, many of whom were living in overcrowded conditions and experienced poor nutrition. There was no universal health care scheme at this time, and some were reluctant to access mainstream medical services.

Foundation members included non-Aboriginal doctors who volunteered their services. Prominent community activists were employed as field officers including Mum Shirl, who was the first Welfare Officer.

In 1977, the AMS moved to premises behind St Vincent's Catholic Church. The Sisters of Mercy later presented the deeds of this property in a symbolic gesture of solidarity. A new building for the AMS designed by the Merrima Design Unit at the Government Architect's Office was built here in 2004.

## 22 BOOT TRADE UNION HALL, 122 EVELEIGH STREET, REDFERN

The Boot Trade Union Hall at Redfern was a popular gathering place for Aboriginal people living in Sydney following the Second World War, especially for dances on Friday evenings.

It was also the site of an important Aborigines Progressive Association (APA) meeting in the 1940s. It was addressed by William Ferguson and Bert Groves to protest about the poor conditions of Aboriginal workers at Oodnadatta in South Australia.



The Boot Trade Union Hall in Redfern in 1922  
(image courtesy National Library of Australia)



Gary Williams and Charles Perkins at Sydney University in 1963 (photograph courtesy Gary Williams)

23

## FREEDOM RIDE, UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

Student Action for Aborigines (SAFA) was formed in 1964 as a way of engaging students at the University of Sydney with issues encountered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia. The group had been directly influenced by the Freedom Rides in America in 1961, and the ensuing Afro-American civil rights movement.

In February 1965, 29 students from the university including Charles Perkins, Gary Williams, Anne Curthoys and Jim Spigelman, set out in a bus to tour regional NSW to protest against racism towards Aboriginal people. The bus was on the road for two weeks but generated comment and debate in the local and international press for years after about the treatment of Aboriginal people in Australia.

24

## BURLINGTON HOTEL, 431–439 SUSSEX STREET, HAYMARKET

Aboriginal people were not free to drink in public bars in Sydney through to the 1970s. Although not upheld by law, this informal apartheid was enforced by patrons, publicans and the police. The imposition of this unofficial ban was a snub to Aboriginal people, and reflected the prevailing attitudes of non-Aboriginal people at this time.

On 21 March 1965, a group of 40 Aboriginal men staged a 'sit-in' demonstration in the lounge of the Burlington Hotel on the corner of Hay and Sussex Streets in Haymarket. The group led by Charles Perkins and Ken Brindle was protesting against the hotel's policy to refuse admission to Aboriginal patrons.

The protest at the Burlington Hotel came a month after a group of Sydney University students took part in an event that became known as the Freedom Ride.

Aboriginal activists in the lounge of the Burlington Hotel on 20 March 1965 (photograph by Ted Golding, courtesy Fairfax Photos)





**25** **LAND RIGHTS,  
SYDNEY TOWN HALL,  
483 GEORGE STREET, SYDNEY**

Along with the protection of children, and the right to vote and be counted, Aboriginal people also mobilised politically around land rights throughout the 20th century.

Sydney had seen protests about Aboriginal land ownership from the early 20th century, but activism here grew in response to the national land rights movement which came to a head in the 1970s over land claims by the Gurindji and Yirrikala peoples in the Northern Territory. In Sydney the movement was led by a coalition of Aboriginal activists, student radicals, humanists, and radical church leaders, and land rights protest marches were organised by the Black Moratorium Committee based at Tranby in Glebe.

Sydney Town Hall was a focus for Aboriginal activism as its Lower Town Hall was the site for rallies, public talks and fund raising concerts in the early 1970s and 80s. Land rights were also a key concern for the protests around the Bicentennial celebrations, which included a march from Redfern Oval into the city on 26 January 1988.

Aboriginal protestors taking to the streets of Sydney during the 1988 Bicentenary (photograph courtesy Newspix)

**26** **REDFERN PARK,  
REDFERN**

*"...It was we who did the dispossessing. We took the traditional lands and smashed the traditional way of life. We brought the diseases. The alcohol. We committed the murders. We took the children from their mothers. We practised discrimination and exclusion. It was our ignorance and our prejudice. And our failure to imagine these things being done to us. With some noble exceptions, we failed to make the most basic human response and enter into their hearts and minds. We failed to ask – how would I feel if this were done to me? As a consequence, we failed to see that what we were doing degraded all of us...."*

Excerpt from Paul Keating's  
Redfern Speech, 1992



Paul Keating at the launch of the Year of the Indigenous Person at Redfern Park in 1992 (photograph courtesy City of Sydney Archives – SRC16969)

Redfern Park was the site of a speech given by the former Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating on 10 December 1992, to launch the Year of the Indigenous Person. Subsequently referred to as the 'Redfern Speech', it focused on reconciliation, and was the first acknowledgement by a Commonwealth Government of the dispossession of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

**NGARA LISTEN, HEAR, THINK DJIYADI TALK  
BADUWA SEEK WARANARA SEEK**

## EDUCATION

EDUCATION AND SCHOOLING NURTURED AND EMPOWERED ABORIGINAL PEOPLE LIVING IN SYDNEY IN THE 20TH CENTURY. WITH THE GROWING SELF-DETERMINATION MOVEMENT IN THE LATE 1960s, ABORIGINAL PEOPLE CREATED AND MANAGED THEIR OWN LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AND INITIATIVES.

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**TRANBY,  
13 MANSFIELD STREET,  
GLEBE**

Tranby Aboriginal College is a community-based education cooperative run by and for Aboriginal people. Located in the inner-city suburb of Glebe, Tranby has provided an independent learning environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people since it was set up in 1957 by the Reverend Alf Clint, a Methodist minister and trade unionist.

Apart from providing education, Tranby was proactive in the land rights movement from the early 1970s and in the push for a Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody in the 1990s.

Additional buildings at Tranby were completed in 1998 reflecting the philosophy of an Aboriginal learning circle with round rooms surrounding a courtyard. The new buildings were designed by architects Julie Cracknell and Peter Lonergan with the Merrima Design Unit.

Aboriginal people continue to travel from all over Australia to study and train at Tranby, taking up courses in legal studies, community development and business.

Students at Tranby Aboriginal College in February 1973  
(photograph courtesy City of Sydney Archives – SRC14399)





**28** **MURAWINA,  
EVELEIGH STREET,  
REDFERN**

Murawina, meaning 'black woman', was a childcare centre run by and for Aboriginal people. It began in 1972 as a breakfast program in Hollis Park for local Aboriginal children living in Redfern and Newtown, but soon expanded to become a child care service. By the late 1970s, Murawina occupied purpose-built accommodation on Eveleigh Street, and moved to the newly refurbished Redfern Public School in 2003.

Murawina contributed significantly to the inner-city Aboriginal community since its inception by providing a link to the mainstream education system. To this end, Aboriginal kinship terms were used in place of formal titles for teachers, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture was integrated into learning programs. This reflected the philosophy of Murawina to instil Aboriginal children with pride in their heritage to enable them to deal with potential racism in wider society.

Students at Murawina on Eveleigh Street in 1980 (photograph courtesy National Archives of Australia – Series A6180, Item 22/4/80/16)

29

**EORA CENTRE,  
333 ABERCROMBIE STREET,  
CHIPPENDALE**

The Eora Centre in Chippendale is a campus of the Sydney Institute of TAFE. Originally located at Regent Street, and later relocated to its present site on Abercrombie Street, it has been a centre for contemporary visual and performing arts and Aboriginal studies since it was established in July 1984.

The Eora Centre has nurtured a range of practising visual artists including Roy Kennedy, H J Wedge and Euphemia Bostock. Many went on to be involved with the Boomalli artists' cooperative, while others now have their works exhibited at the Yiribanna Gallery at the Art Gallery of NSW.

Students in the Theatre and Screen Performance course at the Eora College in 2010 (photograph courtesy TAFE NSW – Sydney Institute)



30

**OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL PRIMARY SCHOOL, 2-6 KELLICK STREET, WATERLOO**

**DARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL, ABERCROMBIE STREET, DARLINGTON**

A number of private and public schools in Sydney's inner-city suburbs have provided primary education for Aboriginal people.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Primary School at Waterloo, originally known as the Waterloo Estate School when it opened in 1858, is one of Sydney's oldest Catholic schools. Today about half of the students are from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background.

Darlington Public School was established in 1878, moving to new premises on Abercrombie Street in 1975. It has educated primary school age children living in Chippendale, Darlington, Redfern and Waterloo since its establishment. Today, the school's curriculum is aimed at Aboriginal students living in these suburbs.



Primary school students learning Aboriginal language at Darlington Public School in 2004 (photograph John Grainger, courtesy Newspix)

Students at the entrance to Cleveland Street High School (photograph courtesy NSW Department of Education and Training)



31

**CLEVELAND STREET HIGH SCHOOL, 244 CLEVELAND STREET SURRY HILLS**

**ALEXANDRIA PARK HIGH SCHOOL, PARK ROAD, ALEXANDRIA**

Cleveland Street High School has educated generations of Redfern and Waterloo children since it was established in 1867. Originally the school provided only primary education, but in 1913 offered secondary education as well, becoming a boy's high school in 1956.

In 1982, 'Clevo' and Waterloo High Schools were merged to become a co-educational facility in Alexandria Park on the site of the former Federal Match Factory in Alexandria. This purpose-built school was provided with an Aboriginal Resource Room and an Aboriginal Teacher's Aid, reflecting the high proportion of students with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage.

Customers at Waterloo Library in December 1984  
(photograph courtesy City of Sydney Archives – SRC7490)



32

**WATERLOO TOWN HALL & LIBRARY,  
770 ELIZABETH STREET, WATERLOO**

Waterloo Town Hall was converted to a library in the early 1970s. The Koori Collection is a dedicated Aboriginal history collection held at the library which was officially launched in July 2007 as part of NAIDOC Week. It comprises over 1250 fiction and non-fiction items on Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander related subjects such as politics, art, sport and history.

**MAGARI TO FISH BINNIE BOW I WILL MAKE  
WULUNADARANG HUNT YARRABUNI MIND YOUR  
WORK! BANGA OR BANGAWARRA MAKE OR DO**

## WORKING LIFE

SYDNEY'S INNER SUBURBS HAVE LONG BEEN A MAGNET FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE FROM AROUND NSW AND INTERSTATE. THE 'BIG SMOKE' PROVIDED WORK OPPORTUNITIES, SHELTER AND REINFORCED CONNECTIONS WITH COMMUNITY AND FAMILY.



**33 HENRY JONES & CO IXL JAM FACTORY,  
12 GOLDEN GROVE STREET, DARLINGTON**



**34 FEDERAL MATCH FACTORY,  
7-11 PARK ROAD, ALEXANDRIA**

Anti-clockwise from top left:

Henry Jones & Co IXL Jam Factory on Golden Grove Street in Darlington in 1937 (photograph courtesy Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW – Home and Away 15975)

The Federal Match Factory at Alexandria in the late 1970s (photograph courtesy City of Sydney – CRS 1140: BM 901)

Female employees at the Australian Glass Manufacturers in Waterloo in 1947 (photograph courtesy Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW – Home and Away 24966)

Aboriginal women living in South Sydney worked for the Federal Match Factory in Alexandria, which was affectionately known as Wellington Matches because so many of the Aboriginal workers were originally from the NSW country town of Wellington. Other local industries where Aboriginal people worked were the Henry Jones & Co IXL Jam Factory on Golden Grove Street in Chippendale, Francis Chocolates on Stirling Street in Redfern, and the Australian Glass Manufacturers on South Dowling Street at Waterloo.



**35 AUSTRALIAN GLASS MANUFACTURERS,  
849 SOUTH DOWLING STREET, WATERLOO**

**36 FRANCIS CHOCOLATES,  
1-7 STIRLING STREET, REDFERN**



### 37 EVELEIGH RAILWAY YARDS, REDFERN (AUSTRALIAN TECHNOLOGY PARK AND CARRIAGEWORKS)



Eveleigh Railway Yards was Sydney's largest employer from the time it opened in 1886. It was also one of the biggest employers of Aboriginal people living in Sydney.

Many Aboriginal men also worked in the Alexandria goods yard loading trains with kegs and potatoes and on the waterfront docks at Walsh Bay and Darling Harbour.

Following the closure of the Eveleigh Railway Yards in the 1980s, the former workshops on either side of the railway line were converted for other uses. On the southern side is the former Locomotive Workshops is the Australian Technology Park, and on the northern side is CarriageWorks, a hub for contemporary arts and culture. There is information displayed at both sites that describes some of the work practices that took place here.

Workers at the unveiling of an honour board at the Eveleigh Railway Yards in Redfern (photograph courtesy Noel Butlin Collection, Australian National University – hdl:1885/203)

### 38 TRADES HALL, 4-10 GOULBURN STREET, SYDNEY

When Aboriginal people began to organise politically, there were often sympathetic non-Aboriginal people to help in the struggle, some of them unionists. From the 1950s, unions and Aboriginal organisations worked closely to build momentum towards the 1967 Referendum on Citizenship Rights and Commonwealth control of Aboriginal affairs.

Unions helped Aboriginal people from regional areas to get jobs in Sydney, and offered support in the education sector by financing scholarships at Tranby College. The Builders Labourers Federation was a sponsor of the Redfern All Blacks football team, and later placed a Green Ban on the development of The Block in the early 1970s.

In 1963, two Aboriginal unionists, Ray Peckham and Valentine 'Monty' Maloney, launched *The Aboriginal Worker* newspaper, which urged Aboriginal people to 'play an active part in their union'.



May Day procession in Sydney in the 1950s (photograph courtesy Noel Butlin Collection, Australian National University – hdl:1885/48117)

**BILYA LAUGH WUNYAWURI MAKE BELIEVE,  
DO SOMETHING IN JEST WUMARA RUN AS  
AN ANIMAL (ALSO FLY) DYANMILA PLAY**

## SPORT AND LEISURE

WHAT ARE COMMUNITIES WITHOUT RECREATIONAL OUTLETS? FOR SYDNEY'S ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY, SPORTING AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES WERE A WAY TO REINFORCE SOCIAL CONNECTIONS, BUT THEY ALSO HAD A POLITICAL DIMENSION.

**39 FOUNDATION FOR ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS,  
810-812 GEORGE STREET, SYDNEY**



The headquarters of the Foundation for Aboriginal Affairs on George Street was opened in October 1966. In addition to providing welfare support for Aboriginal people migrating to Sydney from regional areas of NSW, the George Street shopfront was a focal point of a growing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Sydney. It was a popular venue for community functions, dances and concerts.

Pearl Anderson dancing with Prime Minister John Gorton at a Debutantes Ball organised by the Foundation at Sydney Town Hall in July 1968 (photograph courtesy Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW – APA 29022)

Social events featured Aboriginal musicians based in Sydney, such as Jimmy Little, the Silver Linings and Black Lace. The Foundation also provided a social and political platform for Charlie Perkins, Chicka Dixon and others to agitate about issues including the 1967 Referendum and land rights.

**40 REDFERN TOWN HALL,  
73 PITT STREET, REDFERN**



**41 PADDINGTON TOWN HALL,  
249 OXFORD STREET, PADDINGTON**



Anti-clockwise from top left:

Redfern Town Hall in 1871 (photograph courtesy Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW – SPF / 727)

Paddington Town Hall in c1918 (photograph courtesy City of Sydney Archives – CRS 1033/61)

Sydney Town Hall in 1935 (photograph courtesy City of Sydney Archives – NSCA CRS 46/2/21)

Town Halls throughout Sydney's inner suburbs provided large civic spaces that Aboriginal organisations used to gather and socialise for leisure activities and political meetings.

Aboriginal activist William Ferguson was a member of the Aborigines Progressive Association (APA). Key campaign meetings held at Redfern Town Hall in the 1940s ensured that he was elected as the first Aboriginal member of the Aborigines Welfare Board in 1943, along with William Page.

Regular dances were organised by the Aboriginal-Australian Fellowship, the Foundation for Aboriginal Affairs and the Redfern All Blacks at Redfern and Alexandria Town Halls. These provided a social event for the local community, but were also a means of raising funds for the All Blacks football team. Sydney Town Hall was the scene of debutante balls for young Aboriginal girls in the 1950s and 60s, as was Paddington Town Hall.

**42 SYDNEY TOWN HALL,  
483 GEORGE STREET, SYDNEY**



**43 ALEXANDRIA TOWN HALL,  
73 GARDEN STREET, ALEXANDRIA**



**44** **EMPRESS HOTEL,  
87 REGENT STREET, REDFERN**  
**CLIFTON HOTEL,  
1 BOTANY ROAD, WATERLOO**

The Empress Hotel on Regent Street (photograph courtesy City of Sydney Archives – Mark Stevens Collection, 48575)

The Empress Hotel on Regent Street was frequented by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from the 1940s through to the 1970s. Although it was a place where Aboriginal people were able to drink and socialise freely, it was also a site for heavy handed police action. Aboriginal activists who began to record police harassment at the Empress created the foundations of the Aboriginal Legal Service in 1970.

Similarly the Clifton Hotel on Botany Road in Waterloo was a place where Aboriginal people gathered. It was where the decision was made to start the Koori Knockout, and where Bob Bellair decided to pursue a legal career after watching police discrimination towards Aboriginal people who met there. The Clifton Hotel was the site of a riot in 1983.

**45** **REDFERN ALL BLACKS,  
ALEXANDRIA OVAL**



Footballer Merv 'Boomanulla' Williams playing for the Redfern All Blacks in the 1940s (photograph courtesy of AIATSIS – Rick Mumbler Collection, N4751.20a)

The dynamic and successful Redfern All Blacks rugby league team formed officially in 1944, but may have begun informally a decade earlier. The team attracted talented players from around NSW including Eric 'Nugget' Mumbler, Babs Vincent and Merv 'Boomanulla' Williams.

After a hiatus in the 50s, it reformed in 1960 with activist Ken Brindle as Honorary Secretary. The All Blacks played an important role in helping young Aboriginal men adjust to life in the city. It gave them confidence in their sporting ability, kept community and family ties strong and was a positive expression of identity. Training and matches at Alexandria and Redfern Ovals showcased talent and many players pursued professional careers, often with the South Sydney Rabbitohs.

The team's success had important political, social and symbolic ramifications, and as an expression of community pride was a significant component in the shift towards self determination within Sydney's Aboriginal community.

## 46 KOORI KNOCKOUT, REDFERN OVAL, REDFERN

The NSW Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout, known to most as the Koori Knockout, has been held annually since 1970. It grew out of a longstanding tradition among Sydney's Aboriginal community of playing and watching rugby league, starting in the 1930s with the formation of the Redfern All Blacks and the La Perouse Panthers.

Following a discussion with some of the players from these teams at the Clifton Hotel, it was decided to hold a knockout competition with Aboriginal rugby league teams from around NSW. The first Koori Knockout match was held in 1970 at the Camdenville Oval in Erskineville, with the Sydney teams training at Redfern and Alexandria Ovals.

Until 1980, most of the Koori Knockout games were held in Sydney. But since then, the majority of the matches have been held in towns all over NSW, including Dubbo, Armidale, Moree, Walgett, Bourke and Nambucca Heads.



The Cec Patten Ron Merritt Redfern All Blacks Memorial team at Redfern Oval for the 2004 Koori Knockout (photograph courtesy Amanda James)

## 47 REDFERN COMMUNITY CENTRE, 29-53 HUGO STREET, REDFERN



Redfern Community Centre (photograph by Paul Patterson, courtesy City of Sydney)

The Redfern Community Centre, a focus for Aboriginal social and cultural activities in Sydney, is located in a refurbished former factory on The Block. It is surrounded by a landscaped park which is used for recreation and functions. Local Aboriginal elder, Auntie Joyce Ingram, cut the ribbon when the building was opened in March 2004 by NSW Governor Marie Bashir.

Community groups involved in negotiations to establish the community centre for the local area included the Redfern Residents for Reconciliation, the Redfern Aboriginal Corporation, the Settlement, Renew, and the Chippendale Residents Wilson Bros Factory Site Action Group.



**48** **NCIE, FORMER REDFERN PUBLIC SCHOOL, 160-202 GEORGE STREET, REDFERN**

'Young Mob' Students at the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence (photograph courtesy Amanda James)

Redfern Public School was established in 1879. It educated generations of Aboriginal children living in Redfern and surrounding suburbs during the 20th century. Most students knew the school as George Street Public.

In 2006, the buildings and grounds of the former school were acquired by the Indigenous Land Corporation as a new home for the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence (NCIE). As part of works to revitalise the site, the original school building was refurbished. Gadigal House is home to the Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME), the National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy (NASCA) and the Tribal Warrior Association.

NCIE offers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from around Australia the opportunity to excel in sport, art, education and culture. It was officially opened in 2010.

**BAYUMI MUSIC – A TUNE. YABUN INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC MADE BY SINGERS DANCING OR BEATING ON TWO CLUBS DANGURA DANCE GARABARA DANCE, A METHOD OF DANCING**

## PERFORMING ARTS

MUSIC, DANCE AND THEATRE ARE AN IMPORTANT MEANS OF CULTURAL, POLITICAL AND SPIRITUAL EXPRESSION FOR URBAN ABORIGINAL PEOPLE. MANY ARTISTS AND PERFORMERS HAVE BEEN SUPPORTED AND ENCOURAGED BY ABORIGINAL ORGANISATIONS.



**49** **BLACK THEATRE,  
31 COPE STREET, REDFERN**

**ADTR, 82-88 RENWICK STREET,  
REDFERN**

Black Theatre was an Aboriginal-run theatre company established in 1972 in response to the emerging land rights movement. It started on Regent Street in Redfern but later moved to Cope Street, next door to Radio Redfern.

Black Theatre offered workshops in dancing, writing and acting, and also performed plays authored by Aboriginal playwrights. Although it wound up in 1977, Black Theatre laid the foundation for a wellspring of creative expression within Sydney's Aboriginal community.

Aboriginal Dance Theatre Redfern (ADTR) was founded in 1979, occupying part of the old Black Theatre building before moving to Renwick Street. It offers accredited courses in Aboriginal dance and theatre skills, and provides a dance outreach program for children and youth from metropolitan Sydney, regional NSW and around Australia.

Above: playbill for Gerry Bostock's play, *Here Comes the Nigger*, performed at the Black Theatre in 1976 (image courtesy Australian History Museum, Macquarie University – AHM 4663)

Below: Aboriginal Dance Theatre Redfern logo (courtesy ADTR)



Aboriginal Islander Dance Theatre members including Phillip Langley, Richard Talonga and Steven Christian (photograph by Lee Chittick, courtesy National Library of Australia – nla.pic-an12823436)

**50** **ABORIGINAL ISLANDER DANCE  
THEATRE, ST JAMES HALL,  
153 BRIDGE ROAD, GLEBE**

The Aboriginal Islander Dance Theatre was established in 1975 as a full-time training program to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to take up professional dance. It launched the careers of many dancers and performers, and raised the profile of Aboriginal dance on the international stage.

Under the guidance of the founding Director, American-born Carole Johnson, the Aboriginal Islander Dance Theatre was based at St James Church Hall in Glebe. It was both a training school, teaching traditional and contemporary dance styles, and a performance company.

Following the departure of Johnson in 1989, there was a greater focus on performance. Raymond Blanco was appointed as the first Aboriginal Artistic Director of the dance company in 1991, with performances continuing until the late 1990s.

Radio Redfern on Cope Street in 1989  
(photograph courtesy City of Sydney Archives)



51

### **RADIO REDFERN, 27 COPE STREET, REDFERN**

Maureen Watson and her son Tiga Bayles laid the foundations for Radio Redfern in 1981, when they started broadcasting for 10 minutes each week on community radio station 2SER 107.3 FM.

When Radio Skid Row (2RSR 88.9 FM) was allocated a community broadcasting license in 1984, it gave 10 hours of air time weekly to Radio Redfern. The station was initially broadcast from the University of Sydney, later moving to a terrace house on Cope Street in Redfern, still under the license of 2RSR.

Radio Redfern was considered the voice of the Aboriginal community in Sydney, and played a vital role in coordinating political protests against the Bicentennial celebrations in 1988 and Aboriginal deaths in custody in the early 1990s. Radio Redfern grew to have 40 broadcast hours each week, with all the announcers contributing their time voluntarily.

52

### **GADIGAL INFORMATION SERVICE, 27 COPE STREET, REDFERN**

When Radio Redfern stopped broadcasting in the early 1990s, the gap was quickly filled. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned and operated organisation Gadigal Information Service was founded in 1993. It broadcasts a full-time radio station, Koori Radio (93.7FM 2LND), to the Sydney metropolitan region.

In 2005, the Indigenous Land Corporation acquired the buildings on Cope Street that had been occupied by Radio Redfern and the National Black Theatre. A new building to house the recording studios and offices of the Gadigal Information Service was designed by the architectural firm Tonkin Zulaikha Greer, with exterior artwork by Aboriginal artist Adam Hill. The building was opened here in 2008.



Exterior of the building for Gadigal Information Services designed by Tonkin Zulaikha Greer (photograph courtesy Michael Nicholson)



**53 BANGARRA DANCE THEATRE,  
WALSH BAY**

Bangarra Dance Theatre is a dance company formed in 1989 by staff and students of National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association (NAISDA), including Carole Johnson who had been involved with the Aboriginal Islander Dance Theatre since the 1970s. Bangarra Dance Theatre has occupied studios in one of the finger wharves at Walsh Bay since 1997.

Stephen Page became the artistic director in 1991, in collaboration with his brothers David and Russell. Under the guidance of the Page brothers, Bangarra developed a uniquely modern style, fusing contemporary techniques with traditional song and dance. Bangarra is an important artistic force in the reconciliation and Aboriginal rights movement as well as an ambassador for Australian performance internationally.



Munyarryun family with Bangarra Dance Theatre at Walsh Bay in November 1998 (photograph by Tim Webster, courtesy National Library of Australia – nla.pic-vn3096222)

**BANGADA ORNAMENTS IN GENERAL  
DABURA PAINT DABUWA WHITE, WHITE CLAY**

## VISUAL ARTS

VISUAL AND ARTISTIC EXPRESSION ARE INTEGRAL TO ABORIGINAL CULTURE. TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES IN SYDNEY HAVE LED TO AN EXTRAORDINARY RANGE OF ART PRACTICES, EXHIBITIONS, GALLERIES AND ARTISTS' COOPERATIVES.



**54** **BOOMALLI,  
14 MEAGHER STREET,  
CHIPPENDALE**

Boomalli is an artist-run cooperative which was formed in 1987 by a group of 10 urban Aboriginal artists working across a range of media from painting and photography to sculpture and print making. The word boomalli means 'to strike' or 'make a mark' in at least three Aboriginal languages: Bandjalung, Kamilaroi/Gamilaraay and Wiradjuri.

The cooperative was originally based in a rented warehouse at 18 Meagher Street in Chippendale. In 1993, Boomalli moved to larger premises on nearby Abercrombie Street which provided an exhibition space and artist studios, and it was later relocated to Annandale. After almost a quarter century, the Boomalli cooperative was finally given its first permanent home at 55-57 Flood Street, Leichhardt in 2011.

Founding members of Boomalli in 1987: Jeffrey Samuels, Euphemia Bostock, Avril Quail, Fernanda Martens, Arone Meeks, Brenda Croft, Fiona Foley, Michael Riley, Tracey Moffatt and Bronwyn Bancroft (photograph by Margaret Olah courtesy Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Cooperative)

**55** **YIRIBANNA GALLERY,  
ART GALLERY OF NSW, SYDNEY**

The Art Gallery of NSW was established in 1884, but only acquired its first Aboriginal works in the mid 20th century.

One of the gallery's first collections of Aboriginal art was a donation of bark and paper paintings from the 1948 American-Australian Scientific Expedition to Arnhem Land. This donation prompted Deputy Director Tony Tuckson to expand the gallery's holdings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art. One of its most significant acquisitions was a series of 17 Pukamani grave posts from the Tiwi Islands which were installed in the forecourt in 1959. This installation encouraged Sydney's art going public to consider 'traditional' Aboriginal works as contemporary art.

Tuckson was the curator of the Primitive Art Gallery, which opened in October 1973. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curators were first appointed to the Art Gallery of NSW in 1984. Yiribanna Gallery was opened a decade later.

An installation of 17 Tiwi Island Pukamani grave posts in the forecourt of the Art Gallery of NSW in 1959 (photograph courtesy Art Gallery of NSW)





*Wuganmagulya (Farm Cove)* within the Royal Botanic Gardens (photograph courtesy City of Sydney Archives – CRS 904/B009)

56

### **WUGANMAGULYA (FARM COVE), ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, SYDNEY**

*Wuganmagulya (Farm Cove)* is an art installation within the Royal Botanic Gardens which honours the original clans who lived on the site, as well as those who held ceremonies there.

The artwork is in the form of a mosaic inlaid into the footpath along the foreshore of Farm Cove, and incorporates terrazzo and stained concrete. It depicts rock carving figures similar to those found elsewhere in the Sydney basin, and the names of women and men, places, animals, tools and rituals from the clans and language groups of the Sydney area.

The artwork was created by Brenda Croft, a Gurindji woman who was a founding member of Boomalli Aboriginal artists cooperative. *Wuganmagulya (Farm Cove)* is part of the Sydney Sculpture Walk commissioned by City of Sydney.



### **THE EDGE OF THE TREES, MUSEUM OF SYDNEY, CNR PHILLIP AND BRIDGE STREETS, SYDNEY**

This public artwork created by Fiona Foley and Janet Lawrence is located in the forecourt of the Museum of Sydney on the site of First Government House. *The Edge of the Trees* symbolises the interaction between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people at this place, which was a significant site of first contact.

*The Edge of the Trees* is made up of a series of upright timber, stone and steel poles, each inscribed with words from the Sydney Aboriginal language. The sculptural form is accompanied by a soundscape featuring the names of the Aboriginal people of Sydney and the convicts who arrived in Sydney on the First Fleet in 1788.

The Museum of Sydney displays a number of other art works by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists representing the theme of reconciliation, as well as the Gadigal Place Gallery which commemorates the history of the local Aboriginal people.



*The Edge of the Trees* in the forecourt of the Museum of Sydney (photograph by Brett Boardman, courtesy Historic Houses Trust)

## 58 WYANGA ABORIGINAL AGED CARE AND CULTURAL PROGRAM, 35 COPE STREET, REDFERN

Wyanga Aboriginal Aged Care was established by Sylvia Scott and Mary Silva in 1996 to provide a community aged care service for Aboriginal people in inner Sydney and La Perouse. The service, which today provides home care and residential accommodation, was initially based in Waterloo.

In 2005, a former hardware shop on Cope Street was converted into a permanent home for Wyanga and its residents. The southern wall of the building features the distinctive mural *Mission Boy Dreams*, which is based on an etching by Wiradjuri artist Roy Kennedy. It depicts his memories of the Warangesda Mission in the Riverina where his family is from.

Kennedy was born in 1932 at Darlington Point near Griffith. He studied print making at the Eora Centre in the 1990s, and later joined the Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Cooperative. He was the winner of the Parliament of NSW Aboriginal Art Prize in 2009 for his *Mission Series 2*.

*"From far back I can remember I've always been wondering when we would have our own homes and 70 years on I am still wondering."* Roy Kennedy, 2006



Roy Kennedy's mural on the southern wall of Wyanga (photograph courtesy Cracknell and Lonergan Architects)

## MANWARI FIND YANUNG WATCH NGALGA LOOK

# VISITOR EXPERIENCES

The Visitor Experience section provides contact details for major institutions in the City of Sydney where you can further encounter Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and history. These sites are marked with a magnifying glass on the precinct maps.

This section also includes four Journeys that take you into the heart of Sydney's Aboriginal heritage and culture. The numbered and colour coded sites within the booklet are identified on the precinct maps. While all the sites have historical significance, many have changed or disappeared. Others are private buildings or educational facilities that are not suitable to visit. The numbers for these sites are circled with a dotted line. Sites that are worth visiting are symbolised with an unbroken line around the numbers.

There are other places of significance to Aboriginal people in Sydney within the greater Sydney metropolitan area which are not included in this booklet. Further information about these sites can be found in Melissa Hinkson's book *Aboriginal Sydney* published by AIATSIS.

**ART GALLERY OF NSW**

Art Gallery Road, The Domain  
Ph: 1800 679 278  
[www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au](http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au)

Yiribanna Gallery is the permanent home for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art within the Art Gallery of NSW.

**AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM**

6 College Street, Sydney  
Ph: 02 9320 6000  
[www.australianmuseum.net.au](http://www.australianmuseum.net.au)

The Australian Museum has a rich collection of artefacts relating to Aboriginal people from Sydney and around NSW.

**BANGARRA DANCE THEATRE**

Pier 4/5, Hickson Road, Walsh Bay  
Ph: 02 9231 8111  
[www.bangarra.com.au](http://www.bangarra.com.au)

Bangarra Dance Theatre embraces, celebrates and respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their culture.

**BELVOIR ST THEATRE**

25 Belvoir Street, Surry Hills  
Ph: 02 9698 3344  
[www.belvoir.com.au](http://www.belvoir.com.au)

The Belvoir St Theatre regularly stages plays written by or featuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander playwrights and actors.



Actor Derek Lynch in a production of *Namatjira* at the Belvoir St Theatre in 2010 (photograph by Brett Boardman, courtesy Belvoir Theatre)

Panorama of west Circular Quay showing the Museum of Contemporary Art (photograph courtesy MCA)

**BOOMALLI**

55–57 Flood Street, Leichhardt  
[www.boomalli.com.au](http://www.boomalli.com.au)

Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Cooperative is one of Australia's longest running Aboriginal owned and operated art galleries, which focuses on art from NSW.

**MACLEAY MUSEUM**

University of Sydney  
Ph: 02 9036 5253  
[www.sydney.edu.au/museums](http://www.sydney.edu.au/museums)

The Macleay Museum has a significant collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander material with strong representation from WA, QLD and NSW communities, as well as material from the wider Pacific region. It also houses significant natural history specimens.

**MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART**

140 George Street, The Rocks  
Ph: 02 9036 5253  
[www.mca.com.au](http://www.mca.com.au)

The Museum of Contemporary Art has a dedicated curator for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Programs. The gallery features regular exhibitions by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.



### MUSEUM OF SYDNEY

Cnr Phillip and Bridge Streets,  
Sydney

Ph: 02 9251 5988

[www.sydneylivingmuseums.com.au](http://www.sydneylivingmuseums.com.au)

The Gadigal Place Gallery within the Museum of Sydney commemorates the history of the local Aboriginal people of Sydney. *The Edge of the Trees* (57) sculptural installation is in the museum's forecourt.

The Rocks  
Dreaming  
Tours  
(photograph  
courtesy  
Sydney  
Harbour  
Foreshore  
Authority)



### POWERHOUSE MUSEUM

500 Harris Street, Ultimo

Ph: 02 9217 0111

[www.powerhousemuseum.com](http://www.powerhousemuseum.com)

The Powerhouse Museum has regular exhibitions featuring objects relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



### THE ROCKS DREAMING ABORIGINAL HERITAGE TOURS

Ph: 02 9240 8788

[www.therocks.com/dreaming](http://www.therocks.com/dreaming)

Take The Rocks Dreaming Aboriginal heritage tour to learn more about the DreamTime and history of the Aboriginal people in Sydney. These 100% Aboriginal owned and operated tours were developed by Margret Campbell, a Dunghutti-Jerrinjah woman, and are led by guides who have permission to share her cultural knowledge. The 90 minute tours depart from Cadmans Cottage. Book online or through the Sydney Visitor Centre.



### THE ROCKS DISCOVERY MUSEUM

Kendall Lane, The Rocks  
(enter via Argyle Street)

Ph: 02 9240 8680

[www.therocks.com](http://www.therocks.com)

The Rocks Discovery Museum tells the story of The Rocks area of Sydney.



### THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS AND DOMAIN TRUST

Mrs Macquarie's Road, Sydney

Ph: 02 9231 8111

[www.rbg Syd.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rbg Syd.nsw.gov.au)

The *Cadi Jam Ora Garden* interprets the relationships of the Gadigal people within Sydney by showcasing plants native to the region, and demonstrating how they were used for food and medicine. There are regular guided tours of the gardens, focusing on Aboriginal culture.



### SYDNEY OBSERVATORY

Watson Road, Observatory Hill

Ph: 02 9921 3485

[www.sydneyobservatory.com.au](http://www.sydneyobservatory.com.au)

*Cadi Eora birrung: under the Sydney stars* is an exhibition explaining how the constellations in the southern sky were created from an Aboriginal perspective.

Sydney  
Observatory  
(photograph  
by Geoff  
Wyatt,  
courtesy  
Sydney  
Observatory)





### MUSEUM OF SYDNEY

Cnr Phillip and Bridge Streets,  
Sydney  
Ph: 02 9251 5988  
[www.hht.net.au](http://www.hht.net.au)

The Gadigal Place Gallery within the Museum of Sydney commemorates the history of the local Aboriginal people of Sydney. *The Edge of the Trees* (57) sculptural installation is in the museum's forecourt.



### POWERHOUSE MUSEUM

500 Harris Street, Ultimo  
Ph: 02 9217 0111  
[www.powerhousemuseum.com](http://www.powerhousemuseum.com)

The Powerhouse Museum has regular exhibitions featuring objects relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

### THE ROCKS DISCOVERY MUSEUM



Kendall Lane, The Rocks  
(enter via Argyle Street)  
Ph: 02 9240 8680  
[www.therocks.com](http://www.therocks.com)

The Rocks Discovery Museum tells the story of The Rocks area of Sydney.

### THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS AND DOMAIN TRUST

Mrs Macquarie's Road, Sydney  
Ph: 02 9231 8111  
[www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au)



The *Cadi Jam Ora Garden* interprets the relationships of the Gadigal people within Sydney by showcasing plants native to the region, and demonstrating how they were used for food and medicine. There are regular guided tours of the gardens, focusing on Aboriginal culture.

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Terry Olsen on board the *Tribal Warrior* before a smoking ceremony, looking towards the Sydney Harbour Bridge (photograph courtesy Amanda James)



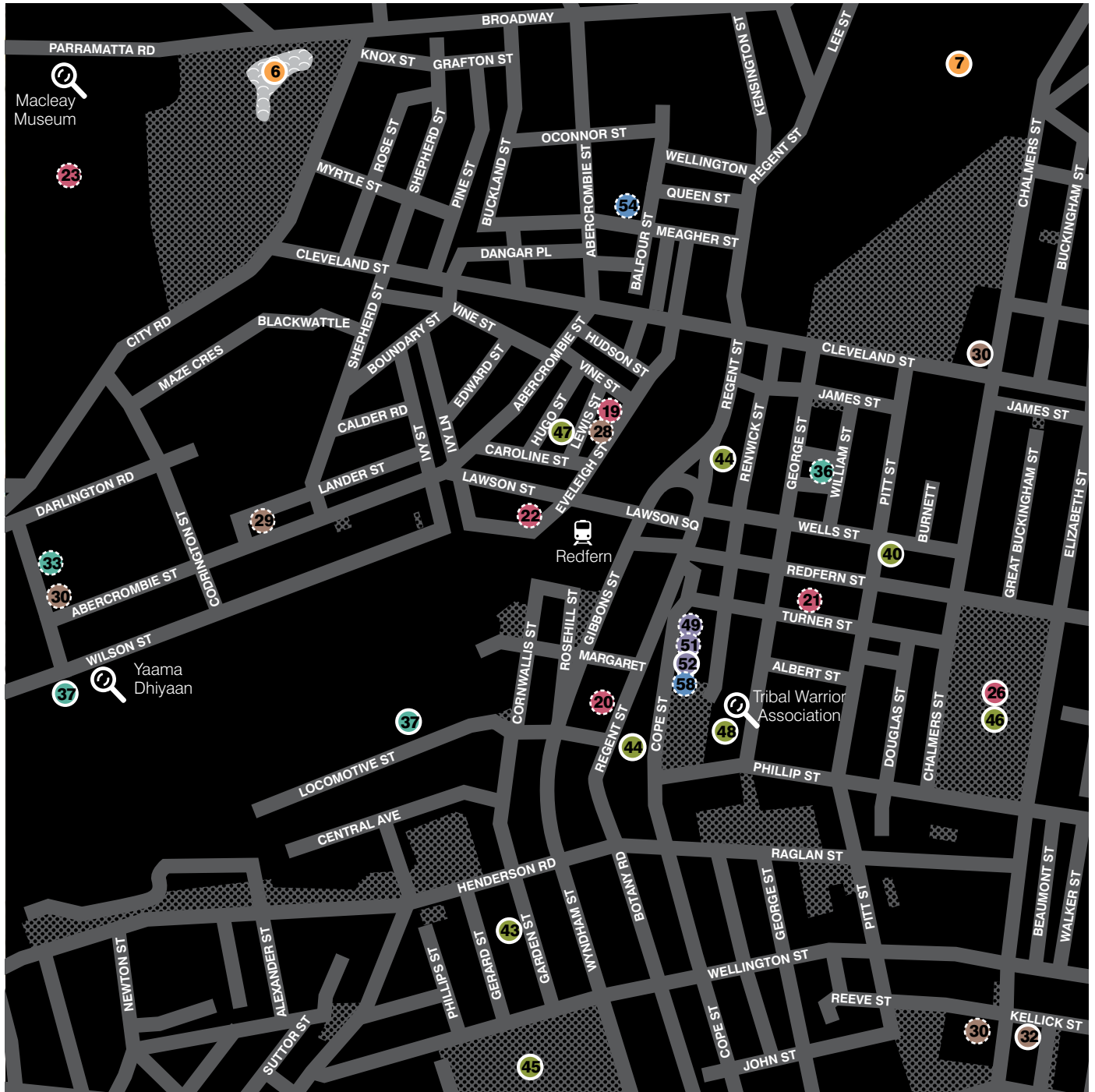
# JOURNEY ONE: REDFERN, ALEXANDRIA AND WATERLOO

THIS JOURNEY TAKES YOU TO THE HEART OF OUR CONTEMPORARY ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY. THESE SUBURBS WERE A POWERHOUSE OF POLITICAL FERMENT AND ACTIVISM THAT CREATED THE EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES THAT CONTINUE TO SUPPORT ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IN THE CITY.

SITE	PAGE REF
 Lake Northam, Victoria Park, Glebe	10
  Freedom Ride & Macleay Museum, University of Sydney	28/67
 Henry Jones & Co IXL Jam Factory, 12 Golden Grove Street, Darlington	40
 Darlington Public School, Abercrombie Street, Darlington	36
  Yaama Dhiyaan, 255 Wilson Street, Darlington	71
 Eveleigh Railway Yards, Redfern (Australian Technology Park and Carriageworks)	42
 Eora Centre, 333 Abercrombie Street, Chippendale	35
 Boot Trade Union Hall, 122 Eveleigh Street, Redfern	27
 Redfern Community Centre, 29–53 Hugo Street, Redfern	51
 Murawina, Eveleigh Street, Redfern	34
 Aboriginal Housing Company, The Block, Redfern	24
 Boomalli, 14 Meagher Street, Chippendale	60




















SITE	PAGE REF
 Prince Alfred Park (Cleveland Paddocks)	11
 Cleveland Street High School, 244 Cleveland Street, Surry Hills	37
 Francis Chocolates, 1–7 Stirling Street, Redfern	41
 Empress Hotel, 87 Regent Street, Redfern & Clifton Hotel, 1 Botany Road, Waterloo	48
 Aboriginal Medical Service, 36 Turner Street, Redfern	26
 Redfern Town Hall, 73 Pitt Street, Redfern	46
  Redfern Park and Oval	31/50
 Waterloo Town Hall and Library, 770 Elizabeth Street, Waterloo	38
 Our Lady of Mount Carmel Primary School, 2–6 Kellick Street, Waterloo	36
 Alexandria Oval	49
 Alexandria Town Hall, 73 Garden Street, Alexandria	47
 Aboriginal Legal Service, 142 Regent Street, Redfern	25
 National Centre of Indigenous Excellence, 160–202 George Street, Redfern	52
  Tribal Warrior, Gadigal House, 180 George Street, Redfern	71
 Black Theatre, 31 Cope Street, Redfern & ADTR, 82-88 Renwick Street, Redfern	54
  Radio Redfern & Gadigal Information Service, 27 Cope Street, Redfern	56/57
 Wyanga Aboriginal Aged Care, 35 Cope Street, Redfern	64





# JOURNEY TWO: CIRCULAR QUAY AND THE ROCKS










THIS JOURNEY COVERS SYDNEY'S MAJOR TOURIST PRECINCT. THIS WAS THE PLACE WHERE SOME OF THE EARLIEST INTERACTIONS OCCURRED BETWEEN ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AND THE BRITISH.

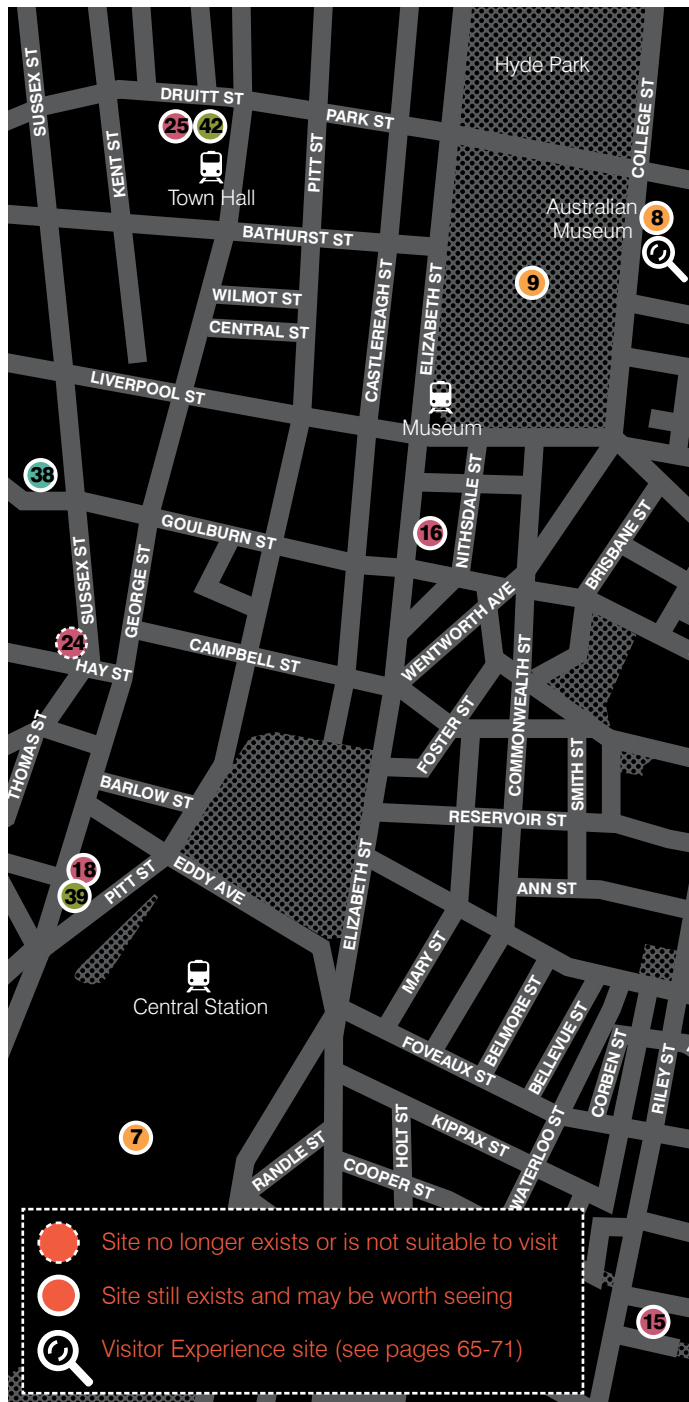
SITE	PAGE REF	
 03	Camp site, Lilyvale, 176 Cumberland Street, The Rocks 07	
 01	Sydney Observatory, Watson Road, Observatory Hill 69	
 53	Bangarra Dance Theatre, Walsh Bay 58	
 04	Dawes Point / Tar-Ra, The Rocks 08	
 01	The Rocks Discovery Museum, Kendall Lane, The Rocks 69	
 01	Museum of Contemporary Art, 140 George Street, The Rocks 67	
 12	Circular Quay / Warrane, Sydney 16	
 05	Sydney Opera House & Bennelong Point / Dubbagulle 09/70	
 11	 56	The Domain & <i>Wuganmagulya</i> (Farm Cove), Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney 15/62
 01	 55	Yiribanna Gallery, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney 61
 01	 01	State Library of NSW, Macquarie Street, Sydney 70
 13	Aborigines Welfare Board, Chief Secretary's Building, 121 Macquarie Street, Sydney 18	
 10	 57	Museum of Sydney, Cnr Phillip and Bridge Streets, Sydney 14/63
 17	Martin Place, Sydney 22	
 02	The Tank Stream, Sydney 06	



# JOURNEY THREE: SYDNEY CITY AND SURRY HILLS

THIS JOURNEY TAKES YOU TO THE CENTRE OF TOWN TO EXPLORE SEVERAL SIGNIFICANT SITES ASSOCIATED WITH EARLY ABORIGINAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY AND LEISURE PURSUITS. TWO LARGE PARKS IN THIS AREA WERE CAMPING AND CONTEST GROUNDS.

SITE	PAGE REF
 Sydney Town Hall, 483 George Street, Sydney	30/47
 The Australian Museum, 6–8 College Street, Sydney	12
 Hyde Park South, Sydney	13
 Australian Hall, 152 Elizabeth Street, Sydney	21
 Trades Hall, 4–10 Goulburn Street, Sydney	43
 Burlington Hotel, 431–439 Sussex Street, Haymarket	29
 Foundation for Aboriginal Affairs, 810–812 George Street, Sydney	23/45
 Prince Alfred Park (Cleveland Paddocks)	11
 St David's Hall, 17 Arthur Street, Surry Hills	20









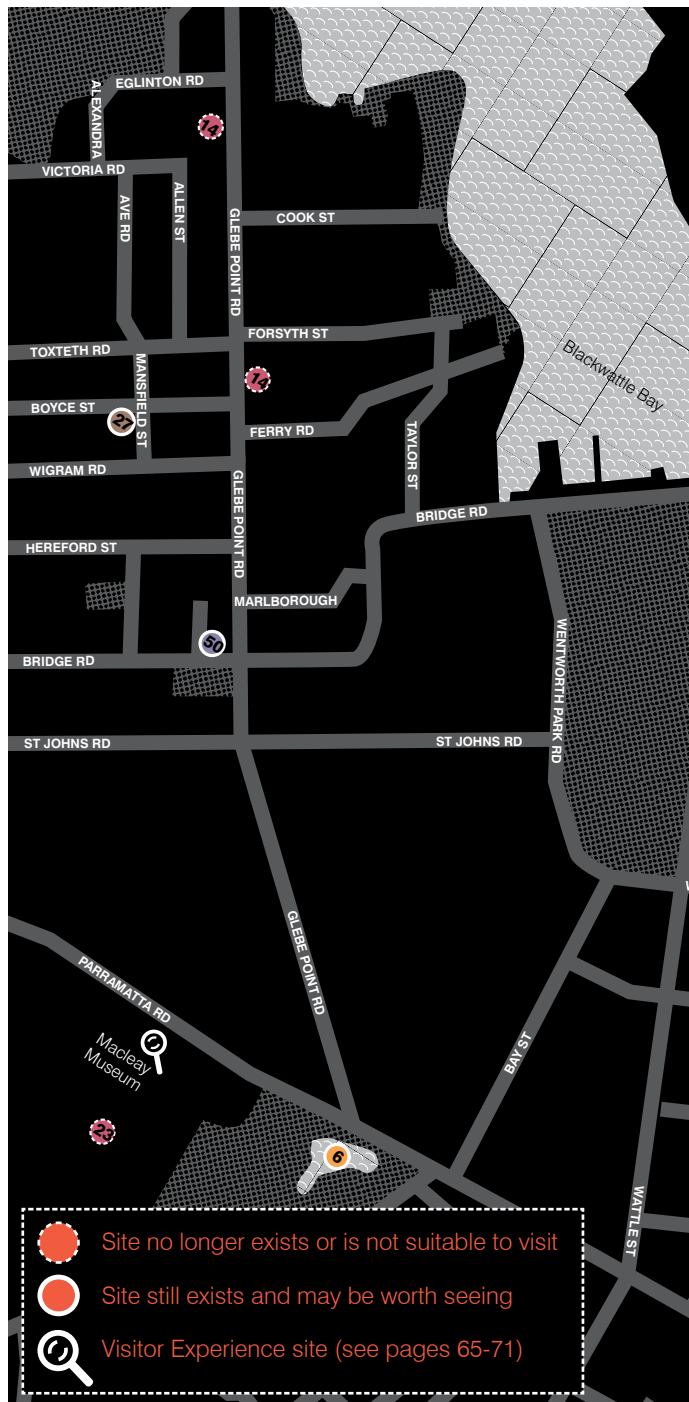
# JOURNEY FOUR: GLEBE

GLEBE HAS LONG BEEN A CREATIVE AND EDUCATIONAL HUB FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE, BUT IT WAS ALSO THE SITE OF TWO STATE-RUN INSTITUTIONS THAT WERE PIVOTAL IN THE STOLEN GENERATIONS.

## SITE

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 27	Tranby, 13 Mansfield Street, Glebe	33
 14	<i>Bidura</i> , 357 Glebe Point Road, Glebe	19
 14	<i>Royleston</i> , 270 Glebe Point Road, Glebe	19





Ex-soldier and Aboriginal activist Herbert Groves wearing his Second World War uniform as a protest on the Australian Aboriginal League float in the 1947 May Day procession (photograph courtesy Australian War Memorial - P01248.001)

Discover more about Sydney's  
Aboriginal history on the Barani website:  
[www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/barani](http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/barani)

Discover more of historic Sydney  
with the other walking tour brochures  
in the series.

More information can be found  
at the City of Sydney's website:  
[www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/history](http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/history)

Or call the City of Sydney  
on 9265 9333

This booklet was prepared by the History  
Program at the City of Sydney with  
assistance from the City's Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel.

Second Edition May 2013

**HWT 1**

ISBN 978-0-9751196-8-6

Cover and inset,  
photographs by Louise Hawson