

Elimatta

Aboriginal Support Group - Manly Warringah Pittwater

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2021





FLOODPLAIN WATER HARVESTING IN THE NORTHERN NEW SOUTH WALES MURRAY-DARLING BASIN

The Murray-Darling Basin Cap (Cap) is one of the foundations of the water reforms in the Murray-Darling Basin. The Cap limits extractions to the level of development in place on 1 July 1994.

For more than 25 years floodplain water harvesting has been recognised by governments as a major threat to the Cap, the environment, downstream communities and downstream entitlements.

The NSW Floodplain Harvesting Policy defines floodplain harvesting as:

...the collection, extraction or impoundment of water flowing across floodplains, including rainfall runoff and overbank flow,

and states that for the purposes of the policy:

...‘floodplain’ means any area of land designated as a floodplain under the Water Management Act 2000 or the Water Act 1912,

Floodplain water harvesting is a legislated form of extraction under the Cap.

However, it has never been regulated, measured or controlled in NSW, nor accounted for under the Cap.

The NSW Government acknowledges that there has been a growth in take by

floodplain water harvesting.

The government intends to license it based on on-farm storage capacity by July 2021, claiming that the licensed volumes will reduce extractions to the Cap.

There is a strong correlation between the capacity of on-farm storages and the amount of floodplain water harvesting.

This project mapped on-farm storages and calculated their capacity in the five northern NSW valleys where floodplain water harvesting licences will be issued.

The capacity of on-farm storages increased by 142% (or 2.4 times) between 1994 and 2020, from 574 gegalitres in 1993/94, to 1,395 gegalitres in 2020. The number of on-farm storages has increased from 400 in 1988, to 1,833 in 2020. Floodplain water harvesting in the Northern New South Wales Murray-Darling Basin.

Background

When the major rivers of the Northern Murray-Darling Basin flow onto their lower floodplains they break up into thousands of smaller rivers, creeks, cowals, warrambools, flood runners and billabongs. One of these is the designated river.

The floodplains of the Northern Basin make up a vast interconnected network of these streams. Floodplain water harvesting is the take of water from these floodplains.

Despite it being a large proportion of water taken for irrigation in the NSW part of the Northern Murray-Darling Basin it has never been regulated, measured or reported.

The NSW government intends to license and regulate floodplain water harvesting by July 2021.

Extraction will be accounted for under a water access licence, basic landholder right or licence exemption, ensuring that it is consistent with the Water Management Act 2000.

The amount of water taken by floodplain water harvesting will be measured and the volume distributed, after it is licensed. Owners of floodplain water harvesting licences will be able to be compensated for these new licences, should they be reduced in future.

Floodplain water harvesting has never been licensed, measured or monitored in New South Wales.

On the 24th of March

2020, Helen Dalton, the NSW Member for Murray, asked Melinda Pavey, the Minister for Water, Property and Housing, in the NSW Parliament:

What has been the volume of water extracted through floodplain harvesting in each financial year between 1993-94 and 2018-19?

The Minister replied:

There is currently very limited data on the volume of water that has been extracted through floodplain harvesting in New South Wales because such volumes have not been required to be reported by landholders.

At a public meeting in Dubbo on 16th March 2018 an officer of the NSW water department acknowledged that the volume of water taken by floodplain water harvesting had been:

...grossly underestimated, ... there is currently no monitoring of floodplain harvesting diversions.



PROTESTS AGAINST ABORIGINAL DEATHS IN CUSTODY MARK 30 YEARS SINCE ROYAL COMMISSION

Hundreds of people have gathered at rallies and marches around Australia to protest against the “horrific” number of Aboriginal people who die in custody each year.

WARNING: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this article contains images and names of people who have died

The protests also mark the 30th anniversary of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, which handed down its final report on April 15, 1991.

The report made 339 recommendations but few have been implemented.

More than 470 Indigenous people have died in custody in the past 30 years, including at least five since the beginning of March this year.

Protests and marches took place in Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Alice Springs and Lismore on Saturday.

In other cities, like Perth and Adelaide, rallies have been organised for Thursday, the exact date of the final report’s 30th anniversary.

In Queensland, about 300 people gathered at King George Square in Brisbane’s city centre.

Several Indigenous speakers made emotive speeches before crowds marched through Brisbane’s streets to the police watch house.

Protesters also lit a fire outside the police headquarters, where a smoking ceremony took place.

Relatives of late Indigenous woman Aunty Sherry Tilberoo spoke at the rally, expressing their frustrations at the inaction of governments when it comes to black deaths in custody.

The 49-year-old was found dead in her cell at the Brisbane watch house in September last year

after she was not checked on for six hours, sparking protests and the suspension of an assistant watch house officer.

“We shouldn’t have to stand here in these T-shirts with her name on it, but we are,” a woman speaking on behalf of the family said.

“As a family, we shouldn’t have to suffer the grief, the pain.

“How is this still happening in 2021? Who can answer these questions that all the families are seeking? It’s not right – enough is enough.”

Other speakers included Aunty Sherry’s nephew Troy Brady, who voiced his concerns over the treatment of Indigenous people in custody.

“The call to action today, all around Australia, is to raise awareness about this blight that continues to oppress and kill our peoples in custody,” he told the crowd.

Mr Brady called on the federal government to revisit the recommendations made in the royal commission, some three decades ago and “fully implement” them across all sectors.

“We need our white brothers and sisters to join us – these are human rights abuses and issues,” he said.

“Engage and ascertain a certain understanding about what your First Nations peoples are having to deal with. We’re not just whinging all the time – we want you to sit with us and learn.”

In Sydney, hundreds of people gathered at Town Hall and marched through the city on Gadigal land to demand change.

Organiser Lizzie Jarrett said she felt devastated after more black deaths in custody since early March.

“Five deaths in five weeks, if that is not telling you that this is a pandemic against our



people,” she said.

Activist Bruce Shillingsworth said the government needed to do more.

“It’s time now that we make a stand with our non-Indigenous brothers and sisters not just here but across the world,” he said.

“I believe we need to send a message and make our government and those people, that are doing these wrongs, accountable.”

Actor, artist and writer Melyne Wyatt, who was also at the Sydney rally, said Aboriginal deaths in custody needed to stop.

“This is going to continue happening, and seeing us as sub-human; it’s an ongoing thing,” he said.

On a cold, wet day in Melbourne, a few hundred people gathered on the steps of Victoria’s Parliament House.

NATSILS, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services, has called on the Prime Minister to meet with the families of people who have died.

“Almost 30 years ... since the royal commission, no police officer or authority has been convicted for black deaths in custody,” NATSILS said.

“Our people continue to die at horrific rates. There is no accountability and no justice.

“We call on the Prime Minis-

ter to meet us face to face on the 30-year anniversary to hear our stories, to see our pain – but most of all, we want answers.”

About 150 people attended the event in Alice Springs, where speeches also focussed on youth detention.

The Northern Territory government last month promised more young people would be refused bail as part of a crime crackdown, sparking backlash and accusations it had learnt nothing from the youth detention royal commission.

One attendee at the Alice Springs rally said he worked in the prison system and believed the situation was “shocking and disgusting”.

“The recommendation that we should close youth detention centres, and yet there’s a multi-million-dollar new complex being built on the same land? Are they not listening?”

Anyupa Butcher from the National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Legal Services addressed the crowd and invited others to speak.

“We’ve had five black deaths in custody in the last month alone and I find it hard to come up with words to explain how horrifying that is,” she said.

“It is a serious issue that needs to be addressed.”

RIDE WITH ABORIGINAL PEOPLE FROM MANLY TO CHURCH POINT

Wanangini,

January 26 presents several faces; those of 'survival', 'invasion' and 'mourning' are amongst those we know well. For the past three years two other faces have been coming into focus as they approach on a journey towards healing, and they are 'acknowledgement' and 'respect'. These are the faces that look towards the other.

This year saw the third annual Manly to Church Point Bike Ride 'Ride with Aboriginal Peoples' as a manifestation of these faces. This is not a race, but a family friendly ride to show respect for Aboriginal Peoples.

The ride is coordinated by Colin Hutton and Neil Evers, a Garigal man, on behalf of the Aboriginal Support Group - Manly Warringah Pittwater.

Meeting at 7.00am at the Manly memorial, where on the 7 September 1790 Wil-Lee-Me-Ring speared Governor Captain Arthur Phillip, riders and supporters were treated to the beautiful sound of the yidaki and sung (roughly in unison) a traditional song shared by the Gumbaynggirr people of the Mid North Coast of NSW with the Garigal and Gayamaygal Peoples and residents sharing their lands.

After some words from Colin, highlighting that not all Australian's see "Australia Day" in the same way but rather stand with Aboriginal Peoples and aim for unity for all Australians, a small phalanx of riders took off, collecting additional riders along the route.

Hugging the beautiful northern beaches coastline, this was a great day of conversation, laughter and sharing by riders of all ages. Ending at Church Point, riders, were greeted by supporters and Neil Evers sharing some of the history of the Garigal people and the land for which they were custodians.

We also enjoyed again the sound of the yidaki, and attempted use of clap sticks and a traditional song. The Uluru Statement of the Heart figured as a centrepiece of the end discussions and presentations, as a key step towards healing amongst the people of this land, and a means by which indigenous people can take their rightful place in this country.

We would like to thank the people who attended these ceremonies and acknowledged Aboriginal peoples.

We would also like to acknowledge and thank Phil Jamieson for these heart felt words and his support as the motor cycle rider who shadowed the cyclists and helped keep us safe.



Zali Steggall MP, Matt James, Collin Hutton

More information about the ride and how to join can be found on:

Facebook:
FB.com/ridewithaboriginalpeoples

Reconciliation NSW:
Reconciliationnsw.org.au



Uncle Bruce Shillingsworth

ABORIGINAL SUPPORT GROUP'S FIRST FACE TO FACE MEETING FOR 2021

Sunday 7th March with 80 people in attendance.

Enjoyed the entertainment the incredible dancing and didgeridoo playing and the supper, Wow! Thank you to all who help with cakes. And a special thanks to the volantes' that help in the kitchen, all with the new covid requirement in place (the new norm) it went really well.

Guest speaker Uncle Bruce Shillingsworth spoke On the Rivers situation and an

update on what's going on. Plus, he also spoke about the Corroboree being held in September/October this year on the Darling river.

The night was a fund raiser towards this year's Corroboree. We are please to say \$1,500 was raised.

The next face to face meeting will be ASGMWP Sorry Day event Sunday 30th May.

More details will be sent out soon.

CHANGES TO THE WAY THE ELIMATTA IS SENT OUT

From 2021 all of our Supporters will reserve the Elimatta.

In the past, before email was the way to go, the Elimatta was posted out to only paid members (now called Supporters).

With the cost of posting the Elimatta out these days, being \$2.20 each. With the push of a button everybody can have one in their inbox.

Plus, the Elimatta is on the ASGMWP.net web page, going back to 2003.

As we progress in to a new era of ASG with Supporters now being able to use the Pay Pal QR code for donations and fees, if you wish. Direct Deposit, Cheque and cash still available

ASGMWP Facebook page up

dated with interesting items.

ASG have a set of rules that governs how the group will run successfully into the future.

Not much has changed just there written down for all to see.

Within the rules, available on the ASG web page, it asks that ASG have Supporters' details i.e., Full Name /address/ Email address/ phone number. We do have most of these details. If you would help us, bring the book work up date by replying with your details to this request, it would be most appreciated.

ASGMWP Committee, thank you in advance for your cooperation. Together we can make a difference.



3D Block of the rock face with the majority of the stencils located within the little cavern centre of the image

DIGITAL PRESERVATION OF HAND STENCILS

Hand stencils, a common motif in Australian Indigenous art, are produced by placing a hand against the rock surface and ‘spluttering’ a mouthful of clay. Alterations of the clay colours could be produced by the addition of iron oxides or blood. Charcoal was added to consolidate it. Furthermore, it was possible, depending upon the clay type, to alter the colour of the clay by firing.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are still at the forefront of science, maths and engineering so it is fitting that cutting edge scientific techniques are used to digitally preserve these sites for both future generations and research purposes.

Work undertaken in the Kimberly region in collaboration with the Kimberly Foundation, ANSTO and the University of Wollongong has used drones to capture

images of Kimberly Rock art non-destructively. The data can be subsequently converted into 3D blocks to allow further investigation of the site and potentially identify features that are otherwise difficult to discern with the naked eye.

This technique was applied for the first time outside Kimberly region on hand stencils at Manly Vale. The scans and subsequent data analysis clearly identified at least five hand stencils. The small size and shape of some of the hand stencils present at this site suggest these are from young children. Digital enhancement of the images suggests there are more stencils which have been eroded by time.

These results are a timely reminder of the potential to preserve this important cultural heritage by using digital techniques.



Brett Rowling and Neil Evers (Descendent of Bungaree and Aboriginal Support Group Manly Warringah Pittwater) with the drone scanning the rock face.



Left to Right: Reka Fulop (ANSTO/University of Wollongong), Ed Couriel (Managing Director of NSW Manly Hydraulics Laboratory) and Brett Rowling (ANSTO and Descendent of Bungaree Mator)

PLANS FOR THE PLAINS: THE FIGHT OVER HARVESTING FLOODWATER IN NSW IS ABOUT TO GET REAL

The state is on the cusp of granting \$2bn or more in licences, but has no way of measuring how much water will be returned to parched river systems

In the next week or two, the NSW government will reveal how many floodplain harvesting licences it intends to grant in the Gwydir valley, home to some of the biggest cotton producers in the country. It's the next chapter in a process that will grant between \$2bn and \$4bn in water entitlements to farmers as part of a plan to control and regularise a practice that captures billions of litres of water for irrigation during high-rainfall events.

The NSW government started with the much smaller border rivers region in the far north of the state, and that has been controversial enough. But the Gwydir will be the real test of the government's plan and its commitment to restoring environmental flows while also continuing to allow farmers to harvest intermittent flood waters.

The licensing process is one of the last big pieces – and possibly the hardest part – of the implementation of the Murray Darling Basin plan.

Over the past three decades, there has been a proliferation of vast water storages – mainly in western NSW and capable of holding billions of litres of water – being used to grow crops on cotton and wheat properties.

As rainwater moves across these flat expanses, engineered structures such as access roads, channels and lev-

ee banks are used to direct it into storages. In the past it would have replenished wetlands, flowed downstream or soaked into aquifers.

Many structures have been built without approval, leading some critics to call the practice “water squatting”.

The NSW government is in the final stages of trying to license this form of water so it can be properly monitored, measured and policed. It wants to have licences issued by July.

Sounds like a sensible idea, right?

But like all water policy, the licensing is highly contentious, mainly because of inadequate data about how much is being taken and the science surrounding the impact of the practice.

The licensing of floodplain harvesting is focused on five valleys: the border rivers, the Gwydir, the Namoi, the Barwon-Darling, and the Macquarie.

The idea is to return to 1993-94 levels of floodplain harvesting, and only structures built before 2008 will be licensed.

The NSW Natural Resources Access Regulator has been visiting farms throughout these areas, verifying how big the storages are and what is eligible for licensing.

It says there are 373 storages greater than 1,000ML (more than 400 Olympic swimming pools) and 693 that are less than 1,000ML.

Eligible farmers must apply to a committee to have their floodplain harvesting structures authorised and to receive floodplain water



Empty water storage units on a Brewarrina cotton farm in western NSW

entitlements. They will be expected to meter the amount of floodplain runoff being taken.

So far, the NSW Department of Primary Industries has released documentation on the border rivers region. About 38 gigalitres of water will be licensed, which is less than a quarter of the total storage in the region (storages can be used for other entitlements, such as extraction of river water).

Floodplain harvesting is thought to have contributed to declining flows into the Murray-Darling system and increased prolonged dry periods.

A report by the Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists, published in September, found significant discrepancies between how much water one would expect to find in the river, and how much was actually there based on hydrological modelling and expected flows under the basin plan. It found that 20% of the water expected under the basin plan at wetlands listed under the Ramsar convention did not arrive.

The department says its border rivers plan will result in a 13% reduction in the volume of water being taken. It argues it will result in significant environmental improvements in wetlands, which will benefit water bird populations and native fish.

But others are less sure, arguing that the hydrological models used to estimate overall water extractions in a

catchment, and to determine compliance with extraction limits, are prone to errors, especially in the northern Murray Darling basin.

Emma Carmody, managing lawyer of the Environmental Defenders Office's freshwater program, says licensing floodplain harvesting could lead to a reduction in the practice, but without a solid understanding of how much water has been taken before the licences come into force, it will be hard to be sure.

Advertisement

“This lack of robust data may result in too much water being licensed in a catchment relative to actual water availability for all users and the environment,” Carmody says.

“If over licensing remains undetected and/or unaddressed, it will invariably affect water access by other licence holders and/or the environment. For example, it could result in annual allocations for other entitlement holders being diminished to accommodate floodplain harvesting,” she says.

“We’re concerned that the result will be two teaspoons of water being returned to the environment instead of one,” Carmody says.

In the face of enormous scepticism from scientists and farmers, the government asked water consultant Tony Weber from Alluvium to review its modelling and the data it had on floodplain harvesting.

The final report in July 2019 concluded: “The determina-



tion of floodplain harvesting volumes is, in effect, a determination by difference. That is, there are a number of 'points of truth' that indicate volumetric flows and consumption in a particular river reach, but floodplain volumes, including floodplain harvesting volumes, in themselves have not been directly measured."

The review found there was "no cross-verification of the volumes" other than through the modelling.

It found that "the justification and evidence provided around the use of the adopted parameters and model for rainfall-runoff is very limited".

The reviewers said they were "unwilling to agree to the current method of accounting for rainfall-runoff until further considerations are undertaken".

But in November the reviewers signed off on the public documentation for floodplain licences in the border rivers, saying the documents fairly represented the "state of play" on modelling for floodplain harvesting in that region.

Adding to the downstream concerns is the extremely intermittent nature of floodplain water. It might only be available every five or so years. Under the plan, if farmers have credits in their water account, they can take 500% of their allowance in any one year. Downstream farmers fear that this could effectively stop water reaching the rivers.

The big test is coming with the Gwydir valley, centred on Moree.

It includes huge agribusinesses, such as Auscott, a US owned cotton company, Australian Food and Fibre, owned by Joe Robinson, who has strong National party connections, and several other large family-owned farming enterprises which often comprise several properties. Getting it wrong will come at a high environmental price and potentially a big cost to the NSW government if it is forced to buy back licences in



the future.

There are other unknowns. One is climate change, which was not accounted for in the hydrological modelling.

Another is how the government can ensure that floodplain infrastructure that is not licensed as a result of this process is decommissioned. In some cases it might be a matter of knocking a hole in a levee bank so the dam no longer holds back flood waters. But in some cases it could involve access to roads and channels, which may not be so simple.

The government says it is developing plans to monitor decommissioning once licences are granted.

Then there is the question of trading floodplain harvesting licences. Sceptics ask how can a licence that requires a structure on the land to harvest flood waters can be traded.

The empty Barwon River. Climate change was not accounted for in Murray-Darling basin hydrological modelling. Photograph: Carly Earl/The Guardian

According to the NSW government, farmers selling floodplain harvesting entitlements will need to modify works on their farms, such as

removing a levee, in order to trade the water. The purchaser will need to have works approved for floodplain harvesting before taking water under the purchased licence. The NSW Labor spokesperson on water, Clayton Barr, has suggested that the government should grant licences only for a limited period, such as five years, to make sure the amount of water taken is sustainable.

He says he has floated the idea with key stakeholder groups and is happy to discuss it with the water minister, Melinda Pavey.

"If we don't know what the implications will be, why would we give farmers an asset now? The NSW taxpayer might have to buy it back in coming years at an unknown cost," he says.

The department says the scheme already has some flexibility because the share of water allocated to each licence can be adjusted.

The government is expected to reveal more detail about floodplain harvesting in the Gwydir and the licences when parliament resumes on 9 February.

It will also table a regulation that aims to outline more detail about how the licences

will work, while legalising the taking of flood water until the licences come into force on 1 July.

But that could ignite a new stoush. The last regulation was disallowed by the minor parties, which do not trust the government's motives for trying to legalise the practice before the licences come into force.

Water consultant Maryanne Slattery predicts trouble.

"Whichever way you look at it, it's going to be a shitshow."

ANNE DAVIES
@ANNEFDVIES
GUARDIAN



LEST WE FORGET ABORIGINAL SERVICE IN WAR

LET'S GO BACK.

It was about the 50th anniversary of the 2 Bark Petitions sent to the Australian House of Representatives back in August 1963, from people of the northeast Arnhem Land.

The petitions protested the Commonwealth's granting of mining rights on their sacred land.

These petitions were the first traditional documents recognised by the Commonwealth Parliament and helped to shape - The Nation's acknowledgment of Aboriginal people and their land rights.

These Bark Petitions played an important role towards changes to the Constitution in the 1967 referendum, Like successfully including Aboriginal people in the national census.

In 1976 the statutory acknowledgement of Aboriginal land rights by the Commonwealth, And in 1992 the overturning of the concept of Terra Nullius by the High Court in the Mabo case Terra Nullius - When the Europeans arrive - "country belonging to nobody". This was the premise for which the British colony and later the Australian Federal Constitution was constructed.

NO body lives here. We can take the lot.

Of course over the years there has been a series of petitions presented to:

Australian Prime Ministers and the Commonwealth Parliament:

Such as William Cooper's petition in 1935, **which denounced the lack of rights for Indigenous peoples since the country's invasion.**

Government did not forward the petition to the king. They argued that, as it was **constitutionally impossible for an Aboriginal person to be a member of parliament**, there was no point in sending the petition on.

As the Government did not hold Constitutional responsibility in relation to Aboriginal people.

Aboriginal people were managed under the same portfolio

as **Australian wildlife** - as a people - they were not mentioned in the constitution

MP Mr. David Shoebridge said it was galling that in 2021 Aboriginal heritage protection laws were still contained in the National Parks and Wildlife Act.

"That's where we protect flora and fauna, not First Nation's cultural heritage"

We need to remember:

Before 1967- Aboriginal people were managed under the same portfolio as Australian wildlife.

They were not quite humans. Not equal. Don't forget, under the "Aborigines Protectors Act".

This Act gave government control of where Aboriginal people could live, of how they would relate to Europeans, of their labour and earnings and of the "care, custody and education" of all Aboriginal children.

They could not enter a public bar, they could not vote, they could not marry non-Aboriginal partners - they could not buy property.

The Act provided clothing and blankets for winter and summer but they were on loan only - and the Minister of the Crown was always the owner. To dispose of them without the authority of the commandant of the mission, our people could be prosecuted for disposing of Crown property.

They were unable to leave the mission without permission, they were banned from traditional activity.

They lived on missions or on reserves and were tightly controlled.

Aboriginal people were not counted as Australian's citizens till after 1967.

So why would all those Aboriginals service men and woman risk their lives and be willing to die for this country, where they are not even counted as citizens.

Why did they join? Not an easy question to answer of course, time were different back then.

What they were hoping for was a better life after the war.

The young Aboriginal people would have been like every other adventurous young Australian, wanting to go out and see the world, get paid really good mon-



ey, see some action and "be home before Christmas".

These young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders fellas that joined up stood out in the crowd, they were proud to be Aboriginal.

They had put up with racist slurs and attitudes almost daily in their civilian life -

But to their mates in the trenches, they were Mick, Ben and Harry.

The misconceptions and negative stereotypes that surely many non-Aboriginal diggers had in their minds when they joined would have quickly disappeared when they were living, eating, laughing and dying with these young fellas.

Today the bodies of those that fell in the battlefields of France and Belgium remain with their mates, thousands of miles away from their ancestral homes.

Probably about a third of the Indigenous soldiers who served overseas were killed in action or died of wounds or disease. Some being sent home with horrible wounds.

But the most tragic aspect of their service was not in them 'going over the top' and running at machine guns and dying. The most tragic aspect came after they returned to their own country.

When they came back home to Australia they were shunned, they were told to go back to the reserve where they come from.

Their sacrifices ignored.

Their families oppressed even further by their respective State and Federal governments with such cruel initiatives as the "Soldier Settlement Scheme", this appropriated land was not available for Aboriginal soldiers.

This scheme also affected the Aboriginal population who did not go to war, because some of the fertile land which was being given in the Soldier Settlement Scheme had previously been Aboriginal Reserve Land.

This meant that many Aboriginal people were forced to leave the land which they had lived off for decades. They had no place to go and were left without any money.

A second dispossession.

These returned Aboriginal soldiers were not allowed to have a drink with their comrades at their local pub, not allowed in RSL clubs, not to march on Anzac day.

Returned Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service men and women were often denied the honour and rights given to other returned servicemen and women.

There was no Government support at the time for the wounded or mentally scarred Indigenous veterans, and their children were still being removed...

The service that these black diggers did - Helped provide momentum to the growing Aboriginal Rights Movement in the 1930's.

They provided hard evidence that they, as a people, were willing to serve Australia but, white Australia were not willing to help them get on with life.

October 1917 the military order was issued: "Half-castes may be enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force provided that the examining medical officers are satisfied that one of the parents is of European origin."

Many men enlisting described themselves as Spanish, Italian or Maori.

1940 the Commonwealth Government barred enlistment of persons 'not substantially of European origin or descent'.

However on February 19, 1942, the Japanese launched two air raids on Darwin. The attacks resulted in the deaths of at least 243 people and led to widespread panic that Australia was on the verge of invasion.

The immediate threat to Australia led to the easing of enlistment restrictions. Essentially, because Australia needed all its available manpower, the race of enlistees suddenly did not seem important.

In 1942 the first Japanese Prisoner of War in Australia was captured by an Aboriginal after the Japanese plane crashed on Melville Island, north of Darwin. The Aboriginal snuck up behind the Japanese pilot with his tomahawk and said, 'Stick 'em up!'.

In 1944 approximately 440 Torres Strait Islander men were members of the "**Torres Strait Light Infantry Battalion**" In proportion to population, no community in Australia contributed more to Australia's effort in World War II than the people of the Torres Strait Islands.

Torres Strait Islander men job was to patrol the Torres Strait and to provide mechanical and logistical support for ships passing through. This unit received lavish praise from superiors and visiting officers, yet its members received less pay than non-Indigenous men serving alongside them. Moreover, like the experience of many First World War Aboriginal men, part of their wages was quarantined by the

Queensland Chief Protector and this became part of what is now referred to as 'The stolen wages'

It was only in 1982 that surviving members of the TSLIB received back-pay.

In 1946 the ban on persons 'not substantially of European origin or descent' returned in full force.

Australia's first Aboriginal officer, commissioned during the Second World War.

Received MBE 1971. Reg Saunders, He argued: 'Now that the danger is past, I feel my race is entitled to equal opportunities with other Australians. We don't want privileges, but opportunities for advancement and fair treatment.'

Despite rules against their enrolment, over 3000 Aboriginal and 850 Torres Strait Islander men and women are known to have enlisted in World War II – possible a further 1000 have served in World War I.

Today there are up to 7000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander veterans and war widows in the Australian community.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander serve with distinction in the Australian Defence Forces Today.

Yes - Indigenous soldiers, sailors and airmen have been part of Australian service history every step of the way.

Some were captured.

Like Private Douglas Grant, he suffered the indignity of being separated from his fellow Australian prisoners of war **So German** doctors and anthropologists could **studied him**.

Then the Lovett brothers (they weren't captured but) occupy a special place in the history, not just of Australia, but also of the Commonwealth. **Four of the brothers** served in both World War One (WWI) and World War Two (WWII).

The total of Lovett family who has served in the Australian Armed Forces –both men and women **21**.

In recent years, the long-forgotten service of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander man and woman who have made significant contributions in all wars conflicts and peace keep-

ing operations Australia has been involved in are starting to be acknowledged and celebrated.

Yes - Indigenous Australians have played a significant part in our military history over the past 2 centuries and will do so into the future.

Over 107 years ago - 14th August 1914 – start of WW1 -11th November 1918, marking the end of the First World War.

11th November marks another day in history - 152 years ago the Victorian colonial government passed an ACT known as the "Aborigines Protection Act 1869".

Some people may not know of the **Aboriginal war involvement**.

LEST WE FORGET ABORIGINAL SERVICE IN WAR

**First Boer War
(1880-1881)
Transvaal, South Africa**

**Second Boer War
(1899-1902)**

**World War I
(1914-1918)
mainly Europe**

**World War II
(1937-1945)
Europe, SE Asia, Middle East, Africa**

**Occupation of Japan
(1946-1951)
Japan**

**Korean War
(1950-1953)
Korea**

**Malayan Emergency
(1950-1960)
Malaya**

**Indonesian Confrontation
(1963-1966)
Indonesia, Malaysia**

**Vietnam War
(1962-1975)
Vietnam**

**Gulf War
2003 And still represented**

Interestingly in the Second Boer War (1899-1902) 50 Aboriginal trackers, they were possible part of the Aboriginal police force.

These men were skilled in use of weaponry, as well to take orders and were trained in military fashion. They were hurried rounded up and sent across to South Africa as bullock drovers and trackers. Some weren't enlisted men.

1901 The Immigration Act was enacted. The White Australia Policy.

There were no coloureds allowed into this country after that date.

So, these Aboriginal men, willing to die for the Country, but because they were sent overseas in a hurry and were not enlisted were not allowed to come home, because of this policy.

They were sent to New Zealand, not back to their families and their Country.

**NAIDOC theme 2014;
Serving Country –
Centenary & Beyond.**

**NAIDOC theme 2021:
Healing of Country**

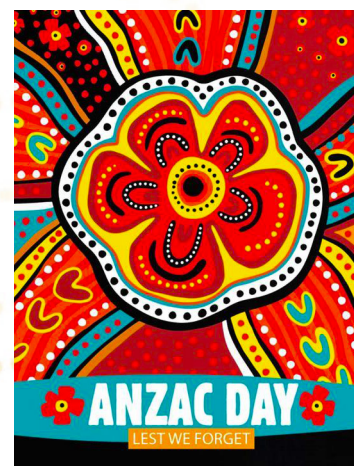
**We acknowledge and
honour our Black diggers.**

They have added to our National identity.

Truth telling.

If we don't have a history how can we have a future?

THREADS COLLECTED AND COLLATED
BY A N EVERS, 2014 EDIT 2021





WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S 'UNOFFICIAL' USE OF NECK CHAINS ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLE LASTED 80 YEARS

Indigenous Australians in neck chains. Historical records say they had been chained after killing an animal. Neck chains were used by police across WA from the 1880s to the late 1950s.

Neck chains were still being used on Aboriginal people in Western Australia in 1958. Witnesses at Halls Creek in the Kimberley reported seeing Aboriginal prisoners chained to a veranda post of the police station for weeks at a time.

It was a common and systematic, though largely informal, practice for horse-mounted police to capture and detain Aboriginal people, including women and children, and remove them from pastoral stations. Their presence threatened the expansion of the cattle industry. At peak periods, from the 1880s to the 1940s, hundreds of Aboriginal people were chained for alleged cattle theft, and marched out of their country, some for up to 400km. Each neck piece weighed 2.4kg. At times they were chained to a ring in the floor.

Neck chains were usually fastened with Yale or Hiatt padlocks. But prior to 1905, prisoners from Wyndham had their neck chains fastened with "iron split links" that were difficult to remove. The links were not police issue but purchased privately from an ironmonger in Perth. They could only be opened, according to police records, "with a hammer and a chisel with the prisoner's head on a blacksmith's anvil". The process could take up to 10 minutes.

The reason for the use of neck chains was simple: financial expediency. There were so few police in such enormous areas of Western Australia – the largest police jurisdiction in the world – and early jails were so rundown that prisoners often escaped. There was periodic criticism of the practice of chaining when cases came to public light.

Kimberley's locals complained that city Perth people 3,500km away had no idea of the conditions they worked in. Neck chaining was considered the "most effective and humane" way of restraining prisoners as it "left their hands free". Police authorities supported their use and influential pastoralists endorsed their use to get Aboriginal people off their cattle stations.

However, in 1905, the infamous Dr Walter Roth's royal commission on the condition of the natives exposed WA to worldwide criticism about the ill-treatment of Aboriginal people. While police regulations allowed ankle chains in jail, there were no such regulations regarding neck chains. These would remain on the prisoners for the period of their sentence despite there being no legal authority allowing the practice. This was, one senior government witness told Roth, an "informally accepted practice of the last 30 years".

Following the Roth report, neck chains were banned. When the public furore had died down, expediency prevailed and they were reinstated – just one year later, in 1906.

But it was not only Aboriginal people on pastoral stations who were neck-chained. In the 1880s, men and women around Broome who were kidnapped, enslaved or "blackbirded" and forced to dive for pearl shells, were also chained. In the 1930s people around Wyndham suspected of suffering from leprosy (Hansen's disease) – were chained and walked 500km to be incarcerated at Bungarun, the Derby Leprosarium.

The system of punitive control of Aboriginal people was ingrained and revealed in other episodes in 1953 and 1954. These accounts are taken from the State Records Office of WA.

In May 1953 at Moola Bulla station, a government-run pastoral station that included a school for Aboriginal children, an 11-year-old boy reported that schoolmaster Robert Johnson told the children they had been "playing around too much" so Johnson put them in neck chains in a standing position. These remained on for hours until one of

the children's fathers came along, went "wild" and demanded their removal. The witness revealed this was not an isolated event: he had seen three other boys, one nine years old and the other two only six, also neck chained. Johnson was subsequently sacked.

The intent of this barbaric punishment was clear: misbehave and you too, like your parents and grandparents, will end up on the chain. Neck chains were abolished in late 1958 following national and international condemnation, especially from the clergy and unions, and the advent of police vans with lockups. But for the small children at Moola Bulla this did not come quickly enough.

Dr Chris Owen from the University of Western Australia was a researcher on massacre sites in WA on behalf of the University of Newcastle's Colonial Frontier Massacre Map Project and is the author of *Every Mother's Son Is Guilty: Policing the Kimberley Frontier of Western Australia 1882-1905*.

The Killing Times is based on data from the Colonial Frontier Massacre Digital Map Project led by Prof Lyndall Ryan at the University of Newcastle's Centre for the 21st Century Humanities.

CHRIS OWEN



HEAL COUNTRY!

4-11 JULY 2021

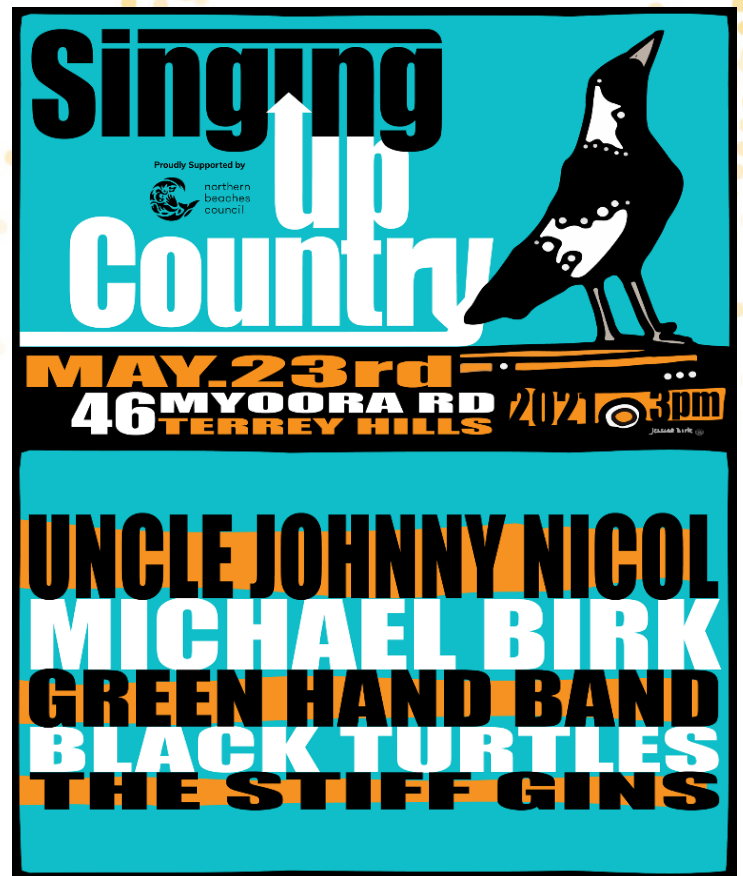
The #NAIDOC2021 theme is: HEAL COUNTRY! – which calls for all of us to continue to seek greater protections for our lands, our waters, our sacred sites and our cultural heritage from exploitation, desecration, and destruction.

Country that is more than a place and inherent to our identity.

For generations we have been calling for stronger measures to recognise, protect, and maintain all aspects of our culture and heritage.

We are still waiting for those robust protections.

This year's theme also seeks substantive institutional, structural, and collaborative reform – something generations of our Elders and communities have been advocating, marching and fighting for.



In the Fields at St Anthony's Terrey Hills
Booking details to come through Trybooking



Hosted by

The Frenchs Forest Parish Social Justice Group

As a work of the ongoing Sharing the Story, Sharing the Land.

Inquiries to annelanyon@gmail.com

DAYS TO REMEMBER

National Sorry Day

26th May

Reconciliation Week

27th May – 3rd June

Mabo Day

3rd June

NAIDOC Week

4th - 11th July

National Aboriginal and Island Children's Day

8th August

YOU CAN HELP ASG BY BECOMING A SUPPORTER WITH AN ANNUAL DONATION FEE

The aims and objectives of the ASG-MWP are to:

- (a) Work particularly in the local area seeking to improve the way people understand and relate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- (b) Commit to supporting Indigenous people in their struggle for justice.
- (c) Assist in educating the Community in social justice for Indigenous Australians.
- (d) Assist and encourage the advancement of Aboriginal education to the local and greater community.

SUPPORTER

Supporter are those who wish to join the association and support the ASG in its objectives.

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE!

Annual Supporters Fee \$25

The annual fee is dated from the day you become a supporter.



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One of the requirements within the rules is that ASG needs to maintain supporters' (previously referred to as members) details including their name, address and phone number. We do have most supporters' details though some of you will be contacted where we are still missing information. Please note that we adhere to strict privacy controls.

Do we have your correct details? If you're details need updating.

Please email your details to info@asgmwp.net

Thank you for your continued support

Supplying your email gives ASGMWP permission to send the Elimatta newsletter and other information to your email address.

ASG-MWP WOULD LIKE TO THANK DEE WHY RSL AND NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT

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ABORIGINAL SUPPORT GROUP MANLY WARRINGAH PITTWATER

Founded 1979

(02) 9982 1425 www.asgmwp.net
[Facebook.com/ASGMWP](https://www.facebook.com/ASGMWP)
P.O. Box 1235 NEWPORT NSW 2106
Koorimail.com [Facebook.com/Koorimail](https://www.facebook.com/Koorimail)

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If you use any of the material it would be appreciated if the extract is set in context and the source acknowledged.



Editor: NEIL EVERS
Graphic Design: NATHAN JOHN