



# DHARAWAL

The story of the  
Dharawal speaking people  
of Southern Sydney

A collaborative work by  
Les Bursill, Mary Jacobs, artist Deborah Lennis,  
Dharawal Elder Aunty Beryl Timbery-Beller  
and Dharawal spokesperson Merv Ryan

## Dharawal Spokesperson, Merv Ryan

I would like to dedicate this book to our Elders, past and present, in recognition of our Dharawal culture and its heritage. Without the Elders' knowledge this book could never have been written.

I, Merv Ryan, an appointed spokesperson for the Dharawal speaking people, would like to recognise the essential contribution made by Aunty Beryl Timbery-Beller who agreed to support the writing of this book and has guided its content.

Being a direct descendant of Timbery (1784-1840), born at Fig Tree near Wollongong, and whose descendants settled at La Perouse late in the nineteenth century, Aunty Beryl's input and knowledge have been invaluable.

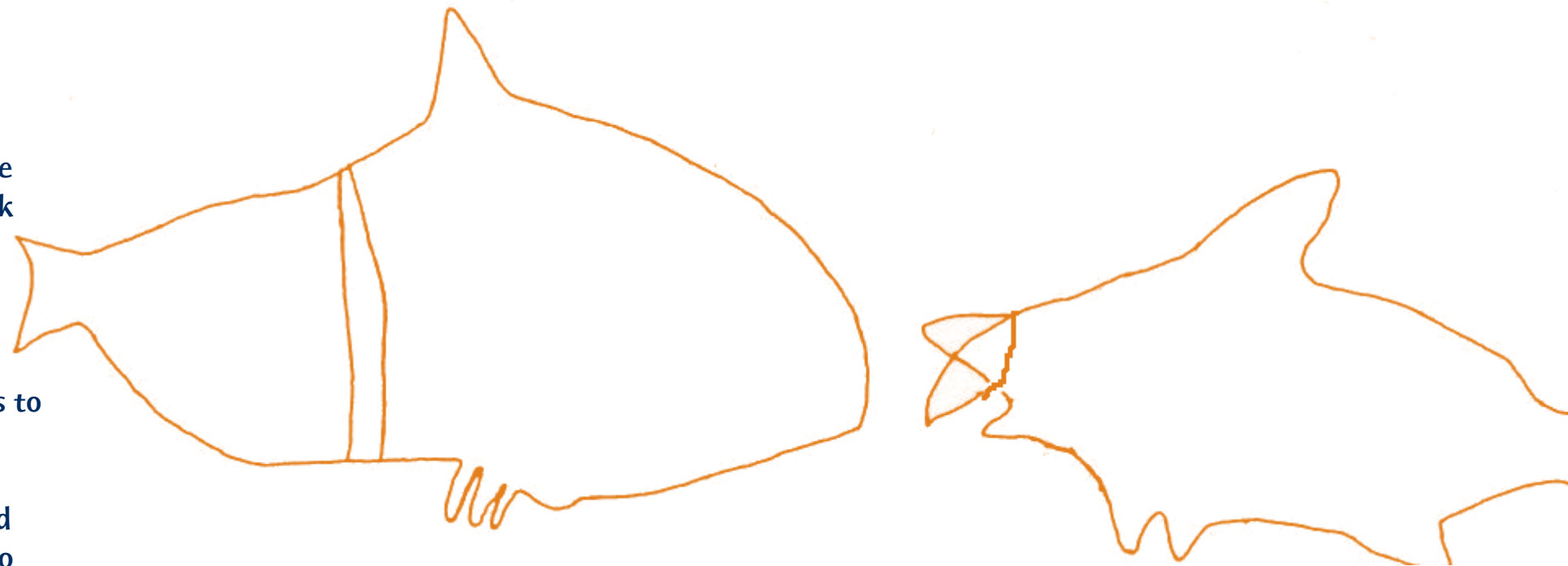
All the information within this book has been taken from approved texts and recordings done 'in the field'. Images are representative of what is in the local national parks and the artworks by Deborah Lennis are contemporary stylisations of actual art within the region. This book reflects a high degree of scientific knowledge that correlates with wide and deep knowledge of the Elders.

This book is also unique in that this is the first time the Dharawal language has been made available to the general community. As there has been a break in the direct link with the language, the language included here by Louise Hercus, Dr Janet Matthews and Dr Jaky Troy is based on the early European recordings and translation from voice recordings of numerous Aboriginal descendants.

This book is part of an ongoing collaboration of all Aboriginal communities to contribute to the dissemination of their culture to all. We hope that this publication will give broad access to the living, yet little-known, Dharawal culture of the Southern Sydney. It is the foundation of our shared history and should therefore be known and understood by all who live in the Shire or who have an interest in indigenous culture.

There is an amazing wealth of Dharawal cultural items that have never been seen or able to be read about in an accessible form until this collaborative book brought it all together. As an indigenous Australian I acknowledge that all Australians have a cultural heritage that is worthy of respect and I hope that you will embrace this Dharawal heritage, adding to the fabric of our wonderfully diverse and rich Australia. I highly recommend this book to you and hope you will enjoy discovering a thorough and clear account of Dharawal life, illustrated by its prolific artifacts.

Merv Ryan





## Acknowledgments

As with any book where there has been collaboration, there is a story within that wonderful journey. This journey started with the Child Studies students at Loftus TAFE and myself being visited by a range of guest speakers to share with us their amazing life stories and our rich Dharawal heritage. Yet when our indigenous visitors were asked where we could read about such information, we were told there was no accessible form and that it still remained an 'oral' history.

As one of my key speakers on the history of the Dharawal speaking people was Les Bursill, we discussed the idea of collaborating on a book as we returned from one of our many visits to the rock engravings in The Royal National Park. We knew that to produce such a book it would have to have the approval and input of our Dharawal Elders. It was here, with the support of Merv Ryan, Kevin Schreiber, the then Mayor of Sutherland Council, and Bruce Baird, the then Federal Member for Cook, that we were able to introduce the idea to Elder, Aunty Beryl Timbery-Beller.

With intrepidation I introduced myself then followed through with a draft proposal. Being non-indigenous, I felt very insecure as to whether Aunty Beryl would accept me being part of the group and whether I would be up to the task. However, I soon learnt that here was a woman passionate about her heritage and her people and so long as we presented the information with appropriate sensitivity, she was willing to guide the book. Aunty Beryl also gave her approval to our artist, Deborah Lennis, and gave Merv Ryan the job of overseeing the drafts as well as writing the book's Foreword.

It was then to get support with funding for the book. It was well known that Bruce Baird, as the former Federal Member for Cook, had already done a huge amount of work with Merv Ryan and Aunty Beryl to improve the status and involvement of indigenous people in local affairs. Bruce and his office staff were very helpful in supporting the proposal and, with a covering letter from Bruce, we believe that helped us gain the funding grant from the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts that we needed for this book to come to life.

As new information becomes available and as we get feedback on reader's needs for other content, new publications will be released.

We hope you enjoy discovering your shared Dharawal heritage as much as we have in putting this book together.

Mary Jacobs  
Les Bursill  
Deborah Lennis

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# Welcome to Country

**Bereewagal, naa niya.**

**Yura ngura dyi ngurang gurugal.**

People who come from afar, I see all of you.  
Aboriginal people camped here, at this place, long ago.

**Ngoon dyalgala niya,  
ngoon bamaraadbanga ni.**

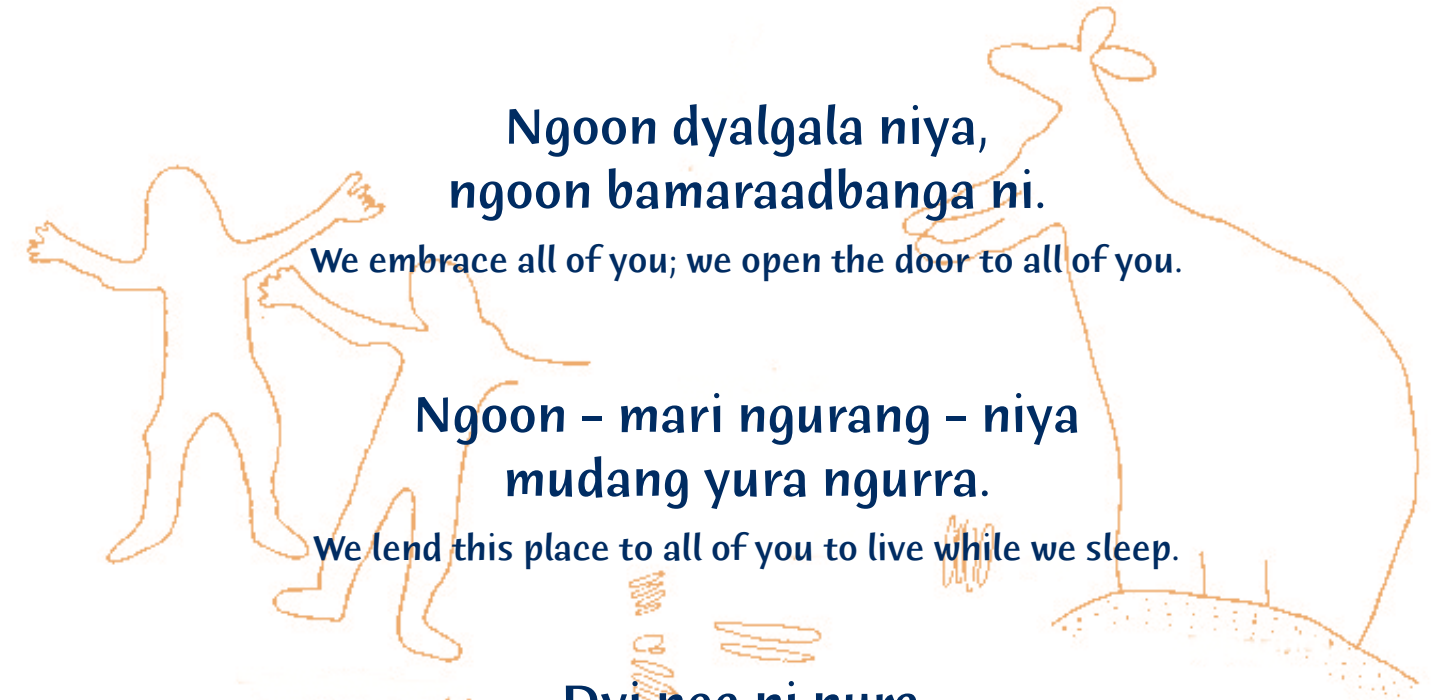
We embrace all of you; we open the door to all of you.

**Ngoon - mari ngurang - niya  
mudang yura ngurra.**

We lend this place to all of you to live while we sleep.

**Dyi nga ni nura.**

Here I see my country.



# Understanding Country

## The importance of the Sky, Land and Sea to the Dharawal People

All the elements of the natural world, the earth, the sea and the sky are aspects of the unique relationship that all Aboriginal people have with the world. These parts all make up the idea of 'Country'.

Aboriginal people believe that the *Spirits* that created the world as it is now, all descend from spirits who once lived in the sky. Every aspect of the world we see now was created in response to the needs of those spirits. All features of the natural earth represent parts of the spirit dreaming and are repeated in the dreamings of the people who now inhabit the earth.

Just as rocks, trees, rivers, soil, the ocean have a connection to that dreaming so each also has a connection to the totems of the people. Each animal, snake, fish lizard or insect has its totem and they also have a direct connection to their ancestral origins in the sky. Those spirits live on in the 'Country' right now.

Today, Aboriginal people express their connection to country and The Spirits through songs, dances, story telling, paintings and engravings. They also recognise their connection to country through their totemic life. Totems are a demonstration of each individual's connection to both the 'Real World' and the 'Spirit World'. In the Sydney Basin the three major totems are Whales, Kangaroos and Snakes. There are many others but these totems reflect the three main spirit creators and their importance to life. To have a totem is to acknowledge your ancestral connection to the Spirit world and the dreaming

Land and Country are 'Life' - the Dreaming connects the individual to that life. Country is beyond sacred, it is life itself.

**'Land cannot be given or taken away.  
We belong to the land...'** Pat Dodson

# Kinship

Kinship is made up of a number of parts: Country; Dreamings; Skin/Relationships; and Totems.

## Country

If you are Dharawal, then this would be because it is the country of your father. Dharawal (Tharawal/Turawal/Thurwal) is said to be the language spoken by the mobs/bands that had a relationship with the area south of Botany Bay and the Georges River, west to Appin, down as far as Goulburn and to Wreck Bay near Nowra.



**If the landscape  
was changed  
then The Dreaming  
is lost.**



## Dreamings

All the wonderful characters depicted in this book can be found in significant places overlooking Port Hacking River. The term *Gurugal* (A long time before) may have been used here to describe the time when Ancestral Beings travelled the country/*nura* creating the forms of the landscape.

The Dharawal clans would have shared certain beliefs with other Aboriginal peoples. *Biame* is our sky spirit and creative being. Illustrated here is a possible rock engraving of *Biame* at Heathcote.

Deb Lennis explains, 'Long before there were any people, plants or animals on their land, *Biame*, the spirit of our Ancestral Being, lived in the sky. He came down to what was a formless void and formed and shaped this land. It is he who gave the laws of life. *Biame* returned to the sky and is known as the Sky Hero. When he had returned he had left some parts unformed. These parts were formed by the activities of other creation spirits such as *Yullangur/gul*, the creation serpent.'

There is a serpent overlaid with a kangaroo engraved at Waterfall (see page 6). This is possibly a creator spirit which would have travelled throughout the land forming its natural features, creatures and the people, placing them in their appropriate places.

Other Dreamings would be connected to natural occurrences such as the Pleiades (a star cluster also known as the Seven Sisters) where it was possible the

*Djuwali* sisters came from to meet up with the *Big Brothers*.

Many Dreamings are concerned with using trickery to defeat troublesome spirits, such as the story of *Moomuga* who was crafty but could be outwitted.



Others kept strangers away from forbidden sites, such as *Gurunatch* or *Gunungaty* who lived in waterholes and drowned intruders.

A *Bunyip* haunted waterholes to capture children and take them into his underground retreat, thus proving an excellent way of keeping small children away from dangerous waters.

The Dharawal whale, which is depicted seven times within The Royal National Park, is the totem for this area. Unfortunately, as there has been a loss of connection with the land, the Dreaming has been lost from The Royal National Park's area. However, as many of the Dharawal people survived in the Illawarra area there is a Dreaming that explains the creation of the Five Islands off Wollongong and why the Blue Whale travels up and down the coast.

## Skin and Relationships

Skin is nothing to do with the colour of your skin. Your skin is the key to your relationships. It defines who you are by explaining how you got your name and identifies who you can relate with, marry and most importantly who you must avoid, not look at or talk to.

'Mother' is your birth mother as are all your mother's sisters. Your grandmother may also act as your mother. Other women in your family line may also be considered as your mother if she accepts the role. However, once young boys start the initiation period of their life, they are no longer allowed to have any contact with the females from their family - this is taboo. Any 'wrong' connections could mean a spearing.

'Father' is your actual father, plus his father and your father's brothers!!!

'Aunts and Uncles' are the brothers and sisters of father and mother, that is mum's brothers are uncles and dad's sisters are aunts.

Other uncles and aunts may be bestowed according to closeness to the families and a friend of dad or mum may be taken on as uncle or aunt. So all these family members are there making sure you are safe and being looked after; however, if you misbehave they all have a right to discipline you!!!

## Totems

The word 'totem' is actually a North American word that we have adopted. Totems are symbols taken from nature which Aboriginal people see as part of their identity, for example, the whale is the totem for the Dharawal people. These totems symbolize the relationship the clan members have to each other, to their ancestors, to their past, and to particular sites or places. This is why you will find engravings of the whales at Jibbon/Djeeban and also at Mainbar.

Individuals would also have a totem; this was bestowed at the time when the woman first felt the movement of the baby inside her. Looking around at the place where this happened, she would work out which spirit was associated with this child, such as a magpie, echidna, swamp wallaby or wattle tree. The spirit babies were believed to wait in the scrub or live with the creatures of the bush until they recognised the mother who was this spirit's ancestor and enter her body.

The Aboriginal people of this area would have had associations with many totems. There would be the main one, the whale that was recognised by all the Dharawal speaking people, then their band would have had several, for example important animals such as a kangaroo/*marloo* or a lace monitor/*jindoda*, and then each person would have had their own totem. These totems would play an important part in their everyday life, such as what they could hunt or eat, their relationships, marriage partners, ceremonies and their connections with their ancestors. The totem, or kinship creature, gave its owner spiritual strength and comfort for those living in the Dharawal area. The totems were believed to act as a guide and support for people in hard times or when in danger.



## Families

In the Dharawal area it was recorded that a man would usually have two or more wives, an older wife and later a younger one. The marriages would be 'promised' from infancy with the arrangement following a very strict kinship system.

The role of the older wife was to teach the young wife, as this new wife would not have been familiar with that area. The younger wife, being more physically fit, would often carry out roles that the older wife could not do.

## Babies and Children

Infants were rubbed with fish oil, often wrapped in paper bark or possum fur and carried in a *pitchi* or *coolamon/gulima*. This was a wooden dish made from the protruding knots of the eucalyptus trees. When strong enough the infant would sit on their mother's shoulder and grasp her hair or sit hugged between her legs when she was out fishing. Baby girls underwent the removal of the tip of their little finger before they left their mother's shoulder. By removing the tip of her small finger, it was believed to enhance her future fishing prowess. *Malgun* is the removal of the second joint to be carried out when she becomes a teenager.

Babies would have been carried and breast fed until they were about three years old. This helped ensure the babies' survival and also helped the mother to space out her births. Babies were given an everyday name about a month after birth that would relate to an animal or plant, rather like our nicknames or terms of endearment such as 'possum'.



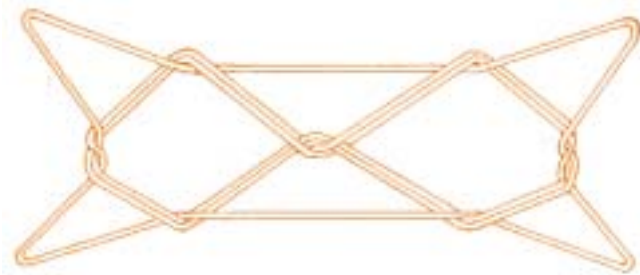


The child would receive their adult name when they were initiated into their adult role in their early teens.

Children were decorated with white clay on their arms and legs. Fish bones and animal teeth were placed in their hair for protection and decoration. At adolescence, girls were expected to wear a *ba-rin*, which was an apron-style covering made from spun possum fur tied onto a possum fur belt.

As children grew they played games that prepared them for being adults. Boys threw spears made from reeds at soft bark shields. The children played a game of throwing a pointed stick at a circular piece of bark, which was rolled along the ground. They made balls out of grass to throw and kick. In another game the player would etch an animal symbol onto a seed pod and the others would have to guess what it was.

The girls would imitate their mothers by practising with small versions of digging sticks, baskets and *pitchis* in which they would carry clay or wooden babies/*gurung*. Other games included face masks for dress-ups, seed pods and gumleaf whistles, a form of tic-tac-toe using stones on a rectangle shape drawn on the ground, wooden seed pod 'marbles', pick up games using pebbles as 'jacks', swinging from low branches, mud slides, and hand and string games that children still play today.



## Women's Business

We know from studying other areas of New South Wales that women/*megababang* did most of the food gathering. Women would learn as young girls/*guragalungalyung* where all the best vegetables, yams and fruits could be found and of course how to survive from what the sea provided.

The Dharawal women are believed to have invented the hand fishing line using plaited hair or twine of the cabbage tree palm, a ground turban shell hook/*barra* and a stone sinker/*ngammul*. They sang a chant while they fished from a bark canoe/*nuwi*, then once a fish had been snagged it was cooked on a small fire in the bottom of the canoe on a base made from seaweed, sand or clay. The *nuwi* was paddled by a large wooden *narewang*, not unlike a wooden spoon, around and beyond the bay and its tributaries where they are believed to have caught most of the fish everyone ate.

Some of these turban shell fishhooks and the stone files used to shape the fishhooks have been discovered in rock shelters near Curracurrang Cove within The Royal National Park and are dated at 2000 years. Animal fat/*ngarrum* or fish oils were rubbed over their bodies to protect themselves from mosquitoes and flies.





To keep warm they would sew kangaroo or possum skins to make cloaks/*budbili* for everyone.

Needles would be made from the leg bone of the muttonbird or shearwater as their shape and sharpness made it ideal for the job. They decorated their hair with ornaments/*bangada* such as feathers, tails of small animals and pieces of wood.

The women would make string by rolling lamandra or stringy bark on their inner thighs then using a lopping design to make their dilly bags. The handles of these bags were usually worn on their heads so their arms could be free for using their digging stick/*guni* to collect the 90 per cent of the food items that kept the family fed.

The women would also carry with them, either on their head or against their hip, a high-sided timber bowl that would have been cut from the side of a tree or a knot of a tree (*angophora*) by the men. It would have been called a *gulima/pitchi* and would have been an all-purpose carrier, from the baby/*guroong* to fruit, yams, bird eggs and small animals for their meal. A member of the hearth group would always have a fire stick/*djarraba* to be responsible for, often a banksia cone, and the food would be prepared and eaten according to age guidelines and totemic requirements.

Women had a separate system of customary law from that followed by the men. Some of the women's law was 'secret women's business' involving ceremonies and ritual influencing kinship ties, marriage arrangements, land-relationships and other rights and duties in resolving disputes. For both secret and shared ceremonies, they would paint their bodies, decorate their hair, perform well-rehearsed songs and dances, and pass on The Dreamings.

## Men's Business

A lot of time, energy and traditional knowledge was involved in making and maintaining the tools and weapons for fishing and hunting, ceremonies and pay back fights. Only properly trained men could own or make some tools and weapons.

### Tools and Weapons

The grass tree/*goolgadie* (*xanthorrhoea*) was essential for many resources. The orange resin was used as an adhesive to attach stone spearheads or pieces of shell; the long stem was used as a spear shaft; the 'grass' was made into string or rope; and even the nectar from the flowers made a lovely sweet drink.

Stone axes were a symbol of an initiated man's life; this is evidenced by the stone grinding grooves located in the national parks. The re-grinding of these axes was a spiritual ceremony, and hence we know there had been 11 senior men in the area.

A wooden *wumara* was used to launch a spear that was about 3-3.5 metres long, which would occasionally kill a kangaroo, wallaby or emu, but the user had to be very skilled.



Most of the men would have made a four-pronged spear/*mooting*, which they would have used from the shore, wading through the shallows or by lying face down in the water from their canoes/*nuwi*. Evidence from around Port Hacking was that the most commonly speared fish were large flathead found around the mud flats and shallow bays.

The men would make the canoes by stripping the stringy bark of the turpentine eucalyptus using a stone hatchet and preparing the bark by scraping and immersing it in water. It would then be heated over a fire to make it pliable. The ends would be tied with vines or bark twine to produce a 3-4 metre canoe/*nuwi*. The *nuwi* was held open by two spacer sticks and would float a mere 15 centimetres above the waterline. In spite of their fragile appearance these canoes would hold several adults and children and it was never recorded that they overturned or took in water. These canoes were also very hardy and lasted many years, often more than a decade.

The inland lagoons were also a great source of food: frogs, yabbies, tortoises and eels/*burra* which the men would catch by placing hollow logs into the water and then pulling out the log once the eel had hidden inside. The eels may have meant more than just a food source to the Dharawal people as their numerous images are represented in stone engravings throughout the national parks.

Shields used by the Gweagal of Kundal (Kurnell) were recorded as being a  $\frac{3}{4}$  body length with two eye holes which they stood behind to receive their enemy's spears. There were two main types, the *yung* being made from a piece stripped from the stringy bark tree and the *arangung* which was made sturdier by hardening the wooden shield over a fire. The shields were decorated with symbolic white clay and blackened with charcoal and blood. A hand stencilled on the surface was believed to protect the owner from injury.

The *bundi/bondi* is a club with a pointed end. This was used very effectively to kill anything quickly. Men also collected some yams, and caught lizards and small animals such as possums and echidnas, but this was considered small stuff as it was women's business.



The use of boomerangs by the Dharawal people is not recorded; however, it was known that they used non-returning sticks/*wigan* and clubs over marshlands to frighten the ducks out of the reeds so they could be caught.

Fire/*gnwiyang* was used by the Aboriginal people as a tool to hunt by burning out the undergrowth and then catching, clubbing or spearing the animals as they attempted to flee. The smoke/*gadial* from these fires would also cause certain plants to release their seeds. With germination, this would attract grass-eating animals to these young green shoots thus giving the Aboriginals an ensured food supply. These regular controlled fires minimised the horrific bushfires that we experience today.

Men often went away on trading journeys where they traded tools such as stones to be used for axes. They also traded songs, dances and arranged secret ceremonies. Men's ceremonies were about spiritual growth and men were trained in new dances to represent their next coming of age. Usually it took many years of training and often the ceremony would take place at a *Bunan* or *Bora* ring (see above). For some Aboriginals it was forbidden to put a foot on the bare *Bora* ring unless they were part of the ceremony.



## Body Decoration

- Most of the men and women of this area wore scars/*cicatrix* on their chest, backs, abdomen and upper arms for both ornamental and ritual significance. This would have been done by cutting back a very thin layer of skin then replacing the flap once sterile ash from a cooled fire had been rubbed in.
- A nose ornament or *nang-oon* was worn through the nose. This was made from kangaroo leg bone.
- The practice of tooth evulsion (removal) was common among the men. Having your right front tooth knocked out was often part of the male initiation ceremonies/*yulang yirabadjang*.
- Females carried out a similar practice that was done to a lower tooth.
- The women of this area would have most of their little finger of their left hand missing. A piece of string was tightly tied around the young girl's first finger joint, and after several days the deadened part would drop off. The purpose for this has been related to women's fishing activities. The second joint would be removed as part of an initiation ceremony, which would create them into 'ghost fisherwomen'/*man*.
- The Sydney women and men regularly used the highly prized, local white clay for decoration or ceremonial purposes. The clan designs used were mainly geometric and had either secret or symbolic function.

## Habitats

The people of the Sydney region set up their 'base' according to the season, the weather and where the water and food was plentiful. As always they used the most appropriate natural resources on hand to meet this need.

Typical shelters were the temporary windbreaks or *whirly/gonye*, usually made from the easily sourced stringy bark or paper bark. The bark was spilt then levered off and fired to shape.

In 1770 Joseph Banks had noted at Botany Bay 'small, rounded and domed huts made with a framework of bent saplings set in the ground and covered with cabbage leaves and pieces of bark'. A fire/*gwee-un* burned at the entrance, keeping away unwanted insects as much as for a heat source for cooking and warmth. Or, as Watkin Tench recorded, if they needed shelter while out hunting, the people used 'nothing more than a large piece of bark, bent in the middle and open at both ends, exactly resembling two cards, set up to form an acute angle'. Joseph Banks observed a 'small village of 6-8 houses'.

In wet and windy weather the Dharawal people would know all the rock shelters (more than 225 shelters with middens have been identified) in their area that would provide them with shelter from oncoming wind and rain. Usually they would avoid actually sitting inside the cave as these sandstone overhangs had a reputation of collapsing in wet conditions.





## Good Corroboree *Boojery Carriberie*

The Dharawal *carriberie* is an extension of their oral tradition with the music/song/dance being learnt by imitation and passed on to the next group by initiation and strict instruction from the owner of the song/dance.

According to Watkin Tench, a marine officer in the First Fleet, a *carriberie* usually consisted of 'short parts or acts, accompanied with frequent vociferation, and a kind of hissing, or whizzing sound; they commonly end with a loud rapid shout', and after a short rest they resumed. Performances were usually precisely the same; though some degree of variation was allowed with different songs and in different contexts. However, as many songs and dances were associated with special ritual the beneficial effects of the ceremony would be threatened if the music, words or the order were changed.

They also danced in pairs facing each other, or back-to-back, then suddenly jumped up from the ground and advanced in rows, or circled around a solo dancer. They performed the dance/*gaxabara* by placing their feet very wide apart and ... moving their knees in a trembling ... manner.

A musical group usually consisted of one or two singers, or a group each with a pair of sticks or clap sticks. The singers used handclapping and slapping of various parts of the body. A typical song session/*yabull* consisted of a number of short items, sung one after another. Some men were held to be very special, travelling from place to place giving recitations of verse-like stories as people gathered to listen for hours.




Children sang both songs of their own making and imitated those of the adults. Their songs were short and repetitive, with a narrow vocal range, and were often shouted or chanted, just as all children's songs are - think of Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star or B-I-N-G-O. Women's songs usually related to special occasions such as the 'crying songs' for mourning or 'love-magic song ceremonies'. Like all women they sang as they went about their daily tasks and sung lullabies to their babies and young children.

## Art Styles

We know that cultures that developed writing did so out of their need to record the storage, ownership and distribution of goods, in particular grain. Aboriginal people had no such need; however, they did need to record their daily events and Dreamings. This they did by painting onto the walls of caves and rock shelters; drawing with charcoal and ochre; and engraving their rituals on the rock surfaces in strategic locations.

These symbols depicted ceremonial activities, the creation of the area or a particular event that took place at an important location. It is the place, not when something happened, that is significant. Because of their significance, the artwork was usually done by men. However, some of the stencils in the area do depict children's small hands and arms.

We know from the vast array of Aboriginal art that has been found within the Dharawal area that there were four main techniques used by the Aboriginals over their 8500 years of occupation of this area; that is, after the last Ice Age. They go under the acronym PEDS - Paintings, Engravings, Drawings and Stencils. Along with songs and ceremonies, these PEDS pass on important events or messages from one generation to another, just as Europeans use writing to pass on stories and ideas.

We can trace the movement of people by the paintings and engravings they left behind as each clan had its own particular style. So for example we know that there were three styles of kangaroo, the oldest being stick ears , next came the pointy ears , and finally the round ears .



## Paintings and Drawings – Outline and Infill

This is when the outline of the subject matter was first drawn, usually in charcoal, and then filled in or as we would now say 'coloured or painted in'. Most of these can be found in rock shelters or overhangs protected from the weather. They would be bi-chrome (two colours) or multi-chrome (many colours).

## Stencils

This was done by mixing clay and water together to make a slurry. They would put it in their mouth, then putting their hand on a rock surface they would purse their lips very tight and in a short, sharp spitting action spray the clay around their fingers, leaving an outline of their hand on the wall.



## Engraving – Pecked and Abraded

This technique was used for rock carvings. The men would first choose the rock because of the significance of the location, for example a rock carving of an orca (killer whale) overlooks the perfect location to sight the orcas as they come into the entrance of the river. Using rocks sharpened into a point, the men would pick (peck) out holes to create the outline, then abrade or rub lines between the pecks to create a deep grooved outline about 25 mm deep. The concept is not dissimilar to our dot-to-dot drawing.

Unfortunately, due to the fact that these were done on Sydney sandstone, weathering has almost destroyed most of these wonderful artworks.

Most of the engravings are of food items created to 'increase' more of that food, such as eels or fish. Many are drawn because they are totems and play an important part of the local Dreaming, such as the giant serpent/witich, kangaroo/marloo, Dharawal whale, or lace monitor/jindoala.

Please note there is **no** recorded use of dots as artwork. Dots may have been used for body decoration or in their 'sand drawing', but was never used as part of their ceremonial art. Also, it is worth noting that dot painting as a style is a very modern form of art that only started in the 1970s. This is very modern considering Aboriginal people had not used it in the previous 50,000 years.

## Geometric Designs

These are the most mysterious of all the graphic material found around Sydney. We know that designs of geometric type done as tree carvings were well known as individual and tribal markings, but there is a large body of circles, squares and elliptical shapes in stone carvings that remain unexplained.

## Trees

- Marked trees denoted the cutting of shields, coolamons/*pitchis* or canoes/*nuwi* with the removal of sections of bark that could then be further worked. Removal of appropriately shaped branches or extrusions was also done for the making of musical instruments (clapping sticks), fighting sticks/*wudi*, woomeras/*wumara* and throwing sticks.
- A 'carved tree' is one where the symbol or totem of a warrior or of a clan may be carved into the tree to mark out traditional territory or hunting territory.
- Some tree trunks display memorial or spiritual carvings - teleteglyphs. *(These are not to be reproduced.)*
- Others are marked trees that mark out the boundaries of ceremonial grounds and Bora grounds, sacred places - dendroglyphs.
- Some trees depict images commemorating burials - taphonoglyphs.

All these trees were methodically photographed and drawn in a book by Robert Etheridge in 1918 called *The Dendroglyphs or 'Carved Trees' of New South Wales*. Unfortunately, most of these trees were 'harvested', that is cut down and 'taken away for study' at the Australian Museum of Natural History.



## Art Tools

### Clay

This was found locally, and was brown, grey/blue or white. The white clay was used to decorate their bodies for special occasions or ceremonies, for painting on the cave walls and for stencils. It was a very valuable commodity so was traded across other language groups by the older women. It was also used as a great curative medicine.

### Charcoal

Charcoal was a very available drawing material as it was just gathered up from a cold fire. By mixing it with animal fat the charcoal was fixed, so that we can still see many of these outlines today.

### Ochre

This is an iron oxide that is found in sandstone and sourced by the men from sacred places. These rocks ranged in colour from yellow through to red and brown. When the ochre was ground, mixed with water, saliva or blood then exposed to the air, oxidisation would occur causing the colour to become more vibrant. Ochre was a most important pigment (colouring) used by Aboriginal people for painting (both for body decoration and art), staining tools and weapons, and in ritual. The grinding of this sacred ochre could only be carried out by an initiated Elder as this was 'the earth's blood'.





## Sand Drawings

Using their finger as the pencil and the sand as the paper, Aboriginal people would use symbols in the sand to tell simple stories or make a map. As sand drawings could be immediately 'rubbed out', they were used for sacred rituals and ceremonies that would be memorised and so not seen by those who were not to access this knowledge.

## Message Sticks

Message sticks were sacred stones or wooden sticks about 20–60 cm long with patterns – coded messages – carved on them. Young men would relay these messages to important people in other bands. Also, by showing the stick to groups as they pass, the messenger gains safe conduct through that territory, as it would show he was on legitimate 'business'. It was like having a passport.

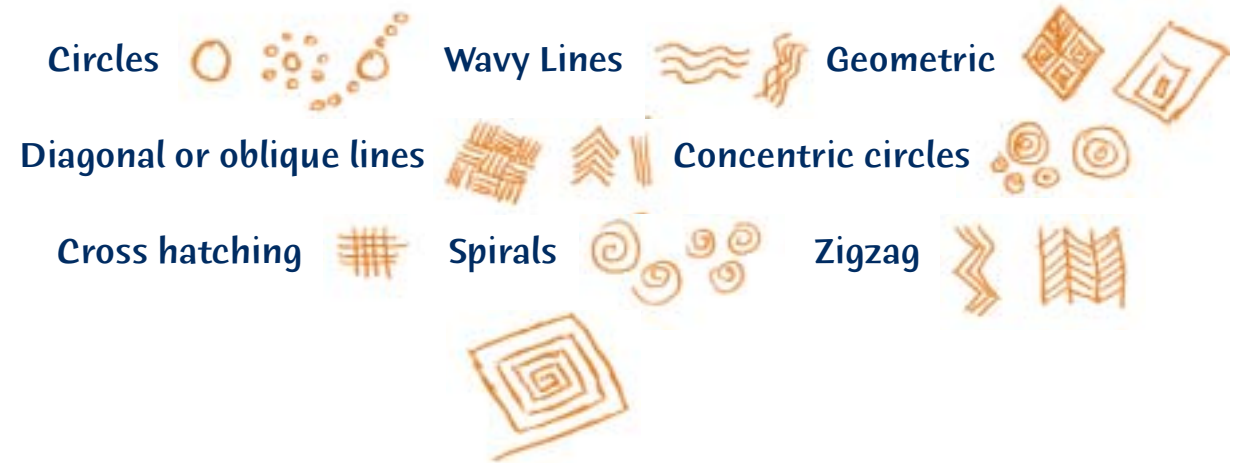


## Paintbrushes

These were probably made by using a green stick then crushing one end with a stone to fray it like a brush or by attaching a feather to the end. A stripped-back, bottle brush fruit stem made a wonderful soft brush to dip into a stone or shell palette of ochre.

## Patterns

Patterns can reflect a number of things:  
The totem of the clan/ band, the family or the individual.



## Symbols

The main symbols used in the Dharawal area that were painted or pecked and abraded are: Circles ○ ○ Circles with random dots ● ●

Large squares of half a metre □ Variations ◻ ◻ ◻

Ellipses ○ Large kidney shapes ◌ Human tracks ● ●

Kangaroo prints ● Eel ◌ Goanna ◌

Tortoise ● Fish ◌ Lozenge ◌ ◌





# Local Words and their Meanings

## BANDS/MOBS

Bidjigal or Bediagal  
 Darook/Dharuk  
 Gweagal - Fire clan  
 Norongeragal  
 Dharaguri(gal)  
 Wandeanian

## AREA

to the north-west of Parramatta  
 northern side of Port Hacking  
 southern shore of Botany Bay - Kurnell Peninsula  
 south of the Georges River  
 Bundeena and the National Park  
 south of Nowra



Members of a band or clan were not restricted to their own territory. With permission they could cross boundaries, often defined by a river or a marked tree, to gather food and take part in social gatherings or spiritual or religious ceremonies.

PRESENT NAME	ABORIGINAL NAME	MEANING
Botany Bay	Gamay/Kamay	fresh water
Bundeena		noise like thunder
Burraneer		point of the bay
Caringbah		pademelon wallaby
Cronulla	Kuranulla	place of pink shells
Garie	Guri	sleepy
Garrawarraah		place of nesting eagles
Gunnamatta	Goonamurra	place of beach and sandhills
Gynea	G/y/omea	the giant (gynea) lily
Illawong		between two rivers/waters
Jannali	Yanad(a)i	place of the moon
Jibbon	Djeeban	sand bars at low tide
Kareela		place of trees and water
Kirrawee	Gi(a)rrawee(i)	place of white cockatoos
Kurnell	Kundul	
Quibay Bay	Daringyan/Bunna Bunna	stingray
Solander Point	Gwea	good hunting
Wattamolla		place near running water
Woolooware		muddy flat
Woronora	Wooloonora	black rock
Yarrawarraah		place of tall trees
Yowie	Koo-ee	a call that echoed



# Some Words of Sydney Aboriginal Groups

Compiled by Dr Jackelin Troy and Les Bursill from material supplied by ATSIIS, recording transcribed by Louise Hercus and Janet Matthews.

Also from records gathered by Captain Watkin Tench and Lieutenant William Dawes, c. 1790.

There have been some minor alterations and shortenings of descriptions.

## Body Parts

banarang	blood	gadlyang	nape, neck
barrang	belly	garaga	mouth
barrangal	skin	garungan	finger nail
budbut	heart	gidigidi	armpit
bunang/guruk	knee	guni	faeces, poo
bung	buttocks	guri	ear
dalang	tongue	mai	eye
damara	hand	manuwi	foot
dara	tooth	marbal	chest
darra	leg, thigh	ngulun	forehead
djarrung	shoulder	nuga	nose
djiwaxra	hair	una	elbow
dyara	bone	wiling	lips
gabara	head	yilabil	urine, wee

## Kin Relationships

babana	brother	guman	grandfather
babang	father	guwalgalyung	elder sister
djambing	sister-in-law	guwalgang	elder brother
djurumin	sister	mubi	mourner at funeral
durung	son	mugung	lover
duruninang	daughter	mugungalyi	marital partner
dyinmang	wife	mulamang	husband
gabami	intermediary in disputes	ngalaiya	ally
gamarada	friend, comrade	ngaramada	younger brother
gulang	widow in mourning	ngarangalyung	younger sister
		wiyanga	mother

## Human Classifications

babana	brother	mani	fisherman
babang	father	megababang	woman
gaiyanaiyung	old man	mula	man
gaiyara	name	ngooroongal	old woman
guragalung	young man	wawura	rascal
guragalungalyung	young woman	wiring	female
guroong	child, baby	wiruwi	girl
maiyal	stranger	wungarra	boy
man	fisherwoman	yura	person

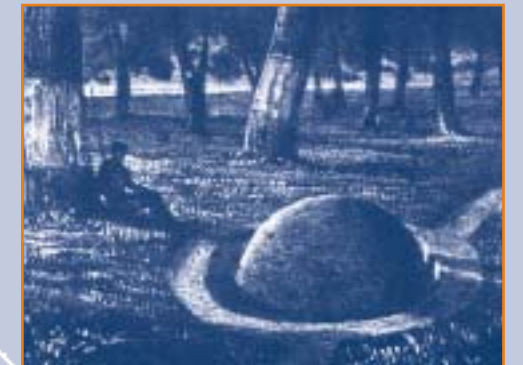
## Language, Mythology and Ceremony

<b>djanaba</b>	laughter
<b>gaxabara</b>	a dance
<b>malgun</b>	woman with two joints of the little finger on her left hand removed ritually
<b>man</b>	ghost (fisherwomen)
<b>nanga mai</b>	dream
<b>nanung</b>	piercing of the nasal septum to insert a bone or reed decoration
<b>yabun</b>	singing and beating time
<b>yalabi daiyalung bora</b>	ceremony
<b>yulang yirabadjang</b>	tooth extraction initiation ceremony



## Pieces of equipment

<b>aragung</b>	shield for war
<b>bangada</b>	ornaments
<b>bangala</b>	water-carrying vessel made from bark tied at each end
<b>barra</b>	fishhook
<b>barrin</b>	apron-style covering made from spun possum fur tied to a possum belt
<b>budbili</b>	possum rug
<b>bumarang/ wumarang/</b>	boomerang for fighting
<b>damang</b>	cap
<b>darral</b>	feather head ornament
<b>duwal</b>	spear - short with 2 barbs
<b>galarra</b>	fish harpoon - 7 metres with 4 barbs
<b>gamai</b>	spear (general name)
<b>garradjun</b>	bark fishing line
<b>gulima</b>	dish made from the knot of a tree
<b>gunang</b>	spear
<b>guni</b>	digging stick
<b>gunya</b>	dwelling
<b>muding</b>	fish harpoon (small)
<b>mugu</b>	stone hatchet
<b>narawang</b>	paddle, oar
<b>ngalangala</b>	club
<b>ngamul</b>	stone sinker
<b>ngurra</b>	camp
<b>nuwi</b>	canoe
<b>wigun</b>	spear thrower made from heavy wood. The rounded end was used as a digging stick.





wuda/wudi a wooden club thicker at one end  
 wumara spear thrower about 1 metre long  
 yung shield for parrying

## Food, Cooking and Fire

djarraba firestick or gun  
 gadial smoke  
 ganalang/yuruga heat  
 garuma blubber  
 gili flame, light  
 guwiyang fire  
 ngarrun fat of meat  
 nggununy/badalya food



## Landscape

bulga	hill	gumirri	hole
buruwang	island	guru	deep water
dyiral	shoal	marrang	sand, beach
ganing	cave	murru	road, path
garagula	ebb tide	nura	country, place
garrigarrang	sea		

## Natural Items

bamal	earth	giba	stone
barabung/ minyimulung	dew	gura	wind
baragula	flood tide	gurbuny	fog
bibola	sunrise	guwing/ bukurung	sun
birrung/ kimberwalli	star	kudjal	smoke
burra/garrayura	sky	mungi	lightning
danagal	ice	murungal	thunder
duggara	cold	ngaityoong	water
duruga	falling star	walan/bana	rain
garaguru	cloud	warriwul. yanada	Milky Way moon



## Local Animals

badagarang/ patagorang	eastern grey kangaroo
banggarai	swamp wallaby
buduru	potoroo
bugul/wurra	mouse or rat
burumin	possum
dingu	dingo
djubi	sugar glider
dun	tail
ganimung	Gaimard's rat-kangaroo
kooroora	brushtail possum
marriyagang	tiger cat
mirrin	brown marsupial mouse
wanyuwa	horse
warrigal	dog
wirambi	bat
wubin	feather-tail or pygmy glider
wulaba	rock wallaby
wularu	wallaroo
wumbat	wombat



## Reptiles

bayagin	leaf-tailed gecko	jindoala	lace monitor
daning	death adder	malya	diamond python
gan	reptiles (snake, goanna or lizard)	ngarrang	bearded dragon
		wirragadar	bandy-bandy

## Birds

binit	tawny frogmouth
binyang	bird
bubuk	boobook owl
buming	redbill
bunda	hawk
burumurring	wedge-tailed eagle
diamuldiamul	whistling kite
dyaramak	sacred kingfisher
gaban	egg
garadi	glossy black cockatoo
garrangabumarri	pelican
girra~girra	seagull
gulungaga	red-browed finch
guma	king parrot
guriyal	parrot, parrakeet
guwali	shag, cormorant
garrawi/kirrawee	sulphur-crested cockatoo
mariang	emu
mulgu	black swan
munu.	bill
murradjulbi	singing bushlark
muruduwin	fairy wren
ngunyul	feather
ngurra	birds' nest
urwinarriwing	eastern curlew
wangawang	ground parrot
wilbing	wing
wirgan	noisy friarbird
wugan	crow



## Fish and Sea Life

badangi	Sydney rock oyster
baludarri	leather-jacket
barung	yellowtail kingfish
baruwaluwu	dolphin
burra	eel
dainya	mud oyster
dalgal	mussel
daringyan	stingray
gadyan	Sydney cockle
gaguni	toadfish
garuma/yerrermurra	black bream
gawura	whale
ginari s	shovel-nosed ray
guruwin	grey nurse shark
kowari	flathead
magura	fish
wallumai	snapper
walumil	Port Jackson shark
waragal	mackerel
yaxa	crab



## Plants

bugi	bark
burumarri	brown gum
buruwan	rock lily
daguba	creek or brush cherry
dainun	Port Jackson fig
daranggara	cabbage tree
diramu	tree
djirang	leaf
djuraduralang	bark used to make fishing lines
gadigabudyari	Christmas bell
galun	grasstree stem
gurgi	bracken fern root
ganugan	vegetable (edible)
gomea	gymea lilly
gulgadya	grasstree
midiny	yam



**Note** As the Dharawal language was an oral language, there are sometimes variations of the spelling of certain words.

# Since 1770

In 1770, Lieutenant James Cook arrived in Botany Bay, and wrote in his journal 'All they seemed to want was for us to be gone'.

*Woroo Woroo, Beeawarigal - Go away, people from afar*

In 1788, Governor Arthur Phillip arrived to 'set up a colony in New South Wales to dispose of convicts'. He also captured three Aboriginal men, including Baneelong (Bennelong), to teach Phillip and five others the language and to demonstrate the food sources of the local Aborigines.

Three weeks after Phillip's arrival, Comte de La Pérouse and his French expedition arrived. They left behind the name we now know the area by, and possibly the smallpox virus (there is speculation this was cowpox as it didn't affect the rest of the colony), which was to wipe out 800-1000 of the Aboriginal population within a 10-mile (16-km) radius of Sydney in 1789.

It is difficult to know fully the fate of the Dharawal people. It is believed diseases that the Aboriginal people had never been exposed to became one of the biggest killers. The early settlers caused dispossession from the land, dispersing the Dharawal people from southern Sydney, thus causing a substantial breakdown of the Dharawal culture.

## Arabanoo

In December 1788, not long after the landing of the First Fleet, Governor Phillip ordered the capture of Arabanoo. Arabanoo became friendly with the colonists and dined regularly with Phillip, providing the first real information about Aboriginal society. He was horrified seeing a public flogging and appalled by the decaying bodies of his people, victims of the smallpox (cowpox) epidemic. He nursed two sick children named Nabaree and Abaroo back to good health, before he fell victim himself, dying in May 1789. He was buried in the Governor's garden (now the Museum of Sydney) as he was well-respected by all those who had known him and in particular Governor Phillip.

## Woollarawarre Bennelong

Woollarawarre Bennelong was born c. 1764 of the Wangal people. On 25th November 1789, Bennelong and a companion, Colby, were lured by the offer of some fish to Manly Bay and, once close enough, were bundled into a waiting long boat and taken to the settlement of Sydney.

Governor Phillip had ordered the kidnapping because he was under strict instructions from King George III to 'endeavour, by every possible means to open an intercourse with the natives, and to conciliate their affections, enjoining all our subjects in amity and kindness with them'.

However, Governor Phillip couldn't carry out these orders while there was no contact with the native inhabitants, who had kept their distance from Sydney Cove and all its white settlers. Believing there was no other option, Governor Phillip felt that capturing a local would start a relationship in which the differences in language, culture and society could be learnt. This he believed would allow both people to converse and trade, and gradually lead to a peaceful and prosperous society for both peoples to live in.

Although there were a few before him, Bennelong was one of the first Aborigines to learn to speak and understand English. He learnt European customs and while in the settlement he wore the European jacket, trousers and hat of the day. As one of the first Aborigines to come into the settlement, Bennelong was instrumental in bridging many gaps between the white settlers and the indigenous people, the Cadigal.

Bennelong is also known to have taught the explorer George Bass the language of the Sydney Aborigines.





## Bungaree or Bongaree



Bungaree was an Aboriginal man who came from Broken Bay. Attracted by 'his good disposition and manly conduct' Matthew Flinders took him in the ship *Norfolk*. He also accompanied Flinders in the ship *Investigator* during his circumnavigation of Australia.

In 1817, Bungaree sailed with Phillip Parker King to north-western Australia.

Bungaree died in 1830 after a long illness.

## Pemulwuy

Pemulwuy, meaning earth or clay, was a Bidjigal (River Flat Clan) man who became the most famous freedom fighter in Aboriginal history. Later known as the Rainbow Warrior, he united the different clans of the *Dharuk* to resist the British.

Pemulwuy was a tall, athletic man with a blemish in one eye and may have been a *carradhy*, a clever man. Pemulwuy had been responsible for the Cooks River killing of Governor Phillip's hated gamekeeper John MacEntire in 1790.

His ability to elude capture earned him mythical status among the British. John Price wrote that 'no gun or pistol can kill him'. As part of this resistance he organised warfare against the 'invaders', causing Governor Phillip a huge amount of embarrassment and frustration that this 'native' could so easily outsmart and outwit the white man.

As was typical of the time when Pemulwuy was finally shot on 2nd June 1802, his head was removed and sent to England for 'scientific research'. His head is still to be returned for traditional burial.

## 1816

Between 1814 and 1816, relations between Aborigines and Governor Macquarie's government broke down. Macquarie felt compelled to 'inflict terrible and exemplary punishments' on the 'natives' by 'punishing and clearing the country of them entirely, driving them across the mountains' (Macquarie's Diary, 10th April, 1816.) When Captain Wallis came across the Dharawal men in Appin, he had them killed and their heads removed. Others were sent to hunt down the women and children. A massacre occurred by 'shooting and trampling them under their horses' hooves and driving them over the cliffs of Broughton Pass' (Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews, 'Genocide'). Nearly all the three thousand Dharawal speaking people had now been killed or driven off their land.

## Today

Today, the Dharawal culture is kept alive by Aboriginal people who descend from the ancient Dharawal people.

The Elders are advocates and cultural historians for this rich and inspiring culture that has thrived for over 8500 years in this area. Research and study of many hours of spoken language has helped it to be revived.

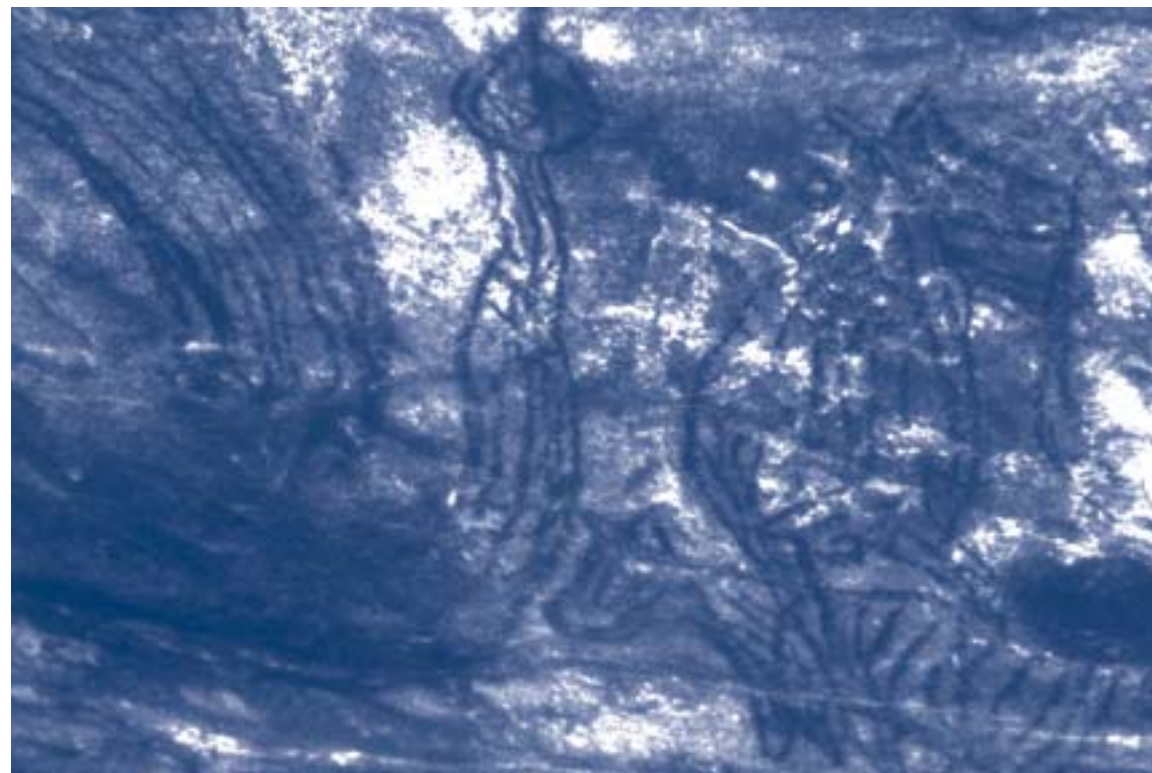
This is now our shared heritage for which we all have a responsibility to know and understand. This inheritance must then be used to enrich the lives of future generations.



# The Tigers of Southwest Arm

One of the hundreds or possibly thousands of paintings and drawings in southern Sydney tells us that not only did the Aboriginal people live here, there were also many strange and exotic animals, plants and fish here with them. One of these animals (or more correctly marsupial) was the Tasmanian tiger - *Thylacinus cynocephalus*, which translates to a dog-headed pouched-dog.

The drawing below of a thylacene, or tiger, shows us that Aboriginal people were living and camping in Port Hacking/Djeeban when the tiger was on the Australian mainland. This carnivorous marsupial is now believed to be extinct.



## So why is the tiger now extinct?

It is believed with the arrival of the dingo onto mainland Australia the thylacene could not compete. The dingo was a placental mammal that was able to reproduce more quickly and in greater numbers, and the dingo was far better adapted to hunting and scavenging than was the thylacene or Tasmanian tiger (and the Tasmanian devil), which quickly lost the race to survive and died out on the mainland.

## Where did the dingo come from?

From our research the dingo arrived on trading ships manned by Indonesians or Macassans who had been trading with Australian Aborigines for thousands of years. These traders brought dogs (dingoes) not only for their company but also for some extra meat when their food sources got a bit low. It is theorised that a pair of these dogs escaped and or maybe a number of dogs escaped and their offspring spread quickly throughout Australia.

## How were there Tasmanian tigers when there were no mainland tigers?

Well, there were no dingoes in Tasmania. The dingoes arrived only after the seas rose from the last ice age about 8000 to 10,000 years ago, thus allowing the thylacene to remain isolated on Tasmania.



# Flag

According to NAIDOC the Australian Aboriginal flag was designed by artist Harold Thomas and was first flown at Victoria Square in Adelaide, South Australia, on National Aborigines Day, 12th July 1971. It became the official flag for the Aborigines after it was first flown in 1972 over the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra. Since then, it has become a widely recognised symbol of the unity and identity of Aboriginal people.

In view of the flag's wide acceptance and importance in Australian society, the Commonwealth took steps in 1994 to give the flag legal recognition. After a period of public consultation, the Aboriginal flag was proclaimed a 'Flag of Australia' under section 5 of the Flags Act 1953 in July 1995.

## Its Form and Symbolism

The Aboriginal flag is divided horizontally into halves. The top half is black and the lower half is red. There is a yellow disk in the centre.

**BLACK** represents the Aboriginal people of Australia.

**RED** represents the red earth, the red ochre used in ceremonies and the Aboriginal people's spiritual relation with the land.

**YELLOW** disk represents the Sun, the giver of life and protector



# Often-asked Questions

## Why did Aboriginals not develop writing?

There are four important facts that we need to look at.

- We know that written language developed where there was a hierarchical system so that chiefs, pharaohs and kings could keep a record (list) of what they owned. Aboriginals had a linear or egalitarian distribution of power and their value system was one of sharing, not owning or exploiting.\*
- The first information that was 'written' about was the storage and ownership of grains and domesticated animals. Australia, even today with our current knowledge, does not produce any native grains of high protein value that we farm nor have we been able to domesticate or herd any of our native animals.
- Aboriginal people lived in bands that primarily moved about within their own language group's territory. Why write something down when you can talk directly to a person? If someone did need to move outside their territory, they would carry a device with a hieroglyphic message on it - equivalent to a passport - and using dance, gestures and shared key words, they would have been able to carry out their business or trade.
- Finally, and the most important point, is that indigenous culture is sacred. Therefore nothing can be shared with anyone else unless they have been 'initiated' by the Elders to have the responsibility to use that knowledge appropriately. One way to make sure that knowledge did not get into the wrong hands was to **not** record it. Everything had to be memorised, or if it had been drawn as symbols in the sand then it could be immediately erased.

\* Note that much Aboriginal art contains information stored in the image.



## Why did Aboriginals not develop the 'wheel'?

Again we only need to look at history and geography to see the explanation.

- Wheels were developed primarily as a means of transport to travel long distances, transport goods or to engage in battles. Aboriginals did not need to travel distances further than 600 metres as a whole and even when they did the terrain was so irregular that walking was considered the quickest way. If you read about our early explorers, they quickly gave up their drays and wheeled wagons as they were impossible to use in the Australian landscape. There are some lovely accounts of Aboriginal guides laughing and jeering at the explorers as they bounded ahead of the slow horses and drays. Wheels were no use even to our early settlers until, with the help of our chain-ganged convicts, roads were built.
- Of course, the other essential item you needed for wheels was a horse or bullock. There are no native animals that anyone has yet been able to harness to a wheeled vehicle. Even Santa's sleigh, pulled by 'six white boomers', is not wheeled!
- The only other wheeled item that was developed that did not need to be drawn was the wheelbarrow that the Chinese had designed. This had been developed as a way of gathering and carting goods. The Aboriginal Australians had needed ease of movement and had no heavy goods - so why invent something you don't need?
- Finally, in Aboriginal culture there was not the notion of all-out warfare (prior to 1788) that involved the mass mobilisation of warriors and weaponry. Rather it was one of 'reciprocal pay back' that again related to sacred lore. Once the 'payback' to the offending person had been carried out, then it was all over.



## Good Books to Read

Note: Some of the older books use the terms 'legend' or 'dreamtime', it is preferred that the term 'dreaming' be used.

For really great comprehensive coverage of what is out there to read, see Margaret Dunkle, *Black in Focus: A Guide to Aboriginality in Literature for Young People*, ALIA Press, 1994, Library call number A823.308035 DUNK.

Margaret has reviewed 302 books, identifying the source or setting to the appropriate Aboriginal community. She indicates appropriate age range and gives her level of recommendation. She has also drawn up a very useful 'criteria for evaluating publications on Aborigines at upper primary level'.

Those with a \* indicate stories connected to New South Wales.

For a current source, contact your local library, Bloomin' Books at Caringbah, Glebe Books [www.glebebooks.com](http://www.glebebooks.com), or Magabala Books in Western Australia at [www.magabala.com/cats/children2.htm](http://www.magabala.com/cats/children2.htm).





Author/Illus.	Name of Book	Publisher	Date	Age
Abdulla, Ian	As I Grow Older	Omnibus	1993	10yrs -
Adams, Jeanie	Going for Oysters Pigs and Honey	Omnibus	1991 1989	6yrs -
Adams, Lee & G	Australian Legends series Molok the Thirsty Frog How the Emu Lost his Wings How the Echidna Got its Quills The Tale of the Kangaroo Plus many more	SRA (Science Research Assoc)	1972 1979 1979 1979	5yrs -
Albert, M Lofts, Pamela (retold & illus)	How the Birds got their Colours	Ashton Scholastic	1983	4yrs -
Argerakis, H Houweeling, P	Gang-Man-Gang *	Kemblawarra Public School	1991	4yrs -
Barlow, Alex	Australian Legends series Red Tit and Brown Tit Emu and Brolga Kuroroo the Koala Gurangatch and Mirragon * Plus many more	Macmillan Australia	1991	5yrs -
Berndt, C Meeks, R (illus)	Pheasant and Kingfisher When the World was New This is Still Rainbow Snake Country	Bookshelf	1988	6yrs -
Brim, Warren Eglitis, Anna (illus)	Creatures of the Rainforest	Magabala	2005	4yrs -
Charles, Mary McGregor, Bill (trans & ed)	Winin: Why the Emu cannot Fly	Magabala	1993	5yrs -

Author/Illus.	Name of Book	Publisher	Date	Age
Christophersen, J Christophersen, C (illus)	My Home in Kakadu	Magabala	2005	4yrs -
Crawford, J Fielding, G (illus)	A Home for Bilby	Magabala	2004	4yrs -
Dann, Lucy Riches, F (illus)	The Bardi Counting Book	Magabala	1993	4yrs -
Ellis, Jean	Stories from the Aboriginal Dreamtime	Playway Distributors	1982	5yrs -
Fogarty, L Hodgson, S	Booyooburra: A Story of the Wakka Murri	Hyland House	1993	6yrs -
Germein, K	Leaving	Roland Harvey	2000	5yrs -
Gilbert, K Williams, E (photog)	Child's Dreaming	Hyland House	1992	4yrs -
Gleeson, L Azar, P (illus)	Mum goes to Work	Ashton Scholastic	1992	3yrs -
Goodluck, J Adams, J & Tonkin, R (illus)	Biaga and Lagi: Five Stories	Joint Board of Christian Education	1976	4yrs -
Greene, G Tramacchi, J (trans)	Tjarany Roughtail	Magabala	1992	All
Gulpilil McLeod, N(photog) of our Dreaming	The Birirrk: Our Ancestors	L & S Publishing	1983	All
Harris, B Harp, B (illus)	The Dream	Magabala	1997	4yrs -

Author/Illus.	Name of Book	Publisher	Date	Age
Ishiguchi, P Stahlmann, C (illus)	Crabbing at High Tide	Magabala	2001	6yrs -
Jones, E Jones, D & Donaldson, K	The Story of the Falling Star	Aboriginal Studies Press	1989	9yrs -
Kartinyeri, D McInternet, K (illus)	Bush Games and Knucklebones	Magabala	2003	6yrs -
Lawrie, M	Tales from Torres Strait	University of Queensland Press	1972	8yrs -
Laws, C	Wargan the Crow*	Envirobook	2002	5yrs -
Lessac, F	The Magic Boomerang	Plantegent	1994	4yrs -
Little, L Lyndon, J (illus)	The Mark of the Wagaril	Magabala	2004	6yrs -
Lippo, A	The Kangaroo and the Porpoise	Ashton Scholastic	1987	4yrs -
Lowe, Pat Pike, Jimmy	Yinti: Desert Child & Desert Dog	Magabala	1998	6yrs - 10yrs
McDougal Taylor, J (illus)	Anna the Goanna (Poetry)	Aboriginal Studies Press	2000	3yrs -
McRobbie, N Fielding, G (illus)	Bip, the Snapping Bungaroo Who's that Jumbun in the Log	Magabala	1990	2yrs - 3yrs -
Mattingley, C Adams, J (illus)	Tucker's Mobs	Omnibus	1992	5yrs -
Meeks, A	Enora and the Black Crane	Ashton Scholastic	1991	6yrs -
Miller, C	Picture Book on Video	Harper Collins	1997	4yrs -

Author/Illus.	Name of Book	Publisher	Date	Age
Morgan, Sally	The Flying Emu and other Stories	Viking	1992	4yrs -
	My Place for Young Readers	Fremantle Arts	1990	10yrs -
	Pet Problem	Centre Press	1994	4yrs -
Morgan, Shane	Look and See	Magabala	1999	3yrs -
Morpurgo, M Birmingham, C	Wombat Goes	Harper Collins	2000	3yrs -
Mumbulla, P	Minah (Poetry) The Whalers	Harper Collins	1997 1995	3yrs - 4yrs -
Nangan, J	Joe Nangan's Dreaming	Nelson	1976	All
O'Brien, M Leaney, A Wyatt, S	The Badudu Stories Series of 4 The Barwoo Stories	Fremantle Arts Centre Press	1994 1992	6yrs - 5yrs -
O'Brien, M Leaney, A Wyatt, S	The Legend of the Seven Sisters Wunambi the Water Snake	Aboriginal Studies Press	1990 1990	5yrs - 6yrs -
Oodgeroo, N Bancroft, B (illus)	The Rainbow Serpent Stradbroke Dreamtime	AGPS Angus & Robertson	1988 1993	All 10yrs -
Pilawuk, R Forrest, R & Scott, J (illus)	The Arguing Edibles	Magabala	1992	2yrs -
Pitt, T & Janke, J Riches, F (illus)	What Makes a Tree Smile	Magabala	2003	3yrs -
Pointgnant, A	Bush Walkabout	Angus & Robertson	1972	All



Author/Illus.	Name of Book	Publisher	Date	Age
Porter, A Bancroft, B (illus)	The Outback	Magabala	2005	All
Povah, F Herring, C	You Kids Count Your Shadows *	Frank Povah	1990	9yrs -
Roennfeldt, R	Tiddolicks: The Frog who caused a Flood	Penguin	1980	4yrs -
Roughsey, D Trezise, P	Gidja The Giant Devil Dingo The Magic Firesticks The Rainbow Serpent The Quinkins	Collins	1984 1973 1983 1975 1978	5yrs - 5yrs - 5yrs - 5yrs -
Simpson, M & R	Mindi Books series Mindi * Daydreamer and others *	Jacaranda	1984	4yrs - 8yrs -
Solomon, S Nona, D (illus) & Bani, E (trans)	Dabu the Baby Dugong	Magabala	1992	4yrs -
Somerville, K	The Lizard Gang	Magabala	1995	5yrs -
Taylor, A	The Day we Lost Forever	Rivka Frank & Associates	1988	6yrs -
Tipoti, A (illus)	Mura Migi Kazika (Rhymes)	Magabala	2000	5yrs -
Torres, P Williams, M	The Story of Crow Jalygurr: Aussie Animal Rhymes	Magabala	1988 1988	4yrs - 4yrs -
Trezise, P	Children of the Great Lake Mungoon-Gali the Giant Goanna Lacsa and her Pups	Angus & Robertson Collins	1992 1991 1990	6yrs - 6yrs - 6yrs -

Author/Illus.	Name of Book	Publisher	Date	Age
Urandangi State School Pupils	Goanna Jumps High	Magabala	1999	5yrs -
Utemorrhah, D Torres, P (illus)	Do not Go Around the Edges (Poetry & Prose)	Magabala	1990	5yrs -
Various	Djugurba: Tales of the Spirit Time	Australian National University Press	1974	5yrs -
Various	Kwork Kwork the Green Frog And Other Tales from the Spirit Time	Australian National University Press	1977	6yrs -
Wallace, P & N	Children of the Desert	Nelson	1968	All
Walsh, G Morrison, J (illus)	Didane the Koala	University of Queensland Press	1983	6yrs -
Watson, M Verall, D (photog)	Kaiyu's Waiting	Hodja Educational Resources Cooperative	1984	8yrs -
Wheatley, N Rawlins, D (illus)	My Place	Collins Dove	1987	6yrs -

# General References

## **ABORIGINAL LITERACY RESOURCE KIT**

Pub: Aboriginal Curriculum Unit, Board of Studies NSW, 1995

Description: 11 books, 1 sound cassette

Subjects: Aboriginal Australians - Education - Books and reading - Language and the arts

## **ABORIGINAL STUDIES. Arts and Symbols**

Cahir, Sandra

Pub: Cambridge University Press, 2002

Subject: Art - Aboriginal Australian

## **THE ABORIGINES OF THE SYDNEY DISTRICT BEFORE 1788**

Turbet, Peter

Pub: Kangaroo Press, 2001

Subject: Aboriginal Australians - New South Wales - Sydney - History

## **ABORIGINAL SYDNEY: A guide to important places of the past and present**

Hinkson, Melinda and Harris, Alana (photographer)

Pub: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2001

Subject: A guide to Sydney's shared Aboriginal heritage and how to discover it.

## **AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL MUSIC**

Pub: Aboriginal Artists Agency, 1979

Subject: Aboriginal Australians - Music

## **BUSH FOODS OF NEW SOUTH WALES; A Botanic record and Aboriginal oral history**

Stewart, Kathy

Pub: Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney, c. 1997

Subjects: New South Wales - Food and Wild Plants

## **BENNELONG: The Coming of the Eora, Sydney Cove 1788-1792**

Smith, Keith Vincent

Pub: Kangaroo Press, 2001

Subject: Smith has addressed the need to return the Aboriginal voice to our shared history.

## **DANCING WITH STRANGERS**

Glendinnen, Inga

Pub: The Text Publishing Company, 2003

Subject: Using original reports, journals and letters we get a chance to revisit the perceptions of those who wrote about the early colony and their experiences with the first Australians.

## **DIRECTORY OF ABORIGINAL RESOURCES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Pub: Lady Gowrie Child Centre, 1989

Subject: Aboriginal Australians - Study and teaching (Primary) - Directories

## **A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF THE ILLAWARRA and SOUTH COAST ABORIGINES, 1770-1850, INCLUDING A CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY, 1770-1990**

Pub: Wollongong University, 1990

Subject: South Coast - History



### **DREAMINGS THE ART OF ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIA**

Pub: Film Australia, NSW, 1988

Description: 1 video cassette

Subject: Aboriginal Culture

### **FROM THE FLAT EARTH: A guide for child care staff caring for Aboriginal children**

Van Diermen, Sandra

Pub: Children's Services Resource and Advisory Program, c. 1995

Subject: Child Care Services, NT

### **GOOD IDEAS, HAPPY KIDS**

Pub: Batchelor Press, c. 2001

Subject: Aboriginal Australians – Activity Programs

### **INDIGENOUS TRADITIONAL GAMES**

Pub: Australian Sports Commission, 2000

Online copy available [www.ausport.gov.au/isp/adultgames.pdf](http://www.ausport.gov.au/isp/adultgames.pdf)

### **LA PEROUSE: The place, the people and the sea**

A collection of writings by the Aboriginal community

Pub: Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra, 1988

### **MACQUARIE ABORIGINAL WORDS**

A dictionary of words from Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages

Pub: Macquarie Library, 1994

### **MUURUUN SERIES**

Bishop, Mervyn

Pub: Curriculum Corporation, 1995–1996

Description: 7 Readers (Big Books)

Subject: Aboriginal Australians

### **NSW ABORIGINAL PLACE NAMES AND EUPHONIOUS WORDS, WITH THEIR MEANINGS**

McCarthy, F.D.

Pub: Australian Museum, 1963

### **OUR PLACE, OUR DREAMING; Indigenous childcare resource book**

Pub: QLD Council of Social Service, 2002

Subject: Childcare Services QLD

### **POOPAJAJYN BOORI NORTA NORTA BOOLA**

Pub: Summer Hill Films for Aboriginal Early Childhood Services Unit

Description: Video and Booklet

Subject: Linda Burney is the presenter, showing how indigenous culture is promoted in four different children's services.

### **STORY, MUSIC and MOVEMENT: Aboriginal child care support materials**

Pub: Prahan College of Tafe, 1991

Description: 1 sound cassette, 1 video cassette and 3 books

### **TALKING EARLY CHILDHOOD: A resource book**

Pub: Bachelor College, c. 1999

Subject: Early childhood education, NT



# Indigenous Contacts

**LOU DAVIS** • 4423 7127 • **Yuin/Nowra**

With enough notice, Lou is willing to come up from Nowra.

He will give a very engaging and positive story of growing up Aboriginal in the 1940s and very comfortably discuss any topics students care to raise. You might like to write out students' questions the week before so you can prepare Lou. Prepare students that he has a very dry sense of humour. Takes coffee 'strong black'!!!

**LES BURSILL** • 0419 298 018 • 9520 7394 • **Dharawal/Engadine**

Les is the specialist anthropologist on the Dharawal speaking people to whom he is related and is the co-author of this book. Les will explain totems, Dreamings and the cultural practices of the local people pre-1788. Knows how to use a light pro and brings all his own equipment!! Loves a strong coffee with milk.

**DANIELLE DE COSTA** • 9528 3369 • **Biripi/Port Macquarie and Bundjalung/Lismore**

Trained in early childhood, Danielle worked with Learning Links as an advisor and is involved in a play session for indigenous mums. Can give services-appropriate resource ideas and is willing to have discussions. Just needs a glass of water.

**DAVID WRIGHT** • 0418 481 437 • 9319 5669 • **Dainggatti/Kempsey**

David's cultural connections are from the central/north coast but he has been trained by National Parks to give talks/walks at Kurnell. Invite David to bring his 'show and tell resources' - indigenous tools, weapons and bush food - and/or arrange for him to take students on a 'bush walk'. Needs at least 2 hours, makes jokes and has a very relaxed style. Takes coffee white and 2 sugars.

**MERV RYAN** • 0419 162 255 • 9545 0860 • **Dharawal**

Merv is an approved spokesperson on Dharawal matters by Aboriginal Elder, Aunty Beryl Timbery-Beller. Merv grew up in La Perouse and has done a huge amount of work with Sutherland Council on a whole range of issues that affect the recognition of and respect for the local Dharawal culture and Aboriginals who now live, work and study in this area. Merv is a great speaker on growing up on the Lappa (La Perouse) reserve in the 1950s and issues affecting Aboriginal people today. Merv is really in touch with local issues and is highly respected.

**DEANNA SCHRIEBER** • 9540 7996 • **Wiradjuri and Wanaruah/Singleton area**

Now lives and works in the Sutherland Shire. Presently works as an Aboriginal Educator at Sutherland Hospital. Will talk about life growing up on a mission and life in Redfern. Is happy to take questions on a whole range of issues but her speciality is Aboriginal health and its effects on children.

**LES SAXBY** • 0414 358 858 • 9518 0187 • **Wonnaru-Darokinung/Hunter Valley**

Les does 'The Dreamtime Connection' Yidaki Didg Dance with the Didg and face/body painting plus is a photographer. Cost as per individual requirements. Works with preschoolers up to adults. Makes up a package according to needs. Full details of what Les has on offer can be found on [www.indidellenium.com](http://www.indidellenium.com)

**JUNE REIMER** • 9528 0287 • **Co-ordinator of Kurranulla Aboriginal Corporation**  
15 Jannali Avenue, Jannali NSW 2226 • [kuranula@bigpond.net.au](mailto:kuranula@bigpond.net.au)

**DEBORAH LENNIS** • 9660 2012 • **Dharawal**

Deborah has a Bachelor of Education (Secondary & Aboriginal Studies/History). She is trained in bush tucker; works on communal projects, for example Sea of Hands, wall murals, flag poles, storytelling/dreamings and face painting. Likes a joke and to have a good laugh. Has her coffee white with two sugars.

● And to contact Mary Jacobs • [maryjacobs49@hotmail.com](mailto:maryjacobs49@hotmail.com)



## Australian National Anthem

### English

Australians all let us  
rejoice  
For we are young and free  
We've golden soil and  
wealth for toil  
Our home is girt by sea  
Our land abound in  
nature's gifts  
Of beauty rich and rare  
In history's page let every  
stage  
Advance Australia Fair  
In joyful strains then let us  
sing  
Advance Australia Fair

### Dharawal

**nyini Australiagal  
budjari garibara  
nyini budjari buriga  
budjari bamul yararaga  
mari walaba  
bamulga mari  
walanmirang  
bamul merong mari  
kaban walaba  
badjajarah waratah  
Yanamuru Australiagal  
yanamuru  
Australiagal  
yana budjari Australiagal  
nyini bayala gawuwi  
bayala gawuwi  
yana budjari Australiagal**

### Dharawal Translation

We Australian mob are  
going to have a good  
dance  
We good young fellows  
Good earth and speared a  
lot of wallabies  
A lot of water associated  
with this earth  
Earth having a lot of  
animals and waratahs  
Go along the path  
Australians  
Australian mob go  
together  
We say and sing out  
Australian mob go  
together

Merv Ryan,  
Kurranulla Aboriginal Corporation  
© 25 January 2001

### Dharawal

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