

A Walk Through 'White Australia' at the National Museum of Australia

What does the National Museum of Australia

tell us about 'White Australia' attitudes and policies 1850–today?

Everyone knows that part of Australia's history includes policies and behaviour that have discriminated against people of non-European backgrounds.

- 1 Brainstorm your knowledge of 'White Australia' as a class. Summarise your knowledge under these headings in a table like this:

Aspect	Initial ideas	At the end of this unit
What 'White Australia' means		
When it existed		
Why it existed		
How it operated		
Who it was directed against		
How it was justified		
Who criticised it and why		
How effective it was		
What impacts it had on people and society		
How it changed over time		
What replaced it		

What this brainstorm does is to create a summary of your present knowledge about 'White Australia'; but it also provides you with a structure for exploring White Australia over time. If you can find information on all these headings you will have a very good knowledge of the topic.

The ideas you have recorded are also your image or representation of what you understand by 'White Australia'. It is time now to test how accurate that image is. We can do this by looking at the displays in the National Museum of Australia, and asking what their representation of the issue looks like. Is it different from yours? Is it a fair and accurate representation of the past?

When you have worked through the information on the following pages, and studied how the theme is represented in the NMA, then come back to the table and see if you can add to and change any of the information you included in your initial ideas.

Let's start.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit students will be better able to:

- > Know what constitutes the 'White Australia' policy
- > Critically analyse the National Museum of Australia's representation of it
- > Understand how Australian attitudes and policies towards immigrants and race have changed over time.

The **National Museum of Australia** at Acton is one of the nation's most important cultural institutions.

The Museum employs a fresh and exciting approach to Australian history, culture and environment.

Each National Museum unit of work in *STUDIES* asks students to consider the stories and concepts behind Museum themes, objects and images and can be used with students in Society and Environment, History, Geography, English and Media Studies.

Afghans

'White Australia' refers to the policies and attitudes of white Australians toward non-European immigrants and Indigenous inhabitants of Australia.

The National Museum does not have one particular display about 'White Australia', but it does have a variety of objects and text about aspects of 'White Australia' spread throughout the various galleries.

The displays give us **information** — through the objects, captions and explanatory text — but they also create **messages and meanings** in our minds. When put together, they create an overall message about or **representation of 'White Australia'**.

In looking at the Museum displays we are asking a key question: from the displays, what is the NMA's representation of 'White Australia'? So your first task is to decide: **if you only had these displays to form your ideas, what image of White Australia would you develop?** Once you have decided on this, you can then look at more information about the topic, and make a judgement or evaluation about how fair and accurate the Museum's representation is.

Most people start looking at 'White Australia' from the 1850s. Let's do that.

Gold rushes

Here is an exhibit in the NMA on the gold rushes, an important period in the development of 'White Australia'. Here is the Museum's representation of the period.



Nation — snapshots timetable, gold discovery

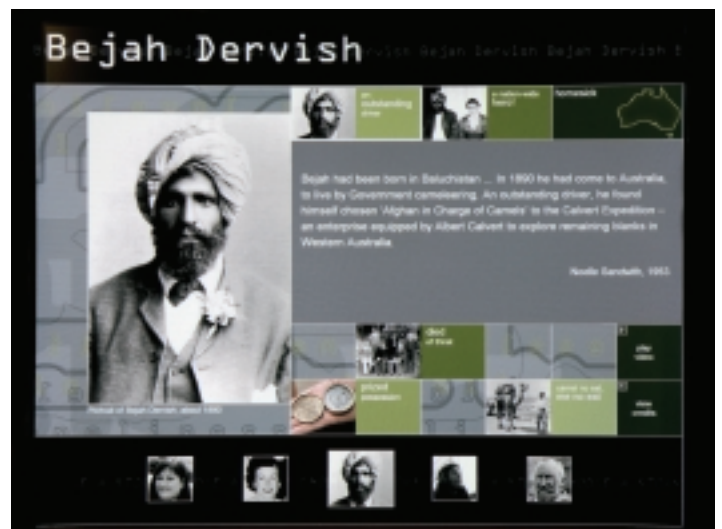
The Museum's text for this reads: *'In 1851 gold was discovered in Australia. The dream of striking it rich and living a luxurious life stood in contrast to the noisy squalor of the diggings.'*

The text does not tell us that Chinese had been brought to Australia in small numbers during the 1840s to work as manual labourers, but it was after the discovery of gold that the Chinese arrived in very large numbers. They lived and worked as a separate group, and were very culturally different to the European and other miners.

- 1 There is no mention of the Chinese in the Museum's display. Suggest reasons why.



Horizons/Vision and Opportunity/Visions — Afghans



Eternity/Loneliness — menu screen for Bejah Dervish

Mahomet Allum arrived in Australia in the 1880s to work as a cameleer in Western Australia and Broken Hill. He later became famous as a herbalist and faith-healer in Adelaide. He died in 1964 at the age of 107. Like most of his countrymen, Allum was ineligible for citizenship.

Bejah Dervish was born in Beluchistan. In 1890 he had come to Australia as a cameleer. He was part of the Calvert Expedition that explored parts of WA.

- 2 What does this display tell us about attitudes to Afghans in Australia?
- 3 What does it help us understand about the nature of 'White Australia'?

Quong Tart

The NMA includes this display on Mei Quong Tart.



Horizons/Vision and Opportunity/Coming to Work/Mei Quong Tart

He was born in China, but lived with Scottish settlers in New South Wales, adopted their customs and spoke English with a Scottish accent.

By the 1890s he was a prominent business figure in Sydney and widely respected in the colony.

The NMA text tells us he was a generous employer, who paid his workers meal allowances, and holiday and sick pay, at a time when that was rarely done. He also planned to make all his employees shareholders in his company.

His nine stylish tearooms 'delighted Sydney society' in the 1880s and 1890s. Tea was kept in elegant pewter caddies. Customers sipped the finest Chinese teas and ate food from crockery hand-painted in China.

He was an Anglican, but brought up each of his six children in different religious denominations. He also kept a Buddhist shrine in his home.

- 4 What does this display tell us about attitudes to Chinese in Australia?
- 5 What does it help us understand about the nature of 'White Australia'?

Pacific Islands and Torres Strait Islanders labourers

One of the main labour sources in late nineteenth century Australia were Torres Strait Islanders and Pacific Islanders. The role of these workers in 'White Australia' was a significant part of late nineteenth century debate over Federation.

Here is what the Museum tells us about this:



Gallery of First Australians — Torres Strait

The text tells us: *Along the Queensland coast the boom of the sugar industry resulted in a labour shortage and Torres Strait Islanders were actively recruited.*

- 6 What does this display tell us about attitudes to Pacific Island and Torres Strait Island labour in Australia?
- 7 What does it help us understand about the nature of 'White Australia'?

Japanese

Japanese were a small but significant part of the non-European population of the north, and they were a significant element in debates about the nature and future of Australia at the time of Federation.

Here is what the Museum tells us about them:



Gallery of First Australians — Paipa

The text tells us: *'From the beginning, the pearling industry attracted many foreign workers including Japanese and Malay people, mostly employed as divers and skippers until the outbreak of the Second World War.'*

- 8** What does this display tell us about attitudes to Japanese in Australia?
- 9** What does it help us understand about the nature of 'White Australia'?

Photographs of displays in this unit by Dragi Markovic National Museum of Australia

Immigration Restriction Act 1901



Horizons/Defining Ourselves

This display is about one of the first Acts of Parliament passed by the new Commonwealth, the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*. This Act created a national law about immigration to Australia, and is a key element of 'White Australia'. How does the NMA represent it?

The text panels tell us: *'The Immigration Restriction Act 1901 was one of the first acts passed by the new Commonwealth Government. Although the Act did not mention race, it allowed authorities to keep out 'undesirable' immigrants, including non-Europeans, through a Dictation test. Between 1902 and 1958 immigration officials could administer a 50-word dictation test in any European language, and later in any language at all. Migrants leaving Australia for a short period of time could obtain a certificate of exemption from the test and provide a handprint as identification. The White Australia policy, as it became known, was not entirely abolished until 1973.'*

- 10** What does this display tell us about the Immigration Restriction Act?
- 11** Who was the Act directed against?
- 12** The certificate for Chan Chong Yu shown in the display is actually a document *allowing* him to enter Australia after he has left it, and not *excluding* him. It says that he is temporarily excluded from the operation of the Dictation Test for a period of 30 months after leaving Australia to visit China. What does that tell you about the Act?
- 13** What does this display help us understand about the nature of 'White Australia'?

European migration in early twentieth century

Sweat Box

'White Australia' is about attitudes as well as about actions and laws.

Here is a display on scientific knowledge at the time.



Hot air cabinet used in experiments at the Australian Institute of Tropical Medicine in Townsville, in use 1919

The text panels tell us: *'The Australian Institute of Tropical medicine was established in 1910 in Townsville. It studied health risks from heat and tropical diseases. Scientists used a hot-air cabinet in laboratory experiments to measure people's responses to extremes of heat and humidity. Such experiments, together with a study of Townsville's wharf labourers, proved that the tropical climate did not dramatically effect the efficiency of the workers' bodies. White men could labour in the tropics.'*

- 14 What does this display tell us about attitudes to race?
- 15 What does it tell us about scientific ideas at the time?
- 16 How would this knowledge influence actions and policies?
- 17 What does it help us understand about the nature of 'White Australia'?

Australia has always had a large migration program, focusing in the first half of the twentieth century on European migration, and then in the immediate post-war period on Displaced People ('Dps'), whose lives had been disrupted by the war. For many people 'European' really meant 'British' or 'northern European'. What happened to southern Europeans who came to Australia?

The NMA addresses this aspect of our history in four biographical displays.



orizons/Coming to Work — Vincenzo Dublé



Horizons/Coming to Work — Werner Hessling and Petronella and Michael Wensing



Horizons/Coming to Work — Lilija Brakmanis and Triantafylia Stamatou (Rose Pappas)

Vincenzo Dublé trained as a barber in Sicily. He and friends migrated to Australia during the Depression of the 1930s, where he worked to establish a business before bringing out his wife and children to join him. He began working as a travelling barber and potato-picker before finding full-time employment in a Melbourne salon. His wife and children joined him in 1934. By 1836 he was able to open his own shop.

Werner Hessling was unable to secure a home for his young family in post-war Germany. He was brought to Australia on a government assistance scheme in 1954, spent some time in the Bonegilla Migrant Camp, before getting a permanent job with the Commonwealth Railways.

Petronella and Michael Wensing left the Netherlands in 1953. They had two small children, and another on the way. Petronella's skills as a dressmaker and craftswoman were widely admired and helped her feel 'accepted in the community'.

In 1944 **Lilija Brakmanis** fled Latvia after the Russian invasion, with her dentistry equipment. She responded to an Australian advertisement for skilled labour, but her qualifications were not recognised here, and she worked as a housekeeper and cleaner. Eventually she qualified to work again as a dentist.

Triantafylia Stamatou (Rose Pappas) grew up on the small Greek island of Castellorizo. During World War 2 the island was bombed, and the population fled to Cyprus, before coming to Australia in 1949 — with her precious Castellorizian costume.

- 18** What does this display tell us about European migration to Australia?
- 19** Does it suggest that there was any difference in attitudes to different European groups among 'white' Australians?
- 20** What does it help us understand about the nature of 'White Australia'?

Refugees

Australia has had many contacts with refugees over time. How has this affected 'White Australia', and how is it represented in the National Museum of Australia? Here is one text panel:

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 1838–39 | Hundreds of Gernam Lutherans find safe haven in South Australia |
| 1938–39 | Australia accepts 6,500 Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany |
| 1941–45 | Escaping Japanese aggression, thousands of Asians flee to Australia |
| 1947–53 | More than 170,000 European victims of war and oppression arrive |
| 1975 | Following Indonesian invasion, 1,800 East Timorese settle in Australia |
| 1975–85 | Australia accepts more than 95,000 Vietnamese refugees |
| 1989 | 20,000 Chinese students permitted to stay after civil unrest in Tiananmen Square |
| 1999 | 4,000 Kosovo refugees receive temporary sanctuary in Australia |

The Museum also has this display on the refugee boat *Hong Hai*:



Horizons — Hong Hai

Indigenous rights

The text panels explain: *The Vietnam War, in which Australia had sent troops to support the government of South Vietnam against the invading North Vietnamese National Liberation Army and their local supporters, the Viet Cong, ended in 1975 with the fall of Saigon.*

Many South Vietnamese now tried to flee Vietnam. Many escaped on small boats to refugee camps in Malaysia. In November 1978, however, the Australian navy helped passengers aboard the *Hong Hai* to land their small fishing boat at Darwin. The 38 people aboard told a story of hardship and illness, combined with ingenuity and remarkable feats of navigation. These were the first of a number of Vietnamese 'boat-people' refugees to be accepted by Australia.

Joyce Doru 1990s

The NMA also has an audio-visual display on Joyce Doru, a refugee to Australia from Sudan.



Eternity — Joyce Doru

The display tells Joyce's story. In 1994 Joyce's village was invaded by rebels. Her parents were beaten, and the rebels asked where Joyce was. She was at school and her uncle helped her to escape to a refugee camp in Uganda, but without her parents. The rebels occasionally came to the refugee camp and beat people — including her uncle, who was beaten to death in 1994. Joyce believed her parents were probably dead. In 1999 Joyce was shot by rebels, and had to be taken to hospital.

She applied and was accepted as a refugee to Australia, and settled in Footscray, Victoria. While there she made contact with the Red Cross, who encouraged her to write a letter to her parents, and they would take it and try and find them. Amazingly, her parents were still alive, and received Joyce's letter, and replied to her: 'Dear My beloved daughter Doru, Most happiest greetings to find and hear from you after missing you a lot. For sure, after our separation we could not really locate your whereabouts otherwise we thought you're dead ... Your Sisters and Brothers are all fine, they are also happy for the struggle to find our whereabouts.'

Says Joyce: 'I was so happy, I couldn't believe it was true. When I opened the letter I knew it was really my mum, and that she was alive. I want to tell them we are very happy now. At last my heart is at peace.'

21 What do the displays on refugees tell us about 'White Australia'?

'White Australia' not only refers to immigration, but also to attitudes to Indigenous people and other 'non-white' races in Australia. Are all people treated equally? Or is there discrimination based on race?

The National Museum of Australia has a major display on all aspects of Indigenous Australia. Here are some representative examples relevant to aspects of 'White Australia' — the nature of Indigenous people's citizenship rights.

The main text panel on this aspect reads:

*Fighting for our rights
Hopes for our future together*

Achieving recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander human rights and land rights is a continuous struggle. Since European colonisation began in 1788, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have fought to be acknowledged as custodians of the land and to maintain cultural identity. Ground has been lost and gained in a series of landmark court cases — Mabo, Wik, Larrakia and others. Today the struggle continues for rights to land and for recognition of customs and traditions.

Some of the main elements in the displays are:



Gallery of First Australians — Mission map

Nation — snapshots timetable, Eddie Mabo, and Torres Strait Islander flag designed by Mr Bernard Namok





Gallery of First Australians — Bomaderry Children's Gate



Gallery of First Australians — Sea of Hands display



Gallery of First Australians — Pryor cartoon on missions

- 22** What do these displays tell us about Indigenous civil and citizenship rights in the twentieth century?
- 23** What does it help us understand about the nature of 'White Australia'? Is it a fair and accurate representation of the rights of Indigenous people?

Now that you have looked at the information that the Museum supplies on aspects of 'White Australia' you can put it together to decide what story the Museum is telling us about this issue.

- 24** Create a short paragraph that summarises the image or representation created by the Museum through these displays.



Nation — snapshots timetable, Referendum poster



Gallery of First Australians – Large painted green sea turtle shell, 1999. Gullawun 'Daniel Roque Lee', Larrakia, Northern Territory

One of the important aspects of a study of history is to analyse the representations that you see and read.

The National Museum of Australia representation of 'White Australia' is not the only one possible.

Look at this timeline — itself a representation of 'White Australia'.

- 25** Mark each element as referring to European immigration (E), non-European immigration (N), or the place of Indigenous people (I) in 'White Australia'.
- 26** Then look back at the Museum representation and discuss its emphases, strengths and weakness in the light of this extra information.

Timeline

E, N or I

1851	Discovery of gold	Gold rushes in Victoria and New South Wales lead to large population increases with people coming from many countries, particularly China.
1855	Anti-Chinese legislation	Victoria passes the first anti-Chinese restriction legislation, imposing a tax to limit the number of Chinese arriving in Victoria. NSW, SA and Queensland follow.
1857	Aboriginal-white conflict	Aboriginal people attack settlers on Dawson River, Queensland, leading to reprisals by local squatters and police.
	Anti-Chinese riot	Anti-Chinese riot and violence at Buckland River, Victoria. One of the very few anti-Chinese riots in Australia.
1860	European and Asian migration	Small numbers of migrants from many parts of Europe and Asia, including Poland, India, Iran, Egypt and Turkey continue to arrive as labourers. Large scale English, Scottish and Irish immigration continues.
	'Afghan' cameleers	First 'Afghans' come to South Australia to handle camels on the Burke and Wills expedition. 'Afghan' cameleers originate from India, Iran, Egypt and Turkey and help to open up the outback.
	Kidnapping of South Sea Islanders	South Sea Islanders, mostly from the islands of New Guinea and New Britain, are recruited to work in Queensland cane fields – many are kidnapped in a practice called 'blackbirding'. Disputes between South Sea Islanders and their employers are a feature of life in the sugar fields. Riots take place on Thursday Island and at Mackay, Ingham, Townsville, Rockhampton and Port Douglas. Kidnapping soon stops and most Pacific Island labourers come willingly under contracts.
1861	Anti-Chinese riot	Anti-Chinese riot takes place at Lambing Flat on New South Wales goldfields.
	Chinese numbers	The Chinese constitute the third largest group in Australia, after the British (including the Irish) and Germans.
	Pearling	The pearling industry in Western Australia begins with Aboriginal divers. After the employment of Aboriginal people is banned, Javanese, Timorese and later Japanese divers are used.
1867	Aboriginal cricket team	All Aboriginal cricket team tours England – the first overseas cricket tour by an Australian team.
1869	Aborigines Protection Boards	Victorian Board for the Protection of Aborigines is established. The Governor can order the removal of any child to a reformatory or industrial school. The Protection Board can remove children from station families to be housed in dormitories. Later similar legislation is passed in other colonies: New South Wales (1883), Queensland (1897), Western Australia (1905) and South Australia (1911). The Northern Territory Aborigines Ordinance makes the Chief Protector the legal guardian of every Aboriginal and 'half caste' person under 18. Boards are progressively empowered to remove children from their families.
1871	Irish immigrants	Arrivals from Ireland peak at 200,000. Up to World War 1 the Irish, after the English, form the second largest component of immigrant community. They have a minority status as Catholics in a predominantly Protestant society.
1878	Strike against non-European labour	Seamen in Sydney go on strike against employment of low-paid Chinese crews on ships. The strike spreads to other ports in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria.
1879	Intercolonial congress	First Intercolonial Trades Union Congress unanimously opposes Chinese Immigration.
1881	Anti-Chinese immigration Settlement at New Italy	South Australia is the first colony to introduce restrictions on Chinese immigration in line with recommendations from the Intercolonial Conference; New South Wales and Victoria pass similar legislation. A group of Italian immigrants form a settlement known as New Italy in the Richmond River area of northern New South Wales.
1884	Anti-Chinese agitation	There is trade union agitation in Melbourne against Chinese in the furniture trade and in Sydney against Chinese seamen.
1886	Anti-Chinese legislation	Western Australian Parliament passes legislation restricting Chinese immigration and excluding Chinese from the newly discovered goldfields in the Kimberley.
1887	Enquiry by Chinese Government	1887 Commissioners appointed by Chinese Government arrive to inquire into the living conditions of Chinese in Australia; they report discrimination against Chinese in breach of international treaties. This causes resentment in the Australian colonies and fears that the Chinese Government might try to interfere.
1888	Uniform legislation	1888 Inter-Colonial Conference in Sydney recommends uniform legislation virtually prohibiting Chinese immigration. Chinese passengers, many of whom are travelling on false naturalisation papers, are prevented from disembarking in Victoria and New South Wales. New South Wales reintroduces restrictions on Chinese immigration. Victoria and South Australia pass similar legislation.
	Afghan cameleers	'Afghan' cameleers establish first Mosque in Australia in Adelaide.
1896	Non-European restrictions	Intercolonial Conference resolves to extend the restrictions on Chinese immigration to all non-Europeans; <i>Chinese Restriction Acts</i> in various colonies are extended to all 'coloured races'. New South Wales passes <i>Coloured Races Restriction and Regulation Act</i> .
	Factories restrictions	Victorian <i>Factories and Shops Act</i> deems that any workplace employing Chinese constitutes a factory and is subject to inspection and that all furniture made by Chinese labour must be so stamped. New South Wales and Queensland introduce similar legislation.
1897	Dictation Test	Western Australia introduces Dictation Test on the model of the 1897 Natal <i>Immigration Restriction Act</i> used in South Africa as a means of excluding non-European immigration. This is followed by New South Wales (1898), Tasmania (1899) and then by the Commonwealth (1901).
1898	Orthodox church	Greeks and Lebanese build Australia's first Orthodox church in Sydney.

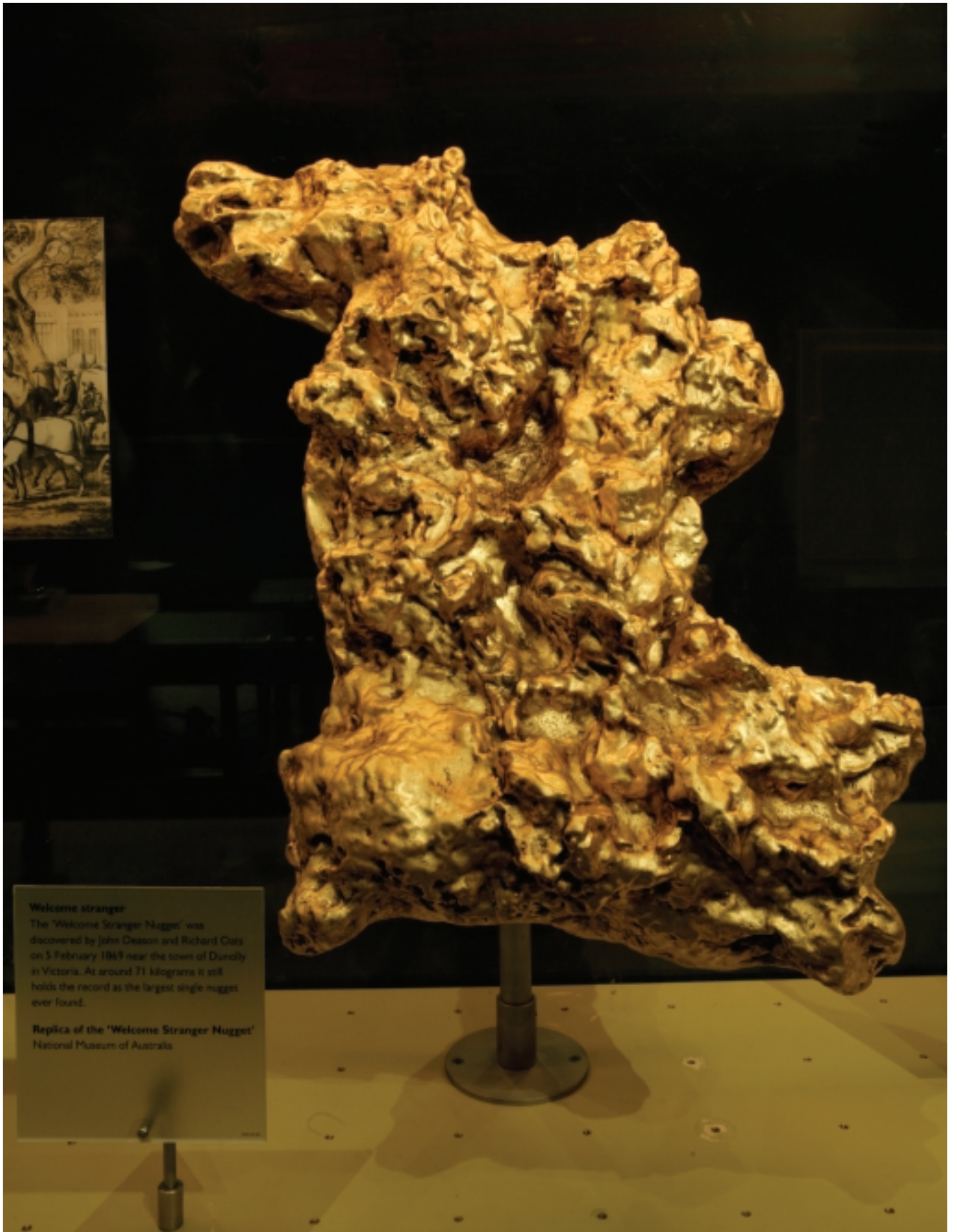
1901	Federation Immigration Restriction Pacific Islanders deportations	Federation of Australia is established. Commonwealth has main power over immigration. The <i>Immigration Restriction Act</i> is first major act of Federal Parliament. It results from agitation aimed at protecting working conditions of Australian workers by prohibiting migration of non-Europeans. The Act allows exclusion of any immigrant who fails a dictation test in a European language. <i>Pacific Islander Labourers Act</i> provides for the end of recruitment of South Sea Islanders by 1904 and deportation of those thousands remaining in Australia by 1906.
1904-11		State and Territory acts increase the power of local boards to control most aspects of the lives of Aboriginal people – including work, marriage, residence.
1912	Child Emigration Society	Kingsley Fairbridge establishes the Child Emigration Society in England and a farm school in Western Australia for orphaned and underprivileged child migrants.
1914	World War 1	Outbreak of war halts immigration. Deportation of enemy aliens (Germans). Aboriginal people serve in the war despite the <i>Defence Act</i> 1909 which prohibits any person not of 'substantially European' origin from serving. Aboriginal soldiers are among Australian troops at Gallipoli.
1915	Separation of Aboriginal children	New South Wales Aborigines Protection Board is empowered to remove and apprentice Aboriginal children without a court hearing. This power is repealed in 1940, when the Board is renamed the Aborigines Welfare Board. Similar policies allowing the removal of Aboriginal children apply in other states and these practices continue up to the 1970s.
1919	Versailles Conference	At the Versailles Conference, Prime Minister W.M. Hughes upholds the White Australia Policy against the racial equality clause proposed by Japan. Migration scheme for British ex-servicemen begins.
1920	Northern Europeans favoured	People from Britain and Ireland as well as those from northern Europe are encouraged to migrate during the 1920s. Controls on entry of some southern and eastern Europeans are introduced. Quota is placed on people from Malta, Greece, Yugoslavia, Poland, Albania, Czechoslovakia and Estonia with Jews added later. Italians cannot be restricted due to treaty between Britain and Italy.
1921	Increased immigration	There is a sharp rise in immigration, particularly from Italy, due to USA restricting immigration from southern and eastern Europe.
1922	Empire Land Settlement Scheme	British Government assists immigrants to come to Australia, particularly to go onto the land.
1925	Big Brother movement	Big Brother movement is launched to assist British adolescents to come to Australia as farm workers.
1927	Discrimination against Aboriginal people	Federal law for family endowment excludes Aboriginal people and instead payments go to Aborigines Protection Board. Aboriginal people are denied maternity allowance and old age pension. Aboriginal people are banned from central Perth until 1948.
1928	Coniston massacre	Settlers and police admit to shooting over 30 Aboriginal people after a white dingo trapper is killed. Following the massacre, an inquiry is held into the conditions of Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory.
1929	Depression	Assisted migration scheme is terminated by Commonwealth Government, leading to a sharp decline in immigration. Entry of non-British Europeans is banned unless they are wealthy or have relatives living in Australia.
1936	Jewish refugees	Commonwealth Government agrees to permit entry to Jewish refugees who are guaranteed by relatives or friends not to cost the state.
1937	Indigenous assimilation and segregation	First Commonwealth and State conference on 'native welfare' adopts 'assimilation' as the national policy. In practice, assimilation policies lead to the destruction of Aboriginal identity and culture, justification of dispossession and the removal of Aboriginal children. At the same time, segregationist practices continue until 1960s with separate sections in theatres, hospitals with separate wards, hotels refusing drinks and schools that can refuse enrolment to Aboriginal children.
1938	Day of Mourning	Aborigines' Progressive Association holds Australian Aborigines Conference in Sydney, on January 26, the 150th anniversary of European occupation. Aboriginal people mark this date as 'Day of Mourning and Protest'. Monthly newspaper, <i>Australian Abo Call</i> is published in Sydney, advocating equality of treatment and opportunity for Aboriginal people.
1938	Jewish refugees accepted	After the Evian Conference, Commonwealth Government decides to accept 15,000 Jewish refugees over 3 years; only 7,500 arrive before war breaks out. Australian Jewish Welfare Society is established to assist immigrants.
1939-45	World War 2	Although Aboriginal people are not recognised as citizens, two Aboriginal military units are established and some Aboriginal people serve in other sections of armed forces. Aboriginal people serve in Europe, the Middle East, the Pacific and New Guinea. Social policy legislation to support families during war years applies to Aboriginal people who can meet strict eligibility criteria. As a result, many Aboriginal people leave reserves to seek employment and improved living conditions.
1940	Jewish refugees	The <i>Dunera</i> arrives in Sydney carrying Jewish refugees from Europe – they are interned at Hay, New South Wales, as 'enemy aliens'.
1941	Italian POWs	First Italian prisoners of war arrive.
1943	Exemption certificate	Exemption Certificate is introduced. This means that certain Aboriginal people are exempted from restrictive legislation and are entitled to vote, drink alcohol and move freely but are also prohibited from consorting with others who are not exempt. Aboriginal people use the derogatory terms 'dog tags' or 'dog licences' to refer to the certificates. For many Aboriginal people this renunciation of their traditional lifestyle is promoted as the only opportunity to overcome poverty, gain work and access to education and social welfare benefits.
1944	Rural Employment Scheme	Rural employment scheme using Italian prisoners of war begins.

1945	Post-war immigration	Post war immigration program is set up, with 'populate or perish' approach in response to labour shortages and fear of invasion by Asia. British subjects receive free and assisted passage. Due to labour shortages in Britain, fewer British migrants apply, so groups previously restricted are now encouraged to migrate, in particular those from southern and eastern Europe.
1946	Deportation of Asians and Pacific Islanders	Government begins deporting Asians and Pacific Islanders who fled to Australia in World War 2.
1947	Displaced Persons Scheme	Displaced Persons Scheme brings a total of 170,000 refugees, mainly from Eastern Europe - Ukraine, Poland, Latvia, Estonia, Croatia. In the period of post-war reconstruction 450,000 migrants arrive. Many people from non-English speaking countries take unskilled work, particularly those admitted under Displaced Persons Scheme and those from southern Europe, Middle East and Latin America. Assimilation of new migrants is a priority. Migrants are expected to take on Australian way of life and learn English quickly. Few services are available apart from basic English.
1948	Universal Declaration of Human Rights	The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is adopted by the United Nations with Australia's support. Calwell announces that all non-Europeans who took refuge in Australia during the war must leave.
1949	Aboriginal vote	Aboriginal people are given the right to enrol and vote at Federal elections provided they are entitled to enrol for State elections or have served in the Defence Forces.
1951	Aboriginal assimilation	Federal Government convenes Australian Conference for Native Welfare, with every state and territory represented except Victoria and Tasmania, which claim to have no Aboriginal 'problem'. The Conference officially adopts a policy of 'assimilation' for Aboriginal people. 'Assimilation means, in practical terms, that it is expected that all persons of Aboriginal birth or mixed blood in Australia will live like white Australians do.'
1951	Japanese wives	Japanese wives of Australian servicemen are admitted under permits valid for 5 years.
1956	Permanent residence for non-Europeans	Permanent resident status is granted to non-Europeans who had fled to Australia during the World War 2 or had been long term residents (at least 15 years); non-European spouses of Australian citizens are permitted to apply for naturalisation. Hungarian refugees arrive in Sydney following Russian invasion of Hungary.
1957	Citizenship for non-Europeans	Non-Europeans can apply for citizenship after 15 years' residence.
1958	Commonwealth Migration Act	Commonwealth Migration Act is revised, abolishing the dictation test and introducing an entry permit system as a means of controlling immigration.
1959	Non-Europeans allowed	Australian citizens are permitted to bring non-European spouses and unmarried minor children into Australia; this is extended to all British subjects in 1960. 'Distinguished and highly qualified' non-Europeans are admitted for permanent residence.
1960	Benefits for Aboriginal people	Aboriginal people become eligible for social service benefits.
1961	Native Welfare Conference	Conference of Native Welfare Ministers agrees to strategies to assist assimilation of Aboriginal people. These include the removal of discriminatory legislation and restrictive practices, the incorporation of Aboriginal people into the economy through welfare measures and education and training and the education of non-Aboriginal Australians about Aboriginal culture and history. After the Conference, all states and territories amend their legislation. The Conference marks the beginning of modern land rights movement and widespread awakening by non-Aboriginal Australians to claims for justice by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
1962	Aboriginal vote	The Commonwealth Electoral Act is amended to give franchise to all Aboriginal people; that is, it extends the right to vote to Aboriginal people in Western Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory.
1965	Freedom ride	'Freedom Ride' by Aboriginal people and students is led by Charles Perkins into north-western New South Wales in support of Aboriginal rights. The ride demonstrates the extent of discrimination against Aboriginal people in country towns, including refusal of service in shops and segregated cinemas, swimming pools, hotels and clubs. Australian Labor Party drops 'White Australia' policy from its party platform.
1966	Wave Hill Station strike	200 Gurindji stockmen at Wave Hill Station, Northern Territory walk off in protest at unequal pay and conditions and as a statement about ownership of their traditional land. The strike lasts 9 years and culminates in some land being returned to the Gurindji people by Prime Minister Whitlam in 1975.
	Award wages for Aboriginal workers	The Conciliation and Arbitration Commission finds in favour of an application from the North Australian Workers' Union for award wages for Aboriginal pastoral workers. The cattle industry reacts by phasing out Aboriginal labour and driving Aboriginal communities progressively off the properties which are their traditional lands.
	Review of immigration policy	Review of immigration policy substantially weakens the 'White Australia' policy; the 15 year residence requirement for non-Europeans is reduced to 5 years.
1967	Referendum change	Constitutional Referendum on Aboriginal Rights is held. 90% of Australian population vote to eliminate sections 51 and 127 of the Constitution, giving the Commonwealth power to legislate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and to include them in the Census.
1968	Czech and Slovak refugees	Czech and Slovak refugees arrive in Australia following Warsaw Pact forces' invasion of Czechoslovakia.
1970	Aboriginal land rights	Limited land lease rights are given to Aboriginal people on Northern Territory reserves.
1971	NSW Schools include Aboriginal children	Principals of schools in New South Wales are no longer able to exclude Aboriginal children because of home conditions or community opposition.

1972	Aboriginal Tent Embassy	Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra is set up as focus for land rights movement on Australia Day, 26 January.
	Policy of self-determination	Policy of self-determination for Aboriginal people is adopted by Federal Government, replacing earlier policies of protectionism and assimilation. The change means having the right to cultural and linguistic maintenance and management of natural resources on Aboriginal land.
1973	Multiculturalism	Minister for Immigration, Al Grassby, delivers the 'Family of the Nation' speech, introducing the term 'multicultural' and linking it with social justice. A policy of multiculturalism begins to develop.
	Immigration reforms	Wide ranging reforms to immigration and visa rules are made. Residence qualification for non-British migrants to be naturalised is reduced from 5 years to 3 (the same as for British) and the words 'British subject' are removed from Australian passports. There is an amnesty for illegal immigrants and racially selected sporting teams are banned from visiting Australia.
1975	Racial Discrimination Act	Commonwealth Racial Discrimination Act is passed, prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, descent or ethnic origin.
	Timorese refugees	Timorese refugees flee to Australia after Indonesian invasion of East Timor.
	Indo-Chinese refugees	In the period, 1975-1984 Australia resettles over 90,000 Indo-Chinese refugees under the humanitarian element of the migration program.
1976	Vietnamese 'boat people'	First Vietnamese 'boat people' arrive in Darwin.
	Land Councils	Commonwealth Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act implements the main recommendations of the Woodward Report. The most significant land rights legislation in Australia, the act transfers reserve land to Aboriginal ownership and administration to Land Councils. It gives statutory recognition to the Northern Land Council and the Pitjantjajara Land Council is formed.
1979	UN Refugee Conference	Over 200,000 Indo-Chinese refugees in camps throughout Asia lead to the United Nations International Refugee Conference. Australia agrees to accept some 36,000 refugees.
1984	African refugees	First significant group of refugees from Africa (mainly Ethiopia) arrive.
1986	Goondiwindi riot	The 'Goondiwindi riot' between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents of Goondiwindi on New South Wales - Queensland border leads to public acknowledgment of poor living standards and low socio-economic expectations of Aboriginal people in the area.
1989	National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia	Commonwealth Government releases the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia with the three principles of cultural identity, social justice and economic efficiency.
	Chinese refugees	Following the Tiananmen Square massacre in Beijing, visas of Chinese students in Australia are extended.
1992	Native Title	High Court decision on Native Title ('Mabo' decision) overturns the concept of terra nullius and establishes that native title can exist over particular kinds of land - unalienated Crown land, national parks and reserves.
1993	Native Title Act	Native Title Act 1993 incorporates the principles of the Mabo judgement into law. The Act recognises the native title rights of Indigenous Australians who have maintained a 'continuing connection' with their land and waters.
1996	Wik decision	High Court decision on Wik finds that, in some cases, native title rights can co-exist with pastoral leasehold rights. Federal Government develops 'Ten Point Plan' outlining a proposed legislative response to the High Court Wik decision, with the aim of limiting Aboriginal land rights.
1999	Australian Multiculturalism	Commonwealth Government develops the multicultural policy statement, A new agenda for multicultural Australia which stresses Australia's commitment to freedom and the role of democracy as the foundation of Australian multiculturalism.
	Refugees from Kosovo and East Timor	Temporary refugees from Kosovo, former republic of Yugoslavia, come to Australia under new category of visa 'Temporary Safe Haven' following war in Kosovo; most return by end of year. Refugees from East Timor also come under 'Temporary Safe Haven' visas following massacres of Timorese in the wake of the vote for independence from Indonesia.
2001		The Australian Government implements stricter border protection laws by excluding parts of Australia from areas where illegal immigrants and asylum seekers using people smugglers can land and be processed in Australia.
2003		The Government's multicultural policy stresses four key elements: Responsibilities of all, Respect for each person, Fairness to each person, Benefits for all.
2005		Australia to take 13 000 refugees under its humanitarian program, two thirds from Africa and nearly one third from the Middle East.

Conclusion

- 27** Look back at your original brainstorm. What would you now add or change or exclude from that original list?
- 28** Look back at the National Museum of Australia display. What displays would you add to or remove to create a representation of 'White Australia' that is a fair, accurate and balanced one?



Welcome stranger

The 'Welcome Stranger Nugget' was discovered by John Deason and Richard Gott on 5 February 1867 near the town of Dunolly in Victoria. At around 71 kilograms it still holds the record as the largest single nugget ever found.

Replica of the 'Welcome Stranger Nugget'
National Museum of Australia

The Afghans

The first Afghans to work in Australia were brought in in the mid-19th century as camelmen. As the first Muslims to settle in Australia, they formed close and communities called 'Ghar' (village) in the south to Perth, Queensland and Alice Springs.

During citizenship under the White Australia policy, many eventually returned to their homeland. The camel transport industry ended in the 1930s.



Portrait of a man in a turban and military-style uniform, likely an Afghan camel driver.



The long head

In Thomas Elder established the first commercial camel caravan in 1861 with 124 camels and 31 Afghan handlers. Camel teams were used until the 1930s when motorized transport, improved roads and railway systems made them less economical.



Small book or document with a decorative cover, likely a historical record or travel log.

Chai Vang and Por Ye


Moving market gardeners




Chai Vang, Por Ye and other children migrated to Tasmania from a Thai refugee camp in 1991. Many Hmong people living in Laos fled their homeland after the communist takeover in 1975. Since arriving in Tasmania, the family has established a market garden in Hobart. Adapting Hmong farming skills and technology to the new environment, they produce vegetables to sell at the Salamanca Market.

Mei Quong Tart

Child of the goldfields



Mei Quong Tart from Carson never missed an opportunity — and there were plenty on the New South Wales goldfields of the 1850s where he grew up. He lived with Scottish miners, adopted their customs, and spoke English with a Scottish accent. By the 1870s he was a prominent business figure in Sydney and widely respected in the colony.



Small informational card with text and a small image.



Small informational card with text.

Small informational card with text.



Small informational card with text.

Small informational card with text.



Cutting Fields of Cane

Moving south

The significant economic decline in the pearl-shell industry resulted in financial disadvantages for many Torres Strait Islanders. Just as the pearl-shell industry was declining in the Torres Strait, employment on the mainland was increasing. Along the Queensland coast, the boom of the sugar industry resulted in a labour shortage and Torres Strait Islanders were actively recruited.



In 1947 the Department [of Native Affairs] had responded to requests from the Eastern Islanders by allowing eighty men to go down to the cane fields, where there was a shortage of cane-cutters The experiment was successful and repeated several years running.

Jeremy Beckett, Torres Strait Islanders: Custom and Colonisation, Cambridge, 1987

Hard work

Harsh conditions

... I ... went out to work at a very young age and ... used to load sugar, fairly young boy at 14, loading 175 pounds of sugar ... it was heavy work ...

Ray Robinson/History, 2011

Cane cutting was physically demanding. Torres Strait Islanders had a good reputation as workers and were in high demand in the 1960s and 1970s until mechanisation of the industry reduced the amount of work. Meanwhile, others were finding alternative employment in construction work and on the railways.

The working system
Torres Strait Islanders worked on the sugar fields in Queensland from 1947 until the 1970s. The industry was then mechanised and the demand for labour reduced. Many Islanders moved to other parts of Queensland.

Many Islanders left the industry
Many Islanders left the industry in the 1970s and 1980s.



Tools of the trade

The knife was the most traditional tool used in cane cutting. Over the years, the blade changed from a hook-like blade with a hole at the end of the shaft before the mechanisation of harvesting.

Cane knives (1960s)
Steel, wood
Inscribed
Australian Sugar Industry Museum

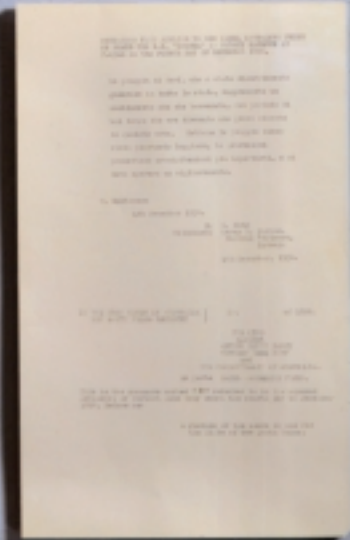
Keeping Australia pure

The White Australia policy

The Immigration Restriction Act was one of the first acts passed by the new Commonwealth government in 1901. Although the Act did not mention race, it allowed authorities to keep out 'undesirable' immigrants, including non-Europeans. The White Australia policy, as it became known, was not entirely abolished until 1973.

The dictation test
Between 1901 and 1958, immigration officials could use a 10-word dictation test in any European language and, later, in any language at all. These tests were mostly used to prevent the migration of 'undesired' people. Migrants leaving Australia for a short period could obtain a certificate of exemption from the test and provide a fingerprint as identification.

- 1 Certificate issued to Chen Cheng Tao 1911
 - 2 Queen Tuck's fingerprints 1957
 - 3 Reproduction of dictation test passages 1938
- all from National Archives of Australia





Vincenzo Dublé
Barber, dentist and surgeon



Vincenzo Dublé continued a family tradition by training as a barber. In his homeland of Italy barbers also acted as dentists and surgeons. Economic depression led Dublé and friends to migrate to Australia, where he hoped to establish a business before bringing out his wife and children to join him.



Vincenzo Dublé
Dental shop, Sydney, Australia, 1910s

Walter Eddison
A soldier settler



Walter Eddison left England in 1912 to pursue his dream of owning a farm and providing a new future for his family. At the outbreak of war in 1914, he joined the Australian Light Horse. In 1919 he returned to Australia with his wife and children and accepted a soldier settler property in the Ribbles Valley, Coburn's.



Walter Eddison
Soldier settler property, Ribbles Valley, Coburn's, 1919

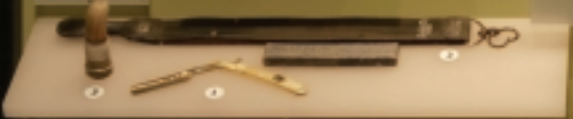


Dental pliers
These pliers were used by Vincenzo Dublé in his dental practice in Sydney, Australia, in the 1910s.

Walter Eddison's military uniform
Walter Eddison served in the Australian Light Horse during World War I. This uniform was worn by him in 1914.



Walter Eddison's suitcase
This suitcase was used by Walter Eddison to transport his family to Australia in 1912.



Dental chair
This dental chair was used by Vincenzo Dublé in his dental practice in Sydney, Australia, in the 1910s.



Walter Eddison
Walter Eddison served in the Australian Light Horse during World War I. This portrait was taken in 1914.



Walter Eddison's property
This photograph shows the property that Walter Eddison and his family settled on in the Ribbles Valley, Coburn's, in 1919.



Dental tools
These dental tools were used by Vincenzo Dublé in his dental practice in Sydney, Australia, in the 1910s.



Walter Eddison's property model
This model shows the property that Walter Eddison and his family settled on in the Ribbles Valley, Coburn's, in 1919.

Werner Hessling

A postwar migrant



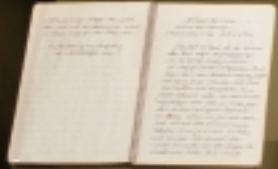
Like many people in postwar Germany, Werner Hessling was unable to secure a home for his young family. Travelling under a government-issued permit, Werner, along with his wife Martha and two children, left his hometown of Siedlitz on 12 September 1954 and migrated to Australia, arriving in Melbourne on 23 October. After two weeks in the Borongalla Migrant Camp, Werner began work with the Commonwealth railways where he remained for the next 13 years.

Petronella Wensing

Postwar skills



After the Second World War, the future for young people in the Netherlands appeared bleak. Petronella and Michael Wensing saw migration as the only option. They arrived in Australia in 1951 with two children and another on the way. Petronella's skills as a dressmaker and craftswoman were widely admired and helped her feel 'accepted in the community'.



Werner Hessling
1954-1967
Werner Hessling
1954-1967

Werner Hessling
1954-1967
Werner Hessling
1954-1967

Werner Hessling
1954-1967
Werner Hessling
1954-1967

Petronella Wensing
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Petronella Wensing
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1951-1967

Lilija Brakmanis

BARRIERS TO SUCCESS



In 1944 Lilija Brakmanis fled the Russian invasion of Latvia. She took her dentistry equipment with her. When Australia advertised for skilled migrants, she looked forward to practicing her profession in a new land, but her equipment sat idle for many years. Her qualifications were not officially recognized, so she worked as a housekeeper and cleaner instead. Eventually she was able to operate a limited dental practice in Canberra.

Hand-cranked dental X-ray machine
This machine was used by Lilija Brakmanis in her dental practice in Canberra. It was one of the few pieces of equipment she brought with her from Latvia.

Hand-cranked dental X-ray machine
This machine was used by Lilija Brakmanis in her dental practice in Canberra. It was one of the few pieces of equipment she brought with her from Latvia.



Group photograph of Lilija Brakmanis and her family in Latvia.

Hand-cranked dental X-ray machine
This machine was used by Lilija Brakmanis in her dental practice in Canberra. It was one of the few pieces of equipment she brought with her from Latvia.

Castellorizo Ankle



Triantifila Stavrou (Rosa) grew up on the small Greek island of Castellorizo. In 1933, dressed in this traditional costume, Rosa married Nikola Papantoniou. During the Second World War, the island was severely bombed and the population fled. Rosa and her family lived in Cyprus until 1949 when they migrated to Australia. Rosa brought the precious Castellorizo costume to her new home.



Group photograph of Triantifila Stavrou (Rosa) and her family in Cyprus.



Group photograph of Triantifila Stavrou (Rosa) and her family in Australia.



Traditional Castellorizo costume, including a red and gold patterned dress with large buttons and a matching headscarf.

5
Hand-cranked dental X-ray machine



Traditional Castellorizo shoes.



After Saigon

The journey of the Hong Hai

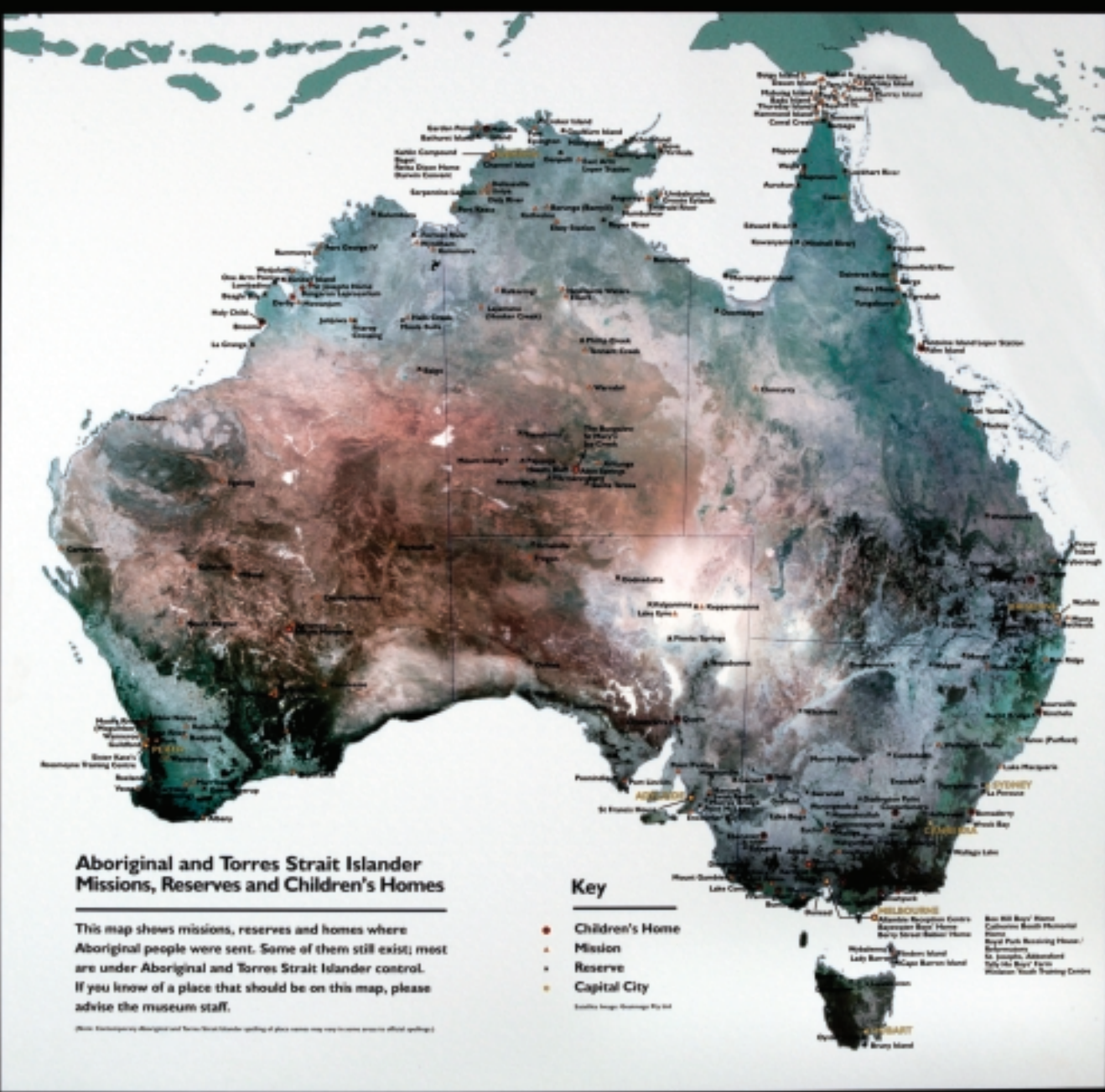
Saigon fell to Communist forces in 1975. The Vietnam War was over. For years afterwards, many people from the former South Vietnam sought to escape.

In November 1978, a spotter plane reported a Vietnamese fishing boat heading towards Darwin. The Australian Navy provided its passengers with fresh water and food and brought the vessel safely into port. The 38 people aboard told a story of hardship and illness, combined with ingenuity and remarkable feats of navigation. On their voyage they had also encountered sympathy and indifference.

Australians called these refugees, who came by sea, 'boat people'.



Binoculars
These binoculars were used by the crew of the Hong Hai to spot the Australian Navy's ship, the HMAS Stirling, in the Indian Ocean. The binoculars were found on the ship in 1978 and are now part of the museum's collection.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Missions, Reserves and Children's Homes

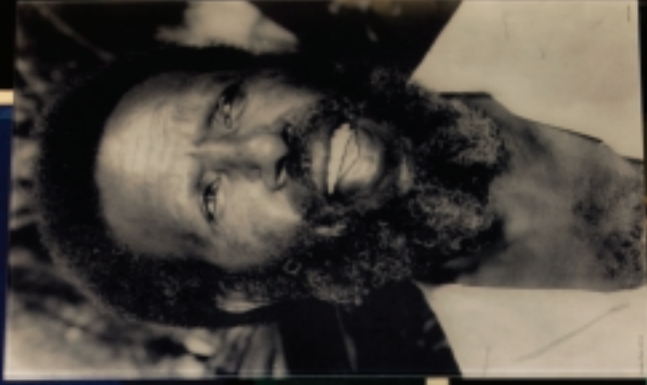
This map shows missions, reserves and homes where Aboriginal people were sent. Some of them still exist; most are under Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander control. If you know of a place that should be on this map, please advise the museum staff.

Note: Mis-spelling of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander spelling of place names may occur because of official spelling.

Key

- Children's Home
 - Mission
 - Reserve
 - Capital City
- Source: Image: Shutterstock Photo

See Hill Bay's Home
Catherine Beach Aboriginal Home
Parks Reserving House/
Belconnen
St Joseph's Aboriginal
Tilly Mc Kay's Home
Whitman Youth Training Centre



Abdullah
... conditions, peace
... villages where they would
... to reform people of the
... and requests.

... Group (around 1950)
... Chief District to Australian
... and, Cecil Young, 2003
... Service Medal awarded to
... 2003

... Cecil Young

oved at 4 years of age, who suffered
s in one foster home and emotional
other.

1 evidences 444. National Inquiry into
ion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait
ildren from their families, 1997



is to wipe away that uncertainty but at the same time show a greater respect for native title than with the blanket extinguishment option.



2

Sea of Hands

The Sea of Hands is an initiative of Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation (ANTaR). It was first displayed at Parliament House in Canberra in October 1997. Since then it has toured nationally.

A selection from the Sea of Hands 1997
National Museum of Australia

GREAT AUSTRALIAN LIES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

..NOW MALCOLM... THIS IS YOUR LUCKY DAY...

...YOU'RE GOING TO BE ASSIMILATED INTO WHITE SOCIETY...



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

VOTE 'YES' ON BOTH COUNTS IN TOMORROW'S REFERENDUM

The first count seeks to alter the present Constitution by deleting the stipulation that the House of Representatives must be twice the size of the Senate.

Don't be misled by splinter parties which really want an ENLARGED SENATE!

Vote for Australia's progress — not for blind adherence to Victorian tradition!



*Edward Gough Whitlam
L.L.B. (Syd.), Q.C.,
Leader of the Federal Opposition*

The second count seeks to eliminate from the Constitution all references which discriminate against Aborigines.

Aborigines must be given equal opportunities for education, housing and employment.

Vote for a better deal for Aborigines and permit them to be counted in the National Census.

MOVE AUSTRALIA INTO THE 20TH CENTURY

Write YES in the box provided opposite BOTH questions:

DO YOU APPROVE the proposed law for the alteration of the Constitution entitled "An Act to alter the Constitution so that the Number of Members of the House of Representatives may be increased without necessarily increasing the number of Senators?"

YES

DO YOU APPROVE the proposed law for the alteration of the Constitution entitled "An Act to alter the Constitution so as to omit certain words relating to the People of the Aboriginal Race in any State and so that the Aborigines are to be counted in reckoning the Population?"

YES

Voting
is
Compulsory

Voting
is
Compulsory

Authorised by W. R. Colbourne, N.S.W. Branch, Australian Labor Party, 233 Elizabeth Street, Sydney



Damalpel — green turtle
*The turtle gave us life, now I'll paint the shell
and give it life, for everyone to see my family's
struggle, to regain some land ... through my art
I can share some of our culture — our struggle.*
Delbert David Lee, 1999