Engravings were made by pecking a series of holes, which were then connected to form a line. In Sydney sandstone is the material from which rockshelters are formed. Designs include fish, animals, humans, wooden artefacts and mythological beings.

Axe grinding grooves were made by Aboriginal people sharpening their stone axe heads. The axes were constructed from hard volcanic stone fastened to wooden handles. To sharpen the axe, water was put onto the wet rock and the axe was rubbed backwards and forwards until the stone is sharp. Then the water is used to clean and cool the stone as friction from the rubbing generates heat. The most common elements used include red and yellow ochre, white pipeclay, gypsum and charcoal. The axes, woomeras, kangaroo tails and stone, wood or bone artefacts used to protect the hand. Other objects used include human feet, fish, boomerang, shields and rocks. Other objects included human bones, animal bones, artefacts and tools made from coralline shells, other shells, main food that made up the diet. Apart from rock oyster & Sydney cockle were the gathered remains of meals of shellfish.

Art Work Above: Hand Stencils. Stencils are produced by mixing ochre in a paste, spraying the mouth into the wet paste, & spraying the stencil onto the rock. Rock Engravings Below: Engravings were made by pecking a series of holes, which were then connected to form a line. In Sydney sandstone is the material from which rockshelters are formed. Designs include fish, animals, humans, wooden artefacts and mythological beings.

Rock Shelter with Deposit (Right): Rock shelters are overhangs that form hollows, allowing good protection from the elements. Deposits show evidence of Aboriginal occupation, eg: middens, fireplaces, tools and sometimes burials. Midden Below: A midden shows gathered remains of meals. Rock oyster & Sydney cockle were the main food that made up the diet. Apart from rock oyster & Sydney cockle were the gathered remains of meals of shellfish.
The Sydney Basin is one of the richest provinces in Australia in terms of Aboriginal archaeological sites. There are over 4,500 sites registered in the area.

**Other Sites Include:**

**Open Camp Sites:** Predominately artefact scatters, i.e. stone tools for working, food preparation etc.

**Isolated Find:** A single artefact is an isolated find. Eg. flaked stone, core or any finished implement.

**Bora or Ceremonial Ground:** A circular ceremonial place where initiation ceremonies are performed and are often meeting places as well.

**Burial:** Burials found where soft soils are located e.g. sand or silty material. A number of burials have been found in middens and within shelters.

**Scarred Tree:** Trees show removal of bark & wood for shields, shelters, coolomons & canoes.

**Carved Tree:** Carved trees have complex patterns cut into the tree for important ceremonial meaning.

**Fish Trap:** Rocks grouped in water – the tide is high, fish are trapped behind Rocks when tide lowers.

**Stone Arrangement:** Stones are placed in a certain way to form circles, semi-circles, lines and routes. E.g. ceremonial grounds and tribal

---

**Importance of the Law**

Please report any sites you may find

All sites are protected

Fines for damage are from $275,000 to $55,000 and 2 years imprisonment

Aboriginal Heritage Office
Ph(02) 9976 1685

www.aboriginalheritage.org
aho@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au
www.aboriginalheritage.org