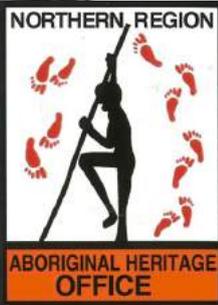


April 2016

Issue 1



Aboriginal Heritage Office Yarnupings



If life gets tough, what do you have that you can always count on?

Answer is below

Autumn Edition

Well this year seems like it is blowing by so quickly. The team have been as busy as ever with all our regular activities like the Volunteers Program, Schools and Education Programs, DA assessments and inspections, site monitoring and conservation works and so on. I am attempting to get the office revamped so as to re-open the museum, but it looks like it could take a bit of time. We are still located at Manly and office operations are as normal, but it is sad to say that we had to shut the museum side of things until we either find a larger premises or we get the current space improved, with a few walls removed and extended out a wee bit.

As always there are plenty of interesting things to keep us busy, like residents finding sites on their property, finding previously 'misaid' sites or new features within a site area and new volunteers joining the ever expanding list. New volunteer training sessions have been held and more reports are coming in which is brilliant. All the Staff and Consultants are all well and with the mergers of Councils set to be a reality we are all putting our heads down and getting on with the work.

I need to take this opportunity to congratulate all our tireless volunteers for the wonderful work they do monitoring sites. Sorry to all that I was away during last year's Christmas bash at Manly Dam, but I needed a break. This year we will plan a special end of year celebration for all our volunteers, friends and associates. Don't forget to drop in when ever you're around the Manly area and have a yarn. Remember, may the force be with you!

David Watts

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Your fingers

Taking Photos of Your Site

By Viki Gordon

Positioning. Look at the last photos taken on the site card that you have for your site. Notice the positions that the photos were taken from. Try and take some of your photos from the same positions. This is sometimes not an easy task to perform and perfection is not required. If this is not possible at all, then choose some positions that you feel will give the best view of the site, or parts of it. Take some of your future photos from the same angles.

Use a scale. Archaeologists use different scales for different types of sites and artefacts. However, the most favoured scale is known as the IFRAO (International Federation of Rock Art Federation) scale. It is designed for taking pictures of rock art but can be used in most situations. IFRAO scales can be purchased on the internet but you do not need to do this. Any scale, like a ruler, that gives you a relative measurement of what you are taking a picture of helps. If the scale has colour on it then it is also helpful. When taking a full shot of your site, you can use a person to give you some scale.



Label your photos. It would also save us time and be really helpful if you could label your photos with the direction you were looking when it was taken, as well as the site and the date. For example, 'Looking North at KUR-001 28.03.16'.

If you have had trouble uploading your photos to the Volunteers Monitor site, please do not hesitate to send your photos via the normal email, 'ahovolunteers@northsydney.nsw.gov.au'. We are hoping to have our Volunteers Monitors Site upgraded shortly which should improve the upload speed.



HANDY HINTS FOR VOLUNTEER MONITORS:

By Viki Gordon

Any Report is a Good Report!

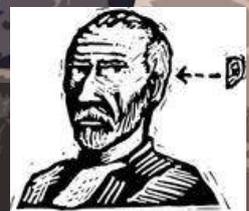
Any report that you submit as a Volunteer Monitor is a great report! As you know, we only ask that you check your site at least once every six months. However, many of you visit your site much more regularly. Every report you submit to us is recorded and helps us make sure the site is cared for. Importantly, it is also an administration record that shows your Local Council that the funds they are providing to the Volunteers Scheme are being well served.

Lately we have noticed that some Volunteer Monitors have been to their site regularly but have not submitted a report. Usually this is because nothing has changed. We still welcome 'nil reports' as they help us know whether a site has been monitored recently and if there are any changes. It also means AHO staff can direct their attention to those sites we don't have recent updates for. Your report can be as simple as 'Similar to previous'. Rest assured, we love receiving your reports and the more you want to give us, no matter how short, the better the AHO Volunteer Monitor Scheme will run.



"I put my heart and my soul into my work,
and have lost my mind in the process".

Vincent Van Gogh



Epistemology...what!?

By Phil Hunt

Epistemology is “the study or a theory of the nature and grounds of knowledge especially with reference to its limits and validity”. It is a branch of philosophy aiming to discover the meaning of knowledge. Or it could be seen as the philosophy of science, or the theory of knowledge. Still awake?

The epistemology of science goes something like this: – science is based on observation and analysis within the context of falsifiability. If a theory can't be disproven, then it becomes truth or 'approximately true' (a fact). If something is *known*, it can be posited as true, but science asserts that 'truth' needs to be validated with empirical data (eg compare the amateur professor: *'I have driven through a red light. I am still alive. Driving through red lights is safe'*). However, the process of making observations relies on the scientist's personal assumptions (in the making of hypotheses, constructing experiments, interpreting results and so forth) that underlie the entire process.



...compare the amateur professor: 'I have driven through a red light. I am still alive. Driving through red lights is safe'

The main point in questioning in this way is to become more aware of what knowledge is, how it is acquired and to what extent something can be known. This is important because any person's theory will be subject to their own assumptions that may skew their own interpretation of results.

Good archaeology requires having a hypothesis and going out and assembling raw empirical data that shows a relationship to the questions. It also requires the humility to acknowledge that there are many interrelated factors that may influence a given piece of evidence or a perceived pattern. The researcher's own questions and biases will also influence how evidence is perceived. And when you are trying to understand why humans did something or other, as much as you try to find an independent, neutral and perfectly logical reason, chances are you'll find an existing example of people doing things for no particularly logical reason at all!

We can apply the epistemological framework to forms of knowledge such as the interpretation of Aboriginal sites in northern Sydney. There are an increasing number of people willing to give an interpretation of a particular engraving or painting, but where does that interpretation come from? How reliable is it? Given the specific causes and conditions that have shaped the Aboriginal heritage of this area, how should we treat 'facts' about the Aboriginal story as it is presented? Is it important to do so or should we just accept people's interpretations of the 'facts'? For example, there could be a general agreement that a series of narrow grooves in a rock platform are not natural, have some antiquity, were not made with metal tools and conform to a shape similar to a human. By comparing this particular set of grooves with others in the region we can gain confidence that our hypothesis that it is an 'engraved figure of a human-like being' is so far supported. Can we say it *is* a represented image of a human? What about being an initiation site? Without the original artists or their descendants who retain the oral tradition of that particular area and that particular engraved technique it is difficult to be certain. We can infer, we can imagine, we can posit a theory, we can solicit an opinion, we can feel this or that, but can we *know*? Even with the benefit of the story holders, how much would they share with the uninitiated anyway?

Which leaves us with our own research. What would an initiation site look like? How many other sites are like this? How many initiation sites would you have in a certain area? What evidence do I lack?

Epistemology is really a very ungainly word that could be crudely summarised by that age old saying: *let the buyer beware.*

Festival Time

By Karen Smith

The **Guringai Festival 2016** is soon underway, beginning on **National Sorry Day 26th May**. The first Sorry Day was held in Sydney on 26 May 1998. The *Bringing Them Home Report* in 1997 had a profound effect on the Australian public, detailing undoubted evidence about the forcible removal of thousands of Aboriginal and some Torres Strait Islander children from their families and communities. This day commemorates the children and their families who are still affected by this policy. On this day you can join the **Children's Voices for Reconciliation** Thursday 26 May, 10.30am-12pm Lane Cove Plaza. Or you can join a commemoration of **National Sorry Day 2016** on Sunday 29 May between 3-6pm at the Scout Hall, Bilarong Reserve, 53 Wakehurst Parkway, North Narrabeen.

The Guringai Festival 2016 **Launch** will be held at Macquarie University on the 27th May 2016. Find out what's happening in your area during the Festival 2016 by accessing the brochure at <http://www.guringaifestival.com.au/>

May 27, 2016 is the beginning of **Reconciliation Week** which celebrates and encourages respectful relationships shared by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians. This day also marks the anniversary of Australia's most successful referendum. The 1967 referendum saw over 90 per cent of Australians support a vote to give the Commonwealth the power to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and for the first time they would be recognised in the national census.

Many Australian people are calling for another successful referendum. Constitutional recognition has been talked about broadly in the mainstream media. For a study guide and more information please look at the Recognise website <http://www.recognise.org.au/>. Listen to the arguments by joining the Macquarie University Indigenous Student Body working together with Walanga Muru and The Macquarie Law School. These groups will be presenting a public forum centred on the issues surrounding constitutional reform. For enquiries please contact: lesa.parker@mq.edu.au. For bookings contact: eventbrite.com.au

June 3rd 2016 is another important date in the Aboriginal calendar and commemorates the High Court of Australia's landmark **Mabo** decision in 1992. This decision legally recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a special relationship to the land and that this was a relationship that existed prior to colonisation and still exists today. This recognition paved the way for Native Title. Learn more about this story at the **Mabo film screening** on Friday 3 June at 11am-1.30pm in Mona Vale Library, 1 Park Street, Mona Vale. There is a \$5 entry fee and all proceeds are donated to the Indigenous Literacy Foundation. For all enquiries and bookings contact Heather Thomson on 9970 1614, email: Heather_Thomson@pittwater.nsw.gov.au. Morning tea will be provided.



Real knowledge is to know the extent of one's ignorance.
Confucius

Crossword:



1			2		3	4		5			6	
					7		8					
9	10					11		12	13		14	
			15					16				
17												18
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	23	24		25				26				
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31		32								33		
							34		35			
36			37						38	39	40	
			41							42		

Across

1. An Aboriginal's land.
5. To produce flour.
7. Cry of surprise.
9. Outer layer.
10. Netting.
14. Place to send things.
15. Small insect.
16. Dramatic pink.
17. Morning.
19. Taken too much.
20. With wet or dry sieves.
23. Gunditjmara people (VIC) trapped these.
26. A Koori's meat.
28. WA custodian's of important spirit beings.
30. Affirmation.
31. Avoids.
33. First ever dragon.
34. Dog's Eye.
36. Rules.
38. With which to direct a curse.
41. Part of a fork.
42. Common Council voting phrase.

Down

1. Gungibal.
2. Fighting club.
3. A sun god.
4. Tuber.
6. Crab bite.
8. Opposite of she.
10. Avoid.
13. Christmas greeting (short).
17. To act.
18. Region in Western Australia.
20. Round and round.
21. And Fro.
22. Will not come back.
24. Express yuck.
25. Small cut.
27. In a midden.
29. Negative.
32. Aboriginal's modern transport.
34. Survey marker.
35. Games outlet.
37. Type of vinyl record.
39. Started.
40. Irrelevant (short).

Quizerama #1:



- Q1. What is the Aboriginal name for the Didgeridoo?
- Q2. What types of site are you most likely to find on a ridge top?
- Q3. Colebee was a warrior from the _____ clan, and was born in _____?
- Q4. Name 5 bush tucker foods?
.....
- Q5. The Aboriginal flag was designed by?
- Q6. Lieutenant James Cook discovered the east coast of _____ in _____ and named it New South Wales.
- Q7. Which part of Australia did the Didgeridoo originate?
- Q8. Where are you likely to find fish traps?
- Q9. On what date did the Prime Minister Kevin Rudd give his apology to Australia's Indigenous peoples?
- Q10. What is another name for the Nutcracker man?

Answers in our next edition!

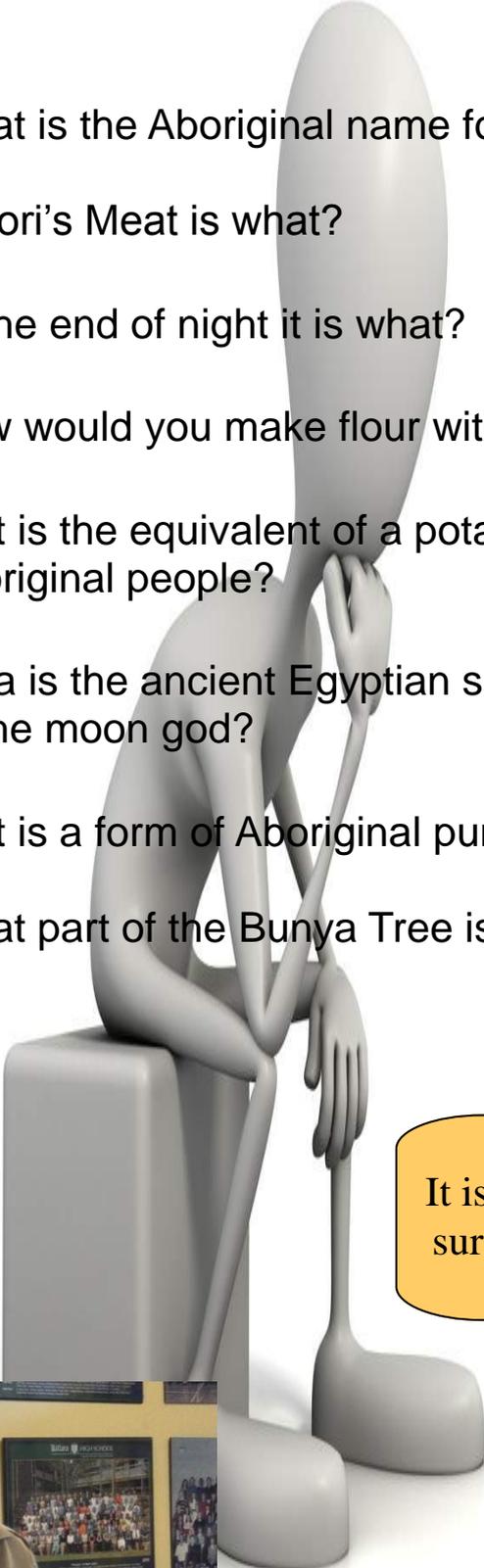


“From what I have said of the Natives of New-Holland they may appear to some to be the most wretched people upon Earth, but in reality they are far more happier than we Europeans; being wholly unacquainted not only with the superfluous but the necessary Conveniences so much sought after in Europe, they are happy in not knowing the use of them. They live in a Tranquillity which is not disturb'd by the Inequality of Condition: The Earth and sea of their own accord furnishes them with all things necessary for life, they covet not Magnificent Houses, Household-stuff &c., they live in a warm and fine Climate and enjoy a very wholesome Air: so that they have very little need of Clothing and this they seem to be fully sensible of for many to whom we gave Cloth &ca to, left it carelessly upon the Sea beach and in the woods as a thing they had no manner of use for. In short they seem'd to set no Value upon any thing we gave them, nor would they ever part with any thing of their own for any one article we could offer them; this in my opinion argues that they think themselves provided with all the necessaries of Life and that they have no superfluities.”

James Cook, *The Journals of Captain James Cook on His Voyages of Discovery*

Quizerama #2:

1. What is the Aboriginal name for a fighting stick?
2. A Koori's Meat is what?
3. At the end of night it is what?
4. How would you make flour with a block of stone and a rock?
5. What is the equivalent of a potato food type for Aboriginal people?
6. If Ra is the ancient Egyptian sun god then what was the name of the moon god?
7. What is a form of Aboriginal punishment?
8. What part of the Bunya Tree is edible?



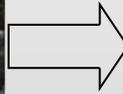
It is a miracle that curiosity survives formal education.



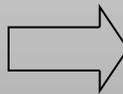
Spot the Difference:



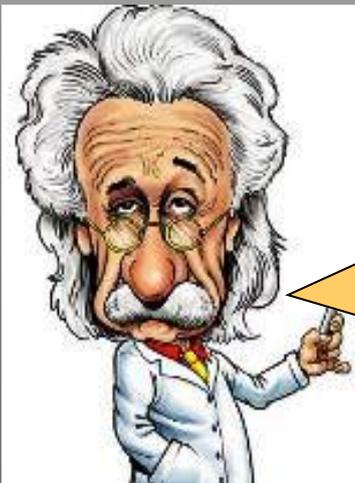
During the monitoring of sites for the Coastal Erosion project we noticed the movement of larger rocks and sections of foreshore. See if you can pick out some of the more significant erosional losses at these two sites—before (left) and after (right).



A. How many rocks are missing from this midden profile?



B. How many rocks are missing from this rock shelter midden? Name one other obvious change (not including the tape measure!).



People love chopping wood. In this activity one immediately sees results.



Answers in our next edition!

Spot the Difference:



There are 16 differences between the top and bottom photos. Can you spot them?



Answers in our next edition!

Bush Food of the Month:

Bonyi Nut

Once only found in the Bunya Mountains and Blackall Ranges of southern Queensland, the Bunya Pine produces huge cones that contain as many as 60 bunya nuts (or *bonyi* in local Gubbi Gubbi language). Every few years there would be a bumper crop where the trees (up to 50m high) would produce even more cones and provide a staple food source fit for a feast. Local groups would invite people from hundreds of km away (eg as far as Grafton) via messages and through family networks. People would converge on the mountains to specific locations and all sorts of business would take place – from marriages, the swapping of dances to the settling of disputes. And of course lots of time for getting food and enjoying a feast together with friends and family from near and far.

The last big traditional gathering was around 1902. Despite moves to allow Aboriginal groups to continue using the mountains, European/Australian pressure for timber and resources and missionary/reserve policies stopped this. Locals today still use the *bonyi* in their cultural practices.

“It will be seen that there was no lack of food of different kinds during a bon-yi feast; the natives did not only live on nuts as some suppose. To them it was a real pleasure getting their food; they were so light-hearted and gay, nothing troubled them; they had no bills to meet or wages to pay. And there were no missionaries in those days to make them think how bad they were. Whatever their faults Father could not have been treated better, and when they came into camp of an afternoon about four o'clock, from all directions, laden with good things — opossums, carpet snakes, wild turkey eggs, and yams — he would get his share of the best — as much as he could eat. The turkey eggs were about the size of a goose egg, and the fresh ones were taken to the white boy...”

Tom Petrie's reminiscences of early Queensland (dating from 1837), recorded by his daughter. C.C. Petrie, 1904



Volunteer Monitor Trey Chance brings in a bunya nut. We suggest not camping under a bunya tree, especially from Dec-March when they fruit!

Where's Gareth?



There's a Gareth (former Vols Coordinator & odd-job man) in each photo. Can you see him?



17 years

