Hello Everyone!

Well, the AHO is having another birthday! 19 this month!

Over the last 19 years, the AHO has grown from an infant (one man with a laptop!) into a functioning adult (5 people with laptops!). If the AHO were our child we’d be starting to wonder if it was ever going to leave home.

The AHO plays many roles, and carries out many tasks on a day-to-day basis. From DA referrals and inspections, to site monitoring, to rock art recording and coastal erosion projects, GIS mapping, and Aboriginal history reports. Not to mention our education programs, at both schools and various council organisations.

This work wouldn’t be possible without one man, David Watts, who keeps this place up and running. He has been helped over the last 16 years by Phil Hunt, Karen Smith for the last 8 years, and Dina for the last 4 months. The work they do is integral to helping protect Aboriginal heritage, and to educate the public about why we should be protecting it.

Other team members and volunteers have helped out along the way, and we thank them as well.

Here’s to a happy birthday to the AHO, and to hopefully a few more!
Figure It Out
Aboriginal Australia was invaded in 1788 (231 years ago).
The AHO has thus existed for 8.2% of Australia’s modern history (and 16% since Federation).
Is this figure significant? We asked our panel of experts who said it bore similarities to other statistics:

- 8% -
  - approximate proportion of left handed people
  - the percent of GDP spent by Costa Rica on education
  - the extent of Moldova’s land in protected areas
  - contribution of primary agriculture to Canada’s greenhouse emissions
  - Australia’s prison population who are women
  - the alcohol content of many strong European beers
  - Australia’s non-bulk rail freight carried on three main corridors (between the eastern states and Perth, between Melbourne and Brisbane, and between Brisbane and northern Queensland)

There is little doubt that 8.2% of anything is less than the GST equivalent (still at 10%). Beyond this, our experts wouldn’t say too much. They also wouldn’t say what 8.2% felt like personally. They did however, agree that 8.2% of 231 years seemed improbable. What seems more improbable is that if the next 5 year MoU is approved by all partner Councils, in 2024 the AHO will have existed for 10.1% of Australia’s modern history (according to the maths expert panel...hmmm).
It is not just the AHO’s birthday this month, but our Education Officer Karen is turning 60! We don’t think she looks a day over 25! Karen started at the AHO 8 years ago, and is kept busy with her public education work, visiting schools, council groups and other organisations to teach them about Aboriginal history. Karen is a great asset to the office, and we wish her a very happy birthday!

If I can just get to the bakery without anyone recognising me...

I didn’t join this place to talk to paper. Help!

But isn’t it the Maori who do the Haka?

My first day. I wonder if this job will last?

Did I say that already? Or was that this morning? Or last night? I need a holiday!

‘Strike a pose.’ Ah, Madonna, I can always rely on you.

I said Don’t eat the yellow ones!

If I can just get to the bakery without anyone recognising me...
It was great to hear Cassie Leatham speak at the Yarn Up last month. It was lovely to see a few of you there.

We are so grateful to Cassie for sharing her knowledge and experience with traditional medicinal plants and uses for animals with us. It was truly a fascinating talk.

There were many plants to taste, such as lemon myrtle, and many more to learn about. Cassie has a large sample collection, and was kind enough to let us even take some home to try.

Her story her living a traditional way of life, leading her to the path of traditional medicines was a bit hard to relate to in this modern world. Not all of us would be brave enough to give up our homes and live in a cave, and off road kill!

Cassie was lively, and entertaining. Her great personality made the talk all the more interesting.

Thank you Cassie!

Just remember some plants are poisonous, so don’t eat anything unless you are certain! Aboriginal people knew how to treat plants properly to rid them of toxins. Sometimes this was a complicated process that involved soaking the plant for several weeks, or grinding and roasting them.
For most people going to school in Australia in the twentieth century, Aboriginal history and heritage was not in the curriculum. Nor was the topic of Aboriginal massacres. It was perhaps natural that the violence of the frontier would become so little discussed as to become something completely implausible by later generations. How could such a fair and egalitarian new society be capable of such things? And if there were ‘dispersions’ by the new settlers, they surely wouldn’t have involved many people. After all, the 1770 Boston Massacre that is such a key event in United States history was not deaths in the hundreds or scores but a total of five.

That is why the mapping of massacres project by the University of Newcastle’s Centre for 21st Century Humanities and the Centre for the History of Violence is so important. Launched in 2017, it was set up to document Aboriginal massacres along the frontiers where new colonists were taking over the lands of Aboriginal peoples. The website not only maps the locations but provides extensive source material, which is not often easy due to the increasing secrecy with which violence took place after the first successful prosecution in the 1840s.

In terms of the belief in the peaceful colonisation of Australia, historian and author Henry Reynolds provided a great crack in the national mirror of self-congratulation with his book *Frontier*, which provided so much evidence of the extent to which each Aboriginal clan fought to hold on to their way of life.

Bruce Elder’s *Blood on the Wattle* gave confronting evidence of massacres. It is perhaps a sad irony that the people who could say the most about the results of any particular massacre, those who were attacked, have so far had the least opportunity to tell their story.

Was it really that bad? In the new settlement of Sydney, Governor Phillip and his officers talked about ‘open war’ with the Hawkesbury River clans. In 1879 the *Queenslander* explained ‘we are today at open war with every tribe of wild blacks on the frontier’ (1). It was an undeclared war against hundreds of different groups, with different cultures and languages across a continent.

Many people still refer to Governor Phillip’s orders in dealing with Aboriginal people as a suggestion of how relations began and continued. He was instructed to ‘conciliate their affections’, to ‘live in amity and kindness with them’, and to punish Englishmen who should ‘wantonly destroy them, or give them any unnecessary interruption in the exercise of their several occupations’ (2). It is clear that Phillip tried. Yet it was also he who in 1790 ordered his soldiers to capture two Aboriginal men and kill ten, with their heads to be cut off and brought back to the settlement, in reprisal for Pemulwuy’s killing of the gamekeeper John McIntyre. McIntyre was thought by his own countrymen to have killed Aboriginal people himself so his killing may have been subject to Aboriginal law. In the end no one was caught.
Remember the Boston Massacre mentioned above? Compare that with the numbers presented by this website, people killed from both sides of the frontier. Indeed, the website defines a massacre as “the indiscriminate killing of six or more undefended people”.

Why six? The massacre of six undefended Aboriginal people from a hearth group of twenty people is known as a ‘fractal massacre’. The sudden loss of more than thirty per cent of a hearth group leaves the survivors vulnerable to further attack, a greatly diminished ability to hunt food, or to reproduce the next generation or carry out ceremonial obligations to kin and country. In their diminished state, they also become vulnerable to exotic disease.

For NSW the estimated average number of Aboriginal people killed in massacres subject to the research was 33. It is estimated that there were 83 massacres, with 2682 Aboriginal people being killed and 36 colonists. The estimated average number of colonists killed by Aboriginal people in a massacre is 9. Just NSW.

In September 1794 in the Hawkesbury 7 Aboriginal people were killed in reprisal for beatings of the settlers and thefts. In June 1795 after two settlers were said to be killed by Bediagal people, over 60 soldiers were sent out and that night their camp was attacked and 7 or 8 were ‘seen to fall’ (but the next morning when they went to retrieve the bodies to hoist them up as a warning there were none found).

In 1805 8 Aboriginal people were killed along the Nepean River. In 1814 official figures say 7 Aboriginal people were killed and another 7 fell from the cliffs near Appin.

Over a hundred years later in another Aboriginal territory in a different era, at least 31 (the official figures) but more likely over 60 Aboriginal people were killed around Coniston, Northern Territory. This 1928 massacre is not a distant memory for the survivors. It is often called the last but many say more killings in remote areas will be brought to light over time.

The massacre website includes the findings and conclusions from previous research and a useful summary of the causes and context of how a massacre may arise:

“From their studies Clark and Gardner identified the key characteristics of frontier massacre.

◊ Usually takes place in response to the Aboriginal killing of a white person, usually a male who had abducted and sexually abused an Aboriginal woman, or the alleged Aboriginal theft of colonial property such as livestock which had occupied Aboriginal hunting grounds.

◊ Planned rather than a spontaneous event.

◊ Intention is to destroy or eradicate the victims or force them to submission.

◊ Assassins and victims usually know each other.

◊ Takes place in secret.

◊ Code of silence in the aftermath, makes detection extremely difficult.

◊ Witnesses, assassins and survivors sometimes acknowledge the massacre long after the event when fear of arrest or reprisal from the assassins is no longer an issue.”
Scrolling through the list can be quite confronting.

1827 – Quamby Bluff, Port Sorell – 100 killed.
1838 – Gwydir River, Slaughterhouse Creek – 300 killed.
1843 – Goanna Headland, Evans Head – 100 killed.
1872 – Coopers Creek – 100 killed.

Informants were often witnesses or participants who would reveal things many decades later, such as a former shepherd who told a reporter in 1883 what had occurred back in 1841 and 1842:

18 stockmen, shepherds, and hut keepers turned out, mounted and armed, and 'fell upon the blacks in camp on the bank of the King above Oxley, and massacred them. About 200 were killed on the spot, and others were pursued miles up the river, until all, with one or two exceptions were exterminated.' 3

For Fraser Island in 1852 compare the entry below from sources with the Sydney Morning Herald version at the time (newspaper extract attached):

A punitive expedition of eleven days duration. Aboriginal people ?driven into the sea, and kept there as long as daylight and life lasted?. Lauer estimates that 100 Aboriginal people were killed. 3

Aboriginal people were not treated as enemy combatants and offered treaties, nor as British subjects and given fair trials. If Aboriginal people carried out their own laws, retaliation by the colonial community was often extreme and not to a particular alleged perpetrator but to the entire community. Take the 1889 case on the Diamantina River, SA, where more than 40 people were killed:

Reprisal for killing of the station cook who was guilty of rape. Large number of Mindiri and Wardamba people gathered for a ceremony. 3

If we think of these events and figures as simply part of our complicated history, we may not fully appreciate the tremendous impact of them to the victims, the survivors and relations, and even to the perpetrators and those who would have to live with the secrets and their effects. Today when we hear the news of a mass shooting or even a natural disaster, especially one that involves people we feel closer to, perhaps then we can gain a better insight into just how traumatic these historic massacres were and how this trauma may still be reverberating. This website, like other sources of Aboriginal history, should be investigated by all Australians if we wish to understand our shared journey from the past to the future.

References
2. Grace Karskens, Governor Phillip and the Eora: governing race relations in the colony of New South Wales; The Dictionary of Sydney (www.dictionaryofsydney.org).

The publically available map is available at https://c21ch.newcastle.edu.au/colonialmassacres.

The next page is for quiet reflection to think about what you just read.
Ingredients

- 2 cups self-raising flour
- 1/2 cup cocoa powder
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup milk
- 3 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla essence
- 125g butter, melted and cooled

Icing

- 1/2 cup cream
- 200g dark cooking chocolate, roughly chopped

Method

Step 1

Preheat oven to 170C or 150C fan. Grease a 20cm square tin and line the base with non-stick baking paper. Sift flour, cocoa powder and sugar into a large mixing bowl and make a well in the centre.

Step 2

Whisk milk, eggs and vanilla together in a jug and add to the dry ingredients, along with the butter. Fold together until just combined, but don’t mix or beat. Pour into prepared tin. Bake for 50-55 mins, until a skewer comes out clean when inserted into the centre. Cool in tin for 10 mins, then turn out onto a wire rack to cool completely.

Step 3

To make the topping, place cream into a small saucepan and bring to the boil. Add chocolate and turn off the heat. Stand for 5 mins, until the chocolate is very soft, then stir until smooth. Refrigerate mixture for about 20 mins, stirring occasionally, until thickened. Spread over top and sides of cake.

“All the world is birthday cake, so take a piece, but not too much.” George Harrison

The museum is open!

As we announced last month, the AHO museum is in its new home! The museum houses an array of interesting Aboriginal heritage items, and tells the story of Aboriginal lives pre- and post-European settlement. We are opening the museum at the end of the month, for three days a week.

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, from 9am-3pm.

Drop in and see us!
Welcome Newcomers!

As you may be aware, we had our first volunteer training session this month. The session was well received, and we welcomed 9 new volunteers! Our new volunteers come from all over including Avalon, Northbridge, Turramurra and Roseville. We are pleased to see our program is reaching across our council areas.

We will endeavour to organise another training night soon for anyone who missed out on this month’s session.

Over the next few issues, we are hoping to introduce you to some of our new volunteers and get to know some of our ongoing volunteers, and what brings everyone to the AHO Aboriginal site monitor program. If you would like to be included, send us a short bio about yourself, and a photo!

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Movie Review

Top End Wedding

This Australian romantic comedy is about the merging of cultures, through the upcoming nuptials of Lauren (Miranda Tapsell of The Sapphires) and Ned (Gwilym Lee of Bohemian Rhapsody). Upon returning home to Darwin, with her new fiancé and future in-laws, Lauren discovers her mother has left her father. With just 10 days until they say “I do”, Lauren and Ned set out to find Lauren’s mother, so that she is present at the wedding.

This comedy will pull at your heartstrings, as the adorable couple embark on a journey across the Northern Territory, finally making it to the Tiwi Islands. The blend of humour and sincerity is set to the beautiful backdrop of the NT landscape, as Lauren rediscovers her family, her past, and her culture. The comedy comes from the two families trying to bond, and understand how the other live. With an array of colourful characters, this movie is sure to entertain and delight.

The trailer is online now, but the full movie won’t be released in Australian cinemas until 2nd of May 2019. Make sure to keep an eye out!
Across
3. The AHO does ____ ups, with guest speakers (4)
6. ____ erosion is one way midden sites are being destroyed (7)
7. Our biggest role at the AHO is to _____ Aboriginal sites (7)
9. The AHO is supported by _____ councils (3)
10. One of our roles is to provide ______ to the public about Aboriginal heritage (9)
12. The AHO are a _____ funded organisation (7)
15. The AHO is a joint initiative by Lane Cove, North Sydney, ________, Ku-ring-gai, Strathfield and The Northern Beaches Councils (10)
16. black____, copper____, gold____ etc. / Karen ____ (5)
17. Our office is based in _________ (10)
19. The AHO has been funded for ________ years (8)

Down
1. The AHO monitors sites under threat from natural and _____ impacts (6)
2. Units of power / David _____ (5)
4. ______ is one way that rock art sites are being destroyed by humans (8)
5. The AHO protects Aboriginal sites because once they are lost, they are lost ______ (7)
8. Sites are under threat every day from ________, vandalism and natural erosion (11)
11. You can help the AHO by being a Volunteer Site _____ (7)
13. Sites are significant to Aboriginal people as evidence of _____ occupation (4)
14. The AHO manages over one _______ Aboriginal sites (8)
18. Aboriginal people used to ___ kangaroos, emus and goanna for meals / Phil ____ (4)
Length: 2.5km one way
Time: 30 minutes one way
Grade: Easy and flat along the boardwalk, soft and sandy along the beach.

Park at the Freshwater lookout, and then take the lovely wooden Curl Curl Boardwalk to the sand. Sit for a moment to enjoy the view. Turn around and head back, or continue along Curl Curl Beach around to Dee Why Head.

Remember to always wear sunscreen, a shirt and hat, and to tell someone where you are going, if going out alone.

Last Month’s answers!

Quiz:

Crossword:

Down

Across