

YARNUPINGS

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE OFFICE ISSUE #2 JUNE 2021



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ABORIGINAL HERITAGE OFFICE NEWSLETTER

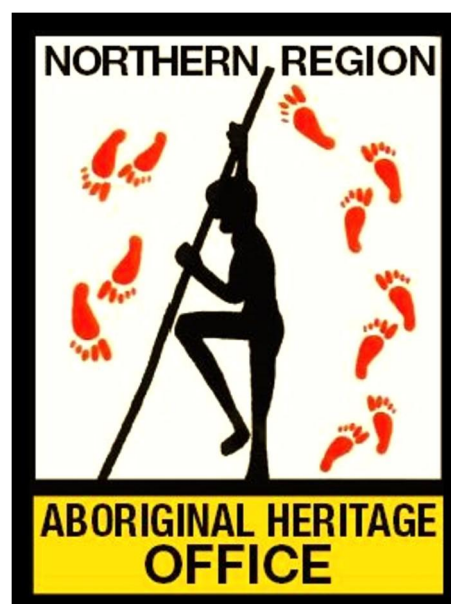
ISSUE #2 JUNE 2021

Welcome to the second issue of Yarnupings for 2021

This issue highlights and celebrates Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week. Karen shares with you her wonderful experiences singing with children from the Lane Cove area and Phil takes us through graffiti removal of an overhang. We celebrate our amazing volunteers and share a delicious recipe.

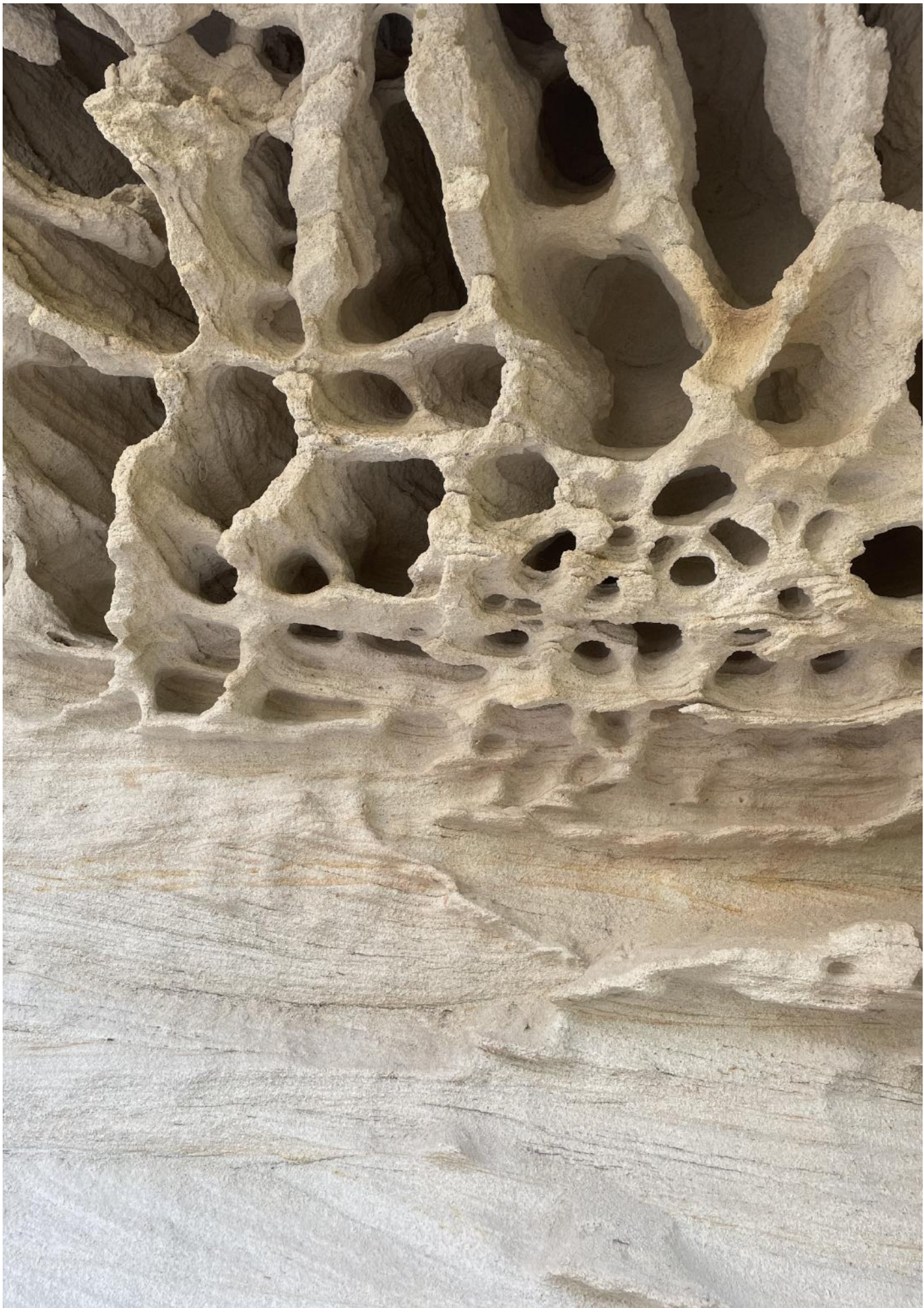
Please enjoy the second issue of Yarnupings for 2021.

The AHO Team— Dave, Karen, Phil and Susan.



In this issue...

- Picture of Serenity 2
- Kangaroo Engraving 3
- Trailblazers Running Club..... 4
- Voices of Reconciliation 5
- Volunteer News 7
- Graffiti Removal..... 8
- Art Gallery 11
- Unsettled..... 13
- Jarjums Page 14
- Dukkah Recipe..... 16
- NAIDOC WEEK 17



Kangaroo Engraving



An ancient rock engraving beside a busy road in Allambie Heights has been restored and the area around landscaped to help reduce further damage from erosion.

The work, carried out during National Reconciliation Week, was well-timed to fit with this year's theme – *More than a word. Reconciliation takes action.*

Taking action, staff from nearby Sunnyfield recently contacted the Aboriginal Heritage Office (AHO) in Freshwater to report damage to the important and rare engraving after a local resident raised concern that it was getting harder to see. After an AHO inspection, specialists from Heritage NSW were brought in to assess the area.

Many years ago, a protective barrier was installed around the engraving, but poor site drainage meant that during heavy or prolonged rainfall, water pooled over the engraving and sediments built up, eroding the grooves.

Following strict site conservation strategies, the AHO carefully cleaned the engraving platform and removed excess material. Today, the Mayor was on hand to help oversee improved drainage installed downslope from the engraving area, ensuring the platform does not get inundated during rainy periods.

The next phase of works involves improved landscaping with native groundcovers to provide protection and a more attractive setting for the kangaroo.

David Watts, Manager of the AHO oversaw this project and is thankful for such a well-preserved engraving in a busy, suburban setting.

"This kangaroo engraving is in very good condition and has



Kangaroo Engraving

survived despite the odds. We need to make sure it's still around for future generations, and that requires everyone's help."

"The location of Aboriginal Heritage sites in NSW are confidential unless there are special agreements in place to have a particular site put in the public domain. Unfortunately, it only takes one person to damage something that is irreplaceable."

The Aboriginal Heritage Office is located in Freshwater and is a joint initiative of Lane Cove, North Sydney, Willoughby, Kuring-gai, Strathfield and Northern Beaches councils.

The role of the AHO is to protect Aboriginal heritage in these areas by monitoring Aboriginal sites on a day-to-day basis and provide long term management reports to ensure their preservation and protection. They also give Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people an avenue of approach to discuss issues or concerns they may have and they communicate with schools and other groups and help children develop a deeper understanding of the unique culture of Aboriginal people.

<https://www.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/council/news/taking-action-saves-rock-engraving-future-generations>

Trailblazers Running Club

The Aboriginal Heritage Office has been collaborating with Trailblazers Running Club to help preserve and protect Aboriginal sites.

Trailblazers is trail running club based on the Northern Beaches of Sydney to encourage those with a passion for running to discover local trails. Trailblazers runs every Sunday starting at different locations enjoying bushland across the northern part of Sydney.

Every week, they traverse beautiful territory and often run past Aboriginal sites, predominately engravings and overhangs. While taking the utmost care not to run over the engravings, they nearly always stop to discuss the sites and take a photo or two. These photos are incredibly valuable to our ongoing site monitoring information.

The AHO and Trailblazers members met over Zoom to discuss their enthusiastic and consistent commitment to protecting Aboriginal sites and how best to work together.

Contact Trailblazers: trailblazersaust@gmail.com





Reconciliation Australia's theme for 2021, *More than a word. Reconciliation takes action*, urges the reconciliation movement towards braver and more impactful action.

To our new supporters, please remember the importance of privileging and amplifying First Nations' voices as you add your voice to calls for reconciliation and justice.

Reconciliation is a journey for all Australians – as individuals, families, communities, organisations and importantly as a nation. At the heart of this journey are relationships between the broader Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We all have a role to play when it comes to reconciliation, and in playing our part we collectively build relationships and communities that value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories, cultures, and futures.

2021 marks twenty years of Reconciliation Australia and almost three decades of Australia's formal reconciliation process.

<https://www.reconciliation.org.au/national-reconciliation-week/>

Children's Voices of Reconciliation

By Karen Smith

Lane Cove Children's Voices of Reconciliation is now in its 24th Year

This is a truly inspiring event, where the many junior schools of Lane Cove present a program on the theme of Reconciliation Week.

The AHO has been the MC for this event and has always been inspired and humbled by the words of the children and their art, poetry and songs. The AHO has also been in awe of the teachers who work so hard to bring this all together.

This year's event was opened by the Lane Cove Mayor, Pam Palmer, who spoke on the theme of Reconciliation Week and it's meaning to Lane Cove Council.



Children's Voices of Reconciliation continued...

Currambeena Public School sang 'I am Australian' with Guitar accompaniment and 3 students spoke, telling the stories and insights on the theme of Reconciliation Week.

Birrilee Kindergarten presented the song Tabá Naba from the Torres Strait.

Greenwich Public School students told the story of 'How the Birds Got Their Colours'.

The students from St Michael's Primary School presented individual art works and each student spoke on the meaning of their artwork. The students also presented poems and a large artwork which showed their learning of Aboriginal perspectives

Killara Public School sang three songs. The first song was by Ruby Hunter extending a message to all 'Welcome to All People'.

The 2nd song was 'Peace by Piece' expressing the theme of truth and love to become an inclusive society.

Their 3rd song was 'Rome wasn't Built in a Day' which showed us that little by little we can enact change.



Lane Cove Public School presented 2 choirs. Their Year 4 Choir spoke about the song and then sang 'My Country'.

Lane Cove Public School presented 2 choirs. Their Year 4 Choir spoke about the song and then sang 'My Country'.

The year 6 choir gave us a rousing song for the finale of the event with the performance by the song 'You're the Voice' reminding us of the strength and power of our voices to create change.



Volunteer News

National Volunteer Week

May 17—23 was National Volunteers Week. This year was special as 39 of our volunteers celebrated 5 years of volunteering with the Aboriginal Heritage Office. We said thanks with a special certificate.

As thanks to all our Volunteers, free swimming pool entry and movie tickets were offered during the week.

We also got our younger Volunteers together. Our volunteering is a solo venture but so many of you have similar interests so we thought it would be great to meet up and grab a bite to eat. There was lots of laughter and chats and we have plans to meet up again later in the year.

We would love to hear from you if you would be interested in catching up with other volunteers. National Volunteers Day is in early December, so this could be a perfect time to say hi and share a yarn. All of you have an interest in preserving and protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage so why not meet others in the AHO volunteering community!



5 Years Service

Thank you so much!

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| • Alan W | • Kerrie M |
| • Alexandra M | • Kim J |
| • Amanda M | • Liza & Dave B |
| • Ariane F | • Malcolm F |
| • Bronwyn C | • Meisha R |
| • Chris F | • Michael H |
| • Claudette R | • Michael M |
| • Danielle W | • Michele A |
| • David F | • Neil H |
| • Ed & Janine C | • Nicola H |
| • Elizabeth C | • Patricia G |
| • Gurfateh PS | • Peter C |
| • Ian R | • Rob J |
| • Janet F | • Robyn L |
| • John G | • Ron A |
| • Jon A | • Rosemary L |
| • Joseph M | • Rosemary T |
| • Judith H | • Sofia M |
| • Julia H | • Stephen P |
| • Kay D | • Tom P |

If you would like to become a Volunteer Site Monitor, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator,

Susan Whitby on 0435 643 205 or email Susan.Whitby@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au



by Phil Hunt

One of the frustrating aspects of site monitoring is seeing graffiti and not being able to do anything about it. This is particularly so for rock art sites. For the AHO staff with about a century of collected experience, progress can seem slower than the current sea level rise. What is going on? As usual, there's more to it than meets the eye.

Firstly, let's imagine we've just cleaned all the graffiti off a big rock shelter. Such satisfaction! If we were careful, we would have kept away from the rock art and only cleaned the bits without the obvious hand stencils or painted figures. But how careful do you have to be? Depending on your graffiti removal technique, very careful! If you scrub or blast away at an area where there might be some very faint figures, you've probably just destroyed them for good. Whereas, if you'd left the graffiti, at least you will have a chance at using different techniques to record what is still there. Clean or unsightly, pristine or layered? It can mean thousands of years difference.

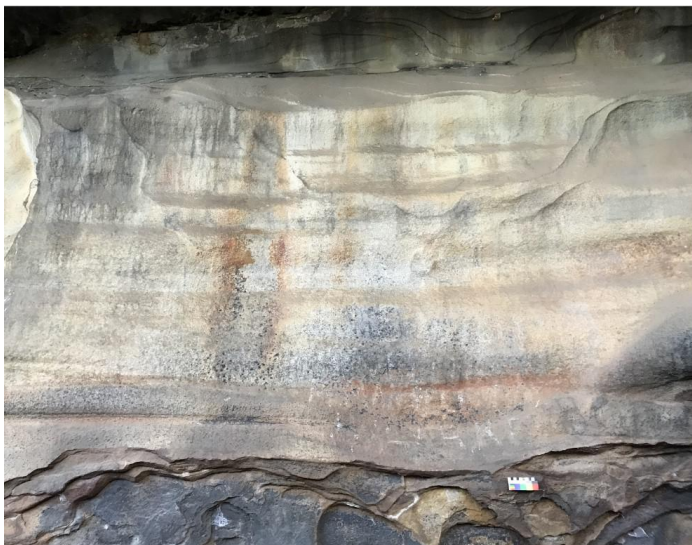
Secondly, now that we have a lovely clean shelter, what happens if the graffiti gang come back? We've left them a blank canvas – oh, except the surviving rock art which isn't that obvious to those not paying attention! With graffiti still in place, it might be that the vandal attacks over old graffiti. With a blank canvas they might strike previously undamaged areas. What was safe before may now become heavily damaged. How do you know? Well, you don't.

Thirdly, no one can remove graffiti from a rock art site without authorisation. In this area it means the specialists from Heritage NSW. All sites are protected under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act* and making any kind of contact to rock art certainly requires a permit or the written authorisation from one of the specialists. For each region of NSW there is usually only one specialist and they won't give permission unless they visit the site, assess it, review all the available documents and new data and then they either do the work themselves or supervise it. There are 120 rock art sites in the AHO partner region, the majority of which requires some level of graffiti removal and site maintenance. Think of the many National Parks, Councils, Local Aboriginal Land Councils and others who are asking for help to do site conservation and you can see why internationally renowned rock art expert Prof Paul Taçon says:

Australian rock art is under threat from both natural and cultural forces impacting on sites. But what saddens me the most is that there is so much government lethargy in Australia when it comes to documenting and protecting Australia's rock art.¹

It is extremely important to get graffiti removed in a timely manner because the longer it stays, the more it becomes incorporated into the physical particles of the

rock shelter
graffiti removal





rock itself. That is why rock art can survive for so long. The pigments become part of the rock's structure. Fresh charcoal graffiti can be quite easy and safe to clean and remove, old charcoal graffiti can require extensive manual removal techniques, and very old graffiti might just be there to stay.

How do you prevent future graffiti attacks? Signage is often the first response, but putting up a sign can sometimes mean there's now a big target on a place and malicious attack comes where previously it was just done through ignorance. There are still many people who don't respect Indigenous Australia. It has always been the AHO approach to tackle ignorance with information. That's why there is such an emphasis on education. Signs can be intrusive and damaging. Even recently there have been signs poorly installed in the middle of an Aboriginal site, and not necessarily promoting the Aboriginal heritage values of the area either. The AHO isn't alone to be wary about signs, as Malgana ranger Sean McNeair told the ABC:

What we don't want to do is make this into a signage area, completely full of signs - we want to keep it as natural as possible, so we are looking at different alternatives to do that...Educational awareness is our main way of getting this message across about these culturally significant areas and what this rock art means to people, especially here on the Burrup, it's quite significant.²

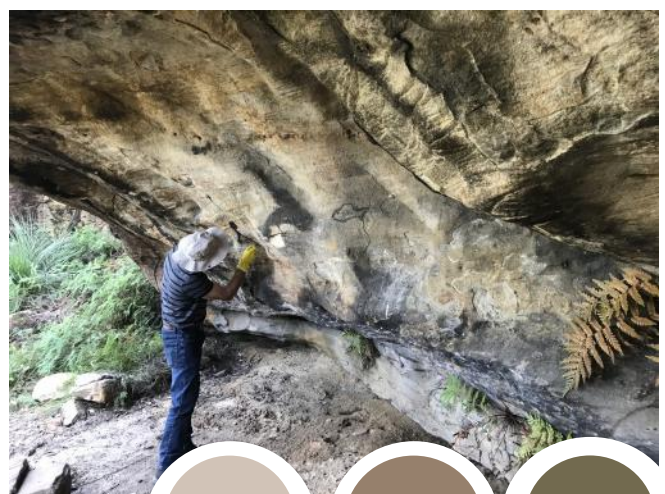
by Phil Hunt

Is there any good news? Of course! To cut a long story short, the AHO was very pleased to have Heritage NSW come out to help clean graffiti from a shelter in Willoughby Council in April this year. Over 20 years of graffiti was carefully removed from the site. It was carried out as part of a broader training program, although there had been quite a few inspections and meetings and another earlier preliminary cleaning session preceding this program. We look forward to doing more, and look forward to a process that is at least a bit more expeditious.

References:

Tacon, P. *The Conversation*, 2014 <https://theconversation.com/profiles/paul-s-c-tacon-140501>

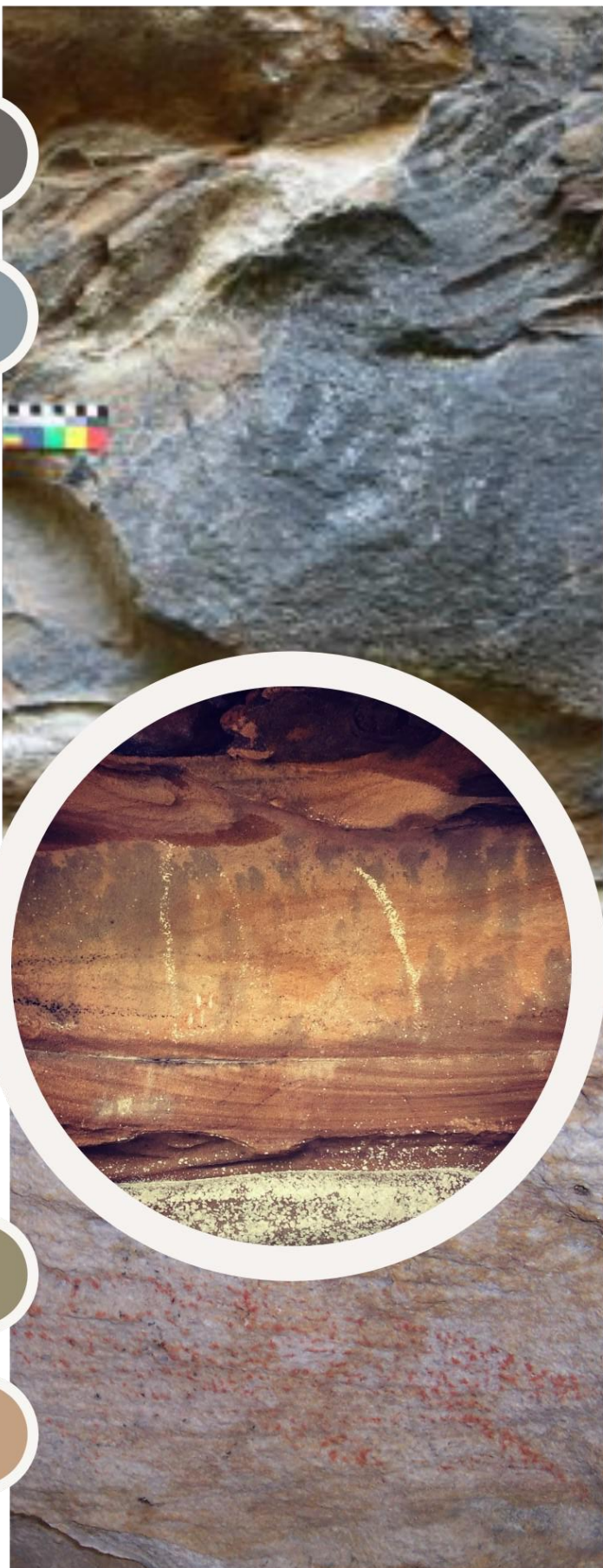
McNeair, S. in E.Spriggs, 2014 <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-08-03/aboriginal-elders-devastated-at-rock-art-vandalism-burrup-wa/5642498?nw=0>



Art Gallery



Art Gallery





AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM

Words from Australian Museum website—<https://australian.museum/exhibition/unsettled/>

This land was not peacefully set—*Unsettled* uncovers the untold histories behind this nation's foundation story.

In this powerful exhibition, First Nations voices reveal the hidden stories of devastation, survival and the fight for recognition. These first-hand accounts are presented through long hidden historical documents, large-scale artworks, immersive experiences and never-before-seen objects from the Australian Museum collections and beyond.

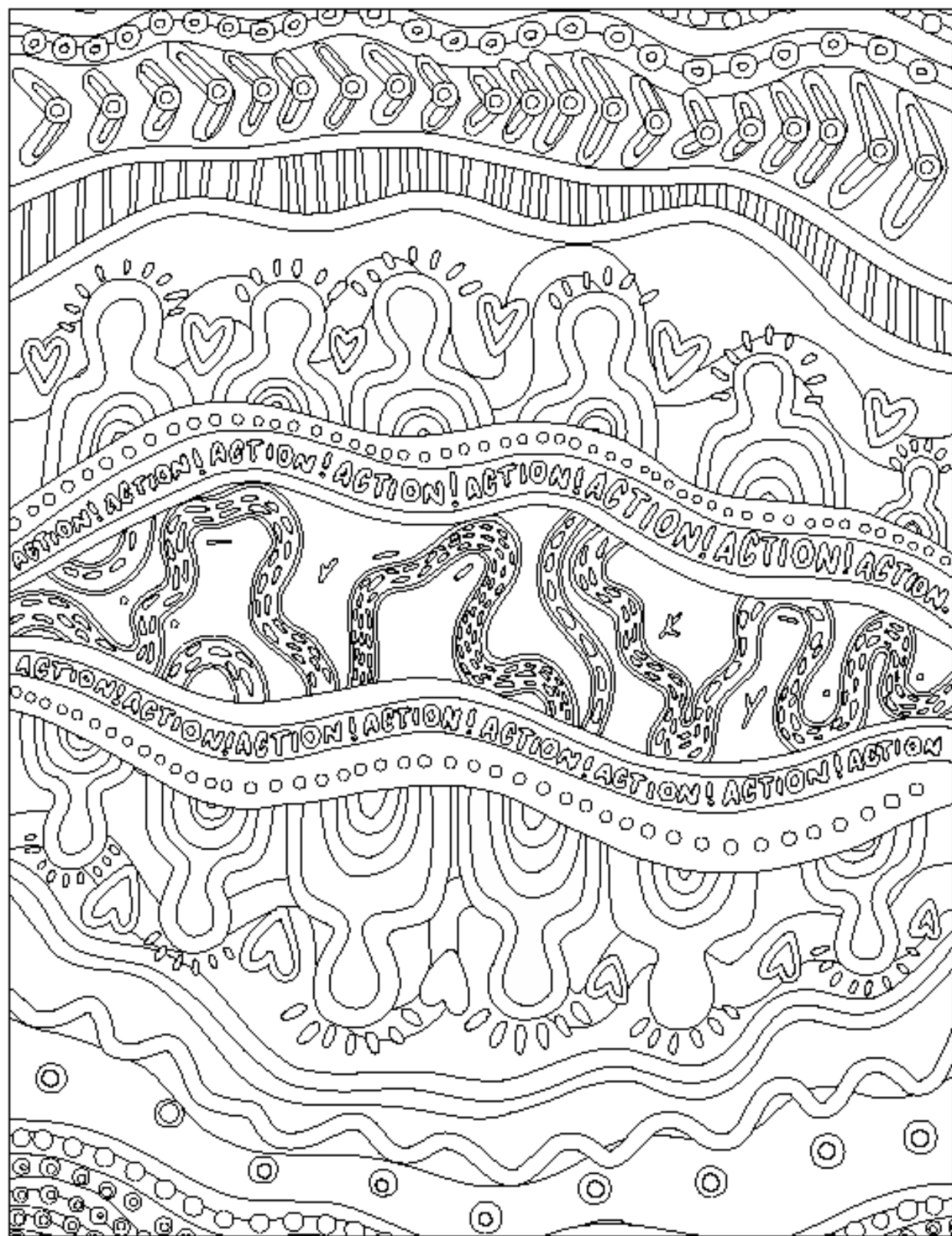
First Nations Elders including Uncle Waubin Richard Aken (Kaurareg), Aunty Fay Moseley (Wiradjuri) and Uncle Noel Butler (Budawang), share their loved experiences.

Featuring the work of contemporary artists including Ryan Presley, Tony Albert, Charlotte Allingham (Coffin Birth), Jai Darby Walker and Danie Mellor, this free exhibition interrogates the lasting impacts of colonisation and the denial of Indigenous sovereignty.

With more than 80 significant cultural objects and over 100 contributions by First Nations peoples across the country, *Unsettled* illuminates the power of truth-telling to realise change. Understanding our shared past is an important step towards healing for a shared future.

Colour for Reconciliation

Action by Jessica Johnson



Action is the story of the land and community sharing the united call for action on reconciliation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples have been listening to the heart beat of the land and sea for generations. With their rainbow shaped souls the spirits ask for us to join and make reconciliation more than a word, take action. We all have a role to play.



Jarjums Quiz

1. Where are the largest Aboriginal fish traps in Australia?
.....
2. What are the colours in the Aboriginal flag?
.....
3. How many Aboriginal languages were there before 1788?
.....
4. What is another name for an overhang?
.....
5. Who was Maria Lock?
.....
6. What is the clan name for your area?
.....
7. What is another name for didgeridoo?
.....
8. What things would you find in a shell midden?
.....
9. What is ochre?
.....
10. Where are you most likely to find an axe grinding groove?



Australian Native Dukkah Recipe

ingredients

50g Macadamias
100g Black/white sesame seeds
100g almonds
1tsp Native mint
1tsp Lemon Myrtle (ground)
1tsp Wattleseed (ground)
1tsp salt. Use Saltbush if you have it
1/2tsp Mountain Pepper

method

1. Weigh nuts and seeds and dry roast
2. Add all the other ingredients. The residual heat will release the flavour and aroma of the herbs/spices. Allow to cool.
3. Once cool blitz to your desired texture.



Artwork: Care for Country by Maggie-Jean Douglas (Gubbi Gubbi)

When creating 'Care for Country' I kept in mind that this meant spiritually, physically, emotionally, socially and culturally – I chose to create a bright and vibrant artwork that included the different colours of the land but showed how they come together in our beautiful country and to make people feel hopeful for the future. I've included communities/people, animals and bush medicines spread over different landscapes of red dirt, green grass, bush land and coastal areas to tell the story of the many ways country can and has healed us throughout our lives and journeys.



NAIDOC Week

4-11 JULY 2021



facebook.com/NAIDOC @naidocweek #naidocweek

#NAIDOC2021 #HealCountry

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are acknowledged as the traditional custodians of the land on which we live and work. We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we live and work. We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we live and work.