

Australia's Heritage

NATIONAL

TREASURES



TEACHERS
NOTES

Series Synopsis

Take a voyage of discovery with Chris Taylor as he reveals the secrets behind a fascinating mix of treasures from Australia's National Heritage List.

In the third season of five-minute mini-documentaries in the *National Treasures* series, Chris travels around Australia delivering historical snapshots of places from the National Heritage List.

He talks with experts and enthusiasts, revealing fascinating insights into our famous and not-so-famous past.

Visiting objects and places of significance, including Fremantle Prison and the ruins of the Dutch merchant ship *Batavia* in Western Australia, the Eureka flag and the Melbourne Cricket Ground in Victoria, Francis De Groot's sword in NSW and the Naracoorte Caves Fossil Mammal site in South Australia, Chris Taylor's enthusiasm shines a welcome spotlight on the sometimes forgotten gems that are an irreplaceable part of our national story.

Established by the Australian Government in 2004, the National Heritage List is a collection of places that contribute to Australia's national identity.

Curriculum Links

This program will have interest and relevance for teachers and students at secondary level. Curriculum links include English, Media Studies, History, SOSE/HSIE, Civics, Drama Studies. The suggested activities are all designed for after-viewing learning experiences.

Eureka Flag



Synopsis

Since it fluttered above a group of rebellious gold miners at the 1854 Eureka Stockade, the flag of the Southern Cross has become a symbol of democracy and defiance. Now carefully preserved at the Art Gallery of Ballarat in Victoria, the flag, and

the National Heritage-listed Eureka Stockade Gardens, remain potent symbols of Australia's only revolution – a battle that was over in less than half an hour and claimed 38 lives. Whether the revolution is interpreted as the birth of Australian democracy or a middle-class tax revolt, it was without doubt a defining moment in Australia's history.

Activities

- The Ballarat gold rush and the events at the Eureka Stockade are considered to be very important in Australia's national history. But what else of interest and significance was happening around the world in 1854? To place the events into a more general context, create a month by month 1854 world timeline. To do this, your class may wish to split into 12 groups, with each group concentrating on one month. (Include the Eureka events in the timeline.)

- Discuss in class, then in pairs design and create a large display poster examining why the Eureka Rebellion is, in the words of the episode, 'regarded as a defining moment in Australia's history'. Illustrate as required. Ensure you consider the question posed in the program as to whether the importance to us of Eureka is 'not what happened, but what we like to believe happened'. In other words, your poster should examine and perhaps comment on the mythology of Eureka.
- Carry out appropriate research then write a selective biography of miners' leader, Peter Lalor. Look at the early influences in his life that may have led to his participation in the Eureka Rebellion, and whether the events at Eureka influenced his public life in later years.
- Plan and write a short fiction story drawing in any way you choose on events that took place on the Eureka goldfields in 1854, and on your research into the participants involved, such as miners and their families, police, licence inspectors, politicians, journalists and even the travelling entertainers who visited the fields. Consider characters, plot events, themes, choice of genre, viewpoint and narrative style.

Francis De Groot's Sword



Synopsis

When right-wing agitator Francis De Groot upstaged the 1932 opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and sliced through the ceremonial ribbon, the antique sword he wielded cemented its place as an Australian national treasure. Part of a monarchist militia called

the New Guard, Irish-born De Groot was protesting about a perceived communist push led by working-class hero and nationalist NSW Premier Jack Lang. The ribbon was retied and cut by Lang, but the story didn't end there. A lengthy court battle followed, which resulted in De Groot being found guilty and fined £5 for trespassing. He immediately counter-sued for wrongful arrest and was awarded compensation. The legal battle established that De Groot, not Lang, had legally opened the bridge, which is now included in the National Heritage List. His sword is held by a private collector.

Activities

- In small groups plan and script scenes that take place prior to the day Francis De Groot interrupted the ceremonial opening of Sydney Harbour Bridge in 1932. The script will be about the concern members of the New Guard experience towards the perceived behaviour of New South Wales Premier Jack Lang, and whether they will kidnap him or not. How will you present and enact this script – as political drama, crime melodrama, farce? Rehearse, edit, and present a play reading to the class.

- In pairs carry out research then prepare a double-page spread as though for a history magazine aimed at the general public, about the rise and fall of both Premier Jack Lang and the New Guard (the right-wing organisation to which De Groot belonged), during the Great Depression. Include illustrations and photographs where relevant.
- Discuss in class then write a short commentary on why De Groot won his court case after being charged by police over his actions in opening the Bridge. Do you think he ought to have been jailed?
- Write an imaginative short fiction story in which De Groot's well-travelled sword is a central 'character'. One way this may be achieved is through narrating the story from the sword's 'viewpoint', in order that it may comment on the events in which it has participated and the characters it has observed. For example, does it now enjoy being 'pensioned' to a life spent in a glass display case?
- Write a commentary on the historical, practical, social and cultural importance of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, and speculate on how the city may have developed differently, and even whether the nation's history may have altered, had the bridge not been constructed.

Batavia Shipwreck Ruins



Synopsis

Stone ruins on Western Australia's remote West Wallabi Island are the oldest structures built by Europeans in Australia and tell a tale of mutiny and murder. Built as a fort in 1629 by survivors of the shipwrecked Dutch merchant ship *Batavia*, the

National Heritage-listed shipwreck site provides a lasting memorial to the treachery of under-merchant Jeronimus Cornelisz, who had conspired to mutiny and steal the treasure-laden ship before it struck a reef. The mutineers murdered more than 120 shipwreck survivors before most were captured, tried and hanged for their crimes. The *Batavia* was found in 1963 and is now on display at the Western Australian Maritime Museum. The wreck convinced the Dutch East India Company to make accurate charts of the coastline, putting Australia on the world map.

Activities

- Carry out research then draw a map of the world showing the maritime sailing routes of the 17th century Dutch East India Company. Ensure you identify and label locations and geographical and national regions on the map, including the location where the *Batavia* was shipwrecked.
- Find out more details about the *Batavia* voyage from the Netherlands, its shipwreck in 1629, and the plotting by Jeronimus Cornelisz and others on board to mutiny and seize the ship's bounty. Take any aspect of this, and of later events, and fashion them into a set of personal,

on-the-spot, eyewitness diary entries. Consider your characterisation and viewpoint carefully. For example, are you an 'innocent' crew member or passenger, or are you part of the conspiracy?

- Discuss in class then write your own commentary about whether Chris Taylor's on and off-camera narration and style detracts from or enhances your understanding and appreciation of the historical relevance and importance of the subject matter in the program. For example, in terms of historical accuracy, is it valid to criticise his use of the word 'tourists' when describing the survivors of the *Batavia* shipwreck? Is this approach too flippant?
- We are informed during the episode that Australia's underwater heritage legislation developed directly as a result of the discovery of the *Batavia's* ruins in 1963, and that it led to similar legislation in other countries. In pairs carry out further research about the history, significance, impact and development of this legislation then prepare and present an illustrated magazine item of one or two pages on the topic, aimed at a young reading audience. Format your presentation using desktop publishing software.

Fremantle Prison



Synopsis

Built by convicts in the 1850s, Fremantle Prison is the best-preserved convict-built prison in Australia and is part of the earliest phase of European settlement in Western Australia. One of the last remaining links to the days of transportation, the prison was notorious

for harsh conditions, including isolation in tiny cells. The conditions triggered wild riots in 1988 and the prison was decommissioned in 1991. Evidence of the hardships remains in the National Heritage-listed prison, including a flogging post, gallows and tunnels carved into its limestone foundations by prisoners.

Activities

- Carry out appropriate research on the history of convict transportation to Western Australia, then write 400–500 words on one day and night in the life of a convict serving time at Fremantle Prison in the 1850s. Your account should be historically accurate. Write the account from the convict's viewpoint. (You may consider writing this account as a letter to be sent back home to family or friends in Britain.)
- Research the physical dimensions and layout of the convict-built main cell block of the prison. In pairs or small groups construct your own small-scale model of the prison. As though designed for a history or public museum exhibit, add a display card of textual background description and explanation.

- During the episode we hear about Martha Rendell, hanged in 1909, whose 'ghostly image' is said to appear in a window of the prison's chapel. Drawing from any aspect of these events, plan and write a fictional ghost story. Consider viewpoint, plot events, characters, time structures such as flashback sequences, and whether the story will be narrated in the present or past tense.
- The episode refers to a prison riot in 1988. Plan and write two letters expressing your views about the riot to the editor of a large daily newspaper. One should be written by supporters of the prison authorities, the other written by friends or relatives of a prisoner. Take care to consider the respective points of view and opinions of each writer.
- Create your own travel poster or information pamphlet promoting Fremantle Prison as a popular 21st century tourist precinct.

Wattie Creek



Synopsis

Wattie Creek entered Australian folklore as the birthplace of the Aboriginal land-rights movement when Prime Minister Gough Whitlam visited the Gurindji people to grant them deeds to their land. The Gurindji rose to national prominence in 1966 when, led by

stockman Vincent Lingiari, 200 Aboriginal employees quit slave-labour conditions at Wave Hill cattle station and walked the now National Heritage-listed Wave Hill Walk-off Route to set up a community at Wattie Creek, which they renamed Daguragu. The walk-off began a nine-year labour strike that ended with a win for Indigenous land rights.

Activities

- Based on the program and from further research, create a poster display of a timeline of important events in the history of Aboriginal land loss and land rights from the early decades of the 20th century to the present. Add illustrations and explanatory text as required.
- Draw a map of the Northern Territory showing the locations of Wave Hill, Daguragu and the water course of Wattie Creek, in relation to other places such as Katherine, Darwin, Alice Springs and Kakadu. Construct a second, small-scale map of the route of the walk-off from start to finish, adding the dates and locations of each section of the journey.
- In pairs carry out background research then create an illustrated two-page magazine spread about the Gurindji living and working conditions on land holdings owned in the Northern Territory by the Vestey business group, which led to the Wave Hill Walk-off. Prepare the items for a young teenage reading audience.
- Listen to the song, *From Little Things, Big Things Grow*, by Paul Kelly and Kev Carmody. Write a short

commentary about the song, explaining its relationship to the Gurindji campaign in 1966–67 for improved working and living conditions in the Northern Territory cattle industry regions.

- Following from the previous activity, compose and edit your own short poem (or song) related to any of the events and issues surrounding the Wave Hill Walk-off and its aftermath.
- In pairs or small groups research and write a commentary on the development and progress of Gurindji land control and usage since the initial 1975 breakthrough land rights document was signed.

Naracoorte Fossil Mammal Site



Synopsis

The extraordinary build-up of fossils in South Australia's World and National Heritage-listed Naracoorte Caves spans at least 350,000 years and provides rare evidence of Australia's distinctive fauna and the way it has evolved. Discovered in 1969, the site covers 300

hectares and gives scientists a snapshot of Pleistocene life in south-east Australia. Only four per cent of the site has been excavated and already scientists have discovered 100 species, a quarter of them extinct, including the marsupial lion, a giant kangaroo and a wombat-like animal the size of a four-wheel drive.

Activities

- To place into a visual perspective, draw a map of south-east Australia indicating the location of the Naracoorte Caves fossil site. Mark onto the map the principal cities and towns of the region, and geographical features such as the Murray River.
- The remains found in the caves are from the Pleistocene, a geological epoch which forms one division of the Cenozoic era (65 million years ago to the present day). Carry out appropriate research then write a description of the main characteristics of this epoch in Australia. Refer to climate change and its impact on the types and range of animals found throughout this epoch. What role, if any, did human activities play in the extinction of the megafauna? You may wish to include a geological timeline indicating when the Pleistocene epoch occurred relative to other epochs of the Cenozoic. (Note that the terms 'epoch' and 'era' are specific, and ought not to be used interchangeably.)
- In pairs create an illustrated poster display of the types of megafauna, now extinct, found in the Naracoorte Caves. Include explanatory text as required, such as a definition of 'megafauna'.
- The initial discovery of the contents of the Naracoorte Caves in 1969 has popular appeal. From the episode

and from further research, work in pairs or small groups to devise, script and record a radio report as though the discovery had taken place recently. Include some background historical detail about the Caves' popularity as a century-old tourist site, and whether they are also of significance to the local Indigenous peoples. You may even wish to create a fictionalised on-the-spot interview with the participants in the discovery, and with scientific experts who offer their own commentaries on its significance.

- Plan and write a short fiction story set during the Pleistocene epoch, which may explain and dramatise how animals were fossilised in the Naracoorte Caves. For example, it may be a story about a smaller marsupial fleeing a predator or about a species of megafauna, narrated from an animal's own viewpoint. Consider aspects such as the effects of climate change on the landscape.

Royal Exhibition Building



Synopsis

During the 19th century, Melbourne's Royal Exhibition Building was an architectural masterpiece which showcased Australia's arrival on the world stage as an economic powerhouse. It was 1888, the golden age of exhibitions, and Victoria,

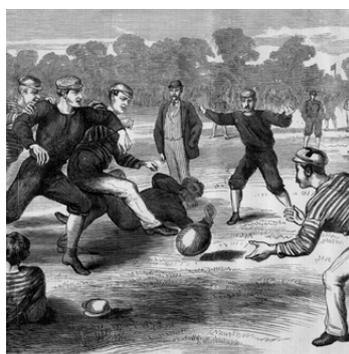
initially fuelled by the gold rush, boasted the largest exhibition building in the world with its annexes combining to cover 14 hectares. Some two million attended the centenary exhibition, nearly twice Victoria's population. The National and World Heritage-listed Royal Exhibition Building was used for the opening of the first Australian Federal Parliament in 1901, and subsequently served as a hospital, an army training centre and a wrestling venue during the 1956 Olympics. It is the only exhibition building from that period remaining in the world.

Activities

- There were many 'palaces of industry' built elsewhere before the Royal Exhibition Building was constructed (and many afterwards). Research and write an article about the purpose of these exhibitions, concentrating on the 'Great Exhibition' of 1851 at the Crystal Palace in London. What was the fate of the Crystal Palace?
- Write an informative commentary about the effects on the city of Melbourne of the 1850s gold rushes and the subsequent creation of great wealth, which led, in part to the campaign, the reasons for, and the construction of the Royal Exhibition Building.
- Carry out relevant research, and in pairs design and create your own, original, large promotional poster, aimed at the local Victorian public, for either the 1880 or 1888 exhibition. Your poster should emulate the style of text, illustration and lettering of the late 19th century.

- Following from the previous activity, imagine you have just attended the exhibition of 1888 and seen some of the marvellous inventions and new technology for the first time, such as electric lighting, the phonograph and ice-making machines. Write a personal letter to a friend about your impressions and feelings. For example, do you think you are living in a wondrous new 'golden age', or are you fearful about what kind of future you are facing as a result of all these developments?
- The program informs us that during the 20th century the Royal Exhibition Building was used for many purposes. Carry out research then write a selection of related items about these purposes. Design them as a double-page spread for a popular history magazine. Format using desktop publishing software, and include illustrations and photographs as required.

Rules of AFL



Synopsis

Ten hand-written rules displayed in a museum in the heart of the National Heritage-listed Melbourne Cricket Ground hold the key to a great Australian sport. If Australian Rules football was a religion, these rules would be its bible. Driven by champion sportsman

and sporting administrator Tom Wills in 1859, the rules established a football code to help cricketers keep fit in the off-season. While several rules remain the same today, some such as allowing defenders to trip a man in possession of the ball have been scrapped. The Australian Football League is now a multi-million dollar business and one of the most popular sports in Australia.

Activities

- It wasn't until the second half of the 19th century that the rules and regulations of British-based football sports such as Association Football (generally referred to in Australia as soccer), rugby (Union and League) and, after its introduction in 1859, Australian Rules football, were codified – that is, written down in a point by point way. These rules have been altered and added to over the years for various reasons, and even today are still under scrutiny. Discuss in class the original purposes of codification of these sports.
- British winter sports such as rugby (before the split into Union and League) and soccer were already played in Melbourne when Australian Rules football was invented. Carry out research then write a commentary on why Australian Rules developed quickly during the later decades of the 19th century in Melbourne, whereas soccer and particularly rugby, which was popular in Sydney, did not develop. Include a commentary on the history of the type of ball used in Australian Rules in the 19th century, and the reasons for the decision to alter this.

(An 1860s illustration of an Australian Rules game depicts the ball as round rather than the spheroid shape common today; see website references.)

- Imagine you are a Melbourne newspaper reporter sent out to observe one of the first games of Australian Rules played in Melbourne, either at the MCG or at nearby Yarra Park. Write your report in 300–400 words. (Take into account that the MCG was a much different place to the stadium of today.)
- There has been debate as to how much influence an Aboriginal 'football' game known as Marngrook (or Marn Grook) had on the formation of Australian Rules in the 19th century. The class may wish to carry out further research about this and, individually or in small groups, prepare a written commentary on the current status of historical discussion about the subject.

Bonegilla Migrant Camp



Synopsis

More than 300,000 migrants had their first taste of Australian life at the Bonegilla Migrant Camp in Victoria before moving out to transform Australia socially and culturally. Established in 1947 to house post-war immigrants, the National

Heritage-listed property was a Spartan former army camp with the most basic facilities. Isolated and primitive, it was freezing in winter, hot in summer, had shared bathrooms and laundries, and pit latrines. Riots erupted in 1952 after the suicide of three young residents triggered widespread dissatisfaction with the standard of living. Conditions improved soon afterwards and the camp continued operating until 1971. Today, Block 19 is all that remains of 28 blocks.

Activities

- One of the basic reasons given for the sudden shift in Australian immigration policy after World War Two is conveyed by the catch-cry, 'populate or perish'. This also signalled a move away from generally only permitting British (and therefore mainly white Anglo-Saxon) people to settle in Australia since Federation in 1901. As a class research and discuss what was meant by 'populate or perish', and how the outcome of this affected the existing mainly Anglo-Australian population's view of their own world. (For example, were Australian citizens adequately prepared for an influx of 'foreigners'?)
- In pairs carry out research about the immigration program begun in 1947 under Australia's first Minister for Immigration, Arthur Calwell. Plan and create a two-page spread for a popular-style history magazine about the immigration program, particularly concentrating on the years Bonegilla camp operated. Include illustrations

as required, and also a graphical representation, in population figures, of the range of non-British nationalities who migrated to Australia in those years.

- After viewing the episode and noting the difference between migrants' views of life in the Bonegilla camp and the Government newsreel messages about camp life, write a letter of personal experience, opinion and feeling to a relative or friend at home from the viewpoint of a Bonegilla camp resident.
- Create your own 1940s–1950s illustrated advertising poster designed to attract non-British citizens to live in Australia. Plan and write a commentary in 500–600 words on the long-term effects on Australian society and culture since post-World War Two, of the huge non-British immigration program carried out by successive Australian governments over many decades.

Ned Kelly's Armour



Synopsis

From violent cop killer to a champion of the working class, bushranger Ned Kelly is a solid gold Australian icon and folk hero. By the time Kelly was captured in June 1880 after the famous siege at Glenrowan – a precinct included on the National Heritage List – the bearded

bushranger had won the hearts of Victorians. When he was sentenced to hang five months later for the murder of three policemen at Stringybark Creek, 30,000 people signed a petition demanding clemency. The iron armour that saved – or some might say cost him – his life is preserved as a national treasure in the State Library of Victoria.

Activities

- In pairs carry out research and write an informative history of the various relationships between the selectors (small, poor landowners), squatters (large and comparatively wealthy station owners) and the police in north-eastern Victoria, which led to the existence in the area of criminals such as the Kelly Gang. Include a response to the question as to whether these relationships worsened or improved after Kelly was executed.
- Plan and create an illustrated poster display titled *Hero or Villain?* about the life of Ned Kelly. Ensure you include relevant and appropriate text. The content of your poster should examine and suggest a historical appraisal as to whether Kelly was 'hero' or 'villain' – or both, or neither. (An alternative approach may be to construct your display as a web page.)
- Imagine that radio broadcasting had been invented by the time the Kelly Gang were operating. In small groups, research one of the incidents in which the gang was involved, then prepare, script, rehearse, produce, record and edit an eyewitness, on-the-spot news broadcast by a reporter with a microphone. You may need to include

interview 'grabs' with the police, onlookers, hostages and gang members, plus relevant sound effects.

- You are a settler living in north-eastern Victoria in 1880. Write a letter to the editor of a large Melbourne daily newspaper in which you argue for clemency in relation to the death sentence handed down on Ned Kelly by his courtroom judge, Sir Redmond Barry.
- *Another Night in the Museum*: Plan and write a short fiction story about the night Ned Kelly's armour comes alive in the State Library of Victoria.

Media Studies



- *Chaser* team member Chris Taylor is central to the entire *Australia's Heritage – National Treasures* series of 10 episodes, both as on-camera narrator and off-camera voice-over commentary. Discuss in class and write your own commentary on whether this is a distraction or an

enhancement to the viewing audience. Provide examples from various episodes to demonstrate your viewpoint.

- Write an analysis of the stylistic techniques of camera angles, movements and shots, and the use of sound (including choice of music background accompaniment), and the purposes they serve in the presentation of non-fiction short story designed for television, drawing attention to examples from at least two episodes.
- After viewing any of the episodes, did you think you had learnt something you didn't previously know, or that you were left wishing you would like to know more? Have you already, in fact, done further research into any of the topics presented in these episodes? Is each episode, looking at past historical items and events, of relevance to Australians today? Discuss in class, then write a short explanation.
- Examine the promotional cover image that accompanies this study guide. Discuss in class and write a short commentary on what the image depicts, and whether it captures a sense of the overall series.
- Following from the previous activity, create your own advertisement for the series, aiming it at school-aged audiences.
- As a practical media studies activity, with access to digital equipment the class may wish to form into groups to research, script, produce, film and edit their own three-minute versions of a *Local Treasures* program.
- In 200–300 words write a review of the program for a weekly newspaper TV liftout section. Will you place your emphasis on reviewing it as entertainment or as education?

References and Further Resources

Eureka Flag

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Francis De Groot's Sword

Books and films:

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 Richard Evans and Alex West, *Constructing Australia: A Companion to the ABC TV Series*, Miegunyah Press, Carlton, 2007
 Andrew Moore, *Francis De Groot: Irish Fascist Australian Legend*, Federation Press, Annandale, 2005
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Batavia Shipwreck Ruins

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 Nathan Richards, *Ships' Graveyards: Abandoned Watercraft and the Archaeological Site Formation Process*, University Press of Florida, Gainesville, 2008

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Fremantle Prison

Books:

Michal Bosworth, *Convict Fremantle: A Place of Promise and Punishment*, University of Western Australia Press, Crawley, 2004
 Alexandra Hasluck, *Unwilling Emigrants*, Fremantle Art Centre Press, Fremantle, 1991
 Robert Hughes, *The Fatal Shore: A History of the Transportation of Convicts to Australia, 1787-1868*, Collins/Harvill, London, 1987

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Wattie Creek

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Naracoorte Fossil Mammal Site

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Royal Exhibition Building

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 David Dunstan et al, *Victorian Icon: The Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne*, Exhibition Trustees in association with Australian Scholarly Publishing, Kew, 1996
 Peter H Hoffenberg, *An Empire on Display: English, Indian and Australian Exhibitions from the Crystal Palace to the Great War*, University of California Press, Berkely, 2001
 Robert Wilson, *Great Exhibitions: The World Fairs 1851–1937*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2007

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Rules of AFL

Books and newspapers:

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Bonegilla Migrant Camp

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