



A CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR EVENTS IN OUR SHARED HISTORY

120,000 BP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of pollen and charcoal giving a date of 120,000 BP suggests land was being cleared by use of fire by people in the Lake George basin in the Southern Tablelands of NSW. This forms some of the earliest evidence of human civilisation.
55,000 - 60,000 BP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archaeological evidence suggests that a rock shelter was used by people at a site in Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. They used stone tools and red ochre probably to prepare pigments for rock painting or body decoration.
45,000 BP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rock engravings made in South Australia - the earliest dated Petroglyphs
31 000 BP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence found of Aborigines living at the Keilor site in Victoria
30,780 BP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Aboriginal underground at Lake Mungo NSW shows continuity with recent historical times.
30,000 BP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A man from the Lake Mungo area is found in a shallow grave. His forearm bones are stained pink from ochre. This is one of the earliest known burials of a distinctly modern people. Aboriginal people were living around the now extinct lakes of the Willandra Lakes system. Evidence shows signs of spiritual and creative life and technology linked to much later Aboriginal culture
29 500 BP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devils' Lair in the southmost of Western Australia found to be home to Aborigines who leave bone tool artefacts, including unique bone-beads of split-pointed macropod shin bones. The cave is occupied from this time to 6,000 BP.
26,500 BP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The body of a woman from Lake Mungo provides the earliest evidence of ritual cremation in the world
23 000 BP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aborigines are living at Malangangarr in Arnhem Land and using ground-edge grooved axes. Australian technology leads the world
15-24 000 BP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In deep caves under the Nullarbor Plains at Koonalda, Aborigines are mining flint and leaving grooved designs on the cave walls. This is early evidence of the close relationship in Aboriginal society of art and working life.
9 000 - 7 000 BP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Earliest visible evidence of Aboriginal belief connected with the rainbow Serpent. This becomes the longest continuing belief in the world
1451	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dutch documents record the journeys of Maccassan trepangers to Australia
1588	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Macassan praus are sailing to the north eastern coast of the Northern Territory. Trade between Aborigines and the Macassans continues until it is stopped by the South Australian Government in 1906.

1606	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Earliest recorded contact between Europeans and Aborigines - crew of the Dutch ship Dwyflken under Captain Willem Jansz on the western coast of the Cape York Peninsula.
1616	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dutchman Dirk Hartog in the Eendracht landed on the western coast of Australia.
1642	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dutchman Abel Tasman reached southwestern Tasmania and claimed the territory for Holland, calling it Van Dieman's Land.
1770	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Captain Cook claims to take possession of the whole east coast of Australia by raising the British flag at Possession Island off the northern tip of the Cape York Peninsula – claims the land as 'terra nullius'.
1788	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Arrival of the First Fleet and the beginning of British invasion. Aboriginal population estimated at between 750 000 to 1 million. In May the first conflict between the First Fleet arrivals and Aborigines takes place near Rushcutters Bay, Sydney. Two convicts are killed.
1789	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Smallpox epidemic wipes out at least half of Sydney Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people have no resistance to European diseases and even the common cold proves to be fatal.
1790	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resistance begins, first by Pemulwuy (from 1790 to 1802), then in Hawkesbury River area. Martial law is declared time and again, but on occasion settlers are told to protect their property. Official records speak of a 'campaign of terror' to crush resistance. Protectionist policies implemented, restricting Aborigines' right to free movement to specific areas such as reserves or missions. This is justified by the 'harmful effects' of contact with Europeans
1794	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By August, 70 colonists farming on the Hawkesbury. Aborigines dispossessed of their land.
1797	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Punitive party pursue Pemulwuy and about 100 Aborigines to Parramatta. Pemulwuy is wounded and captured but later escapes.
1799	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two Aboriginal boys killed near Windsor by five Hawkesbury settlers. A court martial found them guilty but referred sentencing to the Secretary of State for Colonies and the men are released on bail. Governor Hunter is recalled. Acting-Governor King is instructed to pardon the men. ▪ Beginning of a six-year period of resistance to white settlement by Aborigines in the Hawkesbury and Parramatta areas. Known as the 'Black Wars'
1802	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ June 30, Proclamation stating: "His Majesty forbids any act of injustice or wanton cruelty to the Natives, yet the settler is not to suffer his property to be invaded or his existence endangered by them, in preserving which he is to use the effectual, but at the same time the most humane, means of resisting such attacks". ▪ Shortly after this Pemulwuy is shot by two settlers.
1804	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One year after the British flag is raised in Tasmania, settlers are authorised to shoot unarmed Aboriginal people. Colonists are authorised by Lt. Moore to shoot 50 Aborigines at Risdon Cove in response to Aboriginal resistance. Hostilities increase - the slaughter of Aborigines in Van Diemen's Land has begun.
1816	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In May Governor Macquarie announces a set of regulations controlling the free movement of Aboriginal people. No Aboriginal person is to appear armed within a mile of any settlement and no more than six Aboriginal people are allowed to 'lurk or loiter near farms'. ▪ Passports or certificates are issued to Aboriginal people "who conduct themselves in a suitable manner", to show they are 'officially' accepted by Europeans.

1819-1820	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rapid expansion of the colony into present day Queensland. A penal settlement set up a Redcliffe but moved to present day Brisbane three months later. Colonists spread west of the Blue Mountains and establish stations. ▪ There are a number of large scale killings as conflict over dispossession of land and erosion of hunting rights continue.
1824	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In August, martial law is proclaimed in the Bathurst area when seven Europeans are killed by Aboriginal people and conflict with Aborigines is seen as a serious threat. Soldiers, mounted police, settlers and stockmen carry out numerous attacks on Aboriginal people. As many as 100 Aboriginal people are killed.
1834	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In October, Governor Stirling leads a party of men to a site near present day Pinjarra, on the Swan River and attacks 80 Aboriginal people. One of Stirling's men dies and many Aborigines are killed. Official reports say that 14 Aborigines were killed but Aboriginal accounts suggest a whole clan was decimated in the attack. This became known as the 'Battle of Pinjarra'. The battle was an attempt to punish Aboriginal people south of Perth, after conflict with settlers the death, in April, of Hugh Nesbit.
1835	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ John Batman attempts to make a 'treaty' with Aboriginal people for Port Phillip Bay, near present day Melbourne by 'buying' 243 000 hectares with 20 pairs of blankets, 30 tomahawks, various other articles and a yearly tribute. Governor Bourke does not recognise the 'treaty' and the purchase is voided. This is the only time colonists attempt to sign a treaty for land with Aboriginal owners.
1837	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In London, a Parliamentary Select Committee affirms the 'plain and sacred right' of Indigenous peoples to land. The committee reports genocide is happening in the colonies. ▪ Saxe Bannister, first Attorney General of NSW, makes a submission to the Select Committee of the House of Commons arguing that treaties should be entered into with Aboriginal people and that their rights to land should be respected
1838	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jan - Mounted police, mostly European volunteers, set out in response to conflict on the Liverpool Plains, north central NSW. At Vinegar Hill, a site on 'Slaughterhouse Creek', 60 - 70 Aborigines are reported killed. ▪ June - Myall Creek massacre – 28 Aboriginal old men, women and children are butchered. Eleven stockmen are brought to trial; initially acquitted, then seven are retried and hanged for murder. There is a cry of outrage from the colonial press and sections of the public who cannot understand why anyone should hang for murdering Aboriginal people. ▪ Reports of poisoning of Aborigines on 'Tarrone' near Port Fairy, West Melbourne and 'Kilcoy' north-west Moreton Bay. Flour is poisoned and left in shepherds' huts on 'Kilcoy' in the expectation that Aborigines now dispossessed of hunting ground would take it.
1868	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The first overseas cricket tour leaves Australia for England; the team is all Aboriginal. ▪ 150 Aboriginal people are killed resisting arrest in the Kimberleys
1869	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Act for "Protection and Management of Aboriginal Natives" is passed in Victoria ▪ A Board of Protection is established in Victoria and continues until 1957. During the next 20 years nearly 11 000 hectares of land are 'temporarily reserved'. By 1900, most Victorian Aborigines are placed on reserves.
1876	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Truganini dies in Hobart aged 73. The Tasmanian Government does not recognise the Aboriginal heritage of people of Aboriginal descent and claims the last Tasmanian Aboriginal person has died. A falsehood many still believe today.

1879	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Torres Strait Islands are annexed by Queensland.
1883	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW Aborigines Protection Board (APB) takes over reserves for Aboriginal people and sets up reserve schools – usually taught by untrained managers' wives with an inferior curriculum. Where this is not possible, Aboriginal children can attend the local public schools providing they are “habitually clean, decently clad and that they conduct themselves with propriety, both in and out of school”
1886	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Western Australian Aborigines Protection Act provided for a Protection Board. The Victorian Aborigines Protection Act excludes “half castes” from their definition of an Aboriginal person. As a result nearly half the residents of the stations have to leave their homes.
1888	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The phrase ‘White Australia Policy’ appeared in William Lane’s Boomerang in Brisbane.
1897	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jandamarra, Kimberley’s resistance fighter is shot and 19 former Aboriginal prisoners, who he had freed and were fighting with him, are also shot and killed.
1901	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commonwealth of Australia formed. Aboriginal people are excluded from the census and the lawmaking powers of the Commonwealth Parliament. The Commonwealth Constitution states “in reckoning the numbers of people... Aboriginal natives shall not be counted”. It also states that the Commonwealth would legislate for any race except Aborigines. The states therefore retain their power over Aboriginal Affairs. White Australia Policy bars ‘coloured’ immigrants and denies Aboriginal existence. Aboriginal people are excluded from the vote, pensions, employment in post offices, enlistment in Armed Forces, maternity allowance.
1908	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Invalid and Old Age Pension Act provides social security for all Australians except Aborigines
1909	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aborigines Protection Act 1909 (NSW) gives APB the power to remove Aboriginal children from their families.
1920	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal population of Australia is estimated to be 60 000. It is widely believed to be a ‘dying race’.
1925	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Aboriginal Progress Association (AAPA) established. The AAPA, officially launched in February 1925, was the ‘first Aboriginal political organisation to create formal links between communities over a wide area’. It was important because of the role it played in planting political seeds that flowered in future generations of indigenous political leaders in south-eastern Australia. The AAPA campaigned for “freehold title to land, the cessation of the removal of Aboriginal children and the abolition of the NSW Aborigines Protection Board(APB).
1928	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conniston massacre: whites admit to shooting 31 Aborigines after a white dingo trapper is killed. Aboriginal records show scores more died. A court of inquiry says the Europeans’ action was ‘justified’. Aborigines are refused legal aid by the Federal Government
1929	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Royal Commission on the Constitution “recognised that the effect of the treatment of Aborigines on the reputation of Australia furnishes a powerful argument for a transference of control to the Commonwealth”.
1937	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Native Welfare Conference – policy of Assimilation is adopted to make Aboriginal people the same as White Australians.
1938	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On Australia Day a Day of Mourning is held by the Australian Aborigines League (est. 1930s) and Aborigines Progressive Association (est. 1937). These are the first of many Aboriginal protests against inequality, injustice, dispossession of land and protectionist policies. The manifesto ‘Aborigines Claim Citizen Rights’ and Abo Call newspaper are published.

1939	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political activist Jack Patten, a member APS, leads 200 Cumeragunja residents in a 'walk-off' the reserve in protest at APB policies. Patten demands the NSW Premier conduct an immediate inquiry into 'intimidation, starvation and victimisation' on the reserve. The response was to call in police and have Patten and his brother George arrested for 'incitement'. The residents cross the Murray River into Victoria and set up camp at Barmah.
1940	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Aborigines Protection Board is abolished, replaced by the Aborigines Welfare Board. The Aborigines Progressive Association had campaigned to bring about reforms to the NSW Protection Board. Amendments to the NSW Aborigines protection legislation results in the replacement of the Aborigines Protection Board with the NSW Aborigines Welfare Board. Responsibility for Aboriginal Education is transferred to the Department for Education, which takes control of reserve buildings and started to provide trained teachers. In the 1940s most Federal social security benefits are extended to Aborigines.
1945	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal cattle station workers in the Port Hedland district, Western Australia, strike for a pay increase. They are getting 10 shillings a week and are supplied with blankets. The Aborigines then formed a co-operative to mine alluvial wolfram which was successful.
1946	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal pastoral workers in the Pilbara, Western Australia, strike over pay, conditions and ill treatment. An estimated 600 Aboriginal stockmen refused to work until they had been guaranteed a minimum wage of thirty shillings a week. Some of the striking stockmen were arrested, chained by hands and necks and tried time and time again by local J.P.'s. The numerous arrests, food problems and evictions from tribal land did not break the people's spirit. The strike continued for a year. In the end the Aborigines won their demands.
1948	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Commonwealth Citizenship and Nationality Act for the first time gives a category of "Australian Citizenship" to all Australians, including all Aborigines. However, at state level Aborigines still suffer legal discrimination.
1949	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Citizenship Act 1949 (Cth), gives Aboriginal people the vote in Commonwealth elections if they are enrolled for State elections or have served in the Armed Forces.
1953	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Atomic tests, code named Operation Totem, are conducted at Emu, South Australia. A black cloud passes leaving many Aboriginal people suffering radiation sickness.
1956	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operation Buffalo, another atomic blast at Maralinga, South Australia.
1957	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operation Antler: atomic testing yet again at Maralinga, South Australia. The presence of Aboriginal people on the nuclear test site is documented.
1958	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines – later changed to Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI) – begins ten year campaign by both black and white people to end discrimination in the constitution
1962	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Aboriginal people are given the vote in Commonwealth elections.
1963	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> July - a bark petition against mining on the Gove Peninsula is drawn up by the senior men of the affected clans. On 28 August the petition is presented to the Governor General. Although it is signed by more senior clan members, the Federal Government fails to recognise Aboriginal political structure and rejects the petition because of insufficient signatures
1965	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freedom Rides – Sydney University students' bus tour of NSW country towns to expose living conditions and discrimination against Aboriginal people. Assimilation policy is changed to that of Integration – Aboriginal people entering Australian society on their own terms and preserving as much of their culture as they choose.

1966	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Arbitration Commission rules equal pay for Aboriginal workers in the pastoral industry but defers it for three years. ▪ August 22 - Stockmen and women at Wave Hill led by Vincent Lingiari walk-off in protest against intolerable working conditions and inadequate wages. They establish a camp at Wattie Creek and demand the return of some of their traditional lands. This began a seven year fight by the Gurindji people to obtain title to their land. The Gurindji strike was not the first or the only demand by Aborigines for the return of their lands - but it was the first one to attract wide public support within Australia for Land Rights. It led to the 1972 Labour Party's policy on Land Rights and the enactment of the 1976 Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act.
1967	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 91% of Australian voters vote YES in a Referendum to count Aboriginal people in the census and give the Commonwealth the power to make laws for Aboriginal people.
1969	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NSW Aborigines Welfare Board abolished; Aborigines Advisory Council set up.
1970-71	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aboriginal Legal Service and Medical Service set up in Redfern, followed by Aboriginal pre-school, Black Theatre and the Aboriginal Housing Company.
1971	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gumatj Elders Millrrpum and others take on Nabalco Pty Ltd and the Federal Government in the Gove Land Rights Case following on from the bark petition. The Northern Territory Supreme Court ruled that Aboriginal people did not, under Australian law own the Arnhem Land reserve. This meant Nabalco could mine the land
1971	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Neville Bonner becomes the first Aboriginal member of Parliament when he filled a casual Senate vacancy. In 1972 he is elected on the Liberal Party ticket in Queensland
1972	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aboriginal Tent Embassy set up outside Parliament House Canberra – adopts Aboriginal flag. ▪ 14 July - National Aborigines Day there are Australia wide strikes and marches by Aboriginal people ▪ Whitlam Labor Government is elected – abolishes White Australia Policy, sets up Department of Aboriginal Affairs; new Aboriginal policy of self determination. ▪ December, the Whitlam Government freezes all applications for mining and exploration on Commonwealth Aboriginal reserves.
1973	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mr Justice Woodward of the Aboriginal Land Commission delivers his first report, showing the way for a new approach to Aboriginal Land Rights
1974	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Justice Woodward's second report says "to deny Aborigines the right to prevent mining on their land is to deny the reality of their Land Rights". His report is accepted in principle by all political parties and most states.
1975	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prime Minister Gough Whitlam hands back title to Gurindji people. ▪ Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth) is passed in the Commonwealth Parliament. ▪ The Laverton Royal Commission in Western Australia investigating clashes between police and Aboriginal people at Laverton and Skull Creek in December, 1974 and January, 1975, found that police were unable to justify arrests and that some parts of the police story had been invented.
1976	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1976 (NT) is passed by the Fraser government. It provides recognition of Aboriginal land ownership by about 11 000 Aboriginal people. It enables traditional Aboriginal lands to be granted to the Aboriginal Lands Trust
1977	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aboriginal woman Isobel Coe received \$100 in damages in the Moree District Court, NSW against Malcolm Barber who refused her entrance to his bar
1979	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In Coe v Commonwealth, Coe is unsuccessful in challenging the legal concept

	that Australia had been an uninhabited land which had been settled not conquered.
1980	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Link-Up NSW established to re-unite families of the Stolen Generations. NSW Parliament Select Committee inquiry into land rights for Aboriginal people.
1983	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 (NSW) recognises dispossession and dislocation of NSW Aboriginal people, sets up local-regional-State land council network with 15-year land tax funding (to 1998) as compensation and to establish an economic base.
1985	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uluru is handed back to the traditional owners
1987	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prime Minister Bob Hawke sets up a Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody in response to the high rate of Aboriginal incarceration and death in prisons and police lockups. ▪ In the 'Come to Canberra Campaign' joint land councils from the Northern Territory and the States go to Parliament House, Canberra to protest against the proposed changes to the Aboriginal Land Rights Act of the Northern Territory and the inadequate provisions in Hawke's visions of 'Uniform National Land Rights'.
1988	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bicentennial celebrations and protest; tens of thousands of people march through the streets on Australia Day. These signal a massive increase in awareness of Aboriginal history and issues.
1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) is established. ▪ The NSW Taskforce on Aboriginal Heritage and Culture recommends that responsibility for Aboriginal Heritage be removed from the National Parks and Wildlife Service and that a separate Aboriginal Heritage Commission be established
1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody presents its Report and Recommendations to the Commonwealth Government. It is the most comprehensive investigation of Aboriginal experience in Australia ever. It makes 339 recommendations to change Australian systems at every point of contact with Aboriginal people. The final recommendation is that a formal process of reconciliation between Indigenous and other Australians be instituted. Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (CAR) established by Act of Parliament.
1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The High Court of Australia rules in the Mabo case that native title exists over particular kinds of land – unalienated Crown land, national parks and reserves – and that Australia was never 'terra nullius'. ▪ Prime Minister Keating launches Australian celebration of International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples (1993), with a speech accepting responsibility for past mistreatment of Aboriginal people by non-Aboriginal Australians and calling for reconciliation. The speech becomes known as the 'Redfern Park speech'.
1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) is passed in the Commonwealth Parliament. It sets up the National Native Title Tribunal to determine native title rights. ▪ The Office of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner is established by the Federal Government in response to issues of discrimination and disadvantage highlighted by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody and Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's National Inquiry into Racist Violence
1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families is announced. ▪ 9 August declared International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples
1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Election of Howard Coalition Government in Canberra – seen as opposed to Aboriginal rights.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May 1996 – in first budget as PM, Howard cuts \$470 million in funding to ATSIC ▪ The Jawoyn people in the Katherine region of the Northern Territory sign on to the largest single commercial deal in Australian history involving Aboriginal interests. The signing is a major expansion of Aboriginal involvement in the Pegasus Mt Todd Gold Mine ▪ The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation launches the first National Reconciliation Week at a luncheon hosted by the Prime Minister John Howard, Opposition Leader Kim Beazley and Democrats leader Cheryl Kernot.
1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Wik¹ case – High Court rules that native title and pastoral leases can coexist, but that in all cases of conflict of rights the rights of the lessee will prevail. ▪ May 8: The amended Ten Point Wik Plan is released by the Federal Government ▪ 25 May - the report tabled in Federal Parliament that shook Australia. Bringing Them Home detailed painful evidence of the removal of thousands of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander children from their families ▪ National Sorry Day - a day for organisations to apologise for the removal of Aboriginal children from their families. A chance for all Australians to recognise the pain thousands of Aboriginal people went through. The first 'Sorry Day' is marked by hundreds of activities around the country. The Australian Federal Government does not take part in 'Sorry Day', saying people who removed Aboriginal children thought they were doing the right thing and people now should not have to say sorry for what people did in the past. ▪ June 2: The Chairperson for the Aboriginal Reconciliation Council, Mr. Patrick Dodson presents a report entitled Weaving the Threads - Progress Towards Reconciliation, to Federal Parliament ▪ 12 October: Thousands of Australian people plant hands in front of Parliament House, Canberra in support of native title and reconciliation between black and white Australia. ▪ South Australian Premier John Olsen apologises to Aboriginal people for past wrongs, particularly the Stolen Generation: "I apologise on behalf of South Australians for the effects that the then Government policy had on the families and children of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people [...] This sad episode has caused a scar on the face of this nation. [...] By apologising, I hope that we can now move forward."
1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pauline Hanson and One Nation Party campaign against Aboriginal 'special treatment'. Commonwealth Parliament statement of commitment to Reconciliation. ▪ April 1: The High Court upholds the validity of the Hindmarsh Island Bridge Act, the subject of an Aboriginal challenge, and rules that the federal government may make laws for the detriment as well as the benefit of particular races. ▪ July 2: The new Native Title Amendment Bill 1997, an adaptation of the Ten Point Plan, is passed by the Senate ▪ August 26: Following Senator Aden Ridgeway's maiden speech and the government's negotiations with the Democrats, federal parliament passes a declaration of "deep and sincere regret" for the past injustices to Aborigines.
1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ April 7 - The first Native Title deed granted on mainland Australia is awarded to the Dunghutti people for land at Crescent Head near Kempsey in New South Wales. ▪ On June 2, the Draft Document for Reconciliation was released for nationwide

	<p>discussion by the Australian people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ August – Howard officially refuses a national apology for members of the Stolen Generations
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Native Title Amendment Act 1998 (Cth) is introduced based on the Coalition Government's ten point plan. Widely seen as reducing Indigenous native title rights. ▪ First national Sorry Day – over 1 million signatures are collected in thousands of Sorry Books. ▪ May 27-28 Corroboree 2000 is held at Sydney Opera House to mark 10 years of work on Reconciliation. Here, the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation presents to the nation Corroboree 2000 - Towards Reconciliation which includes the documents Australian Declaration towards Reconciliation and Roadmap for Reconciliation; over 300,000 people join People's Walk for Reconciliation across Sydney Harbour Bridge. Howard refuses to take part. ▪ Sydney 2000 Olympics. The Sydney 2000 Olympics showcased Indigenous culture to the world. The opening and closing ceremonies celebrated Indigenous cultural identity and history and provided some deft political comment on contemporary Indigenous issues. ▪ Indigenous athlete, Cathy Freeman, lit the Olympic torch and won the gold medal in the women's 400m. ▪ In September 2000, at University of Sydney, two living legends in the form of Nelson Mandela and Faith Bandler crossed paths. Faith is renowned in Australia for her seminal involvement in the most successful referendum campaign in Australian history in 1967.
2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Indigenous people and cultural events featured heavily in the Centenary of Federation program. The Yeperenye Festival outside Alice Springs was the largest corroboree ever staged in this country – over 25 000 people and 40 Indigenous nations. The program celebrated the first Aboriginal federation of over 1000 generations.
2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The High Court rejects an appeal by Lorna Cubillo and Peter Gunner against the Federal Court's decision to deny the right of those removed from their families and communities to make compensation claims. Members of the Stolen Generations vow to continue their fight for compensation. ▪ November – Howard announces a review into ATSIC, which recommends a strengthening of the regional structure and the election of local officials ▪ December 2002 - the Commonwealth Government released its response to Reconciliation: Australia's Challenge, the CAR's final report. The Government did not commit to action on any of the recommendations of the report, except to indicate that if there was sufficient public support a referendum on deleting section 25 of the Constitution would be held. The response reiterated the Government's commitment to 'practical reconciliation'.

<p>2003</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dr Bill Jonas, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, launches his annual Social Justice Report, describing the incarceration rates for Indigenous women a national shame. ▪ Following an extensive inquiry into national progress towards Reconciliation, Dr Jonas AM calls on the Australian Government to recommit to the Reconciliation process. The Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee's report 'Reconciliation-Off track' highlights crucial failings in the current approach of the Australian Government to Indigenous affairs and the Reconciliation process.
<p>2004</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At least 40 police officers are reported injured following a night of violence directed at the police in Redfern, Sydney. The riot follows the death of a 17 year old Aboriginal boy, TJ Hickey. ▪ The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission is abolished by the Government. In its place the Government will appoint a group of hand picked Indigenous people to advise the Government in relation to Aboriginal affairs. They are called the 'National Indigenous Council'. . ▪ 26 November: 300 members of the Aboriginal community at Palm Island protest over the death in custody of local man Cameron Doomadgee on 19 November. 9 are arrested and later charged. The Federal government admits progress in reducing Aboriginal deaths in custody had been slow ▪ October 2004 – Howard formally dumps the word 'reconciliation' from the government agenda, axing the 'Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Reconciliation'
<p>2005</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Federal Court recognises that the Ngaanyatjarra claimants hold exclusive possession rights over most of the Ngaanyatjarra Lands. The claim stretches from the Gibson Desert Nature Reserve to the South Australian border. The decision was reached through negotiation, not litigation. ▪ Former AFL footballer Michael Long campaigns for recognition of the plight of Indigenous Australians. Long walked from Melbourne to Canberra in 2004 and encourages all Australians to walk with him in Melbourne in 2005. ▪ Research released from the Centre for Independent Studies calls for fundamental changes to Indigenous education. The report claims that remote communities do not offer enough choice for secondary students and that cooperation with other schools should be encouraged to enable teachers and students to share support and resources.
<p>2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 27 September: Queensland acting State Coroner Christine Clements finds that Senior Sergeant Hurley was responsible for the death of Cameron Doomadgee in 2004 whilst he was in custody ▪ 14 December: the state's Director of Public Prosecutions, Leanne Clare announce there was not enough evidence to convict Senior Sergeant Chris Hurley of any offence. There is nationwide protest and dissatisfaction at the decision ▪ September 2006 – Noongar native title decision is handed down. The government, with the support of the Labor opposition, support the state governments decision to appeal.

2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ January 4: Former NSW chief justice Sir Laurence Street starts review of DPP's decision in Palm Island death in custody case. He later advises that there is enough evidence to prosecute Hurley, who is officially suspended. Witness Patrick Bramwell hangs himself on Palm Island on 16 Jan.▪ June 20: Jury acquits Senior Sergeant Hurley on manslaughter and assault charges
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