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PRE-HISTORY TO FEDERATION

Early Knowledge and Discovery of Australia

Pre-history

Humans entered the Australian continent from the South-East Asian area during the last glaciation at least 40,000 years ago, at a time when sea levels were much lower than they are today. Even so, these first migrations would have involved a sea voyage of some 60 kilometres, making it possibly the world's earliest sea-borne migration. Settlement was well established 25,000 to 30,000 years ago and by 20,000 years ago almost the entire continent was inhabited.

The original Australians lived as hunter-gatherers, using tools of wood, bone, shell and stone. Archaeological evidence indicates that a simple pan-continental toolmaking tradition existed, characterised by stoneware tools; scrapers were used to fashion further tools out of wood. This continued until 5,000 to 6,000 years ago, at which time a range of more specialised small tools began to emerge. But, in Tasmania, isolated 12,000 years ago by the post-glacial rising seas, Aborigines still maintained the culture of the late Pleistocene period, until subject to the influence of European settlement of the island.

Estimates by anthropologists of the Aboriginal population at the time of European settlement have varied greatly. In 1930, anthropologist Radcliffe-Brown postulated a minimum figure of 300,000, which was officially accepted by the government. Recent archaeological finds suggest that a population of 750,000 could have been sustained. They were divided into some 500 small groups and spoke a variety of languages and dialects. These groups or tribes were further divided into 'bands' or clusters of family groups and formed the basic self-sufficient economic unit. Labour was divided between the sexes: the men hunted while the women foraged for roots and seeds and caught small animals which also formed a basic part of their subsistence. Local groups would congregate when food or water supplies were abundant or when ceremonial obligations demanded. Exchanges at these ceremonial gatherings led to the wide dispersal of goods. Religious and ceremonial activities relating to the land were a vital part of Aboriginal life. Evidence suggests they had developed the use of ochre as a ritual painting material as early as 25,000 years ago.

The physical barriers of distance and aridity within Australia itself caused, in part, cultural isolation and linguistic diversity of its people. European exploration and settlement was for most Aboriginal societies their first contact with an outside culture. The impact of this settlement in those areas where the colonists established themselves led rapidly to the disappearance of the traditional Aboriginal way of life.

Speculation on the Great South Land

The Ancient Greeks, who are said to have believed the world was round, postulated the existence of a Great South Land. The Christian peoples of Middle Ages Europe, for

religious reasons however, no longer believed in a global world and saw the earth as flat and bounded by the fiery edges of the equator.

First references to Australia came from the Greeks, the Arabs, the Chinese, the Malays and Indians but are thought to have been largely a product of imagination. To the Malays, for example, the Great South Land though not uninhabited was the Land of the Dead. To the Hindu-Buddhists, who came from the first century AD to colonise Sumatra and Java, there were 'islands of gold' to the south of Java and to the south-east of Timor but, like the Middle Ages Christians before them, the beliefs shaped dangers too perilous to confront.

The Chinese recognised the fantasy of these and similar reports which they would certainly have heard of while trading in the area. Their maps show they knew of the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Java, Bali, Lombok, Timor, the Moluccas, Celebes and Borneo. However, the distances involved were too great and the evidence too small and fanciful, and their primary aim was to maintain the freedom of their existing trade routes rather than embark on new explorations. By the time they might have felt any incentive to explore further, domestic political changes curtailed their outward growth.

It is unclear whether any of these peoples, constrained as they certainly were by religious, superstitious and domestic political factors, paid visits to Australia. If they did, their knowledge made no impact on the world at large or on the history of Australia. Contacts of that nature are part of our documented history and probably begin with the occurrence of 'Java the Great' in a number of French maps dating from the middle decades of the sixteenth century. Although the significance of 'Java the Great' is hotly debated, so long as the Portuguese are thought to have been possible discoverers of large portions of our continent, one cannot easily dismiss suggestions that the French were here in the sixteenth century also.

The Portuguese and the Spanish

Theories that place the Portuguese here sometime in the sixteenth century have some support from inconclusive charts and documents but the assumptions rest largely on three points: the extensive exploration undertaken by this highly civilised seafaring race elsewhere about the globe; the Portuguese obsession with the quest for wealth, knowledge and conversion; and the certainty that the Portuguese debated the issue of a 'terra australis incognita' (unknown southern land). Yet hard, clinching evidence of contact is lacking.

Viceroy of Spain's American empire regularly sought new lands. One such expedition left Callao, Peru, in December 1605 under Pedro Fernandez de Quiros, a man of the Counter-Reformation who desired that Catholicism should prevail in the southland. De Quiros reached the New Hebrides and named the island group 'Austrialia del Espiritu Santo' and he and some later Catholic historians saw this as the discovery of Australia. But the more important voyage was probably that of the other ship of the expedition that continued after de Quiros himself was forced to return to the Americas. Under Luis Vaez de Torres, this other ship sailed through Torres Strait but almost certainly failed to sight Australia. Although both de Quiros and de Torres returned to Hispanic America with enthusiasm for further explorations, they both failed to persuade Spanish officialdom to this course.

Discoveries by the Dutch

A few weeks before de Torres, the Dutch vessel *Duyfken*, after coming along the south coast of New Guinea from the west, swung over to the west coast of Cape York Peninsula in or about March 1606. Under the command of Willem Jansz, the *Duyfken* traversed some 200 miles of the Australian coastline as far as Cape Keer-Weer (Turn Again) without actually discovering Torres Strait. Subsequent visits were made by other Dutch vessels sailing from the Cape of Good Hope to Java which were often carried too far east and hit Australia. The first and most famous of these was Dirk Hartog's *Eendracht*, from which men landed and left a memorial at Shark Bay, Western Australia

in October 1616. Hartog was followed by Houtman (1619), Carstenz (1623), Nuys (1626–27), Thijssen (1627), Pelsaert (1629), Tasman (1642) and others.

Most important of all was the work of Abel Tasman, who was such a well-respected seaman in the Dutch East Indies that the Governor-General of the Indies, Anthony van Diemen, commissioned him to undertake a southern exploration. In November 1642, having made a great circuit of the seas, Tasman sighted the west coast of what he called Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania). He then explored New Zealand before returning to Batavia. A second expedition in 1644 contributed to the knowledge of Australia's northern coast, and established the name of 'New Holland' for the southern landmass.

Discoveries by the English

The English had made their first appearance on the Australian coast in 1688, when the north-westerly shores were visited by William Dampier in the trading vessel *Cygnat*. In 1699 he again visited Australia in command of HMS *Roebuck*. On his return to England, he published an account in which a description was given of trees, flowers, birds, and reptiles he had observed, and of his encounters with the natives.

Up until the end of the seventeenth century, it was not certain if Tasmania and New Zealand were parts of Australia or whether they were separated from it, yet formed part of a great Antarctic Continent. Lieutenant (later Captain) James Cook's first voyage, though undertaken primarily for the purpose of observing from Tahiti the transit of Venus, had also the objective of ascertaining whether the unexplored part of the southern hemisphere did in fact contain another continent. In command of HMS *Endeavour*, and accompanied by botanist Sir Joseph Banks, naturalist Dr Daniel Solander, astronomer Charles Green, draughtsmen and servants, James Cook, after observing the transit of Venus at Tahiti, turned towards New Zealand, sighting that land on 7 October 1769 in the vicinity of Poverty Bay.

On 20 April 1770, Cook sighted the Australian mainland at a place he called Point Hicks, naming it after his first-lieutenant, who saw it first. Coasting northwards, on 29 April 1770 he landed at Botany Bay. Cook resumed his voyage and sailed along the coast in a northerly direction for nearly 2,100 kilometres, before striking a coral reef in the vicinity of Trinity Bay where the *Endeavour* was seriously damaged. It was nearly two months before repairs were completed and Cook again set a course to the north through Torres Strait.

The Annexation of Australia

On 22 August 1770, Captain Cook took possession 'of the whole eastern coast, from latitude 38°S, to this place, latitude 10½°S, in right of His Majesty King George the Third', that is, over what now constitutes Victoria, the eastern parts of New South Wales and Queensland.

Annexation of the eastern part of the Australian continent and Tasmania

Formal possession, on behalf of the British Crown, of the whole of the eastern part of the Australian continent and Tasmania was taken on 7 February 1788, when Captain Phillip's commission, first issued to him on 12 October 1786 and amplified on 2 April 1787, was read to the people whom he had brought with him in the 'First Fleet'. The commission appointed Phillip

Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief in and over our territory called New South Wales, extending from the Northern Cape or extremity of the coast called Cape York, in the latitude of ten degrees thirty-seven minutes south, to the southern extremity of the said territory of New South Wales or South Cape, in the latitude of forty-three degrees thirty-nine minutes south and of all the country inland, westward as far as the one hundred and thirty-fifth degree of east longitude, reckoning from the meridian of Greenwich, including all the islands

adjacent in the Pacific Ocean within the latitude aforesaid of ten degrees thirty-seven minutes south and forty-three degrees thirty-nine minutes south.

By the middle of 1829, the whole territory, now known as Australia, had been constituted a dependency of the United Kingdom.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF MAJOR EVENTS IN AUSTRALIA SINCE 1788

1788

Arrival of 'First Fleet' at Botany Bay. Land in vicinity found unsuitable and the expedition moved to Sydney Cove on 26 January. Formal proclamation of the colony and the establishment of a regular government on 7 February.

1790

'Second Fleet' arrives with New South Wales Corps.

1791

'Third Fleet' arrives. Territorial seal brought by Governor King.

1792

Visit of the first foreign trading vessel, the *Philadelphia*.

1793

Arrival of the first free immigrants on the *Bellona*. First Australian church opened in Sydney.

1795

First printing press opened in Sydney.

1797

Introduction of merino sheep from the Cape of Good Hope. Coal discovered near Newcastle.

1798

Tasmania is proved to be an island by the voyage of Bass and Flinders.

1800

First Customs House established in Sydney.

1802

Discovery of Port Phillip.

1803

First Australian wool taken to England. Issue of the *Sydney Gazette*, the first Australian newspaper. First settlement at Port Phillip attempted.

1804

Hobart founded. Abandonment of settlement at Port Phillip.

1805

First extensive sheep farm established at Camden by Captain Macarthur.

1807

First shipment of merchantable wool from New South Wales to England.

1809

Free school established in Sydney.

1810

Post Office established in Sydney.

1813

Passage of the Blue Mountains discovered by Wentworth, Lawson and Blaxland.

1814

The name 'Australia', instead of 'New Holland', suggested by Flinders. Civil courts created.

1815

First free settlers arrive in Hobart.

1816

Sydney Hospital opened.

1817

First bank in Australia—Bank of New South Wales—opened in Sydney.

1821

Penal settlement at Macquarie Harbour in Tasmania established.

1823

New South Wales Judicature Act passed.

1824

New South Wales constituted a Crown Colony. Executive Council formed. Supreme Court at Sydney established, and trial by jury introduced. Penal settlement founded at Moreton Bay, Brisbane.

1825

Tasmania proclaimed a separate colony.

1827

First official claim of British sovereignty over all Australia.

1828

Second Constitution of New South Wales and first census.

1829

Foundation of Perth as a settlement on Swan River, Western Australia.

1830

Publication of *Quintus Servinton*, first novel to be published in Australia.

1831

SS Surprise, the first steamship built in Australia, launched at Sydney. First coal ship from Newcastle launched. First assisted immigration to New South Wales.

1835

Foundation of Melbourne.

1836

Foundation of Adelaide. Port Phillip (Victoria) district proclaimed as open for settlement.

1838

Assignment of convicts discontinued. Settlement at Port Essington, Northern Territory.

1840

Transportation of convicts to New South Wales abolished. Moreton Bay (Queensland) opened for free settlement.

1841

New Zealand proclaimed a separate colony from New South Wales.

1842

Incorporation of Sydney and incorporation of Melbourne.

1843

First Representative Constitution of New South Wales.

1847

Overland mail established between Sydney and Adelaide.

1849

Exodus of population to the goldfields of California. Transportation to Western Australia commenced.

1850

Final abolition of transportation to New South Wales. Sydney University founded. Representative government granted to Victoria and Tasmania.

1851

Gold discovered in New South Wales. Port Phillip created an independent colony under the name of Victoria. Legislative Council established in Western Australia.

1852

Arrival of *Chusan*, first P & O mail steamer from England.

1853

Transportation to Tasmania abolished. Melbourne University founded.

1854

Riots on the Ballarat goldfields and the Eureka Stockade stormed. Telegraph first used. First Australian Railway opened in Victoria.

1857

Manhood suffrage and vote by ballot introduced in Victoria.

1858

Manhood suffrage and vote by ballot introduced in New South Wales. Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide linked by telegraph.

Population of Australia reached 1,000,000.

1859

Queensland proclaimed a separate colony.

1860

Burke and Wills expedition leaves Melbourne.

1861

Anti-Chinese riots on goldfields of New South Wales. Regulations introduced on Chinese immigration. Burke and Wills perish at Coopers Creek, South Australia. World's first freezing works built in Sydney, eventually leading to meat exports. First Melbourne Cup held.

1863

Intercolonial Conference in Melbourne.

1864

First sugar made from Queensland cane.

1866

Camels introduced to South Australia.

1867

First Royal visit to Australia. Protective tariff imposed.

1868

Hougomont, the last convict ship arrived in Western Australia.

1870

Intercolonial Exhibition held in Sydney. Imperial troops withdrawn from New South Wales. Intercolonial Congress in Melbourne.

1871

Permanent military forces raised in New South Wales.

1872

Telegraph cable from Java to Port Darwin. Transcontinental telegraph line completed.

1873

Intercolonial Conference at Sydney. Mail service with San Francisco inaugurated.

1874

Intercolonial Conference at Sydney. University of Adelaide founded.

1876

Completion of telegraph cable between Sydney and Wellington, New Zealand.

1877

Population of Australia reached 2,000,000.

1878

Chinese immigration to Queensland restricted. Telephone introduced to Australia.

1880

First telephone exchange opened in Melbourne. Federal Conference at Sydney and Melbourne. Women first admitted to universities.

1881

Censuses taken on same date in all colonies for the first time.

1883

New South Wales and Victoria linked by railway. Federal Conference held at Sydney.

1884

Federation Bill passed in Victoria but rejected in New South Wales. British protectorate declared over New Guinea.

1885

Australian contingent sent to the war in Sudan.

1887

First 'Colonial' Conference held in London.

1888

Railway communication opened between Sydney and Brisbane. World Expo held in Melbourne to commemorate Australia's centenary.

1889

A new Constitution framed in Western Australia. Railway communication opened between Melbourne and Adelaide.

Population of Australia reached 3,000,000.

1890

Western Australia granted responsible government. Australasian Federation Conference at Melbourne. University of Tasmania founded.

1891

First Federal Convention at Sydney, draft Bill framed and adopted. Assisted immigration to New South Wales ceased.

1893

Financial crisis in eastern States.

1894

Women's suffrage granted in South Australia—first Australian State to do so.

1895

Conference of Premiers on Federation at Hobart. Land and income taxes introduced in New South Wales.

1897-98

Sessions of Federal Convention at Adelaide, Sydney and Melbourne.

1898

Draft Federal Constitution Bill rejected by New South Wales.

1899

Australian troops sent to war in South Africa. Conference of Premiers in Melbourne, Federal Constitution Bill amended.

1900

Naval troops sent to war in China. Commonwealth Constitution Act received Royal Assent, 9 July. Proclamation of the Commonwealth signed 17 September. Mr (later Sir) Edmund Barton formed the first Federal Ministry. Old age pension instituted in New South Wales.

1901

Commonwealth proclaimed at Sydney. First Commonwealth Parliament opened at Melbourne. Interstate free-trade established.

1903

The Federal High Court inaugurated.

1904

Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act passed.

1905

Census and Statistics Act. Assisted immigration to New South Wales re-introduced.

Population of Australia reached 4,000,000.

1906

Papua taken over by the Commonwealth of Australia.

1907

First telephone trunk line service between the capital cities. Imperial Conference in London.

1908

Canberra chosen as the site of the Australian Capital.

1909

Imperial Defence Conference in London. Queensland University founded. The Commonwealth Age Pension Scheme introduced.

1910

Penny postage. Australian Notes Act passed and the first Commonwealth notes issued. Arrival of the first vessels built for the Royal Australian Navy, the *Yarra* and the *Parramatta*.

1911

First Commonwealth Census taken. The Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory transferred to the Commonwealth. Compulsory military training introduced.

1912

Commonwealth Bank opened. First payments of Maternity Bonus. University of Western Australia founded.

1913

Canberra officially named as the Australian Capital and the foundation stone laid.

1914

Norfolk Island transferred to the Commonwealth. War declared in Europe on 4 August. Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) formed. Australia's first aerial mail, flown from Melbourne to Sydney.

1915

ANZAC troops landed at Gallipoli, 25 April. Evacuated 18–20 December. Commonwealth Census planned but shelved. Broken Hill Proprietary's ironworks at Newcastle, New South Wales, opened.

1916

Australian and New Zealand mounted troops in Egypt, Palestine and Syria. First proposal for compulsory military service overseas defeated by referendum.

1917

Second referendum on conscription for overseas service defeated. Transcontinental railway completed.

1918

Australian divisions in France blunt the German offensive. Australia House opened in London. Armistice with Germany, 11 November.

Australia's population reached 5,000,000.

1919

Peace Conference. Peace Treaty signed at Versailles, 28 June. Flight from England to Australia by Captain Ross Smith and Lieutenant Keith Smith.

1920

Imperial Statistical Conference in London. Qantas began operations.

1921

Mandate given to Australia over the Territory of New Guinea. Second Commonwealth Census.

1922

Queensland Legislative Council abolished.

1923

First Australian radio broadcast.

1925

Australian population reached 6,000,000.

1926

Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) established.

1927

Seat of Commonwealth Government transferred from Melbourne to Canberra.

1929

Peace-time compulsory military training abolished in favour of a voluntary system.

1930

World-wide economic depression reached Australia. First Australian appointed Governor-General of Australia (Rt Hon. Sir Isaac Alfred Isaacs, GCMG, Chief Justice of the High Court).

1932

Sydney Harbour Bridge opened. The Australian Broadcasting Commission established. Imperial Economic Conference held in Ottawa.

1933

World Economic Conference held in London. Antarctica and Ashmore and Cartier islands taken over by the Commonwealth. Third Commonwealth Census.

1934

England–Australia Air Mail Service inaugurated.

1935

Empire Statistical Conference at Ottawa.

1936

Tasmania linked with the mainland by submarine telephone cable.

1937

Imperial Conference in London.

1938

New trade treaty with Japan.

1939

War declared on Germany, 3 September. Australian troops embarked for the Middle East, 15 December.

Australia's population reached 7,000,000.

1940

Exchange of Ministers between Australia and the United States marked Australia's entry into the field of direct diplomatic representation with countries other than the United Kingdom. First Australian convoy sailed for Middle East.

1941

Australian Eighth Division arrived in Malaya. Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour, Malaya, Thailand, Hong Kong and the Philippines. Australia declared war on Japan, 9 December. Establishment of Child Endowment scheme.

1942

General Douglas MacArthur set up headquarters of South West Pacific Command in Melbourne. Battle of the Coral Sea. Federal uniform taxation adopted. Commonwealth widows' pension introduced.

1944

Referendum refused Commonwealth Government increased power in the post-war period.

1945

Australia ratified the United Nations Charter. War in Europe ceased, 8 May. War in Pacific ceased, 15 August. Banking Act introduced to regulate banking and to protect the currency and public credit.

1946

The Commonwealth Employment Service inaugurated. Trans Australian Airlines began operations. Constitution Alteration Referendum granted powers with regard to social services to the Commonwealth Government.

1947

End of demobilisation. Census of Australia held.

1948

Forty-hour week effective throughout Australia. First Holden motor car produced.

1949

Nationality and Citizenship Act operative. Certain Aboriginals granted franchise at Federal elections for the first time. Coal miners strike over hours, wages and leave claims. Australian Whaling Commission established. The Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Power Scheme commenced.

Australia's population reached 8,000,000.

1950

Severe floods in New South Wales. Australian forces joined the British Commonwealth Brigade in the Korean War. Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in London.

1951

Jubilee celebrations marked the fiftieth year of Australian Federation. Heard Island and the McDonald Islands transferred to the Commonwealth. Hostilities with Germany officially ceased. Japanese Peace Treaty signed. Third Conference of Government Statisticians of the British Commonwealth held in Canberra.

1952

Widespread bushfires in Victoria, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. Third British Commonwealth Scientific Official Conference held in Canberra and Melbourne. Uranium deposits discovered at Rum Jungle, Northern Territory. British detonate atomic weapon on Monte Bello Islands off the north-west coast. British Commonwealth Economic Conference in London.

1953

Television Act authorised the establishment of both Government and Commercial television stations. Northern Territory Aboriginals given citizenship rights. Atomic Energy Commission established. Korean armistice signed.

1954

Australian Census taken. Transfer of Cocos Islands to the Commonwealth proposed. Queen Elizabeth II became the first reigning monarch to visit Australia.

1955

Food and Agriculture Organization Conference held in Brisbane. Australian troops sent to Malaya. Cocos (Keeling) Islands became a Commonwealth Territory. First power generated by the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Authority.

Australian population reached 9,000,000.

1956

Olympic Games held in Melbourne. Bilateral agreement signed between Australia and the United States for peaceful uses of atomic energy. Regular television transmissions commenced.

1958

Lucas Heights nuclear reactor opened near Sydney. Christmas Island transferred to Commonwealth administration.

1959

Population of Australia reached 10,000,000.

1960

Provision made for Social Service benefits to be paid to Australian Aborigines.

1961

Oil is discovered in south-west Queensland. Iron-ore deposits estimated at 1,800 million tons discovered at Pilbara, Western Australia. Population Census taken.

1962

Commonwealth and Western Australian Electoral Acts amended to provide for votes for Aborigines. Aborigines exercise voting rights in the Northern Territory for first time.

1963

Australia signed Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

Australian population reached 11,000,000.

1964

RAN Destroyer *Voyager* sunk in collision. Army send advisers to Vietnam.

1965

Royal Australian Mint opened. Australian troops go to war in Vietnam. First trade agreement between Australia and the USSR. Economic sanctions imposed on Rhodesia.

1966

Australia adopted decimal currency. Census of population held. Permanent employment of married women by Australian Government proclaimed.

1967

Worst bushfires in the history of Tasmania damaged Hobart and southern Tasmania. New white ensign adopted by the RAN. Australia launched its first satellite at Woomera.

1968

Australian population reached 12,000,000.

1969

The Arbitration Commission handed down its decision on equal pay for women. Bass Strait under-sea oil piped to shore for the first time.

1970

Australia signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Coal miners in three States are awarded a 35 hour working week. Voting age reduced to 18 in Western Australia.

1971

Australia joined the OECD. Population Census held. Australian troops withdrew from Vietnam. Daylight saving adopted in New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory.

Australian population reached 13,000,000.

1972.

Female employees received full entitlement to equal pay. Celsius adopted in lieu of the Fahrenheit thermal measure. Australian Labor Party won Federal election for first time in 23 years. Australia established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China and the German Democratic Republic.

1973

Papua New Guinea attained self-government. All tariffs cut by 25 per cent. First meeting of the Aboriginal Consultative Committee.

1974

Major floods and storms caused damage in the eastern States. Cyclone Tracey hits Darwin. Plans announced for maximum security laboratory to protect livestock against exotic diseases. Colour television introduced.

1975

Medibank introduced. Federal Parliament dissolved and the Australian Labor Party defeated at a general election on 13 December. Papua New Guinea ceased to be an Australian territory and became an independent nation. Australia Council created.

1976

Census of Australia held. Australian Savings Bonds introduced.

Australian population reached 14,000,000.

1977

Aboriginal Land Rights Act passed. Granville rail disaster claimed 80 lives.

1978

Northern Territory gained self-government. Federal Government recognised the absorption of Timor into Indonesia. 'Boat people', refugees from Indo-China arrived in large numbers.

1979

Series of serious strikes in opposition to Fraser Government's economic policies. Severe bushfires threatened Sydney. Tasmanian Hydro-Electric Commission released a report recommending a massive power development scheme in south-west Tasmania, sparking the commencement of the controversial 'Save the Franklin' campaign.

1980

Whale Protection Act passed. Multicultural television broadcasting commenced. Drought takes hold across Australia. Fraser Government returned to office.

1981

Census of Australia held. (Campbell) Committee of Inquiry into the Australian Financial System recommended deregulation.

Australian population reached 15,000,000.

1982

Australian economy depressed. Severe drought in the eastern States. Australian National Gallery opened in Canberra. Commonwealth Games held in Brisbane. Freedom of Information Act became operative.

1983

General election held, resulting in an Australian Labor Party victory. Australia won the Americas Cup. Severe bushfires in Victoria and South Australia. Medicare introduced. Prices Surveillance Authority created. Cocos (Keeling) Islanders voted to integrate with Australia. Royal Commission into British Nuclear Tests in Australia established.

1984

Nuclear Disarmament Party (NDP) formed. Hawke Government returned to office. Referenda on State-Commonwealth transfer of powers and the simultaneous election of the House of Representatives and the Senate rejected. Parliament increased in size: House of Representatives from 125 to 148 and Senate from 64 to 76. World's first frozen embryo baby born in Melbourne.

1985

Ban placed on uranium exports to France. Substantial deregulation of the banking system. Economic summit on tax reform. Split in the Nuclear Disarmament Party. Report of the Royal Commission into British Nuclear Tests in Australia tabled in Parliament.

1986

Constitutional severance from the United Kingdom. Car bomb exploded at Turkish Consulate in Melbourne. Census held. Sighting of Halley's Comet. Twelve miners died in a mine cave-in at Moura, Queensland. Bomb exploded at Melbourne Police Headquarters. Pope visited Australia. Aussat launched.

Australia's population reached 16,000,000.

1987

Hawke Government returned to power in July general election. Australia lost Americas Cup. Prime Minister Hawke announced plans to streamline government administration.

1988

Bicentennial Year. Celebrations included the re-enactment of the First Fleet's voyage and the staging of Expo 88 in Brisbane. Referendum held on four Constitutional amendments soundly defeated.

Sources: Keesing's Contemporary Archives: Record of World Events. The Annual Register: A Record of World Events. Year Book Australia. Acts of the Parliament of the Commonwealth.

The Exploration of Australia

Early exploration

From 1788, when Governor Phillip established his colony on the shores of Port Jackson, expeditions began to explore the immediate area of settlement in search of good farming land. Among suitable locations discovered were those just above the head of the Parramatta River, where the settlement of Rose Hill (later Parramatta) was established in November 1788, and the alluvial flats of the Hawkesbury River, which were explored in 1789.

Other minor exploratory journeys in the 1790s and early 1800s included: John Wilson's investigation of various parts of the Southern Highlands of New South Wales, Lieutenant John Shortland's discovery of the Hunter River and the future site of Newcastle, and expeditions by Henry Hacking (1794), George Bass (1796), Francis Barrallier (1802) and George Caley (1804) in attempts to penetrate the mountain foothills west of the Nepean River.

After two decades of colonisation, settlement stretched along the east coast from the Hawkesbury River to the cedar forests of Illawarra yet reached barely 65 kilometres inland, where a seemingly impenetrable barrier was presented in the form of the Blue Mountains.

In 1813 Gregory Blaxland, Lieutenant William Lawson and William Charles Wentworth succeeded in finding a route through the mountain range, thereby allowing the later exploratory parties of George William Evans (1813 and 1815), John Oxley (1817 and 1818), Allan Cunningham (1823 and 1827), Hamilton Hume and William Hovell (1824) and others, to open the way for expansion from Port Phillip in the south, to the Darling Downs in the north.

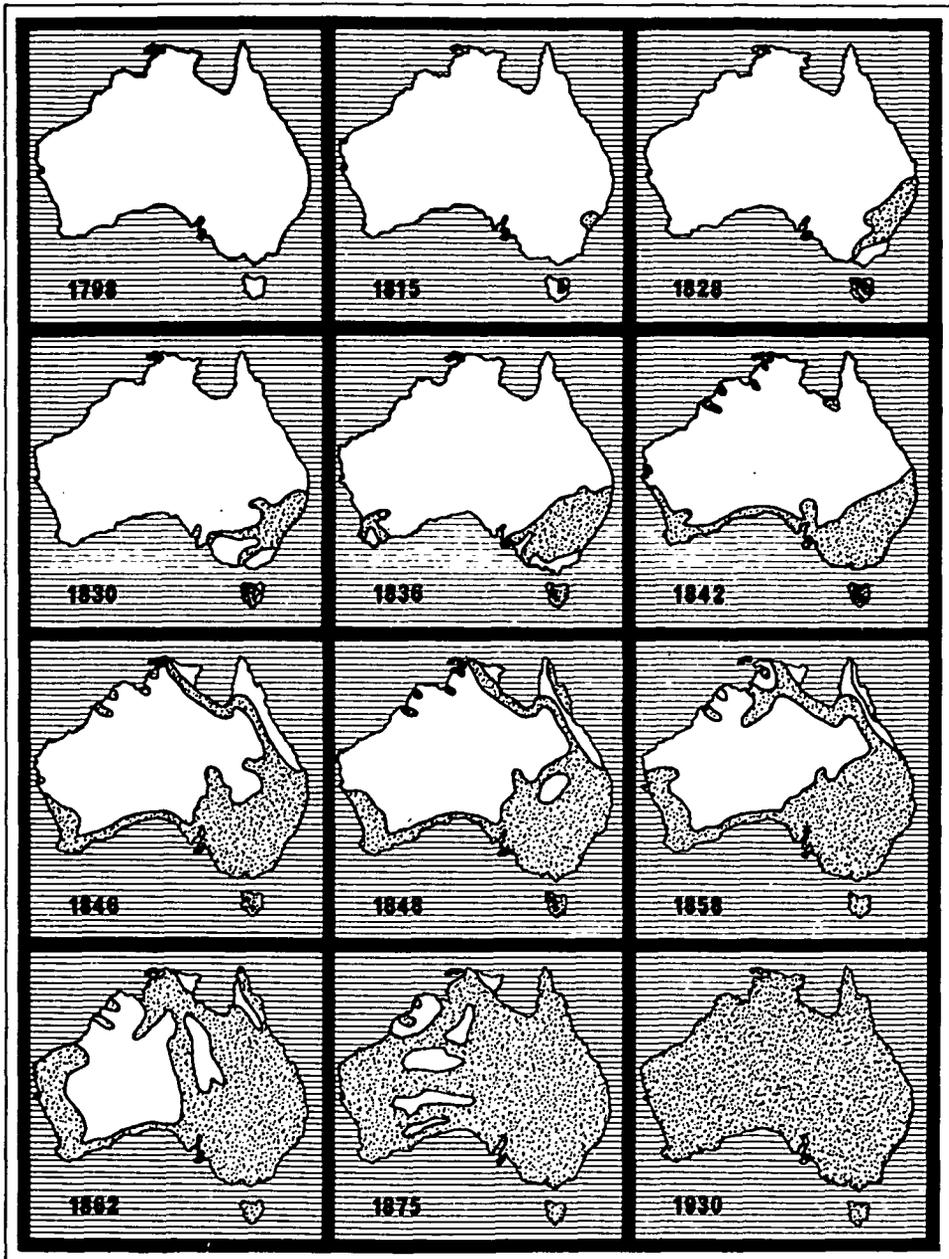
The eastern rivers and to the south

From 1828 to 1841, exploration of south-eastern Australia was concerned mainly with establishing whether or not a large river system emptying into the sea on the south coast existed.

Between December 1828 and February 1829, an expedition led by Charles Sturt followed the Macquarie River to its meeting with the Darling River. Sturt also explored part of the Castlereagh River. On his next expedition, in 1830, Sturt pieced together more of the network of waterways which make up the Murray-Darling system by following the Murrumbidgee River from Jugiong down to the junction with the Murray, which he then followed as far as Lake Alexandrina and Encounter Bay on the southern coastline. Sturt completed his exploration of the Murray in 1838 by investigating and charting its upper reaches.

Meanwhile, Captain John Macarthur and others had discovered that merino sheep were naturally suited to the dry climate of inland Australia. The colony's wool industry flourished, and by 1831, 1,340 tonnes of fine wool was being exported annually. As a result of the wool boom, settlers became anxious to push further inland in the search for new pastures.

In three expeditions between 1831 and 1836, Thomas Livingstone Mitchell explored the Liverpool Plains and discovered the Macintyre River; discovered well-grassed country at the junction of the Darling and Bogan rivers; explored the Lachlan River to its meeting with the Murrumbidgee River, the Murray with its meeting with the Darling River, and



south and south-east of the Murray through the region called 'Australia Felix' to Discovery Bay on the southern coast.

The push south continued and, in 1838, Angus McMillan discovered a practicable route from Monaro to the southern coastline. In 1840, Paul Edmund de Strzelecki made a journey from the Murrumbidgee River, south to Melbourne, during which he discovered and named Mount Kosciusko.

The south

In 1831 Captain Collet Barker landed at what was to become Port Adelaide. Later, cattle-droving journeys undertaken by Joseph Hawdon, Charles Bonney, Charles Sturt and E.J. Eyre, established links between the settlement of Adelaide and other settlements in the east of the State.

In August 1844 Charles Sturt led a sixteen-man expedition from Adelaide into the interior with instructions to investigate a theory that an inland sea existed. After much hardship and near disaster during a period of exceptional heat in the region, Sturt found the channels of Cooper's Creek which formed part of the inland river system of Queensland. However, with the waters drying up rapidly in November 1845, heat and his health deteriorating, Sturt was forced to retreat, mistakenly declaring the land to be worthless.

North-eastern Australia

In 1844 Ludwig Leichhardt left Jimbour Station on the Darling Downs, to lead an expedition on an epic fourteen and a half month, 4,800 kilometre journey north and north-west to Port Essington, thereby winning a reputation for opening up large tracts of rich grazing land. In 1848 however, while on another expedition, he and his party disappeared without trace when attempting to cross the continent westwards to Perth. Ironically, much valuable incidental exploration was carried out when search parties attempted to find them.

Meanwhile, Thomas Mitchell's fourth expedition in 1846 had failed in its objective to find a river which flowed to the northern coast, but did lead to the opening up of good pastoral country in the Maranoa and Barcoo Rivers regions.

In 1848 E.B. Kennedy was speared to death by local Aboriginals while exploring the interior of Cape York Peninsula from Rockingham Bay to the Cape.

In the mid to late 1850s, Angus C. Gregory led two expeditions: one, in 1855 across northern Australia in a west-east direction from the mouth of the Victoria River to the east coast at Port Curtis; and the other, in 1858, from the Barcoo River south to Adelaide.

Exploration of what was by then the new colony of Queensland was continued through the 1860s and 1870s by George Dalrymple, Ernest Henry, the Macdonald brothers, William Hann, James Venture Mulligan, R.L. Jack and others. These led to the founding of such towns as Bowen, Rockhampton and Mackay, and the opening up of much valuable farming land.

Across the continent south to north

In the late 1850s and early 1860s most exploratory interest was concentrated on Central Australia, especially after John McDougall Stuart raised a Union Jack on what he considered to be the geographic centre of the continent, Central Mount Stuart, in April 1860. The South Australian Government had previously offered a large reward to the first explorer to cross Australia from south to north.

In August 1860 Robert O'Hara Burke and W.J. Wills set out from Melbourne with a large party to take up the challenge. On 11 February 1861, four expedition members (Burke, Wills, John King and Charles Gray) reached a mangrove swamp on what appeared to be the coast at the Gulf of Carpentaria (though they could not see the sea). After a

succession of sorry incidents, however, Burke, Wills and Gray all died of exposure and starvation while on their return journey.

As in the case of Leichhardt, search parties sent out after Burke and Wills discovered much valuable land in their own right; John McKinlay led an expedition from Adelaide to the north-east; William Landsborough from the Gulf of Carpentaria southward; and Frederick Walker from Rockhampton to the west.

Meanwhile, John McDougall Stuart had set out from Adelaide on his own expedition across Australia and, in July 1862, reached the sea at Van Diemen Gulf.

The west

As early as 1697, Willem de Vlamingh of the Dutch ship *Geelvinck*, carried out limited inland exploration on the west coast of Australia in the vicinity of the Swan River. However, the first major inland exploration in the colony of Western Australia took place 130 years later when, in 1827, Edmund Lockyer explored the watershed of the Kalgan River to within about 60 kilometres of its mouth.

In the 1830s exploration and settlement were directed mainly to the south of the city of Perth (founded in 1829). Among the explorers during this decade were: Ensign Robert Dale, who found the rich agricultural land of the Avon Valley (1830); Lieutenant H.W. Bunbury, who opened the way to rich pastoral flats in the south-west (1836); and Captain George Grey, who discovered the rich hinterland that now serves Geraldton (1839).

In 1848 J.S. Roe, who had also conducted several exploratory journeys in the 1830s, discovered good grazing country while on a 2,900 kilometre York–Pallinup River, Russell Range–Bunbury–Perth trek.

During the 1850s and 1860s the south-west was extensively occupied as far south as Albany and Kojonup, while to the north the Greenough district rapidly developed into the principal wheat-producing region of the State.

Due largely to the efforts of Grey in the 1830s, the Gregory brothers in the 1840s, 1850s and 1860s, and the Forrest brothers in the 1860s and 1870s, pastoralists were able to gradually push further north and occupy the Murchison, Gascoyne and De Grey districts. By the 1880s, again due largely to exploration by the Forrest brothers, the Kimberley region was also settled.

The hinterland

In 1875 Ernest Giles set out from Beltana, South Australia, and made a 4,000 kilometre journey to Perth. Two years earlier, two other parties, led by Peter Egerton Warburton and W.C. Gosse, had explored west from the MacDonnell Ranges to the Oakover River, and from Alice Springs to Perth respectively.

Exploration of the hinterland was continued by W.P. Goddard (1890), J.H. Rowe (1895), A.W. Canning and others into the early twentieth century.

Tasmania

In 1793 Lieutenant John Hayes, commander of the *Duke of Clarence* expedition, sailed up the Derwent River to the foot of Mount Direction from where he proceeded by boat up to the present site of New Norfolk. He became the first explorer to journey more than a few kilometres inland from the coast of Van Diemen's Land (by which name Tasmania was known until 1856). Then, as always, the island's rugged topography hindered any extensive exploration, and it was not until 1807 that Lieutenant Thomas Laycock crossed the island from Port Dalrymple to Hobart.

Much early exploration was carried out either with the encouragement of Lieutenant-Governor William Sorell (including expeditions aimed primarily at discovering the nature of the west coast and determining its suitability for a future penal settlement),

or under the auspices of the Van Diemen's Land Company which fostered efforts to find land suitable for agricultural settlement.

Some of the most noteworthy of Tasmania's early explorers were official surveyors, including John Oxley, G.W. Evans and Thomas Scott who, between 1820 and 1837 examined parts of the east, north-west and west coasts and, no doubt, influenced decisions to establish the infamous penal settlements at Macquarie Harbour (in 1822) and Port Arthur (in 1830).

Between 1820 and 1840, a considerable amount of incidental exploration resulted, both from expeditions to round up the remaining Tasmanian Aborigines following the declaration of martial law against them in 1828, and from the personal encouragement by Lieutenant-Governor Sir John Franklin of scientific expeditions to Tasmania in the late 1830s and early 1840s.

During 1840 and 1850, licensed surveyor N.L. Kentish was responsible for opening up the rich pastoral areas between the north-west coast and the high mountains, while Assistant-Surveyor James Scott explored much of the north-east.

The 1860s and 1870s were marked by a number of exploratory journeys in search of minerals, including those of Charles Gould (1862), who found traces of silver, lead and gold in the Franklin and Gordon Valleys; James Smith (1871), who discovered tin at Mount Bischoff, destined to become the richest mine of its kind in the world; and C.P. Sprent (1876-77), who found gold, copper, osmiridium and platinum while prospecting between the Arthur and Pieman Rivers.

The Federal Movement in Australia

Due to the size of the Australian continent and the circumstances surrounding the establishment of the various settlements, the initial tendency was toward individual evolution of the separate colonies. However, it was not long before the importance of intercolonial relationships was clearly recognised.

Governor Fitzroy, in 1846, and Earl Grey, in 1847, saw that there were questions which affected 'Australia collectively, the regulation of which in some uniform manner, and by some single authority, may be essential to the welfare of them all', and a 'central legislative authority for the whole of the Australian colonies' was actually contemplated. Even as far back as 1849, a Privy Council Committee recommended a uniform tariff, and the constituting of one of the Governors as Governor-General of Australia, Sir Charles Fitzroy being actually appointed as 'Governor-General of all her Majesty's Australian Possessions'. The office, however, was nominal rather than actual, and expired in 1861. Dr Lang's idea of 'a great federation of all the colonies of Australia' was put forward in 1852, and a Victorian committee in 1853 advocated the value of a General Assembly of Delegates for the whole of Australia.

The need of union was urged by the *Sydney Morning Herald* in 1854, and although Wentworth sought in 1857 to bring about the creation of a Federal Assembly, a draft 'Enabling Bill' proved unacceptable to Her Majesty's Government. In the same year Mr (afterwards Sir) Charles Gavan Duffy secured the appointment of a select committee of the Victorian Legislative Assembly to consider the necessity of a federal union of the Australasian colonies. The need for such a union was unanimously affirmed, the general opinion being that it should not be longer delayed. In the same year, a select committee of the New South Wales Legislative Council also considered this question, fully recognizing that antagonisms and jealousies were likely to arise through delay.

Union was a fair way towards realisation when the advent of the Cowper Administration destroyed all chance of attaining it, owing to the antagonism of Mr Cowper and Mr (afterwards Sir) James Martin. South Australia, also in the same year, and Queensland in

1859, were both unfavourable to the federal scheme. A second attempt by Mr Duffy to bring about a conference in 1860 failed also.

Tariff differences, however, compelled political attention to the matter, and in 1862 correspondence was opened up by South Australia regarding tariff uniformity. By means of Intercolonial Conferences between 1863 and 1880 some degree of uniformity in legislation and a measure of concerted administration were realised. In March 1867, Mr (afterwards Sir) Henry Parkes expressed himself as follows:

... The time has arrived when these colonies should be united by some federal bond . . . There are questions projecting themselves . . . which cannot be dealt with by . . . individual Governments . . . I believe it will lead to a permanent federal understanding.

The Federal Council

The conference of November–December 1880 and January 1881 recommended the creation of a federal council, believing that the time had not arrived for a federal constitution with a federal parliament. Until 1883, however, every effort proved abortive. In November of that year, a convention, at which the seven colonies and Fiji were represented, met in Sydney. A Bill to establish the Federal Council for Australasia, drafted by Mr (later Sir) Samuel Griffith was, after some modification by a committee of the convention, adopted. In July and August 1884, the Crown was addressed, requesting the enactment of a Federal Council Act. New South Wales and New Zealand, however, endorsed the view of Sir Henry Parkes that a ‘Council’ would impede the way for a sure and solid federation. The Bill, introduced by the Earl of Derby in the House of Lords on 23 April 1885, became law on 14 August as *The Federal Council of Australasia Act 1885*. The Council’s career, however, soon showed that it could not hope to be effective and it met for the last time in January 1899.

Formative stages of the federal movement

As early as 1878, the necessity for federal defence was vividly brought into Australian consciousness, and arrangements for naval protection were entered into with the Imperial Government. These were ratified by the Australasian Naval Force Act. Queensland however, did not come into line until 1891.

Early in 1889, Sir Henry Parkes had suggested to Mr Duncan Gillies the necessity for a federal parliament and executive. Unable to accept the latter’s suggestion that New South Wales should give its adhesion to the Federal Council, the former Statesman urged the institution of ‘a National Convention for the purpose of devising and reporting upon an adequate scheme of Federal Government’. This led to the Melbourne Conference of 6 February 1890. It was at the banquet of this occasion that, in proposing ‘A United Australasia’, Mr James Service pointed out that the tariff question was ‘a lion in the path’, which federationists must either slay or by which they must be slain. In the reply Sir Henry Parkes made use of his historic phrase, ‘the crimson thread of kinship runs through us all’. Certain elements of doubt being expressed as to the motives underlying the movement, Sir Henry Parkes said:

We desire to enter upon this work of Federation without making any condition to the advantage of ourselves, without any stipulation whatever, with a perfect preparedness to leave the proposed convention free to devise its own scheme, and, if a central Parliament comes into existence, with a perfect reliance upon its justice, upon its wisdom, and upon its honour . . . I think an overwhelming majority of my countrymen . . . will approve of the grand step . . . uniting all the colonies under one form of beneficent government, and under one national flag.

The first National Australasian Convention, under Sir Henry Parkes’ presidency, was convened on 2 March 1891, all the Australian colonies and New Zealand being represented. The Bill then drafted was considered by the Parliaments of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania, but not by those of Queensland, Western Australia

and New Zealand, and though the parliamentary process of dealing with the matter failed, federal sentiment was strengthening. The collapse of the 'land boom' had made apparent how intimately the interests of the several colonies were related, and the dangers of disunion became impressively obvious. The Australian Natives' Association took up the federal cause with enthusiasm, Federation leagues were established, the issues were widely and intelligently discussed. The unification scheme of Sir George Dibbs helped to make the issue a real one.

At the Conference of Premiers at Hobart on 29 January 1895, it was agreed that Federation 'was the great and pressing question of Australian politics', and that 'the framing of a Federal Constitution' was an urgent duty. The resuscitation of the whole matter led to the passing of Enabling Acts. In New South Wales, the Act received the Royal assent on 23 December 1895; South Australia anticipated this by three days; the Tasmanian Bill was passed on 10 January 1896; the Victorian on 7 March 1896 and Western Australia fell into line on 27 October 1896. The 'People's Federal Convention' held at Bathurst, New South Wales, in November 1896, gave a considerable impulse to the movement; to wait longer for Queensland was considered unnecessary, and 4 March 1897 was fixed as the date for the election of federal representatives for New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. Western Australia followed suit, and on 22 March the representatives met at Adelaide.

The discussions made it evident that the federal point of view had advanced considerably. Constitutional, Finance, and Judiciary Committees were appointed, and a Bill was drafted. This, reported to the Convention on 22 April, was adopted on the following day, and the Convention adjourned until September. The Parliaments of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia discussed the question before the Sydney Session of the Convention, which opened on 2 September 1897. The business of the Convention involved the general reconsideration of the whole Bill, and the consideration of no less than 286 suggested amendments. This work gave a definite character to that of the Melbourne Session of 1898, extending from 20 January to 17 March, the necessity for reaching a final decision giving weight to its deliberations.

Votes on the question of Federation

Eleven weeks after this last convention the first popular vote was taken on Federation in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. Though the decision was overwhelmingly in favour of Federation in three of the States, and there was a distinct majority in its favour in New South Wales, the majority was legally insufficient. On 22 January 1899, the Premiers of the six colonies met at Melbourne in a conference initiated by the Right Honourable G.H. Reid, PC, and seven amendments were made to the Bill. This step virtually effected the solution of the few outstanding difficulties which could in any way be regarded as fundamental.

On the occasion of the second popular vote, Queensland also joined in. The general majority in favour of Federation was more than doubled, that for New South Wales itself having been more than quadrupled when compared with the first vote. The following table shows the two results.

VOTES FOR AND AGAINST FEDERATION

Votes		NSW	Vic.	SA	Tas.	Qld	Total
1st Vote	For Federation	71,595	100,520	35,800	11,797	—	219,712
	Against	66,228	22,099	17,320	2,716	—	108,363
	Majority	5,367	78,421	18,480	9,081	—	111,349
2nd Vote	For Federation	107,420	152,653	65,990	13,437	38,488	377,988
	Against	82,741	9,805	17,053	791	30,996	141,386
	Majority	24,679	142,848	48,937	12,646	7,492	236,602

Enactment of the Constitution

The Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Right Honourable Joseph Chamberlain), on 22 December 1899 expressed the hope that a delegation of the federating colonies would visit England on the occasion of the submission of the Commonwealth Bill to the Imperial Parliament. The delegation consisted of Mr (later Sir) Edmund Barton (NSW), Mr Alfred Deakin (Vic.), Mr C.C. Kingston (SA), Sir P.O. Fysh (Tas.), and later Mr S.H. Parker was appointed delegate for Western Australia, and Mr W.P. Reeves for New Zealand. After discussion as to whether there should be some modification in the Bill, it was introduced into the House of Commons on 14 May; the second reading was moved on 21 May; the discussion in committee commenced on 18 June; and the Royal assent was given on 9 July 1900.

On 31 July a referendum in Western Australia on the question of federating gave the result: For, 44,800; against, 19,691; that is a majority of 25,109 in favour of union. On 21 August both Houses of Parliament in that State passed addresses praying that it might be included as an original State of the Commonwealth.

On 17 September 1900, Her Majesty Queen Victoria signed the proclamation declaring that on and after the first day of January 1901, the people of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, Tasmania and Western Australia should be united in a federal Commonwealth, under the name of the Commonwealth of Australia.

More detail on the federal movement can be found in *Year Book* No. 1.

The Establishment of the Commonwealth of Australia

On 1 January 1901, the designation of 'Colonies'—except in the case of the Northern Territory, to which the designation 'Territory' applied—was changed to that of 'States'.

Transfer of the Northern Territory to the Commonwealth

On 7 December 1907, the Commonwealth and the State of South Australia entered into an agreement for the transfer of the Northern Territory to the Commonwealth, subject to approval by the Parliaments of the Commonwealth and the State. This approval was given by the South Australian Parliament under the *Northern Territory Surrender Act 1907* and by the Commonwealth Parliament under the *Northern Territory Acceptance Act 1910*. The Territory was formally transferred to the Commonwealth on 1 January 1911, and became the Northern Territory of Australia.

Transfer of the Australian Capital Territory to the Commonwealth

On 18 October 1909, the Commonwealth and the State of New South Wales entered into an agreement for the surrender to and acceptance by the Commonwealth of an area of 2,359 square kilometres as the Seat of Government of the Commonwealth. In December 1909, Acts were passed by the Commonwealth and New South Wales Parliaments approving the agreement, and on 5 December 1910 a proclamation was issued vesting the Territory in the Commonwealth on and from 1 January 1911.

By the *Jervis Bay Territory Acceptance Act 1915*, an area of 73 square kilometres at Jervis Bay, surrendered by New South Wales according to an agreement made in 1913, was also accepted by the Commonwealth and was transferred as from 4 September 1915.

Composition of Australia

In 1973, the total area of Australia and of the individual States and Territories was determined by the Division of National Mapping as 7,682,300 square kilometres. Some historical dates and the present areas of the several States and Territories and of Australia are shown in the following table.

AUSTRALIA: COMPONENT STATES AND TERRITORIES

<i>State or Territory</i>	<i>Year of annexation</i>	<i>Year of permanent settlement</i>	<i>Year of formation into separate colony or Territory</i>	<i>Year in which responsible government was granted</i>	<i>Present area in km²</i>
New South Wales	1770	1788	1786	1855	801,600
Victoria	1770	1834	1851	1855	227,600
Queensland	1770	1824	1859	(a)1859	1,727,200
South Australia	1788	1836	1834	1856	984,000
Western Australia	1829	1829	1829	1890	2,525,000
Tasmania	1788	1803	1825	1855	67,800
Northern Territory	..	..	(b)1863	..	1,346,200
Australian Capital Territory	..	..	(c)1911	..	2,400
Australia	..	..	..	(d)	7,682,300

(a) As Part of New South Wales in 1855; as a separate colony in 1859. (b) Previously part of New South Wales; brought under the jurisdiction of South Australia in 1863; transferred to the Commonwealth in 1911. (c) Previously part of New South Wales. (d) Constituted as from 1 January 1901.