

EXPLORER



JAMES COOK



**HERITAGE
EXPLORER
SERIES**

EXPLORER CAPTAIN JAMES COOK

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INTRODUCTION

Name: Captain James Cook
Born: 7 November 1728
Married: 1762 (Elizabeth Bates)
Died: 14 February 1779
Known for: British Explorer

James Cook was a British navigator, cartographer, scientist and Captain of the British Research Vessel the *HMS Endeavour*, and made the first recorded European contact with the eastern coast of Australia on 19 April 1770.



**Captain
James
Cook**

The British Navy Research Vessel - H.M.S. Endeavour was also known as the HM Bark Endeavour. Captain James Cook captained this vessel during his first voyage of discovery to Australia and New Zealand from 1769 to 1771.

Painter: Samuel Atkins (c.1760-1810)

Titled: HMS Endeavour off the coast of New Holland



James Cook was born on 7 November 1728 in Marton, Yorkshire, England, to parents James Cook and Grace Pace. He was the second of eight children. In 1736 he attended a small school in the village of Great Ayton, 12 km east of Middlesbrough which was paid for by his father's employer. Five years later in 1741 he began working for his father who was by this time a farm manager.



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

INTRODUCTION

In 1745, when Cook was 16 years of age, he moved to the seaside fishing village of Staithes to work as an apprentice to a grocer. It is possible that this is where he first fell in love with the ocean, something he had seen little of up until that time. In 1747, he moved to Whitby and was introduced to ship owners and coal traders John and Henry Walker. He was subsequently hired as an apprentice in the Merchant Navy and worked with a small group of ships shipping coal along the English coast.

After finishing his three year apprenticeship, he commenced work in ship trading on the Baltic Sea. After passing his exams, he quickly moved up the ranks of the Merchant Navy, obtaining the position of Captain on board the collier brig (two masted ship designed for transporting coal) *Friendship* before volunteering for the Royal Navy. He was officially accepted into the Royal Navy at Wapping in 1755.

Cook spent much time at sea having begun as Master's Mate on board the *HMS Eagle*. He was quickly promoted to Boatswain and then took and passed the Master's examination in 1757. As Master on *HMS Penbroke* during a voyage across the Atlantic Ocean, in record time to Nova Scotia, 29 men died from scurvy, a disease caused by a lack of vitamin C. This incident had a profound and lasting impact on Cook which influenced his future care for the welfare of his crews. He was subsequently given the position of Master on the *HMS Solebay* under Captain Robert Craig.

During the Seven Years' War, he successfully fulfilled his duties and partook in numerous successful endeavours. It was during this period that his skill for cartography and surveying became evident.

He followed on in the 1760s by surveying and mapping the coast of Newfoundland. In 1764 he mapped the coast between Burin Peninsula and Cape Ray. In 1765 and 1766 he mapped the West Coast of Newfoundland. It was around this time that he wrote that he intended 'to go farther than any man has been before me, but as far as I think it is possible for a man to go.'

First Voyage of Discovery (*HMS Endeavour*)

In 1766 Cook was engaged by the Royal Society to observe and record the transit of



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

INTRODUCTION

Venus in the Pacific Ocean. Prior to leaving he was promoted to Lieutenant and Commander of the expedition. He sailed on 26 August 1768, later opened his sealed orders from the Admiralty which held further instructions once his first commitment was complete, and fulfilled his initial obligations by 13 April 1769.

Cook's further orders were to search the South Pacific for signs of the postulated rich Southern Continent of '*Terra Australis*'. Cook first sailed to New Zealand where he mapped the complete coastline before sailing west and reaching the Southern Coast of Australia on 19 April 1770. In doing so, he had become the first European to record an encounter with the eastern coastline of the Continent of Australia.

Second in command aboard *HMS Endeavour* - Lieutenant Zachary Hickes (1739-1771) was on morning watch on 20 April 1770 and first saw land. This location on the Victorian Coast was named Point Hicks by Cook, who incorrectly spelt his name Hicks in his diaries. Hickes died of Consumption (Tuberculosis) on 21 May 1771 during their return trip to England.

Debate today questions the location of the first land sighting, with some preferring to believe that the land sighted was actually a bank of cloud and not land at all, and the first land sighting was more likely to be Cape Everand.

Sir Joseph Banks sailed with Cook on this voyage as an independent Naturalist. They remained friends and Banks was later interested and actively involved in all Pacific Ocean Exploration and early Australian Colonial Life. After completing his first Voyage of Discovery, Cook returned to England a hero, published his journals, was promoted to Commander (August 1771) and reconnected with family life.



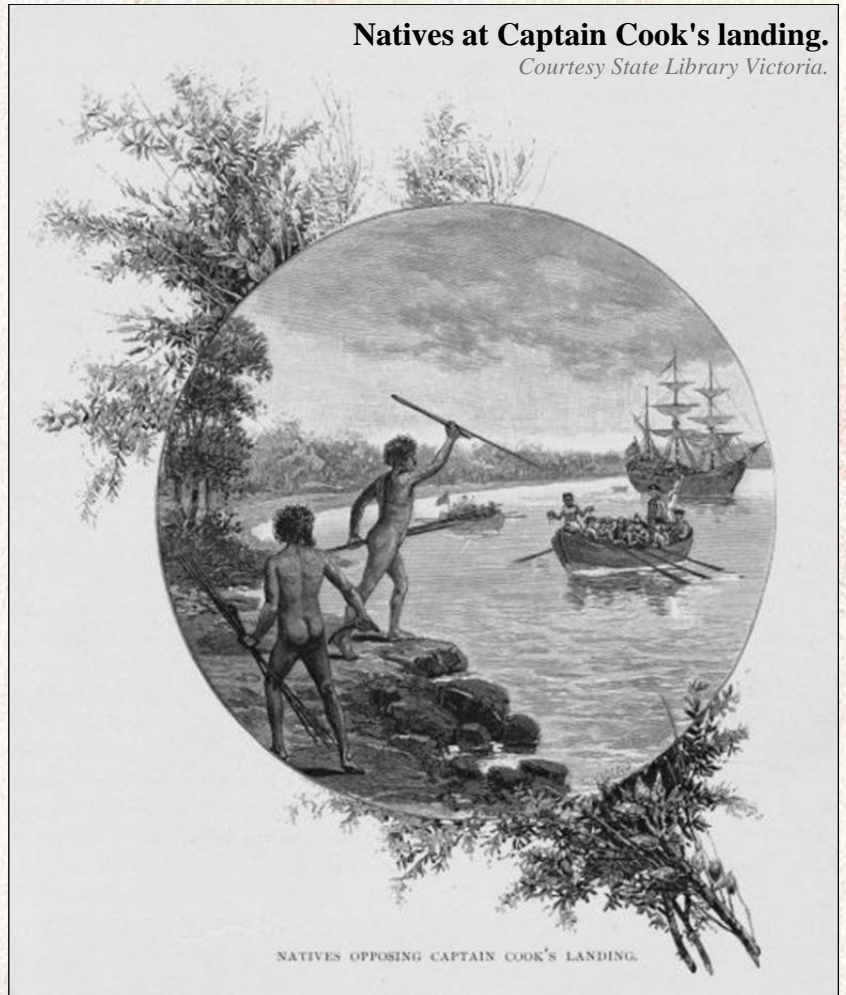
HISTORIC FACTSHEET

INTRODUCTION

Cook made landfall in Botany Bay, New South Wales on 28 April 1770, also making first contact with Aboriginal Peoples of Eastern Australia. Cook's journal records:

'At daybreak we discovered a bay, and anchored under the south shore about two miles within the entrance in six fathom water, the south point bearing S.E. and the north point East, Latitude 34° S. Longitude $208^{\circ}37$ W.'

Endeavour botanists Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander (the first recorded university educated scientist to set foot on Australia soil) explored the coastline around the landing site. Today the area is known as Kurnell Peninsula and is home to the Monument at Kamay Botany Bay National Park, a major tourism attraction.



The Kamay Botany Bay National Park on Kurnell Peninsula was included in the National Heritage List on 20 September 2004 and \$50 million was allocated by the Turnbull Liberal Government in April 2018 to redevelop the site.

The current site includes a series of monuments, plaques and parkland with interpretative signage for visitors to learn from.

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

INTRODUCTION

Second Voyage of Discovery (*HMS Resolution*)

In 1772, Cook returned to the sea aboard *HMS Resolution* for what was to be remembered as his Second Voyage of Discovery. *HMS Resolution* sailed with the companion ship *HMS Adventure*. Cook's mission from the Royal Society was again to find 'Terra Australis'. At that time it was assumed that the land mass Cook located on his first Voyage of Discovery was not 'Terra Australis' (Australia).

During this second voyage, Cook discovered, named and made landfall on Norfolk Island (named Norfolk Isle). Cook returned to Britain in 1775, finally dismissing the myth of a 'Terra Australis' as a southern continent located south of the continent he had already discovered on his first Journey.

Third Voyage of Discovery (*HMS Discovery*)

In 1776 Cook left on his third and final voyage (1776-1779). During this trip he discovered Hawaii on 18 January 1778 when he sailed past Oahu Island. He made landfall on the island of Kauai and named its group of islands the 'Sandwich Islands' after John Montague, Earl of Sandwich.



HMS Discovery
Public Domain Image

Cook returned to Hawaii and anchored in Kealahou Bay on 16 January 1779. The indigenous people paddled their canoes out to see the two ships (*HMS Discover* and *HMS Resolution*). Later Cook made his way to land where the locals were intrigued by the men and especially their iron tools and weapons. During Cook's month long stay, he traded with the locals and was able to reprovision his ship with enough food and water for a year. He and his crew were initially treated as Gods, but relations became strained towards the end of their sojourn when a crew member died, exposing their mortality.

The ships sailed out of the bay on 4 February 1779 but returned on 11 February after the



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

INTRODUCTION

foremast of *HMS Resolution* was damaged. This time their return was not welcomed, with the locals throwing rocks at the men, as well as stealing the cutter of *HMS Discover*.

Death of Cook

On 14 February Cook went ashore with some of his men to negotiate the return of the cutter, but negotiations collapsed. Cook then tried to take custody of the King of Hawaii, intending to trade him for the cutter, but the locals rose up and stopped Cook.

The resulting fight forced Cook and his men to retreat to their boats, but as Cook turned to help push one of the boats off the beach, he was struck on the head with an object and then fatally stabbed. He fell face first into the water where he died. Four of Cook's men were also killed during the short battle.

It is believed that a contributing factor to the aggression was that the islanders were celebrating the ancient festival known as 'Makahiki' or the 'Season of Lono' when the ships returned. Their return interrupted this significant ancient cultural event and may have caused angst against the visitors.

Remembering Cook

In 1982 a commemorative American Half Dollar coin bearing the bust of Captain James Cook was minted as part of Hawaii's 150th celebration of Cook's discovery of the islands.

Captain Cook was a successful Explorer, Navigator, Astronomer and Cartographer. His success as a ship's Captain was in part due to his fairness as well as being amongst the first captains to see a significant reduction in the number of deaths from the horrible disease scurvy aboard his ships. Attention to the health of his crew was maintained by good hygiene, warmth and nutrition. The British Navy was able to improve the conditions and reduce the death rate on their ships by applying the principals of Cook.

The island where Cook was killed was gifted to the English people by the American Government. A township close to the beach where he perished bears the name 'Captain Cook'. A 25 square feet portion of beach is chained off around a large memorial constructed in 1874 as a memorial to Captain James Cook.



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

INTRODUCTION

On Sunday 29 April 2018 the Turnbull Liberal Government announced a \$50 million redevelopment to the Kamay Botany Bay National Park, the landing place of Cook, at Kurnell Peninsula in Botany Bay. The redevelopment will include a \$3 million aquatic monument of Captain James Cook, a new Cook museum, upgraded Visitor Information Centre as well as the installation of ferry wharves. All the redevelopments will commemorate Indigenous Australians and offer focus on the early connection between the two cultures.

The opening is to be during the 250th Anniversary of the first contact between Australia's Indigenous Australians and the crew of the *HMS Endeavour* that brought Cook to our shores during his First Voyage of Discovery.

Remembering the *Endeavour*

When the *Endeavour* was first launched in 1764 it was launched as the *Earl of Pembroke*, though was renamed *Endeavour* in 1768 by the new owners (British Royal Navy). The ship was then outfitted for long-term scientific voyages. The ship sailed to the South Pacific between 1768 and 1771, mainly to record the transit of Venus in Tahiti (1769). The ship again sailed the South Pacific in search of the Great Southern Land, where it charted the coast of New Zealand and the East Coast of Australia.

The Royal Navy then repurposed the *Endeavour* as a transport, taking supplies to the Falkland Islands. By 1775 its overall condition had declined and was sold and renamed *Lord Sandwich* by its new private owner. It operated as a transport back and forth to the Baltic Sea before being hired in 1776 as a troop transport ship by the Royal Navy—transporting troops to fight against American Colonists who were attempting to break free from their British overlords. In 1778 she was scuttled in Newport Harbour in an attempt to block a fleet of French warships from entering the harbour. This was one year before Cook died on his third and final trip to the Pacific and ten years before the First Fleet arrived in what would later become Sydney. In February 2022 it was announced that the *Endeavour* had been located within the harbour, with the Australian National Maritime Museum CEO Kevin Sumption saying he was satisfied it was the ship.



FACTS

SOME INTERESTING FACTS



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

FACTS

- Captain James Cook had six children (James, Nathaniel, Elizabeth, Joseph, George and Hugh). Interestingly, James has no direct descendants, as his children either had no children of their own or pre-deceased him.
- While Cook was the first European to navigate and chart the eastern coastline of Australia, he was by no means the discoverer of Australia. A number of mariners are recognised as making contact with areas of the Australian continent. It is estimated that Cook was around the 54th ship to make landfall on Australian soil.
- Cook was a lieutenant when he navigated the eastern coast of Australia on his first journey of Discovery. He was promoted from Lieutenant to Captain after his return to England.
- It was Cook who proposed Botany Bay as a good place for a settlement.
- James named a number of places now well known in Australia. These include Point Hicks, Cape Howe, Botany Bay, Point Danger, Keppel Group, Cumberland Island, Whitsunday Islands, Repulse Bay, Magnetic Island, Trinity Bay, Endeavour Reef and Endeavour River.
- The Apollo 15 Command Service Module and the Space Shuttle Endeavour were both named after Captain Cook's ship the *Endeavour* that he sailed during his first Voyage of Discovery.
- The Space Shuttle Discovery was also named after one of Captain Cook's ships - the *Discovery*. This was the companion ship sailed by Captain Charles Clerke during Cook's third and final Voyage of Discovery.
- English exploratory ships involved with the discovery and exploration of early Australia had names that included *Endeavour*, *Resolution*, *Discovery* and *Adventure*.
- On Sunday 29 April 2018 the Turnbull Liberal Government announced a \$50 million redevelopment to the Kamay Botany Bay National Park, the landing place of Cook, at Kurnell Peninsula in Botany Bay.

TIMELINE

BASIC TIMELINE OF EVENTS



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

TIMELINE

- 7 November 1728** James Cook was born in England, second of eight children to James Cook and Grace Pace.
- 1736** He commences a small school in the village of Great Ayton, 12 km east of Middlesbrough
- 1741** He begins working for his father who was by this time a farm manager in Great Ayton.
- 1745** In 1745 at age 16, James moved to the seaside fishing village of Staithes to work as an apprentice to a grocer.
- 1747** Cook moved to Whitby and was introduced to ship-owners and coal traders John and Henry Walker. He was subsequently taken on as an apprentice in the Merchant Navy.
- 1750** Cook begins working in ship trading on the Baltic Sea.
- 1752** After Cook passed his apprentice exams, he quickly progressed up the ranks of the Merchant Navy and became the Captain aboard the collier brig *Friendship* (two masted ship carrying coal).
- 1755** Cook volunteered for the Royal Navy at Wapping.
- 21 December 1762** Cook married Elizabeth Bates at St Margaret's Church in Barking Essex.
- 1760s** Cook honed his cartography and surveying skills during the Seven Years' War. His maps were used for over 100 years afterwards.
- 1766** Cook was engaged by the Royal Society to observe and record the transit of Venus in the Pacific Ocean and promoted to Lieutenant and Commander of the expedition. He sailed on 26 August 1768. He carried a sealed command that was to be opened once his first mission was complete. The second mission was to discover Australia.



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

TIMELINE

19 April 1770

Cook made first contact with the coast of Australia. Lieutenant Zachary Hickes was on morning watch aboard the *Endeavour* and first sighted land at an area now known as Point Hicks, Victoria.

1772

Cook commenced his second Voyage of Discovery, returning to Britain in 1775.

10 October 1774

Cook discovered, named and made landfall on Norfolk Isle, now known as Norfolk Island.

1776

Cook commenced his third and final Voyage of Discovery.

1778

The ship *Endeavour* and 12 other ships were scuttled of Rhode Island in an effort by the British to create a blockade and prevent French Ships from making landfall on the Americas during the time of the French rebellion (known as the American Revolutionary War or American War of Independence). At the time of her scuttling, she was named *Lord Sandwich 2* and previous to the scuttling she had been used as a British transport ship and prison hulk.

14 February 1779

Captain Cook was killed towards the end of this voyage in Hawaii by natives there, during a dispute. He was hit over the head and fatally stabbed as he fell face first into the water during a retreat to the beach and boats after a failed attempt to kidnap the King of Hawaii. They had planned to use him as a bargaining tool in order to retrieve a small boat stolen by the natives.

1934

The 1750's small cottage located at Great Ayton, Yorkshire, England and formerly owned by James Cook's parents was disassembled and moved to Melbourne Victoria, Australia where it was re-assembled in the Fitzroy Gardens. The structure was restored in time for Melbourne's 1934 Centenary celebrations. It was dismantled in 1933 and placed into 253 cases and 40 barrels. The cottage had been purchased in 1933 by Victorian Sir Wilfred Russell Grimwade for £800, after being put up for sale. A video



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

TIMELINE

of him talking about his purchase can be viewed [here](#).

- 1969** A scientific expedition by the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia discovered the lost canons from the ship *Endeavour*. They were thrown overboard after her hull was breached by coral while sailing through the Great Barrier Reef on Australia's eastern coastline. They were discarded in an effort to reduce the weight of the ship and keep her afloat until they could reach land and beach the ship and make repairs.
- 1982** In 1982 a commemorative American Half Dollar coin bearing the bust of Captain James Cook and was minted as part of Hawaii's 150th celebration of Cook's discovery of the islands.
- 19 July 2013** Artworkz began this factsheet.
- 24 January 2014** Captain Cook's Cottage was defaced with graffiti.
- 29 April 2018** On Sunday 29 April 2018 the Turnbull Liberal Government announced a \$50 million redevelopment to the Kamay Botany Bay National Park, the landing place of Cook, at Kurnell Peninsula in Botany Bay. The opening is to be during the 250th Anniversary of the first contact between Australia's Indigenous Australians and the crew of the *HMS Endeavour* that brought Cook to our shores during his First Voyage of Discovery.
- 22 September 2018** It was publically announced by the Australian National Maritime Museum that the resting place of the *Endeavour* had likely been discovered off Rhode Island where it had been scuttled. By this time it had been renamed the *Lord Sandwich 2*.
- 25 January 2024** St Kilda Statue of Cook cut down at feet level.



GALLERY

BASIC GALLERY

*Point Hicks Memorial at the
Point Hicks Lighthouse
and photographed
9 January 2014.*



The Glasshouse Mountains is a group of eleven hills rising abruptly from the coastal plain on Queensland's Sunshine Coast. They were named by Captain James Cook in 1770 because they reminded him of the glass furnaces in his home County of Yorkshire.

© Copyright Margaret Nicholas 2013



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



The barque *Earl of Pembroke*, which was later renamed *Endeavour* and used by Cook

Courtesy National Library Australia 2017

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY

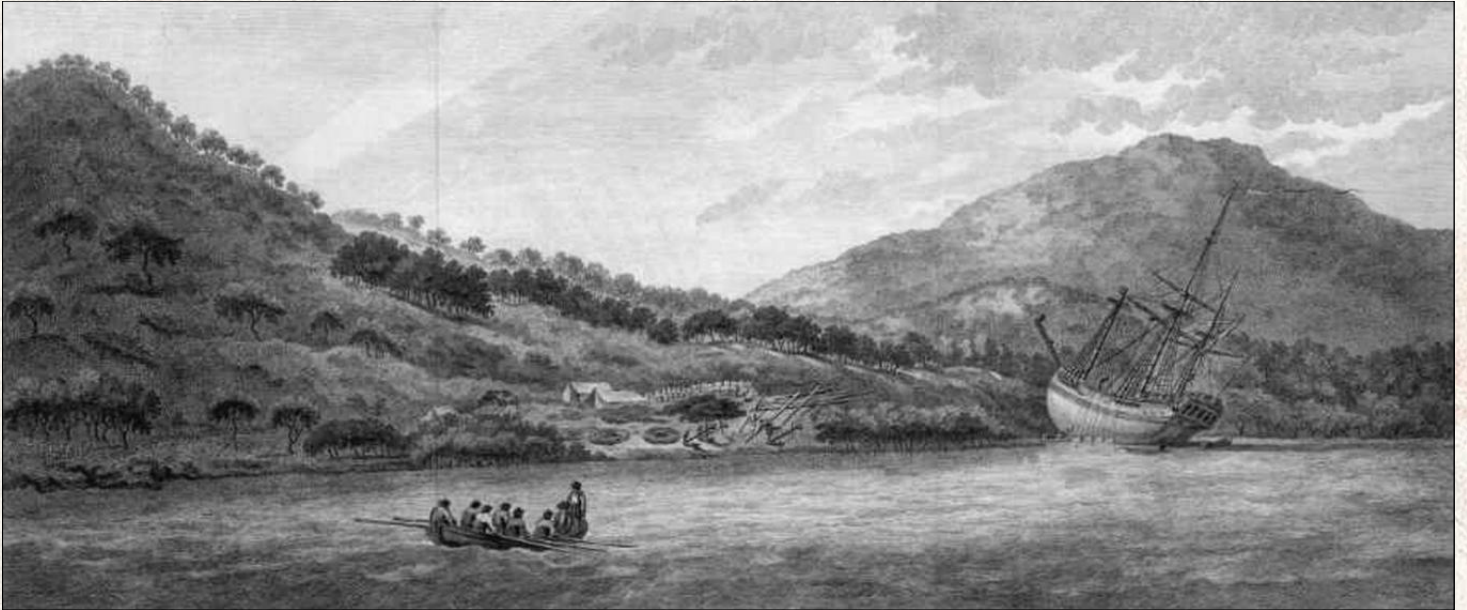


Joseph Banks, appointed botanist aboard Endeavour for the trip to Australia (1768-1771) at age 25

Courtesy National Library Australia 2017

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

GALLERY



The ship *Endeavour* commanded by James Cook and beached at the mouth of the Endeavour River in Queensland for repairs. The ship's hull was punctured on a coral reef on 11 June 1770 and Cook managed to get the ship to the beach through amazing seamanship. The detailed drawing was by botanical artist Sydney Parkinson (1745-1771), who travelled with Banks and Cook on this voyage. Parkinson died at sea on 26 January 1771.

Courtesy National Library Australia 2017

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

COOK'S HILL, QLD



(Top) View from Cook's Hill at Cooktown in 2018
(Bottom) Endeavour River from Cook's Hill

See the following page for interpretive signage

Photographs © Shez Tedford 2018



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

COOK'S HILL, QLD

COOK'S LOOKOUT



Richard Pickersgill's "Part of New Holland" chart 1770

In 1770 James Cook and Joseph Banks stood on this spot and surveyed the dreadful predicament that they and their companions faced as castaways on these shores.

June 30th 1770

Cook – "In the a.m. I went myself upon the hill which is over the south point to take a view of the sea, at this time it was low water and I saw what gave me no small uneasiness which were a number of sand bank or shoals laying along the coast; the innermost lay about 3 or 4 miles from the shore and the outermost extended off to sea as far as I could see with my glass, some just appeared above water. The only hopes I have of getting clear of them is to the northward where there seems to be a passage for as the wind blows constantly from the south east we shall find it difficult if not impractical to return to the southward."



Image: Richard Pickersgill's "Part of New Holland" chart 1770
Text: Journal of Captain James Cook

QR Reader Download Required

THE LIGHTHOUSE



The Lighthouse c 1960

OUR LIGHTHOUSE

"We understand that our Lighthouse is on board the "New Guinea", which left Batavia on 27th of July for Queensland ports. We have another proof of the government's desire to deal fairly with us.

Before long the bright rays of our light will be glowing over the waste waters, carrying comfort and an assurance of safety to mariners who have to thread the intricate navigation of our coast – no better monument could be erected to the memory of Capt. James Cook.

It is the one he himself would have chosen, as it will reach the gallant navigator and explorer every time it's white tower of bright light is seen." Cooktown Courier, 1885

IN THE LIMELIGHT

After shining its beam across the reefs for a hundred years, the threat of losing the lighthouse galvanised the Cooktown community in 1987. Faced with the Government's plan to decommission the facility, a group of residents believing the Lighthouse to be of great local, national and international significance campaigned for nearly a year to save the Lighthouse for the community

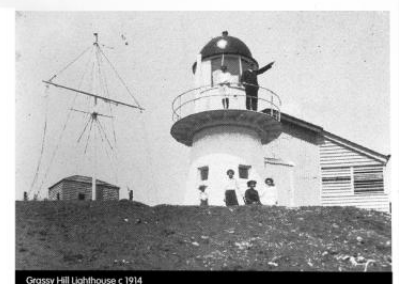
and visitors into the future. Receiving substantial media attention, support came from all over Australia. The power of a united voice prevailed and in 1988 the Lighthouse and the area around it, was "sold" to the Cooktown people for \$100.

COOKTOWN'S LAST LIGHTHOUSE FAMILY

Harry Geater was the last employed light keeper at Grassy Hill lighthouse, serving from 1922-1927. In 1927, the Office of Lightkeeper was abolished when the lighthouse was fully automated with the original apparatus replaced by an open flame acetylene gas burner. Harry, his wife, Florence, and four daughters enjoyed their happy mainland life. The older girls had attended school with their long walk each day carefully watched over by Harry and his lighthouse telescope and a megaphone to hurry them along! Florence enjoyed the social life and services that a town provided. With their newly born daughter, the Geater family left their only town posting and moved to Goods Island (Palilag) in the Torres Strait.



Images: Cooktown Historical Society



Grassy Hill Lighthouse c 1914

AUSTRALIAN MEMORIALS

SOME OF THE MEMORIALS ACROSS AUSTRALIA

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

POINT HICKS, VICTORIA



Point Hicks Memorial Plaque in 2010. Point Hicks was named by Captain Cook after his Lieutenant Zachary Hicks reportedly first saw the Continent of Australia at this point on 20 April 1770. There is some debate about if this was the case as the coordinates recorded by Cook has him over 20 km out to sea.

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

KURNELL PENINSULA, NSW



EXTRACT FROM CAPT COOK'S JOURNAL
Saturday 28th April A.D. 1770.

At daybreak we discovered a bay
and anchored under the south shore,
about two miles within the entrance, in
six fathom water; the south point bearing
S.E. and the north point East.
Latitude 34° S. Longitude 208° 37' W.

FORBY SUTHERLAND
A SEAMAN ON THE ENDEAVOUR
UNDER CAPTAIN COOK.
THE FIRST BRITISH SUBJECT
TO DIE IN AUSTRALIA.
WAS BURIED HERE.
(1ST MAY (L.O.C. DATE).
2ND MAY (CALENDAR DATE). 1770.
R.A.H.S.

Here on the southern shore of Botany Bay, Lt James Cook and the crew of the *Endeavour* first made contact with the Aboriginal people of this country. This encounter in 1770 was followed by many arrivals and encounters between people of different cultures from around Australia and from many parts of the world.

We invite you to engage with this place. Take the Burrawang Walk to experience and understand the land, its people and its history. Explore the scenic landscapes, the special animals and plants of this place. Cycle, swim, jog or just relax and reflect as you enjoy a picnic by the bay.

This is a place where history can be explored and new understandings between cultures are encouraged.

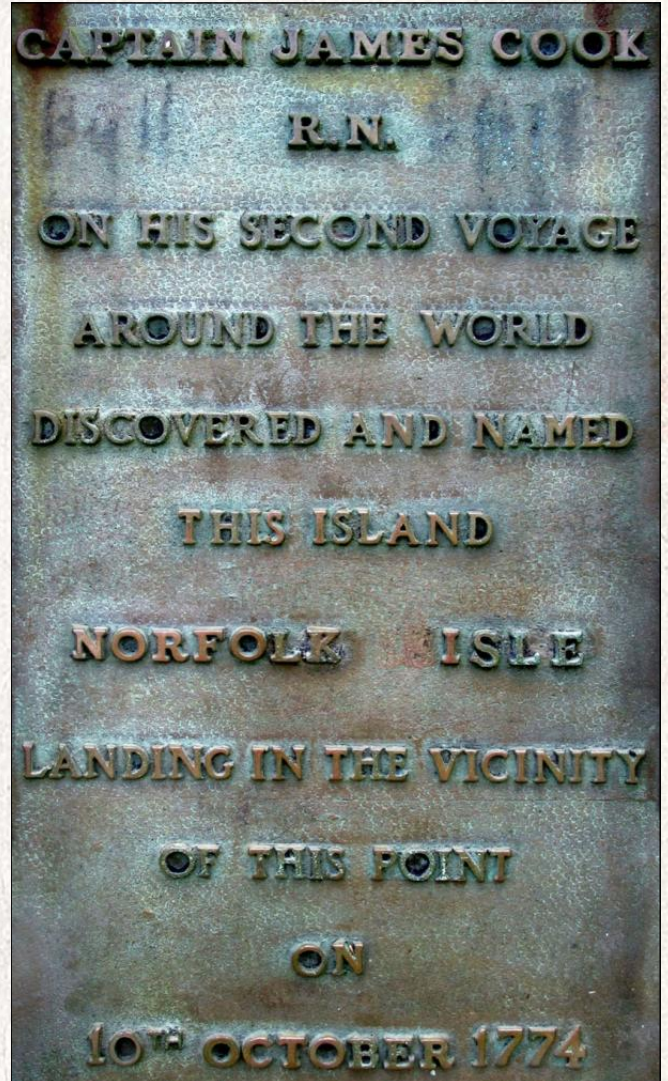
The memorial to the first landing place of Cook's party on the southern shore of Botany Bay at Kurnell Peninsula.

Cook was attracted to the safety of the landing site and it was here that he made first recorded contact with Aboriginal peoples in Eastern Australia. *Endeavour* botanists Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander (the first recorded university educated scientist to set foot on Australia soil) explored the coastline around the landing site.

The Kurnell Peninsula was included in the National Heritage List on 20 September 2004 and \$50 million was allocated by the Turnbull Government in April 2018 to redevelop the site.

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

NORFOLK ISLAND



Norfolk Island Memorial plaque and Cairn in 2014. Captain James Cook discovered the island, named it Norfolk Isle and made landfall on 10 October 1774.

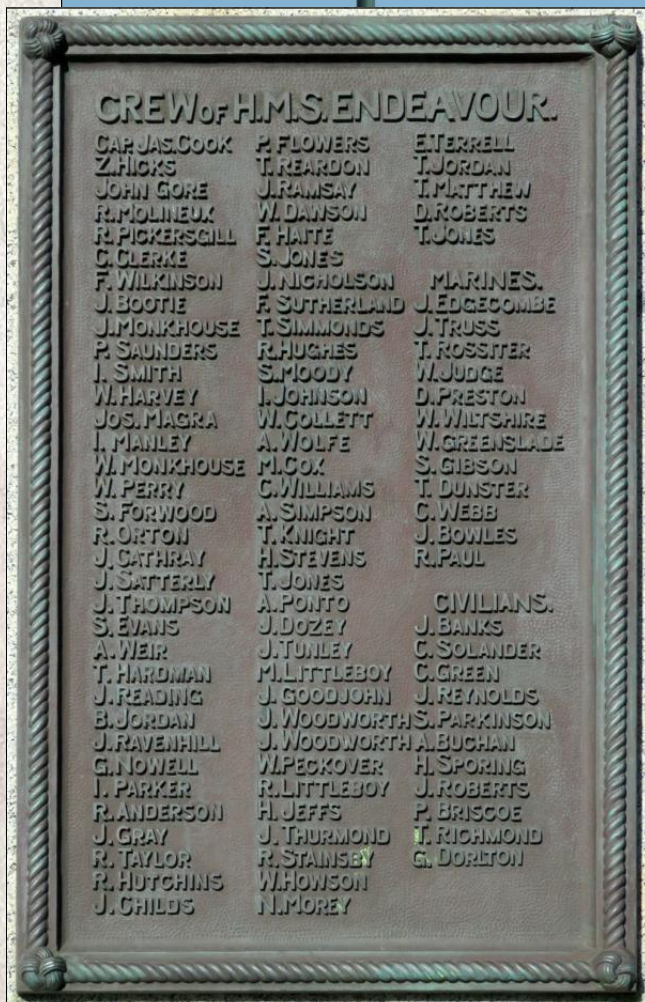
Signage erected at the site tells us Cook named Norfolk Island in honour of Mary, the Duchess of Norfolk, the wife of Edward Howard - the 9th Duke of Norfolk. The Duchess had passed away the year before, on 27 May 1773.

The sign also informs the reader that Cook was the discoverer of the Hawaiian Islands, New Caledonia and Norfolk Isle. According to his ship's log, Cook first signed Norfolk Island on 10 October 1774, 27 months into his second round-the-world Voyage of Discovery - his first aboard the *HMS Resolution*.

© Kathie Maynes 2017

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

ST KILDA, MELBOURNE



**Captain Cook statue looking out along St Kilda pier,
St Kilda, Melbourne in 2017**

On 25 January 2024, this monument was cut off at the feet. A number of other colonial monuments are being desecrated.

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

HYDE PARK, SYDNEY



CAPTAIN COOK

ERECTED BY PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION

ASSISTED BY A GRANT FROM THE NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT

DISCOVERED THIS TERRITORY
1770

KILLED AT OWHYHEE
1779

Bronze Captain Cook statue at Hyde Park, Sydney in 2018. It was produced by English sculptor Thomas Woolner (1825–1892) and unveiled on 26 September 1874.

The inscription (top left) reads:

CAPTAIN COOK

This statue was erected by public subscription assisted by a grant from the New South Wales Government

Note: It is not known why a button was left undone up on the inset photo.

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

CAPE HAWKE, NSW



Memorial near the Cape Hawke Lookout

© George Evans 2017



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

COOKTOWN, QLD



Cook statue at Cooktown in 2018

Photographs © Shez Tedford 2018



SHIPWRECK

THE SITE

On the 11th June 1770, just before midnight on a calm moonlit night, the ship Endeavour commanded by James Cook struck the Great Barrier Reef.

11th June 1770

Cook – "At 11 O'clock in the a.m. being high water as we thought we tried to heave her off without success, she not being afloat by a foot or more notwithstanding by this time we had thrown overboard 40 or 50 ton weight; as this was found not sufficient we continued to lighten her by every method we could think of."

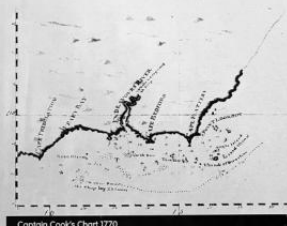
12th June

Banks – "..... the capstan and windlass were manned and they began to heave; fear of death now stared us in the face."

Cook – "About twenty past ten O'clock in the p.m. the ship floated and we hove her off into deep water..."

13th June

Cook – "We now thought of nothing but ranging along shore in search of a harbour where we could repair the damages we had sustained."



Captain Cook's Chart 1770



Image: Cook's "Chart of part of the Sea Coast of New South Wales on the East Coast of New Holland from Cape Tribulation to Endeavour Straits"
Text: Journals of Captain James Cook and Joseph Banks

CAPTAIN JAMES COOK
1728 ~ 1779
COMMANDER, H.M.B. "ENDEAVOUR"
WHICH WAS BEACHED AND REPAIRED
NEAR THIS SITE 17 JUNE ~ 4 AUGUST, 1770.
"HE LEFT NOTHING UNATTEMPTED"
THIS STATUE WAS COMMISSIONED BY
BP AUSTRALIA AS A BICENTENNIAL GIFT
TO THE PEOPLE OF COOKTOWN
AND UNVEILED BY MR A.W. GORRIE
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD,
SATURDAY, 25 JUNE 1988.
SCULPTOR: STANLEY HAMMOND M.B.E.

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

EMU PARK, QLD



The Australian Singing Ship at Emu Park on the coast east of Rockhampton in September 2020.

The metal tunes are hollow and when the wind gets up, they produce a significant amount of sound that can be heard hundreds of meters away.

© Shez Tedford 2020

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

CANBERRA



Canberra Captain James Cook Memorial

NEWSPAPER

RELATED NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

HISTORIC FACTSHEET

NEWSPAPER

THE EARLIEST SCULPTOR IN VICTORIA.

The pre-Raphaelite movement in England coincided, in point of date, with the gold discoveries in California, and preceded by two years only those in Victoria. The "Brotherhood" numbered seven; one of whom, Millais, afterwards became President of the Royal Academy; another, W. Holman Hunt, achieved the highest distinction in religious art; and a third, Thomas Woolner, became one of the most famous sculptors of his day, besides making a not inconsiderable reputation as a poet. It is among the things which are being obliterated from men's memories in this part of the world that Woolner, together with R. H. Horne, William and Richard Howitt, constituted the odd four on the list of 91,664 immigrants who disembarked at what was then Sandridge in the year 1852.

Woolner's fine powers as a sculptor had already revealed themselves to his brother artists in London, but only one small commission had come to him during a long series of years of patient application to his art, while his intellectual culture had obtained for him the friendship of Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle, for the latter of whom he entertained a kind of worship; of the Rossettis, Ruskin, Browning, Tennyson—"the Royal Alfred," as he used to call him—and Coventry Patmore. In the year 1852, however, Woolner's prospects of success were exceedingly gloomy; and his own despondency of feeling caused him to believe that England and the fine arts were going to the dogs, and that the prospects of sculpture were more hopeless even than those of painting. Holman Hunt was seriously thinking of renouncing his pencil, and either turning farmer, or of going up to Oxford and working hard for a scholarship; and Woolner, finding that William Howitt was organising a party to proceed to Australia, resolved upon trying his fortune on the Victorian gold fields. Both Carlyle and Tennyson are said to have encouraged him to undertake the venture, and the poet is said to have asked him, "Will you be content with £20,000?" and then to have added, "But men never are contented about money, so I need not ask."

It is amusing to read, in a letter written by Dante Rossetti, an account of the sculptor's outfit. "I saw him on board the vessel on Thursday," he writes. "He is accompanied by Bernhard Smith and Bateman, all of them plentifully stocked with corduroys, sou'-westers, jerseys, fire arms and belts full of little bags to hold the expected nuggets." And presently he makes the following circumstantial statement:—"Tennyson was especially encouraging. At his house in Twickenham, Woolner spent two days of his last week. The great Alfred even declares that were it not for Mrs. T. (to whom he had been married only two years before) he should go himself. His expectations seem, however, to be rather practical, as he gravely asked Woolner if he expected to come back with £10,000 a year. If the laureate could have 'looked into the seeds of time' at that moment and have foreseen that his second child, as yet unborn, was destined to become the Governor-General of an Australian Commonwealth, he might have mistaken it, perhaps, for an admonition from Destiny to accompany his friend in his search for the golden fleece, and to have missed his high vocation."

When the sculptor reached Melbourne and called upon Governor Latrobe, who was then occupying a small cottage in Jolimont, in company with Mr. Bateman, who was his Excellency's cousin, he was agreeably surprised to find one of his early works there, Little Red Ridinghood. Woolner's first essay at gold digging was made on the Ovens, where he and his "mate," Mr. Bernhard Smith, were as unsuccessful as they were subsequently on the other gold fields they visited; and when they found that, after spending £180 between them, they had only about 25 ounces of gold to show as the result of their joint labors, and that in order to extract this from the soil they were obliged to work up to their knees in water so that their lower limbs were numbed, while the perspiration streamed from their bodies owing to the excessive heat of the sun, they both came to the conclusion that nature had never intended them for gold miners. But Woolner, writing to Rossetti, said that "he should always be glad to have gone through it, as it had given him a strength and a feeling of life which he had never known before, as likewise an intense appreciation of the smallest amount of ordinary comfort; in short, the faculty of content."

Mr. Bernhard Smith joined a brother, who owned a farm on the Campaspe, and the sculptor returned to Melbourne, where he became the guest of Dr. Godfrey Howitt, one of the leading physicians in this city, who was then living in the bush, close to Spring-street, at the east end of Flinders-lane. While he was the guest of a medical practitioner, who is still remembered with the warmest affection by all who knew him, Woolner executed several medallion portraits in profile, for which he received 25 guineas each. One of these—that of Governor Latrobe—is in the National Gallery here. There was also some talk of commissioning him to execute a statue of the Queen, but the project fell through. These medallions furnished the sculptor with the means of returning to England, and he did so with a commission to carve a statue of Wentworth, for Sydney, as in later years he was likewise selected for the execution of the colossal statue of Captain Cook in that city. Woolner reached London in October, 1854, with, as he said in a letter to Rossetti, "a huge beard, brawny limbs, and a weather-worn, bronzed countenance. I do not intend," he added, "buying up some two dozen defunct noblemen's estates and living like a swarthy Sultan in voluptuous imbecility, but have to set to work for daily bread, much in the same way as I had to do before leaving in 1852." But this time he applied himself to his profession, with splendid results, for during the next twenty years he executed some of the finest portrait statues in England, and notably those of Bacon, Gladstone and Prince Alfred in Oxford, of Macaulay at Cambridge, and of Palmerston in Parliament square, Westminster. In all his works he aimed at the dignity, simplicity and naturalness of Phidias, and as a master of style he has had no superiors in the English school of sculpture. The poetry of his Virgilia and Elaine, and the force and nobility of his Moses and Achilles have excited the admiration of some of the best critics in Europe; and plastic art in England has every reason to rejoice at the persistent run of ill-luck which compelled Thomas Woolner to abandon the occupation of a gold miner in Victoria and return, poor in pocket but rich in health and strength, to his native land, where he died in 1894, leaving a great name behind him.

Melbourne Leader
Saturday 14 November 1903
Courtesy National Library Australia

Thomas Woolner is recognised as the earliest sculptor in Victoria.

Thomas was a good friend of artist Bernhard Smith, even travelling to Australia and then the Victorian goldfields with him. Bernhard, also an artist, served as a Police Magistrate at Alexandra, Central Victoria, where he later died on 7 October 1885.

Thomas was one of the seven founding members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (PRB) and the only sculptor in the group at the time of its formation. Bernhard joined the group shortly after they were formed and was a more highly educated sculptor and artist than Thomas.

This article notes Woolner as the sculptor who created the 'colossal' statue of Captain Cook located in Hyde Park, Sydney. The statue was commissioned on 26 September 1874 and unveiled on 25 February 1879.

Courtesy National Library Australia

OTHER

OTHER THINGS OF NOTE



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

CLAIMING AUSTRALIA

Claiming Australia for King George III

22 August 1770 - Possession Island

"Having satisfied myself of the great Probabillity of a Passage, thro' which I intend going with the Ship and therefor may land no more upon this Eastern coast of New Holland and on the Western side I can make no new discovery the honour of which belongs to the Dutch Navigators and as such they may lay claim to it as their property but the Eastern Coast from the Latitude of 38° South down to this place I am confident was never seen or viseted by any European before us and therefore by the same Rule belongs to great Brittan Notwithstanding I had in the Name of his Majesty taken posession of several places upon this coast I now once more hoisted English Coulers and in the Name of His Majesty King George the Third took posession of the whole Eastern Coast from the above Latitude down to this place by the Name of New South Wales together with all the Bays, Harbours Rivers and Islands situate upon the same said coast after which we fired three Volleys of small Arms which were Answerd by the like number from the Ship."



HISTORIC FACTSHEET

COOK'S COMMISSION

Commission to Cook - Under King George III

30 July 1768

"Whereas there is reason to imagine that a Continent or Land of great extent may be found to the Southward of the Tract lately made by Captn Wallis in His Majesty's Ship the Dolphin (of which you will herewith receive a Copy) or of the Tract of any former Navigators in Pursuit of the like kind, You are therefore in Pursuance of His Majesty's Pleasure hereby requir'd and directed to put to Sea with the Bark you Command so soon as the Observation of the Transit of the Planet Venus shall be finished and observe the following Instructions. You are to proceed to the Southward in order to make discovery of the Continent abovementioned until' you arrive in the Latitude of 40°, unless you sooner fall in with it. But not having discover'd it or any Evident sign of it in that Run you are to proceed in search of it to the Westward between the Latitude beforementioned and the Latitude of 35° until' you discover it, or fall in with the Eastern side of the Land discover'd by Tasman and now called New Zeland. If you discover the Continent abovementioned either in your Run to the Southward or to the Westward as above directed, You are to employ yourself diligently in exploring as great an Extent of the Coast as you can, carefully observing the true situation thereof both in Latitude and Longitude, the Variation of the Needle; bearings of Head Lands Height direction and Course of the Tides and Currents, Depths and Soundings of the Sea, Shoals, Rocks and also surveying and making Charts, and taking Views of Such Bays, Harbours and Parts of the Coasts as may be useful to Navigation. You are also carefully to observe the Nature of the Soil, and the Products thereof; the Beasts and Fowls that inhabit or frequent it, the Fishes that are to be found in the Rivers or upon the Coast and in what Plenty, and in Case you find any Mines, Minerals, or valuable Stones you are to bring home Specimens of each, as also such Specimens of the Seeds of the Trees, Fruits and Grains as you may be able to collect, and Transmit them to our Secretary that We may cause proper Examination and Experiments to be made of them. You are likewise to observe the Genius, Temper, Disposition and Number of the Natives, if there be any, and endeavour by all proper means to cultivate a Friendship and Alliance with them, making them presents of such Trifles as they may Value, inviting them to Traffick, and Shewing them every kind of Civility and Regard; taking Care however not to suffer yourself to be surprized by them, but to be always upon your guard against any Accidents. You are also with the Consent of the Natives to take Possession of Convenient Situations in the Country in the Name of the King of Great Britain: Or: if you find the Country uninhabited take Possession for his Majesty by setting up Proper Marks and Inscriptions, as first discoverers and possessors."



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