

# HONEST HISTORY

The Hon. Linda Burney MP  
Minister for Indigenous Australians  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

By email

Dear Minister

Thank you for your letter MC22-002518 of 28 July regarding the proposal for an Australian Frontier Wars Gallery at the Australian War Memorial as a concrete expression of the Spirit of Uluru. These sentences in your letter were particularly encouraging:

*'I suspect we would agree that to understand the challenges of the present, we must understand their roots in past trauma. Supporting processes of truth-telling, including about the Frontier Wars, is a vital part of the Government's commitment to implement the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full.'*

Since our earlier correspondence, [the campaign for an Australian Frontier Wars Gallery has continued](#). Two recent posts in John Menadue's *Pearls and Irritations* blog ([here](#) and [here](#)) make the case strongly, with the second post drawing out the links to the Uluru Statement. I have included the key points of that second post below.

Our campaign continues and we will keep you and your office informed. Please contact me if you need further information ([admin@honesthistory.net.au](mailto:admin@honesthistory.net.au); 0413 867 972).

I have copied this letter to the Assistant Minister for Indigenous Australians and the Special Envoy for Reconciliation and Implementation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Yours faithfully



(Dr) David Stephens  
Editor, Honest History; for [Heritage Guardians](#)

18 August 2022

## ***Uluru Statement shows the way on Australian Frontier Wars: key points***

*The Uluru Statement from the Heart is more than resonant prose. Its words about First Nations people taking their rightful place in their country, about how First Nations culture can be a gift to all Australians, and on truth-telling about our past, all provide signposts for action.*

*Taking 'a rightful place' includes embedding and reflection in the places where we find or affirm what it means to be Australian. It is anomalous and bizarre that in the Australian War Memorial there is still only patchy and inadequate recognition and commemoration of a crucial part of our history – that settler-invader Australians and their military forces killed perhaps 60,000 First Australians between 1788 and 1928 (or later).*

*Defence of Country is part of the cultural gift from First Nations people to all other Australians. There is a continuous line between First Nations tribes' defence of their Country against settler-invaders and uniformed Australians' defence of Australia in the years since 1901.*

*The truth about how settler-invaders took Australia from the First Australians needs to be told without varnishing or dissembling. It needs to be confronted.*

*In the confronting there will be great benefits. Until we see Indigenous history and culture – all of it, including the Frontier Wars – as a key part of Australian history and culture, as Professor Larissa Behrendt wrote in 2017, 'we will never have found a way to truly share this colonised country'.*