



AUSTRALIAN
WAR MEMORIAL

07 July 2022

MC22-002509

Mr Matt Anderson PSM

Director

Dr David Stephens
Editor, Honest History Website; on behalf of Heritage Guardians
admin@honesthistory.net.au

Dear Dr Stephens,

Thank you for your correspondence of 17 June 2022 requesting the creation of a Frontier Wars gallery as part of the extensions to the Australian War Memorial. The Minister has asked me to respond on his behalf.

The project was approved with bi-partisan support and continues to work closely with government. The Detailed Business Case for the Australian War Memorial's Development Project, *Our Continuing Story* was approved to create the space necessary to tell the story of contemporary service, including Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Peacekeeping and Humanitarian operations. The Gallery Master Plan includes, as previously, permanent exhibition space dedicated to Pre-1914 conflict. On current planning, the curatorial team with responsibility for developing the content for the new Pre-1914 Gallery will be established in late 2024. This team will be informed by a number of advisory groups, including the Indigenous Advisory Group that has been involved in the Development to date.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a longstanding tradition of defending Country and continue to serve with honour among our military forces. The stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are an important part of the Memorial's storytelling. As you have noted, the Australian War Memorial already acknowledges frontier violence and conflict throughout the Memorial; including our existing galleries, artwork, travelling exhibitions, the For Our Country pavilion in our sculpture garden and articles in the Memorial's flagship publication, *Wartime*. In 2020, we also awarded the inaugural Les Carlyon Literary prize to Dr Stephen Gapps for his book *The Sydney Wars – Conflict in the early colony 1788-1817*. In doing so we seek to build on the nation's understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' culture in the context of service in the ADF.

All cultural institutions need to consider their role in the telling of our nation's story. Collectively, the undertaking needs to be shared to showcase the history of Indigenous Australians and their deep and abiding connection to, and protection of, country.

Thank you for taking the time to bring this matter to my attention. I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Matt Anderson

Here is their spirit, in the heart of the land they loved; and here we guard the record which they themselves made. C.E.W. Bean

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