

# Gallipoli Centenary Peace Campaign

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## About the Gallipoli Centenary Peace Campaign (GPCPC)

The Gallipoli Centenary Peace Campaign (GPCPC) opposes the militarisation of Australian history and seeks to encourage a more critical understanding of Australia's war experience including the impacts of war on the 'home front'.

GPCPC also seeks to promote public discussion on the causes, costs and prevention of war. As well GPCPC works for a more peaceful and non-violent world through research, education, advocacy and a variety of peace actions and initiatives.

## Mission Statement

GPCPC is a coalition of citizens and organisations calling for a national conversation on Australia's identity and the place of war in its past and future.

GPCPC does not believe that Australia as a nation was born in war. We honour and respect all Australians who have died and suffered in war, both overseas and in Australia's frontier wars, and respect the contribution and suffering of their families and loved ones. We also honour and respect all those who have pursued the path of non-violent resolution of national and international conflicts.

We appreciate that many young Australians died and were wounded at Gallipoli. We deeply regret the tragic loss of life in the killing fields of the WW1. This and other wars have had terrible consequences, not only for the soldiers, but for their loved ones and descendants and for Australian society generally. The experience of war encourages us to redouble our efforts in peace-making and peace-building.

We believe that Australia should not in future be involved in wars at the behest of 'great and powerful friends'. Australia, like all other countries, must abide by the UN Charter which stipulates that force may be used in only two circumstances: in self-defence or in operations authorised by the United Nations.



## We wish to celebrate a story of Australia as a nation which:

- Brought together peacefully six colonies in one Federation;
- Pioneered universal suffrage for all including women, and brought in the eight hour day and the living wage;
- Since 1945, has welcomed 6.5 million migrants seeking a new life;
- Has successfully shaped a multicultural, multifaith community;
- Has supported humanitarian projects and UN peace missions.

## Much remains to be done to:

- Officially recognise the violent colonisation of this land and resolve the troubled relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians;
- Strengthen Australian multi-culturalism;
- Constructively engage with the peoples of Asia and the South Pacific;
- Warmly welcome refugees and asylum seekers;
- Actively support the United Nations and its programs;
- Promote peace with justice for all.

## To this end we propose to:

- Mount and support a range of community reflection and education programs;
- Provide appropriate resources for teachers and students;
- Make representations to governments and members of parliament;
- Contribute to an informed public debate in religious, ethnic and mainstream media as well as social media;
- Advocate the establishment of new institutions, including peace institutes, peace museums and peace parks and a government agency dedicated to disarmament, mediation, conflict resolution and peace-building.

*Image: WW1 anti-war poster*

# Rationale for a Peace and Reconciliation Park at Richardson's Lookout

## Why Select Richardson's Lookout?

The Gallipoli Centenary Peace Campaign (GCPC) believes that the establishment of a Peace and Reconciliation Park will serve to honour the memory of all those who lost their lives in past wars in the most appropriate way, that is by focusing on the causes and prevention of war in the future.

As Peter Underwood, former Governor of Tasmania has said, "all our remembrances and honours are meaningless unless we also vow to become resolute about peace because that is what those whom we remember and honour on (Anzac Day) thought they were dying for."<sup>1</sup> **It is GCPC's belief that the establishment of a Peace and Reconciliation Park will help us become more resolute about peace in the future.**

## The Aboriginal Inhabitants

The precinct around Richardson's Lookout is notable for its Aboriginal, settler, military and local history.

Aboriginal communities of the Sydney region were "united by a common language, strong ties of kinship, and a rich saltwater economy, the Indigenous inhabitants survived as skilled hunter-fisher-gatherers in family groups or clans scattered along the coast. They identified themselves as Eora (pronounced 'yura'), meaning simply 'the people', a word derived from *Ee* (yes) and *ora* (here, or this place), revealing their deep connection to the land."<sup>2</sup>



The land inhabited by the Eora "spread from the Georges River and Botany Bay in the south to Port Jackson (Sydney Harbour), north to Pittwater at the mouth of the Hawkesbury River and west along the river to Parramatta."<sup>3</sup>

The site known as Richardson's Lookout today was part of the land inhabited primarily by the Cadigal people for many thousands of years and is said to have been a significant vantage point for the local Aboriginal people providing views to Botany Bay and of the Cooks River catchment.

Neighbouring communities of the Cadigal included the Wanggal to the west and the Tharawal to the south.

## European Settlement

Following European settlement, Richardson's Lookout was part of a parcel of land first granted in 1799 to Thomas Moore who used local timber to build boats for the colony. Later, in 1830, the estate was purchased by Dr Robert Wardell, a barrister, who expanded his landholding to 2000 acres to include most of today's Petersham, Dulwich Hill and Marrickville, from Parramatta Road to the Cooks River. In 1859, after the sub-division of Wardell's estate, a wealthy businessman, Thomas Holt, purchased a parcel of land comprising 130 acres which he subsequently called 'The Warren'. Holt's home, a 'Victorian Gothic' mansion, was built around 1866. Holt returned to England in 1883 and died in 1888. Following his death, the estate was gradually sub-divided but the mansion remained part of a 12 acre block and was acquired by the Catholic Church.

Between 1886 and 1903, The Warren accommodated a French order of Carmelite nuns. It was named Richardson's Lookout on 4 May 1936 in honour of a Marrickville alderman who led a campaign to turn the rubbish dump and mosquito breeding ground into a park.<sup>4&5</sup>

## Military History

The site's military history is linked to The Warren. During WW1, The Warren was used by the army as an artillery encampment. In 1919 The Warren's mansion was demolished and the land sub-divided for a housing estate for returned soldiers. It is this precinct's military history that makes it a fitting location for a memorial to Marrickville's connection with WW1.

## Recent History

In recent times, Richardson's Lookout has also been the setting for Sorry Day events, organised by Marrickville Residents for Reconciliation, and it is a site for the Aboriginal Interpretative Signage and Story Poles project developed jointly by Marrickville Aboriginal Consultative Committee and Marrickville Council in 2013. It is called 'Looking Out' and features the 'Sea of Hands' imagery initiated by ANTaR (Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation) as a symbol of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians joining hands and working together towards reconciliation. **This location would also be an appropriate setting to recall the Frontier Wars between the Aboriginal people and the European colonisers.**

## Richardson's Lookout – Marrickville Peace Park

While GCPC recommended the name 'Richardson's Lookout - Marrickville Peace and Reconciliation Park', the Geographical Names Board deemed this name too long. Consequently Marrickville Council endorsed the re-naming of Richardson's Lookout as 'Richardson's Lookout - Marrickville Peace Park' in April this year. Permanent signage was erected in the park on 18<sup>th</sup> September after Council consulted widely with stakeholders about the text of the signage.

**The official launch of the Peace Park is to take place on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November at 11.00am.** All welcome.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Peter Underwood, 'Anzac Day Address – 25 April 2013', The Governor of Tasmania (official website): [http://www.govhouse.tas.gov.au/sites/default/files/speeches/anzac\\_day\\_2013.pdf](http://www.govhouse.tas.gov.au/sites/default/files/speeches/anzac_day_2013.pdf)

<sup>2 & 3</sup> Smith, K V 'Eora. Mapping Aboriginal Sydney 1770-1850', State Library of New South Wales, 2006: <http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/events/exhibitions/2006/eora/docs/eora-guide.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Refer to Ferncourt Public School, 'School History': <http://www.ferncourtpps.net.au/history>

<sup>5</sup> Wendy Thorp, *Conservation Plan and Heritage Impact Statement: Richardson's Lookout and Warren Park*, Marrickville Council, Feb 1998: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4227/11/50459872D0F33>

Photo: Richardson's Lookout 1988