

**STORIES OF DEEP TIME:
KIDS TEACHING KIDS IN THE WILLANDRA LAKES WORLD HERITAGE AREA**

***Historias de tiempo profundo:
Niños que enseñan a otros Niños en el área de Patrimonio de la
Humanidad del Lago Willandra***

Authors: Robert Biggs (1), Warren Clark (2)

- (1) Deputy Chair Mungo Youth Project, 219 Nerrum Ave Red Cliffs Victoria, Australia.
robbiggs99@bigpond.com
- (2) Executive Officer – Joint Management Committee Mungo National Park. Office of Environment and
Heritage, NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service, Buronga 2739 NSW
Warren.Clark@environment.nsw.gov.au

ABSTRACT

The educational model of the Mungo Youth Project (MYP) provides an approach to learning & teaching through which the lens of archaeology and traditional understandings come together to focus on 'a deeper understanding of present-day events as well as the enduring significance of earlier ones.'

Shape of the Australian Curriculum

The MYP is a biennial, three-month research in schools project that culminates in a three-day conference hosted by the Tribal Elder communities within the Willandra Lakes Region World Heritage Area. The project generates a student centred approach to 'deep history' and the diverse Aboriginal culture of Australia. It creates powerful references to contemporary challenges including climate change and reconciliation.

The project employs the *Kids teaching Kids* model, where students learn so as to teach in an interactive way with other learners. Critically the students work with Elders, traditional owners, archaeologists, scientists, landholders, educators and National Parks staff as their mentors both before and during the conference.

Occurring in a purpose built, high-tech tented village at Mungo, the 2011 conference was beamed live and interactive into schools in Alaska USA & NSW Australia.

The presenters will demonstrate the power of the model and will commend its adaptive use within other significant sites of World Heritage and archaeological value around the world.

RESUMEN

El modelo educativo de Mungo Youth Project (MYP) enfoca la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de forma que la arqueología y la comprensión tradicionales se unen para permitir "un mejor entendimiento de los eventos actuales y la importancia y significado de los eventos pasados".

MYP es un proyecto en las aulas, bienal, de tres meses duración, que culmina en una conferencia de tres días organizada por las Comunidades Tribales de la región del Parque Nacional Patrimonio de la Humanidad Willandra Lakes. El proyecto centra al estudiante en la comprensión histórica de las diversas culturas aborígenes en Australia, y crea importantes referencias a los problemas contemporáneos, incluyendo el cambio climático y la reconciliación.

El proyecto emplea el modelo "niños que enseñan niños", donde los chicos aprenden al enseñar de forma interactiva junto a otros estudiantes. Estos trabajarán

junto a los líderes de las comunidades, dueños tradicionales de la región, arqueólogos, científicos, terratenientes, educadores y empleados del Parque Nacional como mentores.

La conferencia que tuvo lugar bajo tiendas de campaña en la aldea de Mungo en 2011 fue transmitida en vivo y de forma interactiva a escuelas de Alaska (EE.UU) y Nueva Gales del Sur (Australia).

Los ponientes demostraron el poder del modelo, elogiaron su uso y adaptación en emplazamientos de Patrimonio Histórico y valor arqueológico alrededor del mundo.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Mungo; Educación; Willandra; Australia, Curriculum; Aborígenes; Profesor; Estudiante; Arqueología; Aprendizaje

1 INTRODUCTION

'In the late decades of the 19th Century scientists arrived at a startling conclusion. They realised that not only had the earth existed for a vast length of time, but also humans had lived in that ancient world'.¹ To early archaeologists such as Sven Nilsson (1868) or Sir John Lubbock (1872) the lives of ancient peoples were either "enveloped in obscurity" or "hidden from the present by a veil so thick that it cannot be penetrated by either history or tradition."

In 2003 Mary Pappin jnr, a Mutthi Mutthi woman and park Discovery Ranger made an interesting discovery of human footprints across a dried up mud pan. Mary was on a field tour on Lake Garnpung with archaeologist Steve Webb and fellow Discovery Rangers. Interesting became astonishing when these fossilised footprints were found to be nearly 20,000 years old; they are the oldest known modern human footprints on the planet and were made when the climate was significantly different than it is today. In fact the environment then was like the tundra is now – freezing.

Elders of the Pintubi people from central Australia were invited to interpret the footprints. Their land is library, and through their traditional skills gleaned the moment when one of a number of warriors throws a spear, and the groove left where it landed. They (the Elders) laughed that this warrior had missed his target. A trackway is discerned of a man hopping on his right foot. This man is moving northward at speed, with no visible aid. He is hopping to keep up with the other men also running north. A small family group cuts across from west to east; a woman with a baby on her left hip shifts her load to the other. A child's prints are seen to meander off in another direction only to reappear as if called back to the group. These people walk across the land in community 20,000 years ago. Their story, of a time opaque to us, is captured on a wet muddy surface, fossilised and is now revealed.

Through the eyes of tradition and archaeology the lives of people of a deeper human past inspire our current understandings and respect. Respect for the enormous span of civilisation, and a respect for the adventure and adaptation of peoples past. The Mungo Youth Project (MYP) is the first model of education in Australia to engage students directly with these elements of Australia's deep history and living present.

The Mungo Youth Project developed as a core element of the 2006 Mungo Festival – a celebration of 25 years of world heritage listing and over 45,000 years of indigenous culture in the Willandra World Heritage Area.

¹ Archaeology of Ancient Australia: Peter Hiscock.

In 2000 the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and the three Traditional Tribal Group (Paakantji, Ngyiampaa and Mutthi Mutthi) Elders negotiated a Joint Management Agreement, which was ratified in 2001. Objectives of the Agreement included the desire of the Traditional Owners (TO's) to share the story of Mungo with all visitors to the park.

In particular, the plan identifies the use of Mungo National Park as an education resource for schools and the involvement of youth in learning about the history and culture of Mungo.

- *Mungo is the most “cultured” place as it reflects the past of the people and the land; it is a place that requires respect. It is the creation place where all things were brought into being.*
- *We realise today that this is the place where people and the land becomes one, where our people walk with the spirits of our ancestors.*

The MYP is a powerful realisation of the partnerships evident at Mungo and is an avenue by which TO groups can share their history and the history of their country, promoting a better understanding of Aboriginal heritage and the evolution of Australia's landscape and environment.

Education Part 1 – a personal journey

In 1977 one of the authors (Biggs) commenced his science-teaching career and was fortunate enough to join a tour of 'Mungo' with geomorphologist Prof Jim Bowler. Neither the story of 'Mungo' nor Jim were known to this 'hard science' teacher interested in chemistry, physics and astronomy. Our bus, filled with teachers rolled out of the irrigation oasis of Mildura and into the outback. The landscape is undulating dune and low ridge country and as we travelled north shifted from orange orchards to marginal grazing lands and then to the mallee, varieties of low trees and shrubs cut through with a snaking red dirt track that stretched to the horizon.

We stepped from the bus on the top of what appeared to be a dry grass knoll and then Bowler gathered us and we walked down what he described as the largest clay dune on earth. Part way down Prof Bowler pointed out a line of beach pebbles curving off on contour and said *“well here is an ancient shoreline and if you look across, this whole area was full of water and 30,000 maybe more, years ago people, modern people like you or I lived.”*

This was a literal shock to me. The idea of it shook my sense of humanity and self. A choir boy raised in rural Australia within strong Anglican traditions, 1977 Christian world view meets a human story unknown and untold. I was delighted; what was happening here? Who were these people? Where did they come from? And now my universal and ongoing question: Who are we?

Prof Bowler's educational journey that day opened up world's unknown and unimagined. The mega fauna, now extinct roamed too; were they hunted to extinction? Or did the climate change and their foods quickly disappear? Mungo Woman, discovered by Bowler in 1968 was ritually buried, as was Mungo Man. The oldest ceremonial burials of modern humans 41,000 years ago – celebrations of lives lived. *“The very presence of humanity itself.”* (Bowler)

Prof Bowler's line of research was the study of ice age Australia, and in the 1960's ancient lakebeds held the promise of having preserved signs of past climatic change. Of particular interest were a series of interconnecting lakes on the ancient course of the Lachlan River, and the Willandra Billabong Creek. Since the late sixties a rich Pleistocene history has been identified. In 1981 the Willandra Lakes Region World Heritage Area was inscribed on the World Heritage Register for both cultural and natural values, bearing exceptional

testimony to a past civilisation, and as an outstanding example representing the major stages in the earth's evolutionary history (*Willandra Lakes Region statement of outstanding universal value 2010*).

Prof Bowler, who made the historic discoveries of Mungo Lady and Mungo Man, is the Mungo Youth Project patron. *A distinguished Australian geologist working in the field of geomorphology and environmental reconstruction, his work has focused on the evolution of climate, landforms and soils in arid and semi-arid Australia and China.* He sees Mungo as a powerful opportunity for students to engage with the environment and learn about prehistory and give thought to the contemporary challenges that faces Australia today. *"Lake Mungo provides a key to the wider understanding of Australia. It helps unlock the story of the people-land interaction in this strange and complex land. It also challenges us today to imagine how we and our descendants will respond to the huge changes in the decades that lie ahead"* (Bowler 2009).

The Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area is an area of 600,000 hectares in the southwest of New South Wales, Australia and has formed over the last two million years. Archaeological records reveal that the area has the longest continuous record of human occupation in Australia. The Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area, including Mungo National Park, protects an area of outstanding international and national significance for its landscape and cultural heritage values; its archaeological, geomorphological and palaeontological features. In respect of this outstanding natural heritage, it is the area's record of climate and landscape evolution during the Pleistocene and Holocene that make it unique. Mungo reads like an open page of the past two million years; it is a geomorphological record unparalleled in Australia. The most abundant archaeological sites within the park are stone artefact scatters and fireplaces. Some of these fireplaces had clay heat retainers and the evidence of the Mungo geomagnetic excursion of 28,000 – 31,000 years ago comes from these. Some of the fireplaces contain burnt fish bones and small middens containing shells of freshwater mussels have been found in the Mungo lunette. On the western shore of Lake Mungo a silcrete quarry was the source of many of the stone artefacts scattered through the park, cores and flakes being most commonly found.

It is known from burial sites within the Willandra World Heritage Area, that Aboriginal occupation of the area extends beyond 45,000 years. These burials are also amongst the world's oldest ritual burials and cremations.

Education Part 2

History stretches from the distant past to the present, and provides a deeper understanding of present-day events as well as the enduring significance of earlier ones. It introduces us to a variety of human experience, enables us to see the world through the eyes of others, and enriches our appreciation of the nature of change.

Shape of the Australian Curriculum: History

While Aboriginal history in Australia occupies 50,000 plus years of Australia's human past the teaching of this history is still in its infancy. The concept of deep time (prehistory) in relation to the human past is a difficult one to fathom and presents a challenge to the most adept of teachers and to education systems. Learning about Australia's pre-history in schools has been confined by a euro-centric frame of reference, limited in scope and nature and failing to engage students' imaginations. The post 1788 story is reinforced with little or mixed feelings regarding the value of learning about Australia's prehistory – quite disconcertingly it would appear to be one of the least interesting topics taught to students. In "Histories Children" Clarke notes that students are uniformly bored with the manner in which Aboriginal history is taught within schools. Importantly she notes that "students haven't closed off from

indigenous history – it's just that most of them have had sporadic approaches to the topic, with far too much repetition and not enough material they can engage with". (Clark 2008). As Westaway (2009) describes "...it is similar to the Aboriginal past that we see displayed in most museums... the rich narrative of the complex ancient past is sadly lacking. The Aboriginal historic period...of over 50,000+ years...seems to have slipped off the National narrative."

A significant reform of education is to be implemented across the Australian nation. For the first time Australian students will access a common curriculum in key subject areas including Mathematics, English, Science, Geography and History. As Westaway (2009) describes: "This creates a significant opportunity to expose on an unprecedented scale future generations of Australians to Sahul's antiquity. If done well, the new syllabus has the potential to address a range of issues, from promoting the conservation and protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage to encouraging a deeper appreciation of the complexity and significance of Australia's Aboriginal past".

As the different state and territory education systems move to adopt a new Australian National Curriculum significant challenges exist, including how to respond to a continued mis-framing and continuing disrespect for Australia's evident past. For reasons known to curriculum planners, the 'Shape of the Australian Curriculum: History' is structured under a sequence, which illustrates a system based euro centric and flawed framing of Australian History. The sequence is:

1. History from the end of the Ancient period to the beginning of the Modern period (c.60,000 BC – c.500AD)
2. History from the end of the Ancient period to the beginning of the Modern period (c. 500–1750)
3. The Modern World and Australia (1750–1901)
4. Australia in the Modern World (1901–present)

A demarcation of 500 AD is problematic when Australia's history is complex and adaptive from a period reaching back into deep time, is connected and continues today. How does one consider a continuing and adaptive history between 500 AD and 1750? Framing influences perspectives through which people interpret themselves and the world in which they live. To define an '*ancient period*' in such a manner defines a stereotype combined with a pejorative (ancient - gone and perhaps best forgotten) and creates a box into which a continuing aboriginal history can be dropped.

Researchers and authors such as Bill Gammage (The Biggest Estate on Earth - How Aborigines made Australia 2011) explores pre-Europeans land management strategies and in so doing, offers insights which challenge old paradigms and rewrites the history of this continent. Within an education perspective this is not the time to maintain the constraints, identified in the above sequence, of a euro-centric view of Australia's history. Gammage, Blandowski, Langton, Westaway et al reveal that we are just beginning to gain the insights and understandings that give a deeper and straightforward meaning to Australian History. In this lies the opportunity for the people of Australia to adopt the history of their continent.

Australian history has been embedded in a significant set of denials to ourselves - terra nullius, genocide, the systematic 'land clearing' of peoples, the theft of children, abandonment to the rubbish tips for many following the 1967 referendum, a systemic destruction of language and the authors would contend, a whiteout of the deep history of Aboriginal Australia. Whilst matters and ideas such as these are controversial they are the places from which many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have emerged. Many

opportunities now exist for a clear, productive consideration of the nations history within the education frame that is both true to the sequence and weight of events.

“Without an appreciation and respect for Aboriginal and Torres strait Islander culture and history (both ancient and modern) by non-indigenous Australians we argue that reconciliation will continue to be a difficult goal to obtain”. (Westaway, Tunn, Biggs & Clarke - 2009). Formal education at school is where most people obtain their knowledge and appreciation of archaeology and history that they will take with them into their adult life. (Swain 2007) “If Australia’s historic narrative, which incorporates over 99.4% of Australia’s human past is not communicated effectively then there is little hope that the general citizenry of Australia will have a respectful and meaningful conception or appreciation of Australia’s deep history. Archaeology will undoubtedly be a central component to this narrative” (Westaway 2009)

Across the depth and breadth of mainland Australia are significant heritage areas, including 13 World Heritage sites of cultural importance to Aboriginal people. It is the use of these sites, utilising the ‘Kids teaching Kids’ model and, critically, through a partnership with traditional owners, scientists, landholders, mentors, educators and National Parks staff that is commended for the education of all students across Australia.

The Elders and MYP planning group believe that this project comes to “the heart of the story” and is an educational model that is founded on community ownership and participation. It creates an authentic, powerful and positive engagement for students with the deep history of Australia.

Worawa Aboriginal College, Healesville Victoria; participants in the 2011 Project

To the Mungo Youth Project Organisers,

I'm a teacher from Worawa Aboriginal College in Healesville, Victoria. We were fortunate enough to bring a group of our students to the Mungo Festival for the first time this year. We were late entrants, which meant we really had our work cut out for us in terms of getting together the best possible presentation we could in the short time we had.

We chose 9 girls to be a part of the Mungo Crew and over the weeks leading up to the festival, we all worked super hard to ensure what we presented would do the school proud and the girls even prouder.

Many of our girls are from remote communities and English is sometimes a second or third language. For those girls to get up and present in front of a group of people they have never met before was amazing to see. The end result ended up exceeding our expectations, our girls were so proud of themselves, we the teachers were proud and according to audience feedback, they presented extremely well.

What we noticed with the students in both the lead up to the festival and during the festival was the increase in self esteem, respect for others and pride in their personal history and knowledge. As educators, we could never have gotten the same results from a classroom, the hands on approach and self-lead learning the girls went through was invaluable.

The only aspect of the festival we thought could change was to have more hands on activities for the students. There was a lot of Information to take in and sometimes it felt like they were being talked to a little too much.

The Mungo Youth Festival is something Worawa Aboriginal College would love to continue to be a part of. The feedback from the students was so positive and self-affirming that to not make Mungo a regular part of Worawa, would be a mistake.

Thanks again to everyone involved, it was a wonderful experience.

Education Part 3

Co-author Warren Clark, a Barkindji Elder the Executive Officer of the Mungo National Park Joint Management Advisory Committee, identifies the Mungo Youth Project as coming to the 'heart of the story' of the peoples of the Willandra. To Clark the project builds shared understandings and develops our capacity to visualise and interpret humanities common quest to understand who we are and how things began. How did we get here? From where, when? What are the connections? Developing concepts of time are sequential and the concept of deep time appears to be little understood and very difficult to grasp. The Mungo Youth Project provides a direct link to my ancestral belonging and helps to interpret big questions shared by peoples across the world. "The Willandra Lakes can be viewed as one of the world's great open museums. It has contributed substantially not only in defining the origins of Aboriginal Australians, but also to tracing the global picture of the origins and migration of modern humans. (Mungo over Millennia)

In the words of Alice Kelly – Mutthi Mutthi Tribal Elder, Balranald: *Mungo is the most "cultured" place as it reflects the past of the people and the land; it is a place that requires respect. It is the creation place where all things were brought into being. We realise today that this is the place where people and the land becomes one, where our people walk with the spirits of our ancestors. Today we look at this place and we belong. It is a place where all our concerns and worries disappear – it has that effect on people. It is our most sacred site and demands respect. The future of the Willandra Lakes and Mungo National Park relies upon good management and respect of all those people that have an association with it. The children and students must come to Mungo to learn and enjoy the spiritual and cultural significance of this, our most important place of our people, as this is the place of love, peace and harmony.*

In Trish Albert's "Caring for Country" she asks the reader to "imagine a place that can take you back in time... The Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area in New South Wales (NSW) Australia is one such place – taking you as far back as 50,000 years!"

FIGURE 1 — LOCATION OF THE WILLANDRA LAKES REGION



"Here, some of the world's oldest known sites of human footprints and burial, shell middens and fireplaces tell a fantastic history of Aboriginal people through time. These archaeological sites paint a picture of people going about everyday activities such as hunting and cooking. They also show rare evidence of people taking part in ceremony"

Australian archaeology has moved beyond developing models that simply explain human society. Archaeology is establishing understandings of socio-economic and cultural complexity. In nations such as France or Ethiopia their pre-histories have been embraced and play a direct role in their own national story.

It is the mystery of the Willandra's past and the significance of its discoveries that perhaps provides the most effective means of capturing the imagination and enthusiasm of young students.

Education Part 4 – The Mungo Youth Project

The Mungo Youth Project Conference is a biennial event that engages approximately 200 indigenous and non-indigenous students and 100 adults from regions around South Western and Central NSW and North West Victoria in the Willandra World Heritage area. The intended learning outcomes of the project are directly aligned to three specific areas of the new National Curriculum, Geography, Science and History.

Australian National Curriculum: Geography:

- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures encompass the concepts of Country and Place, People, Culture and Identity.
- These are interconnected and cannot be separated as each relies on the other.
- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander priority involves students actively engaging with the world's oldest continuous living cultures and the principles and virtues that are deeply embedded within these communities.
- These principles include caring for Country, caring for each other and respecting the systems embedded in the concepts of Country and Place, People, Culture and Identity, including the links and lessons from the past.

Australian National Curriculum: Science:

Thinking skills are embedded in a range of skills taught in science, including:

- The ability to pose questions, make predictions, speculate, solve problems.
- Through investigation, make evidence-based decisions, analyse and evaluate evidence from their own and others' work and summarise information.
- Students will be taught skills that will enable them to develop creative questions, to speculate, to think in new ways about observations of the world around them.

Australian National Curriculum: History:

- History is the study of the past.
- It provides knowledge, understanding and appreciation of previous events, people, practices and ideas.
- It orders them, renders them intelligible and discerns patterns of continuity and change.
- It provides the means whereby individual and collective identities are formed and sustained.
- It enriches the present and illuminates the future

Refer: http://www.acara.edu.au/verve/_resources/Shape_of_the_Australian_Curriculum.pdf

The Projects Purpose:

The Mungo Youth Project (MYP) engages indigenous and non-indigenous youth with education and culture in order to develop pride, confidence and identify opportunities for future well-being, employment and training.

The MYP broadens the historic frame of reference to support an authentic learning for students. Centralising cultural knowledge and engaging students as active learners in a broad and challenging learn-scape achieves this. The MYP comes into old country in new ways. Students investigate what is beyond the veil of obscurity. Through the eyes of others and their own research, students engage with what geo-archaeology, science and traditional knowledge can inform us of the 1st Australians cultural and adaptive histories.

The MYP explores deep history and a pedagogical model that is open to learning communities across Australia, perhaps the world. Students are required to approach their learning and teaching with discipline, innovation and a view to the engagement of others, including elders, archaeologists, educators and each other. Teachers learn to adapt pedagogies, and key themes and essential questions are explored.

Prior to the conference teachers were required to develop the capacities of students in two key areas – as young researchers working with their teachers, elders and scientists to investigate a topic and as the presenters themselves. Their engagement required them to be young pedagogues with a capacity to “teach” other students of their own learning in an interactive manner.

The teachers themselves participated in new learning so as to ensure that they had the competence to transfer into an effective and authentic practice the ‘kids teaching kids’ pedagogy.

Student teams were asked to develop presentations from one of six topics: Mungo Man, Mungo Woman; Climate Change – World Change; Mega Fauna; Culture and Dance; Food, Weapons & Survival; Initiation – growing up then and now.

Primary and secondary students, working in their schools in small teams, engaged in a ten-week study prior to the conference. Presentations were then considered and those that met specific criteria (quality of content and presentation, interactivity with peers, hands on activity, use of relevant technology) were selected and those teams then presented at the conference.

Teachers were asked to utilise ‘essential questions’ to ensure the development of understandings and integrated thinking, including:

- How does learning about other cultures help us to understand ourselves?
- How do we find out the truth about things that happened long ago?
- Why do people seek to discover what is unknown?
- What does it mean to ‘come of age’ and how does that differ across culture, time and gender?
- What keeps people of different cultures from living/working together?
- What brings people together?
- What is reconciliation and is it achievable?
- How do archaeologists/ scientists seek to discover the unknown?
- How does archaeology/ science help us to understand the world we live in?
- Is science always right? Does it help us?

The conference featured a number of elements including: student led workshops; a range of community activities led by Aboriginal Elders; archaeological activities in the field; team building and student leadership; cultural events; creative performances and presentations of a range of significant personal, artistic and professional achievements by national indigenous role models.

The students also spent time with National Parks staff including community and heritage officers, scientists, discovery rangers and regional managers to explore training and employment opportunities for future engagement with the world heritage area.

With allocated mentors relevant to the topic they select, students are guided by essential questions and scaffolded strategies to develop a presentation that they give at the three-day field conference.

The MYP journey of development is a mosaic of relationship and partnership building. Farmers link with park rangers; scientists with Aboriginal Elders; educators with project leaders – and then each with each other, across age, race, time and geography, in a process designed to activate students engagement with Australia's deep history, with their communities and with each other. The true strength of the project is that all partnerships are built on the foundational vision of the Elders.

The Mungo Youth Project has three distinct student components:

1. School based learning with teachers and mentors
2. Conference based presentations and learning
3. Field experiences with Elders, Discovery Rangers, archaeologists, pastoralists, artists

The MYP provides three explicit frameworks to support teaching:

1. Coaching
2. The provision of Mentors
3. Curriculum material

At the beginning of each conference year, schools are informed through a broad communication process including a mail out package, email and personal contact. Key information to schools includes:

- The MYP education rationale and overview
- Cultural & Protocol Considerations (Appendix 1)
- Dates for the conference
- Advice as to the two different levels of participation by a school – either as a Presenting School or as an Attending School
- The MYP web site: <http://www.mungofestival.com.au/>
- The VisitMungo web site: <http://www.visitmungo.com.au/>
- The Monash Sahul Time web site: <http://sahul时间.monash.edu.au/>

Following a general invitation to attend, those schools that chose to do so are then advised to determine at what level they wish to participate in the conference.

A Presenting School is:

- Allocated strategic support through an Education Officer and key staff from the Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service.
- Provided with an initial visit by these officers to ensure project clarity
- Required to identify Teacher leaders and school based Aboriginal Educators.
- Invited to send project teachers to a Mungo Coaching Program to be mentored in the "Kids teaching Kids" Model within the World Heritage context.
- Required to establish student project teams
- Provided with a resource package of books and references
- Provided with curriculum planning material
- Allocated mentors (archaeologist, Elder, cultural officer, scientist) as required for the topic selected.

Note: Schools are advised that only school teams that meet defined presentation criteria will be selected to present a 45-minute workshop.

Whilst not all students present at the conference, all students participate in explorations with archaeologists, pastoralists, discovery rangers and cultural activities led by Elders from the three traditional tribes.

Education Part 5: Professional Learning – the Mungo Coaching Program “Teaching teachers how to teach Kids to teach Kids”.

Educator Anne Robinson first introduced student led workshops in 1998. Anne was very excited with the profound impact the process of ‘learning so as to teach’ had on her students and their teachers.

The advantage of “Kids teaching Kids” is that you learn in ways that you enjoy, rather than being bored out of your brains listening to people ramble on. Not only do you learn a lot more, but also you actually have a good time.

Regards,
Geoffrey P

Authentic, student-centered learning is the agenda of the MYP and it is the professional learning of teachers and “significant others” that is a key enabling strategy to achieve that purpose.

“Professional development should be targeted and directly related to teachers’ practice. It should be site-based and long-term. It should be on-going - part of a teacher’s workweek, not something that’s tacked on.” **(Stigler, 2002)**

Clearly the project cannot achieve such an important set of objectives as described by Stigler. However as Bill Donahue, teacher from Mt Austin High School, Wagga Wagga NSW described after the 2007 conference: “clearly I just didn’t get it (the model), I thought I had but it was only when I saw what other presentation groups did that I realized the limited presentation (traditional) style of my students. They were more or less an old fashioned “talk and chalk “ with a non-interactive demonstration.”

The reflection of this teacher is important as from those pedagogical insights arose new practice – in the following two conferences Mt Austin High School student presentations demonstrated all the features required by the “Kids teaching Kids”.

The elements of a successful presentation are:

1. There is a clarity of purpose
2. There are three or more mini lessons within a presentation
3. Each mini lesson provides a learning or an action
4. The audience is actively engaged in using what they have learnt
5. There are multiple presenters who work as a team

Inspirational educators Joan Dalton and David Anderson describe a clear framework for authentic pedagogy in action:

Deep understanding	Inquiry
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Purposeful, relevant, active• Connected to learners’ lives and real world contexts• Diversity acknowledged• Construction of understanding; multiple pathways• Making connections with important ideas and processes• Transfer/application to many contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problem-based learning• Questioning, investigating• Skills of researching• Rich topics, trans-disciplinary inquiry• Risk-taking, learning from error

<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating communication literacies • Focus on substantive dialogue • Use of language to empower learners • Multiple ways of accessing/demonstrating learning • Integrated use of multi-media and information technology • Home-school communication 	<p>Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to teamwork, common vision/purpose • Shared responsibility and teamwork principles • Social-ethical values • Skills of working effectively with others • Involvement of broader community
<p>Self responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honoring intrinsic motivation • Learning how to learn • Increasing responsibility for learning, thinking and behaviour • Skills of self-direction and self-management • Focus on higher order thinking and reflection 	<p>Human development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caring relationships • Developing proactive personal qualities, attitudes, dispositions • Principled, social-ethical values • Leadership: creating preferred futures and the 'new' • Fostering community: unity, diversity, and citizenship

Dalton Anderson – visit: (Plot – <http://www.plotpd.com/Home.htm>)

Table 2

Key concepts identified in Table 2 are embedded within the ‘Kids teaching Kids’ model and are intrinsic to its success.

The development of pedagogical practices designed to enact these concepts are provided within the Mungo Coaching Program and are supplemented by regular school visits by the ‘Mungo Education Team’ MET. During the coaching program the education team models practices commended for the classroom and considers learning and planning actions:

- Team building & introductions
- Project overview
- Reflections on “How we learn” and what is “Effective learning”
- Pedagogy in action – authentic learning
- Defining and refining the topics for presentation
- Review of current resources available
- Brainstorming Strategies
- Thinking Preferences and strategies
- Essential questions and their adaptation
- Presentation design and development
- Accessing mentors (Elders, Discovery Rangers, Archaeologists, Aboriginal Cultural and Heritage officers)
- Traditional languages – keeping language alive
- Development of a school action plan
- The ongoing role of the Mungo Education Team

Within each ‘Presenting School’ teachers and educators establish their learning teams and establish the school presentation topic. In 2011 schools selected one or two topics from the following:

Presentation Topics	Notes
Song lines & dance stories.	Culture is a living entity. What are some significant cultural events you attend? Why are they important? Learn about, adapt and develop an exciting presentation to celebrate culture.

Bush Foods & Medicine	Bush Foods and Traditional Medicine helped people thrive and survive? Consider traditional living and make it alive today through your presentation.
Time Travel	20,000 years ago it was freezing at Mungo. The footprint track ways mark the presence of people then. Go back in time through scientists and trackers... tell the story of human travel, of land and people and Mungo Man & Mungo Woman.
Climate Change – World Change.	The climate is continuously changing. Floods, fire and the future... How will we/ survive if the hottest day is hotter by 2C? How would you survive if it is colder by -9C than now? What does Mungo tell us about Climate Change?
Traditional Lore & Language	Keep the Lore strong. Through your community (elders and community educators) find a way to present understandings and respect for traditional lore. Explore and find ways to use traditional language in your presentation.
Initiation - Growing up, then and now	“What does it mean to ‘come of age’? Consider the way we “grow up now” and the way it was in the past. Interview people who know the values of the past...find an agreed way to share. Do people grow up differently across cultures? Are there differences in the ways that girls and boys grow up? What inspires you in your life?
Mega Fauna	Giant animals of the past – what were they and what changed? Become an archaeologist and reveal the past...

Each presentation team establishes a presentation plan summary utilising a planning scaffold. The summary is reviewed with the MET to reduce duplication and to focus support.

During the period that schools have to develop their presentations a scheduled timetable of schools visits establishes the MET school support program.

Education Part 6: The role of “significant others” within the project.

The success of this project is founded on a shared vision and a coordinated set of partnerships. Each partnership member/group have critical roles including that of education, and an essential responsibility of the Mungo Education Team MET is to enhance the opportunity for success of each of these members when engaging with students.

The “significant others” who provide an education and or leadership role are:

- Elders from the three Traditional Owner communities
- Executive Officer’s, Willandra World Heritage Area and Mungo Joint Management
- Aboriginal Community Projects Coordinator and Aboriginal Heritage Conservation Officer – Office of Environment & Heritage, National Parks NSW
- Discovery Rangers - Willandra World Heritage Area
- Archaeologists
- Patron Prof Jim Bowler AM
- Pastoralists
- Chair – Mungo Youth Project, Ross O’Shea (Premiers Office NSW)
- Mentors

To maximize the impact and efficacy of presenters the MET provides resources, scaffolded

activities and coaching for each specific educational role. The needs of each group are different; for the purposes of this paper the mentoring of an archaeologist by the Education Officer is considered.

An accepted maxim is that archaeology helps us to understand ourselves, and the world in which we live. As the MYP conference field trip with an archaeologist will, for most students, provide their first such experience, the intended impact is to be powerful and positive. In 2007 and 2009 the program allowed thirty students at a time to participate in a field trip with an archaeologist. These trips were highly engaging and motivating for those students who were able to establish a physically close experience with the archaeologist. However, for those at the back, almost out of hearing, it was easy to observe that little or no learning engagement was occurring.

For 2011, through consultation with the Education Officer a new archaeological field experience was established. The experience utilized the following framework:

- Four archaeologists for 32 students with four separate teams established
- Preplanned circuits for each team with evidential material identified on route
- Artifact for field use identified and placed on site or available with the archaeologist
- A set of key questions for students to respond to
- Activities designed for students to interpret the landscape
- A “jigsaw” challenge to replicate the challenges facing archaeologists as they assemble and interpret discoveries

Key Mentors

Mentoring is an important part of the Mungo Youth Project and an experienced mentor, for the topic area relevant to a presenting school, provides authority to and enhances the learning experience of the students. As examples, a scientist can be sent to a school studying Climate Change; a traditional owner can teach about Lore and a contemporary leader can inform about Initiation, then & now. In regard to Elder or TO participation the role of the Aboriginal Community Projects Coordinator and the Aboriginal Heritage Conservation Officer are crucial.

Each conference offers students access to significantly achieving Australians. In 2007 it was international swimming and multiple Olympic gold medalist champion Ian Thorpe, in 2009 Australian 100 metre champion and Olympian sprinter Patrick Johnson. In 2011 both Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO Governor of NSW, and aboriginal Elder Stephen “Baamba” Albert, education leader and star of stage and the film “Bran Nue Dae” provided significant connections to a wider Australia, vision and leadership.

In helping to contribute to the participant’s optimism and their sense of a future, influential community based role models from different backgrounds and professions participate in educational and motivational talks to enhance and inspire students. These role models primarily include people who grew up in the region and have gone on to carve out successful careers in their chosen fields. They included Little G (performance poet and hip hop singer), Angela Bates from SBS’s Living Black and Barrister Rudolph Kirby.

Event Management

The critical role of the project event management requires attention. An event manager is essential for a project such as this as partnerships must occur with an array of significant interests, all of who will participate in the field during the conference and for some, before. The event manager, Helen Healy, Director of ‘HHO Events’ and her team have facilitated the engagement of all parties associated with this project since 2007. This work is

of outstanding integrity and has been essential for the ongoing success of the MYP. Responsibilities undertaken include: Strategic Planning, site development and construction, travel and accommodation for all Elders & mentors, Financial planning and budgets, recruitment of key mentors, communication, planning and managing the project committee, relationships with the patron and former patrons, responding to contingencies such as bad weather, innovation. Respect for and integrity within the TO communities, of the Mungo Youth Project Management committee and at a broader national level has allowed 'HHO Events' to achieve the goals of the project and have supported funding applications for a strategic future.

Visit: <http://www.hhoevents.com/public/home.html>

Education Part 7: The Conference Program.

The program is a complex three day matrix of events for students, educators, presenters, Elders, Distance Education, mentors, pastoralists, caterers, sound and light Technicians, land and emergency managers and Discovery Rangers. The details of the program are found by visiting visit: <http://www.mungofestival.com.au/>

The conference schema:

1. Welcome to country
2. Team Building activities
3. Student lead presentations – “Kids teaching Kids”
4. Field experiences
5. Cultural activities with the Elders and TO
6. Mentor presentations
7. Celebrations, theatre, poetry and song – “Let the Stars Shine”
8. Teacher professional learning sessions

The conference occurs in a specifically constructed high-tech tent community within the Willandra Lakes Region World Heritage area and Mungo National Park.

Through DEC Distance Education NSW, 2011 presentations were beamed 'live and interactive' with Inuit school communities in Alaska and schools across NSW.

Visit: <http://open.abc.net.au/posts/tags/mungo%20youth%20project>

During the conference all students take part in field experiences and cultural tours and activities led by either elders from the three traditional tribes, scientists, national parks Discovery rangers or pastoralists, all within a spectacular and culturally rich world heritage area.

The tours include:

- Traditional Owners take students to Joulni to see the site where Mungo Man and Woman were found and have explained their vision of a Keeping Place for cultural material.
- Archaeologists and scientists lead students into a landscape of geological, cultural and human significance.
- Pastoralists take students on a tour of historical woolsheds, offer students a sheep shearing experience and provide explanation of the pastoralist history and involvement in the management of the World Heritage site.
- NSW Parks and Wildlife staff, including Discovery Rangers, take students on a tour of the interpretation centre, replicas of the 20,000-year-old footprints and archaeological work sites to identify with their ancestral past and brief students on employment

opportunities in Willandra Lakes Region World heritage Area in management, conservation and education.

Education Part 8: The Future.

The educational scope of the MYP asked for the development of curriculum materials that could be used to further the study of a true history of Australia. This was not achieved; however it signals the attainable and great opportunity available in developing and transforming prehistory from the current state which is virtually nothing in the curriculum for the vast majority of Australian students into something of substance and value.

The fourth MYP is scheduled for September 2013. Prior to the 2013 conference a range of actions are envisaged to enhance the project; these include the development and trialling of further curriculum resources aligned to the Australian Curriculum and the education values and opportunities of the Mungo National Park and the Willandra Lakes Region World Heritage National Park.

The Mungo Education Team, in continuing partnerships with the world heritage community, and strategic involvement with national and state education departments, universities and TAFE and innovative designers aims to create a Mungo based curriculum that:

- Meets the education goals of the Traditional Tribal Groups' strategic plan
- Is accessed through agreed cultural protocols
- Is linked to the 'Australian Curriculum Connect' Portal
- Is independent and accessible to a variety of learners
- Provides a range of strategies and resources that will enable all partner participants (Traditional Owners, Elders, Discovery Rangers, Pastoralists, Scientists, mentors, schools, teachers and students) to implement the "Kids Teaching Kids" model
- Provides coaching programs and learning scaffolds that enable teachers to build new skills and develop innovative learning practices
- Encourages interactive experiences with artefact and archaeology
- Encourages access to different thinking dispositions; scientific, historical, artistic, cultural, environmental
- Links virtual learning and problem solving with landscape, people and culture
- Allows for interaction and storytelling
- Promotes connectivity with other World Heritage Areas.

Medium term actions include:

- Museum in a suitcase, featuring archaeological artefacts and interactive worksheets for students
- Interactive applications that simulate archaeological excavations and re-assembly puzzles
- Interactive story board applications that provide alternative historical perspectives
- A range of pathways for learners to access the Mungo Education experience

Conclusion

Students participating in the MYP describe their role as the educator (with key responsibilities for transferring learning to others in an active, culturally respectful, technically savvy, historically and scientifically informed manner) as "awesome".

During the 2009 conference, a young Aboriginal boy led the NSW Minister of Aboriginal Affairs across a sand dune to a site previously revealed to the boy by archaeologist Harvey Johnston. The boy showed the Minister the shell remnants of a

Genyorus egg, estimated to be 42,000 years old. The learner had been enthralled by the moment of discovery, he seemed to experience the 'aha' that educators seek, a new knowing. Certainly he was inspired to engage the Minister who was also captured by the moment – a child moved to action by an idea. Importantly, the action of the Aboriginal boy was spontaneous and not known by the organisers, perhaps an indicator as to the efficacy of the model – “Kids teaching Kids”.

The MYP is a proven model of learning that engages students in an archaeological and traditional history previously opaque. In the view of teachers and through post conference on line surveying of students, the project impacted positively on student school participation, attendance, self-esteem and purpose.

While the Mungo Youth Project illustrates the key role and essential partnership that the science of archaeology has in the education of people the reality is that archaeology within the education landscape is in its infancy. For the general public archaeology remains interned in a scattered array of museums, universities and popular science pages. People are enthralled by the “moment” of archaeology – The Hobbits in the Flores, Indonesia. If you look hard, or receive advice you can locate such information.

The important challenge for educators, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and archaeologists is to communicate the complexity and significance of an earlier Australia with a 50,000 plus year-old record of exploration, survival, adaption and complex management of a complex and challenging landscape. Such achievements need to be a central part of the National narrative. “If we involve the broader public in the archaeological stories that lie within their regions then we will potentially foster a greater and more meaningful sense of place and a sense of stewardship for the national heritage.” (Westaway 2009)

The MYP's success in creating a student centred approach to the deep history of Australia is founded on three elements: an authority to act provided by the Elders who hold a clear vision for their ancestral and World Heritage lands, the enduring power of education and a respect for the inclusion of all partners in the projects implementation.

The innovative Mungo Youth Project has identified that archaeology and traditional understandings may come together in wholly integrated ways to transform understandings of present day events as well as the enduring significance of earlier ones. Archaeology plays a significant role in telling the complexity of the Mungo story. The MYP has engaged, through its three conferences, communities of young learners who focused on gaining a true sense of time and history and yet the number of students participating is tiny relative to the number of students in the nation.

Every region of Australia, from the Mallee scrub to the Australian Alps, the islands of the Torres Strait to the Sturt and Simpson Desert fringe retains evidence of deep histories. It is a fragile record, and is a largely untapped educational resource. The efficacy of the Mungo Youth Project is that it provides a model that is adaptable and useable by any community within range of areas of archaeological and cultural significance, anywhere on the planet. An adaptive use of the Mungo Youth Project educational model is commended; it is a thoughtful and inclusive approach to the education of Australian students.

Appendix 1: Cultural & Protocol Considerations:

- Consult Aboriginal experts, Aboriginal Education Officers (AEOs), Koorie Education Support Officer's (KESO's) and others from school and community to ensure correct protocols
- Consult AEOs, KESO's and seek their assistance in organizing an appropriate Aboriginal person /Elder to come to school
- Invite Elder to talk to your class and discuss what you'd like them to do. Ask if the Elder is happy for students to ask questions at the end of the session
- Organise someone – it may be students – to photograph activities and students as they participate
- Prepare students for the visit. Make clear your expectations about demonstrating respect to the
- Elder, for both Aboriginal and non Aboriginal students
- Have the class prepare a greeting for the Elder on arrival
- Thank the Elder for sharing their culture with students, or ask a student to prepare beforehand to do this on behalf of the class.
- Prepare a list of focus questions for group discussions

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