Teacher’s Resource Kit
2.5 hour Site Walk
History Stage 5
Years 9-10
Updated June 2015
Quarantine Station Site Study

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Quarantine Station Site Study
The Program

The Quarantine Station Site Study (2.5 hour site walk) is an education program for Year 9-10 students. By observing the built and natural environments, and examining historical photographs, maps and primary and secondary source documents, students explore the way that the Quarantine Station has changed from the days of Aboriginal occupation to the present.

The program gives students the opportunity to develop an understanding of the history of the site in the context of the specific history of Sydney and the political, scientific and social developments of Australia.

The Station’s site study provides students with the opportunity to further develop their historical skills with an emphasis on analysis, use of sources, investigation, interpretation and communication.

Whilst every Site Study considers the evolution of the Quarantine Station over its entire history, there are two main areas of focus from which to choose:

19th Century - 1788-1918 – First contact, Colonisation, Migration, Federation, Immigration Restriction Act, WWI and Spanish Influenza

20th Century – 1900-Present – Federation, World Wars I & II, Spanish Influenza, Refugee Detention, Vietnamese Orphans, Closure of the Station, Public/Private use of Quarantine Station

Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the program are to:

- Introduce students to the concept of change and causation within the cultural landscape of the Quarantine Station.
- Develop students understanding of the history of the Quarantine Station in light of and as a reflection of changes worldwide
- Provide the opportunity for students to consider differing perspectives of those who have been associated with the site and develop empathy for those perspectives.
- Challenge students to consider the past as a relevant factor to the present.
- Introduce students to a number of the Quarantine Stations primary sources and engage them directly in interpreting these sources in relation to the physical evidence in situ, including the consideration of contestability of the sources.
- Challenge students to debate the present use of the Quarantine Station and its relevance to our world today.

Key Inquiry Questions

- What were the changing features of the movement of peoples form 1750 to 1918 as seen at the Quarantine Station?
- How did new ideas, especially about hygiene, disease, and treatment of disease and technological developments, especially as related to quarantine practices, contribute to change in this period and provided a microcosm of larger world trends?
- What was the significance of World Wars I and II?
- How does the use of the site in the 20th Century reflect current social concerns?
1.3 Areas of the History Syllabus Addressed on the Stage 5 Site Study
Making of the Modern world from 1750-1945 and Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relevant Skills Addressed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comprehension: chronology, terms and concepts</strong></td>
<td>Use historical terms and concepts in appropriate contexts (ACCHS165, 183)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sequence historical events to demonstrate the relationship between different periods, people and places (ACCHS164, 182)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analysis and use of sources</strong></td>
<td>Identify the origin, content, context and purpose of primary and secondary sources (ACCHS169, 187)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluate the reliability and usefulness of primary and secondary sources for a specific historical inquiry (ACCHS171, 189)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perspectives and Interpretation</strong></td>
<td>Identify &amp; analyse the reasons for different perspectives in a particular historical context (ACCHS172, 173, 190, 191)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empathetic Understanding</strong></td>
<td>Interpret history within the context of the actions, values, attitudes and motives of people in the context of the past (ACCHS172, 173, 190, 191)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Outcomes**

Using the Quarantine Station as a microcosm reflective of larger trends, students have the opportunity to:

- Explain and assess the historical forces and factors that shaped the modern world and Australia (HT5-1)
- Sequence and explain the significant patterns of continuity and change in the development of the modern world and Australia (HT5-2)
- Explain and analyses the cause and effects of events and developments in the modern world and Australia (HT5-4)
- Use relevant evidence form sources to support historical narratives, explanations and analyses of the modern world and Australia (HT5-6)

2 Preparation

In order to prepare students for their visit to the Station and maximise their appreciation and learning about it, please use the pre-visit activities. The attached workbook is designed to be used during/shortly after their visit. If you wish to use the workbook, please print a copy for each student.

2.1 Student Workbook – as follows:
These worksheets contain both questions the guides will answer as you tour the Station and questions you will need to reflect on and answer yourself at the end of the tour.

Use the photographs and maps during activities as instructed by your guide throughout your visit.

Use the blank space to take notes of things that interest you.

**Historical Phases of the Quarantine Station**

- 1838 – Establishment
- 1839-1872 – Immigration Phase
- 1873-1880 – Class Definition Phase
- 1881-1909 – Board of Health Phase
- 1909-1950 – Federal Phase
- 1950-1984 – Aviation Phase
- 1984-2006 – National Parks Phase
- 2006-present – MaWland Phase

1. **What is Quarantine?**

   [Your answer here]

2. **How was the Station used to protect Sydney from infectious diseases?**

   [Your answer here]
Figure 1 Slade, George Penkivil, 1822-1896. Harmony, quarantine hulk, 1870. nla.pic-an6453088 National Library of Australia
Figure 2 - Plan showing position of Old and New Buildings on Quarantine Station NSW, J Barnet 1876. Report of the Royal Commission on the Management of the Station 1881.
Figure 3. Quarantine Station 1881-1909- Board of Health Phase

Board of Health Phase: 1881-1909
Source: P Davies 2000
Figure 4. Quarantine Station 1910-1950– Federal Phase
3. Why did the Station stop being used for quarantine purposes in 1984?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

4. Do you think there is still a need for a quarantine station?

Why/why not?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

5. List some of the sources you may use to see how a historic site such as the Quarantine Station has changed over time. Give one example from your visit.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

6. Recall a story about what life was like at the Quarantine Station.

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________________________________________________________________________

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7. Make a judgement as to the importance of the Station for a historian studying past migration to Australia

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
8. If you were going to interpret a particular phase of the Station’s history which one would you choose and how would you interpret it?
3 Pre-visit Activities

The following activities are provided as suggestions for lesson activities to engage students with the concept and practice of immigration and quarantine. It is recommended that students become familiar with these concepts beforehand in order to get the most out of the experience.

3.1 The Historical Phases of the Quarantine Station

Using the information provided in this kit and other historical sources, introduce students to the history of the Quarantine Station, based on the historical building phases as outlined in Section 8.1.

3.2 Immigration to Australia

Discuss the different waves of immigration in Australia to the present day. This could include graphing immigration numbers chronologically within the phases of the Quarantine Stations history as outlined in section 8.1. It could also include looking at political policies that may have influenced the waves of immigration. It may also be worthwhile investigating and comparing the difference between policies that are in play today in comparison to those in the 1900’s.

Students can also begin to develop their own ideas about the current issues with Asylum Seekers in Australia.

3.3 Location of the Quarantine Station

The site of the Quarantine Station was chosen for three reasons:

1. It is close to the entrance of Sydney Harbour
2. Isolated from the new settlement of Sydney
3. A natural spring providing fresh water runs from the swampy ground at the top of the site through the site to Spring Cove (now quarantine beach).

Mapping the Port Jackson area from 1837 to the present puts these ideas in context.

3.4 Timeline

The Quarantine Station’s history began prior to the first buildings being built in 1837. It is an evolving site even today. There were major historical events within that time that contributed to the changes at the Station. These include:

- Arrival of the First Fleet
- 1880s Smallpox epidemic in Sydney
- Federation
- WWI
- Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918
- WWII
- Development of first commercial airline flights to Australia.

Construct a timeline which links these events to developments at the Quarantine Station within the various phases.

3.5 Disease and Treatment

The importance of the Quarantine Station is directly related to medical developments and the changing methods of treating disease. Quarantinable diseases included smallpox, Spanish influenza, scarlet fever, measles, bubonic plague, typhus fever, typhoid fever and whooping cough. Students can research these in groups to identify how treatment has changed over time and present this information to the class.

4 On-site Experience and Activities

This tour has a number of different routes in order to cater for large groups however the information that is portrayed to the students is done so in chronologically. At each stop attention is drawn to specific features of the landscape today or as seen in the primary source material directly relevant to the particular location.

The phases are as follows:
Quarantine Station Site Study

- Aboriginal people and North Head
- Introduction to Quarantine
- Establishment and Immigration Phase
- Board of Health Phase
- Federal Phase
- Aviation Phase
- National Parks Phase
- Mawland Phase

There is an interactive and discussion topic to be undertaken whilst in the Wharf Precinct

- Interactive 1 - Wharf Precinct - Niagara Cabins:
  
  **Introduction to Modes of Travel and Subsequent Impact on the Transmission of Disease**

- Inscriptions – Wharf precinct – National Parks/ Mawland Phase:
  
  **Graffiti or Art? A Question of Conservation**

**Primary Source Activities** - students work with primary source materials in situ:

- Option 1 - Hospital Precinct
- Option 2 - Staff Cottage 9

**Migration Experiences Case Studies** – a more in-depth look at the use of the Quarantine Site to house Vietnamese Orphans from Operation Babylift in 1974 and as a Refugee Detention Centre in the 1960's-70's

Additional cost of $2.50/student per case study.

4.1 **On the Day**

**Times**

The start time for Site Studies can be negotiated to suit your school’s requirements but generally start at 10:00 am. Please enquire when booking.

**Duration**

The activity outlined herein has been designed as a 2.5 hour experience, which does not include breaks for morning tea or lunch. However, times can be tailored to your group’s needs and can be expanded as a full day excursion, speak to our education program manager at 9466.1566 or h8773-CR3@accor.com for details about this option. You are welcome to stay after your visit for lunch on site make the most of this beautiful and interesting place!

**On Arrival**

Tour Guides will meet you at entrance to the site, just at the round-about to assist with a safe off-loading of all passengers from the coaches.

Once students have exited the buses (or have arrived by other means) they will be provided with an introduction to the site and focusing on the rules associated with their visit to the Quarantine Station which is a protected heritage site, before being divided into class groups (preferably no more than 25 students per group) and assigned a guide.

**Toilets**
There is one toilet available at the entrance to the site and more from twenty to forty-five minutes into the tour. Guides will advise students when toilets are available.

**Luggage Store Visitor Centre Café and Historical Exhibit**

Located in the wharf precinct and open daily, the LSVC includes a café, retail shop and historical exhibit. The café stocks a limited selection of sweet and savoury items, ice cream and hot and cold beverages. Catering is available for school groups with advance notice.

**Water, Sunscreen and Clothing**

As the experience consists of outdoor activities it is strongly advised that all students have sunscreen, hats and clothing suitable for being outdoors, including close-toed shoes, and appropriate to the weather forecast. They will need to carry their own water and food. Please alert us to any specific medical conditions and requirements of individual students when booking your activity.

**Buses**

Coaches are not permitted to enter the Quarantine Station as there is no provision for them to park, reverse or turn around safely. Buses must therefore drop students at the STA bus stop at the entrance to the Quarantine Station and proceed to North Head or Manly to park. If you need assistance please enquire when booking.

**Water access**

The eco-hopper comes regularly to the Q Station en route from and to Manly and Watson’s Bay on a circuit of the most-visited sites on Sydney Harbour. It offers special rates to school groups. Please phone them directly to organise transport by water. This is a great way to add to the overall quarantine station experience! The link below details their schedule, website and phone details.


**Important!**

The Quarantine Station is an historic site and students will be instructed to walk carefully and be mindful of where they are walking to reduce risks of slipping and / or tripping. Our risk management documentation is available for download at www.quarantinestation.com.au. We would also appreciate it if for every class of secondary students there is at least one supervising adult, with two preferable (not including the Education Guide). Please note that teachers have duty of care for their students at all times.
5 Post-visit activities
The following activities are suggestions to deepen the student's knowledge and understanding of the Quarantine Station site.

5.1 Precinct Study
The Quarantine Station’s landscape has changed over its long history. Many of the buildings were not designed to last for a long period of time and, as a result, many have been demolished and new ones built. The site is divided into areas or precincts, such as: the Hospital Precinct, Wharf Precinct, Third Class and Steerage Accommodation Precincts, some of which were visited during the excursion. Select a precinct and complete a study of the existing buildings within that area. Determine the phase of the station’s history in which they were built, what they were originally designed for and how their use changed over time.

5.2 Newspaper Front Page
Using a program such as Publisher, construct a front page for a broadsheet newspaper like the Sydney Morning Herald. The date for your newspaper is 13th September 1881- the day that a Royal Commission was announced into the running of the Quarantine Station. The small pox epidemic was spreading throughout Sydney. People were being forcibly removed from their homes if they were suspected of having the disease, or had been in contact with someone who had smallpox, and were taken to the Quarantine Station. The station and facilities were in a poor state of repair and unable to cope with the large influx of people. This resulted in the Royal Commission and the sacking of the Superintendent.

Your front page should include
- A headline
- A photo
- A main story
- Interviews with people involved

Examine some old newspapers and try to recreate the style, visually and in writing, of the time.

5.3 60-minute Interview
Write and record interview in the style of the 60-Minutes news program with a 1st class and 3rd class passenger from the steamship, RMS Niagara. Compare both the journey from Vancouver to Sydney in 1918 and the treatment of the passengers on arrival at the Quarantine Station. Consider the buildings on site which the different passengers used.

5.4 Perspectives
The Quarantine Station has a layered history. Ask students to research one of the following personalities and write an account of what the site was like from their perspective:
- Aboriginal man and woman prior to 1788 up to and including white occupation of North Head for its use for Quarantine. Note the introduction of smallpox into the colony and its impact on the Aboriginal population.
- Convict quarantined on the beach in 1828 after their voyage aboard the Bussorah Merchant.
- 1st class passenger quarantined before there were first class accommodation
- Child quarantined in the hospital or left to fend for themselves in healthy ground
- Sydney resident quarantined during the 1880s smallpox epidemic.
- Vietnamese orphan housed at the station as part of operation babylift in 1974 prior to the fall of Saigon.
5.5 **Inscription Debate**

Host a debate considering the following statement, "Modern day graffiti is of equal historical significance to the sandstone inscriptions at the Quarantine Station." Consider the arguments for and against. Why do we think of the inscriptions as being important but not consider graffiti in the same way?

5.6 **The Future of the Quarantine Station**

Operations at the Quarantine Station ceased in 1984 when the site was taken over by National Parks and Wildlife. However, since 2006, the site has been leased for a 20-year period by the Mawland Group who has transformed it into Q Station, "a place for powerful, rejuvenating experiences to explore the future by connecting the past to the present." Controversy surrounded the leasing of a publicly-owned heritage site by a private company. Consider the arguments for and against this. Is this the right way forward for such a unique site?

5.7 **Swine Flu**

Swine flu is a respiratory illness caused by a strain of influenza virus which was determined to be a pandemic (H1N1) influenza in 2009 by the World Health Organisation.

Swine flu was introduced to humans in 2009. It is said by U.S. federal agriculture officials that Swine Flu began in Asia with many researchers hypothesising that the virus began in pigs, and had been circulating through pigs for quite some time, and was transferred to North America through a human who became infected. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in May of 2009 performed a study which showed that this form of influenza differed from previous strains for two reasons; children had no pre-existing immunity to the virus, and other vaccines for influenza seemed to have no effect.

The symptoms of this swine flu in people are similar to the symptoms of regular human seasonal flu and include fever, fatigue, unusual tiredness, headache, runny nose, sore throat, shortness of breath, cough, loss of appetite, aching muscles, vomiting, and diarrhea. People are most infectious soon after they develop symptoms. They can continue to spread the virus, for example in coughs and sneezes, for up to five days (seven days in children). People become less infectious as their symptoms subside, and once symptoms are gone, they are no longer considered infectious to others.

Treatment with the anti-influenza medications oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) and zanamivir (Relenza®) may shorten the duration and severity of illness in people that already have influenza.


6 **Additional Resources**

6.1 **Introduction to North Head Quarantine Station**

Quarantine is defined as 'strict isolation designed to prevent the spread of disease'. Quarantine stations were created when necessary in Europe's ports so that vessels suspected of carrying infectious diseases could be isolated for the duration of the quarantine. The origins of the word quarantine come from the Italian *quaranta* (i.e. *quaranti giorni*) which is forty and relates to initial period of quarantine of 40 days during the fourteenth century. At North Head the period of quarantine varied depending on the incubation time of the disease.

There were quarantine stations in ship ports-of-entry at Sydney, Newcastle, Fremantle, Broome, Bunbury, Thursday Island, Darwin, Point Nepean, Perth, Albany, Townsville, Moreton Bay, Hobart and Adelaide.

They isolated passengers with diseases such as plague, cholera, typhus fever, typhoid fever, yellow fever, smallpox and leprosy.
The experience of quarantine for many immigrants [and probably crews as well] was harrowing. After the long passage to Australia was over, they expected to be put ashore in their new home, only to find themselves encamped in isolated and, initially, poor conditions, with their sick family and friends dying around them.

North Head was chosen as the site for Quarantine because it

- was within close proximity to the entrance to Sydney Harbour
- was isolated from Sydney
- had a natural spring that ran from the swampy ground above to spring cove providing freshwater

A Brief History

In the 156 years of the Quarantine Station operation (1828 to 1984)

- At least 580 ships were quarantined
- More than 13,000 people were quarantined
- Approximately 572 people died and were buried (including however people who died in Sydney of the plague)

The history of the Quarantine Station can be viewed in terms of the following phases:

Establishment of the Station – 1838

Between 1828 and 1984 North Head was used as a site for the Quarantine of people infected or under suspicion of carrying infectious disease. The first ship to be quarantined in Spring Cove was a convict ship, the *Bussorah Merchant*, for an outbreak of smallpox during the long voyage from England. The convicts and their guards were housed in tents on shore. In 1837 the site landed the ill fated passengers and crew of the immigrant ship the *Lady McNaughten* spurned by typhus and scarlet fever. 54 immigrants died on the voyage and this was followed by 17 more during their lengthy Quarantine. The quarantine of the *Lady McNaughten* was the catalyst for the establishment of an official Quarantine Station on North Head and permanent buildings being were erected on site.

Immigration Phase: 1839-1880

By 1853, the Quarantine Station could accommodate up to 150 people. However when the need arose for 1000 immigrants to be housed at one time, facilities were found to be grossly inadequate and a building program was required once more. A hulk ship, called the *Harmony*, was moored in Spring Cove for use as a hospital for men and a barracks were built to accommodate single women in the former Sick Ground. This was followed by two new buildings to house 60 people each, with verandas for dining and a cottage for the Superintendent building (S6) which still exists. During this time the first cemetery was also levelled and the grave stones moved to a new cemetery so that the burials were not in view from the healthy ground.

In the 1860s and 1870s the world economy slowed and as a consequence the immigration rate also slowed and the Station fell into such disrepair that, in 1872, passengers were kept aboard their quarantined ships. This period also saw the introduction of class-based accommodation after a number of wealthy and well-
connected first class passengers put pressure on government officials to provide accommodation more apt for their needs

See Figure 7.2 for an impression of the Station during the Immigration Phase. Board of Health Phase: 1881-1909

The outbreak of Smallpox in Sydney in 1880 created hysteria amongst Sydney’s residents. If it was suspected that a person was either infected with smallpox, or had come in contact with someone infected with smallpox, they could be taken from their home and sent to the Quarantine Station with as little as five minutes notice. This, combined with the inadequacies of the Quarantine stations facilities resulted in so many complaints that a Royal Commission was ordered resulting in the dismissal of the Superintendent of the Quarantine Station and the establishment of a ‘Board of Health’ to operate the Quarantine Station. From this point onwards there was also much closer supervision of procedures and a greater accountability for the actions of staff.

Federal Phase: 1910-1950

The turn of the century saw a change in the administration of the Quarantine Station from State to Commonwealth control with the federation of the colonies. This, and the recognition by the new director of Federal Quarantine, Dr. W.P. Norris, that Australia’s facilities for the protection against infectious diseases were grossly inadequate, precipitated the biggest upgrade to the Station. The wharf precinct was redesigned to accommodate a luggage shed, state of the art disinfection block, laundry, powerhouse, waiting shelter and bathing blocks for each of the three classes. A modern isolation block was constructed to accommodate up to thirty cases of suspected infection and a dining, kitchen block, accommodation for up to 300 steerage passengers and quarters for 100 second class passengers were welcome additions. A cable tramway, electric lights and new staff cottages were also constructed.

Aviation Phase: 1950-1983

The twentieth century saw many advances in medical science, immunisation, and quarantine procedures. Consequently the need for the quarantine station facilities decreased significantly. Sydney received nearly 700,000 assisted immigrants between 1946 and 1980, or nearly double the number it had received between 1831 and 1940, yet only four ships were quarantined in that period and at least one of those was a tanker. After 1919, only two deaths occurred at the Station. As maritime quarantine decreased in frequency, the Quarantine Station was allowed to deteriorate. By the time air travel was becoming more common the Station was in poor condition. In 1957, instead of another expansion, there was a refurbishment program and the Quarantine was re-equipped to house less people (250) but in ‘modern comfort’. As a result a number of buildings were removed in order to fund the refurbishment of others. Ironically the refurbishment was not used to any great degree because there were so few quarantines. The only large quarantine after the refurbishment was of 29 cholera suspects from an aircraft in 1972.

The last ship to be quarantined was the tanker Sakaki Maru in 1973, whose crew was landed for a short period while a suspected infection was found not to be a quarantineable disease. After that time the only people admitted to the Station were airline passengers who arrived without adequate vaccination certificates.

Quarantine Station Site Study

On 16 March 1984, ownership of the Quarantine Station was transferred from the Commonwealth to the State Government and it was reserved as part of Sydney Harbour National Park. The National Parks and Wildlife Service [NPWS] established guided tours and a conference and functions centre.

To minimise visitor impacts, access was limited to these paid experiences, so people could not spontaneously visit, and could not independently access the site.

A new Community Employment Program from 1985 to 1986 helped fund a major conservation program for buildings, structures, grounds and site works, with emphasis on stabilisation of the most threatened elements. Conservation planning also commenced for individual elements of the place, including historical research, measured drawings of buildings and structures and recording of rock engravings.

The NPWS also made the Quarantine Station its base for district operations, setting up workshops and offices, and permitting some staff to become temporary residents.

Because the site is rugged, the buildings light weight, and the landscape continually changing, maintaining the Quarantine Station is a constant and very expensive exercise. Despite considerable work by the NPWS over the first 15 years of its management as a national park, many of the buildings and some of the cultural landscape surrounding them fell into poor condition. The NPWS did not have enough money to return the Quarantine Station to a fit condition that ensured its cultural significance was maintained. For over a decade, the NPWS tried to raise the funds from State government, from grants and sponsors, and from the profits of their on-site conference, functions and tours business. Despite all of these efforts, the NPWS judged that they could not raise enough funds to stop the decline, and that the situation would become much worse if at least $4 million was not spent within the next few years.

Mawland Quarantine Station: November 2006- present

In November 2006 the site was leased to tourism operator, Mawland Company, Pty Ltd, who invested close to $20 million dollars for much needed conservation work, and the careful adaption of buildings to provide for accommodation, a restaurant, a visitor centre and historical exhibits. In April 2008 the site opened, allowing increased access for the public and water based transport to the Wharf Precinct in conjunction with new interpretive experiences. For more information about Mawland see http://www.qstation.com.au/mawland_group.php.
6.2 Map of the Quarantine Station showing both existing and demolished buildings

LEGEND
- Buildings Present
- Buildings Demolished
- Buildings Burnt Down & Reconstructed

National Parks & Wildlife Service Phase:
1984 - 2006
Source: P Davies 2000
6.3 Bibliography and suggested resources

Printed publications


New South Wales. *Report of the Royal Commission, appointed on the 13th September, 1881, to enquire into and report upon the management of the Quarantine Station, North Head, and the hulk “Faraway”; together with the minutes of evidence and appendices.* Sydney: Govt. Pr., 1882.


Internet resources

Quarantine Station website- [www.quarantinestation.com.au](http://www.quarantinestation.com.au)


Picture Australia- [www.pictureaustralia.org](http://www.pictureaustralia.org)


