



**...‘to turn those poor unenlightened people into an important degree of civilisation...’<sup>1</sup>**  
**Rethinking Governor Macquarie’s Aboriginal policy**

**Patricia Hale and Tanya Koeneman**

In his bicentennial year, Governor Lachlan Macquarie is being celebrated for the foresight and vision of his and Elizabeth’s legacy to the built environment of New South Wales of their ambitious program of civic architecture and public works, and for his acceptance of emancipated convicts and their advancement within colonial society.

The 2010 celebrations have noted Macquarie’s establishment of the Native Institution and the annual Parramatta feast with the Aboriginal peoples, but are largely silent on whatever else made up Macquarie’s Aboriginal policy.

Did his foresight, understanding and vision extend also to the Aboriginal peoples of NSW? How did he see, understand and treat them? Was his policy consistent? Or did it change over his 11 years as governor? What were the impacts of his policy on Aboriginal society, then and now?

We sought the views of two academics with particular interests in Aboriginal colonial history: Dr Shayne Williams, Dharawal descendent and teacher educator in Aboriginal programs, and Associate Professor Grace Karskens, historian and author of a recently published study of the Aboriginal and European shared history of the Sydney region. Both kindly agreed to be interviewed for an article in *Heritage NSW* and the transcripts of their interviews have been

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<sup>1</sup> Macquarie to Bathurst, 8 October 1814, *HRA*, 1, 8, p. 368.

catalogued into the Heritage Branch Library.<sup>2</sup> The views they expressed have also been woven into this longer review of a select historiography of Governor Macquarie relations with the Aboriginal peoples of the Sydney region.

### **Macquarie's arrival**

Macquarie's focus on arrival was on re-establishing vice-regal control of the colony and smoothing over past ructions, following the deposition of Governor Bligh and the two-year interregnum of Johnston, Foveaux and Paterson.

Macquarie's brief speech on his swearing in as Governor on 1 January 1810 included relations with the Aboriginal peoples when he expressed the wish that peacefully inclined Aboriginals 'be treated with Kindness and Attention, so as to conciliate them as much as possible to our Government and Manners'.<sup>3</sup>

He was fortunate to arrive during a period of relative peace in the War on the Cumberland Plain. This had been flaring up intermittently since 1794 when settlers first moved out to the fertile Hawkesbury River flats. Conflict moved south and west with the spread of settlement, led by the Bediagal warrior Pemulwuy (until his death at the hands of settlers in 1802) then by his son Tedbury. There were still isolated, sporadic incidents of violence after 1809, between settlers, their convict workers and Aboriginal people. These largely represented Aboriginal payback (by spearing and mutilation) for settler depredations on their people, either by firing on them when they raided their crops and stock for food, or when they abducted their women or children. Major hostilities—in the form of attacks on settlers and setting fire to their farms, crops and stock—were part of the pattern of Aboriginal resistance. They were often aligned with periods of drought when the Aboriginal people, forced off their best lands and hunting grounds, raided the settler's maize crops.<sup>4</sup>

But there were no major hostilities on the frontiers of settlement after Macquarie's arrival, until violence flared at Appin in 1814.

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<sup>2</sup> Koeneman, T & Hale, P, " '...solely intended for their own benefit...' , Governor Macquarie's Native Institution at Parramatta" in *Heritage NSW*, Vol 18 No 1, Winter 2010, pp. 10–11, Newsletter of the Heritage Council of NSW & the Heritage Branch, NSW Department of Planning, Parramatta.

Williams, S & Karskens, G, *Governor Macquarie's Aboriginal policy, 1810-1821 : signed transcripts of interviews by Dr Shayne Williams, Dharawal descendent and teacher educator, and Associate Professor Grace Karskens, School of History and Philosophy, University of New South Wales, with Tanya Koeneman and Patricia Hale*, Heritage Branch Library, NSW Department of Planning, Parramatta, 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Government and General Order, *Sydney Gazette*, 7 January 1810.

<sup>4</sup> See generally Karskens, *Colony*, Chapter 13; Brook & Kohen, *Native Institution*, Chapter 2.

Appin was the new frontier, to the south-west of Sydney, which Macquarie had helped to establish. Liston and Whitaker note that the Foveaux/Paterson rebel administration opened up the Minto, Airds and Appin districts to settlement in late 1809, alienating around 47,000 acres in nearly 300 land grants. Some of these were in exchange for flood-prone land on the Hawkesbury. Macquarie—required to recall and review all land grants of the rebel administration—confirmed most of them, and added some more.<sup>5</sup>

Ellis and Karskens note that Macquarie's initial responses to the first eruption of violence, in 1814, were measured and even-handed.<sup>6</sup>

He instituted a magistrates enquiry which found that the settlers and their convicts were to blame for the initial aggression (for which payback was carried out) and for escalating the hostilities to a revenge attack on an Aboriginal camp by night, which killed a woman and three children. He warned the colonists not to take the law into their own hands; reminded them that the Aboriginal people were protected under British law; urged forbearance, and suggested they share some of their crops with the Aboriginal people. He also met and talked with the 'Cowpastures tribe' (the Muringong).<sup>7</sup>

Following this, Macquarie initiated his two novel responses to deteriorating Aboriginal relations.

### **The Native Institution at Parramatta**

Macquarie set up the Native Institution in late 1814, on the recommendation of the missionary, William Shelley who, Brook & Kohen write, was guided by 'deep understanding, intellect and humanity' towards the Aboriginal people. Karskens sees Elizabeth Macquarie's hand in this initiative.<sup>8</sup>

The school aimed for equal numbers of young girls and boys, aged between four and seven, though in practice the children were generally older. It was always a small venture. Numbers were often below 10, peaking at 26 in 1820 before they dropped off steeply (and permanently) from disease. The children were well-housed, fed and dressed. They were given a basic education with English, scriptural teaching, training as a domestic servant or farm labourer and the prospect of a marriage partner and a small land grant at the Blacks

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<sup>5</sup> Liston, *Campbelltown*, pp. 7–11, 13–14, 16; Whitaker, *Bligh*, p. 100.

<sup>6</sup> Ellis, *Macquarie*, pp. 353–4, Karskens, *Colony*, pp. 492–3.

<sup>7</sup> Karskens, *Colony*, p. 493; Brook & Kohen, *Native Institution*, p. 20.

<sup>8</sup> Brook & Kohen, *Native Institution*, p. 55.

Town reserve (later Blacktown).<sup>9</sup> The school was the Macquarie's showpiece: one they proudly displayed to visiting French and Russian dignitaries.

Karskens and Williams acknowledge that the school can be seen, in the enlightenment tradition, as a well-intentioned initiative. But they see it also as an ill-conceived one that conveyed no particular lasting benefits to Aboriginal children, while perhaps influencing policies of lasting damage.

Karskens sees the school's aim as controlling and reshaping Aboriginal children's lives. It was a social experiment too. Young boys and girls were raised together to be married off to each other and settled on small farms to raise their own Christian children and produce food for the colony—just as the small ex-convict settlers were expected to do.

For Williams and Fletcher the school has more insidious impacts. Both see its purpose as intentionally eradicating Aboriginal children's traditional culture and learning, replacing these with British notions of 'improvement' and fast tracking to 'civilisation.'<sup>10</sup>

Children were not readily surrendered to the school. Macquarie instituted the first gathering of the tribes at Parramatta in December 1814 specifically to encourage Aboriginal parents—with food and drink (and, in later years, a parade of the current children attending the school)—to give up their children. (They may not, however, have known that their girls and boys had to remain at the school until they were 14 and 16 years respectively). Enough parents obliged for Macquarie to make the gathering an annual event.

Children frequently absconded, though, by squeezing through the palings of the fence that was built expressly to provide their parents with a good view of the on-going process of their 'civilising'.

Keeping the numbers up was a constant problem. For the most part, the annual Parramatta gathering became the usual means of recruiting children, who might also be surrendered to the school.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid, pp. 578, 60–2, 69–71, 74–5, 77, 79–81, 82–7.

<sup>10</sup> Fletcher, *Macquarie*, p. 116.

<sup>11</sup> See generally Brook & Kohlen, *Native Institution*, Chapter 4; Karskens, *Colony*, pp. 501–2.



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*Augustus Earle. Depicts the annual meeting of the Aboriginal peoples in the Market Place at Parramatta with Governor Darling in January 1826. St John's Cathedral is in the background.*

In 1816, however, Macquarie authorised the taking of Aboriginal children as part of his military reprisal against all Aboriginal peoples of the colony. He instructed his officers to bring back 12 boys and 6 girls between four and six years for the Native Institution—but ‘only fine, healthy and good-looking children’. Two boys only were procured, both of whom absconded within six weeks.<sup>12</sup>

Karskens writes of ‘the commonness of Aboriginal child-taking’ being reflected in official orders as early as 1795 that acknowledged the existence Aboriginal children being raised in settler households. Small Aboriginal ‘orphans’ would be scooped up by settlers or soldiers during reprisal raids on Aboriginal camps: ‘A generation of black children was growing up in white households’.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Brook & Kohen, *Native Institution*, p. 23; Karskens, *Colony*, p. 508.

<sup>13</sup> Karskens, *Colony*, p. 465.

Child-taking was one of the major drivers of Aboriginal payback retaliation. In 1816 Macquarie gave official sanction to this practice, so that his showpiece Native Institution could keep going.

For Fletcher and Karskens, the Native Institution demonstrates the Macquarie's lack of 'deep humanity and understanding' for Aboriginal culture, that allowed them to champion a venture that separated Aboriginal children from their families. It highlights, too, the gulf of understanding that separates Macquarie from the earlier governors: Phillip, Hunter and King. They, and others, were part of that educated officer group of the First Fleet who were fascinated by the culture of the Eora people of Sydney Cove, recording interactions in their journals and learning their language.<sup>14</sup>

Williams views the Native Institution as the first state-sanctioned entity for the removal of Aboriginal children from their families 'for their own good'. He considers it provided the template for later 19<sup>th</sup> century government removal of Aboriginal children from their families.

### **Return of Lands**

Macquarie was the first governor to systematically give land back to the Aboriginal people, initially to Bungaree (an Eora man from the Broken Bay area and a favourite of Macquarie's) and his people. The aim was to settle them on coastal farms, to fish and cultivate the land.<sup>15</sup>

The first return of land was at Georges Head, on the northern shore of the harbour where Governor and Mrs Macquarie ceremonially handed over the settlement to 16 Aboriginal families in January 1815. This was followed in 1820 by a settlement at Elizabeth Bay, also launched with much fanfare.

Both settlements provided the Aboriginal settlers with huts, gardens, tools, food, slop clothing and a boat. An assigned convict assisted in working the land and taught farm skills.

The Macquaries were very supportive of these farming settlements. Just prior to their departure they took their farewells of both with much feasting. They also took along the incoming Governor Brisbane to Georges Head, to commend the venture and its people to him.

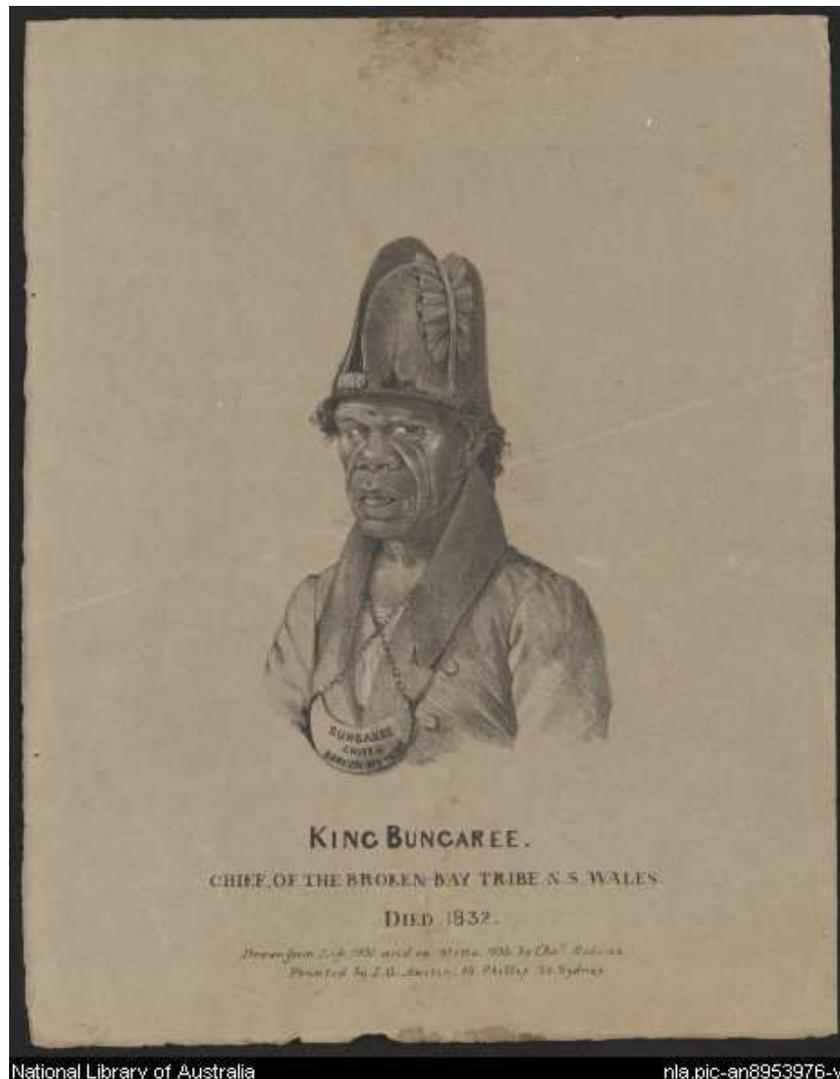
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<sup>14</sup> Fletcher, *Macquarie*, pp. 116–7.

<sup>15</sup> Brook & Kohen, *Native Institution*, pp. 91–5; Karskens, *Colony*, pp. 502–4.

Neither venture flourished nor lasted for long. Bungaree's people were coastal, fisher people. They did not want to settle to farming the land, though Bungaree did harvest peaches at Georges Head for many years. The site remained marked on maps as Bungaree's land until the 1840s, largely because it was land no-one else wanted. Elizabeth Bay was different. A more desirable location for settlement, in 1826 it was granted by Governor Darling to the Colonial Secretary, Alexander Macleay who transformed the landscape into Elizabeth Bay House and gardens.

Karskens considers that Governor Macquarie's returns of land are still an important first. They were a symbolic gesture that would have been interpreted by the Aboriginal people as 'getting our country back again.'



*Charles Rodius, 1831. Bungaree, an Eora man from the Broken Bay area, was the first Aboriginal leader to receive land and be awarded a breastplate by Governor Macquarie in 1815.*

Karskens also suggests that Macquarie's enthusiasm for the settlements had an ulterior motive: to remove half-naked Aboriginal people from enacting their laws in the streets of Sydney town. Not that the long-time settlers, convicts and soldiers were especially worried about this. They were used to Aboriginals in unusual adaptations of European attire, and they enjoyed the great three-day long contests that brought Aboriginal people in from all over the region where the Law was enacted in a violent, physical fashion.

The Macquaries were keen to show off the architectural accomplishments of their building program to distinguished French and European visitors to Sydney. But the Aboriginal people were causing them embarrassment. They weren't a part of the Macquaries' revised and civilized Sydney. Karskens argues that one solution was to remove them from Sydney's streets to their own lands. The other was to ban the contests from Sydney, which Macquarie did in 1816.

Macquarie intended his return of lands and Native Institution initiatives to demonstrate his peaceful intentions to like-minded Aboriginal people. They were to go some way towards redressing the Aboriginal peoples' grievance over the loss of their traditional lands and food sources and to counter the hostilities that had broken out on the new frontier at Appin in 1814. Ritchie notes that Macquarie, in acknowledging that the Aboriginal peoples had lost trust in the Europeans, sought by these measures of 'practical philanthropy' to demonstrate that they should be treated as equals with the colonists.<sup>16</sup>

The Eora of Sydney Harbour and the Burramattagul of Parramatta were not, however, the same people as the often friendly Dharawal of the Georges River/Appin region or the warlike Gandangara who came down from the Blue Mountains to terrorise the settlers. In the context of violence on the distant frontier Karskens writes: 'Macquarie's grand gestures seem surreal: they involved such small and select numbers of Aborigines, and were so far from the contested country, and so unlikely to appeal.'<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ritchie, *Macquarie*, p. 132.

<sup>17</sup> Karskens, *Colony*, pp. 503–4.

Macquarie was the first governor to honour Aboriginal elders or warriors as 'chieftains' by awarding them ornamental breastplates and titles of his design. The first recipient was Bungaree, whom Macquarie had probably first met on his arrival. Macquarie came to regard Bungaree as 'chief' of the Sydney Aboriginal people and to use him as his main negotiator. He awarded him a metal breastplate engraved with his name and 'Chief of the Broken Bay Tribe' at the inauguration of the Georges Head farm in January 1815.<sup>18</sup> Kogi, a Dharawal man from the Georges River region, who had first met with Macquarie when the Governor toured the Cow Pastures district in 1810, was another recipient. Kogi sheltered with the settler Charles Throsby for protection during the early part of the Appin hostilities and retained Macquarie's favour by responding to his call to lay down arms in 1816, in return for food, education and secure title to land. While there is no official record of land transfer, Macquarie awarded Kogi a breastplate declaring him 'King of the Georges River'.<sup>19</sup>

Macquarie first distributed a number of engraved breastplates at the Parramatta feast in December 1816. These breastplates (or gorgets) were awarded to Aboriginal warriors who had rendered assistance to Macquarie's recent military expedition—thus confirming the status of these individuals in the colonist's eyes with a badge of distinction. Cleary sees in these awards not only Macquarie's 'token of recognition from one "chief" to another' but also his attempt at social control and domination of the Aboriginal people. Altogether, 38 Aboriginal 'chiefs' are known to have been honoured by Macquarie with breastplates. This practice was continued by later governors into the twentieth century.<sup>20</sup>

Williams thinks more work needs to be done on what effect this policy of Macquarie's might have had on communities where recognition was given to members who were not necessarily those the community might respect.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid, pp. 491, 503.

<sup>19</sup> See Goodall & Cadzow, *Rivers*, pp. 55–8. Goodall notes anecdotal evidence of Aboriginal freehold land along the Georges River.

Karskens notes that the Macquaries and the Aboriginal people would have understood each other in terms of public show and ritual. They both loved celebrations. Macquarie's initiative of gathering Aboriginal groups together at Parramatta for an annual feast appealed to the Aboriginal people. In Kohen's opinion they came to reinterpret these gatherings in their own way, as a modern corroboree. Even after bloody conflicts and a deadly epidemic at the Native Institution, they still came to the December 28th gathering in large numbers. At the 1821 gathering (the last of Macquarie's governorship) a record 340 Aboriginal people thronged the Parramatta marketplace.<sup>21</sup>

The Parramatta feasts prevailed, and came to play a significant role in marking the end of the War on the Cumberland Plain in 1816.

### **Appin 1816**

Macquarie recognised the difference between hostile and friendly Aboriginals. He exempted the Dharawal from attack when authorising armed civilian reprisal parties at Appin to hunt down five identified Gandangara men in 1814.

He may not, however, have been aware of the undercurrent of Aboriginal/settler frontier relationships and accommodations that ran counter to the depredations of some settlers. Karskens and Goodall write of the loose web of co-dependency based on Aboriginal labour and protection in return for food, tobacco and 'sitting down' on settler lands. Aboriginal groups, dispossessed of their lands, rebuilt their lives between the cadastral grid of European settlement.<sup>22</sup>

Such accommodations were working between settlers and Dharawal of the Georges River region in 1816. In the drought years of 1814–16, when the warlike Gandangara from the mountains and other groups from around Jervis Bay moved onto Dharawal lands in search of food, the Dharawal people sought refuge on settlers' properties around the districts of Airds and Appin. They probably offered the settlers protection too, such as Charles Throsby of Glenfield, who was an outspoken critic of settler depredations.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Cleary, *Poignant Regalia*, pp. 9–11.

<sup>21</sup> Brook & Kohen, *Native Institution*, p. 95.

<sup>22</sup> Karskens, *Colony*, pp. 479, 487, 496–7; Goodall & Cadzow, *Rivers*, pp. 29, 33.



*Augustus Earle, c1826. An Aboriginal family 'sitting down' on an English settler's farm (likely to be Glenfield, the home of Dr Charles Throsby, at Casula, near Liverpool).*

Karskens notes that John Kennedy of Teston Farm at Appin took the bodies of the Aboriginal woman and children killed in the raid on their camp and buried them at Teston Farm. Perhaps they were part of an Aboriginal group that had settled on Kennedy's lands. Local Aboriginal elders say their graves are still there.<sup>24</sup>

John Warby, ex-convict settler of the Airds district, had strong connections with the Aboriginal peoples of Prospect and Airds as a guide to official parties. Liston writes that 'Much of Warby's knowledge of the district came from his friendship with the Dharawal.'<sup>25</sup>

These settlers, several Dharawal guides, and the allegiances between them played a significant role in defeating Macquarie's military enterprise at Appin.

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<sup>23</sup> Liston, *Liverpool*, p. 6; Liston, *Campbelltown*, pp. 19, 21; Karskens, *Colony*, p. 498.

<sup>24</sup> Karskens, *Colony*, p. 498.

<sup>25</sup> Liston, *Campbelltown*, pp. 14–15; Karskens, *Colony*, pp. 496–8.

In 1816 the Gandangara returned to the Dharawal lands in search of food and attacked settlers' farms. As the violence escalated, Macquarie bowed to settler demands for military intervention and effectively declared war on all Aboriginal peoples. He authorised a three-pronged military strike throughout the settled districts of the colony.

His instructions were clear: the soldiers were to take prisoner all Aboriginal people they found, to shoot any who refused to surrender and to hang them in trees. They were also to bring back 18 small children for the Native Institution at Parramatta.

Unlike any previous military reprisal previously authorised by a governor, there was, firstly, to be no distinction between 'hostile' and 'friendly' Aboriginals and, secondly, an acceptance that women and children were likely to be collateral damage. Macquarie, the first of the military governors of NSW and a career soldier for over 30 years, reverted to a military response to insurrection. Karskens considers it was three times larger than any military reprisal to date.

As a military mission it was doomed to fail, given the existence of the settler and Aboriginal networks that effectively subverted Macquarie's intent.



*Samuel Thomas Gill, 1845. Interior of a settler's hut. Grace Karskens suggests this indicates that Aboriginal people commonly shared domestic spaces with settlers.*

The three commanding officers were all sent on wild goose chases by their Aboriginal and settler guides that tied them up and exhausted them for seven days. At John Kennedy's Appin farm Captain Wallis, in reassuring Kennedy that the Aboriginal people sitting down on his land were safe, noticed two of the outlawed Gandangara men among them. Kennedy and Hamilton Hume argued for their lives, saying they were protecting the farm. Wallis left in confusion and was soon abandoned by his Aboriginal guides and John Warby.

But the failure of the military enterprise itself paved the way for the usual attack on the soft target of an Aboriginal camp by night.

Following the departure of his 'guides', Wallis located such a camp, above the Cataract River at Appin, in the early hours of 17 April. In the darkness, the soldiers drove the inhabitants over the gorge where they were shot, or jumped to their deaths to escape the guns. Among the 14 known dead were old men, women and children. Two warriors were captured and hanged nearby. Their heads were taken to Edinburgh with that of another and were eventually repatriated in 1991.

The official record of the Appin Massacre (as it came to be known) survives in Captain Wallis's report in the Colonial Secretary's Correspondence. It shows something of Wallis's anguish at his 'melancholy but necessary duty', his regret at the deaths of women and children. Macquarie obscured the detail of the event in his report to Earl Bathurst, failing to mention that women and children were among the 14 dead, or that only they comprised the five prisoners taken. Karskens considers that Macquarie seemed to be trying to portray a failed military excursion as a success in noting that 'dangerous men' were killed or taken.<sup>26</sup>

The Appin Massacre didn't bring closure to the hostilities. They flared again shortly after in the Hawkesbury. Macquarie had to learn what Governor King had practised more than a decade previously: that all punitive reprisals, settler or military, generated increasingly violent Aboriginal payback, thus escalating the level of violence.

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<sup>26</sup> Liston, *Campbelltown*, pp. 19–23; Karskens, *Colony*, pp. 506–14;

Macquarie reverted to Governor King's strategy of 'divide and rule'. King had successfully ended hostilities in 1802 and 1805 by banishing Aboriginals from the settlements (thus breaking up the arrangements beneficial to both). King also identified and rounded up resistance leaders by exploiting tribal differences and negotiating with tribal elders. Leaders captured in this way weren't hanged. They were transported for secondary punishment, like the convicts, or just warned, pardoned and released.

In May and July 1816 Macquarie's proclamations recognised this same reality: banishing Aboriginal people from the settlements and naming outlaws. Unlike King, however, Macquarie's proclamation also offered small land grants to Aboriginal people who were prepared to settle down to the life of the small farmer. They would be supplied with tools, seed, clothing and six months food as well. This was another example of Macquarie's innovative return of lands policy to the Aboriginal people, along the lines of his plan to settle Aboriginal married couples on smallholdings at the Blacks Town.

In November Macquarie rescinded his previous proclamations. Aboriginal people were free to return to the settler farms, and outlaws still at large were promised a pardon if they surrendered. Macquarie was anxious not to jeopardise the success of his annual Parramatta feast in December. Large numbers attended this to hear peace proclaimed. The long War on the Cumberland Plain was officially over.

## **Conclusion**

We asked 'How might Aboriginal people see themselves in the landscape of the Macquarie bicentennial celebrations? What is the way forward?'

Karskens suggests reviving the Governor's feast with the tribes at Parramatta. Have the roast beef, roast potatoes and jugs of ale. And have the Aboriginal people run the event, since they took it and made it their own corroboree (until it was discontinued by later governors in the 1830s).

Williams doesn't think celebration is possible as that 'would be effectively asking Aboriginal people to celebrate their own decimation.' Because that's what these governors represent to us—the total extermination of our cultures, identity and ourselves...'

Williams sees the only way Aboriginal people can move towards some engagement with the ever-present historical anniversaries of European settlement is through a full acknowledgement by non-Aboriginal people of the enduring legacy and devastating impacts of European settlement on Aboriginal society. He argues that ‘whites are very good at...sanitizing history...refuting massacres...that Aboriginal children were taken for their own good...They’re the sorts of arguments that are absolutely offensive to Aboriginal people.’ He isn’t intent on inducing guilt among non-Aboriginal Australians...’ but you can’t forget about the past either. The past informs how we interact with one another today and how we do things in the future...Unless people are willing to acknowledge what happened, I can’t see why Aboriginal people would want to engage.’

He acknowledges that Macquarie, ‘in his own way...did try to reconcile with us in some cases’, but, like Karskens, he is looking for a more balanced assessment of the legacy of Lachlan and Elizabeth Macquarie—one that includes their Aboriginal policy—in the celebratory focus of their bicentennial.

Karskens suggests a way forward is a more proactive policy of dual naming of places, as in the example set by New Zealand.

Both Karskens and Williams want to write the Aboriginal people back into mainstream Australian history. Williams comments that Governor Macquarie is not just a figure of white Australian history. He is part of Aboriginal history which should not be considered separately from the white history of Australia. ‘Aboriginal history is very much a part of Australian history and ...has always been pushed to the margins...I think the time has come for us to be brought in from the margins and absolutely centred in the mainframe of Australian history. I think that’s the way forward for us.’

Williams is happy that questions are being asked about how Aboriginal people can mark or be involved in the Macquarie celebrations ‘it will be interesting to see what Aboriginal people have to say... We have a shared history...It’s not a good history but it’s a shared one just the same. And we have a shared present and a shared future as well.’

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