

# Youth Challenge Program

## What are the Mysteries of Maralinga?

# 2007

**9.00 am Registration**

**9.15 am Teacher briefing**

**9.30 am Welcome and program outline**

Students are told that they are going to focus on one main history mystery during the day – What happened at Maralinga and Woomera in the 1950s and what does this tell us about Australia's involvement in Cold War history? In trying to solve this mystery they will develop the knowledge and skills that they can use to better explore history in their own families and local communities.

**9.40 am Introductory activities – the History Mysteries Quiz**

Students are shown some 'mystery objects' from the NMA collections. They are each given a worksheet and during the morning they have to try to work out what the mystery objects are. Those who identify the objects correctly will be placed in a draw to receive prizes.

**10.00 am Australian History Mysteries in the Twentieth Century**

The special video segment from *Australian History Mysteries 2* introduces some history mysteries from the twentieth century. These are briefly discussed and together students begin to work out how to go about working with different types of evidence to solve a history mystery. What evidence exists? How do you locate it? How do you decide if it is good or bad evidence?

**10.15 am Meet the Guest Historian**

A special session introducing a guest historian, who briefly talks about his or her work, responds to the video introduction, shares a mystery object with the audience and answers questions.

**10.25 am Are you a good History Mystery Detective?**

A light-hearted computer simulation challenges students to find out why a once thriving town has become a ghost town! Was it war, drought, flood, an explosion, or perhaps a disease? What does the evidence tell us and how can we apply the skills of research, evidence analysis and problem solving to engage with history mysteries in our own local communities?

**10.45 am Morning tea** – hand in entries for the *History Mysteries* quiz

**11.05 am What are the Mysteries of Maralinga?**

What happened at Maralinga and Woomera in the 1950s and what does this tell us about Australia's involvement in Cold War history? A video segment introduces students to the specific mystery and locale and students have to investigate the impacts of the decision to use Australia for nuclear testing from 5 different perspectives – Local Aboriginal People, Health and Safety, Energy/Power, Weapons/Defence, and Foreign Affairs. Students will also view an interactive Cold War timeline featuring world events and Australia's involvement.

**11.35 am Workshop**

Students now work in groups to take up the challenge of the history mystery introduced in the video. Each workshop group gets evidence from one of the five perspectives above. Their task is to use this evidence to prepare a segment for a television documentary about Maralinga.

**During the latter part of the workshop session teachers will be invited to participate in a short in-service from NMA staff on the latest programs and resources available from the Museum.**

**12.45 pm Lunch** – and time to fine-tune role-play presentations.

**1.15 pm Role-play presentations**

Students present their segment of the documentary and, having now seen all perspectives presented, they can make their own judgement (and take a vote) about a significant issue in Australian history: *Was the atomic testing program at Maralinga in the 1950s necessary and justified?*

**2.20 pm Program evaluation and outline of Participation Task**

The Task encourages students to identify a mystery in their own community. This may simply be a name on a memorial, a strange object in Grandma's drawer, the photo of someone you don't know or indeed a mystery surrounding an event that happened in the past. Students either write an essay, make a short video or audiotape or perhaps a website presentation and send it in for judging. Winning entries will be placed on a special Youth Challenge website. All participants will receive certificates and the winners will receive great prizes for themselves and resources for their schools. There will be one major winner from each of the Youth Challenges and entries may be individual or in pairs.

**2.30 pm Presentation of Certificates of Participation**

To all students and prizes to the winners of the *History Mysteries* quiz and for exemplary performances in the role-play scenarios.

**2.40 pm Close of Challenge**