



THE HON SCOTT MORRISON MP

Prime Minister

THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

THE HON KEN WYATT MP

Minister for Indigenous Australians

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

29 April 2020

Australia marks 250th anniversary of Endeavour's historic voyage

Today marks 250 years since Captain James Cook and HMB *Endeavour* voyaged to the east coast of Australia in 1770.

This historic anniversary provides all Australians with an opportunity to reflect on our shared history, celebrate the legacy of the world's oldest continuing living culture, and understand the origins of modern Australia.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the anniversary represented a merging of histories.

"The day Cook and the local Indigenous community at Kamay first made contact 250 years ago changed the course of our land forever," the Prime Minister said.

"It's a point in time from which we embarked on a shared journey which is realised in the way we live today.

"We honour the resilience, wisdom, custodianship and stewardship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. Indigenous culture is a fundamental element of modern Australia.

"We also acknowledge the extraordinary individual of James Cook whose passion for science and discovery played such a critical role in Australia's journey to the nation we are today."

Minister for Indigenous Australians, Ken Wyatt said the *Endeavour's* arrival in Australia is a very important chapter in our history which dates back 65,000 years.

"The anniversary represents an opportunity to reflect upon the impact and changes felt by Indigenous Australians, and also to gain a better understanding of how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders lived prior to European settlement. The *Endeavour's* arrival marked the first true understanding from the Western World on the world's longest living Indigenous culture, and revealed the different ways in which science was used to help guide exploration and discovery," Minister Wyatt said.

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, Paul Fletcher said while the COVID-19 pandemic is currently front of mind for Australians, it remains important to mark key dates in our history that have helped shaped our nation and national identity.

“This year it is particularly important that we are reminded of the sense of community that exists among us all, even when we cannot physically gather together,” Minister Fletcher said.

“It is through reflecting on our history that we can better understand who we are as Australians and help future generations to understand these events.

“The Endeavour voyage expanded the West’s knowledge of the world: the east coast of Australia was charted and native plants and animals were studied and collected.

“Western and Indigenous cultures are connected through their approaches to the natural world around them, highlighting how central ‘knowledge’ is to both cultures.

“Some exhibitions and activities for the anniversary have been suspended or delayed due to the current COVID-19 situation. Our national cultural institutions are working hard to take the educational experiences and exhibitions they have developed to new audiences online – supporting children and teachers as they navigate their new learning environments.

“Other initiatives, including the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies project to return Indigenous cultural heritage and upgrades to the Kamay Botany Bay National Park visitor facilities will have lasting value for the community when they are completed.”

The Government has released a new website - www.endeavour250.gov.au - to mark the anniversary, which includes information from a range of perspectives and educational resources for teachers and students.

Decisions about future Endeavour 250 activities will be informed by official health advice on the community response to COVID-19.

Media Contacts:

The Hon Scott Morrison MP

Press Office, (02) 6277 7744

The Hon Paul Fletcher MP

Brad Hatch | 0448 162 679 | Brad.Hatch@communications.gov.au

Rebecca Papillo | 0439 892 771 | Rebecca.Papillo@communications.gov.au

The Hon Ken Wyatt MP

Luke Nayna | 0438 231 687 | Luke.Nayna@ia.pm.gov.au