



# MEDIA RELEASE

**The Hon Peter Garrett MP AM**

*Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts*

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## **MYALL CREEK MASSACRE RECOGNISED 170 YEARS ON**

Heritage Minister Peter Garrett, today announced the inclusion of the Myall Creek massacre site, near Inverell, on the National Heritage List.

Minister Garrett made the announcement while attending a memorial service for the 170<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the massacre.

“The events at Myall Creek resonate across the years and the listing of the Myall Creek Massacre and Memorial Site formally recognises a pivotal moment in Australia’s history,” Mr Garrett said.

“The fact that so many people gather each year from the Myall Creek community, Indigenous elders and the relatives of those killed to honour and remember those who died and continue the journey of reconciliation is a testament to the communities deep understanding and acknowledgement of this crucial chapter in our history.

“During the period of early European settlement, competition for land and resources and a lack of cultural understanding resulted in conflict between Aboriginal people and settlers. In 1838 approximately 30 Wirrayaraay people of the Gamilaroi nation were killed near Myall Creek. Seven settlers were found guilty of, and hanged for, the murder of these people.

“It was the first and last time the Colonial Administration intervened to ensure the laws of the colony were applied equally to Aboriginal people and settlers involved in frontier killings.

“However, the public response to the massacre, trial and hangings also shaped the way the Colonial Administration dealt with Aboriginal people for the next century. The Administration was reluctant to get involved in any future frontier conflicts, and the event also led to the establishment of Aboriginal missions.

“The conflict of 170 years ago has given way to a new understanding of Aboriginal peoples’ attachment to the land. Recognition of this attachment and the sometimes brutal ways in which Aboriginal people were dispossessed are important in the journey of reconciliation.

“The Myall Creek Memorial was established in 2000. The fact that the descendants of some of the people massacred on that horrific day in 1838 and the descendants of those charged with the crime can come together in their own peaceful and personal reconciliation gives me great hope for our country and makes me very proud to be an Australian,” Mr Garrett said.

National Heritage listing ensures places are protected for future generations under the Australian Government’s *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999*.

The National Heritage List showcases natural, historic and Indigenous places of outstanding heritage value to our nation. It reflects the story of our development - from our original inhabitants to present day, Australia’s spirit and ingenuity, and our unique, living landscapes.

Myall Creek is the 79<sup>th</sup> place to be included in the National Heritage List, joining other Indigenous sites including the Hermansburg Historic Precinct, the Brewarrina Aboriginal Fish Traps, the Budj Bim National Heritage Landscape and the Mount William Stone Hatchet Quarry.

For more information visit [www.heritage.gov.au](http://www.heritage.gov.au)