

CAIRNS
MUSEUM

CAIRNS MUSEUM - EXCURSION

Unsettled History

Learn about unsettled history, the continuous connection to Country felt by First Nations people of the north, and prominent advocates for community and Country. Y 7-10

Curriculum V.9

Unsettled History Excursion Program Overview

2024-2030 V.9¹

Introduction

Welcome to Cairns Museum's **Unsettled History Excursion Program**. At the Cairns Museum, we love to showcase our rich and diverse history and bring to life engaging stories and events of times gone by to all ages, including all curious minds!

What we do: Your visit will commence with a tour of the Cairns Museum which will weave together narratives from Deep Time and Traditional Owner groups, through to contact and settler history, the birth and growth of a community and town, and now our present day city. Students will learn about what life was like in the past for First Nations communities, the arrival of Lieutenant (later Captain) Cook and the colonisation of Queensland, as well as how life changed over time.

How we do it: Your tour at the Cairns Museum will be guided by volunteers, who are familiar with the many stories in and around our Museum. They are happy to engage and take questions along the way, and are experienced in working with students.

What you will see: It is more a case of what you won't see when your class goes on tour!

From Gimuy Wallaburra Yindinji and Yirrganydji cultural objects and stories, to colonial settlers, diverse cultural communities of the past, post war migration, changing technology, the environment, and collectors of butterflies and beetles, there are so many opportunities to learn interesting local facts which align to your curriculum needs.

Teacher information:

Max 60 students broken into 3-4 groups dependent on age.

Each tour takes 45 minutes with a further 45 minutes allowed for free time or activities.



¹ All information is based on ACARA: Australian Curriculum: V.9

Unsettled History

The Cairns Museum's **Unsettled History Excursion Program** offers thematic education-focused displays which cover a range of topics linked to the curriculum for Years 7-10, covering important aspects such as pre-colonisation Traditional Owner groups, Elders of importance, places with cultural significance, and post contact implications. The Cairns Museum is a carefully curated social history museum which includes content about local Indigenous Traditional Owner and Custodian groups, pre-colonisation European visitation, settlement formation, industry, migration, impact of colonisation, laws and citizenship. We highlight changing attitudes about natural resources and the environment and show how environmental resources have been cared for, or exploited, by different racial groups. Our Museum enables exploration of themes based on wants and needs when living in the tropics.

We are focused on real history, real life stories, and content which is applicable to far north Queensland students.

At the Cairns Museum, we offer an environment where enhanced learning can occur through exciting guided tours, storytelling, engaging visual content and supplementary resources. We assist you to meet your curriculum requirements for History, Geography, Questioning and Researching, Interpreting, Analysing and Evaluating, Concluding and Decision-making and Communicating, and we are the only museum in Cairns which presents the history of Cairns and region over time. We offer a vibrant experience to enhance your classroom methodologies and promote reflection to enrich curious minds.

Inquiry Questions

Our **Unsettled History Excursion Program** supports your framework for developing students' knowledge, understanding, independent thought and skills base for each Year's level. This enables connections to be made across the sub-strands and may be used or adapted to suit local contexts.

Curriculum Links

This tour is appropriate for Years 7-10 but can be utilised for other year levels. All of our programs align with Curriculum V.9

[AC9HH7K03](#), [AC9HH7K09](#), [AC9HG7K07](#), [AC9HC7K04](#), [AC9HG8K03](#), [AC9HC8K05](#), [AC9HC9K05](#), [AC9HH9K03](#), [AC9HH10K09](#), [AC9HH10K10](#), [AC9HH10K11](#), [AC9HC10K05](#), [AC9HG10K01](#)



The Cairns Museum offers dynamic and curriculum focused school program experiences, to provide in-depth learning opportunities for large and small groups.

Cairns Over Time

Our tour commences on Level 2 with an exploration of our First Nations Welcome Walls.

First Nations stories of far north Queensland remain an important link with the past for many families within the far north Queensland community. Our museum offers a unique opportunity to understand this history in an informative and sensitive way.

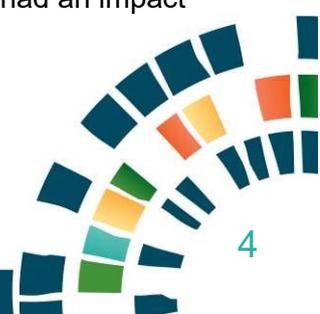
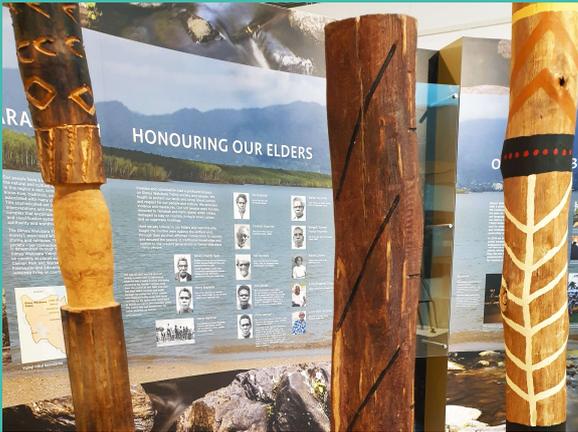
Students will learn about Traditional Owner groups Gimuy Wallaburra Yidinji of Cairns and Yirrganydji of north Cairns. Students will hear about our Message Poles and artefacts on display including Headdresses, Shields, Yirrganydji painting and the story of Ye-i-nie, Yidinji King of Cairns. They will learn about life after colonisation and living in Town Camps. The deep interconnectedness between people, Country and place is a feature of this gallery, which highlights leading Elders of the community, past and present.

Around the Welcome Walls are stories of individuals and communities associated with post-colonial migration. Students will learn about the diverse range of people, industries and change associated with early settlement as well the new social, political and community institutions which followed.

Built on racial and cultural diversity, this gallery highlights individuals and communities of our multicultural past with First Nations at the centre of it all.

Broader themes covered in this gallery include:

- Gold scales relating to the gold rushes of far north Queensland.
- A printing press which illustrates the story of early broad-print communication.
- A temple seal from the 1886 Chinese Lit Sung Goong (temple) demonstrating early multiculturalism.
- Stories of men and women who had an impact on our community.



Old Cairns

Our tour continues on Level 1 with an exploration of Old Cairns. Here students will start on a journey to learn first about seasonal First Nations tracks from coast to hinterland as pathways for resources and cultural gatherings, and how they were converted by early colonists into stable inland routes, railways and roads.

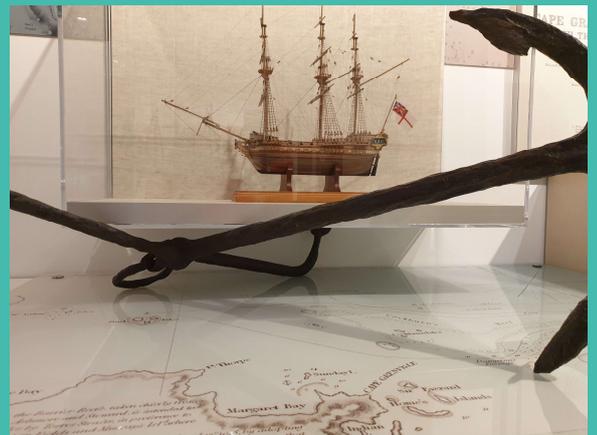
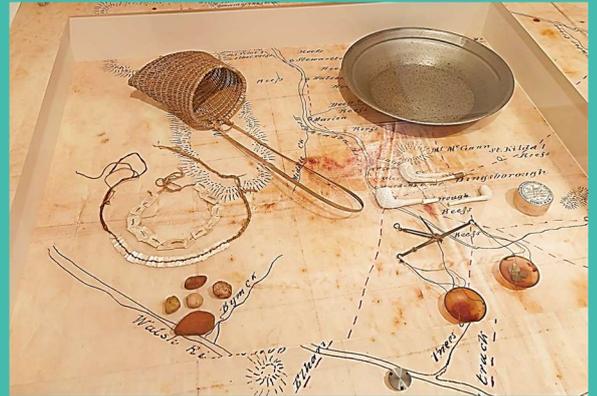
The story of **Unsettled History** is captured throughout this gallery with displays of tools used to secure resources in the tropics such as grinding stone, spears and woven baskets. Displays also focus on traditional water craft which enabled Saltwater people to navigate seascapes.

Our volunteers will introduce students to the arrival of European sea explorers including Lieutenant Cook to north Queensland, contact, colonisation, and subsequent disruption caused by colonial settlement to traditional lifestyles, culture and community. This gallery introduces themes of resistance and change.

One of our highlights is a large interactive table which offers a bird's eye view of Cairns and surrounding natural features which enables students to explore and discuss Traditional Owner groups' Countries, environments for resources, colonial expansion and settlement as well as locations of Aboriginal Missions in relation to Cairns.

This gallery introduces:

- How life changed for First Nations people with arrival of migrants and colonial settlement.
- Traditional tools, spears, fishtraps and baskets, egg holders and grinding stone.
- The effect of colonial settlement on resources in both land and sea
- Weapons used to resist or subdue in conflict between First Nations and colonial settlers.
- Saltwater and Freshwater natural resources



Living in the Tropics



A great way to learn about difference in family structure based on racial difference, continuity and intergenerational change can be found in an exploration of everyday items associated with the family home in our Living in the Tropics Gallery.

Everyday items can be explored in the kitchen and laundry around items relating to food, clothes, growing up and living within our tropical environment.



This gallery can smoothly lead into a discussion of the roles Aboriginal women and girls played in society, by learning how to do domestic work in government sanctioned schools, so that they could be employed in non-Aboriginal households throughout far north Queensland.

Objects which depict features familiar to kitchens and laundries but yet so totally different to today include:

- Washboard, tubs and washing dollies.
- Solid timber Kitchen dresser meshed to keep flies out
- Interesting cooking equipment.
- Ice chests, stoves and cookers



A short film in our theatrette highlights some of the changes in our community since World War Two. From there students will discover a world of growing up in the tropics, attitudes to fauna, and environmental disasters.

This is an area where reflection, interpretation and analysis can be applied through classroom discussion about

- Childhood play and sustainability
- Introduction of the Cane Toad and pest management.
- Mosquitos and Malarial program



Changing Cairns

Changing Cairns gallery enables students to explore a more contemporary history of Cairns in the late 20th century. This gallery emphasises global influences underpinning migration and changing attitudes towards the environment, civil rights, conservation, and the rise of tourism as a form of entertainment. Students are able to explore the region through the lens of the Second World War; post war migration; advocacy, and innovation.

The right to maintain connection to country is highlighted by an exploration of the resilience of First Nations peoples with stories of community advocates, including civil rights advocates Gladys O'Shane and Joe McGuinness. This gallery enables students to reflect on the impact of colonisation upon local First Nations people, providing a starting point for further conversation back in the classroom.

Cairns transitions from a sleepy community of the 1950s to a vital city participating in a global environment with a new outlook on the environment, calls for protection of the Reef, and the rise of cultural tourism. Find out about home grown First Nation tourism through the story of Tjapukai Cultural Centre and world-renowned Yarrabah Pottery.

Stories and artefacts on display in this gallery include:

- First Nations and the fight for civil rights and for connection to Country.
- The Cairns Advancement League.
- Post WWII Migration and influence of global citizenship.
- The protection of the environment and the local environmental movement.
- Local cultural tourism and artisan tourism through the story of Tjapukai and Yarrabah Pottery.
- Changes over time in human attitudes to land and sea resources.





Temporary Gallery

At the Cairns Museum, we offer a temporary exhibition space with rotating curated exhibitions which change every four months.

Our Temporary Gallery exhibitions are thought provoking, visual and creative additions to our static exhibitions and are drawn from national travelling exhibitions, local partnerships or from our own collection resources.

These exhibitions are aligned to the Cairns Historical Society and Cairns Museum vision of diversity, representativeness and inclusivity and provide a valuable addition for questioning, reflection, and analysis of what it means to have a Changing World.

Exhibitions the Cairns Museum have shown include:

- An exhibition of fashion created by everyday rubbish picked up from the beach.
- Everyday items which we find hard to let go and throw out but no longer have a use
- Growing up in the tropics
- Partner collections of shells, tapa cloths, shaving equipment, and steam engines
- Individuals such as Percy Trezise, Les Paul and Northern Anzacs
- Chinese history and heritage
- Treasures from collections
- First Nations Country, place and people

Atrium

At the Cairns Museum, we encourage an immersive student experience. Do not forget to look up at our current student installation in the Atrium above the stairwell. Each year the Cairns Museum partners with a local school to showcase their vision of a museum installation. Your school could be next! Make enquiry at info@cairnsmuseum.org.au to see how you can enter your idea.

