

GOVERNOR LACHLAN MACQUARIE: 'THE FATHER OF AUSTRALIA'

The year 2010 marks the bicentenary of Lachlan Macquarie beginning his time as Governor of New South Wales. Lachlan Macquarie was the fifth governor of the state, and held his position from 1 January 1810 until 30 November 1821. The bicentenary also pays tribute to his wife, Elizabeth Campbell Macquarie.

ADDITIONAL IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Use these questions as a guide for discussion.

1. How did Macquarie's military training help him in his role as Governor of New South Wales?
2. What was the name of the colony's first bank, encouraged in its creation by Macquarie? How was this significant in the history of NSW?
3. What and where is the place called Mrs Macquarie's Chair?
4. What role did Macquarie play in the lives of Francis Greenway and Dr William Redfern?
5. What was an emancipist? What was Macquarie's policy on the treatment of emancipists?
6. Governor Macquarie brought an end to the Rum Rebellion. What was the Rum Rebellion?
7. What were some of Elizabeth Macquarie's greatest achievements?
8. What was Governor Macquarie's relationship with the aboriginal people? How was this similar or different to the previous Governor's relationship with the aborigines?
9. What were 3 of the values the Macquarie's showed when they came to New South Wales? How can you imitate these values in your own life at school and at home?
10. Why do you think the Macquarie's didn't stay on in Australia?



*Mixtures of Lachlan Macquarie and Elizabeth Macquarie
Originals held by Mitchell Library State Library of NSW. Unaltered and updated See
<http://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/exhibition/objectsthroughtime/portraits/>*

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Mapping

Provide the students with a stencil of a map of the world. Invite each student to mark Governor Macquarie's place of birth on the map. Encourage them to research the places he travelled to before he came to Australia, and to label these locations.

Across the world

Ask the students to calculate the distance from Scotland to Australia in kilometres and to convert these kilometres back to miles.

Timeline

Invite the students to research the early life of Governor Macquarie, and create a timeline including the important events that occurred in his life before he came to Australia.

Place names

Encourage the students to work in small groups to find the names of places named after Lachlan and Elizabeth Macquarie. Ask them to start with Sydney, then look at New South Wales, then Australia.

Interview

Invite the class to write some interview questions to ask Governor Macquarie. Have the students break into pairs to research the answers to their questions.

Board game

Encourage the students to research and find 10– 20 interesting facts about the lives of Lachlan and Elizabeth Macquarie. Invite them to use these facts to write questions and answers for a board game. Ask the students to form small groups and to invent a fun, educational board game using their facts.

Journal entry

Invite the students to imagine they were convicts living at the time that Lachlan Macquarie was Governor of New South Wales. Ask the students to write a short series of journal entries detailing their life at this time, how they were treated, and the new initiatives set up by Governor Macquarie.

Macquarie and the Aboriginal people

Encourage the students to use books and the internet to find out about Governor Macquarie's relationship with the Aboriginal peoples of New South Wales, and how he thought they should be treated. Ask students to list any information or interesting facts they find, and to share their information with the class.

Paint the picture

In a book about Elizabeth Macquarie, there is a description of the departure of Lachlan and Elizabeth Macquarie from Sydney in 1822.

Their actual departure from the Colony in whose life they had been an integral and focal part for the previous twelve years was an extremely emotional occasion. From the ship [*Surry*] they could see the actual progress achieved in Sydney during that time — many fine buildings, properly laid out streets, houses and services for nearly four times the population when they first arrived. From first hand experience ... they knew of the opening up and settlement of the country, north, south, west and in Van Diemen's Land. They were aware of the intangibles — pride in the country, especially of those young people born there; the better quality of life of the citizens, both free settlers and emancipists; and probably, with due modesty, of their own part in bringing about all this.

(Lysbeth Cohen, *Elizabeth Macquarie: Her Life and Times*, Wentworth Books, Sydney, 1979)

Lachlan Macquarie recorded their leaving in his journal on 12 February 1822:

[The Sydney foreshore areas] were covered with Men, Women, and Children, and a vast number of Boats were also sailing or rowing in the Harbour full of People, cheering us repeatedly as we passed along through them.

Provide the students with paints and paper and ask them to paint this scene. Look at other pictures of boats, people and Sydney Harbour from this time.

LEADERSHIP, CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP

As we learn about the Macquaries, we are reminded of the many important values of leadership and citizenship they demonstrated after their arrival in Australia. These include resilience, holding onto values, the importance of family, courage, determination, commitment, vision and allowing a fair go for everyone. Applying such qualities in our own lives will help shape the future of our country and connect us with our history.

For example, family values were very important to Lachlan and Elizabeth Macquarie. They were very influenced by the concept of the 'clan', and befriended many people during their time in Australia, making their household a rich and lively one.

Themes and ideas

Here are some themes and ideas for further studies that link the experiences of Lachlan and Elizabeth Macquarie to ideas of leadership, civics and citizenship. In exploring these themes, a real connection is created between Australian history and what happens today. Possible themes include:

- resilience in the face of hardship (e.g. remoteness from England, constant criticism by the 'exclusives', etc.)
- holding on to values in the face of criticism (e.g. see Macquarie's farewell speech to Sydney at www.lib.mq.edu.au/digital/lema/1821/1821farewell.html)
- courage
- perseverance and determination to overcome obstacles and rise to challenges
- commitment and focus
- embracing changes and continuous improvement
- maintaining a positive attitude towards other people
- making tough choices
- goal setting and achieving
- a 'fair go' for all and giving people a second chance (e.g. the Macquaries' treatment of convicts).

Projects

There are many classroom projects that could be used link the ideas listed above with Australian society today.

- Ask students for ideas on how they can make a difference in their community. This might be at home, in their local community (e.g. volunteering), or in the world at large. Students could undertake a project to improve some aspect of their world.
- Discuss with students the importance of speaking up. Explore with students what happens if we don't speak up when we can see that a wrong is occurring in our society. Then have them write a letter to a newspaper, start a blog, or use any other medium to speak up about an important issue.
- Have students develop a website for Lachlan and Elizabeth Macquarie. Compare with the web pages found at the Parliament of NSW site (www.parliament.nsw.gov.au — search for 'Lachlan Macquarie') and at Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's website (www.pm.gov.au).
- If the Macquaries arrived in Sydney today, what infrastructure and social welfare projects would they see as most pressing for Sydney? Have students design a project plan and job descriptions for the workers. Issues might include:
 - climate change
 - problems with river systems such as the Murray-Darling and the Hawkesbury flood plain
 - social welfare.

Remember that Lachlan Macquarie was the first patron of the Benevolent Society, established to help ill, disabled and homeless convicts, as once they aged or could not work they were useless to the free settlers. Elizabeth Macquarie led the establishment of the Bible Society. These two entities still exist today. The Macquaries also set up the first asylum for the mentally ill, at Castle Hill.

- The current Governor of New South Wales is Marie Bashir. Ask students to find out about her role, and how she makes a difference. Have them compile questions for Professor Bashir, then coordinate with schools in your area, book an auditorium, and write to her asking if she could attend and answer questions prepared by the students of your area. Each student could come up on stage to ask their question. Not overloading the governor with individual requests needs to be a priority.

- Discuss with the students the hard lessons Governor Macquarie had to learn during his 12 long years in Australia. Develop a 'Lessons Learned Register' for Macquarie. Have students had to learn any of these lessons themselves yet?

Excursions

If you are in or around New South Wales, or planning a trip with your students, here are some ideas for excursions or for highlighting some further studies.

- Visit the suburbs of Windsor, Richmond, Wilberforce, Pitt Town and Castlereagh in north-west Sydney. These are the 'Macquarie Towns' — settlements that Governor Macquarie designated and named in 1810.
- Visit Liverpool and Campbelltown, both named for Elizabeth Macquarie (nee Campbell).
- Visit Newcastle. The city was greatly influenced by Macquarie.
- Travel the road over the Blue Mountains to Bathurst.
 - The original route, Cox's Road, is still evident (see <http://coxsroad.com>) and it can be walked from the obelisk at Mt York, in Mt Victoria. Lachlan Macquarie recorded his descent of Mt York in 1815 (see www.lib.mq.edu.au/digital/lema/1815/1815april.html#apr28) and 1821 (see: www.lib.mq.edu.au/digital/lema/1821/1821dec.html#dec17).
 - Show students *The Road*, a new dramatised documentary about the construction of the road over the Blue Mountains (in an astonishing 6 months!) by William Cox and his team of convict workers. This documentary should be released in 2010.
- Visit places such as Old Government House, Parramatta; Hyde Park Barracks; St James Church; the Macquarie Street precinct; the Macquarie Obelisk in Macquarie Place; the Domain and the Botanic Gardens; and the restored Female Orphan School at the Parramatta campus of the University of Western Sydney.
- Students could complete a photography, film or scrapbooking (digital or hard copy) project tied in with the life and achievements of the Macquaries, such as a commemoration of the bicentenary of Macquarie's governorship.