

Stories from Australia's History

Charles Perkins and the Freedom Ride

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WARNING: Indigenous Australian readers are warned that this publication may contain images of deceased persons.

When a word is printed in **bold**, click on it to find its meaning.

ON THE GRAPHIC PAGES, TEXT WITH THIS COLOURED BACKGROUND COMES FROM A HISTORICAL SOURCE.

Freedom is one of the great stories in Australia's history.

Stories from Australia's history

The story of modern Australia starts on 26 January 1788. On that day, Captain Arthur Phillip arrived at Sydney Cove from England with the **convict** ships of the First Fleet. The new **settlement** brought disaster to Australia's **Indigenous peoples**, because the newcomers took their lands. This event marks the beginning of Australia as we know it today.

After 1788, Indigenous Australians became **outcasts** in their own lands. The European settlers tried to crush Indigenous ways of life, but they did not succeed. Indigenous Australians survived and fought back. There are many stories in this long fight for **justice**. Charles Perkins and the Freedom Ride is one of these great stories in Australia's history.

Indigenous peoples, such as the Eora people of Sydney, suffered the loss of their lands and culture when Europeans arrived in Australia.



Charles Perkins and the Freedom Ride

Around midnight on 12 February 1965, a group of 29 students boarded a bus outside the University of Sydney. They were going on a two-week tour of **outback** New South Wales, but this was no holiday. The students on the Freedom Ride aimed to drive from town to town, exposing shocking **racism** against Indigenous Australians.



The students who took part in the Freedom Ride came from different backgrounds, including Jewish, Christian and Indigenous. They all wanted to fight for an end to racism.

A fiery young Indigenous man, Charles Perkins, was one of the students on the bus. He was determined to stand up to racists and improve the lives of Indigenous Australians. By the end of the Freedom Ride, the students had exposed racism in Australia and Charles Perkins had become a powerful Indigenous leader.

The Freedom Ride was a **turning point** for Indigenous Australians. This is the story of the people, the ideas and the events of the Freedom Ride, and how it changed Australia forever.

What does it mean?

racism: Unfair treatment based on race

The big picture

When European settlers arrived in Australia in 1788, the lives of the **Indigenous peoples** changed forever. Thousands were killed or died of diseases introduced by the newcomers. Traditional hunting grounds were taken over and turned into farms, and Indigenous Australians lost their lands and ways of life.

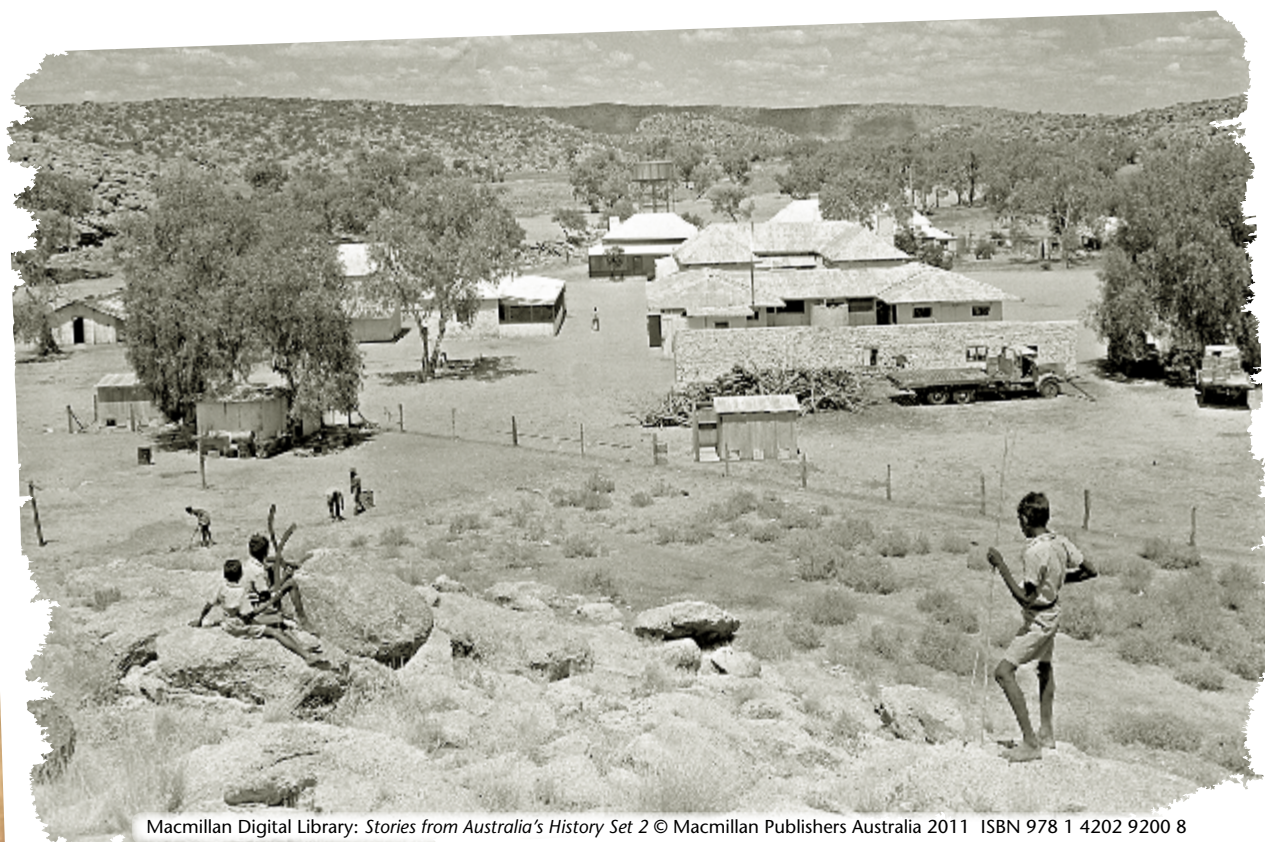
The settlers passed strict laws to force Indigenous Australians to live on **reserves**. They could not work, marry or travel without permission, and Indigenous languages and cultures were banned. Many children were taken away from their families.

To survive, some Indigenous Australians took poorly paid jobs as farm workers and servants. Some escaped the reserves and lived in rough camps outside towns. Indigenous Australians were **outcasts**, banned from theatres, cafés and swimming pools. Hospitals had separate wards for them and some schools refused to teach their children. Throughout Australia, Indigenous peoples were denied basic **rights**.

What does it mean?

rights: freedoms that all people in a society should have

Many Indigenous Australians were forced to live on reserves. The Bungalow in Alice Springs housed more than 130 Indigenous Australians in tin sheds.



Eyewitness words

“[On Gulargambone Aboriginal reserve] ... there were houses with no doors and with no windows and ... no sanitation (toilets) and no water ... children ... ill with ... flies in their eyes ...”

Warwick Richards,
one of the students on the Freedom Ride

Changing times

By the 1960s, ideas were changing. In the United States of America, strong leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr urged **African-Americans** to stand up for their rights. He supported Freedom Rides to the southern states of America to expose the racism there. At that time, Australia had some of the most racist laws in the world. The ‘White Australia Policy’ stopped non-Europeans from settling in Australia, and Indigenous Australians suffered **brutal** and unfair treatment.

Student Action For Aborigines

In 1965, a group of students at the University of Sydney decided to do something about racism in Australia. Supported by Pastor Ted Noffs and led by Charles Perkins, the group Student Action For **Aborigines** (SAFA) planned their own Freedom Ride through New South Wales and Queensland.



This map shows the route taken by the Freedom Ride bus.

Key people

These two people played key roles in the Freedom Ride.

Charles Perkins

Born: 1936 at The Bungalow, a police-run **Aboriginal reserve** in Alice Springs, Northern Territory

Role: Leader of the Freedom Ride

Age at the time of the Freedom Ride (1965): 29

Died: 2000

Appearance: Tall, slim, well-dressed, dark eyes, dark curly hair, strong jaw

Character: Intelligent, quick-tempered, hard-working, a brilliant sportsman and an excellent public speaker, but a loner

Comments: Charles Perkins was clever and energetic, but as an **Indigenous** man he faced terrible racism. It was through hard work and determination that he achieved success. Perkins became a soccer star in Australia and overseas, then became the first Indigenous man to earn a university degree. Perkins' experiences of unfair treatment made him determined to fight for Indigenous rights. As the leader of the Freedom Ride, he battled racism with great courage. However, his experiences of racism made him angry and difficult to work with in later life.



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Ted Noffs

Born: 1926 in Mudgee, New South Wales

Role: Supporter and organiser of the Freedom Ride

Age at the time of the Freedom Ride: 39

Died: 1995

Appearance: Short, stocky, round face, warm smile

Character: Intelligent, friendly, energetic, good with people, a writer, a poet and a man of action

Comments: Ted Noffs was a church minister at the Wayside Chapel in the Sydney suburb of Kings Cross. He welcomed everyone to his chapel, including drug addicts, alcoholics and homeless people. He also fought for **justice** for Indigenous Australians. Noffs recognised Charles Perkins' talents and encouraged him to study at the University of Sydney. Perkins was so inspired by Noffs that he said 'he set me alight'. Noffs was one of the people who came up with the idea of the Freedom Ride to highlight racism in New South Wales and Queensland.



Shameful treatment

In the early 1960s, Indigenous Australians were treated as second-class citizens, just because of the colour of their skin.

In country towns in New South Wales, they were banned from hotels and cafés ...

HEY, YOU CAN'T SIT DOWN IN HERE! GET OUT!

They lived outside the towns in rough camps.

1962

In Sydney, Charles Perkins and his friend Pastor Ted Noffs were determined to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians.

I WANT TO HELP MY PEOPLE.

YOU COULD BE A GREAT LEADER, CHARLES.



... and picked on by the police.

YOU'RE UNDER ARREST.

BUT I'VE DONE NOTHING WRONG!



ME? I FAILED HIGH SCHOOL.

WORK HARD AND YOU'LL GET INTO UNIVERSITY.

March 1963

Perkins passed his high school exams and began studying at the University of Sydney.

I WON'T WASTE THIS CHANCE!

Soon, Perkins became involved in student activities. He spoke at meetings ...

MY PEOPLE HAVE NO HOUSES AND NO RUNNING WATER! THEY'RE BANNED FROM HOTELS AND CINEMAS!

20 July 1964

... and formed a group to fight for justice called Student Action For Aborigines.

IN AMERICA, THEY HELD FREEDOM RIDES TO PROTEST AGAINST RACISM.

WE COULD DO THAT, TOO - HIRE A BUS AND DRIVE TO RACIST TOWNS.

At a SAFA meeting ...

DO WE AGREE ON A FREEDOM RIDE?

YES!

LET'S INVITE THE PRESS ALONG.

WE SHOULD DO SURVEYS, TOO, AND ASK ABORIGINES ABOUT WHAT THEY WANT.

A Freedom Ride around New South Wales was planned for the summer.

December

The Wayside Chapel, King's Cross

THESE ARE THE MOST RACIST TOWNS, CHARLES. WHILE YOU'RE AWAY, I'LL STAY HERE AND KEEP THE PRESS INFORMED.



12 February 1965

The University of Sydney

THIS IS DARCE CASSIDY REPORTING FOR ABC NEWS. TWENTY-NINE STUDENTS ARE ABOUT TO LEAVE ON A FREEDOM RIDE AROUND THE STATE.

GOOD LUCK, CHARLES. BE CAREFUL.

SURE, TED. WE WON'T USE VIOLENCE.

LET'S SAY A PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY GOD ... WE ASK ... THY BLESSING ... UPON THESE AUSTRALIANS ... AS THEY JOURNEY OUT ... TO BRING RECONCILIATION AND HEALING AMONG PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN DIVIDED BECAUSE OF THE COLOUR OF THEIR SKIN ...

11.30 a.m.,
13 February

The next morning, the bus arrived at the first town.

Welcome to
Wellington

At the Aboriginal camp outside Wellington, the students were shocked by the conditions, but could not prove any racism.

WE'RE GOING TO THE ABORIGINAL CAMP.

OK, WE'LL LOOK AROUND THE TOWN.

The Freedom Ride continued.

7 p.m.,
14 February

The next day, the Freedom Ride arrived at Walgett, which was known for its racism.

THERE'S THE RETURNED SERVICEMEN'S LEAGUE (RSL) CLUB. I'VE HEARD THEY BAN ABORIGINES.

ABORIGINES
BY
INVITATION
ONLY

The students met with Reverend P. J. Dowe, the minister of the local church.

WELCOME, EVERYONE. YOU CAN SLEEP IN THE CHURCH HALL.

ST. PETER CHURCH

15 February

The next morning, at Walgett RSL ...

NO ABORIGINES ALLOWED. GET OUT!

Noon

End
colour bar

WHO THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

ABORIGINES

ALSO

FOUGHT

5 p.m.

Later in the day, local Aborigines took notice of the protest.

I'M GOOD ENOUGH TO FIGHT FOR THE COUNTRY ... WHY SHOULDN'T I WALK IN THERE?

YOU'RE ALL SCUM!

... EVERYBODY KNOWS ... WALGETT RSL DOES DISCRIMINATE AGAINST ABORIGINAL PEOPLE ON THE BASIS OF COLOUR ALONE ... WE OBJECT TO THIS ...

The protest ended at nightfall.

**8 p.m.,
15 February
1965**

At the Oasis Hotel-Motel in Walgett, locals Paul Evans and Joey Marshall hatched a plan ...

LET'S TEACH THOSE STUDENTS A LESSON.

YEAH!

UH-OH. I'D BETTER GET SOME HELP ...

9 p.m.

Back at St. Peter's Church, Reverend Dowe was angry ...

YOU LOT ARE STIRRING UP TROUBLE. LEAVE WITHIN TWO HOURS!

10.30 p.m.

The students boarded the bus and left Walgett.

GOOD LUCK!

IT'S BEEN GOOD TO KNOW YOU.

Meanwhile, Evans and Marshall set off to follow the students ...

KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED FOR THE BUS.

LET'S GIVE THEM A FRIGHT!

... but Phillip Hall, the local Indigenous man who had overheard their plan, had other ideas.

He got his friends to drive behind the bus to protect the students.

11.30 p.m.

Fifteen kilometres outside Walgett ...

THERE'S THE BUS, JOEY. DRIVE FASTER!

Evans and Marshall sped past the other cars ...

LOOK OUT!

screech!

RUN 'EM OFF THE ROAD!

crunch!

AAAAHHH!

As the Freedom Ride bus landed in a ditch, the ute sped away.

WE'RE SURROUNDED!

IT'S OK, THEY'RE FRIENDS.

Phillip Hall and his friends surrounded the bus to keep the students safe.

THIS UTE TRIED TO RUN US OFF THE ROAD.

HE NEARLY KILLED US.

Midnight

Back in Walgett

COME INSIDE AND I'LL WRITE UP A REPORT.

Outside the police station

FILTH!

SCUM!

I'M BLACK AND I'M PROUD OF IT.

YOU LOT HANG AROUND US GIRLS WHEN YOUR WIVES AREN'T LOOKING!

The woman, Pat Walford, made the drunken men feel ashamed, so they went away. The students boarded the bus and drove on to Moree.

Viewpoints

Most non-Indigenous locals saw nothing wrong with the way Indigenous Australians were treated. However, many Australians were shocked at the racism shown towards Indigenous peoples during the Freedom Ride. The following two extracts show these different points of view.

Reverend P. J. Dowe, minister of Walgett

“ [Indigenous Australians in Walgett] have been well treated in this district [with some exceptions] They are accepted by most of the whites [again, with some exceptions]. They have the same opportunities (chances) as whites. There is no shortage of work. They are paid as well [as] or better than the whites There appears to be plenty of money among them They have had no end of gifts and ‘hand outs’ and they are quite content to take all these, but it has only encouraged them to sit back and take things easy There is a complete ... lack of concern to help themselves.”

Reverend P. J. Dowe,
St Peter's Church, Walgett,
June 1964

In Walgett, while Indigenous Australians were not allowed entry to the Returned Servicemen's League (RSL) club, Indigenous and non-Indigenous children shared classrooms at school.



Pastor Ted Noffs, minister at the Wayside Chapel, Kings Cross

“ The events ... which marked the end of ... [banning] **Aborigines** ... must go down as a milestone in the history of race relations in Australia. The fact that this was accomplished (done) by a small student group must also bring judgement to bear on ... many adult Australians who have done little despite **discrimination** against Aborigines in Australia. It is to be hoped that ... equal numbers of Aborigines and white people [in country towns] will sit down and work out for themselves ways by which an end can be brought to all social divisions that have ... [lasted] for so long.”

Pastor Ted Noffs, Wayside Chapel, Kings Cross, Sydney,
22 February 1965



What does it mean?

discrimination:

To treat someone unfairly based on something about them, such as their race

Racism's ugly face

16 February 1965

The Walgett bus crash hit the headlines and interest in the Freedom Ride grew. The students had stirred up racist hatred, but they were not afraid. The Freedom Ride went on ...

MOREE
Please slow down

No ... Aboriginal native of Australia ... shall be allowed ... to use ... the Memorial Hall ... or the Council ... Baths

LOOK AT THIS! MOREE'S EVEN MORE RACIST THAN WALGETT.

Some locals were racist ...

ABORIGINES SHOULDN'T SWIM IN THE POOL. THEY'RE DIRTY.

... while one man, Bob Brown, stood up for Indigenous Australians.

WHY SHOULDN'T THEY SWIM AT THE POOL?

Meanwhile, the press came pouring into Moree.

HERE AT MOREE, ABORIGINES ARE BANNED FROM THE SWIMMING POOL. THE FREEDOM RIDERS PLAN TO HOLD A PROTEST THERE TOMORROW.

17 February

Charles Perkins wanted to challenge the 'no Aborigines' rule at the pool.

DRIVE TO THE CAMP, BILL.

NO WORRIES, CHARLES.

WHO WANTS TO GO SWIMMING IN TOWN?

WE DO!

HOP ABOARD!

Back at the pool ...

EIGHT TICKETS, PLEASE.

THEY CAN'T COME IN HERE.

The protest began. It stirred up racial hatred from the local people.

WE'RE LIVING IN PEACE UNTIL YOU COME ...

TV crews interviewed the locals.

THEY'RE NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO MIX WITH US!

THEY'RE DIRTY AND LAZY.

ABORIGINES SHOULD STAY OUT OF OUR TOWN.

Why Whites only?

Stop racism

Why not swim together?

The Mayor, Bill Lloyd, arrived.

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

THESE KIDS HAVE THE RIGHT TO SWIM IN THEIR LOCAL POOL.

IT'S THE LAW: NO ABORIGINES.

THE LAW IS RACIST!

HMMM ... THIS MAKES MOREE LOOK BAD.

LET THEM IN!

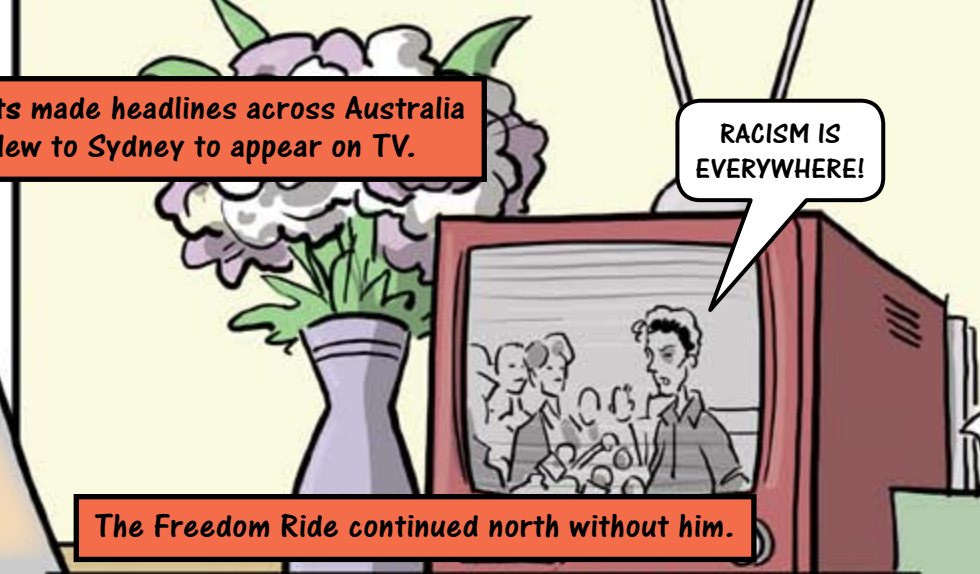
COME ON, KIDS!

The students had won!

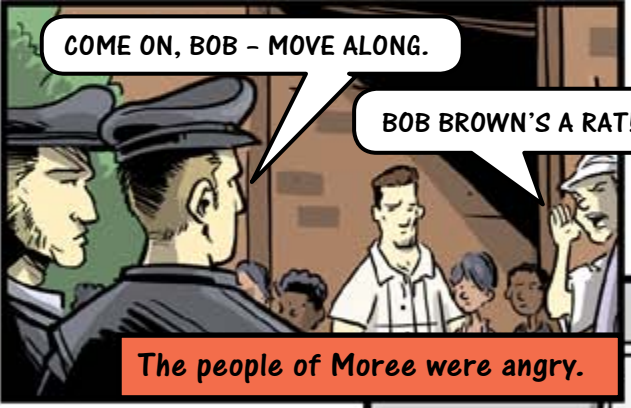
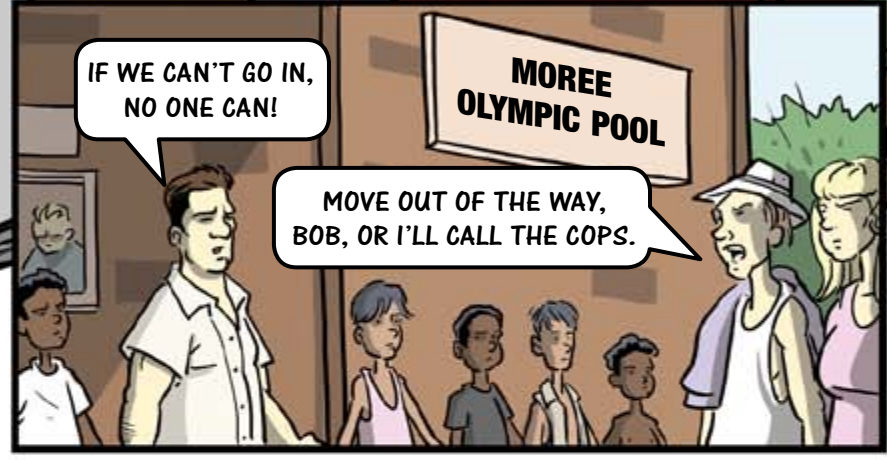
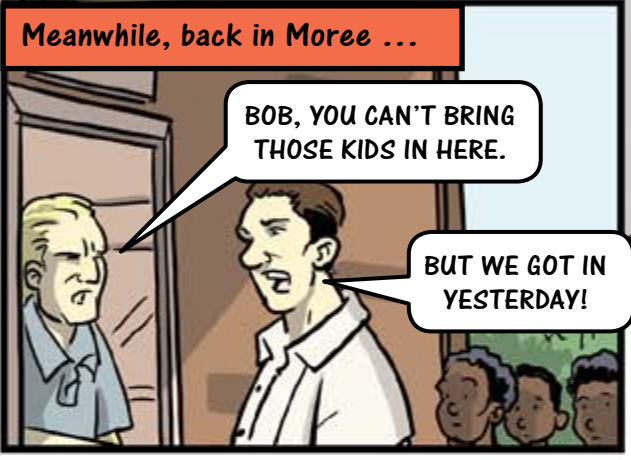
The next morning, the Freedom Ride left Moree, but the students promised to return if there was any more trouble.

18 February 1965

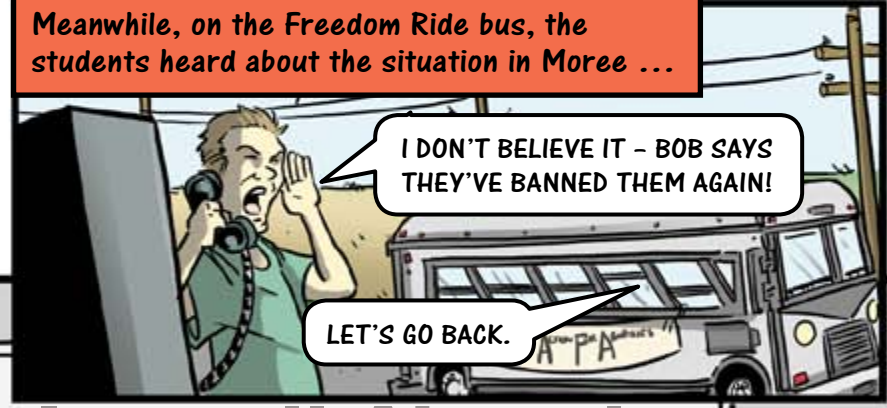
The students' protests made headlines across Australia and Charles Perkins flew to Sydney to appear on TV.



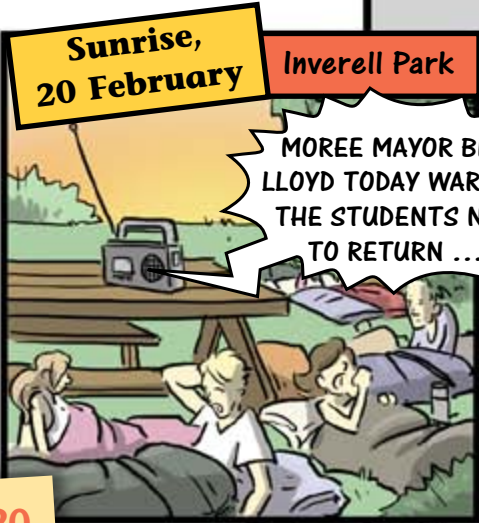
The Freedom Ride continued north without him.



The people of Moree were angry.



Inverell Airport



The bus picked up Perkins and headed back to Moree.

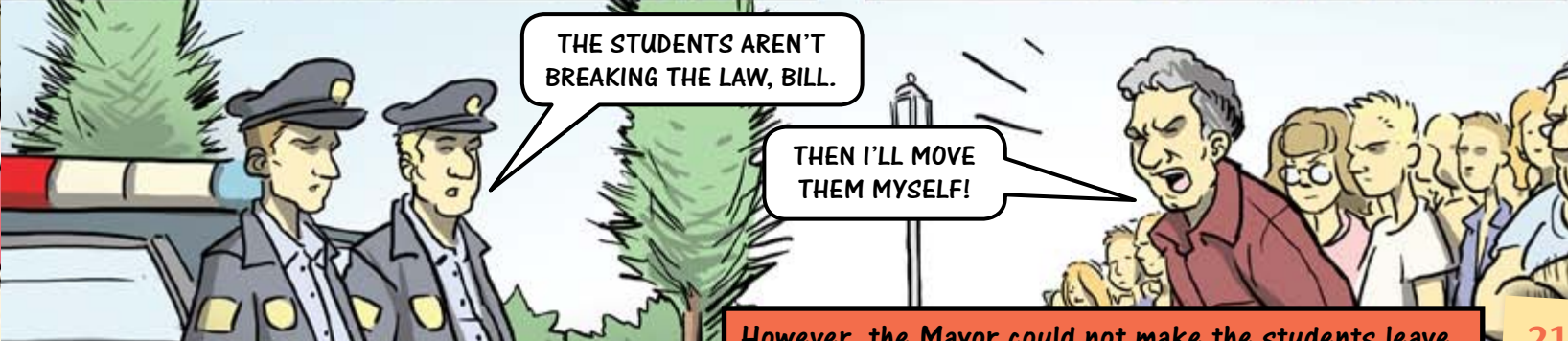
12.30 p.m., 20 February

While some of the students waited in town, Perkins and Bill Pakenham, the bus driver, fetched some children from the camp.



2.30 p.m.

Back at Moree pool



However, the Mayor could not make the students leave.

4.30 p.m.,
20 February 1965

The crowd became more violent ...

RUN THEM OUT
OF TOWN!

Splat!

OW!

The police rigged
up a wire fence to
keep the mob away
from the students.

Splat!

STRING
THEM UP!

To stop the riot, Mayor Bill Lloyd and
Charles Perkins reached an agreement.

IF YOU LEAVE, I'LL
DO ALL I CAN TO
REMOVE THE NO-
ABORIGINES RULE.

OK. IF YOU PROMISE
THAT, WE'LL GO.

QUICK! PICK UP
THE STUDENTS.

YES, OFFICER.

The police guarded the
bus as it left Moree.

Bill Pakenham, the bus driver, left at
Grafton, the next town. The Freedom Ride
was becoming too dangerous for him.

21 February
1965

The Moree protest made
headlines in Australia ...

**VIOLENCE
EXPLODES IN
RACIST TOWN**

... and around the world.

22 February

Once they had their new
driver, the Freedom Ride
continued to Lismore.

They received a
warm welcome and
found no racism.

24 February

At Bowraville, the students
found racism everywhere.

BLACKS
USE
SIDE
DOOR

WHITES
ONLY

They held a protest outside the cinema.

WHY CAN'T
ABORIGINES SIT
WITH THE REST OF
THE AUDIENCE?

[ABORIGINES] ALL SMELL ...
AND DRINK TOO MUCH.

However, the owner refused to change his
racist ways, so the students drove on.

At Kempsey they
found racism at
the local pool, so
held a protest.

POOL

THIS IS TREVOR PHILPOTT
FOR THE BRITISH
BROADCASTING SERVICE.

Equal at school
Unequal at pool

Australia's racism was
reported all around the world.

26 February

The Freedom Ride bus
arrived back at the
University of Sydney.

WELCOME BACK,
CHARLES!

THIS ... GROUP OF STUDENTS HAS
CREATED A NEW DAWN OF HOPE
FOR MY PEOPLE ... WE LAID BARE
THE STRONG PREJUDICE (RACISM)
AGAINST ABORIGINES.

The Freedom Ride was a success.

What happened next?

Charles Perkins and the other students were tired and shaken after their two weeks on the Freedom Ride. However, many of the students went back to the towns in the months that followed to hold **protests** against racism. They also helped local **Indigenous people** set up human rights groups and legal and medical services.

In March 1965, Kempsey lifted its ban on Indigenous people swimming in the public pool, but other towns, including Moree, did not. Joey Marshall, the Walgett man who had forced the Freedom Ride bus off the road, was taken to court. He was set free, but had to keep out of trouble following the trial. The Student Action For **Aborigines** (SAFA) group broke up in mid-1966.

Ted Noffs and Charles Perkins set up the Foundation for Aboriginal Affairs in Sydney, providing **welfare** support for Indigenous Australians. Noffs continued his work at the Wayside Chapel, helping those in need, until he had a stroke in 1987. He died in 1995.



As leader of the Foundation for Aboriginal Affairs between 1965 and 1975, Charles Perkins promoted pride among the Indigenous community. He said, 'I'm proud to be Australian ... but being Aboriginal ... that's icing on the cake.'

First Austr
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There are
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Charles Pe
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istory.



In the 1980s, Eddie Mabo (second from right) and his legal team fought against the Australian Government in one of the most famous cases in the history of Indigenous land rights.

Laws against racism

Australia's state and **federal** governments realised that laws were needed to make racism illegal. In 1966, South Australia was the first state in Australia to pass such a law, called the **Prohibition of Discrimination Act**. Then, in 1975, the Federal Government passed the *Racial Discrimination Act*, which made it illegal throughout Australia to discriminate against Indigenous peoples based on their race.

Slowly, the rights of Indigenous Australians began to be acknowledged. In 1967, a **referendum** asked Australians whether Indigenous people should be counted as part of the population. The referendum was passed by 90 per cent of the voters.

Land rights

In the 1960s, Vincent Lingiari began a long fight for Indigenous **land rights**. Finally, in 1992, the 'Mabo decision' of the High Court of Australia led to successful Indigenous land claims across Australia.

Eyewitness words

Charles Perkins saw the Freedom Ride as a **turning point** for Indigenous Australians. Looking back on the event in 1999, the year before he died, he said:

“[The Freedom Ride] was the beginning of the social change for Aboriginal people in Australia We were evolving (changing) into another sort of society.”

The effects of the Freedom Ride

The Freedom Ride was a **turning point** in Australia's history. **Indigenous people** began to stand up for their rights more boldly and demand **equality**. Non-Indigenous Australians supported them and racism became unacceptable.

Based on his leadership of the Freedom Ride, Charles Perkins became a powerful **role model** for Indigenous Australians and helped develop relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. Many Indigenous leaders today, such as Noel Pearson and Warren Mundine, say they were inspired by Perkins' example.

In the years since the Freedom Ride, Indigenous Australians have won more control over their own affairs. However, the battle to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians continues today.

Whatever happened to ...

Charles Perkins?

Charles Perkins completed his Arts degree at the University of Sydney in 1965 and was named Outstanding Young Man of the Year in 1966. He joined the public service and in 1984 became the first Indigenous man to lead a **Federal** Government department. As head of the Department of **Aboriginal** Affairs, he advised Australian prime ministers on Indigenous issues. Perkins died in 2000 and was given a state funeral.

After the Freedom Ride, Charles Perkins went on to become a powerful Indigenous leader.



Timeline

This timeline shows the main events related to Charles Perkins and the Freedom Ride.

16 June 1936

Charles Perkins is born in Alice Springs, Northern Territory.



Early 1962

Perkins meets Ted Noffs.

January 1964

Noffs opens the Wayside Chapel in Kings Cross, Sydney.

1966

The *Prohibition of Discrimination Act* is passed in South Australia, making racial discrimination illegal in that state.

1975

The *Federal Racial Discrimination Act* bans unfair treatment on the basis of race throughout Australia.

1977

New South Wales Parliament passes the *Anti-Discrimination Act*.



3 June 1992

The 'Mabo decision' of the High Court of Australia recognises that Indigenous Australians have **land rights** as traditional owners.

1935

1960

1965

1970

1975

1980

1985

1990

2000

May 1961

The first Freedom Rides are held in the United States of America. Supported by Martin Luther King (pictured), the Freedom Riders fought for the rights of **African-Americans**.



12-26 February 1965

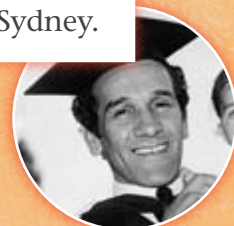
The Freedom Ride tours New South Wales.

December 1965

Perkins graduates from the University of Sydney.

March 1963

Perkins becomes a student at the University of Sydney.



1967

In a **referendum**, Australians vote to count Indigenous peoples as citizens and agree that the Federal Government should oversee Indigenous affairs.

1984

Perkins is appointed head of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

1987

Perkins is awarded the Order of Australia.

2000

Perkins dies.

What do you think?

The Freedom Ride raises many questions about racism and the rights of **Indigenous peoples**. Try the following activities to test your own ideas about this important subject.

Who was right?

Most of the students on the Freedom Ride were not Indigenous Australians. Some people criticised them for interfering in Indigenous peoples' lives, while others supported their actions. Read the following opinions and have a discussion about who you think was right.

Critics

Indigenous Australians have been controlled by non-Indigenous Australians for long enough. They do not need others to interfere. Indigenous Australians should be left alone to solve their own problems.

Supporters

Racism is everyone's problem. All Australians have a duty to stop racism and achieve **justice** for Indigenous peoples.



What would you do?

The following events actually occurred at the time of the Freedom Ride and after. Read each scene, then choose what you would do.

Scene 1

You are Bob Brown, the non-Indigenous Moree local who supported the Freedom Riders' **protests** at Moree swimming pool. After the protests, rotten food is thrown at your shop and your family is threatened. Would you ...

- A** change sides and support the ban on Indigenous swimmers
- B** protest at the pool yourself
- C** move away from Moree?

Scene 2

You are Charles Perkins. The Freedom Ride has a strict rule that all protests must be peaceful. However, during the protests, you and the rest of the students are punched and pelted with gravel. Would you ...

- A** defend yourself in any way you can
- B** refuse to hit back
- C** ask the police to protect you?

Scene 3

You are Charles Perkins, about 20 years after the Freedom Ride. Now a respected government official, you go back to Walgett RSL. The man who refused you entry during the Freedom Ride refuses to let you in again. Would you ...

- A** laugh and walk out
- B** report him under the anti-discrimination laws
- C** yell at him and walk out?

Once you have chosen what you would do in each scene, find out what actually happened on page 31.

Find out more

Websites

<http://www1.aiatsis.gov.au/exhibitions/freedomride/start.htm>

This website covers every aspect of the Freedom Ride. It includes a map of the route, diary entries, important documents, eyewitness accounts and links to related websites.

<http://www.australianbiography.gov.au/subjects/perkins>

This website features a long interview with Charles Perkins in his later years, which includes his thoughts on the Freedom Ride.

Book

Freedom Ride: A Freedom Rider Remembers by Ann Curthoys,
Allen and Unwin, 2002

Ann Curthoys was one of the students on the Freedom Ride. This book is a detailed eyewitness account of the ride, including newspaper reports, diary entries and interviews with the people involved.

DVD

Fire Talker: The Life and Times of Charlie Perkins, directed by
Ivan Sen, 2010

This ABC documentary about Charles Perkins' life is narrated by his daughter, Rachel. It covers the events of the Freedom Ride and includes footage of the key scenes.

Place to visit

Australian Museum,
Sydney, New South Wales

The Australian Museum's exhibition on **Indigenous Australians** includes a recreation of the Freedom Ride bus.



Glossary



Aborigines another word for some Indigenous Australian people

African-Americans Americans with African ancestors

brutal very cruel

colour bar a rule or law separating people of different coloured skin

convict someone serving a sentence in jail for committing a crime

equality where everyone has the same rights

federal to do with the nation as a whole

Indigenous peoples the original peoples of Australia

justice where everyone is treated fairly

land rights the right to own or occupy traditional land

outback remote areas of Australia

outcasts people that have been rejected by society

prohibition ban

protest an act of opposition

referendum a poll of the whole voting population

role model a person who is looked up to as an example to be followed

reconciliation the process of working through issues to reach an agreement

reserves lands set aside for a special purpose

settlement a place where people live

turning point an important event, after which things change

welfare financial aid

What actually happened in the 'What would you do?' scenes described on page 29:

Scene 1: B and C. Bob Brown continued to take Indigenous children to the Moree pool, but was refused entry. Threats from locals eventually forced him to move away.

Scene 2: B. Perkins told the students that anyone who hit back or used violence would be sent home. None of the students did.

Scene 3: A. Perkins laughed and shook the man's hand, saying that he must be a genius to remain the same when the rest of the world had changed.

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