

NOT-FOR-PARENTS

AUSTRALIA

Everything you ever wanted to know

Janine Scott

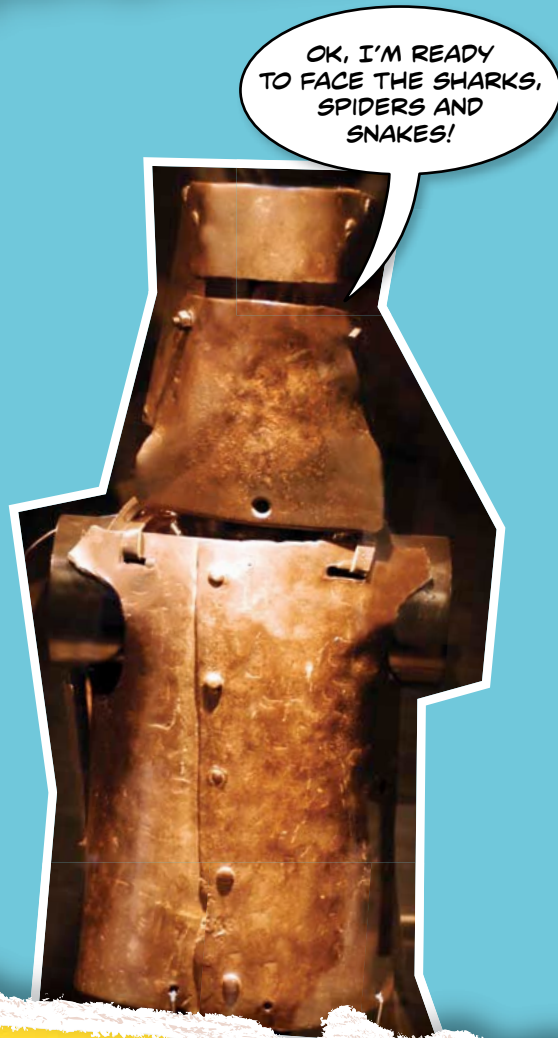
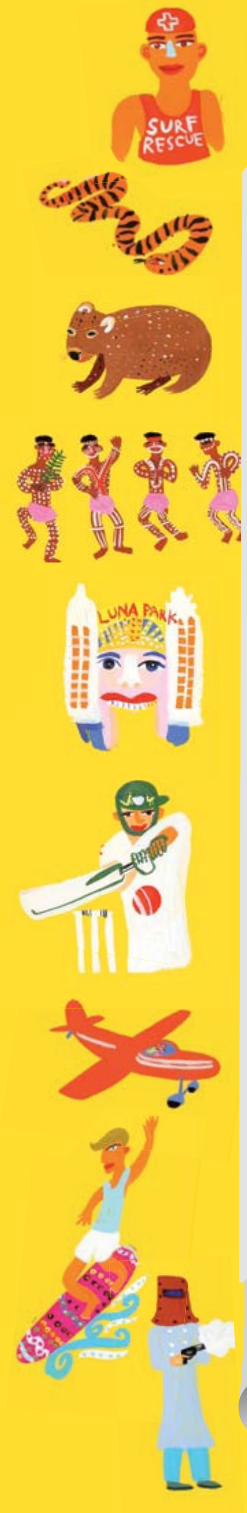
Peter Rees

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NOT-FOR-PARENTS

THIS IS NOT A GUIDEBOOK. And it is definitely Not-for-parents.

IT IS THE REAL, INSIDE STORY about one of the world's most exciting countries – Australia. In this book you'll hear fascinating tales about **toothy sharks**, giant rocks and snappy crocs, **bushranger baddies** and explorers galore.

Check out cool stories about a famous coat-hanger, **underground hotels**, a super-fast horse and a very rough race. You'll find flying doctors and flying fruit flies, **flesh-eating spiders** and thieving convicts.

This book shows you an **AUSTRALIA** your parents probably don't even know about.



THE LAND OF BIG

Australia does things in a big way. There are big crocs with big teeth and big kangaroos with big pockets. There are big reefs, big rocks and big roads. And if you take a big road trip, give a big wave to the Big Banana, the Big Koala and even the Big Prawn. Australia has six states and two territories, and each is bold, beautiful and BIG!

Big hole

A big meteorite made a big crater in the Kimberley region in Western Australia. Wolfe Creek Crater – 875m (2870ft) across – was big news in 1947 when it was spotted in an aerial survey.

Big throw

If you could throw a boomerang from west to east across Australia, it would go the big distance of nearly 4000km (2485mi).

Big crocs

The Northern Territory is home to the biggest crocodiles, and none is bigger than the 8m (26ft) tall Big Boxing Crocodile statue in Humpty Doo!

Big red

The big red centre has the big, red rock Uluru, but it also has a big sand dune called the Big Red. You can play golf on it. What a big sand bunker!

Big strides

An emu is a big bird that can take a 2.7m (9ft) leap forwards but not even a small step backwards.

Big post

The world's longest postal run in a day flies from Cairns to Cape York. It takes a big nine hours, and there are 10 big stops on the way.

Big sea

Imagine a post office in the big, blue sea! The Great Barrier Reef, 2010km (1250mi) long and the world's biggest group of coral reefs, has the only floating post office in Australia.

Big road trips

Catherine Gregson was the first woman to drive around the big continent in 1937. Her mother went on the six-month trip with her. What a big help!

Big divide

The Dingo Fence is the biggest fence in the world. It stretches about 5615km (3490mi) from South Australia to Queensland.

Big devils

The biggest population of Tasmanian devils lives in Tasmania. That's because that's the only place they live!

INDIAN OCEAN

CORAL SEA

TASMAN SEA

WANT
MORE?Australian stories, facts and figures ☆ www.australia.gov.au/about-australia

FIRST ARRIVALS

The first people came to Australia from South-East Asia about 60,000 years ago, at a time when sea levels were low and Australia was part of a larger continent, called Sahul. These tall, slender arrivals probably parked their rough boats on the beach and wondered what they had let themselves in for! Ahead of them lay a vast, hostile landscape, full of strange new creatures that seemed determined to sting and bite them. It may have taken generations, but they would eventually find a niche as superb hunter-gatherers and custodians of the secrets of this ancient place.

I'LL BE BACK.

Killer kylie

The new continent was full of weird and delicious animals. Lizards and snakes could be caught through cunning and patience. Kangaroos and emus were quicker, but the hunters had a secret weapon: the kylie. Not the pint-sized Australian pop princess – this kylie was a killer boomerang that could stop a kangaroo dead in its tracks.

GO, KYLIE!

'Indigenous Australians' means Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, who are two distinct groups.

Flying the flag

The Aboriginal flag symbolises the Indigenous people and their relationship to the land. Today, it is an official flag of Australia. But back in 1994 it caused a few flutters when gold-medallist Cathy Freeman proudly posed with it at the Commonwealth Games.

Cathy Freeman



Digging up the past

Australia's oldest man was discovered at Lake Mungo in New South Wales in 1974. Mungo Man lived about 42,000 years ago. From his bones, scientists believe he stood nearly 2m (6.5ft) tall, which makes Mungo humungous!



BIG TIME

- ★ Around 60,000 years ago: first humans in Australia
- ★ 42,000 years ago: Mungo Man lived and died
- ★ 20,000 years ago: earliest known rock art, at Koonalda Cave
- ★ 5000 years ago: the dingo introduced from Asia as a pet
- ★ 1606: first contact with Europeans
- ★ Late 18th century: Indigenous population is approximately 500,000, with about 500 groups speaking 300 languages
- ★ Early 20th century: population plunges below 100,000
- ★ 2006: population has grown to 517,000

BY JINGO,
I'M A DINGO!

Drone-pipe

Indigenous Australia has a unique voice – the growl of the didgeridoo. These ancient instruments are cut from hollowed out trees, although you can make a decent 'didge' from PVC pipe! Listen carefully to the didgeridoo's drone and you will hear the sounds of the Aboriginal world – from a kangaroo's hop to a kookaburra's cackle.



WANT
MORE?

LIFESAVERS FOR LIFE

If you see a lifesaver racing into the surf to pluck a swimmer to safety, you can thank William Gocher, who had only mutiny on his mind when he went for a swim one Sunday at noon at Manly Beach in Sydney. The year was 1902, and the law stated that swimming was strictly forbidden every day during daylight hours. The defiant Mr Gocher, who had been defiant for three Sundays in a row, was arrested. However, it was the beginning of the end of the ludicrous law. But where there are swimmers, there are people who need to be rescued. Five years after William Gocher's daring dips, the first surf lifesaving clubs in the world splashed onto the scene.

IF WE CAN'T SEE YOU, WE CAN'T SAVE YOU.



I CAN SEE SOMEONE WAVING, OR IS IT JUST A WAVE?

Roped in to rescue

Today, motorised rescue boats roar to the rescue up and over the wild white waves. Early rescue devices consisted of a life jacket tied to a piece of rope. What a lifesaver!

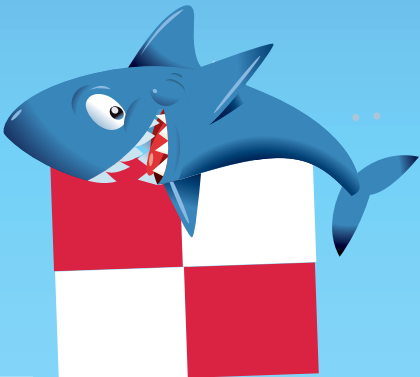
Little lifesavers

Nippers is a junior surf lifesaving programme that teaches surf skills to children aged between 5 and 13. In 1977 girls could join the Nipperettes. Women, however, could not become active patrolling members of a surf club until 1980. You're kidding!



Between the flags

Swimmers are advised to swim between the yellow-and-red flags. This is the safer part of the beach and is patrolled by lifesavers. Mind you, there's nothing stopping sharks from swimming between the flags, too. So if a red-and-white chequered flag goes up and a siren goes off, be alarmed! It means a shark is also patrolling the beach.



Flags in a flap

You wouldn't want to be a colour-blind swimmer. In some countries, the flag that goes up when a shark has been spotted is blue and purple. That might make you see red!



The world's first surf lifesaving club started at Sydney's Bondi Beach in 1907.

A REEL STORY

Who would have thought that a simple cotton reel would help save swimmers' lives. In 1906 Lyster Ormsby, a member of the lifesaving club at Bondi Beach, was a 'reel' lifesaver! He built a model of the now famous lifesaving reel out of a cotton reel and two hairpins. A year later, full-sized reels were used to pull swimmers to safety.

MY ARMS ARE REEL-Y, REEL-Y TIRED.



WANT MORE?