

In memory of the children and families of Stolen Generations

This memorial stands as a tribute to the strength of the La Perouse Community in the Sydney area and remembers those Aboriginal children in New South Wales who were taken away from their parents. This memorial acknowledges the adversities and sacrifice made to the generations of Aboriginal people separated from their families and communities, known as "The Stolen Generations".

La Perouse has a significant relationship with Bomaderry as many from that community made the journey to the South Coast. Bomaderry Children`s Home opened in 1908 and has a strong social significance for the former residents and for the families and communities from whom the children were removed. Children were transferred to Kinchela Boys` Home or Cootamundra Girls` Home when they reached a suitable age for training as labourers for domestic work. The Prime Minister of Australia delivered an "Apology to Australia`s Indigenous Peoples" on 13th February 2008, on behalf of the nation. The apology reads :

" That today we honour the Indigenous peoples of this land, the oldest continuing cultures in human history. We reflect on their past mistreatment. We reflect in particular on the mistreatment of those who were Stolen Generations - this blemished chapter in our nation's history.

The time has now come for the nation to turn a new page in Australia's history by righting the wrongs of the past and so moving forward with confidence to the future. We apologise for the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians. We apologise especially for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country.

For the pain, suffering and hurt of these Stolen Generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry. To the mothers and the fathers, the brothers and the sisters, for the breaking up of families and communities, we say sorry. And for the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry. We the Parliament of Australia respectfully request that this apology be received in the spirit in which it is offered as part of the healing of the nation. For the future we take heart; resolving that this new page in the history of our great continent can now be written. We today take this first step by acknowledging the past and laying claim to a future that embraces all Australians.

A future where this Parliament resolves that the injustices of the past must never, never happen again. A future where we harness the determination of all Australians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to close the gap that lies between us in life expectancy, educational achievement and economic opportunity. A future where we embrace the possibility of new solutions to enduring problems where old approaches have failed.

A future based on mutual respect, mutual resolve and mutual responsibility. A future where all Australians, whatever their origins, are truly equal partners, with equal opportunities and with an equal stake in shaping the next chapter in the history of this great country, Australia.