

Become a  
history  
detective!

Follow your  
map to find 7  
Convict Clues  
stops around  
Cockatoo Island



Cockatoo  
Island



Australian Government  
Sydney Harbour Federation Trust

Cockatoo Island was once home to Sydney's most notorious convict prison. Become a history detective! Search for clues to uncover the gruesome tales of Cockatoo Island and find out what life was like for the convicts who lived here.

## Take the challenge!



## Collect the clues!

- Follow the trail to find the 7 Convict Clues around Cockatoo Island marked with the magnifying glass symbol.



- At each stop, read the information in your booklet and try the activity on the next page.
- Look for the Convict Clue! Make a rubbing of the secret clue in your activity booklet.
- Find all 7 clues, and enter the letters on the last page of your booklet to discover the answer to the secret convict question.

## Stop 1. Solitary Cells

Convicts sent to Cockatoo Island were the most dangerous in the country. Guilty of crimes like cattle stealing, forgery and robbery, many had been sent to prison more than once.

Misbehaving convicts faced harsh punishments, like rope lashings or time in the Solitary Cells. Fed only bread and water, time was spent in total darkness, with nothing to do and no one to talk to. Except for the rats that is...



## Activity 1. Convict Punishments

Time in the cells was only one type of punishment for unruly convicts. Can you match these convict crimes to their punishment?



Over here!

### CRIMES

Building an escape boat  
Swearing  
Attempting to escape  
Having a newspaper  
Fighting  
Refusing to work

### PUNISHMENT

1 day in cells  
6 months in chains  
28 days in cells  
200 lashes  
3 days in cells  
14 days in cells

Building boat: 6 months in chains, Swearing: 3 days in cells,  
Attempted escape: 200 lashes, Newspaper: 1 day in cells,  
Fighting: 14 days in cells, Refusing to work: 28 days in cells

Enter the clue in the square with a '1'  
underneath it on the back of  
your booklet.



**Activity 1. Trace your first clue here...**

A large empty square box with a thin grey border, intended for tracing a clue.

## Stop 2. Convict Courtyard

Convict life was not a holiday! Convicts worked hard, six days a week, quarrying sandstone to use in buildings on Cockatoo Island and in Sydney. Many of them worked with chains around their feet and wrists.

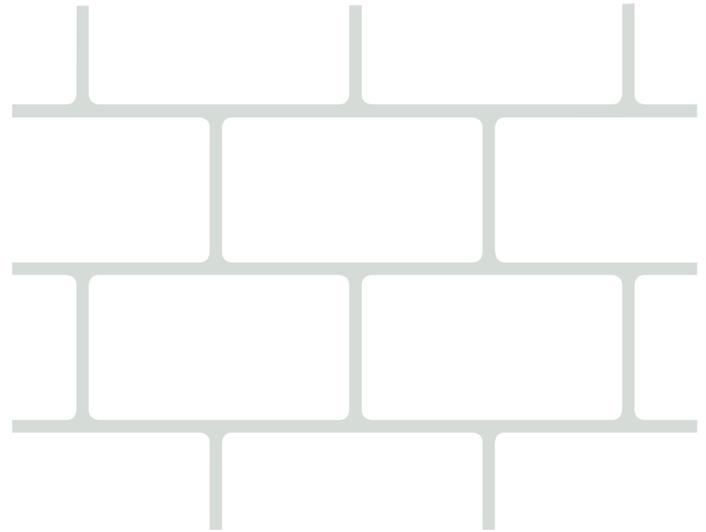
Look around you – the walls of the prison are all made from convict sandstone.



## Activity 2. Convict Punishments

See!

Investigate the sandstone. Feel the marks made by convict tools. Every convict had a different cutting style, so the marks on every stone are different. Choose a block and copy the marks onto the stone drawing.



Enter the clue in the squares with a '2' underneath them, on the back of your booklet.



**Activity 2. Trace your second clue here...**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin grey border, intended for tracing the second clue.

## Stop 3. Convict Barracks

At night, the convicts were locked in the Barracks. With 500 inmates on the island, it was a tight fit to squeeze everybody in. The Barracks held a scary mix of prisoners — even the guards were too afraid to go in.

Convicts weren't allowed out at night, not even to go to the toilet. Instead, they used tubs in the middle of the room. Imagine the smell! Or worse, emptying the tubs on the vegie garden the next day!



## Activity 3. Convict Daily Rations

Shhh.

Before bed, convicts had dinner in the Mess Hall. They didn't get much food to eat.

A Convict's Daily Rations.

- 1 pound of beef or mutton
- 1 small chunk of bread
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- Chunk of soap
- 1/2 pound of vegetables

What do you eat every day?

How does it compare to convict rations?

### MY DAILY RATIONS

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Enter the clue in the square with a '3' underneath it, on the back of your booklet.



**Activity 3.** Trace your third clue here...

A large, empty square box with a thin grey border, intended for tracing a clue. The box is positioned on the right side of the page, below the text 'Activity 3. Trace your third clue here...'. The background of the page is a light blue gradient.

## Stop 4. Soldiers: Military Guardhouse

The Guardhouse was built to protect the soldiers in case the convicts attacked. The soldiers were afraid of the convicts, and locked themselves up in the Guardhouse every night to sleep.



## Activity 4. Guardhouse

The Guardhouse was specially designed to protect the soldiers. Explore the Guardhouse. What clues can you find that tell us the building was used to keep the soldiers safe?

### CLUES

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High sandstone walls. Hooks to hang rifles on. Small windows for shooting out of. Roman Numerals on the windows so guards knew which window to shoot from.

Enter the clue in the square with a '4'  
underneath it, on the back of  
your booklet.

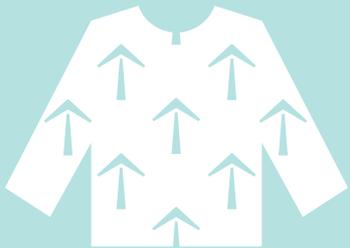


**Activity 4. Trace your fourth clue here...**

A large, empty square box with a thin grey border, intended for tracing a clue. The box is positioned on the right side of the page, below the text 'Activity 4. Trace your fourth clue here...'. The background of the page is a light green gradient.

## Stop 5. Guardhouse lawn

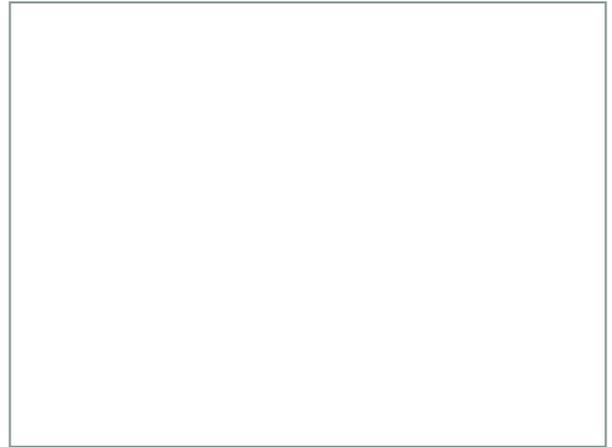
Although many tried, only one convict ever escaped from Cockatoo Island. Fred Ward was imprisoned on Cockatoo Island for stealing a horse. One dark night, Fred jumped into the harbour, braving the sharks to swim for freedom. His wife Mary Ann was waiting for him on the other side with a getaway horse. They escaped into the bush, where Fred became Captain Thunderbolt, the famous bushranger!



## Activity 5. Help catch Captain Thunderbolt!

Help police catch Captain Thunderbolt!  
Create a wanted poster for his arrest.

# WANTED



REWARD \$

Enter the clue in the squares with a '5' underneath them, on the back of your booklet.



**Activity 5.** Trace your fifth clue here...

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin grey border, intended for tracing the fifth clue.

## Stop 6. Convict Silos

Can you find the underground grain silos in the cliff face? How many can you see? Convicts dug 20 of these silos on the island to store grain. They were lowered into the silo and told how much rock they had to dig out that day. If the convict worked too slowly, they were left there overnight!

Have a close look at the bottom of the silos. Can you spot anything the convicts might have left behind?



## Activity 6. Outline drawing

Draw a convict digging in the silo. Imagine what he would have been thinking and feeling?



Enter the clue in the square with a '6'  
underneath it, on the back of  
your booklet.



**Activity 6. Trace your sixth clue here...**

A large, empty square box with a light gray border, intended for tracing a clue. The box is positioned on the right side of the page, below the activity title.

## Stop 7. Biloela House

Biloela House is where the convict Superintendent lived with his wife and 11 daughters. How can you tell that someone important lived here?

The family held many parties and the children had lots of playmates, including Blanche Mitchell. Blanche wrote in her diary about the day they watched a British Royal Navy ship sail away from the island.

“Dear Diary, We could hear the flapping of the sails, the commands of the captain, the whistle of the boatswain...and we shouted and waved handkerchiefs and hats; answered by loud cheers from on board and waving of hats by the officers.”



## Activity 7. Dear Diary...

Write or draw your own diary entry about sailing away from Circular Quay this morning. What could you see, hear and feel?

### DIARY

*Dear Diary,*

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Enter the clue in the squares with a '7' underneath them, on the back of your booklet.



**Activity 7. Trace your final clue here...**

A large empty rectangular box with a thin grey border, intended for tracing a final clue. The box is oriented vertically and occupies the right half of the page.

Now that you have collected all 7 rubbing plates in your activity booklet, and written the letters in the correct boxes below, what is the answer to the secret question?

Fred Ward was sentenced to 3 years on Cockatoo Island for committing what crime?

3

6

5

7

5

4

7

2

2

1

Well done!

# Convict Clues Trail

**1 Solitary Cells**  
From Visitor Information, follow the path past the rusty sculptures and the campground. Walk up the hill on Burma Road. At the top of the hill you will find the Solitary Cells.

Complete Activity 1 and trace the first clue in your booklet.

**2 Convict Courtyard**  
Facing the water turn left up the hill. Follow this path past the frangipani trees, until you come to the gates of the Convict Courtyard.

Complete Activity 2 and trace the second clue in your booklet.

**3 Convict Barracks**  
From the Convict Courtyard, look for the dark doorway into the Convict Barracks. Enter if you dare!

Complete Activity 3 and trace the third clue in your booklet.

**4 Military Guardhouse**  
Head through the Mess Hall and across the grass area. Look for the sandstone building without a roof. This is the Military Guardhouse.

Complete Activity 4 and trace the fourth clue in your booklet.

**5 Guardhouse Lawn**  
Walk towards the sandstone wall and look out beyond the Docks Precinct below to the suburb of Balmain.

Complete Activity 5 and trace the fifth clue in your booklet.

**6 Convict Silos**  
Head back through the Convict Courtyard and follow the path past the old ship design buildings. Stop to look out over the docks before heading down the cliff top walk. Who will be the first to spot the Convict Silos?

Complete Activity 6 and trace the sixth clue in your booklet.

**7 Biloela House**  
Stay on the walkway and go up the stairs to the grand Biloela House. Complete Activity 7 and trace the seventh clue in your booklet.

Can you answer the secret question on the back of your booklet?

To head back to the wharf, follow the walkway past the tennis courts and take the Northern Stairs to the Lower Island.



**S** Journey Start  
**E** Journey End

**Pathway**  
**Alternative Route - No Stairs**  
**Visitor Information**

**Cafe**  
**Toilets**  
**Disabled Toilets**  
**Cockatoo Island Wharf**  
**Emergency Assembly Point**

**Toilets**  
**Disabled Toilets**  
**Cockatoo Island Wharf**

**Cockatoo Island**

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