



## MEMORY OF THE WORLD REGISTER – NOMINATION FORM

**Australia** – The Endeavour Journal of James Cook

### PART A – ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

This is the original document, in Cook's handwriting, of his first exploration voyage in the Pacific on HMS *Endeavour* in 1768-71. The first European charting of the east coast of Australia and the first circumnavigation of New Zealand took place on the voyage. This is the key document which foreshadows British colonisation of Australia (which actually began in 1788) and presaged the tragic consequences for Australia's indigenous peoples – the oldest surviving culture on Earth – who, under British law, were effectively deemed not to exist (the 'terra nullius' doctrine).

#### 1. Identity and Location

1.1 Name of documentary heritage  
*Endeavour* journal of James Cook

1.2 Country  
Australia

1.3 State, province or region  
Australian Capital Territory

1.4 Address  
National Library of Australia  
Canberra ACT 2600

1.5 Name of organization or institution (if appropriate)

National Library of Australia

#### 2. Legal Information

2.1 Owner (name and contact details)  
National Library of Australia

2.2 Custodian (name and contact details)  
National Library of Australia

2.3 Legal status (if different from 2.1)

- (a) category of ownership (e.g. public, corporate or private)  
Public

- (b) details of legal and administrative provisions for the preservation of the documentary heritage  
1960 National Library Act
- (c) accessibility  
Available for reference within the Library
- (d) copyright status  
Copyright expires in 2005

#### 2.4 Responsible administration

National Library of Australia

### 3. Identification

#### 3.1 Description and inventory

Journal of Lieut. James Cook kept on board H.M. Barque *Endeavour* on a voyage round the world, 1768-71

#### 3.2 Bibliographic/Registration details

Manuscript, quarto, 1 volume, 753 pages, bound in oak and pigskin

#### 3.3 Visual documentation, if appropriate (for example, photographs or a video of the documentary heritage)

CD ROM: *Endeavour: Captain Cook's journal, 1768-71*, published by National Library of Australia and Australian National Maritime Museum, 1999

#### 3.4 History

Purchased by the Australian Government at a Sotheby's sale in London in 1923. From 1868 to 1923 it was in the possession of the Bolckow Family of Marton-in-Cleveland, Yorkshire.

#### 3.5 Bibliography: Please indicate up to three published sources describing the proposed documentary heritage.

Beaglehole, J.C. *The journals of Captain James Cook on his voyage of discovery: the voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, Cambridge, Hakluyt Society, 1955

Dening, Greg. MS1 Cook, J. Holograph journal, in Cochrane, Peter, ed. *Remarkable occurrences; the National Library of Australia's first 100 years, 1901-2001*, Canberra, National Library of Australia, 2001, pp.1-21

- 3.6 Names, qualifications and contact details of up to three independent people or organizations with expert knowledge about the values and provenance of the documentary heritage

Professor Greg Dening  
34 Stirling Street  
Kew Vic. 3101

#### **4. Management plan – see below Annex 1**

#### **5. Assessment against the Selection Criteria**

- 5.1 Assessment of the documentary heritage against each criterion described in Annex 2.

##### **Criterion 1 – Influence**

The journal has been in the possession of the National Library for 77 years and in that time has been seen by many thousands of people. The publication of the journal in 1955 and the CD ROM produced in 1999 made the text accessible to scholars and general readers throughout the world. It has been cited in countless works on Pacific exploration and on the first contacts between indigenous peoples of Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific.

##### **Criterion 2 – Time**

The journal was written in 1768-71. It records one of the first English voyages to the Pacific and one of the first voyages in which exploration and scientific discovery, rather than military conquest and plunder, was the primary purpose of the expedition.

##### **Criterion 3 – Place**

Cook's voyage touched several countries, including Brazil, the Dutch East Indies and the Cape Colony (South Africa). However, it is chiefly of value in recording (i) the exploration of Tahiti and the Society Islands (ii) the first circumnavigation and detailed charting of New Zealand (iii) the first charting of the eastern coast of Australia.

##### **Criterion 4 – People**

The journal is one of the few substantial manuscripts in the hand of one of the world's greatest navigators and maritime explorers, James Cook. It is of extraordinary importance in the history of British colonization of Australia and as one of the earliest written records of the indigenous peoples of Polynesia, New Zealand and eastern Australia.

##### **Criterion 5 – Subject/theme**

The journal deals directly or indirectly with many major themes: shipboard life in the 18th century, the relations between Cook, his officers, the crew and scientists and artists on the expedition, the exploration of the South Pacific, experiments with navigational instruments, the precise charting of immense coastlines, astronomical observations, observations of the topography, flora, fauna and possible resources of the countries explored, and relations with and observations of the physiognomies, economies, social systems, customs and religions of indigenous peoples.

### **Criterion 6 – Form and style**

The journal is a handwritten volume (originally series of volumes). It is a good example of a journal of an officer of the Royal Navy in the 18th century and illustrates the vocabulary and literary conventions of the time.

### **Criterion 7 – Social value**

For the reasons already stated, the journal has great significance for both European and indigenous Australians, especially those living in the eastern States. The name of James Cook is probably known to more Australians than any other figure in its history and many have strong views on the significance of his voyage. The journal is the foundation document of the National Library.

### **Secondary Criterion 1 – Integrity**

The journal covers the entire voyage. One page is missing, otherwise it is complete and it has not been altered or damaged in any way. The binding is modern.

### **Secondary criterion 2 – Rarity**

The journal is unique and irreplaceable. Although Cook signed and sometimes annotated the official logs and journals kept by other officers, no other journal of this voyage is in his handwriting.

5.2 Contextual assessment including an assessment of the importance of a series of documents, the importance of a series of documents in a particular setting, and the assessment against other documentary heritage

Several officers, scientists and artists on the *Endeavour* kept journals and logs and they have been preserved in archives and libraries in Britain, Australia and New Zealand. Cook's journal is pre-eminent because it records the experiences and, to a lesser extent, the thoughts of the leader of the expedition, and the man who went on to become the greatest explorer in Pacific history.

5.3 An evaluation of the authenticity

The full provenance of the journal is not known, but it seems likely that after Cook's death in 1779 it remained in the possession of his wife, who lived until 1835. When the journal was sent to England for rebinding in 1976, it was examined by experts at the British Library, who compared it with other Cook manuscripts. Its authenticity was confirmed.