



**AIATSIS**  
Australian Institute of Aboriginal  
and Torres Strait Islander Studies

# MEDIA RELEASE

*Further understanding of Australian Indigenous cultures, past and present through undertaking and publishing research, and providing access to print and audiovisual collections*

## **A snapshot of Taree/Purfleet - courtesy of AIATSIS**

**Members of the Aboriginal community in the New South Wales township of Taree and nearby Purfleet, can look back on history today – Tuesday, March 29 - when Australia’s biggest repository of Aboriginal history – the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) brings their archives to the community.**

Staff of AIATSIS’ Pictorial Access Unit will bring with them relatively recent photographs of community members – but will also have access to the organisation’s much wider data base of photographs from the surrounding region – some which date back more than 40 years.

In fact, AIATSIS is the caretaker of the world’s greatest collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural material with a vast archive of film, sound, photographs and print materials.

The collection, for example, comprises:

- Over 620,000 photographic images
- 6 and a half million feet of motion picture footage,
- 45,000 hours of recorded sound, and
- over 8,000 video titles and in excess of 1,000 artefacts and works of art

The photographic display will include specific photographs from Taree/Purfleet taken for AIATSIS’s bicentennial coffee table publication “*After 200 years –photographic essays of Aboriginal and Islander Australia Today*”.

AIATSIS’s access pictorial manager, Ms Tasha Lamb, said some of the older images available from the archive went back many decades.

Ms Lamb said AIATSIS staff had worked closely with community representative Ms Katrina Russell to organise the visit.

“It is all about making our collection available to the community.

“I think community members will be very surprised just how much material we hold in our photographic archives from this area of New South Wales. It is not uncommon for community members to be able to see photographs of family members that they never knew existed.

“If this occurs we will, of course, ensure that these photographs are made available to the family”.

Ms Russell said the team would be working from the Biripi Aboriginal Medical Service Shed at Purfleet for three days until March 31.

“Biripi AMS and other organisations- such as Ghinni Ghinni Youth and Culture Aboriginal Corporation and the Greater Taree City Council - have been wonderfully supportive,” she added.

“Biripi has kindly agreed to cater on each day of the visit and will also be hosting a community barbecue.

“I think the visit is going to be a big hit with the community,” Ms Russell said.

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*Further information John Janke 0408 600867 or Katrina Russell on 0438 941212*