



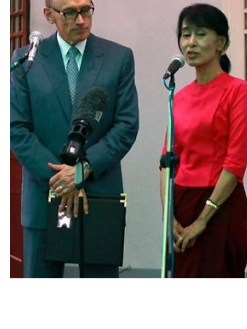
Welcome to the fifth issue of ACYA's monthly AustraliaBites, designed to give Chinese and Australian students a unique insight into Australian society and culture. If you missed them, click [here](#) for previous issues. If you have any questions, suggestions, or contributions to AustraliaBites, please send an email to [neil.thomas@acya.org.au](mailto:neil.thomas@acya.org.au)



## Media Watch

### [POLITICS: Australia Lifts Burma Sanctions—BBC \(8 June\)](#)

Whilst in Burma on an official government visit, Australian Foreign Minister [Bob Carr](#) met with President [Thein Sein](#) and Opposition Leader [Aung San Suu Kyi](#) and followed the lead set by the USA and the EU by announcing that Australia will lift all remaining travel and financial restrictions on Burma, although an arms embargo will still remain in place. He also pledged to double Australia's aid contributions to Burma to A\$100million per year by 2015.



### [ECONOMICS: The Limits of the Reserve Banks's Interest Rate Influence—ABC \(8 June\)](#)

The Australian news media frequently focusses its attention upon the topic of interest rates, and particularly the monthly [Reserve Bank of Australia](#) meetings where official monetary policy decisions are made. But the Reserve's official interest rate is not imposed directly upon Australian lenders and borrowers but rather through Reserve transactions with Australian banks. So what effect does the Reserve Bank actually have on commercial interest rates?

### [SOCIETY: Australia a Smuggler's Paradise?—BBC \(13 June\)](#)

An ABC program has alleged that an international people smuggling ringleader was living in Canberra under a refugee visa. This led Captain Emad to flee the country, drew stinging rebuke for the Government by the Opposition, as well as pleas from refugee rights groups that many smugglers are genuine refugees.

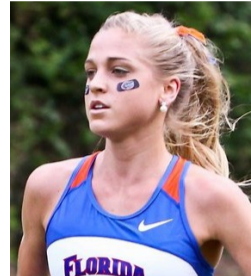
*"Asylum boat organisers move from Indonesia to Australia"*

### [THE ARTS: Australian Arts Figures Recognised in Queen's Birthday Honours—BBC \(12 June\)](#)

Of the 762 Australians included in this year's [Queen's Birthday Honours](#) list, two prominent Australian figures in the arts have been made Officers of the [Order of Australia](#), one of Australia's highest honours. [Rolf Harris](#) is a world-famous musician, artist, and TV personality, who wrote the famous song "[Tie Me Kangaroo Down, Sport](#)", and [Peter Carey](#) is one of Australia's most prominent writers, best known for his book "[True History of the Kelly Gang](#)".

### [SPORT: Olympic Qualification Deadline Extended—ABC \(17 June\)](#)

Athletics Australia has bowed to pressure to extend its [2012 London Olympics](#) qualification deadline after coming under fire for refusing to select steeplechaser Genevieve LaCaze as part of the Australian team, despite the fact she ran an A-class qualifying time on the US collegiate athletics circuit just two days after the initial deadline. Following the move, she will now be selected to go to London.



### [TRAVEL: Australia to Create World's Largest Marine Reserve—BBC \(14 June\)](#)

In the lead up to the [Rio+20 Earth Summit](#), Australian Environment Minister [Tony Burke](#) announced the creation of a network of marine parks that will cover 3.1 million square kilometres of ocean, including the entire Coral Sea off the coast of Queensland that includes the [Great Barrier Reef](#), a [UNESCO World Heritage Site](#) and one of Australia's premier tourist attractions. However, commercial fishing in the Coral Sea will still not be completely banned.

## Culture Watch

### [Artist of the Month—The Bee Gees](#)

The Bee Gees, consisting of brothers Barry, Robin, and Maurice Gibb, are one of the best-selling music groups of all time, most famous for recording the iconic [disco soundtrack](#) to the 1977 movie [Saturday Night Fever](#). Whilst being born in Britain, what is less known is that the Bee Gees began their musical career in Australia, after their family moved to Queensland. But following the success of the song "[Spicks and Specks](#)", which reached #1 in Australia, the band decided to return to the UK, from where they launched their path to international superstardom.



### [Movie of the Month—Walkabout](#)

*Walkabout* is a 1971 film by British director [Nicolas Roeg](#) that is set in the [Australian Outback](#) and based loosely upon the novel of the same name by [James Vance Marshall](#). It tells the story of two schoolchildren stranded in the Australian wilderness who meet an Aboriginal youth (played by renowned traditional dancer and actor [David Gulpilli](#) in his breakthrough role) who helps them and teaches them how to survive in the desert. The film is renowned for its cinematography, particularly its intense visual depiction of the Australian landscape and its use of montage to contrast traditional and modern lifestyles. It showed at the Cannes Film Festival but fared poorly at the box-office.

### [History of the Month—Assassination Attempt at Arthur Calwell](#)

Arthur Calwell was Leader of the [Australian Labor Party](#) and [Leader of the Opposition](#) from 1960 to 1967, and a member of [Australian Parliament](#) for 32 years from 1940 to 1972. He is notable as an Opposition Leader for his vehement opposition to Australian [military involvement in Vietnam](#) and the introduction of conscription, at a time when the Vietnam War was still very popular with the Australian public. He was only the second subject of an attempted political assassination in Australian history, when on 21 June 1966 mentally-ill student [Peter Kocan](#) opened fire on his car following an anti-conscription rally in Sydney. After losing three elections as ALP Leader, he eventually handed over to [Gough Whitlam](#).



### [Quote of the Month—The Beatles' 1964 Australian Tour](#)

"Welcome to Australia. Which one am I talking to?"  
A well-prepared journalist's first words to Paul McCartney upon The Beatles arriving in Australia at Darwin Airport on 11 June 1964.  
"Things couldn't be better for The Beatles—but they know it can't last"  
Australian journalist John Larkins forecasting in January 1964 about the upcoming Beatles tour.

On 11 June 1964 phenomenally popular English band [The Beatles](#) arrived in Australia for their first and only tour of Australia, and over the course of the next three weeks they played to over 200,000 spectators in packed-out venues across Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane. The visit came at the very height of "[Beatlemania](#)" and it is estimated that in Adelaide over 300,000 people came to line the streets to welcome them as they drove into town from the airport. It is argued that the tour fundamentally changed Australian youth culture and attitudes to popular music, playing a significant role in overcoming Australia's isolation from the social revolutions of the 1960s occurring elsewhere in the Western world.

## Language

### [Australian Saying of the Month — "Pom"](#)

The words *pom* and *pommy* are used colloquially by Australians to refer to the British, and more particularly the English. These are sometimes used with another word to create a derogatory term, such as "whingeing pom", "bloody pom", or "pommy bastard". The [origin of the term](#) is somewhat unconfirmed; one popular theory states that the word comes from a shortened form of "pomegranate", a reddish fruit that resembled the sunburnt complexions of recently-arrived British immigrants. Other theories claim that pomegranate was once Australian rhyming slang for "immigrant", that it [comes from](#) an acronym of "Prisoner Of Her Majesty" that was stitched to British convict uniforms, or that touring English cricketers preferred to drink [Pommery Champagne](#) to Australian beer. Pom is a controversial term that has led to British residents of Australia filing cases that its use [breaches the Racial Hatred Act](#) and Australian [Advertising Standards](#), but it was found to be merely playful and vernacular in tone.



### [Australian Slang of the Month](#)

- **"Uey" (noun):** This is a very popular Australian slang abbreviation for a "U-turn", whereby a vehicle makes a 180 degree turn. It is commonly used with the verbs "do" and "chuck". E.g. "Quick mate, chuck a uey!" or "Do you know if I can do a uey on this street?"
- **"Bathers" (noun):** One of many Australian generic terms for "swimming clothes". *Bathers* and *swimmers* are unisex terms, whereas *cossie* typically refers to female swimming clothes. E.g. "Chuck a uey at the next intersection, I forgot to bring my *bathers*!"
- **"Bottle-O" (noun):** Also known as a "bottle shop", a bottle-o is a store that specializes in selling all types of alcohol (and not just alcohol sold in bottles!) and which are very common in Australia. Alcohol bought at bottle shops though is always for later consumption and cannot be consumed in-store! E.g. "After we do a uey and fetch your *bathers*, let's go past the *bottle-o* and pick up a slab of beer."

Questions or comments? Please email [neil.thomas@acya.org.au](mailto:neil.thomas@acya.org.au)

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