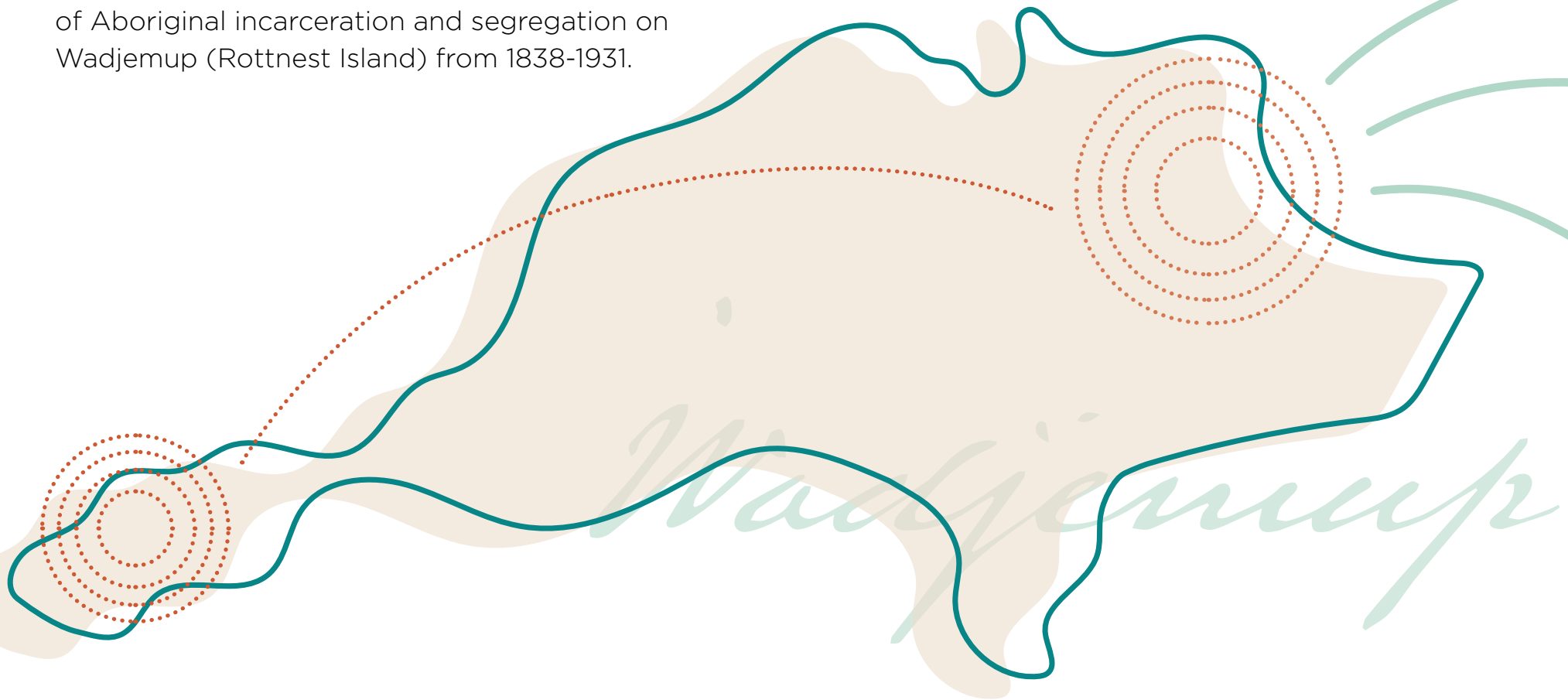


Wadjemup PROJECT

The Western Australian (WA) Government is working in partnership, with the Whadjuk, Noongar and greater Aboriginal communities, to heal the impacts of Aboriginal incarceration and segregation on Wadjemup (Rottnest Island) from 1838-1931.



Wadjemup

WHAT IS THE WADJEMUP PROJECT?

The Wadjemup Project is working to formally acknowledge and reconcile the Aboriginal prison history on Wadjemup (Rottnest Island).

For nearly a century, from 1838 to 1931, Rottnest Island was used as a place of incarceration, segregation and forced labour for over 4,000 Aboriginal men and boys.

They were forcibly taken from regions across WA – Whadjuk and the rest of Noongar country, Murchison, Gascoyne, Goldfields, Pilbara, Kimberley and the Central Desert. Of those taken to the Island, almost 400 died while imprisoned, and were buried in unmarked graves on the island.

The project will focus on how best to commemorate the Aboriginal men and boys who are buried on the island, and the use of the old prison building, known as the Quod.

WHAT WILL IT DELIVER?

To support State-wide engagement with those First Nations people who have been impacted by Wadjemup Aboriginal prison's history, this Project is working to deliver strategies for:

- Truth Telling - to acknowledge Wadjemup's history of Aboriginal incarceration and its role in the colonisation of WA.
- Ceremony - to facilitate healing in line with Aboriginal cultural protocol.
- Commemoration through memorialisation - of the former prison sites on Wadjemup, including the Quod and the Wadjemup Aboriginal Burial Ground.

View looking towards the Quod, 1901.
Western Mail, June 1, 1901, pg 42,
State Library of WA



Wadjemup

HOW WILL IT BE DELIVERED?

Aboriginal governance is critical to the Project's success. The first stage has involved the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, and the Rottnest Island Authority, working together to support Whadjuk Elders and Leaders in developing an Aboriginal decision-making structure, known as a Cultural Authority Framework (Framework).

The Aboriginal-led Framework will guide how State-wide Aboriginal consultation will occur, ensuring cultural protocols are observed, and all Aboriginal people and communities with a connection to Wadjemup and the Quod are included, or have the opportunity to have their say.

As host Nation, Whadjuk Noongar Traditional Owners and custodians will be responsible for authorising, coordinating and enabling cultural protocols and processes through to completion of the Project.

This process ensures Aboriginal people decide how best their ancestors will be honoured, and how their cultural groups, communities or countries are to be represented in the final memorial.

Group of unidentified prisoners on Wadjemup, 1901.
Western Mail, June 1, 1901, pg 42,
State Library of WA



Wadjemup

PROJECT TIMEFRAME – STAGE 1 - 2020 TO 2021

The first stage of the Wadjemup Project has taken place with the development of a Whadjuk Wadjemup Cultural Authority. The process of wider engagement with the greater Noongar and State-wide Aboriginal consultation is now underway.

There will be regular announcements as the project progresses.

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Cover Page:
Prisoners with luggage and passengers
between the jetty and the settlement,
1917. 304439PD, State Library of WA

Chief Secretary's Department list of Aboriginal prisoners at
Wadjemup as at 31 December 1901. cons752, item 393, pg 10,
State Records Office of WA

26	Chavalk & Kopper	126	Cookier & Kory
27	Carindimulbing	127	Cuntbunden & Leo
28	Perringoma & Willie	128	Cannabildy & Long

2) Districts to which above 38 Prisons belong			
East Kimberly	3	only	32
West Kimberly	7	Lyndie	2