“As an eight year old boy I found an Aboriginal grindstone on our family farm at Bruce Rock, only to quickly become aware that neither my parents or my teacher had any real idea of how the people who used it lived or what had become of them once white people arrived. From that point on I was always aware that others had owned the land long before us. The stone has remained with me for all of my life, as did the mystery and the sense that the whole topic was somehow seen as one to quietly avoid. “.

– Author of A Journey Travelled, Murray Arnold

This is a pivotal story long overdue for the telling: how Aboriginal and European people interacted with each other following the British territorial invasion of 1826 for the next hundred years. There has always been a wealth of documentary and oral history available to researchers prepared to write from a local history perspective, yet very few Australian historians have accepted this challenge. What has been lacking until recently is the sense among historians and the general Australian public that the history of Aboriginal–European relations, not only for the first few years of contact but for a period of many decades, is central to our nation’s story.

The intense cultural and political foment of the 1960s inevitably impacted upon the history departments of Australian universities, and for the first time, Australians were confronted by the reality of their past as the old reluctance to write about the history of Aboriginal–European relations came to an abrupt end.

Murray Arnold tells this story from the vantage point of the town of Albany and the wider Great Southern region of Western Australia, and brings the unique story to life.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Murray Arnold is an historian and former farmer. After forty-four years farming near Bruce Rock in Western Australia, during which time he also studied for his Bachelor degree, Arnold moved to Albany where he completed his PhD through the University of Western Australia.

Arnold tutors local Aboriginal High School students enrolled in the Follow the Dream program, and in 2013 spent three months in an impoverished and remote South African village doing similar work. He has lectured in Aboriginal History at the Albany Summer School and presented addresses on the topic to two seminars at the Albany campus of UWA, at public meetings at the Albany Public Library, and at the the University of the Third Age. He has presented at the Australian Historians Association conference, been interviewed several times by the local ABC and community radio, as well as spoken at professional development days for local teachers and given talks to students.

Murray Arnold is available for interview

For media queries, images, or to arrange an author interview please contact
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