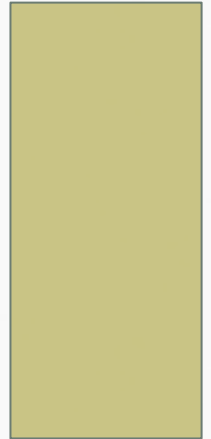


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# AUSSIE SLANG

A PRESENTATION ON THE SLANG OF AUSTRALIA



# EARLY ORIGINS

"Australian slang really seems to have built up a head of steam in the late 19th Century"

- Tony Thorne, linguist at Kings College, London, author of the *"Dictionary of Contemporary Slang"*.

"At least in the early decades there was a connection with the lower classes. Slang and jargon, that sort of playful language, was very common among those social classes"

- John Hajek, professor of language and linguistics at the University of Melbourne.

# CONVICTS



One of the 1<sup>st</sup> to add something to the Australian slang were the forced labourers of the colonisation: convicts and conscripts.

The language of the convicts originates from early 1800s London underworld slang.

# THE TERMS THAT ENDURED

**Servant of the Crown, public servant, government man** – originally meant a *convict*, now means a *worker for the government (civil servant in Britain)*.

**Must**er – originally, it was an *assembly of convicts*, by the mid-1800s it was being used to refer to the *gathering together of livestock*

**Chunder** – came from the first colonists, and referred to a *person who was seasick (“Watch out under!”)*.

# GOLD RUSHERS AND BUSHRANGERS



**Fossick** – former meant to *ferret out*, now to *search around/about*, *rummage*.

A **Roll-up** – used to be “a mass meeting of miners to consider an individual grievance or an issue of common concern”, but now it’s an *assembly*.

**Bush telegraph** – means of spreading rumour, formerly a primitive means for communication in large areas.

**Bail up** – to hold under guard in order to rob smb. -> to detain, especially in a conversation.

**Stick-up** – rob at gunpoint – transferred to the US.

# FIRST WORLD WAR

- ✓ **Jargon** is seen as technical terminology devised by a particular group and part of the continuity and integrity of the forces.
- ✓ **Slang** is more likely to avoid technical terminology altogether, in favour of figurative, inventive and humorous allusions to the thing being described or referred to, sometimes serves to make the unfamiliar more familiar.

- Eric Partridge

# FIRST WORLD WAR

- ✓ **Aussie** – Australia, Australian, abbreviation for “Australian English” and the “Australian dollar”.
- ✓ **Anzac** - An Australian soldier. Anzac denotes the virtues of courage and determination displayed by the First World War Australian soldiers at Gallipoli in 1915. Anzac was formed from the initial letters of **A**ustralian and **N**ew **Z**ealand **A**rmY **C**orps. Australian soldiers are also called '**diggers**' because so much of the original Anzacs' time was spent digging trenches. First recorded 1915. Became seminal to Australian identity, redefined as the Anzac spirit.



# TEST YOUR MADSKILLS

Barbie is

- a. A doll for children
- b. Short for barbarian
- c. A BBQ
- d. A local barber shop

Mozzie means:

- a. Moses
- b. Mosquito
- c. Mozart
- d. mozzarella

Which of the following is an Australian slang word?

- A. Birdie
- B. Bikie
- C. Limey
- D. Walkie-Talkie

Journo stands for

- a. Jordanian
- b. journey
- c. journal
- d. journalist



# TEST YOUR MADSKILLS

For most Australian English speakers, the ‘**-ie**’ suffix is a natural part of the language. Unlike similar diminutives in international English, for example ‘birdie’ or ‘doggie’, the ‘-ie’ suffix in Australian English serves as a marker of informality – providing speakers with a shared code of familiarity and solidarity.

The Australian penchant for abbreviating words is also demonstrated by the use of the ‘**-o**’ **suffix**. An ‘**ambo**’ is an ambulance officer, a ‘**reffo**’ is a refugee, and a ‘**rello**’ is a relative. A number of these types of abbreviations have made their way into global English including ‘**demo**’ (a demonstration), ‘**muso**’ (a musician), and ‘**preggo**’ (pregnant). Other: ‘**perv**’ (a sexual pervert) and ‘**uni**’ (university)

# TEST YOUR MADSKILLS

Bikkies mean:

- a. bikini
- b. bicycles
- c. biscuits
- d. bikers

I'm full up to dolly's wax means

- a. I have a lot of money
- b. My car has been fueled
- c. I have eaten enough
- d. I have tolerated this enough

In Australian language "bloody" means

- a. Covered in blood
- b. Real, true
- c. Notorious for crimes
- d. Damned, cursed

ant's pants:

- a. something very small
- b. something very impressive
- c. someone very talkative
- d. someone very hardworking

# SOURCES



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