

Civil & political rights

Charles Perkins

Without doubt the most well-known Aboriginal person associated with Glebe is Charles (or Charlie) Perkins.

Charlie Perkins was born in Alice Springs 16 June 1936. He was a fitter and turner and a great sportsman, as well as 'prominent Indigenous activist and public servant.'¹

He lived and his family lived in Catherine Street, Glebe.

This famous photo of Charles Perkins shows him travelling home after being at Tranby.²



LEFT: Charles Perkins was an excellent soccer player. He rose through the ranks in Adelaide and was asked to try out for Everton in England where he was offered a part-time contract. He turned down various offers in the UK and returned to Australia.

“Football serves a three-fold purpose. The first was to provide me with finance for my study. Second, it enabled me to keep fit because I needed to study for such long hours. Third, it was the means whereby I could mix socially and enjoy myself comfortably.”⁴



RIGHT: The Charles Perkins Centre at the University of Sydney is named after Charles Perkins. The Centre works to improve public health.³



The Freedom Ride

The Freedom Ride led by Charles Perkins, took place from 12-26 February 1965. Students from the University of Sydney toured NSW towns known to practise racial discrimination. The ride ended at Charlie Perkins' house in Catherine Street Glebe.⁵

References

1. Dictionary of Sydney, Charles Perkins. https://dictionaryofsydney.org/person/perkins_charles.
 2. Photo: *Charles Perkins on bus home after visit to Tranby, Glebe circa 1965* by Robert McFarlane. www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/544.2000/.
 3. Photo: Interior of the Charles Perkins Centre, by Jason Tong. commons.wikimedia.org
 4. Roy Hay (2012) *Charles Perkins: footballer, activist, administrator*, Sports and Editorial Services Australia, <http://sesasport.com/?p=1591>; Photo: John Maynard, The Aboriginal Soccer Tribe, p. 51.
 5. Dictionary of Sydney. *Freedom Ride*. https://dictionaryofsydney.org/event/freedom_ride
 6. Image from the *Moree Tribune*, <https://aiatsis.gov.au/exhibitions/1965-freedom-ride>
 7. Ann Curthoys (2012) *Ann Curthoys – Radical Glebe*. Glebe Society website. www.blebesociety.org.au/socialhistory/radical-glebe-a-personal-view-by-ann-curthoys/
 8. Rona Tranby Trust. *Rona Tranby Award and Collection: History*. <http://ronatranby.org.au/about/>.
 9. Image: Centre for Australian Art, *The first national conference on aboriginal controlled ... community based education institutions*. <http://www.printsandprintmaking.gov.au/works/10595/images/2646/>
 10. NSW Aboriginal Land Council. A Short History of NSWALC. cls.org.au/about_nswalc/our-history.aspx. Photo by Elaine Pelet Syron



Tranby – the first independent Aboriginal education provider
Tranby National Indigenous Adult Education and Training is located in Mansfield Street Glebe. It was established in 1957, and is Australia's oldest, not-for-profit, independent Indigenous education provider.⁸

Tranby is more than a provider of education and training; it is a cultural hub from Aboriginal people from all over the country and has fostered many important cultural and artistic activities. See other posters in this exhibition for more details.

Tranby engages with Aboriginal civil and political rights actions, such as the land rights movement from the early 1970s and was involved in gaining support for the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody in the 1990s.⁹



Photo: Elaine Belot -Supra

Land Rights

A key civil and political right for Aboriginal people is the right to their land. Glebe – via Tranby – has played a role in the Land Rights movement. The NSW Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) was formed in 1977. Initially without government funding, the NSWALC was assisted by Tranby College to submit around ten land claims in NSW: after which they obtained external funding.¹⁰