

MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Tony Kelly MLC

Minister for Lands

Leader of the House in the Legislative Council

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council



UNESCO AWARD FOR NSW'S UNIQUE COLONIAL RECORDS

Wednesday 14 October 2009

The Minister for Lands, Tony Kelly, today accepted a UNESCO tribute honouring the Rees Government's protection of important historical records which have been placed on a highly respected United Nations register.

"The *Old Register* has been formally accepted for inscription on the UNESCO Australian *Memory of the World* register," Mr Kelly said.

"This is like achieving an Olympic gold and it shows the importance of preserving and making available historical records to the public."

Other items on the UNESCO register include the *Endeavour Journal* of Captain Cook, the Mabo case transcripts and the landmark constitutional documents of the Commonwealth of Australia. NSW's additions are today represented by the *Old Registers* from the Land and Property Management Authority and the *First Fleet Journals* from the State Library.

"UNESCO's *Memory of the World* guards against collective amnesia by preserving valuable archive material such as the *Old Register* and ensuring their wide dissemination.

"The *Old Register* comprises nine books recorded between 22 January 1794 to 15 May 1824, which represented the first method for people to officially record legal documents.

"They include agreements between convicts and their masters, marriages, separations, sales of horses and stock, wills, writs and even official warrants related to wars.

"These unique records tell the colourful story of the colony's early development", Mr Kelly said.

For more detail about the UNESCO register: www.amw.org.au/register/amw_reg06.htm

A DVD of the *Old Register* is available from NSW State Records for \$125.

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