



AGTV

# German Language Heritage Trails

WESTGARTH TOWN

Beth Williams

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## Association of German-Speaking Communities

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## **What is a 'Heritage Trail'?**

The concept of a 'Heritage Trail' has been developed to provide support materials for teachers and students to focus on historical and cultural influences of German-speakers in Australia. With authentic contexts as the basis of all tasks in the kits, students will reinforce and extend their language skills in German.

It is hoped that these two trails will encourage the development of further German language heritage trails that trace the influence of German-speakers, past and present, on Australian life.

### **Background**

The idea of a 'Language Trail' in German is not new. German teachers in Victoria have contributed to the development of similar educational kits for use at the Melbourne Zoo, the National Gallery of Victoria, and the Botanic Gardens with the support of the LOTE, ESL and Multicultural Education Branch of the Department of Education. In addition, the 1998 Year 12 exam topic 'The contribution of German-speakers to the cultural life of Australia' led to the development of a 'Global Classroom' project on the Internet that documented some of the influences German-speakers have had on Australian life.

Interest in discovering and promoting aspects of our German-speaking heritage was well established prior to a request to the AGTV for support to develop materials for learning about the German-speaking people interned during World War II at Tatura. In 1997, Andrew Ferguson, from the AGTV, and Eva Schulz, from the Goethe-Institut, drafted a process for developing 'Heritage Trails'. It included strategies for planning, and importantly, funding such projects. In order for copies to be distributed free to schools, outside funding or sponsorship would be needed to cover the significant costs for the design, printing and production of the kits.

In 1998, the AGTV received a generous grant from the LOTE, ESL & Multicultural Education Branch to produce the 'Westgarthtown Heritage Trail'. Around the same time, Billanook Primary School received a grant for the development of the 'Tatura Heritage Trail', a project supported and co-authored by the AGTV.

### **Launch of the Heritage Trails in 1999**

The AGTV is proud to have been involved with the initial concept of 'Heritage Trails' and we extend our thanks to all involved in the production of the first two trails. Together with the Association of German-Speaking Communities (AGSC), we have funded the folders and their initial distribution to schools. We commend the use of the materials to you and look forward to additional kits being developed and distributed in the future.

Catherine Gosling

AGTV President