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Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Library

MS 4116

Cathy Freeman and the Sydney 2000 Olympic games

2000, 2003 and 2010

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COLLECTION SUMMARY

Creator:	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
Title:	Cathy Freeman and the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games
Collection no:	MS 4116
Date range:	2000, 2003, 2010
Extent:	0.66 linear metres (1 archival box, 1 oversize box and 1 folder in Manuscript Plan Cabinet)
Repository:	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY STATEMENT

It is a condition of use of this finding aid, and of the collection described in it, that users ensure that any use of the information contained in it is sympathetic to the views and sensitivities of relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This includes:

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Deceased persons

Users of this finding aid should be aware that, in some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, seeing images of deceased persons in photographs, film and books or hearing them in recordings etc. may cause sadness or distress and in some cases, offend against strongly held cultural prohibitions.

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ACCESS TO COLLECTION

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Preferred citation

Items from this collection should be cited as [Title or description of manuscript item], Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, MS [insert number], Series [insert number], Subseries [insert number], Item or Folder [insert number].

For example:

Cathy Freeman and the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, MS 4116, Series [no.], Folder/Item [no.].

COLLECTION OVERVIEW

Scope and contents note

The collection consists of a small selection of newspapers, lift outs from newspapers, newspaper cuttings and magazines relating to Cathy Freeman and the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. There is also a selection of guides, brochures and flyers relating to the Games and its associated activities, including the Olympic Arts Festival held from 18 August

to 30 September 2000. Also included are commemorative stamps featuring Freeman and Olympic ticket information.

In July 2003 a small addition of newspapers relating to Freeman's announcement of her retirement from athletics was added to the collection by the AIATSIS Library. In 2010 a newspaper clipping on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Games was also added.

Provenance/ Source of acquisition note

The AIATSIS Library collected most of the material at the time of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, with a small addition added in July 2003 and another in 2010 on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Games.

Administrative note

Additional papers added in August 2003 and October 2010. Finding aid transferred to Word, from Archivists Toolkit, and revised in 2016.

Material separated from the collection

No material has been separated from this collection.

Related material

For a complete list of works by, or about, Cathy Freeman, held by the Library, and for other related material consult [Mura®](#), the AIATSIS catalogue.

For access to Audiovisual material contact AIATSIS [Collections](#).

Important: Before clicking on the links to the catalogue entries please read our [sensitivity message](#).

Controlled Access headings

Personal name

- Freeman, Cathy, 1973

Subjects

- Politics and Government – National symbols and events – Olympic Games, Sydney, 2000
- Sport – Athletics and running

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Catherine Astrid Salome (Cathy) Freeman, one of Australia's best known athletes, was born in Mackay, in Queensland, on 16 February 1973, the daughter of Norman Freeman and Cecilia Barber. She married Alexander (Sandy) Bodecker in 1999, separating from him in

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February 2003. Freeman won a scholarship to a boarding school where she was able to have professional athletic coaching.

In 1990, at the age of 16, Freeman won a Commonwealth Games gold medal as part of the 4 x 100 metre relay team in Auckland. In 1994 Freeman became the first Aboriginal sprinter to win a gold medal at the Commonwealth Games, in Victoria, Canada, where she won two Commonwealth gold medals. She also became the first person to take Commonwealth titles at both the 200m and 400m, both in record times. She has twice been world champion over 400m. In 1996 she won an Olympic silver medal behind Marie-Jose Perec, the 1992 gold medallist, at the Atlanta Olympics, while setting a Commonwealth record and beating the previous Olympic record. Later in the same year she became the International Amateur Athletic Federation 400m Grand Prix Champion.

After the Atlanta Olympics Freeman won 22 consecutive 400m finals, including her first world championship in Athens in 1997, a winning streak that wasn't broken until July 1998.

Freeman was unable to compete in the 1998 Commonwealth Games owing to a heel injury. She also had injury problems in 1999 but despite this was able to win the 400m national title in Melbourne. Freeman also won the 1999 World Championships in a world class time of 49.67 seconds in the same year, becoming the first woman to successfully defend a world 400m crown, as well as the first Australian to win two world titles.

At the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games Freeman lit the Olympic torch and went on to win the 400m gold medal. This was Australia's 100th Olympic gold medal.

Among many other awards, Freeman was made Young Australian of the Year in 1990 and Australian of the Year in 1997, becoming the first person to have completed the Young Australian-Australian of the Year double. She was named Australian Sports Personality of the Year in 1996, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sportswoman of the Year in 1997, and in 1999 she received the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sport Award and was awarded the Australian Sportswoman of the Year. In 2001 Freeman was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia, the Silver Olympic Order by the International Olympic Committee and she also became the Laureus World Sportswoman of the Year. In 2002 she was presented with a degree of Doctor of the University (Honoris Causa) by the University of Ballarat for 'her determination and willingness to tackle challenges'.

Other achievements include being voted as one of Australia's one hundred National Living Treasures in 1997 in a National Trust poll, in the same year she was ranked in the nation's top twenty popular personalities by a survey of 120 advertising agencies. She has twice been named in the Australian Sporting Hall of Fame's achievement roll, was modelled in Madam Tussaud's Waxworks in 1997 and a street has been named after her in Mackay.

Freeman received a great deal of publicity when she carried the Aboriginal flag, in addition to the Australian flag, after her victories at the 1994 Commonwealth Games. Despite controversy at the time she has continued this practice. Freeman received tremendous support from the Australian public for her event at the Sydney Olympics and she is viewed as a role model for Australia's Indigenous youth.

References:

1. Who's who 2002

2. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/olympics/athletes/freeman.htm>

SERIES DESCRIPTION

Series 1: Newspapers 2000

This series consists of a selection of Sydney and Canberra newspapers, newspaper lift outs and newspaper clippings covering the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and, in particular, Cathy Freeman's part in the opening ceremony and the women's 400m race. Also included are, *The Australian Magazine*, September 16-17 2000, and the, *Sydney Morning Herald Good Weekend Olympics Souvenir*, October 2000.

Folder/ Item

- 1 *Sydney Morning Herald*, Mon. Sep 25, 2000. Poster printed by Fairfax printers, 'Our new golden girl'. [Held in Manuscript Plan Cabinet]
- 2 Newspapers. [Held in oversize box]

Series 2: Magazines 2000

Magazines which feature Cathy Freeman, and which were issued around the time of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, are included in this series. Included are, *The Australian Women's Weekly*, October 9, 2000; *New Idea*, Games souvenir issue October 7, 2000; *Who Weekly*, October 9, 2000; *Woman's Day*, October 9, 2000; *Women in Sport*, v. 6, no. 5, 2000.

Folder/Item

- 1-2 Magazines

Series 3: Olympic tickets 2000

The series consists of one booklet giving information on obtaining tickets, the card that enabled ticket purchasers to identify themselves so that they could receive their hand delivered tickets, and a ticket holder's printout indicating the tickets purchased. The tickets purchased included tickets to athletics events on the 25 September when Cathy Freeman won the women's 400 metre race.

Folder/Item

- 1 Booklet and tickets

Series 4: Guides and brochures 2000

This series consists of various guides and brochures to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and its related activities. Included are the Official Spectator Guide, a TV guide, a city guide, an Olympic arts guide, an Olympics Arts Festival guide and brochures for the various programs of the Olympic Arts Festival, including art, music, opera, theatre and the Flying Fruit Fly Circus. There is also a printout of a web page and a brochure on Tubowgule,

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(Meeting of the Waters), involving three ceremonies to usher in the 2000 Olympic Arts Festival on 18 August. A National Aboriginal History & Heritage Council web page printout is also included giving the September program of events including the Aboriginal Olympic Art Expo 2000.

Folder/Item

1-2 Guides and brochures

Series 5: Commemorative stamps 2000

This series consists of the Cathy Freeman sheet of the Australian Gold Medallists series issued in commemoration of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. The stamp sheet also commemorates the fact that this was Australia's 100th Olympic gold medal.

Folder/Item

1 Commemorative stamps

Series 6: Retirement 2003

This series consists of tributes, a farewell, an editorial and articles about Freeman published in *The Australian*, *The Canberra Times* and the *Herald Sun* on 17 July 2003 after Freeman announced her retirement from athletics on the 16 July.

There is also a postcard, produced by the National Portrait Gallery, from a 1994 photograph of Freeman by Montalbetti + Campbell.

The items were added to the collection in July 2003

Folder/Item

1a Postcard

1b Tributes and editorials [Held in Manuscript Plan Cabinet]

Series 7: Sydney 2000 Olympic Games 10 year anniversary 2010

'What it felt like to be an Olympic champion, 19 years on', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Weekend edition, September 4-5, 2010, News 3.

Folder/Item

1 'What it felt like to be an Olympic champion, 19 years on'. [Held in Manuscript Plan Cabinet]

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BOX LIST

Series	Folder/Item	Box
1	1	Manuscript Plan Cabinet
1	2	1 Oversize box
2	1-2	2
3	1	2
4	1-2	2
5	1	2
6	1a	2
6	1b	Manuscript Plan Cabinet
7	1	Manuscript Plan Cabinet

Finding aid compiled by J.E. Churches, April 2000, updated in 2003 and 2010.
Another update was carried out in Aug 2016 when finding aid was transferred from
Archivists Toolkit to Microsoft Word, by C. Zdanowicz

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