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Norman Miller with his hand painted boomerang in front of the Captain Cook statue in Cairns

The Weekend Australian 28-29/4/18 carried a Page 1 article by Geoff Chalmers headlined “\$50m for memorial to Captain Cook.” Author of a book on the early explorers attempts and successes to find Australia, Barbara Miller says, “This statement in the article is not true and is bad history – ‘Delivery of a new aquatic monument, which is expected to include memorials to both Cook and Australian’s first inhabitants, will be delivered ahead of the 250th anniversary commemorating the first contact between Europeans and Indigenous people on April 29, 1770.”

Miller says, "As valuable a scientific expedition as Cook's was, he was 164 years too late to have this claim made about him. Yes, he was the first to chart the east coast of Australia and claimed it for England at Possession Island but the Dutch were the first to Australia in 1606.

"We were taught inaccurate history in Australian schools as I was growing up and I hope it has improved but many of our politicians and journalists need to catch up. I hope history teachers and curriculum writers have.

"Willem Janszoon in the ship *Duyfken* made the first contact with Aborigines and the shores of what became known as Australia at Mapoon on western Cape York, north of Weipa in 1606. They also visited the area known today as Weipa and Aurukun, being turned back by Aborigines after skirmishes at Aurukun at a place called Cape Keerweer (or Cape Turn Again).

"This little-known fact was commemorated by the Dutch and Australian governments at the 400 year anniversary of first contact in 2006 and a first contact memorial with a replica of the *Duyfken* was built there. I cover all this in my book *The European Quest to Find Terra Australis Incognita: Quiros, Torres and Janszoon*.

Aboriginal artist Munganbana Norman Miller has campaigned to have a big boomerang as part of the statue of Captain Cook in Cairns to recognize Indigenous people. He has recently painted a new one, pictured, with the markings "Aborigines time immemorial Janszoon 1606 and Cook 1770" to set this history straight and he hopes to take his message into schools.

Munganbana says, "I have a passion to see history record the true story. I am glad the First Contact Memorial at Mapoon, which I have visited, tells the story of the Indigenous people as well as the explorers. I am also glad that La Perouse Aboriginal Land Council has been involved in planning the Botany Bay upgrade of Cook's memorial site and that Indigenous people will be commemorated in an inclusive redevelopment."

The Millers said they visited Whitby in England in 1999 and walked the 199 steps down to the sea. Whitby is where Captain Cook left from for Australia and they were able to sit in the little boxed-in wooden seats in St Mary's church where he worshipped and watch a documentary on Cook.

Signed Barbara Miller

Munganbana Norman Miller