



# Infosheet

## Ludwig Leichhardt



### The name is everywhere!

It's a suburb in Sydney (NSW), and also a Sydney municipality. In Queensland it's a suburb in Ipswich, an electoral division reaching way up to the tip of Cape York and the Torres Strait, as well as a river in north-west Queensland ... and there's also a tree named after him in the town of Taroom.

### **So, WHO is behind this name?? and WHY are so many things named after him in Australia?**

The story starts way back in 1813, in the German town of Trebatsch. It was there and then that Friedrich Wilhelm Ludwig Leichhardt was born - later to be known by his middle name, Ludwig. He studied at universities in Germany, but it was a friend who introduced him to natural science, which then became his passion. They went to England and continued studying ....

### Why did he go to Australia?

Australia wasn't the obvious choice as a tourist destination for a young German lad in those days. In fact the journey itself would have taken several months in often very unpleasant conditions and some ships that left port were never heard of again. Australia wasn't a tourist destination at all, it was just the opposite!

Leichhardt wanted to focus on something new in his natural science studies, something that had never been properly researched before! His friend came to his aid - paying his fare to Australia, giving him clothes and £200 - and Leichhardt left London in 1841 on his journey of discovery to Australia.

### Why is he important in Australia?

His research into plants and wildlife are often overshadowed by his explorations. He left Sydney for Brisbane (Moreton Bay, as it was known then) in 1844, leaving with his team from the Darling Downs, west of Brisbane, for an epic journey - naming new rivers and landmarks along the way. In December 1845 they arrived - after a massive 4,828km trek - in Port Essington (in what is now known as the Northern Territory).

He had explored a major area of Australia (mainly Queensland) that had never before been mapped.

Arriving back in Sydney in 1846 they were given a heroes' welcome ... in fact, they were presumed dead and their success was a real surprise to everyone! He was proclaimed 'Prince of Explorers' and they were celebrated as national heroes.

What next? No one had ever managed to cross Australia from east to west, so this was his next big challenge.

In 1848 he left Moreton Bay (Brisbane), gathering his team together in the Darling Downs, for Perth. Shortly afterwards they disappeared ... and were never heard of again ...

### Hero or Villian?

The 'Prince of Explorers' was hailed by many as a hero and described as 'the most amiable of men'. But some members of his exploration teams described him very differently - as jealous, selfish, careless, a bad bushman, and unfit for leadership.

**The truth?** Find out more about Leichhardt's fascinating life, and the mystery behind his disappearance at

[www.leichhardtland.net.au/contact/leichhardt-links-for-kids](http://www.leichhardtland.net.au/contact/leichhardt-links-for-kids)

... and make your own decision ...

## Word Search

All the words below are associated with Ludwig Leichhardt.

Find the words - they can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal. Viel Glück!

R E V I R M D H P Z F P K S S	CAMP	MORETON BAY
E Q H Y O A O M W H T W I N R	DARLING DOWNS	NATURE
X U A O R A A R C J P W W E E	DISAPPEAR	PERTH
P E X G E C J R E Q K O C S V	DISCOVER	PLANTS
L E I C H H A R D T D E S H O	ESSINGTON	QUEENSLAND
O N R Q G E G S S G O I R R C	EXPLORE	RESEARCH
R S V A S E U I N Y N N O T S	FAMOUS	RIVER
E L Q E E O R I W G D C B J I	GERMANY	ROCKS
M A R Z M P L M T D K N O A D	HERO	SURVIVE
I N A A B R P O A S U U E F Y	JOURNEY	SYDNEY
U D F F A Z N A C N R L R Y P	LEICHHARDT	TREBATSCH
W I L D L I F E S N Y N U L E	LUDWIG	TREK
P L A N T S M M E I Z E T T R		WILDLIFE
E V I V R U S Y H X D R A B T		
H C S T A B E R T J B I N Y H		

## Organising the 1848 expedition

Based on his doomed expedition from Moreton Bay to Perth in 1848, and using his experience from his first expedition, examine how Leichhardt could have planned his trip better ...

Groups of 2-3 students can look at the following aspects:

- What food and drink and food/cooking utensils would you take? What else would you eat and drink on the way and where would you get it from?
- What transport and housing, clothes & other implements would you take? Shelter? Finding your way?
- Who would you take? And why? Hint: think of what professions that would have been useful on the trip

## Going bush: 1844 and today

In groups, compare the differences between going on an outback trip:

- a) back in Leichhardt's time      b) today

**Consider:** What would you take, eat, drink, wear, sleep in, be transported with and who should be on the team?

**Role-play:** Select a team leader and other team members. Discuss the up-coming trip as if a) in 1844 b) today.

## Botanic discoveries

Create a scrap-book of different plants you find in your garden, local park, etc. and present them as 'newly discovered' flora - as if you'd found them when taking part in one of Leichhardt's expeditions.

Press or draw the plants.

Write a short description of each 'new' plant - where and how you found the plant during the expedition - and give it a new botanical name.