

WONDER

Ghan

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Ghan

Film proposal, production design and script

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ASSIGNMENTS 2-4
FLINDERS UNIVERSITY SCREEN AND MEDIA PRODUCTION 2012
RESEARCH AND WRITING SCME 8004
LECTURER: COLE LARSON

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Synopsis

This is the story of an Afghan Muslim who took on the rich, gave to the poor, and won hearts in the City of Churches.

Mahomet Allum was born in Kandahar in 1858 and came to Australia as a cameleer in 1888. After working in numerous jobs for 50 years, he moved to Adelaide in 1930 and set up a herbalism practice at 181 Sturt Street in the city. For the next three decades, his treatments and cures made him a household name. But more notably he became known for his generosity and vocal criticism of the city's powerful medical establishment and what he claimed were its costly and unnecessary treatments.

A core Islamic tenet is compassion and Mahomet was a devout Muslim. He treated the hundreds of people who flocked to his consulting rooms for free, asking for donations from those who could afford it and giving thousands of dollars in cash, provisions and medical treatment to those in need. His patients loved him - writing letters, penning poetry and songs about him, and giving him the title 'Wonder Man' in recognition of his cures and charity. In the process, he was ostracised by Adelaide's elite as a pariah, and vilified by the medical establishment as a fraud. He was queried, put on charges of misconduct and perjury, and police sought to discredit him through underhand means.

Mahomet was the classic anti-hero. Wrong ethnicity, wrong colour, wrong religion, wrong profession, wrong associations, wrong ideas and wrong behaviour.

His past was shrouded in stories of marrying a prostitute, and burning down his drapery business. He drove a blue Daimler (like King George), sponsored the police, married a 20-year-old woman at the age of 84, and published books and newspaper stories describing himself as 'Humanity's benefactor' and 'Santa Claus.' He was riddled with flaws, complex and charming. A newspaper of the time described him as 'tall, handsome and broad-shouldered Afghan' with piercing dark eyes and swarthy skin, who wore a western suit, turban and lashings of jewellery.

Mahomet's story is a great tell. It has a hero, intrigue, plot, sub-plots, audacity, humour, beauty and sadness. But it's also a powerful story, because it is about a real man who strived to do what he considered right against the many odds.

It is the story of his search for identity and place in a foreign country where ethno-religious tensions ran high. Mahomet was technically an Alien living under Australia's White Australia Policy for 75 years. It kept him at an arm's length from national inclusion, despite his efforts to care for its people and be received as one of them.

His story reminds us how ethnicity, ideology and religion have shaped a deep-seated conflict between Christians and Muslims which simmered for centuries and exploded on September 11. And it offers hope as Mahomet rises above bigotry on a platform of shared humanity, and wins.

Treatment

Mahomet's story unfolds on a linear level, and traces his journey from his birth in Afghanistan in 1858 until his death in Australia in 1964.

From the outset, we sense the complexity of Afghanistan, a harsh yet achingly beautiful country where centuries of war and foreign invasion are mirrored in the wary eyes of its people. Equipped with a resilient and outgoing nature, he journeys through Central Asia for 10 years, before arriving in Australia where he works as a cameleer, butcher, draper and miner. Mahomet is undaunted initially by the restrictive immigration laws of his adopted country, but as time passes he becomes rankled by a country that won't accept him as an Australian citizen. However, he is full of confidence, charm, compassion and conviction, and draws people to him.

We are introduced to Mahomet's contradictory behaviour early in the piece. He gives money to the poverty-stricken people he meets on his travels, many of them afflicted by drought, pestilence and disease that ravaged Australia around the turn of the century. He is also accused of perjury and his actions set the scene for his later emergence as a serious philanthropist and maverick.

The heart of the story opens in Mahomet's later years when he moves to Adelaide in 1930 and sets up a herbalism practice which becomes a mecca for Adelaide's ailing. He treats his patients for free, surviving comfortably on donations and earning their devotion and loyalty.

In time, he tackles the medical profession in Adelaide for what he considers is its selfish exploitation of those who can't afford its services. Letters, newspaper articles, books and intrigue follow as the herbalist and medics engage in a public ding dong. The pious and conservative city of churches is scandalised and enthralled as Mahomet rings its bells for years to come. Some of the publications and newspaper articles by Mahomet about Mahomet are wildly self-aggrandising and at times amusing, and reveal a man who is vain and needs acceptance. The stoushes go all the way to court where he is found guilty of posing as a medical practitioner and fined 45 pounds.

We follow him via a trail of documentation about his life. Unable to read or write in English, he dictates as others write his papers about herbalism, Islam and why at he intends to leave Australia. At 84, Mahomet marries a 20 year-old woman who converts to Islam and their daughter, Bebe, is born. Tragedy strikes when he refuses to allow his wife to be immunised, and she dies of smallpox on a return trip to Mecca. His daughter walks out on him, unable to forgive him for the loss of her mother.

The story ends with Mahomet's death in 1964. His epic long walk has taken him through a century of ethno-religious confluence and conflict, and challenged his world views and sense of self. He emerges triumphantly as a man who has remained true to his faith, and turned prejudice on its head through his compassion for others.

Production design

Concept

To produce a 55 minute documentary about the life and times of Mahomet Allum, a cameleer, herbalist, philanthropist and one Australia's most colourful but least known Afghan Muslims. *Wonder Ghan* will trace Mahomet's life from 1858 in Afghanistan until his death in 1964 in South Australia. It will focus on his warm, inspiring, sometimes shady and often turbulent relationships with his fellow Australians as he strives to locate his identity as an Afghan Muslim in Australia.

Research

The images, documents and information for this project have been sourced from the internet, newspaper archives and books. Key sources include Madeleine Brunato's *Hanji Mahomet Allum: Camel-Driver, Herbalist and Healer*, the National Archive's *Uncommon Lives* website by VALMAI A. Hankel, State Library of South Australia's website (SA People), and Australian newspaper archives.

Structure

During his 106 years, he travelled the world, witnessed great change and negotiated divergent cultures and religions. As his story unfolded, history left a trail of clues about the evolution of his unique and multi-dimensional character. As such, this documentary will take a panoramic view which follows these clues and sets the stage for his later public.

Style

The documentary will be classical and visually poetic in style. Its narrative will be driven by the story of Mahomet's life, and recounted by a third person with comments provided by talking heads and the voice of historical characters. The simple story will have offbeat, humorous and reflective moments which echo the unorthodox nature of the man.

Talent

Narration:

Homaira Mershed

Support worker with the Australia Afghan Development Organisation.

As a woman who left Afghanistan 28 years ago, she will provide humanism and conviction to Mahomet's story while giving Afghan women a voice in the telling of their own stories in Australia.

Talking heads:

- *Dr Nouria Salehi OAM*

Nuclear physicist and Senior Australian of the Year 2011.

A high profile, female Afghan Australian who will lend credibility to the documentary. Her professional work and commitment to Afghan people in Australia will ensure reasoned and informed commentary.

- *Cory Bernadi*

Former Liberal Senator for South Australia

Bernadi's anti-Islamic position will deliver a counter-perspective of Allum. He will also be a protagonist for the medical establishment.

- *Madeleine Brunato*

Author, *Hanji Mahomet Allum: Camel-Driver, Herbalist and Healer*

Brunato is a South Australian who has written a book about Allum, and interviewed several people who were closely involved with him. This will deliver insights to intimate details of his life.

- *VALMAI A Hankel*

National Archives biographer, Mahomet Allum

Hankel has recently researched Allum's life and will provide a contemporary expose of events and circumstances concerning him.

Music

A combination of traditional Afghan music and qarara rasha instrumentals will be interweaved with Australian folk, and period music throughout the documentary to reflect cultural heritages of his original and adopted countries, and relevant themes and eras. Examples below:

- qarara rasha <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHzOZ3ayC14>
- Waltzing Matilda <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwvazMc5EfE>
- You rascal, you <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hSIF0yBq5No>

Sound

Music and narration will be supplemented by muted sound effects indicative of simultaneous events occurring in the script.

Camera

The story tellers will be filmed at close range against dark backgrounds in warm tones to provide a sense of intimacy and proximity between viewer and story tellers. Other photographic and archival material will be panned, zoomed and dissolved, simulating movement in the absence of film.

Images

This documentary will be comprised entirely of contemporary and coloured archival images and documents, strung together in a lush fusion of colour and form to reflect the colourful Afghan herbalist and his kaleidoscopic life. Viewers will be taken on a visual trek through Mahomet's harsh and beautiful world, where the only absolute is compassion. Photos will be cut to beat and evoke the transience of time, and enduring consequences of our actions.

Colours and design

Strong, lush colours will convey Mahomet's passion and humanity. Branding will incorporate strong use of tangerines and blue, reflecting the culture, deserts and skies of Afghanistan and Australia.

Budget summary

PROJECT TITLE: Wonder Ghan
DURATION: 55 MINUTES
FORMAT: DOCUMENTARY

DOCUMENTARY SHOOT	5,000
IMAGE RESEARCH	10,000
IMAGE USAGE FEES	20,000
DIRECTOR'S FEES (PRE-PRODUCTION/ POST PRODUCTION)	\$20,000
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S FEES	15,000
PRODUCER'S FEES	10,000
EDITOR AND OFFLINE EDIT SUITE (6 WEEKS)	15,000
OPENING/CLOSING TITLE SCREEN DESIGN	5,000
SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT	5,000
VOICE OVER RECORD AND TALENT FEES	2,000
SOUNDMIX, SOUND DESIGN AND MUSIC PRODUCTION	10,000
MUSIC COPYRIGHT FEES	10,000
MARKETING	5,000
LEGAL FEES	10,000
CONTINGENCY	15,000

BUDGET TOTAL **157,000**

Visual concepts

Talent



Dr Nouria Salehi



Senator Cory Bernadi



Madeleine Brunato

Afghanistan



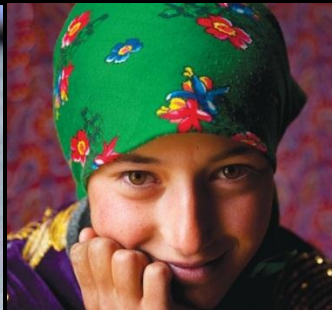
War



Leaving home



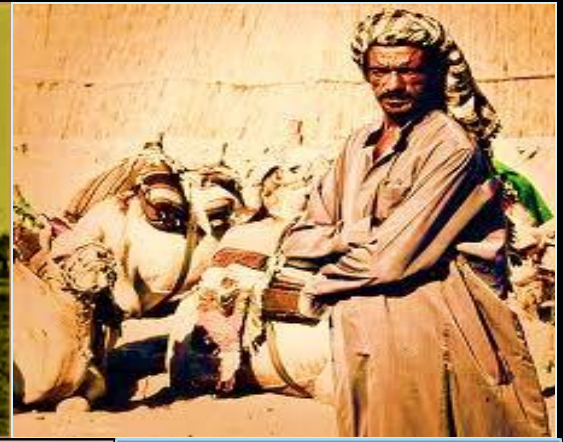
Voyage of discovery



Desert places



Ghans down under



Battling odds



Flaming doubts



AP



Cloncurry Station
30th June, 192

relative to :- Mr. and Mrs. Mahomet Allum, referred to in
attached correspondence from the Home and Territories
Department.

Sir :

I beg to report that I have been unable to
interview either Mahomet Allum or his wife, as they both left
Cloncurry on the 22nd instant for Townsville.

Both Mahomet Allum and his wife are personally
known to me, I have known Mahomet Allum for the past four years
and know nothing definitely against his character, but he is a
rogue and very rarely works.

His wife Mrs. Allum, nee Annie Baker, was a
prostitute. Her parents are well known residents of Panning
iding, Townsville District. She was prostituting in Longreach
and later came to Cloncurry where she was prostituting for a
few months when Mahomet Allum married her.

About two months ago she informed me that while
she was prostituting in Longreach she was treated by a doctor
for venereal disease. No convictions were recorded against
her during her term in Cloncurry, but she appears to be a very
undesirable class of a woman.

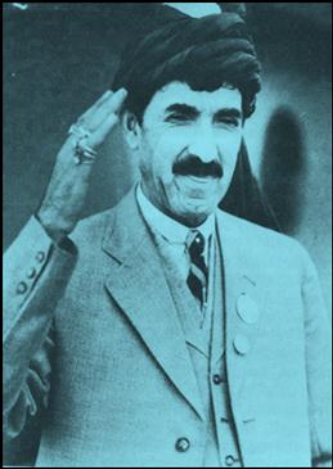


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Sage in the city



Media Mahomet



"THE LAMP OF GOD"

Mahomet Allum has a favorite poem which he is fond of reciting. It is called "The Lamp of God," and this is how it reads:

Lamps that gleam in the city, lamps that flare on the wall;
Lamps that shine on the ways of men, kindled by men are all.
But the desert of burnt-out ashes, which only the lost have trod,
Dark and barren and flowerless, is lit by the hand of God,
Only the wanderers know it; the lost with those who mourn,
That lamp in the desert darkness and the joy that comes in the dawn;
That the lost may come into safety and the mourners may cease to doubt,
The lamps of God will be shining still
When the lamps of men go out.



'Varsity Rejects Annual Prize "Thanks, But..." Mahomet Allum Politely Told

THERE'll be a check in store for Adelaide University medical students when they learn that the 'Varsity Council has turned down flat an offer of an annual cash prize of £50 for young men and women doing their final year "stewing" medicine. The offer was made by South Australian citizens and taxpayer veterans herbalist Mahomet Allum, who, like all of us, contributes indirectly through taxation, to keep the doors of the University open, but who felt that he would like to do something more tangible to help medical students.

... Mahomet Allum, of Stuart Street, Adelaide, has offered to give the 'Varsity Council an annual cash prize of £50 for young men and women doing their final year "stewing" medicine. The offer was made by South Australian citizens and taxpayer veterans herbalist Mahomet Allum, who, like all of us, contributes indirectly through taxation, to keep the doors of the University open, but who felt that he would like to do something more tangible to help medical students.

A Patient's Gratitude to Mahomed Allum

SOME SIDE-LIGHTS ON A REALLY GREAT CHARACTER

Opinions Formed From Close Observation

In foreign cities, it is the season when homage is paid to the ruddy-checked, white-bearded old tiger who is always associated with a team of mules, and a bag of toys.

But in Australia it must be admitted the most practical and best known Daddy Xmas is the stately moustached, bearded head of human, Dr. Mahomet Allum, of Stuart Street.

A MIRACULOUS CURE BY MAHOMET ALLUM

121 STURT STREET

These 200 bones 7/8 to 2 long were forced through the nose into eye and back of head by taking of herbal medicine only

Doctor Praises Mahomet Allum

Enviest Wonder Worker His Marvellous Skill

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SANTA CLAUS IN AUSTRALIA

Wears a Turban and Jewels

HAS NO HENDERS BUT HAS GIVEN PRODIGES OF HEALTH AND HAPPINESS TO MANY THOUSANDS

THE MAN OF GOD MAHOMED ALLUM Returns To Australia

In India, in Colombo, hundreds begged him to stay

... Mahomet Allum, of Stuart Street, Adelaide, has offered to give the 'Varsity Council an annual cash prize of £50 for young men and women doing their final year "stewing" medicine. The offer was made by South Australian citizens and taxpayer veterans herbalist Mahomet Allum, who, like all of us, contributes indirectly through taxation, to keep the doors of the University open, but who felt that he would like to do something more tangible to help medical students.



MAHOMED ALLUM Fights For Humanity

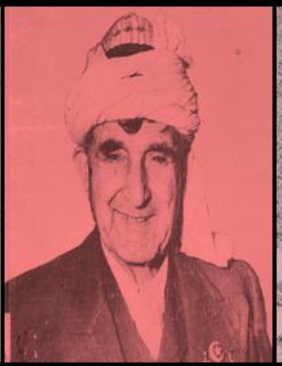
Doctors Cannot Bluff Him - Threats of Libel Cannot Frighten Him - Works for Nothing - Doctors Make Fortunes

Suffering humanity called him and that all he could not resist.

"God is good," he says with rigorous sincerity. "My life is to help others." And that is why Mahomet, though making no actual charge for all the help he gives to people, still gives away tens of thousands of pounds to the poor.

When Mahomet Allum arrived in Adelaide on his visit from Australia he did not intend to be other than a visitor. But he soon did it become known that he had cured some people here to call to see him, his time had proved him, A few became a score, a score became a hundred and before he had been long in the Adelaide city, many hundreds had had good reason to be grateful for his coming, and thousands were begging him to stay with them and not to return to Australia.

One man who came to see him was a Member of Science, a Doctor of Philosophy, entitled for 12 years with a certificate and seven hundred. All efforts to find fault with his claims had proved unavailing. Mahomet Allum arrived one day, the doctor was there to see him.



Life in letters



1301 1 / 12 9 AU

MEMORANDUM for :-
The Secretary,
Prime Minister's Department,
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

Your reference 867/1/5
 17th July, 1951.

Text of the letter from Mahomet Allum and inquiry by my Deputy Director in Adelaide that the Prime Minister's correspondent is :-

- In conformity with the usual practice of my colleagues, he claims ability to cure with knowledge of the pathological condition he has to treat.
- There is no reason to suppose that the mentioned herbalist can offer His Majesty's



181 Bent Street,
 Adelaide,
 South Australia.
 24.7.1949

Mr. Chifley,
 Prime Minister of Australia,
 Canberra.
 Dear Sir,

I beg to thank you for my congratulations and good wishes on your strong stand in regard to the Free Medicine Scheme. I was glad to hear of your intention to

Sir,

In tendering my application for a passport I wish to state that I am weary of the treatment received by the public of South Australia and am in need of a rest. My absence from Australia for a time may prove my value to people here.

I have been in Adelaide for 3 years, during which period I have given towards charity about £7000. Over 14,000 sick and suffering people in this State have been cured by me. I estimate that the savings to those persons in Doctor's expenses by my treatment, amount to over £200,000. I have on record the names of over 1300 Doctors who have un-

PHONE: CENTRAL (4888)
 (TWO LINES)
 (4899)

PLEASE ADDRESS REPLY TO
 CHIEF QUARANTINE OFFICER,
 C.M.L. BUILDING,
 31-47 KING WILLIAM STREET,
 ADELAIDE.
 QUOTE THE FOLLOWING NUMBER
 257/1/4.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.
 C.M.L. BUILDING,
 KING WILLIAM STREET,
 ADELAIDE.

MEMORANDUM :

The Director-General of Health,
 CANBERRA, A.C.T.

Letter to Prime Minister from Mahomet Allum
 Reference 1301/1/12 of 25th July 1951

- Mr. Allum has made several visits to Adelaide in possession of this Department in connection with applications for Certificates of Exemption from the Act under the Immigration Act show that prior to his arrival in Adelaide as a Herbalist he followed the following occupations:-
 Butcher
 Shepherd
 Electrician
 Bookkeeper
 Cab Driver
 Organ Grocer
 Gardener
 Miner
 Survey Camp work
- In a report obtained from the Townsville on 25th July, 1925, it was stated that he was a gambler and that he would be worth watching for opium, and that he was a notorious liar, he being put on his trial for perjury and the jury disagreeing he was committed to prison before the second hearing case on the Crown provided not to go on with it and he was liberated.
- Whatever may have been his record in the past there is no doubt that at the present time he is a high esteem in Adelaide by a large number of persons and is well known to the officials in the State Government Service.
- I am informed by officers here that Mahomet Allum in 1929 regarding the issue of a Certificate of Exemption from the Dictation Test and while doing so stated to the number of persons he had successfully treated.

been in Australia I have done all in my power to help and serve Australia as a Mighty God and I give all the praise to Him, who has brought me through me. I have thousands of testimonials from all parts of Australia, and indeed from all over the world. These testimonials prove my medicines cure such as skin diseases, Stone in the Kidney, Rheumatism, Flatulency, Dropsy, Drops in the Legs and any part of the body. I have treated for me to undertake and I have testified to my cure of T.B. The only enemy which is beyond me is death. I have been with great sadness of His Majesty's death and it grieves me very much. As I have been in trouble in their legs similar to the King - free, through you, to be effective in curing so many others, I am

In seeing Sergeant Cadell's report on Mahomet Allum he refers to this man being a Gambling House Tout, also a notorious liar, he being put on his trial in New South Wales for perjury, but the Jury disagreed and he was re-committed, before the second hearing came on the Crown Prosecutor's

as comparative, the most grateful of all are the hundred or so poor unfortunates whom circumstances over which they had no control compelled their dwelling in ragged humpies on the banks of the Torrens.

To these—men of all nationalities—Mahomed Allum proved a fairy godfather. Loads of firewood were distributed by him among them in the winter, accompanied by donations of food.

To the man or woman whose regu-



years, he was treated for 2 years by Dr. Britten Jones and Dr. E. Brown, who said the complaint was incurable and that it would grow worse as he grew older. This upset me so much that I took him straight to the WONDER MAN. As soon as you

His wife Mrs. Allum, nee Annie Baker, was a prostitute. Her parents are well known residents of Pennington, Townsville District. She was prostituting in London and later came to Cloncurry where she was prostituting for a few months when Mahomet Allum married her.

About two months ago she informed me that she was prostituting in Longreach she was treated by a doctor for venereal disease. No convictions were recorded against her during her term in Cloncurry, but she appears to be a member of the undesirable class of a woman.

Yours faithfully,
 Mahomet Allum
 (Mahomet Allum)

Script

NO. VISUAL

1. CU NOURIA SALEHI
TEXT Dr Nouria Salehi OAM
Senior Australian of the Year 2011
2. CU CORY BERNADI
TEXT Cory Bernadi
Liberal Senator South Australia
3. CU MADELEINE BRUNATO
TEXT Madeleine Brunato, author
*Hanji Mahomet Allum: Camel-
Driver, Herbalist and Healer*
4. FADE OUT
5. FADE IN PHOTO: Young Mahomet
ZOOM IN to eyes;
CUT TO MONTAGE PHOTOS: (PAN R-
L): Afghanistan people, poppies, mosque

AUDIO

NOURIA SALEHI:

Who was Mahomet Allum? He was a camel-driver, herbalist and philanthropist. He was one of the most important Muslims in Australian history who showed us what it means to be Australian.

CORY BERNADI:

He was a ladies' man pedalling herbs and hope.

MADELEINE BRUNATO:

Mahomet was a loveable maverick -- loathed by some but loved by thousands. He was like no one else in Australia before or since, a devout Muslim who won hearts in the city of churches.

MUSIC UP Afghan folk music

MUSIC PLAYS with FX bartering, footsteps, crowing, bleating UNDER NARRATOR (HOMAIRA MERSHEDI)

V.O: Mahomet Allum was born in 1858 in Kandahar, Afghanistan to a 400 year lineage of herbalists,

a calling that he would serve him well into his life.

6. **MUSIC PLAYS with FX gun shots, galloping, shouting UNDER NARRATOR**
 DISSOLVE TO PAINTING: Aghan war
 PAN L-R across painting
 CUT TO CU PHOTO: Horseback war
 ZOOM IN.
 CUT TO PHOTO: Afghan fighters
 PAN L-R
 DISSOLVE TO PHOTO: Afghan soldier
 ZOOM OUT
V.O: Centuries of foreign invasion by neighbouring
 Countries
 had devastated his country
 and left in its wake
 a hardy but fiercely loyal people.
7. **MUSIC PLAYS with FX water, galloping UNDER NARRATOR**
 DISSOLVE TO PHOTO: Afghan man
 walking (ZOOM IN)
 CUT TO PHOTO: Afghan hills
 DISSOLVE TO PHOTO MONTAGE:
 Central Asia (PAN L-R)
 DISSOLVE TO PHOTO MONTAGE:
 India (PAN R-L
V.O: Sometime in the late 1880s, Mahomet left his
 war-ravaged homeland
 in search of a better life and
 journeyed through Central Asia
 and the Indian subcontinent.
8. **MUSIC PLAYS with FX horse galloping, whinnying UNDER NARATOR**
 PHOTO SUPERIMPOSED OVER MAP:
 British horsemen, India 1800s
V.O: selling Arab steeds to the British army.
9. **MUSIC PLAYS UNDER VOICE OF VALMAI A HANKEL:**
 DISSOLVE TO PHOTO: Mahomet
 ZOOM OUT from his face to H&S
*Mahomet was a remarkable young man who possessed tremendous personal
 appeal.*

10. CU: VALMAI HANKEL
TEXT: VALMAI A Hankel, Biographer
- MUSIC PLAYS UNDER NARRATOR**
VALMAI HANKEL: *He was handsome, bold, charming, visionary and enormously self-confident. He was prepared to take risks, and inspired others to trust him.*
11. PERIOD MAP: Dotted line traces travel
India – Perth, Australia.
MAP DISSOLVES TO PHOTO SAILING
SHIP ON COASTLINE
- MUSIC PLAYS with FX Didgeridoo UNDER NARRATOR**
V.O: By 1888, Mahomet’s travels had taken him to the remote British colony of Australia lying east of the Indian Ocean.
- CUT TO PHOTO: Cameleers talking
together
- MUSIC PLAYS UNDER NARRATOR**
V.O: Here he joined hundreds of other Afghan men, the ‘Ghans’,
- DISSOLVE TO PHOTO: Camel train on
horizon
- MUSIC PLAYS with FX talking, whistling, stamping UNDER NARRATOR**
V.O: who drove camel trains loaded with supplies to settlements scattered across the vast continent.
- ZOOM IN, PAN R-L: Sand blowing across
camels’ legs
12. DISSOLVE TO PHOTO:
WS, Meeting of Australian politicians 1880
(ZOOM IN)
- MUSIC PLAYS UNDER NARRATOR**
V.O: Whether he knew it or not, Mahomet had arrived in a country which recently passed a series of non-white immigration laws.
13. DISSOLVE TO PHOTO: Group ghans
frowning into camera (ZOOM OUT)
ZOOM OUT, PAN R-L: Outback town
revealed left of Ghan group
- MUSIC PLAYS UNDER NARRATOR**
V.O: Unable to obtain citizenship or bring their families into the country, the Ghans lived on the fringe of society.

14. CUT TO PHOTO, MS : Church goers,
Catholic church 1800s (PAN R-L)
DISSOLVE TO PHOTO:
PAN L-R: Cameleers with desert
Aboriginals

15. CU NOURIA SALEHI

DISSOLVE TO PHOTO: Maree mosque
DISSOLVE TO PHOTO, MS: Muslim
Aboriginals in gown and turbans, NT

16. PHOTO DISSOLVES TO PHOTO:
Mahomet

17.
CUT TO PHOTO: INT. Hay Court House,

DISSOLVE TO PHOTO:EXT, Wesley
Church, Greenough (ZOOM IN)
DISSOLVE TO PHOTO: EXT, S (L-R)
Francis Xaviers Church, Geraldton WA

18. CU: NOURIA SALEHI

19.
CUT TO PHOTO: family bush camp,
Queensland (ZOOM OUT)

MUSIC PLAYS WITH FX digeridoo UNDER NARRATOR

V.O: The cultural and religious differences between Muslim migrants and Christian settlers fuelled a simmering distrust, and the Afghans instead found affinity with indigenous Aboriginals who shared their understanding of the ancient deserts.

MUSIC PLAYS WITH FX UNDER MADELEINE BRUNATO: *Eventually, the Ghans all but faded from Australian memory but their legacy still lives on today in the remains of old mosques in the outback,*

and in their Muslim Aboriginal descendants.

MUSIC DOWN

V.O: But Mahomet wasn't about to go anywhere quietly.

MUSIC UP Waltzing Matilda UNDER NARRATOR

V.O: Full of ebullience and self-conviction, he made friends easily, and visited courts of law and

Christian churches to understand the

workings and mindscape of Australia.

MUSIC PLAYS UNDER NOURIA SALEHI:

NOURIA SALEHI: *He tried to understand the world through other people's eyes without compromising his faith. He was a people's person.*

MUSIC PLAYS with FX moaning voices UNDER NARRATOR

V.O: During his early years in Australia, Mahomet witnessed great poverty and hardship, particularly among rural Australians.....

- DISSOLVE TO PHOTO: Little girl
ZOOM OUT to WS: her backyard poverty
- MUSIC PLAYS with FX cattle, moaning UNDER NARRATOR**
V.O: ... brought on by the 1890s depression and the
20. CUT TO PHOTO:
Horse carcas, drought, NSW (ZOOM IN)
DISSOLVE TO PHOTO:
Sydney bubonic plague cleanup(L_R))
CUT TO PHOTO:
Rat catchers, Sydney 1900 (ZOOM)
- catastrophic droughts and
outbreaks of bubonic plague at the turn of the century.
21. DISSOLVE TO PAINTING: Man offers
water to exhausted swaggie
TEXT: David Davies (1890) *Under the Burden and Heat*
- MUSIC PLAYS UNDER NARRATOR**
V.O: A devout Muslim, he gave money and food to the poor and needy people he met on his travels and news of his philanthropy spread.
22. CUT TO: PHOTO: Cameleer long train
DISSOLVE TO PHOTO: Camel train in
arid desert
- MUSIC PLAYS UNDER NARRATOR**
V.O: He also earned the title 'King' from other camel men for his ability to single-handedly drive trains of up to 100 camels through floods and heatwaves.
23. CU NEWSPAPER ARTICLE:
ZOOM IN: '...As theywidely known.'
TEXT: *A patient's gratitude to Mahomed Allum* by Con Noonan, *SA Turf Review*, 1938
FADE OUT
- MUSIC PLAYS UNDER VOICE OF CON NOONAN:** *As they grew to know this sturdy Afghan better they appreciated him more for his goodness of heart, his straightforward dealing with all men, and the practical charity which he was becoming so widely known'.*
- MUSIC DOWN**
24. FADE IN PHOTO: Trucks carrying loads
in Outback
- MUSIC UP Billy of Tea with FX car revving UNDER NARATOR**
V.O: By the early 1900s, motorised transport had replaced the outback camel trains and Mahomet's entrepreneurial spirit sought other opportunities.

25. DISSOLVE TO PHOTO:
CUT TO PHOTO: Early butcher store

CUT TO PHOTO: WA goldfield (L-R)
CUT TO PHOTO: Broken Hill miners(R-L)
- MUSIC PLAYS with FX talking, laughing UNDER NARATOR**
V.O: Still criss-crossing the country, he turned his hand to butchering, surveying, herbalism and drapery, and laboured in the Western Australian goldfields and Broken Hill mines.
26. CU VALMAI HANKEL
TEXT: Valmai A Hankel
Mahomet Allum's biographer
- MUSIC PLAYS with FX pick axes, train UNDER VALMAI HANKEL:** *He was an enigma – a man of evident means who toiled alongside his workmates on week days, then promptly gave his earnings away to anyone who needed it on pay day.*
27. FADE OUT
- MUSIC PLAYS UNDER NARATOR**
V.O: But not everyone was convinced of his virtue. In 1923,
28. FADE UP: Fire over shops, regional country town. PAN R-L
CUT TO PHOTO: Three firemen hosing flames
DISSOLVE TO HOTO: Old fire truck
CUT TO PHOTO: Newspaper clipping
- MUSIC PLAYS with FX fire crackling, muffled shouts UNDER NARATOR**
V.O: a suspicious fire razed his Cloncurry drapery in Queensland, and the accompanying police report provided a glimpse of the polarised views that would later surround him.
29. CUT TO PHOTO: Full page police report
PAN L-R over page to Landers's name
- MUSIC PLAYS with FX UNDER NARATOR**
V.O: A Constable Landells investigating the case described him as ...

30. CU: NEWSPAPER ARTICLE:
ZOOM IN: *'...a notorious .. his character.'*

TEXT: Report on Mahomet Allum by
Constable WJ Landells, Duchess Station
1923
- MUSIC PLAYS with FX UNDER VOICE OF CONSTABLE LANDELLS:**
'...a notorious liar who rarely works. The man is a Gambling House Tout worth watching for opium. I always looked upon him as a slimy suspicious individual but I know nothing definite against his character.'
NARRATOR: Charges were not laid.
31. CU: CORY BERNADI
- MUSIC PLAYS UNDER CORY BERNADI:** *First he marries the town prostitute, Annie Baker, next he sets fire to own his shop. Before that, he wriggles out of a perjury case in NSW because the jury supported him. The crown prosecutor's hands were tied.*
32. CU: VALMAI A HANKEL
- MUSIC PLAYS UNDER VALMAI HANKEL:**
VALMAI A HANKEL: *By 1930, Mahomet had been on the road for more than 40 years and travelled the length and breadth of the country. He was 72 and it was time to hang up his boots.*
MUSIC DOWN
33. CUT TO PHOTO: EXT building, 181 Sturt Street, Adelaide ZOOM IN
- MUSIC UP: You Rascal, You UNDER NARRATOR**
V.O: In a well-timed move, Mahomet set up a herbalism practice in his new home at 181 Sturt Street in Adelaide, on the back of the increasing popularity of alternative medicine.

34. DISSOLVE TO PHOTO: Page of book
CU: 'His home ... Mr Allum.'

DISSOLVE TO PHOTO: INT WS,
Mahomet's consulting room

CUT TO PHOTO: CU piles books, flowers

CUT TO PHOTO: PAN R-L medicine
bottles, newspaper clippings,
prayer mat

CUT TO PHOTO: MS kitchen

ZOOM IN: tubs of butter, honey and herbs

35. CU MADELEINE BRUNATO

36. CUT TO IMAGE: Page of Mahomet's
writings. ZOOM IN

CU: 'The sicktestimonials.'

TEXT: *Why I am leaving Australia and
other interesting stories* by Mahomet
Allum

FADE UP PHOTO OVER PAGE:
Mahomet Allum H&S

MUSIC UP: You Rascal, You UNDER NARRATOR

V.O: His housekeeper of many years, Catherine Jonson, knew his habits well.

VOICE OF HOUSE KEEPER: *'His home was untidy but clean and in his consulting
room were chairs, tables,*

*piles of books and letters, and vases of flowers. The shelves were filled with
medicines and knick-knacks, and
yellowed newspaper cuttings about him hung on the walls.*

*There was a prayer mat on the floor near fireplace in the lounge room, and in his
spotless kitchen about 30 pounds of butter and 14 pounds of honey were heated
and blended with herbs, fresh every day by Mr Allum.'*

MADELEINE BRUNATO: *Mahomet's arrival in Adelaide was received with delight
by the poor and dismay by mainstream medics. The lower rungs were happy
because he treated them without charge, but the medical establishment was ruffled
when he began criticising its high fees and unnecessary procedures.*

VOICE OF MAHOMET:

*'The sick and suffering people of Australia have all had their bodies butchered by
surgeons, their constitutions ruined by poisons prescribed by doctors and dispensed
by chemists. When ruined financially and physically, they have come to*

*Mahomet Allum, and by God's prepared herbs he has affected cures proved by
numerous testimonials.....'*

**NOTE: REMAINDER OF SCRIPT'S
AUDIO AND VISUALS ARE
INCOMPLETE AND INCLUDED FYI
ONLY TO INDICATE DIRECTION OF
THE SCRIPT.**

37. HERBALISM WARNING POSTER **V.O:** The medical profession responded in kind by openly attacking his 'bogus' claims and treatments.
38. EXTRACT MELBOURNE ARGUS QUOTING DOCTOR **VOICE OF DOCTOR:** *He is no more than a nostrum-monger, but pretends to medical skill he does not possess.'*
39. PEN AND INK DRAWING 181 STURT STREET AND PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC **VO:** Despite or because of his growing notoriety, people from all walks of life including politicians and policemen, men and women, and the destitute and lonely continued to flock to his clinic.
40. CU MADELEINE BRUNATO **MADELEINE:** *He was forced to employ people to help him dispense treatments. The more money he made, the more he gave away. The full extent of his generosity will never be known as he didn't keep proper records.*
41. EXTRACT WHY I AM LEAVING AUSTRALIA **VOICE OF MAHOMET:** *'They turn up in the hundreds. Their once healthy bodies all twisted and all shapes; some take fits, others go so far as sham fainting and crying, some pushing their way through to where I am consulting. Really, sometimes I wonder if I am at a picture show, there is such a mad shamble. And yet I am not a medical practitioner, chemist, pharmacist, or homoeopathist. I...am only a poor camel driver who is besieged by the people to cure them of their afflictions.'*
42. PEN AND INK WOMAN WRITING 1930S **VO:** His satisfied customers frequently wrote letters and published glowing testimonials about his excellent character and miraculous cures in newspapers of the day.

43. EXTRACT LETTER **VOICE WRITER 1:** *'What impressed me most was the free treatment I received, and it made no difference that I could not pay. It would have been just the same had I been worth thousands.'*
44. EXTRACT LETTER **VOICE WRITER 2:** *'I am a triple-certified nurse and from my knowledge and personal experience of your wonderful treatment, I consider you the real Medical Man in Australia. I would not go to Doctors (a title forbidden to you) because I dread the use of knife and drugs. (Palmerston North, New Zealand)'*
45. EXTRACT LETTER **VOICE WRITER 3:** *'My little boy was suffering from convulsions for 2 1/2 years, he was treated by doctors who said the complaint was incurable. This upset me so much that I took him straight to the WONDER MAN and after two months of treatment he was cured. Mrs Irene Wagner, Largs Bay 1934'*
46. ARCHIVE PHOTO HERBIST AT WORK **VO:** One of his very popular cures was 'Blackjack', a mixture of butter, honey and senna pods for stomach cleansing.
47. EXTRACT LETTER **VOICE WRITER 4:** *'Dear Mr Allum, after eight years of treatment for Sugar Diabetes by several Melbourne doctors and getting no relief, hearing of your marvellous cures, I decided to place myself in your hands for treatment. After taking your first powder the action from the bowels was most remarkable and the relief tremendous. If I continue to improve like this after a few days treatment what more could I say than 'God bless Mahomet Allum'. Gratefully yours, Ethel M Stevens'*
48. PHOTO MAHOMET
PHOTO NEWSPAPER ARTICLE **VO: Mahomet was no less glowing in his self-assessments.**
VOICE OF JOURNALIST:
(Reading newspaper headlines)
'Santa Claus in Australia – wears a turban and jewels. Has no reindeer but has given priceless gifts of health and happiness to countless thousands.'

49. PHOTO UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE
PHOTO MEDICAL STUDENTS
VO: Mahomet frequently provided donations and sponsorships to Adelaide charities and institutions, including the police academy. His attempts to sponsor medical students at the University of Adelaide were politely but flatly rejected.
50. PHOTO MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS,
ADELAIDE 1920s
VO: In 1930, the growing skirmish between herbalist and doctors came to a head when he was charged under the 1919 Medical Practitioners' Act of posing as a medical practitioner.
51. PEN DRAWING: MAHOMET IN
CROWDED COURT
VO: Arriving before a crowded gallery in gold lapel badges and chains, and diamond and opal rings, Mahomet was asked how he pleaded:
VOICE OF MAHOMET: *'A hundred, a thousand times not guilty. I have never presented myself a doctor, but I can produce 30,000 testimonials from satisfied patients and will pay 500 pounds to charity if any can be proved false.'*
52. NEWSPAPER ARTICLE
VO: The crown prosecutor described him as a quack.
VOICE OF CROWN PROSECUTOR: *'He is a particularly vile character whose vindictive methods against the medical profession are not congruous with his pious appearance.'*
53. CU: CORY BERNADI
CORY BERNADI: *He was fined 45 pounds, and kept going! He was out of control!*
54. NEWSPAPER ARTICLE
Headline and subhead
VOICE OF JOURNALIST 1:
*Mahomet Allum – Fights for Humanity.
Doctors Cannot Bluff Him ... Threats of Libel Cannot Frighten Him ... Works for Nothing ... Doctors Make Fortunes*
55. NEWSPAPER ARTICLE
Headline and subhead
VOICE OF JOURNALIST 2:
*Doctor Praises Mahomet Allum.
Envies Wonder Worker His Marvellous Skill*
56. CU: CORY BERNADI
CORY BERNADI: *Perhaps he funded these articles, or perhaps he was in cahoots with the editors – either way even a salesman would cringe at that type of banal*

self-exposure today.

57. CU:NOURIA SALEHI

NOURIA SALEHI: *Mahomet felt a need to defend himself against Adelaide's medical establishment which was a small but elite power group in the city. He had ruffled feathers and been marginalised, not just because of his herbalism but also his ethnicity and religion.*

58. V CU: ALMAI A HANKEL

VALMAI A HANKEL: *This is the City of Churches whose power brokers were under attack from a lone Muslim cameleer. They were losing patients. The people loved him. Their social equilibrium was all out of whack. How could this be? It was preposterous and he had to go!*

59. CU: MADELEINE BRUNATO

MADELEINE BRUNATO: *His rankled hecklers wanted to test his faith and undermine his credibility. On a couple of occasions, pregnant women were sent to him by police to try to catch him performing abortions.*

60. PHOTO MAHOMET

VOICE OF MAHOMET:

'Just what do they think I am? Do they think I am a murder man? How do they think I could face the Almighty on Judgement Day if I did such a thing?'

61. NEWSPAPER PHOTO AND ARTICLE

VO: *In 1934, frustrated by the assaults on his character and by his donations being taxed by the Australian Government, he returned to India threatening never to return.*

62. COVER OF BOOK, CLOSE UP
PETITION

VO: *Before leaving, he published the book: 'Why I am leaving Australia and other interesting stories'. It contained letters and a Monster Petition citing 10,000 signatories begging him to remain in Australia.*

63. CLOSE UP PETITION

VOICE OF MAHOMET:

'Harassed by your short-sighted, pumpkin-headed politicians for the past five years, I have considered leaving Australia. I have given to almost every charitable

institution in Adelaide. I was doing it quietly for God's name as charity, and I was exempted by Taxation. Now against my religion I had to pay taxes. If the Australian government can't see that I am helping their race, what's the use of my staying in Australia?'

64. CU: NOURIA SALEHI READS EXTRACT

NOURIA SALEHI: *The prospect of losing Mahomet drove religious tolerance to a whole new level:*

(READS) '.....Please brother, can't you overlook this strange, ungrateful race of ours and remain among our midst a little longer? There was the Good Prophet who was put on the Cross for his good deeds, so what can you expect? ... God bless you. Your most humble friend, A. Ryan'

65. CU: CORY BERNADI READING THE POEM

CORI BERNADI: *(READS)*

*'.....The widows, the homeless, the orphans,
The sick, the weak-minded too,
Could the puppy dog talk, I'm sure they would say
'Mr Allum, we all want you to stay.
A Grateful Patient'*

66. CU: VALMAI A HENKEL READS EXTRACT

*(READS) '.....My dear friend and brother,
It was once said of Jesus that He was a 'DOER OF GOOD' - wherever He went the sick and infirm were cured and healed. I do not think that any man has ever performed such wonders since the days of Jesus as you have undoubtedly done in our own State of South Australia.'*

67. CU: MADELEINE BRUNATO

MADELEINE BRUNATO: *When someone who has become as charismatic and adored as Mahomet said, 'I'm leaving Australia because of unfair treatment', it resonated throughout the City. People were drawn across the ideological divide to support him in response to his enormous generosity and sheer force of personality.*

68. CU: VALMAI A HENKEL

VALMAI A HENKEL: *He became a classic anti-hero. He's making money – possibly from the rich, and he's giving it back to the poor. He's taken on Adelaide's medical elite and the working class loves him.*

69. CU: NOURIA SALEHI

NOURIA SALEHI: *There is a lovely passage in a letter to Mahomet about the 'one truth, many paths', which shows how he's connected with people of other faiths.*

NOURIA SALEHI READS EXTRACT

NOURIA SALEHI: (READS) *'.....Although we both worship the 'Nameless One' of a Thousand names' in a different way, you in the sacred stillness of the Mosque and I in the Church, with its music and song, yet we are brothers in the truest sense.*

First, as God's creatures. He is our Father and Creator. Secondly, as lovers of humanity without concerns as to their colour, creed or country. Thirdly, we are both dedicated to the sacred work of helping our brother men in the serving whom, we serve God best. Reverend TP Willason, Port Adelaide Central Methodist Mission

70. PHOTO MAHOMET

VO: *But despite his achievements and public support, Mahomet remained an Alien. It was a sore point as he felt he had earned his place as a legitimate Australian, identified as an Afghan Muslim Australian, and wanted that validation and acceptance. But all his attempts over the years to secure citizenship had failed, and now he decided to take matters to the top.*

71. LETTER FROM MAHOMET ALLUM TO
RG MENZIES, PRIME MINISTER

VOICE OF MAHOMET

'Dear Prime Minister

Although I am technically regarded as an Alien, I still do all I can to serve your country, and will do so until I die, as I am a Mighty Soldier of Allah, and only want to do His will.'

72. PEN AND INK, MAHOMET DICTATING
LETTER TO HOUSEKEEPER

VO: *In his letter to Prime Minister Robert Menzies, he also offered to treat King George VI and gave testimonials of people he had successfully treated. The Director General of Health was unswayed.*

73. MEMORANDUM FROM AJ METCALFE,
DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF HEALTH, TO
THE SECRETARY, PRIME MINISTER'S
DEPARTMENT

VOICE OF AJ METCALFE:

'Although he is quite a reputable citizen and somewhat of a leader of the Moslem community, he is also a straight out herbalist without any qualifications' whose claims can hardly be taken seriously. There is no reason to suppose that the well-intentioned herbalist can offer His Majesty any therapeutic agent or discipline not already available to him'

74. CU: MADELEINE BRUNATO

MADELEINE BRUNATO : *Ironically, by the time the White Australia Policy was lifted in the 1950s, he was no longer interested. Perhaps it was too little, too late.*

75. PHOTO MAHOMET
PHOTOS FOODS

Mahomet remained in excellent health throughout his life, and attributed many western ailments to a habit of eating too much. He ate fruit and curries frugally, and scorned the use of eyeglasses which he called window panes.

76. PHOTO ADELAIDE MOSQUE
PEN AND INK, MAHOMET PYJAMAS,
SINGLET AND TEA COZY

MAHOMET FEEDING BIRDS

VOICE OF HOUSE KEEPER: *'As he grew older, he continued practising herbalism and attending the Adelaide mosque. At home, he relaxed in pyjama pants and a singlet and wore a tea cosy on his head. He corresponded with people around the world, was a great melon grower and kept pigeons in his back yard. He often sang beautiful songs in different languages about the universe, the sun, the moon and stars.'*

77. NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

VO: At the age of 82, the herbalist married 20 year old Jean Emsley who converted to Islam. Three years later their daughter, Bebe Nora was born amid rumours about the identity of her true biological father.

78. CU: MADELEINE

His latest exploit trumped his detractors. In Afghanistan, it was not uncommon for men to marry young wives and it was evidence of his popularity that newspapers reported fondly about the family, despite an age gap that might otherwise have been considered outrageous.

CUT TO PHOTO: newspaper article

79. CU: NOURIA SALEHI
- NOURIA SALEHI:** *Old men marry young women, young women marry old men – it has been around in most cultures since the beginning of time. Look at Lang Hancock, Hugh Hefner, J. Howard Marshall and other celebrities. Perhaps the motivation is sex, money, security or maybe they love each other. Neither the bible nor the Koran forbid marriage between old and young, though what people think about it privately may be another matter.*
80. PHOTO MAHOMET, JEAN, BEBE
- VO:** At the age of 95, Mahomet took Jean and Bebe on a pilgrimage to Mecca before sailing to India and Afghanistan. In the same year, Jean contracted smallpox and died. His daughter was unforgiving of the father who had refused to vaccinate his family. It caused an irreparable rift between them, and she instead to be raised by foster parents.
81. CU: CORY BERNADI
- CORY BERNADI:** *There's your proof. Say no more.*
82. CU: VALMAI A HENKEL
- VALMAI A HENKEL:** *Here is a man who spent his life giving and healing strangers but his error of judgement leads to the death of his wife and estrangement of his only daughter. It was very sad.*
83. PHOTO HOUSE ANZAC HIGHWAY
- VO:** On 21 March 1964, nearly 10 years after his wife's death, Mahomet himself passed away at his home on Anzac Highway in Everard Park. He was 106 years of age. Though his daughter later contested his will, his worldly possessions valued at 11,218 pounds were bequeathed to children's charities. His funeral procession stretched 1.5km from the Muslim Mosque to the Centennial Park cemetery on in the city.
- EXTRACT WILL
84. CU MADELEINE
- PHOTO MOSQUE
- PEN AND INK, FUNERAL PROCESSION
- PHOTO TOMBSTONE
- MADELEINE BRUNATO:** *Somehow this act of public respect seems a fitting end to the life of a remarkable man who refused to be marginalised. He was colourful and controversial but his compassion and philanthropy were unchallenged.*

85. CU: NOURIA SALEHI

NOURIA SALEHI: *Mahomet did more to break down ethno-religious barriers in Australia than any other Muslim of his time. Without compromising his Islamic faith or shunning others, he connected with people on a platform of shared humanity.*

86. PHOTOS DESERT CAMELS:

WS, PAN L-R Camels shadows in the sand.

VOICE OF MAHOMET:

'...The caravan of life will one day surely depart hence. All in their time, will leave you, whether it be your relations or belongings. If there is any bliss remaining with you, it is the good which ye have done in your life.

ATTRIBUTION

The images, documents and information for this project have been sourced from the internet, newspaper archives and books. Key sources include Madeleine Brunato's *Hanji Mahomet Allum: Camel-Driver, Herbalist and Healer*, the National Archive's *Uncommon Lives* website by Valmai A. Hankel, State Library of South Australia's website (SA People), and Australian newspaper archives.

Photographs are indicative only, and are not necessarily intended to be the people or locations in this proposal.

Where possible, comments attributed to Valmai A Hankel and Madeleine Brunato in the script have been taken directly or loosely from their writings. The real name of Mahomet Allum's housekeeper is unknown. All comments ascribed to people providing commentary and narration are intended for educational purposes. They are to be read only by academic staff of the Flinders University of South Australia and no malice is intended.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The information and ideas in this proposal are confidential and are not be used discussed or disseminated to other parties without the author's consent.

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