



CREATING TIMELINES WITH TIMELINE JS

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Timeline JS

- Developed at Northwestern University by their KnightLab team, which has developed a range of successful open-source tools
- TimelineJS was developed for use by journalists and media outlets, making it very user-friendly
- TimelineJS was also created to be narrative-driven, and focused on engaging public audiences with its visualisations

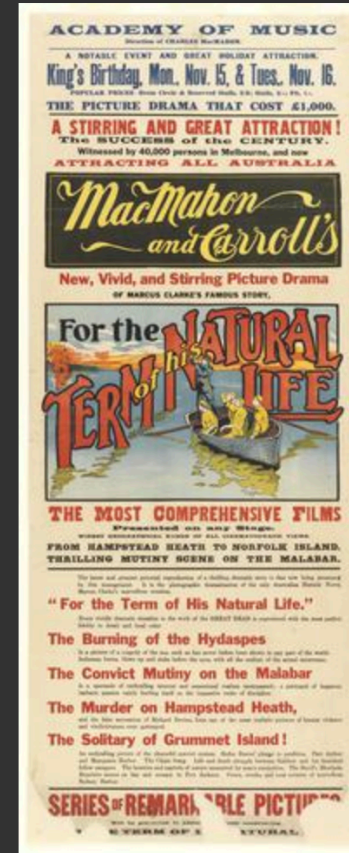
Here's some I prepared earlier



1906

The Story of the Kelly Gang

(director Charles Tait) The first - but certainly not the last - film depicting the life of nineteenth-century bushranger and outlaw Ned Kelly and his gang. Running for more than an hour, this was also the world's first full-length narrative feature film, and as such was entered on the UNESCO Memory of the World Register in 2007. Ned Kelly had been executed only twenty-six years before, and his mother and younger brother Jim were still alive at the time of its release. The bushranging drama became a mainstay genre of early Australian cinema.



1908

For the Term of His Natural Life

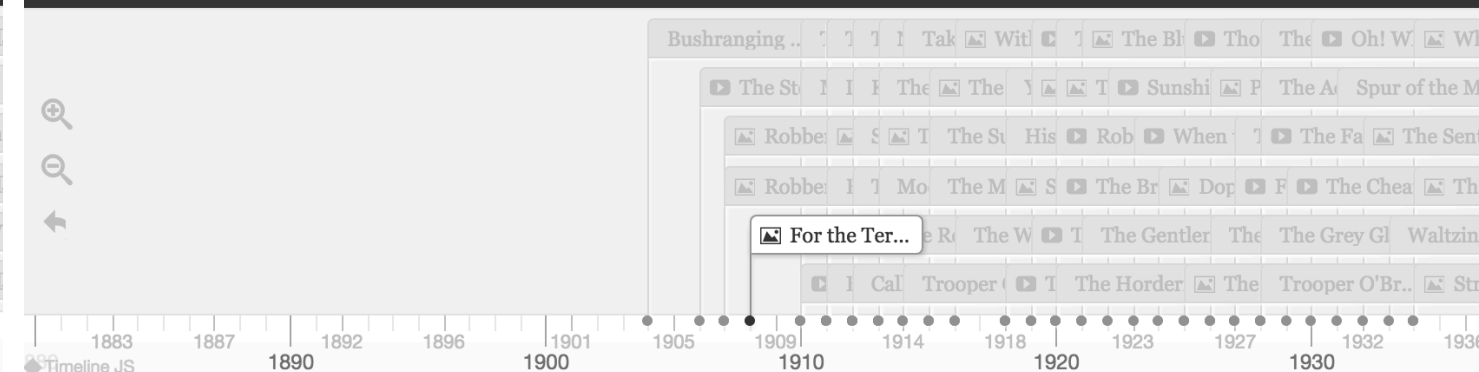
(director Charles MacMahon) Film version of the novel of the same name and is considered a lost film. Tells the story of a wrongly accused convict transported to Van Diemen's Land.

< Bushranging in North Queensland

> Robbery Under Arms

< Robbery Under Arms

> Thunderbolt



I used Timeline JS for my research project site to create a timeline of crime films produced in Australia - <https://criminalcharacters.com/prisons-and-punishment/map-of-australian-prisons/>

Getting started with TimelineJS

- Go to Timeline JS - <https://timeline.knightlab.com/> - an overview of tips, some further examples and instructions are all available here
- If you have a question that is not covered in this tutorial, the site provides a range of help documentation including an FAQ section, a 2-minute instructional video and chat forums.
- Click 'Make a Timeline' to get started

Timeline



Easy-to-make, beautiful timelines.



Make a Timeline

Google Spreadsheet

- Clicking 'Make a Timeline' will take you to the four-stage process for TimelineJS
- Start with step 1 by clicking 'Get the Spreadsheet Template'
- Clicking this will prompt you to log into your Google Account, or create one if you don't already have one. From here you will be able to download a copy of Timeline's Google Spreadsheet template into your Google Drive.

Make a Timeline

TimelineJS works on any site or blog. Make your own in four easy steps.

Having trouble? Watch our [video](#), or see the [help section below](#).

1

Create your spreadsheet

Build a new Google Spreadsheet using our template. You'll need to copy the template to your own Google Drive account by clicking the "Make a Copy" button.

Drop dates, text and links to media into the appropriate columns. For more about working with our template, see our [help docs](#).

Get the Spreadsheet Template 



Note: Don't change the column headers, don't remove any columns, and don't leave any blank rows in your spreadsheet.

Google Spreadsheet

The Timeline spreadsheet has sample information in the rows below the top row to show you the types of information that can go into each column. Once you have looked over this example information you can delete or clear them to begin adding your own data. Each row in your timeline will represent a separate event.

						Google Spreadsheet Example	This is a test of using google spreadsheets as a source for the timeline tool. This is a 'title' slide, so it doesn't need a date. It automatically occurs first, and doesn't appear in the timeline below.			http://www.flickr.com/photos/zachwise/5567777777/ Zach Wise/verite.co	Chicago to Chicago by Zach Wise on Flickr
2011	11	1		2011	12	15		Another Flickr Example	It's Easy to Make Your Own Timeline Illustrate your Timeline with photos, videos, tweets and more.	http://www.flickr.com/photos/zachwise/5567777777/ Zach Wise/verite.co	Chicago to Chicago by Zach Wise on Flickr
2011	11	16	05:58:44	2011	11	16	07:30:00	Vimeo Example		https://vimeo.com/141914913 Knight Lab	A video about timelines!

Date columns

The first four columns are for putting in the date or start date of your event. Depending on how precisely your event is dated you can fill out just the year, or day, month and year, or even add the time of day to the date.

	A	B	C	D
1	Year	Month	Day	Time
2				
3	1904			
4	1906			
5	1907			
6	1907			
7	1908			
8	1910			
9	1910			
10	1910			
11	1911			

Date columns

The next four columns offer you the option of adding an end date for your event, if it is the type of even with a clear starting and end point, such as a war. If your event does not have such an end point, you can simply leave blank. The column after these four is the 'Display Date' column – again you do not have to use this, but you can if you want to change the default way the date is displayed on the timeline to another format, e.g. dd/mmm/yyyy, mmm/dd/yyyy etc.

E	F	G	H	I
End Year	End Month	End Day	End Time	Display Date

Annotation Columns

The next two columns will create the annotation that will appear about your event. The headline column creates a large, bold headline for the event, so it is best to keep it something short and simple. The text column then lets you create an annotation about the event. If you like the annotation can be quite lengthy – in this case the timeline will just auto-generate a scroll bar that will let the viewer scroll down the annotation to read it. However, you may want to self-limit your annotations in order to ensure viewers are kept engaged through a pacy narrative structure.

J	K
Headline	Text
Crime in Australian Films	This timeline showcases over a hundred years of representations of crime and criminality in Australian films.
Bushranging in North C	(director Joseph Perry) A short film
The Story of the Kelly C	(director Charles Tait) The first - bu
Robbery Under Arms	(director Charles MacMahon) The t
Robbery Under Arms	(director John Tait, Nevin Tait, Milla
For the Term of His Nat	(director Charles MacMahon) Film
Moonlite	(director John Gavin) In the early 1
The Life and Adventure	(director S. A. Fitzgerald) The film s
Thunderbolt	(director John Gavin) Frederick Wa
A Tale of the Australian	(director Gaston Mervale) The stor
All for Gold, or Jumpin	(director Franklyn Barrett) Englishn
Assigned to His Wife	(director John Gavin) An English sc
Ben Hall and His Gang	(director John Gavin) A lost film ab
Bushranger's Ransom, c	(director Mrs E. I. Cole) In 1863 Be
Captain Midnight, the E	(director Alfred Rolfe) Based upon

Media Columns

The next four columns relate to any media you wish to accompany your annotation. TimelineJS does not allow you to upload your own files into the timeline – they must be hosted somewhere online and the link the files copied into the Media column. Supported media formats include twitter, flickr, youtube, vimeo, vine, dailymotion, Wikipedia, soundcloud and more. Image URLs can be copied into this column provided the URL ends in a .jpg, .png, .tiff, or other image format (image URLs can be found by right-clicking on internet images). The next two columns can be used to credit and caption your media file. The final column lets you insert a thumbnail version of the media that will link to the original if you have a very large image that viewers will need to zoom into and expand outside of the timeline environment.

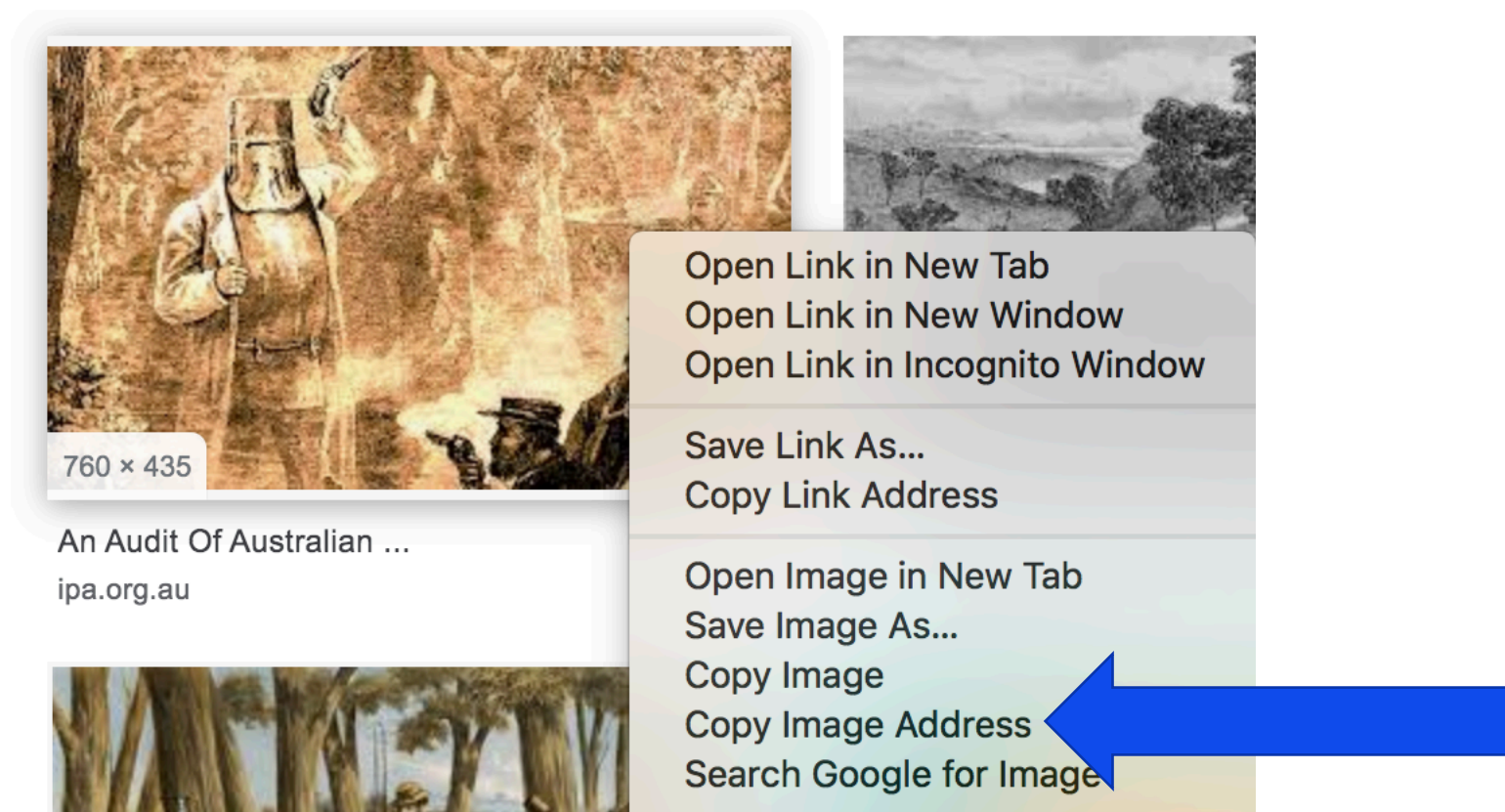
L	M	N	O
Media	Media Credit	Media Caption	Media Thumbnail
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1A6niZmzvoc			
http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/pictoria/a/1/0/im/a10046.jpg			
http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/pictoria/a/1/0/im/a10050.jpg			
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/4/43/For the Term of His Natural Life			

Inserting Media

Supported media formats include twitter, flickr, youtube, vimeo, vine, dailymotion, Wikipedia, soundcloud and more. For most of these formats you will simply be pasting the URL for the webpage into the media column.

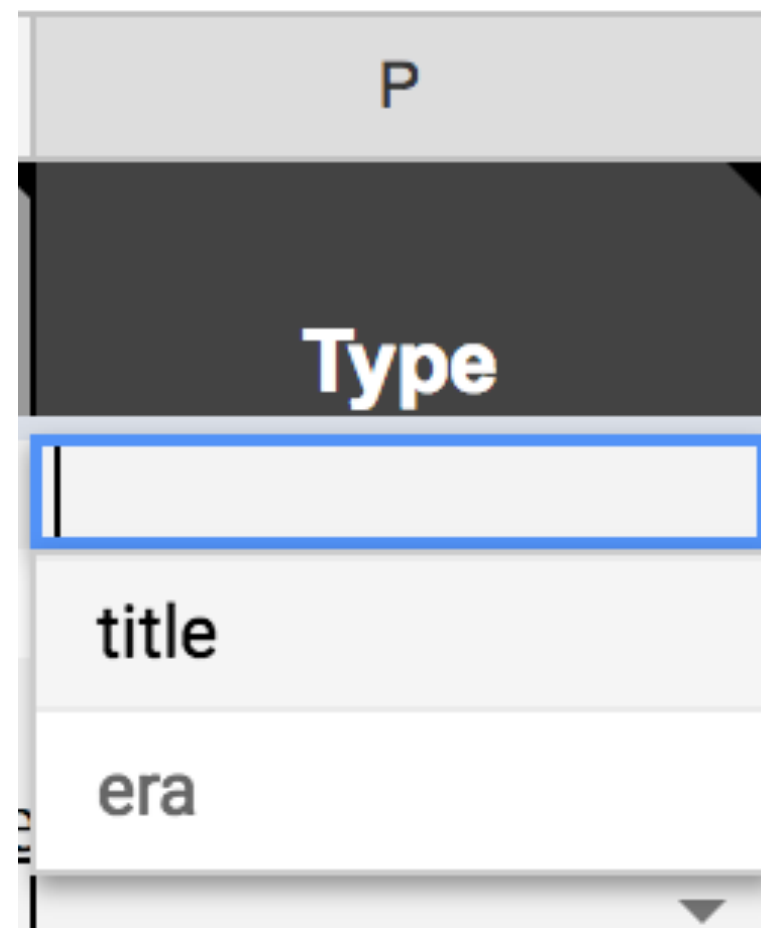
However, for **images** you will not be inserting a webpage URL, but a specific image URL. Image URLs for internet images can be found by right-clicking on an image, then selecting 'copy image address'. See screenshot below.

Image URLs should end in a .jpg, .png, .tiff, or other image format.



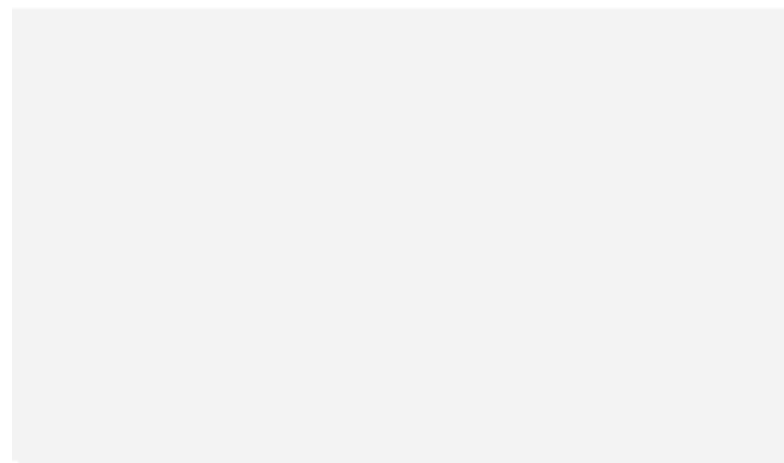
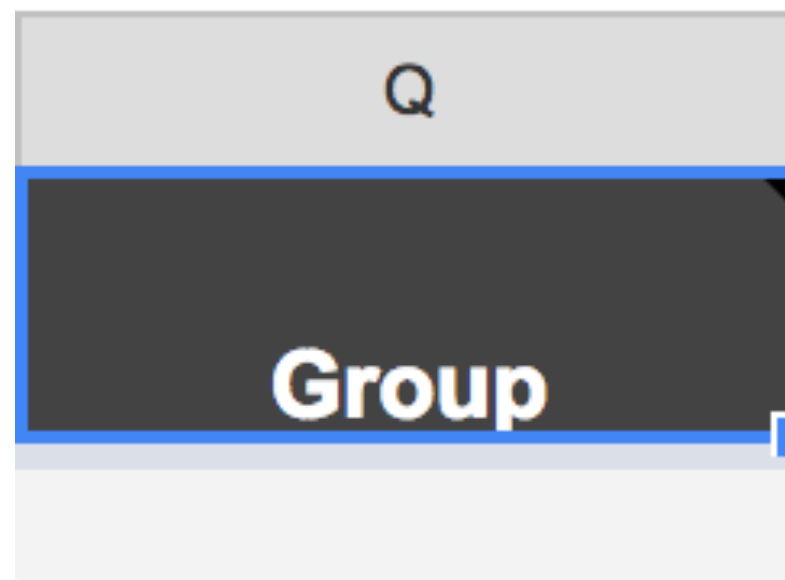
Type Column

For most rows or events you will probably leave the type column blank. The exception would be if you want to include a title slide at the start of your timeline – you would then click Title within the type column. This is so that Timeline JS knows that there does not have to be a date for that slide. The other option in the Type column is to create an ‘Era’. This will act as a sort of sub-title slide if you want to break up your timeline into different set periods, e.g. ‘First World War’ era slide by clicking ‘Era’ here then nominating the war’s start and end dates in the date column. This would let Timeline JS know that any events added to the timeline that fall between these dates are part of this ‘Era’, and it will automatically colour code events from the same era together. Note that the platform does not allow for overlapping eras.



Group Column

The Group column can be used to show that different events are related to each other by tagging them as part of the same Group. For instance, you may want to group all political events in your timeline by tagging those events 'Politics', but create another group for cultural developments by tagging those events 'Culture'.





Notes on spreadsheet

You should delete any blank rows that appear at the bottom of your spreadsheet – leaving them in can create a bug that means your timeline cannot be generated.

Once you have published your spreadsheet to the web and generated your timeline URL, you can still make further edits to the spreadsheet. These edits will automatically carry over to the 'live' version of the timeline.

I would strongly encourage you to generate a version of your timeline early on so that you can see how it works and preview what it will look like while you make edits to it.

Generate Your Timeline

Once your timeline is ready you need to go to 'File' then 'Publish to the Web' then 'Publish'.

Copy of Official TimelineJS3 Template

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools

Share... % .0 .00 123 ▾

New ▶

Open... ⌘O

Import...

Make a copy...

Download as ▶

Email as attachment...

Version history ▶

Rename...

Move to...

Move to trash

Publish to the web...

Email collaborators...

Document details...

Spreadsheet settings...

Print ⌘P

Publish to the web

This document is not published to the web.

Make your content visible to anyone by publishing it to the web. You can link to or embed your document. [Learn more](#)

Link Embed

Entire Document ▾

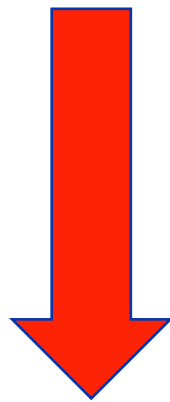
Web page ▾

Publish

▶ Published content & settings

Generate Your Timeline

Copy your spreadsheet URL directly from the URL bar at the top of your spreadsheet. Don't worry if you want to make changes later on – once the Google Spreadsheet is published it will just automatically any time you save changes to it, and any versions of the timeline that you have embedded to your website will automatically update too.



The screenshot shows the top portion of a Google Spreadsheet interface. At the top, a browser's address bar contains the URL: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1xAKZNyIKKi8zm0uTjLyUCxkl3G9MnJdE52kW_u-H7Jl/edit#gid=0. Below the address bar, the spreadsheet title "Crime Films" is displayed next to a star icon and a folder icon. A menu bar includes "File", "Edit", "View", "Insert", "Format", "Data", "Tools", "Add-ons", and "Help", followed by the text "All changes saved in Drive". Below the menu bar is a toolbar with various icons for undo, redo, print, and other functions. The toolbar also includes numerical and formatting options such as "100%", "\$", "%", ".0", ".00", "123", "Arial", and "10". The bottom of the screenshot shows the formula bar with the "fx" icon.

Generating Your Timeline

Now you have the URL from the top of your Google Spreadsheet, you are going to paste it into the Step 3 box on Timeline JS. Under Step 3 you will also see an 'Optional Settings' button that you can click into to play with some of the display features of your timeline, such as selecting different fonts

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**Generate your
timeline**

Copy/paste spreadsheet URL into the box below to generate your timeline. (Make sure you've published the spreadsheet.)

Google Spreadsheet URL

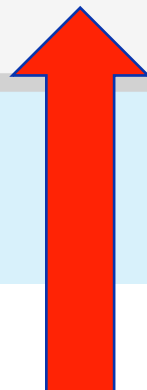
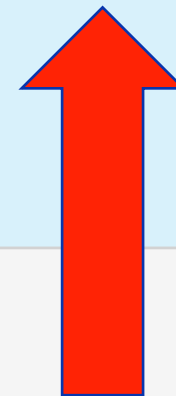
om/spreadsheets/d/1xAKZNYIKKi8zm0uTjLyUCxkl3G9MnJdE52kW_u-H7JI/edit#gid=0

Width 100%

Height 650

Optional settings (show)

Set language, fonts, starting slide and more.



Generating Your Timeline

Now scroll down to Step 4 of TimelineJS and click 'Preview'. Below you will see a Preview of your Timeline that you can click through and check that everything appears as you want it too. Once you are satisfied, you can either copy the embed code displayed above into your web page, or obtain a URL for people to visit where they will just be able to see the timeline.

4

Share your
timeline

Share Link

Use this to link directly to your timeline.

If you're embedding on Medium.com or other oembed-aware services, just paste this link on a line by itself where you want your timeline to appear.

```
https://cdn.knightlab.com/libs/timeline3/latest/embed/index.html?  
source=1xAKZNyIKKi8zm0uTjLyUCxkl3G9MnJdE52kW_u-
```

Embed

Copy this embed code and paste it on your site where you want your timeline to appear (just like a YouTube video).

```
<iframe src='https://cdn.knightlab.com/libs/timeline3/latest/embed/index.html?  
source=1xAKZNyIKKi8zm0uTjLyUCxkl3G9MnJdE52kW_u-  
H7JI&font=Default&lang=en&initial_zoom=2&height=650' width='100%' height='650'
```



Preview

Open Preview in a new window 

Preview Embed

Thank
you

