

ON THIS DAY

498 Symmachus is elected Pope by the people of Rome, after the death of Anastasius II left the office vacant. Symmachus's election causes a schism with another papal candidate elected on the same day.

1497 Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama becomes first person known to have sailed around the Cape of Good Hope.

1718 A British naval force off North Carolina kills the pirate Blackbeard, born Edward Teach in Bristol, who terrorised the US east coast.

1800 Convict George Howe, a Creole convicted of shoplifting, arrives in Sydney aboard the Royal Admiral. He would produce the country's first newspaper and its first books.

1952 Pastoralist and mining entrepreneur Lang Hancock discovers iron ore while flying over the Hamersley Range of the Pilbara region, Western Australia.

1956 Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, opens Australia's first Olympic Games, in Melbourne. Junior mile champion Ron Clarke, 19, carries the torch into the stadium (pictured).

1963 US president John F. Kennedy is assassinated in Dallas Texas.

1997 Rock star Michael Hutchence, 37, of INXS, is found dead in a Double Bay hotel room.

2008 Barbara Williams, mother of Melbourne gangland killer Carl Williams, is found dead in her bedroom after taking an overdose.

2017 A UN court convicts former Bosnian Serb army commander Ratko Mladic of genocide and crimes against humanity, sentencing him to life in prison.

1956

