



# Desert Sky News

"It's All About The Experience – Yours and Ours "



Volume 18 Issue 1

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**T**here has been wonderful news of significant rainfall over the past few weeks in areas of the Outback which have been in drought conditions. Whilst more rain would be very welcome, particularly south west Queensland, it is a very good start to the year.

The following information from the Lake Eyre Yacht Club website indicates:

- The Diamantina is in moderate flood, and the Georgina and Eyre Creek are in minor flood.
- Goyder Lagoon is filling and the Warburton Crossing is closed.
- Warburton Groove is flowing and the top of the Lake has a thin surface cover of water.
- Madigan Gulf also has a thin surface cover of water. Water in Belt Bay is 1.8m and rising.
- Thunderstorms with 50mm to 100mm are roaming the catchment area daily.
- Pelicans are feeding in the Neales and Warburton Rivers.

The Bureau of Meteorology predicts a 55 -65% chance of above average rainfall in the next few months with a decline in El Nino so time will tell if this falls in the Lake Eyre catchment and if those falls are substantial or not.

Wrightsair at William Creek offer scenic flights over the Lake, and their website Gallery and Facebook Timeline have some great pics!

## Important Notice

Please see page 2 for an important notice regarding future mailing of this Newsletter.

## Smiles in Birdsville!

**T**he Australian Traveller recently announced it's "Best Getaways" and in the People's Choice category, the winner of The Best Town off the beaten track was BIRDSVILLE!

"Most Australians won't make it to this minuscule oasis (population 115) in their lifetimes -and that's a travesty!"

The sense of achievement in reaching Birdsville's classic outback pub (pictured) is overwhelming. The 1500-kilometre drive from either Adelaide or Brisbane will give you a religious appreciation for just how pancake-esque this continent really is."



The runners-up are:

2. Broome, WA
3. Broken Hill, NSW

4. Mudgee, NSW
5. Coober Pedy, SA

## News from Birdsville!

**S**tephan Pursell has been appointed Officer in Charge at Birdsville.



He was previously at Maroochydore on the Sunshine Coast.

**T**he Diamantina and Barcoo Shires joint Optic Fibre project was successful in being granted \$5.95M. This very important project will now go ahead. When finished, the five towns of the two Shires will have Internet speeds equivalent to any metropolitan area in Australia. It will also bring high quality mobile phone access to the towns and their surrounds.

...../contd

## News from Birdsville! (contd)

The opportunities this will bring to the area will be almost limitless, from improving the capabilities of local businesses, to handling the tourist industry, to providing opportunity for home based businesses to flourish and to open the way for new business to start up.



It will bring the present seven minute download time down to around seven seconds!

## News from Hawker SA

**C**onstruction work has now commenced on another Panorama next to the existing Wilpena Panorama at the Jeff Morgan Gallery in Hawker.

The new building will house a scene found in the far northern Flinders Ranges at the amazing Wilderness Sanctuary of Arkaroola.

Unlike most panoramas that are usually painted and viewed as from a high vantage point this one will be painted and viewed as if the viewer is standing in an almost dry creek bed surrounded by the beautiful Arkaroola hills and Gum trees, it will also include the Arkaroola Flora and fauna. The three existing sections and the new 360 degrees panorama will be all connected so that the viewer can walk from one to the next to increase the pleasure of the experience.



Important Notice about this Newsletter!

Desert Sky News was first published in 1998— just over 2 years following the establishment of our business. At it’s peak time (and before the internet!), copies were being mailed to over 500 subscribers each quarter.

With advances in technology came the ability to use a digital format—with colour, and links to further references about a particular item which can be sent quickly and conveniently!

Now, I fully understand that there are subscribers who do not have access to the internet or prefer to receive a “hard copy”, and we are more than happy to continue sending a printed newsletter.

The reason for mentioning all this ? - it is a convenient time to update our records and check that we are not sending mail to someone who does not wish to receive the newsletter.

If you would like to keep receiving the **printed** newsletter, I have arranged a Reply Paid Post facility and ask that you indicate your preference by completing the coupon below :

**If no response is received, your details will be deleted from our mailing list !**

I would like to **continue** receiving Desert Sky Tours newsletters:

Name: .....

Address: .....

**OR:** - Please transfer me to your emailed newsletter:

Name: .....

Email address: .....

Please place the coupon in an envelope addressed to:

Desert Sky Tours  
Reply Paid 84878  
GLENELG SA 5045

**No stamp is required**

Mound Springs around the Oodnadatta Track

**A**long the edges of the Oodnadatta Track the Great Artesian Basin squeezes to the surface creating oases of springs.

There are hundreds of springs along the Track and a trip last December visited eight of them between Marree and Oodnadatta.

A couple of these Springs will be familiar to many travellers because they are close to the Track and well signposted, for instance Hergott Springs at Marree, Blanche Cup and The Bubbler in Wabma Kadarbu Mound Springs Conservation Park.

We chose to visit eight of the Springs between Marree and William Creek, staying overnight at William Creek then heading back down the Track and along the Borefield Road to Woomera.

At Jersey Springs.  
(Pic Courtesy Ann)



This allowed opportunity to spend time visiting the Springs over the 2 days. (A couple of the Springs were difficult to find despite our GPS references!)

Hergott, Elizabeth, Jersey, Blanche Cup, The Bubbler, Coward and Strangways Springs were visited the first day - the latter requiring

additional time to inspect the ruins of Strangways Telegraph Repeater Station. (Used on the Overland Telegraph Line).

There are stone-walled stock pens, and a huge stone-walled water tank that looks more like a church until you find it has no door!!



Strangways

At its peak, it was a small village with a number of buildings. The site was selected as it was next to a mound spring.

The station was closed down in 1896 and moved to William Creek.

A highlight the following day was a visit to Emerald Springs.

Permission was obtained from Stuart Creek Station to drive the approx. 13kms on their property to the Springs. The Station is a



Part section of Emerald Springs

mixture of land types including sandhills, breakaways, mound springs and gibber plains

## News from Quorn SA

**Q**uorn business-owners Robert, Wendy and Sally Brown are in the midst of developing the Great Northern Lodge, a 4.5 star motel and function centre in the heart of Quorn, offering high grade accommodation and facilities.

The family is already well-known for their central Quorn business 'Emily's Bistro', an open plan cafe decorated with memorabilia from the region's past.



The Brown family received a \$400,000 regional development grant from the State Government to ensure the project got off the ground

The 34-room motel should be completed next year and will employ nine full-time staff.

Ms Brown said she hoped the motel would bring more tourists to the region and help other businesses.

"There's a market that we still don't have here in Quorn so we're hoping to tap into that," she said.

"We're looking at four-and-a-half star and enough to suit a bus for coach tours and study groups."

Ms Brown said several movies had been filmed in the town and the new accommodation could make it more attractive. "It's just going to open the door for more movies to be filmed here because obviously we'll have the accommodation for them."



Mt Lyndhurst Station— for sale

## Mt Lyndhurst Station

**O**NE of South Australia's most iconic station holdings has come onto the market for sale. Mount Lyndhurst Station covers 348,900-hectares (862,150 acres) and is located at the head of the Strzelecki Track.

It was once a part of the massive Beltana Pastoral Company which was owned by the Barr Smith family, one of the original owners of Elders.

A feature of the property is The historic circa-1877 12-stand stone shearing shed .

Mount Lyndhurst will be auctioned by Landmark Harcourts in Adelaide on April 8.

## 2016 Itineraries



## Yorke Peninsula &amp; The Southern Flinders Ranges

(5 days)

**\$1600pp**

## Friday 8th February

Ardrrossan, Port Julia, Port Vincent, Edithburgh, and Wool Bay. Scenic drive to Troubridge Point and Marion Bay. Innes National Park includes Cable Bay, Cape Spencer and Pondalowie Bay. Corny Point, Warooka and Yorketown. Moonta, Kadina and Wallaroo. Southern Flinders Ranges, Alligator Gorge, Melrose. Scenic Bridle Track to Port Germein



## Kangaroo Island

(4 days)

**\$2175pp**

(Includes Sealink ferry!)

## Wednesday 2nd November

Penneshaw, Antechamber Bay, Cape Willoughby, American River, Kingscote, Flinders Chase National Park, Cape Borda, Admirals Arch, Cape De Coudic, Seal Bay, Emu Bay, Stokes Bay, Snelling Beach, Western River Cove.

## 2016 Itineraries



## Mungo and Hattah Kulkyn National Parks

(5 days)

**\$1895pp**

## Wednesday 30th March

Pinnaroo, Kow Plains Homestead and Cowangie, Murrayville, Pink Lakes, Underbool, Mildura, Wentworth, Old Zanci Station, Mungo Woolshed, Walls of China, Grand Canyon, Vigar's Well, Perry Sandhills, Paddle Steamer through Lock 11 Mildura, Red Cliffs, Lake Hattah, Lake Victoria, Rufus River, The Riverland



## The Back O'Bourke

(9 days)

**\$3880pp**

## Sunday 8th May

Broken Hill, Mutawintji NP, White Cliffs, Wilcannia, Tilpa, Louth, Bourke( accommodation Bourke Riverside Motel ), Lightning Ridge, Gilgandra, Cobar, Balranald, Murrayville, Pinnaroo



## Coongie Lakes

(7 days)

**\$2950pp**

## Friday June 3 &amp; Monday June 27

Old Strzelecki Track, Innamincka, Coongie Lakes, Camp LXV, Cameron Corner, Sturt NP, Tibooburra, Broken Hill, Loch Lilly and Quandong Stations, Burra.



## The Painted Desert

(9 days)

**\$3800pp**

## Saturday 21st May

Clare Valley, Leigh Creek, Marree, William Creek, Coober Pedy, The Breakaways, Painted Desert, Woomera, Roxby Downs, Andamooka, Port Augusta, Arid Lands Botanical Gardens, Horrock's Pass to the Flinders Ranges, Orroroo and Burra.



**2016 Itineraries**



**Legendary Longreach & Winton**  
(12 days)  
**\$4500pp**

**Monday 4th July**

Strzelecki Track, Innamincka, Windorah, Lark Quarry Dinosaur Trackway, Winton, Waltzing Matilda Centre, Longreach. Visit The Stockman's Hall of Fame, Qantas Founders Museum, Sunset Cruise on the Thomson River.

Barcaldine, The Tree Of Knowledge, Blackall Woolscour, Tambo, Charleville. Cunumulla, Currawinya National Park, Hungerford, The Darling Track to Yantabulla, Fords Bridge and Bourke.

A day exploring Bourke visiting Mt Oxley and local attractions and a cruise aboard the Jandra paddle-steamer on the Darling River.

Wilcannia via The Darling River Run through Louth, Tilpa and on to Broken Hill. Old Pastoral route to Burra, Adelaide



**Birdsville & Innamincka**  
(9 days)  
**\$3800 pp**

**Saturday 23rd July**

Clare Valley, Leigh Creek, Marree, Mungerannie, Birdsville, Innamincka, Camp LXV (the Dig Tree), Cameron Corner, Sturt National Park, Tibooburra, Broken Hill, Old Pastoral Route via Loch Lilly Station to Burra, Adelaide



**Birdsville & Windorah**  
(9days)  
**\$3800 pp**

**Saturday 6th August**

Clare Valley, Leigh Creek, Marree, Mungerannie, Birdsville, Betoota, Windorah, Quilpie, Toompine, Thargomindah, Cunnamulla, Bourke, The Darling River Run, Louth, Tilpa, Wilcannia, Broken Hill. Old Pastoral Route via Loch Lilly Station to Burra, Adelaide.

**2016 Itineraries**



**Head of Bight & The Eyre Peninsula**  
(9 days)  
**\$3600pp**

**Saturday 20th August**

Cowell, Tumbay Bay, Pt Lincoln, and Whalers Way. Coffin Bay, Talia and Woolshed Caves, Streaky Bay, Murphys Haystacks. Ceduna, Yalata, Head Of Bight (whale watching) and Bunda Cliffs. Return via Minnipa, Gawler Ranges, Kimba, Pt Augusta and Flinders Ranges to Adelaide.



**Flinders Ranges & Skytrek**  
(4 days)  
**\$1725 pp**

**Wednesday 7th September**

Rawnsley Park, Wilpena Pound, Willow Springs Station, "Skytrek", Bunyeroo Valley, Brachina Gorge, Blinman, Parachilna Gorge, Moralana Scenic Drive, Melrose, The Bridle Track, Port Germein, Laura, Orroroo, Burra, Eudunda and Kapunda.



**Flinders Ranges & Arkaroola**  
(5 days)  
**\$2350 pp**

**Saturday 17th September**

Rawnsley Park, Wilpena Pound, Bunyeroo Valley, Brachina Gorge, Blinman, **Arkaroola, Ridgetop Tour**, Bolla Bollana, Arkaroola Waterhole, Gammon Ranges, Moralana Scenic Drive.



**The Gawler Ranges**  
(5 days)  
**\$1895 pp**

**Monday 10th October**

Port Wakefield, Port Germein, Port Augusta, Iron Knob, Corunna, Siam, Nonning, Mt Ive, Lake Gairdner, Yardea, Hiltaba, Paney Station, The Organ Pipes, Pildappa Rock, Tcharkuldu Hill, Minnipa, Wudinna, Kimba, Wilmington, Melrose, Gladstone, The Clare Valley.

**2016 Itineraries**



**Tumbay Bay & Eyre Peninsula**  
(5 days)  
**\$1700 pp**

**Saturday 22nd October**

Port Germein, Arno Bay, Port Neill, Trinity Haven Scenic Drive, Poonindie, Port Lincoln, Sleaford Bay, Tod Reservoir, Cummins, Mt Hope, Point Drummond, Greenly Beach, Dutton Bay, Coffin Bay National Park to Golden Island and Price Island. Explore Whalers Way and visit the Koppio Museum. Return is via Kimba, Iron Knob, Port Augusta and Horrocks' Pass to the Flinders Ranges, Orroroo and Burra.



**Dares Hill Circuit**  
(2 days)  
**\$700 pp**

**Departure by demand**

Gilbert Valley, Terowie, Peterborough (overnight) and we visit **Steamtown's Laser Light Show**, Franklyn, Ketchowla, Dares Hill, Mt Bryan.



**Lake Eyre**  
(3 days)  
**\$1380 pp**  
**Includes Plane flight**

**Departure by demand**

Clare Valley, Leigh Creek, Marree, One and a half hour plane flight over Lake Eyre, Farina Ruins, Ochre Cliffs, Hawker, Orroroo, Terowie, Burra, Clare Valley.



**Flinders Ranges & Outback**  
(8 days)  
**\$3950pp**

**Departure by demand**

Rawnsley Park, Wilpena Pound, Bunyeroo Valley, Brachina Gorge, Blinman, Arkaroola, Ridgetop Tour, Arkaroola Waterhole, Gammon Ranges, Moralana Scenic Drive. Marree, The Oodnadatta Track, William Creek, Coober Pedy, The Painted Desert, Woomera, Roxby Downs