

# Mungo, Mutawintji & More

Dates:

Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> February to Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2007

(17 days)

Cost: \$3,200

Style: Accommodated

Start and Finish: Sydney

Explore two World Heritage sites: Willandra Lakes (Lake Mungo National Park) and the Naracoorte Caves fossil site plus Hattah-Kulkyne National Park International Biosphere Reserve and Macquarie Marshes and Bool Lagoon, Wetlands of International Significance (Ramsar sites). Also drive the length of Victoria's Great Ocean Road and visit Mutawintji and Kinchega National Parks. Appreciate the cultural legacy left in Aboriginal art and artifacts - relics of the oldest continuous civilization known on Earth.

**John Sinclair** will be joined at by Aboriginal custodians at Mutawintji and elsewhere who will interpret the landscape and the Aboriginal culture to enrich the experience with expertise, local knowledge and as an observer of nature.

**Day 1; Tuesday, 27 February:** Depart Eddy Avenue opposite Central Station at 7.30 a.m. Follow the early explorers footsteps across the Blue Mountains to Bathurst, then via Burrendong Arboretum to Dubbo. Accom: Dubbo

**Day 2; Wednesday, 28 February:** Visit the Macquarie Marshes, an important breeding habitat for large colonies of ibis, spoonbills and egrets where the Macquarie sprawls into a 200,000 ha wetland in good seasons. Discuss priorities for water use — human use or wildlife. Accom: Nyngan.

**Day 3; Thursday, 1 March:** Travel via historic mining town of Cobar to Mt. Grenfell historic site to see some Aboriginal paintings which densely cover rock shelters at. Then travel via Wilcannia, once a thriving port on the Darling River with its legacy of historic buildings and now a large Aboriginal community. Accom: Wilcannia.

**Day 4; Friday, 2 March:** To the quaint old opal mining town of White Cliffs. Jock will guide us through White Cliffs and his underground accommodation and the lunar landscapes of this barren land. (It was Australia's first solar town).

Accom: Underground B&B

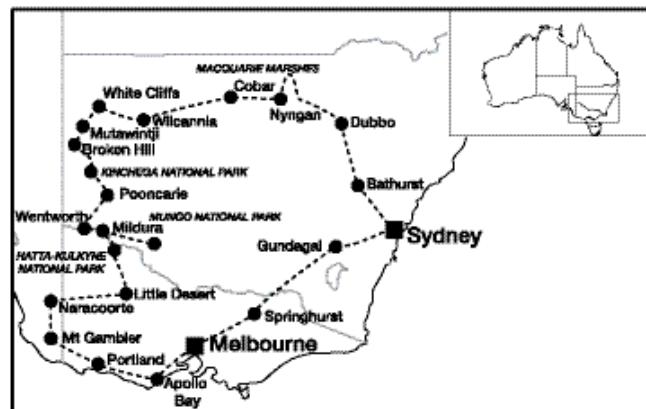
**Day 5; Saturday, 3 March:** Make an early start to visit Mutawintji National Park, a gem of New South Wales' Outback, with its dramatic scenic beauty. Aboriginal guides will help reveal the wealth of Aboriginal relics, colourful and unusual rock formations. Accom: Broken Hill

**Day 6; Sunday, 4 March:** Explore the famous mining town, Broken Hill, with its interesting vernacular architecture. The "Silver City" has produced some talented bush artists who have captured the spirit of the bush. Visit Broken Hill's Sculpture Park. Accom: Broken Hill

**Day 7; Monday, 5 March:** Visit the "ghost town" of Silverton before going on to Menindee, setting off point for the Burke & Wills Expedition. Nearby Kinchega N.P. on the Darling River has a prodigious population of kangaroos, emus and other birds. Arid red dunes contrast with the Menindee Lakes and river gums. Accom: Kinchega Shearers Quarters

**Day 8; Tuesday, 6 March:** To Mungo National Park in the Willandra Lakes World Heritage site where an ancient lake system supported a population of Aborigines and interesting fauna. It dried up after the last ice age producing a lunar type landscape but it is the best preserved and best known occupation site of the world's oldest continuous civilization. Accom: Mungo Shearers Quarters

**Day 9; Wednesday, 7 March:** The crumbling Walls on an old lake lunette hold complete evidence of Aborigines who feasted here more than 40,000 years ago when the lake provided prodigious food. Explore Australia's earliest known human habitation site and the pastoral legacy of Mungo National Park. Accom: Mungo Shearers Quarters



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**Day 10; Thursday, 8 March:** To Buronga, the junction of the Darling and Murray Rivers, and Mildura, centre of the Sunraysia irrigation area. Then on to Biosphere Reserve Hattah-Kulkyne National Park. Accom: Hattah-Kulkyne.

**Day 11; Friday, 9 March:** Spend the day exploring the 48,000 ha Hattah-Kulkyne National Park in mallee country. The large lake system is filled when the Murray River floods. It is a rich fauna habitat. Accom: Hattah-Kulkyne.

**Day 12; Saturday, 10 March:** Through the Mallee to the Little Desert to meet Whimpey Reichelt to see and learn about the endangered Mallee fowl (lowan), the world's only arid dwelling mound building bird. Accom: Little Desert Lodge

**Day 13; Sunday, 11 March:** Travel via Mount Arapiles to Naracoorte (SA). Take the 2.00 pm tour of the outstanding Victoria Fossil Cave near Narracoorte, now inscribed on the World Heritage List because they contain unique fossilized specimens of ice age animals and other spectacular features. Accom: Naracoorte.

**Day 14; Monday, 12 March:** Proceed to Bool Lagoon, a Ramsar wetland of international significance, and then through the vast vineyards of the Coonawarra District to Penola where Mother Mary McKillop's mission began. Then on to Mount Gambier and into Victoria. Accom: Cape Bridgewater.

**Day 15; Tuesday, 13 March:** Travel via Portland, Victoria's Western District's main sea port and the Princes Highway through Port Fairy, Warrnambool to the Great Ocean Road. Stop at several lookouts including the Twelve Apostles along this spectacular drive. Take a short walk in the Otway rainforest at Mait's Rest. Accom: Apollo Bay.

**Day 16: Wednesday, 14 March:** Continue north along the Great Ocean Road to Geelong, then deviate north through the historic gold centre of Ballarat and the spa centre Daylesford before joining the Hume Highway at Broadford to continue north. Accom: Springhurst.

**Day 17: Thursday, 15 March:** Follow the Hume Highway, via Albury, Gundagai, Yass and Goulbourn. Arrive Sydney at approximately 7.00 pm.