



Easter 2017, Murray Mallee

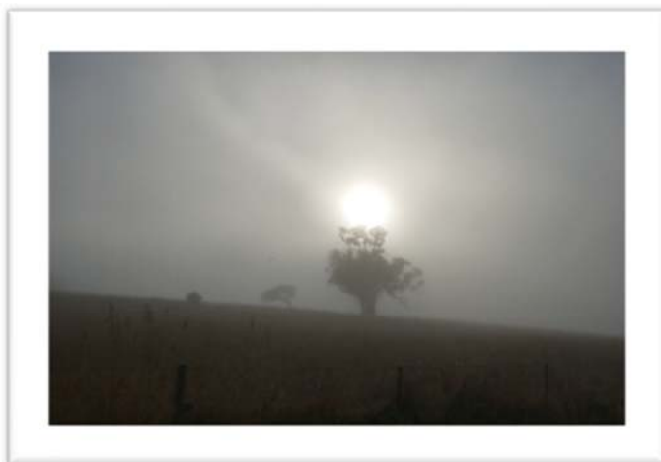
**Murray Mallee trip 14 -17th April 2017**

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**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

Meeting at the visitor's centre for a 7am start were Sandra & Pete, Martin & Brian, Bronte & Norma, Keryn, Brenton & Wil, Mick & Kylie, Sandra & Wayne. Roy & Bronwyn met us at Coonalpyn. All raring to go for a fantastic weekend of 4WD, fun and laughter.

The fog was so thick in places that we were wondering who was in front of us. But, boy oh boy, fantastic photos.



Made our way to Coonalpyn and where we were in for a surprise!!!!!! Cars and people everywhere what a busy town now! Not bad for a town that most people just drove through.

The silos are just magnificent; when we were there a month ago the artist Guido van Helten was just using a spray can of paint standing on a cherry picker. He would just toss the empty can to the ground, look at a piece of paper/ photo then carry on spraying again, such talent. I wonder if he was a graffiti artist

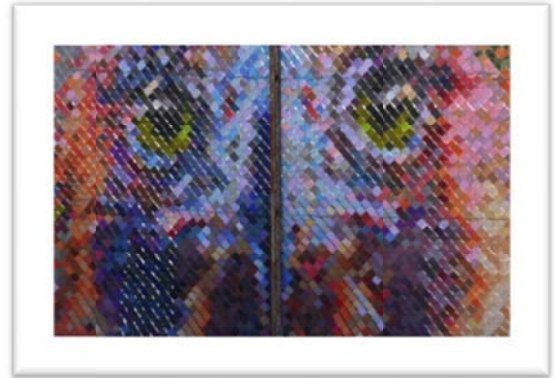
as a teenager?????? The paintings look realistic and they are of local children from the school, as he says that the children represent the future of the town.





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They also have other art work throughout the town, a great eagle's face as you head out of town on a fence, small metal tabs of different colours. They had a small market as well. After having a fantastic waffle and hot choc for me, with everyone fuelling up on coffees and food on offer, we headed off on the back roads to come back out on the highway at Lameroo. Short trip down the highway to Pinnaroo for fuel then off over the border to Murrayville.

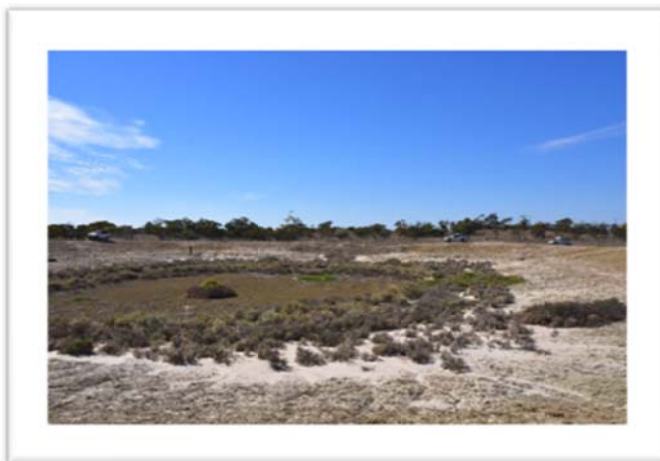


At the caravan park we all set about setting up camp and into happy hour for a few drinks, nibbles, lots of laughs and mega amounts of relaxation. We were very lucky with Pete bringing wood and Bronte the half 44-gallon drum, so we could have some great fires at night to sit around, and it was cold the first night.

Everyone had a task to build an Easter nest for Sunday morning so the Easter bunny doesn't miss us!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

### **Saturday 15th April 2017**

Woke from a very cold night, everyone up and raring to go on an adventure around the Pink Lakes, Sunset National Park. Sun shining, sky blue, birds singing and the frigging rooster had been crowing since sunrise. It's a beautiful day.



Headed out along the Mallee Highway and then turning onto Sunset Road, 1st stop Linga trig point which gave us a great view over the country side. What a beautiful country we live in. Turning left onto the Underbool track, next stop was the Green Opal Mine with a 800 metres walk which I am sure was at least 2kms of walking through soft sand. At the end was the slag heap and the mine shaft had been filled in. Morning tea was on the cards when we got back to refresh the bodies for the next stage. Had a look at Sunset tank (a dam,) pretty big.

Headed down the Grub track to check out a camping spot, and the pine-log cattle yards. Native pine posts and rails are naturally resistant to termites. To Birthday Plains and again another cattle yard and we tried to find Don Perry's butchering tree but think it went years ago. Don Perry was a local who was nick named "Blowfly" as he used to have a green ute that was known as "the grasshopper." He would load up the carcasses, cover them with broken Mallee branches and hopefully the leaves shaking up and down over the meat would keep the blowflies from settling!!!!!!!!!! You can see at different areas the regeneration of the scrub after bushfires as we drove through the park.

Lunch was at Mt Crozier and a lesson on how to light a fire without matches or lighters. Peter and Wil were interesting to watch. No fire started but it was continued back at camp.

After lunch we took off and decided to take a short cut which, it turned out, was not that good of a short cut. We still got to see the beautiful country side.



Stopped at Lake Crosbie for a look and out on to the Salt Lake for some photos. The camping area was quite full, looks like you have to get in early for a spot. Lucky we stopped as Kylie and Mick lost a bolt from their bull bar, so it was a bit of "bush mechanics" to fix. Called



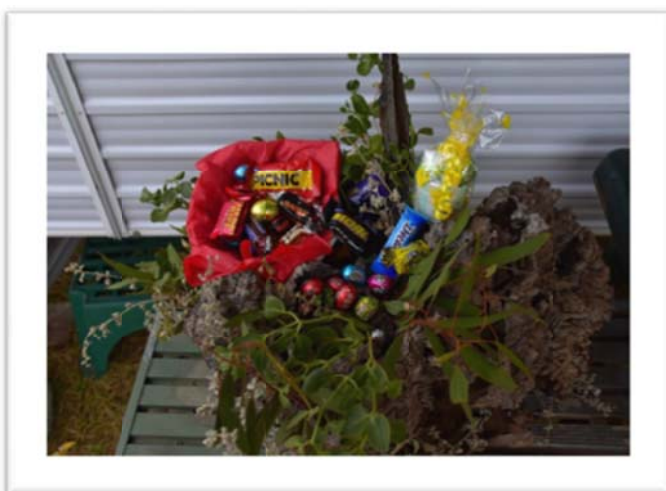
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into Cowangie homestead for a look around, still an interesting place. Another building has been restored which is good to see.

Back to camp for tea at the hotel which was so disappointing, poor Kylie was eating her meal after everyone had finished and was not even able to get the meal she ordered!! Headed back to the caravan park for drinks and the fire to cheer ourselves up. and make sure our nest were ready for the Easter bunny in the morning.



**Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2017**



Unzipping the camper and staring out bleary eyed to be greeted by Easter eggs everywhere. Tasted good for breakfast. Having to get an independent judge, I picked a caravan and knocked. A lovely lady agreed to judge, she was a little stunned at first, but didn't take long to get into the swing of it. Keryn and Wil were very good and made two. Wil needed them he had eggs everywhere and Clarentyne even helped himself. Norma & Bronte made one out of a massive Mallee stump. Kylie had a nest in her hair. Peter and Sandra nest was a paddy melon even Martin and Brian made a nest!! Bronwyn had a beautiful arrangement with yellow flowers.

What good fun and Norma & Bronte won the best nest. Well done!!

Kylie and Mick had a rest day at camp while we headed off towards Pinnaroo then turned on to the Border track heading north. This is a beautiful track with parts like a roller coaster, not a wide track and cars got quite scratched. The things we do for fun! Along this track is the old Border Fence made from wire netting and iron droppers, it began in the 1887 to try and keep vermin out of the farming lands. Lots of potatoes are grown in this area with the centre pivot irrigators. They can get two crops a year. Turned off the track to look at areas where the returned soldiers were given land to begin a new life after

the war. Pretty harsh in the middle of the desert.



Would have been such a hard life. Next on the track was an old eucalyptus plant for making oil, which was started in the 40's. Stayed here for a while looking around as an interesting place with lots of rusty artefacts lying around. Wil and Keryn had a small metal detector which kept them busy where ever we stopped. Found a few really great camping spots for future reference, one that we stopped for lunch. Wil





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found a black cricket which was quite large, black and different. Headed to the Rock Holes which was really stinky, something had been dead in there for a while.

Back to camp for happy hour and again a fire. Lot of laughing as we played "celebrity heads." Just trying to see each other in the dark was hard enough let alone being able to see what people were.



**Monday  
17<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

Up and a slow start to the morning as we all had to go home which is a pain. Back to the real world and wishing I could win x-lotto and retire.

Thank you everyone for a fantastic long weekend. See you next time.

**[Sandra Heintze]**