



Australian Government

WILLANDRA LAKES REGION

World Heritage Area

MUNGO NATIONAL PARK



Issue 2
December, 2009

Message from the Executive Officer



As 2009 draws to a close it is worth reflecting on the year's achievements.

The Mungo Youth Conference was certainly a highlight for me, and I hope you enjoy Leanne's review of this special event in this issue. The Discovery program at Mungo National Park has gone from strength to strength as we enjoyed strong growth in visitor numbers across the year. Scientific study under the guidance of Dr Nikki Stern from La Trobe University revealed many interesting finds and has paved the way for further research next year. We have also enjoyed considerable success in attracting funding from the Commonwealth Government for a range of projects across the Willandra Lakes Region.

In the last issue I mentioned that we had received a grant to employ two Indigenous Field Officers. This funding comes from the Commonwealth's Working on Country program. We are in the process of recruiting now and hope to have them start early in the New Year. We've also just heard that our Caring for Our Country submission to the Commonwealth has been successful. This will enable us to employ an additional two Indigenous Field Officers, a Community Programs Officer, and a Cultural Sites Officer. These positions mean that we are well placed to serve the aspirations of the Willandra Lakes Elders to safeguard cultural heritage and promote the values of the region, while at the same time improve employment

opportunities for traditionally affiliated aboriginal people.

In addition to this, we have also received a Commonwealth Jobs Fund grant to upgrade the interpretation and exhibits at the Mungo National Park Visitor Centre. Combined with a commitment from the National Parks Foundation to find \$3 million to extend and refurbish the existing building, this provides a wonderful impetus to continue to improve visitor experience at Mungo. While these projects get underway, our quiet achievers, the Willandra Landholders are updating their Individual Property Plans and considering a range of on-farm initiatives in conjunction with our partners at the Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority. 2010 is going to be an exciting and productive time!

My thanks go to everyone who has contributed to the protection and celebration of the Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area this year. I hope you enjoy a safe and Merry Christmas and I wish you a vibrant and fulfilling New Year.

Inside this Issue

Mungo Youth Project 2009

Willandra Updates

Bush Food & Medicine

Personality Profile

Christmas Idea



NEWSLETTER



Australian Government

WILLANDRA LAKES REGION

World Heritage Area

MUNGO NATIONAL PARK

MUNGO YOUTH PROJECT September 2009

Over 120 kids descended on Top Hut Station in the Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area for the 2nd Mungo Youth Project.



The gathering focused on kids teaching kids inside Marquees that were erected at the foot of a sand dune. It was an appropriate setting for presenting the various topics they'd researched and prepared prior to the event.

Student presentations were creative and thought provoking and it was evident they'd put a lot of work into the various chosen topics. They spoke about bush foods and traditional medicines, traditional trading, mega fauna, middens, traditional law and what Lake Mungo can reveal about climate change.



The youngest students in attendance were from Mildura's Two Rivers Community College who gave a fantastic presentation on 'middens'. These kids shone with confidence and captured everyone's attention when they got hands on dissecting a yabbie to expose where the gastroliths are located. They measured how much information their audience



received by giving out questionnaires at the end.

The project began on Wednesday September the 9th, 2009. Schools encompassing north-western Victoria, Ivanhoe and Menindee in New South Wales and as far as Wagga Wagga all participated in the three day event.

The kids took part in a range of activities including tours within the World Heritage Area. Landholders were invited to speak about the pastoral history while Professor Jim Bowler & the local Elders spoke about the discoveries of Mungo Lady and Mungo Man at Joulni. The Elders spoke about their aspirations for a Keeping Place to take care of their ancestors remains on country. National Parks Staff & Discovery Rangers spoke about job opportunities & day to day work on Park & within the Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area.

On the final evening, students had the opportunity to let their hair down and give presentations of a different kind. Outstanding performances were given by the students which included multi media by TRAX, singing and dancing up a storm, and even a talented comedian act.





Australian Government

WILLANDRA LAKES REGION

World Heritage Area

MUNGO NATIONAL PARK

While students spent their first few days inspiring adults and students alike, it was now their turn to be inspired by four special guest speakers. Little G hip hop artist and MC for the event, Angela Bates executive producer of NITV National News, Barrister Rudolph Kirby and once the fastest runner in the world, sprinter Patrick Johnson.



They all spoke about the challenges and rewards of their respective careers. Patrick Johnson said "It seems my background is generally of interest to people and I find it's also inspirational for me to come out and talk to the kids".

On the final day, NSW Minister for Youth Graham West MP delivered some great news to the project. The Minister has committed an extra \$100,000 to ensure a 3rd Mungo Youth Project for 2011. Event organiser Helen Healy said, "We are encouraged by this funding announcement as it validates the importance of this event that emphasises the importance for children to build an understanding of their heritage and learn about cultural history in a significant environment".



NEWSLETTER



WILLANDRA UPDATES

Senior Ranger - Fire

A number of fire management projects including upgrades and maintenance have been undertaken or are occurring over the coming months.



Rita Enke

A new fire water tank will be installed at Numbuccurra Public Water Point to assist fire fighting requirements in the northern section of the park. Approval and support of the project has been gained from the Livestock Health and Pest Authority and the Wentworth Shire Council. The fire water tank will consist of a 28,000L poly tank with pipes, stand and appropriate fire fittings so that the tank can safely be filled and emptied as required. A new tank will also be installed at Leaghur.

NPWS was successful in gaining funding through the local Bush Fire Management Committee for fire trail maintenance at Mungo and Mallee Cliffs National Parks and Tarawi Nature Reserve. Grading has been completed in Tarawi Nature Reserve and will be undertaken at Mungo throughout January.

Fire trail information for Mungo is currently being entered into the Rural Fire Service (RFS) Fire Trail Database. This will assist in the coordinated response to fires and ensures that there is an adequate fire trail network for fire fighting vehicles for the protection of the community and its assets.

Planning is underway to conduct two prescribed burns in the northern part of the park (Garnpang) to reduce high fuel loads adjacent to

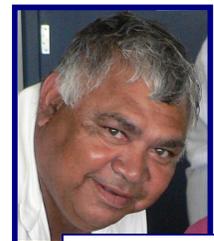
existing fire trails. Strip burns of about 200m in depth have been shown to be effective in halting all but extreme or intense fires in the mallee. The last wildfires that occurred throughout the area were in 1977/78. We also will be looking into some larger ecological mosaic burns in the future to try and introduce a range of vegetation and habitat age classes.

All fire trained staff completed a Fire Preparedness Day in early September. Fire fighting equipment was inspected and tested and a number of short training exercises were undertaken to ensure readiness for this fire season. Despite the lovely rain we've had locally the rest of the state is not fairing as well. A number of our staff have already been sent away to fires around the state and we have committed to sending staff into the New Year.

Executive Officer - Joint Management

Welcome to all readers.

The most significant thing that has happened since the last Newsletter is the signing of the 3rd edition, Mungo Joint Management Agreement with the two tribes, Paarkindji & Ngyiampaa, in September. The Deputy Director General of National Parks Sally Barnes was in attendance along with Elders, Discovery Rangers & NPW staff. As a commitment to the Mutthi Mutthi nation the Elders decided to include them in all employment & training opportunities that may arise in Mungo National Park or the wider Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area.



Warren Clark



Roy Kennedy, Chairperson of The Mungo Joint Management Advisory Committee, and I travelled to Salamander Bay where we attended a State wide Chairperson Conference. All the Chairpersons of Joint Managed Parks provided reports from their areas which were really informative. Some of the issues were the same and others completely different. Roy and I gave a power point presentation which was very well received. Over all it was a good conference to network and talk with others who deal with the same issues.

The annual Parks V's Landholders cricket match was cancelled due to extreme weather conditions that were predicted. It was a good call as Mungo had some very good rainfall.

The last Mungo Joint Management meeting for the year was held at the NPW office in Buronga on Saturday 21st November and had a joint half day meeting with the Far West Advisory Committee where some very positive discussions took place.

Exciting and very busy times are ahead with the Mungo National Park visitor centre upgrade which will include Interpretation Panels on the footprint site, complete inclusion of the Joulini end of the Mungo Lunette into Mungo National Park, Interpretation of the 70km drive tour & Employment of two Field Officers.

So as you can see there are quite a lot of work programs to instigate and complete. Therefore it would seem the most appropriate time for yours truly to take some recreation leave from 14th December through to the New Year. I would like



to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Willandra Elders



The Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area Two Traditional Tribal Groups had their last Elders Council meeting for the year at the Edge Hotel, Buronga on the 15th October. The Elders enjoyed a Christmas dinner after the meeting with members of the TSAC/CMC committees and Discovery Rangers to share their accomplishments over the last year.

With the support of the Elders the Mungo Youth Project was a great success. The Elders participated in tours and story telling.

Thank you to those Elders who have been out in the field in some very hot weather assisting La Trobe students with the ARC Linkage Project.

Some of the Elders will be off to Adelaide to attend the Australian Archaeology Conference where they will introduce a session on the Willandra with papers from the ARC Linkage project.

Before the New Year rings in the Elders would like to wish everyone a safe X-mas and Happy New Year.





Australian Government

WILLANDRA LAKES REGION

World Heritage Area

MUNGO NATIONAL PARK

News from our World Heritage Partners in the Greater Blue Mountains



Despite scorching heat and the threat of coincidental bushfires, more than 80 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people attended the 2009 Living Country Culture Camp. The camp took place at the Jenolan Caves Conservation Reserve within the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, Friday 20th to Sunday 22nd of November.

The event was supported by the Aboriginal Reference Group for the Greater Blue Mountains which is made up of representatives of the 6 language groups. Their support strengthened cultural connections with Country and between people. Judging from feedback received from participants, it appears the Camp was again a great success following our inaugural Living Country Culture Camp held at Ganguddy in 2008.

Campers enjoyed cultural dance and music from Walan Cultural Connections and Muru Mittigar performers. They shared stories around the campfires, visited the Jenolan Caves, swam under the waterfall, participated in workshops, learned to throw a boomerang and dance like a kangaroo and emu, had fun with Discovery Rangers, enjoyed excellent tucker, all while absorbing the relaxing atmosphere of the Country around the Jenolan Cottages (approx. 8 kms before the Caves).

Due to bushfire outbreaks across the Blue Mountains and Wollemi National Parks and the catastrophic fire alert in parts of NSW many

staff were called away. The World Heritage Unit based in the Blue Mountains Region, thanks and acknowledges assistance from the many Parks and Wildlife Group, Division, Regional and Area staff members, including Jenolan Caves staff, who contributed toward the success of this Camp. We are also grateful to learn of the success of our Aboriginal Park Partnerships funding application to support the Camp.

Jenolan is a wonderful *place* and the *story* that unfolded at the camp deserves to be told. Only as a participant could you truly appreciate the wonderful setting and celebration of culture and Country. We believe that such gatherings hold the key to continue building and strengthening relationships whilst meeting some of the Co-management aspirations of the Aboriginal people within and surrounding the GBMWhA.

For details of the Living Country Culture Camp for 2010 visit www.livingcountry.com.au or contact Den Barber, Aboriginal Co-management Officer by telephone on 4784 7326 or via email to dennis.barber@environment.com.au



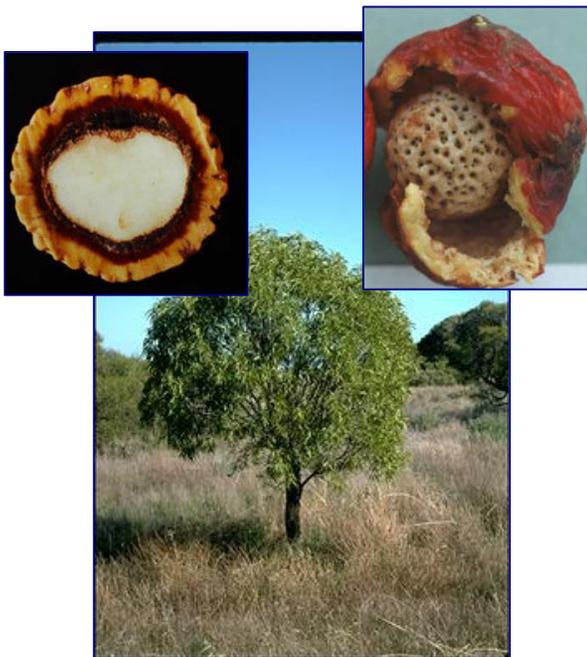


Bush Food & Medicine

Scientific Name: Santalum acuminatum
Common Name: Sweet Quandong
Barkintji Name: Karnpuka

Description: Drooping shrub or small tree with narrow opposite olive-green leaves. A root parasite on surrounding plants. Fruit round, bright red, walnut size, with the remains of the flower on top. Ripens in spring. The hard stone inside the fruit is pitted and contains an oily seed with a strong flavour of Oil of Wintergreen.

Use: The red fruit is eaten raw. The seed can also be eaten or ground up and used as a medicinal cream for scalp sores.



Personality Profile

Lisa Mitchell - Area Administration Officer

What is your job role?

I provide administrative support to the NPWS Lower Darling Area Office.

How long have you worked for NPWS?

I've been with NPWS for a period of nearly three years.

What do you like about working for NPWS?

My interactions with such a wide range of individuals including tourists, Willandra Lakes Elders, researchers and other NPWS staff members.

Are you ready for Christmas?

I've put up and decorated the Christmas tree; however I have a little more shopping to go!

Are you going away for Christmas?

No, I'll be spending Christmas in Mildura.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Spend time with my partner, family and friends.

What was the last movie you watched at the Cinema?

StarTrek - it was some time ago!





Christmas tree biscuits Makes 3-4 trees

Gluten-free & nut-free

- 250g butter, softened
- 3/4 cup caster sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 1/2 cups plain flour
- 100g dark chocolate, melted
- 1 packet of Jaffa lollies, to decorate
- 1 tablespoon icing sugar, to dust

Cream the butter and sugar together with a spoon in a bowl or use an electric mixer.

Add the egg and vanilla and beat until smooth. Add the flour and mix until a smooth dough forms. Divide the dough into three. Wrap the dough portions separately in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 180C. Line two baking trays with non-stick baking paper. Roll each piece of dough between two pieces of baking paper until 5mm thick. Use three different sized star shapes to cut 4 biscuits of each size. You will need to roll each piece of dough out 2-3 times to get all the biscuits.

Place biscuits on baking trays and cook for 10-15 minutes until golden. Cool biscuits on wire racks.

Christmas Idea

For each tree, place one large star on a flat surface, place a small amount of melted chocolate on the biscuit and top with another large star, slightly off line with the one below. Continue with using the chocolate to stick on progressively smaller biscuits.

Dip Jaffa's in melted chocolate and carefully stick 'baubles' on the tree branches. Stick on as many as you (or the kids) like. Place icing sugar in a tea strainer and use a teaspoon to dust 'snow' onto trees.



To make this Newsletter better we would like your feedback on what you like or could be improved so we can meet your needs. We can be contacted at the address below.

Leanne Mitchell, Editor

Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area
PO Box 318
Buronga, NSW 2739
PH: 03) 5021 8911 Fax: 03) 5022 2037

