



THE 2012 “ON FIRE” CAR SAFARI:

presented by the Rotary Club of Hunters Hill.

SATURDAY 22 SEPTEMBER TO SATURDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2012

The Rotary Club of Hunters Hill invites you to experience seven days of “discovering the Outback of New South Wales”.

The dates correspond with the NSW school holidays so this vacation is an experience for the whole family. Four WD’s and SUV’s would be the most comfortable for travelling however the roads chosen will accommodate a late model two WD also. There are a couple of short stretches of dirt road; however, apart from one short stretch (10 Km) there are sealed road alternatives for those people wishing to stay on the “black”. (Note that the alternatives will be used by all cars in case of road closures on the dirt roads at time of travel). Total mileage for the Safari is about 2100 Km (from Sydney to Griffiths).

Please note that some of the towns we will be visiting, especially Millthorpe and Lake Cargellico, have limited quality accommodation. It is suggested that you book well in advance.

THE TOUR: DAY BY DAY

Saturday 22 September – Sydney to Millthorpe (230 Km)

Today we depart Sydney at our leisure for the pleasant drive over the Blue Mountains and Bathurst to our destination, the historical hamlet of Millthorpe.

Millthorpe is a picturesque, compact and historic National Trust-classified village set amidst gently rolling hills. It has a number of fine historic buildings, as well as cobbled, bluestone-bordered streets, art galleries, gift and antiques shops, and a museum. Millthorpe's commercial area was extended after the depression of the 1890s and many of its largely brick buildings date from that period. The town's decline after World War I means that it was spared redevelopment and so many of its buildings have survived with very little alteration.

This evening we will experience an Outback BBQ at one of the district’s properties.

For accommodation, visit: <http://www.millthorpevillage.com.au/accommodation>

Sunday 23 September – Millthorpe to Lake Cargellico, via Cowra (350 Km)

This morning we start with a relaxing short drive to Cowra. During World War II Cowra was the site of a prisoner of war (POW) camp. Most of the detainees were captured Japanese and Italian military personnel, On 5 August 1944, at least 545 Japanese POWs attempted a mass breakout



from the camp. Simultaneously, other Japanese prisoners committed suicide, or were killed by their countrymen, inside the camp.

During the breakout and subsequent recapture of POWs, four Australian guards and 231 Japanese died, and 108 prisoners were wounded. The dead Japanese were buried in Cowra in the specially created Japanese War Cemetery. This is the only such cemetery in Australia, and also holds some of the dead from the WWII air raids on Darwin.

Another 60 Km along the Mid-Western Highway we reach the gold mining town of Grenfell, a pleasant lunch stop and the birthplace of Henry Lawson (for those who joined our Safari last year, will we even lose sight of this Man!). We then continue our drive via West Wyalong to Lake Cargellico. There is something quite magical about Lake Cargellico. The history, culture, landscape, agriculture, views and sense of wide-brown-land are all experiences for us to discover.

Part of Lake Cargellico is a bird sanctuary, making it very popular for Bird Watching. Large numbers of water birds inhabit Lake Cargellico and its waterways, while nearby Round Hill Reserve and Nombinnie Reserve are also ideal for bird watching. The lake nearly dried out during the past 15 years and only in 2010, did abundant water return.

For accommodation, visit: <http://www.lakecargellico.net.au/visitorinformation.html>

Monday 24 September – Lake Cargellico to Cobar (255 Km)

Continue through Euabalong to Mount Hope, experiencing 10 Km of an all weather dirt road along the way. At Mount Hope, we will join the Kidman Way for the 160 Km drive northward to Cobar. The Kidman Way is named after Sir Sidney Kidman, Australian cattle king and philanthropist who owned a large number of cattle stations along the road, many still owned by his descendants. It is an important beef route linking the area to Melbourne, Adelaide and Sydney.

About 65 Km short of Cobar is a turnoff to the right, destination Nymagee (30 Km): this town is popular for “I don’t really know”, however it seems like a good diversion and it has a pub (it has an old business card of mine on the wall, or it did in 1994 when we last visited). You can retrace your steps to the Kidman Way, or alternately, take the 60 Km of dirt road northwards and then join the Barrier Highway, 43 Km east of Cobar.

Mining has long been the lifeblood of Cobar, and the wealth that followed its discovery influenced the many fine buildings still in existence. Among the many reminders of its past glory is the Great Cobar Open Cut, originally an open-cut 150-m deep mine but now a local swimming hole. Mining continued until the 1920s, and at its peak, Cobar had a population of 10,000 people and its own stock exchange. Mining again became prominent from the 1980s with the opening of a silver-lead-zinc operation

For accommodation, visit: <http://www.cobar.nsw.gov.au/tourism/accommodation>



Tuesday 25 September – Cobar to Broken Hill 436 Km)

Before we depart Cobar this morning it is worth visiting the Great Cobar Outback Heritage Centre, and if you are very energetic, take the two hour scenic walk past mines and a slag dump.

Driving along the Barrier Highway towards Wilcannia and Broken Hill it is essential that (at the 37 km sign), you turn right and follow the unsealed road for 27 Km to the Mt. Grenfell Historic Sight. There are 100's of Aboriginal stencils and paintings of great cultural significance in spectacular reds, yellows and ochres on rock overhangs along the trail.

Return to the Barrier Highway and our stop is Wilcannia, located on the banks of the Darling River. This small town has many fine sandstone buildings, an opening bridge across the Darling River and an old paddle steamer wharf. A note: if leaving your car, ensure it is locked and any valuables out of sight.

Two hours later brings us to the oasis of Broken Hill, set amidst the most barren and desolate countryside you will ever have seen! Broken Hill is Australia's longest-lived mining city. In 1844, the explorer Charles Sturt saw and named the Barrier Range, and at the time referred to a "Broken Hill" in his diary. Silver ore was later discovered on this broken hill in 1883 by a boundary rider named Charles Rasp. The "broken hill" that gives its name to Broken Hill actually comprised a number of hills that appeared to have a break in them. The broken hill no longer exists, having been mined away.

For accommodation, visit: <http://www.visitbrokenhill.com.au/accommodation.asp>

Wednesday 26 September – Broken Hill

Where do we start?

- The ghost town of Silverton, with its myriad of Art Galleries.
- Line of Load Miners Memorial and Visitors Centre.
- The Royal Flying Doctor Service Base and Museum.
- Railway, Mineral and Train Museum.
- Art Galleries, including Pro Hart, Howard William Steer and Absalams.
- The Silver City Art Centre & Mint.

Late afternoon we will drive to the magnificent Broken Hill Sculpture Park, one of the main tourist attractions and icons of the Australian outback. Twelve impressive stone sculptures are situated on a hill located in The Living Desert Reserve about 10km north of Broken Hill. The sculptures were carved in 1993 by artists from around the world, under the direction of organiser and artist Lawrence Beck. WE have organized a spectacular Sunset and some champagne for our visit.

Did you know that Broken Hill was the scene of the only enemy attack on Australian soil in WW1! On 1st January 1915 - only four months before the Anzac's fought the Turks at Gallipoli, a trainload of Oddfellows were on their way to a New Year's Day picnic in Silverton from Broken Hill, when on the eastern fringes of the town the train passed an ice-cream cart flying the



Turkish flag. Two men in the cart had rifles and some picnickers thought they must be shooting at rabbits. Then the men fired 20 or 30 rounds at the train. A railway truck marks the scene of the shooting (listed on the City's heritage trail) and there is a replica ice-cream cart at White Rocks, at the northern end of town, the scene of the later shoot-out...and if you really want to find out more visit the Sulphide Street Railway Museum in Broken Hill.

Thursday 27 September – Broken Hill to Mildura, via the Silver City Highway or via the Menindie Lakes (300 Km)

Today we have two choices for our drive to Mildura: (1) travel down the Silver City Highway, or (2) drive via the Menindie lakes and Pooncarie to Mildura, staying on the eastern side of the Darling River. The latter road is a mixture of sealed and unsealed (for some 120 Km, however it is a well-travelled road and usually in very good condition.

The Darling River flows into the Menindee Lakes from Wilcannia and on south towards Pooncarie and Wentworth. Australia's most famous explorers Burke and Wills passed through Menindee for their Melbourne to the Gulf of Carpentaria expedition. The expedition arrived at Menindee on October 14 1860, and made camp at Kincheega Station after crossing the Darling River. A depot camp for the expedition was established at the Pamamaroo Creek (a sign and cairn mark the site of the camp). Upon their departure, Burke and Wills carved an arrow in the door post of the hotel to indicate the expedition's direction.

At Wentworth the two mightiest rivers in Australia, the Darling and the Murray join to flow onwards into South Australia and the Southern Ocean. The drive to Mildura is short, following the Murray River.

For accommodation, visit: <http://www.visitmildura.com.au/accommodation.html>

Friday 28 September – Mildura to Griffiths (450 Km)

Mildura's development has been aided by the development of irrigation which has allowed the city to become a premier fruit-growing area. Of interest before departing the town are visits to the Mildura Arts Centre Complex, and also the Alfred Deakin Centre.

Follow the Sturt Highway through Balranald, to Hay. A visit here is definitely recommended to Shear Outback: Hear the colourful yarns of life in and around woolsheds. Shear Outback is a new and exciting Interpretive Centre devoted to the culture, stories, passion and language of Australian shearing, - past, present and future. It's an interactive experience with activities, education and entertainment for all ages.

After Hay we travel along the Mid Western Highway and turn right at its junction with the Kidman Way, for the short drive into Griffiths.

Griffith's path from "uninhabitable...howling wilderness" to today's cosmopolitan city has been a relatively short one, having its beginnings less than eighty years ago with the advent to the area of irrigation. The town is surrounded by low hills and citrus orchards in the heart of the



Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area (MIA). It is one of the largest vegetable-production regions and produces more than 60 per cent of the state's wine. This evening we will dine at one of the many Italian Restaurants in the town.

For accommodation, visit: <http://www.visitnsw.com/area/Griffith>

Saturday 29 September – Depart Griffiths for Sydney or wherever you wish to go!

Today some of the group may want to return to Sydney, or some people may wish to extend their Outback Adventure and meander back to Sydney via Canberra, and/or the Snowy Mountains.... the choice is endless.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED TO KNOW

1. All overnight stops are in reasonable size towns where motels are plentiful. A contact list of accommodation is detailed in the day itinerary above.
2. The cost will cover dinners and you need to budget for \$240 per adult and \$120 per child – **to be prepaid**. Also required is a donation to our chosen charity (**ON FIRE**) of \$250 per car (tax-deductable) and payable to the Rotary Club of Hunters Hill. This is required to confirm your car's participation. **ON FIRE** specifically assists children and youth where the parent/s or siblings have any form of mental health issues. (www.sfnsw.org.au)
3. The countryside should still be green. Which indicates that there will be many animals around, so take care. Emu's travel in pairs and 'roo's are just idiots, being encouraged to jump in front of cars at every opportunity.
4. We will only be travelling on dirt roads for some 60 Km – unless you decide to drive from Broken Hill to Mildura via the Menindie Lakes – add another 85 Km or so if taking this route. The Roads Authority continues to upgrade these roads so please be advised unsealed roads could be less than that stated in this document.
5. Be warned – we could encounter cows and other livestock at any time. Any of these conditions can turn a car over in a matter of seconds especially when travelling at 80 kph+. Both the driver and passengers need to be attentive as medical assistance is sometimes some way off!
6. Ensure your car insurance covers windscreen damage. Ensure you have good quality tyres also.
7. Mobile reception is available with "Next G by Telstra" during much of the trip – however don't blame me if you are unable to obtain reception.
8. Petrol is plentiful and you do not need to carry any spare jerry cans.



Any questions at this stage, please do call me on 0437 212121, or alternately email me: john@jhconsult.com.au

Please note that places are limited. If you wish to pre-register for this event to secure your place, then please complete the following for each car and return to John Verhelst, PO Box 325, Gladesville NSW 1675, along with your deposit of \$100 per car made payable to: **Rotary Club of Hunters Hill**. Payment available via cheque, or credit card (Visa or MasterCard only). The balance will be payable by the end of July 2012. (You may pay the full amount now if you wish)

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THE 2012 "ON FIRE" CAR SAFARI

NAMES OF CAR PARTICIPANTS

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

PAYMENT BY:

Cheque OR Credit Card: MasterCard Visa

Name on Card: _____

CARD NUMBER: _____

EXPIRY DATE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____