



ADFAS Gold Coast Inc.

# NEWSLETTER

Spring 2020

Member of the Association of Australian Decorative & Fine Arts Societies Group & Associate  
Member of NADFAS



**Vignette: TAMBO TEDDIES – Little Aussie Ringer Teddy Bear**

## From the Chair

Welcome to the Spring Edition of ADFAS Gold Coast Newsletter

This is certainly a celebration of Spring and all things Queensland.

It's wonderful to be able to share stories about our Members getting out and about, including our successful Cinema event, the Queensland Ballet's Gold Coast performance, and stories involving recent road trips around our State. This edition also celebrates Queensland enterprise in articles about the Queensland Quarantine Quilt and our world famous Tambo Teddies.

Many thanks to our Editor and our fantastic contributors. This is such an engaging edition; please share with your friends and family.

Happy Spring Reading!

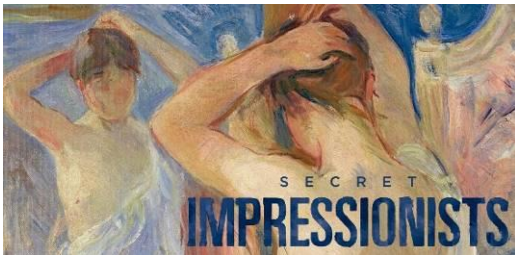
Best wishes to you all

Patricia

**Patricia Ruzzene**

**Chairman, ADFAS Gold Coast**

## ADFAS FILM EVENT – THE SECRET IMPRESSIONISTS



On Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> September, a total of 68 members and 6 guests attended the ADFAS Gold Coast Film Event at HOTA to see *The Secret Impressionists*. Two sessions were held – one at 11 a.m. and one at 2 p.m. There were 37 participants at each session.

All were unanimous in praising the quality of the film and the organization of the event both by the ADFAS Committee and by HOTA staff. Comments expressed were very similar, in that all enjoyed the

exploration of the fifty paintings which had been previously inaccessible to the general public until their exhibition in the Palace of Madame Bonaparte in Rome. They valued the analyses made by the owners of the art works, curators and other experts.

Many felt motivated to express their appreciation in writing to the ADFAS Committee for arranging such an event which afforded the opportunity to get together again with ADFAS friends and art lovers. Everyone had a great time and felt COVID safe.

A Lucky Door prize was drawn at each session. At the first session, Judy Gadloff was the winner of a Coffee Table Book entitled "From Expressionism to Cubism". Carolyn Frogley was the winner of a bottle of French Champagne at the second session. To the ADFAS members who donated these prizes, a grateful thank you is extended.

The event raised \$410.28 for our ADFAS Gold Coast Young Arts programme. To all the members who attended sessions of *The Secret Impressionists*, thank you for your support of our Young Arts Programme.

**Sandi Fueloep, Film Event Organizer**



### A DELIGHTFUL AFTERNOON with the QUEENSLAND BALLET

As part of HOTA's *Fireside Programme*, four members of the ADFAS Events Planning Committee joined an eager crowd of ballet lovers for the Saturday 29th August presentation of the Queensland Ballet company's 60 *Dancers: 60 Stories*.

In his introduction to the performance, Artistic Director of Queensland Ballet, Li CunXin (right), explained this performance was born out of one of the most challenging periods in Queensland Ballet's 60 year history. During the time of lockdown across Queensland, the dancers created sixty new works based on the theme of *Love* – something the world badly needs at this time – to “engage, inspire and express gratitude to Queensland Ballet supporters over the challenging period of the corona virus pandemic”.



The Lakeside Room was beautifully presented with socially-distanced tables of two or four and soft, dappled lighting and diaphanous curtains setting the tone for a magical experience. Individual plates of sandwiches and delicacies were served with coffee and champagne prior to the performance. The theme of *Love* was presented by three different groups of dancers.

The first section, “Where is Love?” showed dancers expressing longing, wonderment, searching, solitude or hope. Choreography was by members of the Corps de Ballet, and the music of Debussy, Chopin, Tchaikovsky and Beethoven was supplied by a talented group of pianists and harmonica players.

The second section, “Looking for Love” was light hearted, joyful and most amusing. Dancers fantasized, postured and flirted on their way to relationships.

The third section, “In Love”, a moving series of Pas des Deux, expressed the heights of true love, where the loved one's presence is all there is. This section gave the audience the feeling of being touched by something uplifting in the troubled times we are experiencing.

Li Cunxin and his wife Mary were accompanied by Gold Coast Mayor, Tom Tate, and his wife Ruth. Li spoke of how the celebrations for sixty years of Queensland Ballet were put on hold by the pandemic and expressed the hope that the Queensland Ballet would be able to resume its programme soon. He also suggested that with the opening of the new Arts Centre, HOTA might become a second home for the Queensland Ballet.

**Margaret Hamilton**

### QUEENSLAND QUARANTINE QUILT



After Craig Zonca and Loretta Ryan, (612 ABC Radio Breakfast Show hosts, left) publicised the making of a *Queensland Quarantine Quilt*, more than 200 handmade blocks (15cmx15cm) from across Queensland arrived, showing how their makers spent time during lockdown. These snapshot-in-time squares have now been stitched into a giant patchwork quilt by members of QSWFA – the Queensland Spinners, Weavers and Fibre Artists Group. The pieces had to illustrate what made the makers happy and gave them joy.

The squares could be made from any textile using any technique such as felting, embroidery, applique, weaving, dyeing, patchwork, knitting, crocheting, lacemaking and/or spinning. The field was wide open and invited creativity, humour and exuberance.



QSWFA President, Kym Textor, (wearing a pink patterned jumper) pictured left with Yvonne Ritson (who is wearing red) said, "Each block tells a story with people showing their gardens, flowers, books or libraries. There was even a photo of a plumber on one of the squares. The work on the squares has been amazing and to see them all together has been outstanding. Jigsaws, games and face masks also featured on the quilt — people did keep busy during that time." There was even a square depicting the joys of staying at





home without the constraints of wearing a bra or high heel shoes and another portraying the bliss of eating a (crocheted) slice of home-delivered pizza! **Photos: by Jessica Hinchliffe**



**Left: the quilt being videoed as it is worked on by folk from Queensland Spinners, Weavers and Fibre Artists. Images by Gavin Bannerman, Director at State Library of Queensland**

Piecing together and stitching was a mammoth task which took more than 108 hours. The official *Queensland Quarantine Quilt* was on display at the ABC Headquarters, Southbank, for a few weeks but it will be displayed from mid-October at the State Library of Queensland, before being preserved in the library's climate-

controlled storage. Robyn Hamilton of the State Library of Queensland says she wishes she could be around in 100 years' time to see our descendants' reaction to how Queenslanders of 2020 coped with Covid-19. Click on this link to see some detailed images of the quilt: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-07-10/quarantine-quilt-records-coronavirus-lockdown-in-fabric/12437766> Click on the next link to hear 612 ABC Breakfast presenters Craig Zonca and Loretta Ryan discussing the creation, display and storage of the *Queensland Quarantine Quilt* with Gavin Bannerman, Director of Queensland Memory with the State Library of Queensland:

<https://www.abc.net.au/radio/brisbane/programs/breakfast/quilt-to-library/12378846>

**Val Shooter**

### **COACH TRIP to REDLAND BAY – Thursday 5 November 2020.**



Yes!! It is happening. We have rescheduled this event (limited to 25 for COVID restrictions). The quota has been filled and there is a small waiting list. We look forward to morning tea at historic Ormiston House, lunch by the bay, and a visit to Redland Art Gallery for a guided tour of the exhibitions.

For most of our social functions we now use the *Trybooking.com* website. It has a minimal 50c booking fee, is easy to use, and

simplifies things for event organisers – and our Treasurer.

**Wendy Spencer**

### **VIGNETTE:TAMBO TEDDIES**



**Tambo Teddies**

*If you go down in the woods today you're sure of a big surprise...* and at Tambo, in central western Queensland (913 km and 10 hours north west of Brisbane), what could be more delightfully surprising than a store filled with beautiful, locally-

hand-crafted teddy bears?



Guarding the entrance at the moment, and sporting a cheerful red bow and red-spotted mask is COVID-safe Teddy – a dashing fellow who cheekily invites visitors to make use of his bottle of hand sanitiser.

Tambo Teddies was established in 1992 when wool prices crashed during sustained drought, and in order for the town to survive, something had to be done to create jobs, ideally by capturing the

passing tourist trade.

As the town is the centre of the regional sheep industry, utilising wool was the natural solution, and making teddy bears out of readily-accessible sheepskin and stuffing them with wool would create something unique – a real tourist stopper!

Naturally there were knockers, but with great enthusiasm and months of designing and planning (and learning how to operate an industrial sewing machine and finding where to source everything Australian-made like eyes, noses, tags and sewing materials), three ladies, Mary Sutherland, Charm Ryrie and Helen Sargood, set out to prove them wrong.

Who would have thought how absolutely right these ladies were and how much their business has burgeoned since the first Tambo Teddies went on sale in 1993? In all the years since then, tourists haven't stopped getting out of their cars to wander around the store to make purchases, and also enjoy a coffee and a meal at nearby eateries.

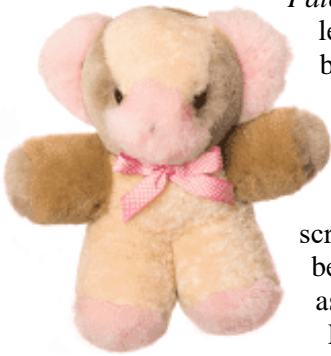
With the business growing from three workers to twenty, Tambo had become the Outback Teddy Capital of Australia and surprisingly, men were the keenest buyers for the women and children in their lives, one even saying it gave him the edge when trying to impress girlfriends.

Despite being a 100% Australian-made sheepskin and woollen product, it took years for Tambo Teddies to be allowed to use the internationally-recognised Woolmark symbol – being originally rejected because the product was regarded as a toy – but



what could reflect the Australian wool industry more charmingly?

Tambo Teddies come in two families – the Basils (the traditional teddy bear style like *Basil Bear with Suede Paws*, previous page right) and the Tobies (like *Toby Teddy Bear Patchwork Pink* with chubby body and multi-coloured patchwork, left) – in a range of sizes and colours – but they are all unique because sheepskins always differ and the person sewing them inevitably creates a personal touch.



Seeing Tambo is in Australia, there is also a *Tambo Teddies Koala* line in partnership with the Australian Koala Foundation. Tambo Teddies 'Koala' is described as "large and scrumptious, a real Aussie character". The colour of this plush beauty (right) is bamboo but the koalas come in different colours as well.

Like any sewing project, the shapes are sewn with fluffy sides in and then have to be turned out so the fur is on the outside – a tricky process with bulky sheepskin, so for this reason you will never see miniature Tambo Teddies – but they are all big enough to be huggable, even for little children.

Tambo Teddies are named after sheep and cattle properties in the Tambo area, and like Cabbage Patch Kids with their 'adoption papers', Tambo Teddies have individual names written onto the woven identification numbers tags sewn into their legs. When sold, the destinations of the bears are recorded, which comes in handy if a lost teddy is found.

**Left & Right: Mr and Mrs Stockman Basil Teddy Bears**

The Tambo Teddies ladies say, "Over 52,000 of the uniquely-numbered teddy bears have been made and names like *Macfarlane Michael* or *Tambo Station Tony* or *Drensmaine Debra* reflect the personality of the dressed

bears as well as one of the regional Tambo Sheep Stations."



In 2014 the ownership changed, but two local teachers and an arts and cultural officer, Tammy Johnson, Alison Shaw and Kiralee Sanderson (who later left to devote more time to her family and the family property), took over the reins. Left: Tammy and Alison

Child-friendly and comforting touches have been added: a special *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* (for teddy bears) – as a distraction to help children cope with Covid-19 and lockdown worries; an adoption service; a lost and found service and a rehoming programme!

One rehomed bear, Matilda (right), one of only 100 *Millennial Tambo Teddies*, has gone to the Maternity

Ward at Mt Isa Hospital. Her former owner, who lost babies at early stages of gestation said, 'Sometimes mums don't get to take their babies home. Matilda could be a comfort bear for those special mums who are dealing with loss, no matter what stage their babies are taken from them'. So Matilda is now living on the ward and the lovely staff at Maternity are caring for her and allowing her to ease the pain of mums who need her.



The business expanded so much that more workers were urgently needed but Tambo was too small to supply them, so in 2019, a Regional Sewing Hub employing refugees was created in Toowoomba. While settling into Australia, these new citizens learn skills which enable them to be self-sufficient and contribute to the community.

During pandemic lockdown when sheepskins became nigh-impossible to obtain, a new creation, *Tambo Lambo* (left) with prettily decorated ears was created from rolls of a South Australian wool fabric called sliver-knit – sliver fibres of wool knitted into a

base fabric of fibrillated backing yarn, much like a wool-rest sleeper made for beds.

Tambo Teddies' latest creation is a *Peter Possum* glove puppet.

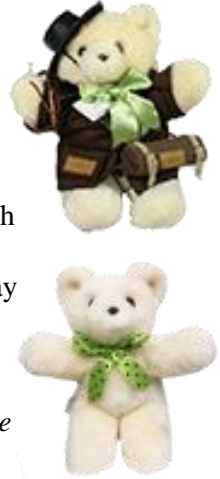
Tambo Teddies are also dedicated travellers who have made their way to children worldwide, including the Danish Royal Family's children, the children of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and the Duke and Duchess of Sussex.



Right above and below: ‘Baneda Bob’ and ‘Stirling Downs Sussex’ were Queensland’s gifts during the royal tours of Kate & William in 2014 and Harry & Meghan in 2018

With Tambo Teddies being the winners of the 2019 *Queensland Multicultural Award for small business* for its sponsorship of refugees, and being supporters of *Buy from the Bush Queensland*, the *Bushfire Appeal* and the *Australia Koala Foundation*, this fascinating outback enterprise is going from strength to strength.

So if you are driving along the Landsborough Highway and happen to see a Teddy Bear Crossing sign as you go through Tambo, you know you will be close to Tambo Teddies. But don’t be too late, for, *at six o’clock their Mommies and Daddies will take them home to bed, because they’re tired little Teddy Bears.*



[www.tamboteddies.com.au](http://www.tamboteddies.com.au)

Val Shooter

### FEEL LIKE A ROAD TRIP?

*Visitors, as if they knew, never remarked on the old silo with its rammed earth walls and high thatched roof, incongruous amongst the new machinery and silver field bins. Nor the workers brought in at harvest time, trucks rolling past the ghostly whimperings, snarls and sharp howls cutting the thick silo’s baffling. Nor when a bumper harvest filled every bin and the farmer was hungry for space – no one ever mentioned bringing the old silo back into service.*

*The Silo (extract) by John Kinsella.png*



We probably will not be able to travel overseas freely for another year or two so let’s explore our own backyard... and what better way to do this than on a road trip around the huge art displays on silos throughout the Australian countryside! I must confess I have seen SOME of the silo art in NSW and Victoria but none yet from Queensland. The Internet allows us to travel vicariously but my mind wanders: “In my wild erratic fancy, visions come to me (of Clancy)” and my country soul yearns to travel around country towns which meant so much to me in my youth. ‘Nothing to stop you now,’ I hear you say! Except for lockdowns, quarantines and Covid-19 fears!

There is a fabulous site on the Internet called the [australiansiloadtrail.com](http://australiansiloadtrail.com) (screenshot above right). So hop on and take a look, download a few maps and off you go. Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria have a myriad of country towns on offer, with a smattering around Adelaide and country South Australia and a few in Western Australia (including the very first Australian silo mural, painted in Northam, WA, in 2015).

To whet your appetite, I draw your attention to a few examples of quintessential Australian creativity occupying the country’s largest art gallery. In Victoria (when lockdown ends), you can cruise around the whole Mallee-Wimmera region and visit some wonderful silo art by Australian and international artists. All of us with a country background grew up with images of grain silos towering over small country towns and we occasionally journeyed with our fathers to offload grain during harvest season. The silos were iconic, albeit an eyesore – vast towering grey concrete/metal monoliths to the countryman and Australian grain harvesting. But when Brisbane-based street artist, Guido van Helten painted murals on defunct silos in the tiny town of Brim in Victoria’s Wimmera district (right) – permanent population 100– the town became an instant tourist attraction and has ongoing appeal for thousands of visitors who puzzle over the identity of the four 30-metre high characters.



**Photo: Brim Silo Art project (2015) by Brucephython - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=46690143>**

You could traverse the entire Silo Road Trip out of Melbourne in approximately four hours, although I question whether you could just drive past these without calling at the local café or milk bar to ‘pick a local identity’. Depending how the spirit of discovery and adventure takes you, it will take at least two days, perhaps starting at Rupanyup, (population 550) where Russian-born street artist, Julia Volchkova, spray-painted two local young people (left) chosen for their long standing



history in the farming area. Using monochrome, she said she wished to bring a 'little femininity' into the project and immediately knew the "titanic" work would "go down in history".

Photo: [https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rupanyup\\_Silo\\_Art\\_005.JPG](https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rupanyup_Silo_Art_005.JPG) Author: en:user:Mattinbgn.

NSW: You may wish to travel to Portland and then divert either west to Grenfell, Weethalle, Narrandera and Lockhart or north towards Merriwa, Gulargambone, Coonamble, Gunnedah, Tamworth, and then out to Barraba, Brewarrina and Lightning Ridge. Being relatively close to my own country heritage, I'm highlighting the tiny country town of Weethalle, near West Wyalong – population 250 – who selected Mongolian born muralist, Heesco Khosnaran, to paint its silos. His work (right) reflects the close country community, and although he did not identify his shearer and a grain farmer characters, they are a composite of a number of local identities. Heesco says, "I like to work closely with local communities to bring about positive change."

Photo: Sheba\_Also 43,000

Artist: Heesco <https://www.flickr.com/photos/shebalso/39328493942/>

Queensland is an easier travel in these Covid-19 times. You could head inland from Bundaberg to Monto, or for a more comprehensive trail, begin in Toowoomba and move through Wandoan, Augathella, Charleville, Cunnamulla, Thallon, Goondiwindi, Yelarbon, and end in Millmerran. New silo art appears all the time as country towns recognise its value for tourism and hospitality. Silos have literally put these towns on the map!



After deregulation in the 1980s drastically reduced the Wide Bay town of Monto's prosperous dairy industry from over 400 dairy farms to just three, art is now rejuvenating the community. When artists Joel Fergie (Zookeeper) and Travis Vinson (Drapl) arrived to work their artistic magic they commented that they "...just loved to capture the town and every essence ..." and "we usually single out a few people we have warmed to in the town, and we paint them." Currently this northern-most end of the silo art trail covers a range of topics in bold colour: gold mining and mustering, and the Dreamtime. Left: *The Three Moons' Silos* (completed in 2020) – features a Gooreng Gooreng elder telling the story of the Three Moons to his granddaughter.

Image by Joel Fergie (*The Zookeeper*) and Travis Vinson (*Drapl*)

A study of each talented artist and his/her silo artwork throughout Australia is not possible here but if you had that inkling – that travel itch which needs scratching – to travel within Queensland and then – time and border restrictions permitting – further afield in Australia, you could do far worse than to follow the numerous Silo Art Trails throughout Australia. It has certainly whetted my appetite just reminding myself of some that I have been lucky enough to see.....

Anyone for a road trip?

**Jacqueline Marchant**

For an interesting 9:24 min video on the creation of the *Three Moons Silos* and other art in Monto by The Zookeeper and Drapl: Google [YouTube The Three Moon Silos - The Zookeeper and Drapl](#)

### **BEYOND the BLACK STUMP (and BACK)**

After yet another cancellation of a trip to NSW this year, Colin and I decided it was time to explore our own backyard – outback Queensland – and found painted silos, art in all sorts of quirky forms, and history, sometimes dating back millennia.

At the younger end of history is **Roma's Heroes Avenue**, an avenue of 93 Queensland bottle trees (*Brachychiton rupestris*) honouring the men of Roma who died in World War I.

Farther back in time, *Arrest Creek Sculpture* (right) in **Mitchell** commemorates the service of police troopers and blacktrackers in the capture of the last Australian Bushrangers, Patrick and James Kenniff. The brothers were the subject of one of Queensland's largest manhunts, lasting over thirteen years. Photo right: Patrick Kenniff is lying on the ground with two police constables standing guard over him. Facing south is the Aboriginal Tracker.







**Augathella** possesses a water tower painted by Blender Studios (left). It celebrates bird life of the area, bullock teams, boundary riders, a windmill and old man emu. The *Big Meat Ant* and many other whimsical, wrought iron sculptures line the main street. The pub offers 'the best steak sandwich in Australia' and a chance to chat with locals.

*Below: Street sculpture Augathella;*



*The Mighty Meat Ants mural represents the local football team (Augathella is "Meat Ant Country" and Meat Ant Park, located right next door to the town library has a giant meat ant sculpture); this year is the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the movie, 'Smiley' and a screening with its star, Colin Petersen in attendance, will be held in Augathella on Sat 22 October*



**Blackall**, home of the Black Stump, boasts sculptures inspired by stories of remote rural dwellers.

*Left: The Black Stump Monument and Mural painted by Bob Wilson, was opened in 1993; Below: roly poly sculptures; John Robert*



*(Jackie) Howe became famous in 1892 for shearing 321 sheep with blade shears in 7 hours and 40 minutes at Alice Downs Station near Blackall. This record has never been broken with blade shears. Bodo Muche created this bronze.*

The Black Stump: Historical surveys of the area were conducted by placing a theodolite on top of a stump but the original Black Stump was burnt. It was replaced by a piece of petrified wood in time to commemorate the 1988 bicentenary of Australia.



**Barcaldine** has the *Miners' Strike Monument* and the *Tree of Knowledge* (left) which marks the first significant labour struggle in Australia's history, and the creation of the Australian Labor Party. *The Tree of Knowledge* was a 10 m tall heritage-listed 200-year-old *Corymbia aparrrerinja* ghost gum, in Oak Street, Barcaldine. It was used as the meeting place for shearers during their unsuccessful 1891 strike and was added to the *Queensland Heritage Register* on 21 October 1992. It was poisoned in 2006 but its remains have been preserved under a purpose-built wooden structure.

**Longreach** is home to the Longreach Arts and Crafts Centre (photos of exhibits right), the Qantas Founders' Museum, the Stockmen's Hall of Fame and the Hugh Sawrey Gallery.



**Winton**, north of Longreach, is the home of Dinosaurs and *The Outback Regional Gallery and Waltzing Matilda Museum*, a gallery built by the Winton Shire Council, for displaying artworks from state and national institutions.

A unique tourist attraction is *Arno's Wall* – a 70 metre concrete wall of discarded bits and pieces built over 30 years around a house Arno Grotjahn bought with money he made after finding a particularly rare and beautiful opal.



*Right: a small section of Arno's Wall*

<https://www.abc.net.au/local/photos/2014/04/04/3978762.htm>

Designed by Composer Graeme Leak and lots of fun to play is Winton's *Musical Fence*. *Left: a portion of the Musical Fence*



It is described as a public musical instrument made from 'found objects that can be played with sticks, plucked by fingers or bowed like a violin'. To see people playing the musical fence and hear some twangy music: [www.graemeleak.com](http://www.graemeleak.com) > [the-musical-fence-in-winton](http://the-musical-fence-in-winton)



The iconic *North Gregory Hotel* hosts night time bush poets reciting the poems of Banjo Patterson, including "Waltzing Matilda", which was penned in August 1895 while the poet was staying at Dagworth Station, a sheep and cattle property near Winton.

About 110 km southwest of Winton is *Lark Quarry* and the *Dinosaur Stampede* where, 95 million years ago, at least 150 dinosaurs of two different kinds – carnivorous coelurosaurs about the size of chickens, and slightly larger plant-eating ornithomimids, some of them as large as emus panicked as a huge meat-eating theropod, smaller than a tyrannosaurus, approached the lake. The predator slowed, saw the prey gathered at the water's edge, began to stalk, and then turned and charged. A chaotic mass of more than 4000 footprints was imprinted in the mud as the terrified animals rushed to escape. <https://www.dinosaurtrackways.com.au/>

The trackways are protected inside a solar-powered shelter which was built using ecologically sustainable methods. The scenery of mesas, gullies and steep escarpments is breath taking, not to mention the sight of prints from so long ago. It is a must for any visitor to Winton.

If you are interested in Dinosaurs, another highlight near Winton is the *Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum*. This is a world class, not-for-profit venture built to further the public knowledge and understanding of Australia's natural history through displays, educational programs, and scientific research. Palaeontologists and other interested members of the community work on digs for up to 3 weeks at a time and this culminates in around 5 years of laboratory investigations. More information: <https://www.australianageofdinosaurs.com/>

Photos below: 1&2 tracks; archaeological dig with retrieved bones wrapped for transportation to the laboratory; Ammonite fossil; bronze dinosaur stampede statues beside the Dinosaur Canyon walkway.



**Tambo:** Forget the Melbourne Cup and the Birdsville Races, Tambo has its own event – *Ben's Chicken Racing* at the Royal Carrangarra Hotel. A clutch of 8 prettily-coloured, pampered 'ladies' was auctioned off to visitors (Col and I with our pink hen pictured left) to raise funds for the Royal Flying Doctor Service. After chasing a cart filled with tasty treats around a course until the champion chick crossed the finish line (right), 'the eggs-cellent ladies' were returned to their coop to resume a normal life, scratching around the chook pen.

Tambo's *Grassland Art Gallery's* current exhibition is entitled, 'Out of Isolation'.

Who could resist buying one of the famous Tambo Teddies, lovingly created using 100% woollen sheepskin? 'Gartmore Gus' (modelled on the original Gartmore Gus) was bought for our very lucky grandchild, Lucy Belle. Gus's Identification Certificate is pictured right. From Tambo Teddies: *The oldest bear to make an appearance was number 268, Gartmore Gus owned by Julie*



*Birchley from Gartmore. Gus was given to Julie by her husband Richard before they were married – it seems a Tambo Teddy might have been what sealed the deal and encouraged Julie to say 'I do'.*

**Charleville:** You can't fail to notice Guido van Helton's water tower mural depicting the town's youth. Another water tower painted by him exists at Cunnamulla, and commemorates rugby league, a sport which bridges the divides of distance and cultural differences in rural Australia. Charleville also boasts the *Mulga Lands Gallery* which opened in 2018 to coincide with the town's 150 year celebrations. The gallery opened with the exhibition *Through My Eyes – A Murweh Story*, showcasing 47 images from nine local photographers.



Added to the Queensland Heritage Register in 2013, is Historical Homestead *Myendetta Station*, at Bakers Bend, designed by celebrated church architect, Robin Dods (1868–1920) and built by the Gibbs Brothers of Charleville.

Charleville's *Cosmos Centre* (right) is open to the public and an advanced solar scope focuses on the sun's solar flares by day but at night, the Observatory roof is





opened and visitors can book a 'Night Sky' tour to look at planets and stars through their main telescope.



**St George** on the Balonne River has cotton farms and wineries and the *Unique Egg*, a tiny museum showcasing the work of Stavros Margaritis who has been carving and illuminating emu eggs for over 60 years. This family museum is now proudly run by Stavros's daughter who



has been carving eggs for around 5 years.

Right: Made entirely of discarded tools, old farming equipment and scrap metal, *Murray the Cod*, the work of renowned sculpture artist Dion Cross, is the newest feature at St George.



No visit to St George is complete without a detour to the tiny town of **Thallon** and the beautiful silo art painted by Joel Fergie (The Zookeeper) and Travis Vinson (Drapl) titled, 'The Watering Hole' (right). The mural portrays the Thallon district and its surrounding area and features the Moonie River, an amazing Thallon sunset and the area's agricultural base. It also recognises members of Thallon's indigenous community by the inclusion of a scarred tree. These silos were the first of their kind in Queensland and are officially the 10th painted silos to be included in the *Australian Silo Art Trail Collection*.



The Publican at the Francis Hotel directed us to two more murals (shown left), painted by the same artists. While staying at his pub, they painted Hairy Nosed Wombats on his water tanks as well as a magnificent mural of local identity, Col, on the pylon of a disused railway bridge.

We took a detour back to St George via the Nindigully Hotel where Hugh Jackman's 'Paperback Hero' was set – a wonderful conclusion to an incredible journey of over 3000 km.

- **If travelling independently to these areas at the moment, it is wise to pre-book entry to attractions, as numbers are strictly Covid-limited. Tour operators will have guaranteed entry for their customers.**

### **BARBARA'S ARTY ROAD TRIP TO TIN CAN BAY AND GYMPIE**

I packed for a 4 night trip to Tin Can Bay, keeping in mind the weather and every type of emergency. Naturally that meant taking my rice cooker, Nespresso machine, an esky full of different types of wines and of course my G&T. Here are some highlights...

**Tin Can Bay's** early morning dolphin feeding is the only mainland dolphin feeding site in Queensland. Government rangers monitor daily public feeding sessions for a pod of Australian humpback dolphins, each of which consumes 3 kg of fish.

Photos below: Dolphin feeding and a water tank painted through the *Work for the Dole Scheme*



**Rainbow Beach**, about 40km away, is named for its towering hills of coloured sands. Inskip Point is the gateway to Fraser



Island via a car ferry. The island is strictly 4x4 sand driving terrain, so tyres have to be deflated before driving along the beach – a designated registered road and sometimes airstrip – where all road rules must be obeyed.

Close to the township of Rainbow Beach is the *Carlo Sand Blow* (right), a "moonscape" sand mass of over 15 hectares, which overlooks the Coloured Sands and the coastline from Double Island Point to Inskip Point and the southern tip of Fraser Island. An easy 600 metre nature walk from the edge of town connects with the *Cooloola Great Walk*.





**Gympie** was originally called Nashville after James Nash who, in 1867 found gold, but a year later, the name was changed to Gympie. At one stage 30,000 men worked in the area. A sign states, 'Gympie was the town that saved Queensland'.

After it separated from New South Wales in 1859, Queensland was about to fall into severe economic depression. When he arrived, the first governor, Sir George Ferguson Bowen, found only seven pence ha'penny (six cents) left in Treasury coffers, but a few nights later, a thief broke in and stole the lot. Governor Bowen had to borrow money from his own accounts to pay the state's first public servants. He then offered a reward for anyone finding gold within 90 miles (145km) of Brisbane.

Mary Street was named after Lady Mary Fitzroy whose husband was Governor of NSW before Queensland was declared a State. The Mary River which regularly floods the town was named after her. Placed at the highest point of the record 1893 flood, bronze statue, *Lady of the Mary* (top right) with skirt hitched up and toe in water was cast in 2017 by Gillie & Marc, the Sydney artists who create the rabbits on motor scooters around the country. Many heritage buildings date back to the Gold Rush.

**Attractions:** *Gympie Regional Art Gallery*; a *Memorial Walk* commemorating Gympie's contribution to wars; *Gympie Memorial Park* was added to Queensland's Heritage Register in 2009; the *Mary Valley Rattler Steam Train* trip from Gympie to Amamoor; the *Gympie Woodworks Museum and Interpretive Centre*; the *Gympie Gold Mining and Historical Museum*, which houses a vast collection of documentation, artifacts and photographs (right and left), dating from James Nash's discovery of gold to the

recently closed operations of Gympie's Eldorado Goldmine.

Another part of Australia is now done and dusted...

**Barbara Corrigan**

<https://www.gympietimes.com.au/news/the-real-story-about-marys-gympie-connection/3143322/>

Contributing photographers to this Newsletter: Alison Shaw and Tambo Teddies, Jessica Hinchliffe, Gavin Bannerman, Joel Fergie and Travis Vinson, Carol Little, Barbara Corrigan and various acknowledged internet sources

**PHOTO GALLERY – photos taken at *The Secret Impressionists***

