

ADVENTURE BEFORE DEMENTIA #2

By Bob Nichols

September 12-30, 2010 - 19 days

Hobart-Melbourne-Daylesford-Bendigo-Kerang-Swan Hill-Robinvale-Mildura-Wentworth-Berri-Barossa Valley-Adelaide Hills-Robe-Mt Gambier-Warrnambool-12 Apostles-Great Ocean Road-Portsea-Melbourne-Hobart.

3902km, average 205km/day. **Fuel \$270**, average \$15/day. 42kg of gear on bike!

Day 1, Sunday 12th, 291km, Hobart-Devonport. Ferry less than half full

Day 2, Monday 13th, 286km, Melbourne-Rockbank-Bacchus Marsh-Barry's Reef-Daylesford-Castlemaine-Maldon-Kangaroo Flat-Bendigo - stayed in a caravan
Maldon, pop. 1600, est. 1836, gold discovered in 1853 – part of the Victorian Gold Rush
'Confectionary Capers' 10km east of Bendigo, has steam engines and wheeled models.

Day 3, Tuesday 14th, 417km, Bendigo-Kerang-Lake Boga-Swan Hill-Robinvale-Euston-Mildura - tent
Lake Boga, pop. 725, est. 1887, was a RAAF Catalina Flying Boat maintenance facility.

Day 4, Wednesday 15th, 173km, Mildura-Jamesville station on Darling River-Wentworth-Mildura Ulysses club night – tent. Last visit to Wentworth was 48 years ago!

Day 5, Thurs 16th, 72km, Mildura, Paddle Steamer 'Melbourne' 98 feet, 300 passengers.
Mildura, est. 1857, pop. 51,000, city is 882km from the mouth of the Murray River

Day 6, Friday 17th, 120km, Mildura-Nichols Point-Moorna station-Wentworth - motel
Wentworth, pop. 1200, paddle steamers once traveled 1,000km up the Darling to Bourke.
Nichols Point, 4km east of Mildura, est. 1908, pop. 837, was named after my great grandfather who was bailed up a tree by a bull.

Day 7, Saturday 18th, 403km, Wentworth-Renmark-Berri-165km. Berri-Loxton-Swan Reach ferry-Sedan-Angaston-Nuriootpa-238km. – tent.
Nuriootpa was site of a Ulysses AGM. Numerous vineyards, visited Jacobs Creek winery
60 Dodge and 70 Chrysler vintage cars doing a 7-day rally to Bay to Birdwood car rally.

Day 8, Sunday 19th, 103km, Nuriootpa-Angaston-Whispering Wall dam-Maggie Beer's

Day 9, Monday 20th, 130km, Nuriootpa-Prospect-Mile End-Goodwood-Uraidla - home

Day 10, Tuesday 21st, 80km, Uraidla-Oakbank-Woodside-Mt Torrens-Birdwood Motor Museum-Gumeracha-Lobethal-Uraidla – cousin's home
My GPS 'died' for 3 days, and mysteriously came back to life at Mt Gambier.

Day 11, Wednesday 22nd, 220km, Uraidla-Mt Barker-Meadows-Mt Compass-Victor Harbour, Port Elliot-Meadows-Echunga-Mount Lofty-Uraidla-Handorf-Mt Barker - cabin Fitted a new front tyre @ 38,790km! – fitted while I waited

Day 12, Thursday 23rd, 307km, Mt Barker-Woodchester-Langhorne Creek-Wellington ferry over Murray River-Meningie-Coorong National Park-Kingston-Robe - cabin
Lake Albert near Meningie is fresh water where carp are harvested for cray fishermen.
Coorong National Park, 467 km², est. 1966, freshwater lakes support Pelicans and birds
Robe, est 1845, fishing port on the Limestone Coast, has a population of 1,400 that swells to 10,000 in summer, was once the summer residence for the South Australian Governor.

Day 13, Friday 24th, 176km, Robe-Beachport-Millicent-70km of pine forests-Mt Gambier

Day 14, Saturday 25th, 115km, Mt Gambier-Port McDonnell-Mt Gambier sink hole - tent
Mt Gambier, est. 1854, pop. 24,000, is 450km from Adelaide & 420km from Melbourne.

Day 15, Sunday 26th, 273km, Mt Gambier-Nelson-‘Discovery Coast’-Cape Bridgewater-Cape Nelson lighthouse-Portland-Port Fairy-Warrnambool - cabin
Lighthouse at Cape Nelson, 21km from Portland, was built in 1884
Portland, est 1834, pop 32,000, the only deepwater port between Melbourne and Adelaide

Day 16, Monday 27th, 56km, Warrnambool-Hopkins Falls-Logans Beach whale watching
Warrnambool, est. 1855, pop.28,000. Large Fletcher Jones clothing factory in the city.

Day 17, Tuesday 28th, 280km, Warrnambool-‘Shipwreck Coast’-London Bridge-Port Campbell-Bay of Islands-Loch Ard Gorge-12 Apostles-rain-Apollo Bay-Great Ocean Road-Lorne-Anglesea-Torquay-Barwon Heads-Ocean Grove - motel
Port Campbell, est 1870, pop. 600, 3 cray boats are craned off the jetty, no moorings.
2 million visitors see the 12 Apostles each year but only 50% pass through Port Campbell

Day 18, Wednesday 29th, 130km, Ocean Grove-Queenscliff to Portsea ferry-Frankston-Melbourne. Ferry trip takes 40 mins, 2 catamarans, every hour, \$35.50 for a motorcycle!

Day19, Thursday 30th, 270km, 0° at Devonport-Perth-home.

These are some of the interesting towns and places we visited in September 2010

Bendigo, Maldon, Lake Boga, Swan Hill, Mildura, Wentworth, Moorna Station, Berri, Nuriootpa, Whispering Wall, Mt Lofty, Victor Harbour, Wellington, Coorong, Robe, Woakwine Cutting, Beachport, Millicent, Mount Gambier, Warrnambool, Flagstaff Hill Maritime Village, Great Ocean Rd

journey total 3,900km, 19 days.

Bendigo is a regional city 131 kilometres from [Melbourne](#). Bendigo is currently the 4th most populous city in Victoria and the state's 2nd largest inland city with a estimated population of 88,000. A resident of Bendigo [is known as](#) a Bendigonian. Bendigo is notable for its [Victorian](#)

[architectural](#) heritage and [gold mining](#) history. Originally known as Bendigo's Valley (Sandhurst was the official designation before a [plebiscite](#) in favour of Bendigo settled the matter), the city grew quickly out of the [Victorian gold rush](#) and became established as a major provincial hub and minor financial centre, being home to Australia's only provincially headquartered retail bank, the [Bendigo Bank](#), and the [Bendigo Stock Exchange](#) (BSX). We visited the “Confectionary Capers” display.

Maldon, 136km from Melbourne, was first discovered by white Europeans in 1836, during Major [Thomas Mitchell](#)'s famous Victorian expedition. It was settled soon afterwards by [pastoralists](#), and two [sheep runs](#) were established in the area, at the foot of [Mount Tarrangower](#). In December 1853, gold was discovered at Cairn Curran (the name given to one of the sheep runs), and Maldon became a part of the [Victorian Gold Rush](#). The [goldfield](#), which was named "Tarrangower Fields" after Mount Tarrangower, immediately attracted an immense number of men eager to make their fortunes at the diggings. Just one month after gold was first discovered, the [Chief Commissioner for Goldfields](#) reported 3000 miners had arrived at the diggings. A month after that, a [journalist](#) for [The Argus](#) reported that the road from [Castlemaine](#) to Maldon was lined with the shops of people hoping to make a living of their own from the miners: The narrow road is lined on each side almost continuously with stores of every description, saloons, restaurants, eating houses, lemonade and beer shops, apothecaries' shops, and the tents of doctors, who, I am sorry to say, drive a very lucrative business at Tarrangower. By 1856 there was estimated to be 18-20,000 people at the goldfields, and the Victorian government arranged for the settlement to become a town, which was named Maldon. The post office had opened on 14 March 1854. In 1861, a government census declared the town's population to be 3341, servicing an additional 5,000-6,000 miners at the diggings. At that time it was the 8th-largest town in Victoria, and remained so for the next decade. However, as miners were forced to dig deeper to obtain usable specimens, or as mines ran dry completely, the population began to decline. By 1891, Maldon was reduced to 1,600 inhabitants. Mining of small claims continued through the 20th century, together with sluicing of gullies and tailings. In the 1980s, several new ventures commenced, including an open cut at Union Hill. Maldon proved to be one of Victoria's richest quartz-mining centres, though with poorer alluvial results than others such as Castlemaine or Ballarat.

Lake Boga is a small town in [Victoria](#) with a population of 725. It is situated in [the Mallee](#) region of north-west Victoria. The town is located 325 km north west of [Melbourne](#) and 17 km south east of the regional centre [Swan Hill](#). There is a [PBY Catalina flying boat](#) on display as Lake Boga was a [Royal Australian Air Force](#) flying boat maintenance facility during [World War II](#), known as the [Lake Boga Flying Boat Base](#). Now popular for water skiing.



Swan Hill. Transport from one side of the Murray to the other consisted of two parallel ferries. These were replaced by a bridge in 1997. Swan Hill is a [city](#) in the north west of [Victoria, Australia](#). It is located on the [Murray Valley Highway](#), on the south bank of the [Murray River](#), downstream from the junction of the [Loddon River](#). At the 2006 [census](#), Swan Hill had a population of 9,684. The [Burke and Wills](#) expedition reached Swan Hill on Thursday, 6 September 1860 on their journey across Australia from [Melbourne](#) to the [Gulf of Carpentaria](#). They made Camp XV, (their fifteenth camp out of Melbourne), in the police paddock on the banks of the Murray River. The expedition stayed in Swan Hill until Monday, 10 September while they reorganised the stores. Burke dismissed four men; Essau Khan, Brooks, Lane and John Polongeaux. He then hired Alexander McPherson, a saddler from Epsom and Charlie Gray, a former sailor from Scotland who had worked as an ostler for Cobb and Co between [Bendigo](#) and Swan Hill and who was now employed at the Lower Murray Inn in Swan Hill. The party was strengthened further by the arrival from Melbourne of journalist, William Hodgkinson, and scientist Georg Neumeyer. The local inhabitants gave the expedition a rousing farewell as they crossed into New South Wales. Folklore alleges Burke and Wills planted a [Moreton Bay Fig](#) tree in the garden of the local doctor, Dr B W Gummow. The tree is now approximately 27 metres high and has a branch spread of approximately 44 metres and can be seen in Curlewis Street.

Mildura is a regional city in northwestern [Victoria](#), located in the [Sunraysia](#) region, and is on the banks of the [Murray River](#) (which is 2530km long), and is only 50m above sea level. The city is 882km from the mouth of the Murray River. The current population is estimated at 50,000. There is the only inland Life Saving Club in Australia at a sandy beach on the river. Mildura is a major agricultural centre notable for its grape production, supplying 20% of Victoria's wine grapes, and 95% of dried vine fruit, 68% table grapes, 55% almonds, 41% pistachios, 33% olives, 24% carrots, 23% asparagus, The Mildura-based P.S. Melbourne is licensed to carry 300 passengers, and is 98 feet long, 21 feet wide at the waterline and 40 feet across the top of the paddles. Like all other Paddlesteamers, she has almost a flat bottom and therefore a very shallow draught. The bow only draws 2 feet, 6 inches whilst the stern 3 feet. So the Melbourne could safely float and operate fully laden in less than 4 feet of water. The Melbourne has a composite hull, which means she has a redgum hull with iron topsides. The old steam engine was originally built by the Marshall Engineering Company in England. The boiler is referred to as a Loco type with a maximum steam pressure of 150lbs and still fired by wood. This in turn drives a twin cylinder compound engine, which at normal cruising speed turns at about 60 turns per minute. At her maximum speed of 11 miles per hour, 130 rpm.



Wentworth was named after the New South Wales explorer and politician William Charles Wentworth. The area was proclaimed a municipality on January 23, 1879. Wentworth is the

region's oldest settlement located at the junction of Australia's two largest rivers, the Murray and the Darling. Wentworth Shire covers an area of 26,000 sq km and has a population of approximately 8,000 people. The southern boundary (along the Murray River) has the greatest population density in the towns of Wentworth with 1200, Dareton, Buronga and Gol Gol. Wentworth is 1,075 km from Sydney, 585 km from Melbourne and 420 km from Adelaide. I met a man who had paddled solo 200km down the Darling River from Menindie, a 10-day trip. In the past paddle steamers used to travel 1,000km up the Darling River to Bourke where there is a weir.

Moorna Station about 30km west of Wentworth is a 26,000ha working property containing sheep, cattle and crops run by the Walsh family. The main dwelling is connected to a kitchen/workman's quarters by an enclosed former breezeway and open courtyard. The homestead was constructed by William Crozier. It replaced the original dwelling built by Edward Bate Scott who originally settled Moorna after acquiring it from Ned Bagott. By 1856 Moorna was the administrative centre of the Shire. As the last 10 years have not been too kind to graziers, the family looked at ways to supplement their living and decided to venture into the tourism industry. The result is the very popular four-wheel motorbike tour business on their property — 40km of which has Murray River frontage. There is an old bridge which goes over a 20km man-made canal built to take water from the Murray into Lake Victoria, South Australia's main storage lake. My great grandfather was married at Moorna in 1884, and the station has significant family ties. There is a small cemetery on the station that has the graves of many of my forebears.



Moorna, grand mansion by the Murray River

Berri is a town in the [Riverland](#) region of [South Australia](#). It is 238 kilometres north-east of [Adelaide](#). Primarily an [agricultural](#) and [viticultural](#) town on the north bank of the [Murray River](#). The Riverland is the largest wine producing region in Australia, accounting for 30% of total wine grape production and a staggering 60% of South Australia's production. It is the original home of a juice company, Berri Ltd. The name "Berri" is from the local [Aboriginal](#)

tribe, Meri, meaning "a wide bend in the river". The area was first explored by European settlers when [Charles Sturt](#) navigated the Murray River. Its first impetus for settlement came when [paddle steamers](#) came down the River Murray and a refuelling stop was developed. This was to become Berri. The area was also part of Cobdogla Station. In 1910, [irrigation](#) was established and Berri was proclaimed as a town in 1911. Irrigation subsequently led to the establishment of [vineyards](#) and [fruit orchards](#) (such as [citrus](#), [apricots](#) and [peaches](#)). A [distillery](#) was established in 1918 and rail arrived in 1928. In 1943, "Berri Juices" (Berri Ltd) were first produced. By the 1950s, Berri and other Riverland towns were dominated the local economy with fruit and their products.

Nuriootpa is the major commercial centre in the [Barossa Valley](#) in [South Australia](#), about an hour's drive north of [Adelaide](#), and 77 kilometres by rail. The name of the town is reputed to be the local [Aboriginal](#) word for "meeting place". Nuriootpa is situated at the north end of the Barossa Valley, near the [Sturt Highway](#) and has a population of almost 4500 people, making it the largest town in the area. It dates back to 1842, and it has a profound and unique Silesian (German) influence. It is a picturesque town, with grape vines growing on some of the buildings in the main streets, and vineyards surrounding the town. There are 700 grape growing families, and about 170 wine companies with more than 70 cellar doors. This has led to some contention in recent years as the town is growing, and new housing estates are being built on land formerly occupied by the vineyards which made the town attractive in the first place. It is also home to some very famous wineries including Seppelt, Yalumba, Jacob's Creek, [Penfolds](#), Peter Lehman, [Elderton](#), [Kaesler Wines](#), and [Wolf Blass](#). Since the 1930s, Nuriootpa has often been cited as a textbook example of inspired community development. We stayed at the huge caravan park, and 60 Dodge and 70 Chrysler vintage cars were on site to start a week-long rally to Birdwood in the 'Bay to Birdwood' featuring 1500 pre-1956 vehicles. The Bay to Birdwood Run was formed in 1980, the year in which the first Bay to Birdwood Run was staged. The largest most continually held motoring event for veteran, vintage and early classic vehicles held anywhere in the world. The first [Bay to Birdwood Classic](#) was held in 1997 for vehicles built from 1st January 1945 (and at least thirty years old). The Classic is establishing a world class reputation alongside the original Vintage Run.

The Kaesler "house on wheels" caravan on display at the Nuriootpa caravan park dates from 1931. Two twelve gallon water tanks were made and fitted underneath at the rear. A spare five gallon petrol tank was also made and fitted giving a total capacity of seventeen gallons and a touring range of around 416 km. Also fitted and or stowed were a spare tool box to carry an axe, spade, chains, blocks, small and large jacks, a compass, altitude meter, and clock.



The Whispering Wall is in fact the retaining wall of the Barossa Reservoir. Built between 1899 and 1903, the parabolic dam was a revolutionary engineering feat for its day and attracted attention from all over the world, even making its way into the pages of the journal *Scientific American*. But what draws visitors to the Whispering Wall are its unique acoustic effects: words whispered at one side can be clearly heard at the other, more than 140 meters away. Children in particular love visiting the wall and testing its abilities. To visit the Whispering Wall, travel to Williamstown in the Barossa Valley and follow the signposts from the main street.



Whispering Wall

Mount Lofty, elevation 727 metres, is the highest point in the [Mount Lofty Ranges](#). It is located about 15km east of the centre of the city of [Adelaide](#) and gives unrivalled panoramic views of the city and the Adelaide plains and foothills. The region boasts more than 90 wine labels and more than 30 cellar doors. It was first climbed by a European when explorer [Collet Barker](#) climbed it in April 1831, almost seven years before Adelaide was settled. It was named by [Matthew Flinders](#) on his circumnavigation of [Australia](#) in 1802. The Summit was closed to the public during World War 2, when the obelisk was considered an indispensable navigation assistant. A flashing strobe was fitted to the top to improve visibility at night. This strobe was removed after the war, but then re-installed in the 1990s, when the obelisk was repainted, and raised during construction of the new kiosk. Access to the summit can be

gained by road from the [South Eastern Freeway](#) at [Crafers](#). The summit provides panoramic views across Adelaide, and a cafe-restaurant and gift shop. These are relatively new due to protracted disputes over appropriate development following the destruction of the old cafe in the 1983 [Ash Wednesday fires](#). On the ridge near the summit are the television transmission towers for the Adelaide television stations, and the [Mount Lofty Fire Tower](#) operated by the [Country Fire Service](#). This is becoming a popular spot for tourists to Adelaide and also for cyclists coming up the old [Mount Barker Road](#) through [Eagle on the Hill](#); this section of highway has now been superseded by the [Heysen Tunnels](#). Light snowfalls are not uncommon on the summit, although it is possible for Mount Lofty to go two or three years with out any snowfall. Mount Lofty is the coldest location in Adelaide, during winter months the temperature will not surpass 3-4 degrees Celsius some days. It is the most common location for snow in South Australia, with other rare snowfalls in other parts of the Mount Lofty Ranges and Northern South Australia.

Victor Harbor has long been a favoured holiday destination. Situated 83km south of Adelaide with a southern ocean frontage, the township offers an enjoyable experience for everyone. The panoramic views of the rugged granite landmark bluff and the well known Granite Island are stunning. In winter the Southern Right Whales can be seen basking at Encounter Bay, only metres from the shore line.

Wellington, 156km from Adelaide, is the small town on the [Murray River](#) just upstream of where it empties into [Lake Alexandrina](#). People, livestock, and goods travelled overland between [Adelaide](#) and [Melbourne](#), until a bridge was built at [Murray Bridge](#) in 1879. There is still a car ferry here. Some of the [gold](#) from the [Victorian gold rushes](#) crossed the Murray under police escort at Wellington. Even though the Murray has very little flow most of the time, and Lake Alexandrina is mostly only a few metres deep, the river at Wellington is about 25 metres deep.

The Coorong is a national park and lagoon ecosystem in [South Australia](#), and is 156 km southeast of [Adelaide](#). Its name is thought to be a corruption of the Aboriginal word kurangh, meaning "long neck"; a reference to the shape of the lagoon system. The name is also thought to be from the Aboriginal word Coorang, "sand dune", a reference to the sand dunes that can be seen between the park and the Southern Ocean. The western end of the Coorong lagoon is at the [Murray Mouth](#) near [Hindmarsh Island](#) and the Sir Richard Peninsula, and it extends about 130 km southeast. The park area includes the Coorong itself, and [Younghusband Peninsula](#) which separates the Coorong from [Encounter Bay](#) in the [Southern Ocean](#). The Coorong has been cut off from [Lake Alexandrina](#) by the construction of the [Goolwa Barrages](#) (weirs) from Goolwa to Pelican Point during the late 1930s. The park was formed in 1966 as a sanctuary for many species of birds, animals and fish. It attracts many migratory species. It provides refuge for these animals during some of Australia's regular droughts. The 467 km² also supports coastal dune systems, lagoons and coastal vegetation. One of the unique things about the Coorong is the interaction of water along its length, with sea water and Murray River water meeting rainfall and groundwater. The freshwater supports the fauna of the area while the sea water is the habitat for much of the birdlife. The waters of the Coorong are a popular venue for recreational and commercial fishers who catch carp as bait for the cray fishermen. The popular 'Coorong [Mullet](#)' and

'School [Mulloway](#)' are the main species. The region was the setting of the popular 1977 film [Storm Boy](#).

Robe (*my favourite place on the whole journey*) is a town and [fishing port](#) on the South East [Limestone Coast](#) of [South Australia](#) with a population of 1,246. It is 337km SE of Adelaide. The town's distinctive combination of historical buildings, ocean, fishing fleets, lakes and dense bush is widely appreciated. It is home to a fleet of fishing boats. Especially important are the local [lobsters](#). Robe lies on the southern shore of Guichen Bay, just off the [Princes Highway](#). Guichen Bay was named by the French explorer [Nicolas Baudin](#) after [Admiral De Guichen](#) in 1802, as he was [charting](#) the south coast of [Australia](#). Part of it is protected in the [Guichen Bay Conservation Park](#). Robe is one of the oldest towns in South Australia, founded by the colonial government as a seaport, administrative centre and village only ten years after British settlers formally established the Province of South Australia. Robe was named after the fourth [Governor of South Australia](#), [Major Frederick Robe](#), who chose the site as a port in 1845. The town was proclaimed as a port in 1847. It became South Australia's second-busiest (after [Port Adelaide](#)) international port in the 1850s. Robe's trade was drawn from a large hinterland that extended into western Victoria, and many roadside inns were built to cater for the bullock teamsters bringing down the wool, including the 'Bush Inn' still standing on the outskirts of Robe. Exports included horses and sheep skins and wool. The [Customs House](#) is listed by the [National Trust of Australia](#). A stone obelisk was built on Cape Dombey in 1852 to assist ships to navigate safely into the bay. Even so, there have been a number of shipwrecks along the coast in the area. An automatic [lighthouse](#) was built on higher ground in 1973. During the Victorian [gold rushes](#) around 1857, over 16,000 [Chinese](#) people landed at Robe to travel overland to the [goldfields](#), as [Victoria](#) introduced a landing [tax](#) of £10 per person (more than the cost of their voyage) to reduce the number of Chinese immigrants. The immigrants then walked the 320 km to [Ballarat](#) and [Bendigo](#).

Woakwine Cutting, 10km north of Beachport, and by Lake George, is an outstanding example of engineering. Accomplished by just two men, a D7 tractor was used to make a cutting through the Woakwine Range to drain swampland for farming. The project began in May 1957 and took three years to complete. The length of the cutting is one kilometre and the depth at the deepest point is 28.34 metres. The width of the cutting at the top is 36.57 metres and three metres at the bottom. There were 276,000 cubic metres of material removed using a new D7 tractor and ripper and scraper over a total of 5000 hours. The cutting has a viewing platform, information boards and machinery on display.



Woakwine Cutting, 1km long

Beachport, 385km SE of Adelaide, is an isthmus with the sea on two sides and Lake George beside it. Established in 1878. Sandy beaches stretch around Rivoli Bay offering surfing and safe swimming. Once a whaling town, Beachport is now known for lobster and shark fishing and 40 boats are stored on a hardstand as the port is rather exposed. Other important industries including forestry, tourism and viticulture. Bird life in the area is prolific. Other attractions include the Beachport Jetty, originally 4000 feet, now 772m, the second longest in South Australia; the Bowman Scenic Drive, which provides spectacular views of the rugged coast of the Southern Ocean, and the Pool of Siloam. This small lake, also situated on Bowman Scenic Drive, is supposedly seven times saltier than the sea, making swimming very easy, as the water is extremely buoyant.

Millicent and Lake Bonney Wind Farm, Stage 1 consisted of 46 turbines each having a rated capacity of 1.75 MW (total 80.5 MW) and was finished in March 2005. Construction of Stage 2 began in November 2006 and was finished around April 2008. Stage 2 consisted of 53 turbines of 3 MW (total 159 MW). The combined capacity of the two stages is 239.5 MW making it the biggest wind farm in Australia at the time of completion. Kimberley-Clark paper manufacturers, employing 1650 people in Australia, get most of the raw material to make Aussie Kleenex from plantation softwood, but a small proportion of the tissue manufacturing process uses hardwood woodchip fibres. Tantanoola Mill pulps plantation grown radiata pine using advanced systems. The softwood fibre gives the tissue paper structural strength while the hardwood fibres are used to make tissue products. We traversed 70km of pine forests.

Mount Gambier's population is 24,000, making it the largest urban area in the state outside of [Adelaide](#), and the 50th largest urban area in [Australia](#). Mount Gambier is the 2nd most populous regional [city](#) in [South Australia](#) after [Adelaide](#). It is approximately 450 kilometres south of [Adelaide](#) and 435 kilometres west of [Melbourne](#). The Blue Lake was formed in the vent of a recent volcano. There are several lakes and one of these is a huge lake of high-quality [artesian](#) drinking water which changes colour with the seasons. In winter, it is a steel grey and then changes to [cobalt blue](#) in the summer, giving rise to its name, [Blue Lake](#), 70-metres deep, and 5km around the edge.



Blue Lake, Mt Gambier

Port MacDonnell is a small [port](#) about 477 kilometres southeast of [Adelaide](#) and 28 kilometres south of [Mount Gambier](#). Port MacDonnell is the southernmost town in South Australia and has a population of 623. There is a very long breakwater to protect the port.

The area was originally inhabited by the [Bungandidj](#) Aborigines. The first Europeans to see the area were led by explorer Lieutenant [James Grant](#) in HMS [Lady Nelson](#) on 3 December 1800. In 1860 the area was proclaimed an official port, was given a name, and was surveyed. It is named after Sir [Richard Graves MacDonnell](#) who was [Governor of South Australia](#) from 1855 to 1862.

Warrnambool, 265km from Melbourne, attracts approximately 715,000 visitors per year, and is a comprehensive regional service centre. The town's tourism benefits from the views from the [Great Ocean Road](#), and its nearby beaches, some of which are used for [surfing](#). In the winter months, [Southern Right whales](#) can be seen in the waters near the city at the Logan's Beach nursery, and boats make [whale-watching](#) tours. The mainstay of the economy is agriculture and its support industry - particularly dairy farming and associated milk processing. Other major industries and services include retail, education, health, meat processing, clothing manufacture and construction. The [Fletcher Jones and Staff Pty Ltd](#) clothing factory opened in 1948 and was closed in 2005.

Flagstaff Hill Maritime Village, Warrnambool is built around the original lighthouses and now operates as a heritage attraction and museum for the Great Ocean Road. Winner of the past 3 Victorian Tourism Awards - Tourist Attraction, it houses an extensive collection of shipwreck and maritime trade artefacts in both a museum and village setting. The post office and lighthouse date back to the early days of settlement. Many whales and dolphins are seen in South Australia throughout the year. The Southern Right Whales annual migration is to the Head of the Bight between May and October. During this time whales can be seen with their calves close to the shore, with large aggregations gathering near Victor Harbor, Kangaroo Island and Head of the Bight.



Flagstaff Hill



Shipwrecked, \$5m sound & light show

Great Ocean Road is a 243-kilometre stretch of road along the coast between [Torquay](#) and [Warrnambool](#). The road was built by returned soldiers between 1919 and 1932, and is the world's largest war memorial; dedicated to casualties of [World War I](#). It is an important tourist attraction in the region with an estimated 2 million visitors a year. It winds through varying terrain alongside the coast, and provides access to several prominent landmarks; including the nationally significant [Twelve Apostles](#) limestone stack formations.

Great Ocean Road



The **Great Ocean Road** is a 243-kilometre stretch of road along the south-eastern coast between the [Victorian](#) cities of [Torquay](#) and [Warrnambool](#). The road was built by returned soldiers between 1919 and 1932, and is the world's largest war memorial; dedicated to casualties of [World War I](#). It is an important tourist attraction in the region, which winds through varying terrain alongside the coast, and provides access to several prominent landmarks; including the nationally significant [Twelve Apostles](#) limestone stack formations.

The Great Ocean Road, officially designated as the *B100*, begins at [Torquay](#) and travels 243 kilometres westward to finish at [Allansford](#) near [Warrnambool](#), the largest city along the road. The road is two lane (one in each direction), with the majority covered by an 80 kilometre per hour speed limit.



Great Ocean Road near Lorne

The road is considered a tourist attraction in the area, in which much of the road hugs coastline affectionately known as the [Shipwreck Coast](#), providing visibility of [Bass Strait](#) and the [Southern Ocean](#). The road traverses rainforests, as well as beaches and cliffs composed of limestone and sandstone, which is susceptible to erosion. The road travels via [Anglesea](#), [Lorne](#), [Apollo Bay](#), and [Port Campbell](#), the latter being notable for its natural limestone and sandstone rock formations including [Loch Ard Gorge](#), [The Grotto](#), [London Arch](#) and [The Twelve Apostles](#).

The city of [Geelong](#), close to Torquay, experiences great benefit from Australian and international visitors to the road; with Geelong Otway Tourism affirming it as an invaluable

asset. The [Royal Automobile Club of Victoria](#) (RACV) listed the road as the state's top tourism experience in its *Victoria 101 survey*, based on spots recommended by members and the public on what they would recommend to visitors.

Great Ocean Road Marathon

Besides standard vehicular travel, a 45 kilometre section between Lorne and Apollo Bay is used for the annual *Great Ocean Road Marathon*, first started in 2005. As of 2010, the marathon record of two hours, 29 minutes and 41 seconds is held by [Geelong](#) resident Mark Tucker.

History



Great Ocean Road

The Great Ocean Road was first planned in 1864, when chairman of the [Country Roads Board William Calder](#) asked the State War Council for funds be provided for returned soldiers to work on roads in sparsely populated areas in the Western district. By the time of [World War I](#), the rugged south-west coast of Victoria was accessible only by sea or rough bush track. Besides being dedicated as a memorial, it was also envisioned that the road would connect isolated settlements on the coast, and become a vital transport link for the timber industry and tourism.

Surveying for the road, tentatively titled the *South Coast Road*, started in 1918 - with the road suggested to travel from [Barwon Heads](#), follow the coast west around [Cape Otway](#), and end near Warrnambool. In 1918, the Great Ocean Road Trust was formed as a private company, under the helm of president [Howard Hitchcock](#). The company managed to secure £81,000 in capital from private subscription and borrowing, with Hitchcock himself contributing £3000. Money would be repaid by charging drivers a toll until the debt was cleared, and the road would then be gifted to the state.

Construction effort

Construction on the road began on 19 September 1919, built by approximately 3,000 [returned servicemen](#) as a war memorial for fellow servicemen who had been killed in [World War I](#). An advance survey team progressed through dense wilderness at approximately 3 kilometres a month. Construction was done by hand; using explosives, pick and shovel, wheel barrows, and some small machinery, and was at times perilous, with several workers killed on the job; the final sections along steep coastal mountains being the most difficult to work on. Anecdotal evidence from [ABC](#) archives in 1982 suggested workers would rest [detonators](#) on their knees during travel, as it was the softest ride for them.

The soldiers were paid 10 [shillings](#) and [sixpence](#) for eight hours per day, also working a half-day on Saturdays. They used tents for accommodation throughout, and made use of a communal dining marquee and kitchen; food costing up to 10 shillings a week. Despite the difficulty involved in constructing the road, the workers had access to a piano, gramophone, games, newspapers and magazines at the camps. Additionally, in 1924, the [steamboat Casino](#) became stranded near Cape Patton after hitting a reef, forcing it to jettison 500 barrels of beer and 120 cases of spirits. The workers obtained the cargo, resulting in an unscheduled two week long drinking break.

Completion and early usage



The [Hitchcock Memorial](#) at Mount Defiance

On 18 March 1922 the section from Eastern View to [Lorne](#) was officially opened with celebrations. However it was then closed from 10 May 1922 for further work; opening again on 21 December along with tolls to recoup construction costs. The charge, payable at Eastern View, was two [shillings](#) for motor cars, and 10 shillings for wagons with more than 2 horses.

In November 1932, the section from Lorne to [Apollo Bay](#) was finished, bringing the road to completion. The road was officially opened with Victoria's Lieutenant-Governor [Sir William Irvine](#) holding a ceremony near Lorne's [Grand Pacific Hotel](#), and the road subsequently being acknowledged as the world's largest war memorial. At the time, newspaper [The Age](#) commented - "In the face of almost insurmountable odds, the Great Ocean Road has materialised from a dream or 'wild-cat scheme', as many dubbed it, into concrete reality". Hitchcock had however died of heart disease on 22 August 1932, before the road was completed, though his car was driven behind the governor's in the procession along the road during the opening ceremony. A memorial was constructed in Hitchcock's name on the road at Mount Defiance, near Lorne, and he is still affectionately considered the *Father of the Road*.

In its original state, the road was considered a formidable drive; fitting only a single vehicle comfortably at a time. Areas with sheer cliffs would be most hazardous, with only few places for drivers to pull over to allow others to proceed in the opposite direction. On 2 October 1936, the road was handed to the State Government; with the deed for the road presented to the Victorian Premier at a ceremony at the Cathedral Rock toll gate. It was at this time that the tolls were also removed.

In 1962, the road was deemed by the Tourist Development Authority to be *one of the world's great scenic roads*. It also had sections widened between the Lorne Hotel and the Pacific Hotel to improve traffic, while aiming to preserve it's character. Despite

improvements, the road was still considered a challenging drive; the [Victorian Police](#) motor school even using it for training around 1966.

Over its life, the Great Ocean Road has been susceptible to natural elements; in 1960 the section at Princetown was partially washed away by water during storms. It experienced landslides on 11 August 1964, and in 1971; both closing sections of the road near Lorne. Because of the terrain surrounding the road, it was also closed due to bush-fires in 1962 and 1964; particularly in areas with nearby camp-sites.