

Media Release



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MEDIA RELEASE

MUNGO COMMUNITY PLANNING & INFORMATION FORUM
20 November 2008 @ Mungo Lodge @ 2.00pm
“Our World Heritage in Willandra”

Mr Richard Mintern, Executive Officer, Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area, will speak at the next Community Planning and Information Forum to be held at Mungo Lodge on Thursday 20 November 2008 from 2.00pm.

The Willandra Lakes Region is a World Heritage Site that covers 2,400 square kilometres in the Murray Darling Basin, in south-western New South Wales and incorporates seventeen dry lakes.

The area is managed by the Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC), a NSW State Government Agency.

The Region has important natural and cultural values including exceptional examples of past human civilization including the world's oldest cremation site. A small section of the region is protected by the Mungo National Park which is in the Balranald Shire. The central feature of Mungo National Park is Lake Mungo, the second largest of the dry lakes.

The park is very significant for the archeological remains which have been discovered there. The remains of Mungo Man, the oldest human remains discovered in Australia, and Mungo Women, the oldest known human to have been ritually cremated, were both discovered within the Park. They were buried on the shore of Lake Mungo, beneath the “Walls of China” which is a series of lunettes on the south eastern edge of the lake.

The fossil remains of a series of lakes and sand formations that date from the Pleistocene are also found in this region, together with archaeological evidence of human occupation dating from 45–60,000 years ago. It is a unique landmark in the study of human evolution on the Australian continent. Several well-preserved fossils of giant marsupials have also been found here.

Today, the lake beds are flat plains vegetated by salt tolerant low bushes and grasses. About 10 per cent of the World Heritage area is gazetted as the Mungo National Park, which covers about two-thirds of Lake Mungo and includes the spectacular parts of the Walls of China lunette. The remaining area comprises pastoral leasehold properties.

Mark King, LMD CMA Chair said “the better understanding of such an important place in the history of, not only Australia, but of the world is important in preserving our heritage.”

“Mr Mintern’s immense understanding of the developments of the Management Plan since 1996 will lead the way for this significant region to be placed on the world stage for all to see” he said.

“The Mungo Forum will open up discussions on the direction that the DECC are wanting to take this sacred place” Mark King said.

“Aboriginal ancestry and the recognition of their “Keeping Places” are a part of our great land and should be preserved into the future. Only by understanding the conservation value of the Willandra Region can the future be secured for it” he said.

All interested people and groups are welcome to attend the Mungo Forum on 20 November at Mungo Lodge. It would be good to know the number who anticipate to attend, so registration to LMD CMA would be appreciated.

More details about the Mungo Forum agenda can be found on the LMD CMA website at www.lmd.cma.nsw.gov.au or by phoning Susan Walla on 03 5021 9460.

ENDS

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