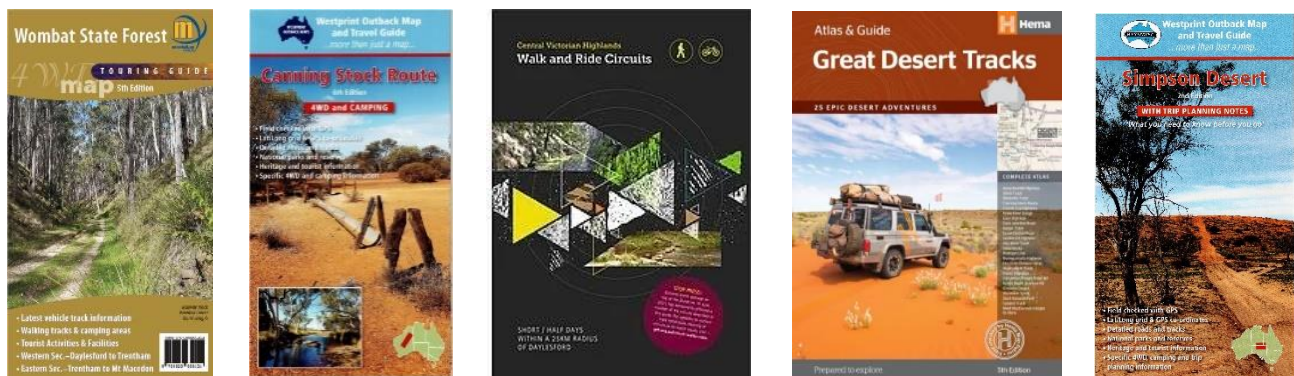


The Meridian Line - Sunday 26.05.2024

“Just one small positive thought in the morning can change your whole day.” —Dalai Lama



Wombat State Forest 4WD Map – from \$14.95

This double-sided map at a 1:50,000 scale covers the entire Wombat State Forest, stretching from Daylesford to Woodend and the Macedon Ranges. It is an excellent resource for four-wheel driving, highlighting all the region's tourist activities and features, including wineries, mines, mineral spas, picnic grounds, and more. The map also includes the Great Dividing Trail and Wombat Forest Drive, making it perfect for touring, four-wheel driving, holidaymakers, bushwalkers, and day-trippers. Recently updated, it now features pet-friendly campgrounds, accommodation options, local produce, petrol stations, waterfalls, and additional tourist information.

<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/wombat-state-forest-4wd-map/>

Canning Stock Route – from \$19.95

The Westprint Canning Stock Route Map is an indispensable resource for anyone planning to explore one of Australia's most iconic and remote regions. Specifically designed for adventurers and explorers, this high-quality map provides accurate and detailed information about the entire 1850km length of the Canning Stock Route, from Halls Creek in Western Australia to Wiluna in the east. It includes comprehensive details about the route's history and key points of interest, such as wells, water sources, campsites, and Aboriginal communities. The map features historical notes on the surveying and construction of the Stock Route by Alfred Canning, as well as the later reconditioning of the wells by Snell. Clear symbols on the map refer to textual information on the back, explaining each point of interest and detailing the surrounding flora and fauna.

<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/canning-stock-route/>

Central Victorian Highlands Walk & Ride Circuits - \$25.00

This guide is perfect for circuit walks and rides around Daylesford, featuring 30 routes complete with clear maps, elevations, and descriptions. Spiral-bound for convenience, it ensures you experience the best of the Wombat State Forest and the Upper Loddon State Forest.

<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/central-highlands-walk-and-ride/>

Great Desert Tracks Atlas & Guide - \$69.95

Explore Australia's desert regions with this comprehensive guide, perfect for both desert enthusiasts and those seeking to tackle some of the country's favourite 4WD destinations. This informative guide is an indispensable companion for traversing the arid centre of Australia. It features handy track profiles with elevations and distances, as well as points of interest, camping areas, and supply points, all presented in an easy-to-follow graphic format. Additionally, it includes essential pre-trip information on preparation, outback safety, and driving techniques, making it a must-have guidebook for traveling through Australia's deserts.

<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/great-desert-tracks/>

Simpson Desert – from \$14.95

This revised Simpson Desert Map is designed for trip planning, covering the area from Birdsville and Mungerannie to Oodnadatta, Old Andado, Finke, and Todd River Downs, plus everything in between. Insets include Poeppel Corner, Big Red to Birdsville, and Dalhousie Springs. Major features are identified with GPS locations, and places of interest are numerically cross-referenced to detailed information on the reverse side. The map includes rest areas, parking bays, fuel stations, caravan parks, trip planning notes, and camping information, with distances for every road and track. Note that a SA Desert Parks Pass permit is required to drive across the desert. Outback Australia is one of the world's unique regions, and this map is designed to enhance your enjoyment of it.

<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/simpson-desert/>

Meridian Musings

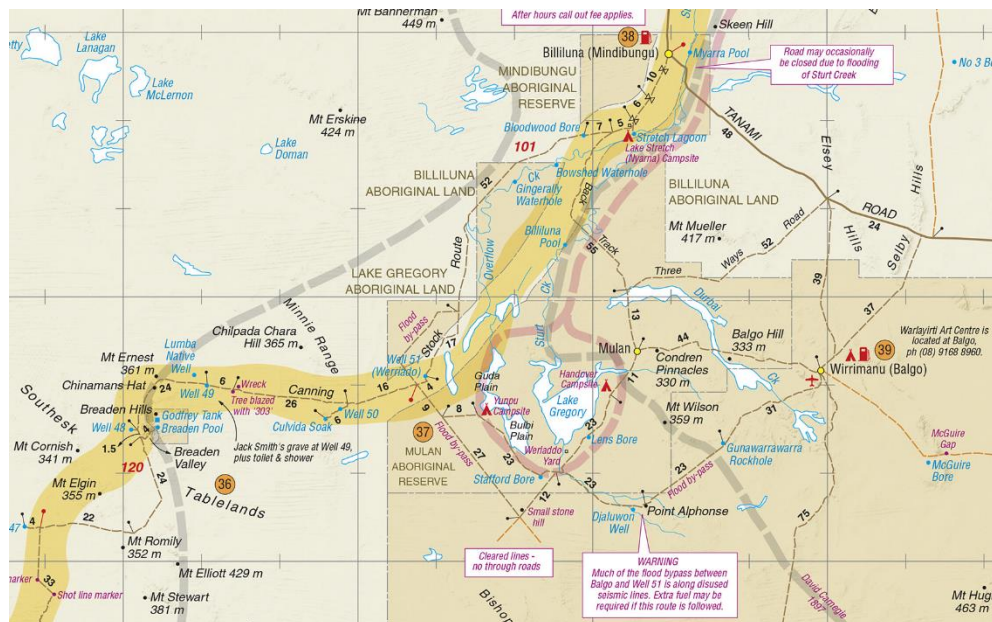
Last fortnight Paul contacted us to see if anyone in the Westprint community could help him out with some information on Lake Gregory flood by-pass along the Canning Stock Route.

Heather replied saying:

“I think you need to contact the store manager at Balgo Community as they're right there. A long, long time ago we used the bypass, when I travelled with Northwest Safaris, but they retired many years ago. Halls Creek police might know, as I believe they'd cover the area? “

Information that may be of interest to our Meridian/Westprint community often comes across our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/MeridianWestprintMaps/>) . I recently read this post from Jim Backhouse who had posted on 'The Canning Stock Route' FB page which may give Paul more information.

"I believe we are the first crew to successfully completed the CSR this season, travelling from South to North. We had a fantastic trip and enjoyed everything the CSR has to offer. Wells 25, 46 and 51 are all under water. Also, to report is well 41 has been burnt in recent fires. We were the first wheel tracks on a large portion of the CSR. There is a small section of water (80-100 mtrs) just after well 24, the base was very firm and we drove it without spinning a wheel. We did hear rumours of a crew that were stuck for 24 hours and we did see evidence of this incident just before the water at well 24. It appears they had tried to go around the water by deviating off the track in a wet area. (The golden rule of outback travel in the wet is never leave the track!) We stayed on the track and drove through without spinning a wheel. At well 25 you will need to deviate around the well as the water is 1.8km across!! At well 46 the water is approximately 500mm deep and around 500 mtrs long. Once again the ground underneath the water was firm on the track and we drove well 46 without a problem. (Staying on the track) well 51 is situated 2 km out in the middle of Lake Gregory. Unfortunately we were unable to reach well 51! (Maybe an excuse to drive the CSR again 😊) There is no way around Lake Gregory at this point and we exited via Mulan (with a permit) even exiting this way you will need to deviate off the track to get around Lake Gregory. I highly recommend you apply some form of bush wrap to your vehicle as the CSR is heavily overgrown and even the burnt sections have sharp branches protruding onto the track."



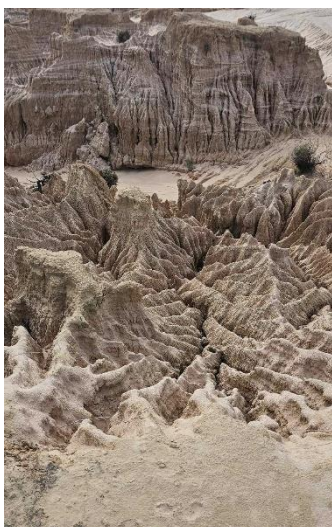
Well, our road trip continued but before leaving Mildura we ventured to Mungo National Park which is a protected national park that is located in south-western New South Wales. The road leading into the Park is an unsealed dirt road. It was rather corrugated and the day we travelled, quite a bit of dust was being kicked up by either the wind or other vehicles. It is also worth noting that a 4WD was not necessary for travelling this route.



This national park is steeped in Aboriginal history; it was here that the remains of Mungo Lady and Mungo Man were discovered. We started with the Mungo lookout and the view was truly spectacular before taking the self guided driving tour of the park along the Mungo loop track.



This starts at the Visitor Centre and then winds through the dunes and mallee country of the National Park taking in the Mungo lunettes (Walls of China), dry lakes, Vigars Well and Mallee Stop Track. Along the way we enjoyed the board walks and short walks to truly marvel at the unique landscape and enjoy our short time in this Park.



Our next major destination was Broken Hill but not without some stops on the way. First stop was Wentworth, a small border town in the far south west of the state of New South Wales where the Murray River and the Darling River meet. Another stunning view but so different to what we had experienced at Mungo National Park.



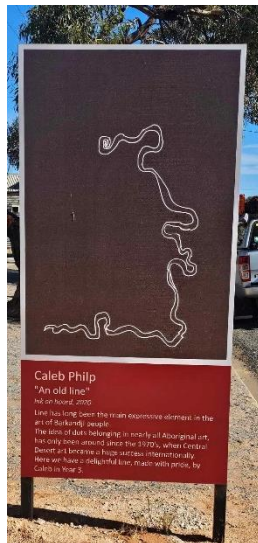
You truly know you are travelling in Australia when you see emus and kangaroos along the roadside.



Menindee Lakes are a naturally occurring series of shallow lakes located along the Lower Darling River and the perfect place to stop en-route. They are currently full of water with lots of birdlife.



Seeing the painted silos and water tanks along our travels is amazing but there is actually an abundance of artwork to be enjoyed. The streets of Menindee are dotted with artworks which all have an indigenous theme.



Next stop on our outback adventure was Broken Hill. Sunset at the Living Desert and Sculpture, countless galleries, the Royal Flying Doctor Outback Heritage Experience and Line of Lode Miner's Memorial all add up to make Broken Hill a special place in the outback.



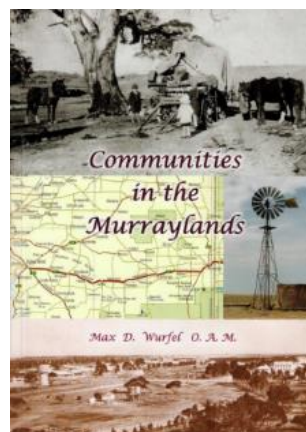
Broken Hill was also the scene of a first for Meridian Westprint Maps. We were interviewed by ABC radio in Broken Hill about our new Corner Country Map! It was something that we have never done before and was quite a terrifying process. Fortunately, it all went well and it is especially gratifying to see how well the map has been received.



What's New to the Website

Communities in the Murraylands by Max Wurfel - \$25.95

Max Wurfel has thoroughly researched and compiled information on the origins of approximately 50 communities that emerged in the Murraylands along the railway line from Tailem Bend to Pinnaroo. These settlements often began with the establishment of a meeting venue, followed by the creation of a school and a football team. A variety of sources were utilized to gather this information, in addition to Max's own research. The book offers a fascinating glimpse into the early days of the region and serves as an excellent resource for anyone interested in tracing their family's history in the area.



<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/murraylands/>

Westprint Great Central Road Map Pack – from \$26.90

We have curated a new map pack which covers the Great Central Road, stretching from Laverton (WA) to Yulara and Alice Springs (NT). It includes maps of the Gunbarrel Highway and the route from Alice Springs to Uluru. This mostly unsealed Australian outback highway spans 1,126 km and passes through several small communities. Part of the Outback Way, which extends all the way to Winton, Queensland. Although primarily recommended for four-wheel drive vehicles, the road is now graded to a standard suitable for two-wheel drive vehicles and caravans. This route, being the most direct from Perth to Uluru/Ayers Rock, sees thousands of vehicles annually. The maps have been field-checked with GPS and feature a Lat/Long grid and GPS coordinates, detailed roads and tracks, national parks and reserves, heritage and tourist information, and specific 4WD, caravan, and camping details. All Westprint maps include notes on history, explorers, points of interest, surrounding flora and fauna, and feature various landmark photos. They are easy to read, with road distances, rest areas, caravan parks, and fuel outlets clearly noted.



<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/westprint-great-central-road/>

What's On

June 1 – 2: 224 Pinjarra Festival in Pinjarra Western Australia. Free community event, is set to entertain with live music, market stalls, vintage car and machinery displays, wine tasting shed, woodturning demonstrations and food trucks.

<https://www.murray.wa.gov.au/events/2024-pinjarra-festival/267>

June 7 – 10: Gulgong Henry Lawson Heritage Festival in Gulgong NSW. Aims to promote aspiring artistic endeavours whilst showcasing the Grenfell region's heritage and tourist attractions with entertainment for everyone including vibrant street parties, market stalls and performers.

<https://henrylawsonfestival.com.au/events-entertainment/festival-program/>

June 7 – 9: Jandowae Timbertown Festival in Jandowae Queensland. A weekend of entertainment including a grand parade, market & food stalls, chainsaw & wood cutting events, chainsaw sculpting, fireworks & live entertainment.

<https://jandowaetimbertown.org.au/>

June 10 – 16: 2024 Crows Nest Country Music Festival in Crows Nest Queensland. Features country music and bush poets.

<https://events.tr.qld.gov.au/all-time/120934/crows-nest-country-music-festival-2024>

21 June – 21 July: East Gippsland Winter Festival in East Gippsland Victoria. Incorporating winter solstice, expect hand-made lanterns, projection art, live music, long lunches, workshops, wellness experiences, on-foot adventures and much more!

<https://egwinterfest.com.au/>

20 – 23 June: Brunette Races ~ A.B.C. Amateur Race Club held at Brunette Downs Station, which is situated on the Barkly Tablelands, Northern Territory. Events to suit everyone including amateur horse racing, campdraft and rodeo, a kids gymkhana, adult barrel racing; and a variety of kids events for those without a horse.

<https://www.abcraces.com.au/>

12 – 13 July: Huon Valley Mid-Winter Festival in Huon Valley Tasmania. The Huon Valley Mid-Winter Festival is all about celebrating the region's apple-picking history and at its core is the wassail: the ages-old tradition of scaring evil spirits from the orchard to bring on a bumper crop.

<https://www.huonvalleytas.com/event/mid-winter-festival/>

If there is an event that you would like to see included in the What's On section, drop me a line at rochelle@meridianmaps.com.au.

Seasonal Updates

For more regular updates on closures, please check our facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/MeridianWestprintMaps> as we try to include warnings and advice as we become aware of them.

Innamincka Regional Reserve and Malkumba Coongie Lakes National Park:

Coongie Track Innamincka to Kudriemitchie Campground – Open to 4WD only – No Towing, Caution at washouts and silting.

Coongie Track Kudriemitchie Campground to Malkumba Coongie Lakes National Park – Closed

15 Mile Track – Closed due to flood damage

Merninie Loop – Closed due to flood damage

Cullyamurra Waterhole – Closed due to flood damage

Burke's Grave – Open to 4WD

Queerbidie – Open to 4WD

Policemans – Closed due to flood damage

Kings Marker – Closed due to flood damage

Ski Beach Campground – Closed due to flood damage
Wills Grave – Closed due to flood damage
Minkie Waterhole Campground – Closed due to flood damage
Old Strzelecki Track (on Innamincka Regional Reserve only) – Closed due to flood damage
Bore Track North – Closed due to flood damage
Bore Track South – Closed indefinitely
Walker Crossing Public Access Route – Closed for Public Safety, by order of the Pastoral Board of South Australia

Be aware that seasonal road closures exist across Victoria and generally apply from the Kings birthday weekend in June until the Melbourne Cup weekend in November but can be closed earlier or opened later depending on weather and track conditions. For a full list of closures please see <https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/get-into-nature/safety-in-nature/seasonal-road-closures>.

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service will be conducting maintenance work at Big Bend camping area in the Carnarvon section of Carnarvon National Park from 18/6/2024 to 20/06/2024 and the following areas are temporarily closed to public access: Big Bend camping area and Big Ben walkers' camp.

Flood damage at Carnarvon Gorge has led to the temporary closure of Wards Canyon while rangers undertake repairs. All other walking tracks at Carnarvon Gorge are now open unless otherwise signed.

For a full list of Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service closures please see <https://parks.desi.qld.gov.au/park-alerts>.

Disclaimer: These events were correct at the time they were added to the Meridian Line; however, this may have been some time before the actual event. Please make your own enquiries before travelling to an event.

Reader's Stories

If you have any stories that you would like to contribute based on places that you might have been, drop me a line at rochelle@meridianmaps.com.au.

Do you have a story?

Articles for this newsletter can be emailed to rochelle@meridianmaps.com.au We cannot guarantee any item will have a particular publishing date but we do our best to keep topics and events current.

My Fascination with Tracks

By John Deckert & Jo Ussing.

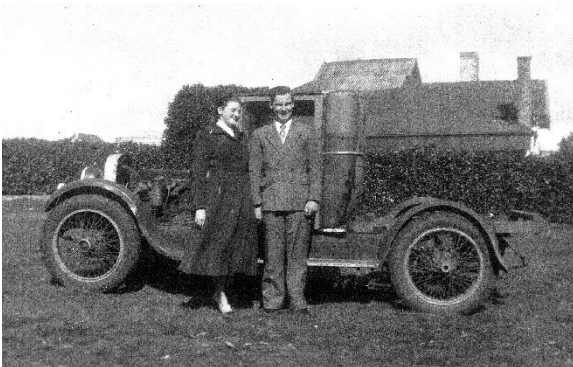
Author's Note: This was intended to be an article for The Meridian Line explaining why I wanted to add a section to the [Gold Escort Route Travel Guide](#) showing the tracks taken by Chinese gold-seekers who arrived by ship at Robe, South Australia and walked 500 kilometres to the Victorian goldfields of Bendigo and Ballarat and many other places in between. I was sidetracked by my enthusiasm to explain how, since my school days, I have been excited by exploring new tracks. An

article about Chinese gold seekers, who numbered in the thousands, will follow but readers may have to put up with more of these stories along the way. John Deckert 04-05-2024.

It all started in high school, c1954. My best mate Mal, who lived on a farm a few miles away, and I were discussing our intention of building a go-cart. We had more than 300,000 acres (132,000 ha) of bushland to explore and a go-cart seemed to be a good idea. Although the go-cart consumed many hours of time spent together, it never actually became more than a figment of our imaginations.

One day during our earnest go-cart planning, Mal said he knew where there was a motorbike that once belonged to his father, and it had been in a farm shed for a long time and might provide an engine for the go-cart. Perhaps it could be bought. I duly negotiated with the farmer and handed over £5 for the purchase of a 1918 Indian motorbike still painted in faded WW1 green. I rode that old Indian along every track on our farm but alas, it wasn't in great condition, and I was forever walking home. Improvements to mode of transport were required. (Side note: for those who wonder what happened to the Indian. I sold it to a restorer but have no idea who he was.).

Nearby, in another farm shed and under a thick layer of dust, straw and other shed detritus, was a c1924 four-cylinder Buick car that had been cut down for use as a farm utility (known then as a buckboard). I received better value with my next £5 purchase because I now had four wheels, a better engine and Mal and I could both explore. Another advantage was that it could go further, and I rarely had to walk home. Those 300,000 acres of bushland, later becoming the Little Desert National Park was criss-crossed with tracks waiting to be explored.



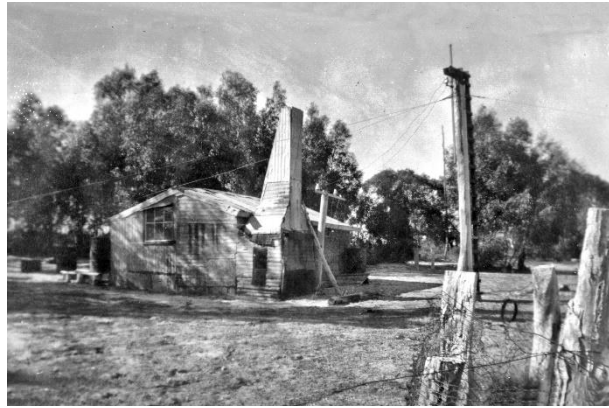
John and Lyn about to go somewhere with the Buick and John underneath doing repairs.

One track running north-south from Nhill to Goroke was probably established formally when the Little Desert was surveyed for lease or settlement prior to 1900. Much of another old track between Mt Elgin station and Vectis station was also used by the Gold Escort travelling between Adelaide and Castlemaine in the 1850s. But the Gold Escort happened a long time ago and very few people knew much about it so there was not much reason for me to go exploring in that direction. It was too far anyway.

The track that interested me most is now known as Stan's Camp Track. It ran from Lawloit, halfway between Nhill and Kaniva, across the Desert and then on to Hamilton in the Western District and was used by Squatters who had to travel to Hamilton to register the land they wished to lease for sheep grazing. Of course, I was just a teenager and didn't know that. I just enjoyed the round trip past Brown's Spring, across to Stan's Camp and home by adjoining tracks leading to Kinimakatka.



Stan's Camp Track, Little Desert.



Stan's Camp about 1950. Little Desert.

More than 60 years later I'm still obsessed with this track and believe it is one of the most unusual tracks I've been on. Here's why. Stan's Camp Track joins a waterhole on the northern edge of the Little Desert with a waterhole on the southern edge, suggesting that the general route may have been used by Aborigines for centuries. European settlement started in 1845 near the northern end of this track and most of the surrounding area was taken up for sheep grazing by 1850. In 1852 the Gold Escort Route from Adelaide to Castlemaine was established and this track was shown on a map drawn by John McLaren Deputy Surveyor General of South Australia when he passed through in mid-1852.

Although the track can no longer be followed in its entirety, the Little Desert Section is still in constant use. To the best of my investigations, there has never been a road-making machine of any type working on this track with the intention of making improvements. That is 180 years of constant European use and not even repaired by a grader. Is there any other public road or track in Australia that can make this claim? In the past few years, parts of the track have had vegetation cleared. Apparently new 4WDers are more particular about their paintwork than I ever was in that Buick buckboard. Stan's Camp is now just ruins but in the early days it was the home of a workman for the Meagher family (pronounced Maar) who ran a sheep property at Lawloit, extending into the Little Desert. Stan lived in a small two-roomed hut and repaired fences, moved sheep, and burned strips in the Desert.

He enjoyed the company of visitors, usually on horseback, and never complained about being bored. Mahers Track heading east from the Nhill – Harrow Road was incorrectly named by National Parks after the Meagher family. Not only is the name spelled wrongly but the track also has absolutely nothing to do with the Meagher or Maher families. Both Meagher and Maher are pronounced the same. Good news for the Maher family who still live in the Horsham area, bad news for the Meagher pioneers who no longer live locally. Perhaps that should be my next story...after the Chinese gold miner's story.

Side note from Jo: *The Little Desert is easily accessible for 4WD vehicles and offers numerous free camping areas in the central section. Meridian Maps provides an excellent map covering the Victorian Deserts and the Gold Escort Tracks. Autumn is the ideal season for camping, while October is the prime time for viewing wildflowers.*

Meridian Mirth

For some these will be a trip down memory lane while other may be left scratching their heads. Regardless enjoy these, which were sent in by our regular joke contributor as well as some thoughtful reflections from Max. To share your jokes, please send them to rochelle@meridianmaps.com.au

Do you remember?



- You know you are getting old when you hold all the cards, but they're get well cards
- It's not your age that matters, it's how your matter ages
- Old age isn't so bad when you consider the alternative
- If you wear dentures, a glass of water is something into which you can really sink your teeth
- An old-timer remembers when a pie was set on the window sill to cool, not to thaw
- The years between fifty and seventy are the hardest. You are always being asked to do things, and you are not yet decrepit enough to turn them down
- Old age is like everything else. To make a success of it, you've got to start young
- You know you are getting old when you decide to procrastinate but never get around to it
- There is no cure for birth and death, save to enjoy the interval
- Old age - Your idea of a night out is sitting out on the porch

When you are over the hill you pick up speed

The most aggravating thing about the younger generation is that I no longer belong to it
Retirement takes the fun out of week-ends

The Fine Print

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<https://meridianmaps.com.au/newsletter/>

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