



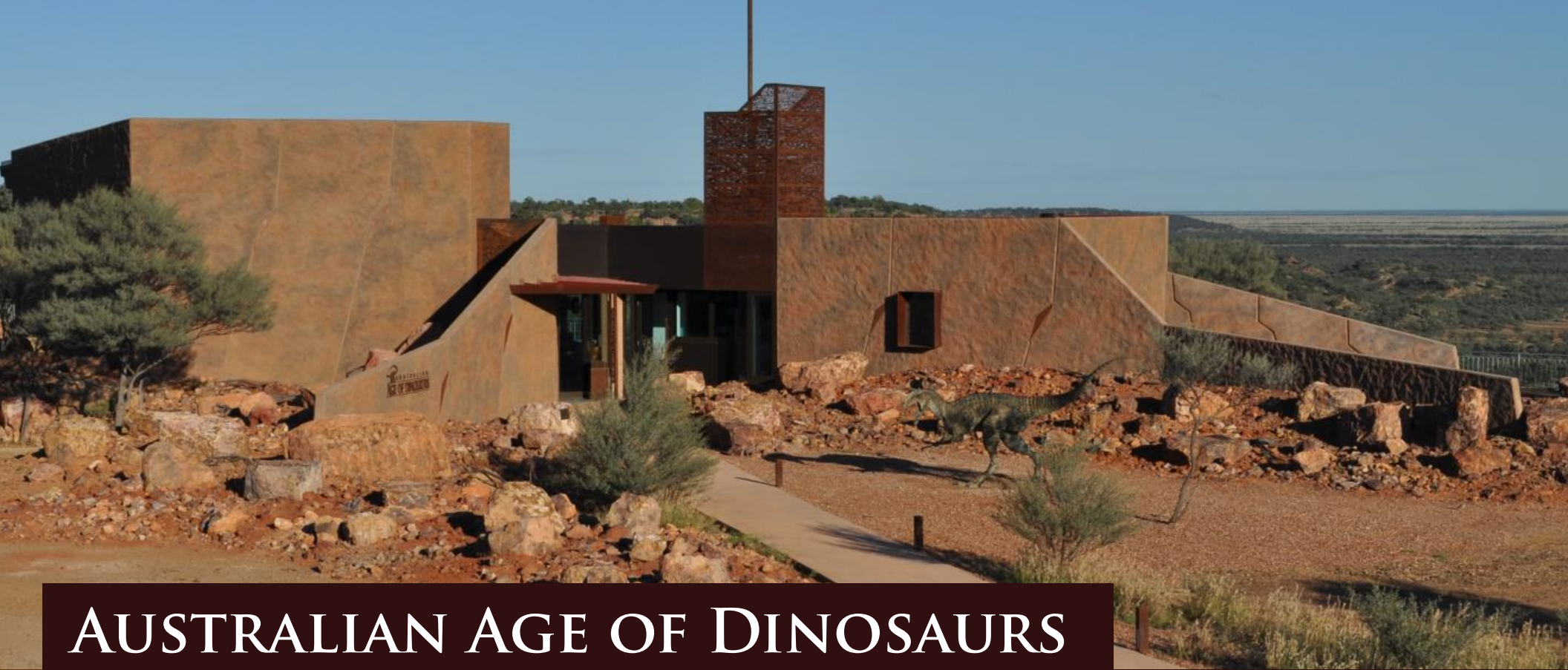
A U S T R A L I A N AGE OF DINOSAURS

MEDIA KIT
2020



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AUSTRALIAN AGE OF DINOSAURS

ABOUT US

Australian Age of Dinosaurs Limited (The Museum) is a not-for-profit organisation located in Winton, Queensland and founded by David and Judy Elliott in 2002. The organisation's activities include operation of the Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum of Natural History, which holds annual dinosaur digs in the Winton Formation of western Queensland and oversees the year-round operation of the most productive dinosaur fossil preparation Laboratory in the Southern Hemisphere.

Since 2005 the Museum has accumulated the largest collection of Australia's biggest dinosaur fossils in the world and holds the holotype specimens of *Diamantinasaurus matildae* (Matilda), *Savannasaurus elliottorum* (Wade), *Ferrodraco lentoni* (Butch) and *Australovenator wintonensis* (Banjo), Australia's most complete theropod skeleton. In 2019 the Museum site, The Jump-Up, became Australia's first International Dark-Sky Sanctuary through the International Dark-Sky Association.

The Museum is open to the public daily from April to October and open six days a week (closed Sundays) from November to March.

HISTORY

In 1999 David Elliott discovered a sauropod fossil while mustering on his property, near Winton. From these beginnings David and his wife Judy created Australian Age of Dinosaurs Incorporated, and later Australian Age of Dinosaurs Limited – a not-for-profit organisation to encourage, promote and facilitate the discovery, preservation and display of Australian dinosaurs – with David Elliott as Executive Chairman. In 2006 the Britton Family donated 1,400 hectares of mesa or Jump-Up country to AAOD as a site for the future Museum. In 2009 the fossil preparation Laboratory was built on the jump-up, a facility where Prep-A-Dino participants and staff actively prepare dinosaur fossils on a day-to-day basis. Three years later the Reception Centre was built, which houses the Museum's holotype fossils, single specimens on which the description and name of a new species is based. Visitors from all over the world can now become part of the amazing age of dinosaurs in Australia. Today the Museum is working toward a new main Museum building and new bronze dinosaur galleries to add to the recently opened Dinosaur Canyon.

AAOD JOURNAL

Since 2003 Australian Age of Dinosaurs has published an annual journal on Australian natural history. The Journal is compiled and edited by David and Judy Elliott and incorporates the scientific research and life's work of Australia's leading palaeontologists. The Journal is distributed each year to subscribing members who receive a variety of discounts and special offers and a quarterly newsletter. In its fourteenth year the AAOD Journal continues to be an unmatched source of Australian dinosaur information and palaeo news in Australia.

RECEPTION CENTRE

Designed by Cox Rayner Architects as a pro-bono contribution to the AAOD project and built by Woollam Constructions in 2012. The Reception Centre was built with \$1 million funding provided by the Australian Government with \$50,000 funding from the Queensland Government and pro-bono support from the Winton Shire Council and several corporations.

Designed to blend into the surrounding Jump-Up rock, the building takes on the earthy hues and textures of the surrounding landscape. The concrete walls of the building were coloured and stamped with latex mats that were moulded from the rock surface of The Jump-Up rock by the Elliott family. The building has won several awards

for architecture including the J W Wilson Award for 'Building of the Year' in central Queensland, the Queensland 'State Award for Public Architecture', the 'Walls' category of the Queensland 'Public Domain Awards 2013' and the Kevin Cavanagh Medal – the Concrete Institute of Australia's highest national award for 'Excellence in Concrete'.

A life-sized 5m-long bronze statue of *Australovenator* (Banjo) stands at the entrance to the Reception Centre. Digitally sculpted by the Museum's palaeo-artist Travis R Tischler, the statue was cast by Deep in the Heart Foundry, Texas USA. It was funded by The John Villiers Trust and erected in front of the Reception Centre in April 2012.



COLLECTION ROOM

The Collection Room inside the Reception Centre is a climate-controlled space that houses the Museum's holotype and paratype fossil specimens. The specimens are displayed in a semi-circle around a public stage where visitors can view the fossils as part of daily guided tours run by the Museum. The holotype fossil bones of *Diamantinasaurus matildae* (Matilda), *Savannasaurus elliottorum* (Wade), *Ferrodraco lentoni* (Butch) and the most complete theropod dinosaur in Australia, *Australovenator wintonensis* (Banjo), are on display as well as fossils from digs that were collected in 2004/2005 in conjunction with the Queensland Museum. The Collection Room is fitted with audio visual equipment that complements the guided tours by showing animation footage of Western Queensland's dinosaurs. This footage consists of excerpts from the documentary *Monsters in the Outback* produced for the Museum by Bearcage Studios in 2013 through funding provided to AAOD by BHP Billiton.

FOSSIL PREPARATION LABORATORY

The Laboratory is the most productive Fossil Preparation Laboratory in the Southern Hemisphere. The Laboratory currently stores and sorts the preserved dinosaur fossils brought back from the Museum's annual dinosaur digs. It is estimated that the fossils currently on hand will take over ten years to prepare. With a team of dedicated fossil technicians and volunteers, many new discoveries are being recorded, displayed and scientifically published.



DINOSAUR CANYON

In April 2017 the Museum officially opened Dinosaur Canyon. Dinosaur Canyon is located at the site of the future main Museum building, two kilometres beyond the current Reception Centre.

The attraction consists of a spectacular building perched on the cliff overlooking Dinosaur Canyon and includes 300 metres of elevated concrete pathway throughout the gorge below. Five outdoor galleries are positioned along the pathway, which resembles a treetop walk as it winds throughout massive boulders and thick vegetation below the rim of a gorge.

In late June 2019 the Queensland Government officially awarded the Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum a share in the \$36 million Growing Tourism Infrastructure (GTI) Fund to deliver the Dynamic Destination project at Dinosaur Canyon: to build the Gondwana Stars Observatory and *March of Titanosaurs* exhibition. This catalyst project will greatly expand visitation, particularly in summer, and provide flow-on effects to regional businesses, strengthening regional sustainability and instigating the growth required for western Queensland to be international-tourism ready. The Dynamic Destination project will be ready to open to the public by the middle of 2020.



OUR EXPERIENCES

PREP-A-DINO PROGRAM

The Museum has an active fossil preparation program for public involvement through its Prep-A-Dino program. The process of preparing a dinosaur fossil is a time consuming job that involves carefully chipping away layers of stone to reveal the embedded dinosaur fossil inside. The Museum offers a fully inducted training session and tour of the Museum before participants embark on prepping a dinosaur fossil. The Museum offers on site accommodation at Maloney Lodge as part of its Prep-A-Dino package.

DIG-A-DINO PROGRAM

Since 2004 the Museum has hosted dinosaur digs that can be attended by members of the public. Digs are usually held in late May and early June and attract a participation charge that helps cover the cost of holding the dig and preparation of fossils recovered. The digs take place in the Mitchell Grass Downs country of the Winton district, and have produced numerous dinosaur fossils – many of which have become holotype specimens.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Museum's education program provide school groups with opportunities to get up close to real dinosaurs. During Junior Paleontologist tours students learn how to dig up dinosaur bones, mould their own Banjo claw and prepare real dinosaur fossils.



GUIDED TOURS

ULTIMATE DINOSAUR PASS

The Ultimate Dinosaur Pass includes guided tours of the Fossil Preparation Laboratory, Collection Room and Dinosaur Canyon.

Timing: This three-site tour takes three hours, including transfers via the Noble Express shuttle bus.

WINTON DINOSAUR CAPITAL OF AUSTRALIA VIP PASS

The Winton Dinosaur Capital of Australia (WDCOA) VIP Pass includes guided tours of the Fossil Preparation Laboratory, Collection Room, Dinosaur Canyon and Dinosaur Stampede National Monument at Lark Quarry Conservation Park.

Timings: The Museum three-site tour takes three hours, including Noble Express shuttle bus transfers. The Dinosaur Stampede tour takes 45 minutes not including self-transfers.

WHOLESALE TOURS

The Museum is excited to provide private group tours for ten or more adults. Wholesale packages to the Museum include the Ultimate Dinosaur Pass, as well as a range of catered options available from morning tea to dinner.



OUR DINOSAURS

***Diamantinasaurus matildae* (Matilda)**

Diamantinasaurus matildae was a genus of lithostrotian titanosaur, found in the lower Upper Cretaceous (Cenomanian) Winton Formation of central Queensland.

Etymology: (Waltzing) Matilda's Diamantina (River) Lizard

Geology: Winton Formation, Central West Queensland

Age: Earliest Late Cretaceous (Cenomanian) 98–95 million years ago

Discovered: June 2005, north-west of Winton Qld

The Discovery: A team from the Museum excavated the Matilda site and discovered a theropod dinosaur intermingled with the bones of the sauropod. Between 2006 and 2009 annual digs recovered further remains of the two dinosaurs, which were officially published in 2009. The sauropod remains, collectively designated AODF 603, were made the holotype of *Diamantinasaurus matildae*, named for the Diamantina River (located several kilometres west of the site) and the famous song “Waltzing Matilda”, written by Australian poet Andrew Barton “Banjo” Paterson on a property near Winton in 1895. Excavation of the site continued in 2010 when more remains of the same skeletons were discovered. Preparation of fossiliferous concretions from the Matilda site continues in the Museum’s Laboratory to this day.

***Wintonotitan wattsii* (Clancy)**

Wintonotitan wattsii was a genus of somphospondylan sauropod, found in the lower Upper Cretaceous (Cenomanian) Winton Formation of central Queensland, northeast Australia.

Etymology: (Keith) Watts’ Winton Giant

Geology: Winton Formation, Central West Queensland

Age: Earliest Late Cretaceous (Cenomanian) 98–95 million years ago

Discovered: 1974 by Keith Watts and excavated June 2006 by Queensland Museum and Australian Age of Dinosaurs team

The Discovery: In 2009 QM F7292 (now nicknamed Clancy) was made the holotype of *Wintonotitan wattsii*. The generic name refers

to the Winton Shire, whereas the specific name honours Keith Watts. The nickname Clancy refers to the Andrew Barton “Banjo” Paterson poem “Clancy of the Overflow”.

Like all sauropods, *Wintonotitan* would have been entirely herbivorous. Its coexistence with *Diamantinasaurus* and *Savannasaurus* in the mid-Cretaceous of northeast Australia suggests that these sauropods would have had different dietary preferences to prevent interspecific competition.

***Savannasaurus elliottorum* (Wade)**

Savannasaurus elliottorum was one of several types of long-necked plant-eating sauropods that existed in Queensland during the mid-Cretaceous, 98 – 95 million years ago. *Savannasaurus* bones were excavated in 2005 on a property north-east of Winton and constitute one of the most complete sauropod skeletons ever found in Australia. *Savannasaurus* had very wide hips and widely-spaced, stocky limbs with five toes on each foot.

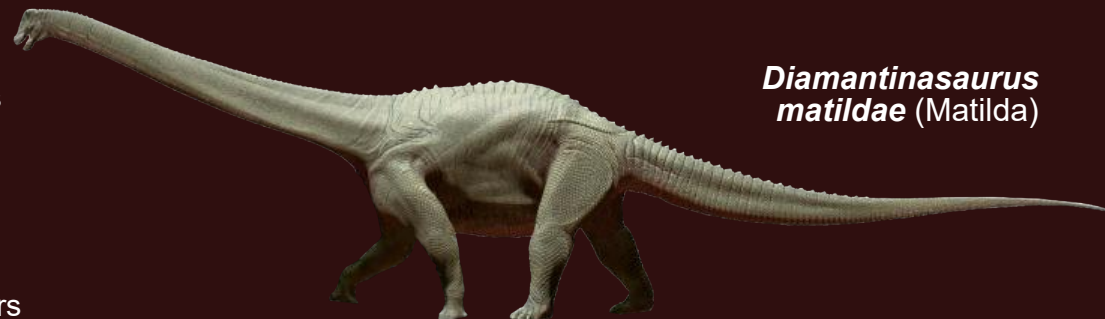
Etymology: (The Elliott Family) Grassland Lizard

Geology: Winton Formation, Central West Queensland

Age: Earliest Late Cretaceous (Cenomanian) 98–95 million years ago.

Discovered: 2005 by David Elliott and excavated September 2005 by Queensland Museum and Australian Age of Dinosaurs team

The Discovery: *Savannasaurus* was discovered by David Elliott, co-founder of the Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum, while mustering sheep in early 2005. The site was excavated in September 2005 by a joint Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum and Queensland Museum team and 17 pallets of bones encased in rock were recovered.



***Diamantinasaurus matildae* (Matilda)**

***Australovenator wintonensis* (Banjo)**

Australovenator wintonensis is Australia's most complete theropod dinosaur. The skeleton consists of two nearly complete forelimbs and hind limbs, along with isolated ribs, gastralia and both dentaries. *Australovenator* stood about 1.6 metres at the hip and was approximately 5 metres in length. The fossils were discovered amongst the remains of a sauropod dinosaur *Diamantinasaurus matildae*. Why the two specimens were preserved together is unknown.

Etymology: Winton's southern hunter

Geology: Winton Formation, Central West Queensland

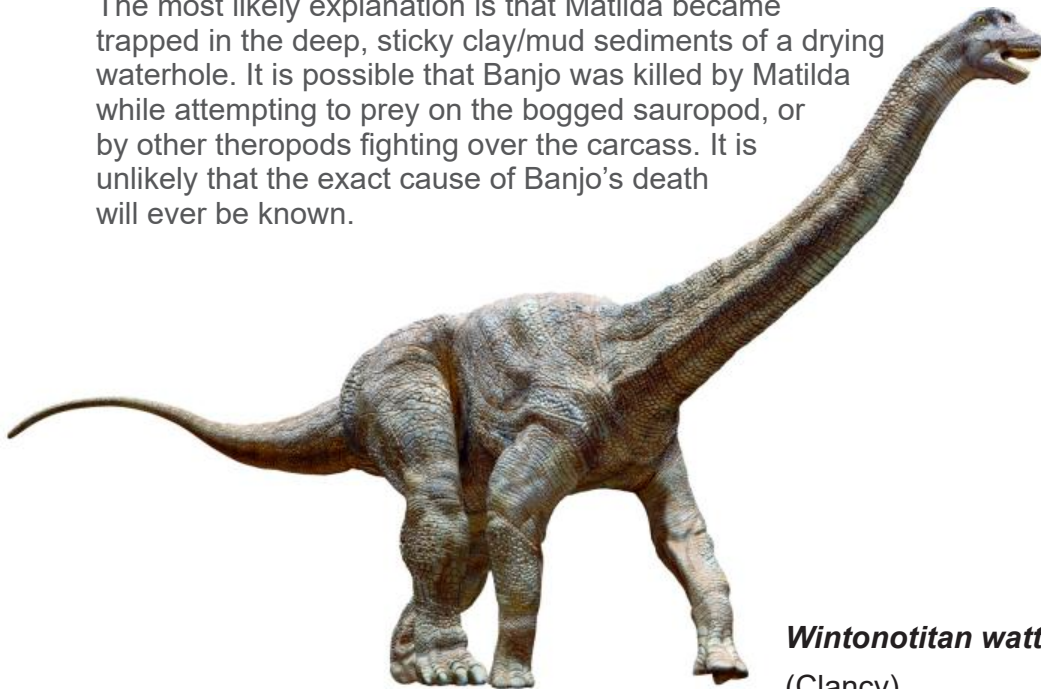
Age: Earliest Late Cretaceous (Cenomanian) 98–95 million years ago

Discovered: *Australovenator* was discovered in 2005 and published in 2009

The Discovery: Although it was originally hypothesised that Banjo and Matilda were drowned in a flood event and washed up beside each other, recent observations reveal that this was very unlikely due to the fact that both skeletons were preserved in sediments deposited by still water.

The most likely explanation is that Matilda became trapped in the deep, sticky clay/mud sediments of a drying waterhole. It is possible that Banjo was killed by Matilda while attempting to prey on the bogged sauropod, or by other theropods fighting over the carcass. It is unlikely that the exact cause of Banjo's death will ever be known.

***Australovenator wintonensis* (Banjo)**



Wintonotitan wattsi
(Clancy)



Dr Stephen Poropat with the fossil bones of *Savannasaurus elliottorum* (Wade)

SCIENTIFIC PAPERS

Some of the scientific papers directly linked to the research carried out by the Museum include:

2016, A new Cretaceous dinosaur from Queensland, Australia sheds light on global sauropod evolution. *Nature*

2016, The pes of *Australovenator wintonensis* (Theropoda: Megaraptoridae): analysis of the pedal range of motion and biological restoration. *PeerJ*

2015, The dentary of *Australovenator wintonensis* (Theropoda, Megaraptoridae); implications for megaraptorid dentition. *PeerJ*

2014, Revision of the sauropod dinosaur *Diamantinasaurus matildae* Hocknull et al. 2009 from the mid-Cretaceous of Australia: Implications for Gondwanan titanosauriform dispersal. *ScienceDirect*

2009, New mid-Cretaceous (late Albian) dinosaurs from Winton, Queensland, Australia. *PLoS ONE*

FUNDING AND MEMBERSHIP

The Museum is a not-for-profit organisation funded through memberships, individual contributions, donations, foundation grants, corporate sponsorships, government grants and retail sales. Museum members, 2,500 strong, come from all over the Australia and 10 other countries.

FUTURE PLANS

The Museum's third and final stage consists of a purpose-built multi-million-dollar, natural history museum that will portray the evolution of the Australian continent over the past 4.5 billion years and Australia's unique dinosaur heritage. The new Museum building which will include education facilities is planned for 2022 and initial work including concept planning and design has been completed. The Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum of Natural History will be located two kilometres from the Museum's Reception Centre, and positioned overlooking the plains below The Jump-Up.

The buildings' concept statistics allow for a floor space of 7,000 square meters of which 1,800 square metres will be exhibition space. The remainder of the building's planned space will be divided between public space, gift shop and café facilities, back-of-house management, collection room, laboratory, school classrooms and audio visual facilities.



LOCATION, HOURS AND ADMISSION

The Museum is located on top a large mesa named The Jump-Up, which is 24km south-east of Winton and 600km south-west of Townsville. Visitors travelling from Longreach drive north-west along the Landsborough highway for 164km before turning left on to Dinosaur Drive. From the highway, it is a further 12km along a fully sealed road.

Operating hours
8.30am to 5pm

Open daily
from April to October

Closed Sundays from November to March; check website for Christmas and New Year closed dates

The Museum conducts hourly tours from 9am, the last full tour starting at 2pm.

GENERAL ADMISSION*

Adult	\$55.00
Concession	\$50.00
Child	\$30.00
Family.....	\$115.00
Adult Wholesale Tour.....	\$40.00
Child Wholesale Tour	\$25.00

CATERED OPTIONS FOR WHOLESALE TOURS (TOUR PRICE NOT INCLUDED)

Morning Tea or Afternoon Tea	\$7.00
Lunch	\$14.00
Deluxe Sunset BBQ	\$55.00


DIRECTORS

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 www.facebook.com/aaodl

 www.youtube.com/watch?v=0woEDqtJVFE