



December, 2017



Bonegilla Migrant Camp marks 70 years

Former residents, family members, dignitaries and visitors came together to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Bonegilla Migrant Reception and Training Centre on Saturday, November 18.

Guests immersed themselves in the sights, sounds, flavours and surrounds of the centre 70 years after it was first established following World War II, when millions of people seeking a new start and peace, departed for Australia.

An army camp at Bonegilla was transformed into a migrant reception and training centre where new arrivals lived while they were processed and allocated jobs.

Bonegilla became the largest and longest operating reception centre in the post-war era, with more than 300,000 migrants passing through its doors between 1947 and 1971.

Wodonga Mayor Cr Anna Speedie said Wodonga Council was proud to support such an important national heritage site, and help celebrate this significant milestone.

"Our community has a long association with the people of the Bonegilla Migrant Camp, and many former residents still live and work in Wodonga today, and have raised their

families here," Cr Speedie said.

"I greatly admire the courage and strength of the people who made the long journey to Bonegilla for a better life, and it was fantastic to see many of them return to the region for the celebrations."

Lutheran Church celebrates 70 years since first church service at Bonegilla.

Members of the Lutheran Church gathered for a church service at the "Chapel Hut" to mark 70 years since the first service at Bonegilla.

Chaplain Pastor Bruno Meutzelfeldt, who had immigrated from Germany in 1933, conducted the first service.

Pastor Christian Fandrich led this month's service with Chey Mattner, from the Australian Lutheran World Service, providing background to the work in refugee camps across the world.

It was a truly an Australian service with kookaburras adding in their voices outside the hut.

A ceramic plaque was made by Dieter Klier to mark the occasion. It was presented to Bonegilla and accepted by Jenny Allen on behalf of Bonegilla Migrant Experience and Wodonga Council.

Dieter was sent to Australia when he was only 11 years old and his story *The Alien Nation* is told in books which are available from the Welcome Centre on site.

Bonegilla by the Weir

These summer holidays, visitors to the region are invited to Bonegilla by the Weir. It is a chance to come and experience the stories, sites and history of the centre.

Join one of our guided tours, enjoy a self-guided tour or take the suitcase trail.

Bring a picnic, play one of our traditional games and enjoy the surrounds for a little longer.

The Bonegilla by the Weir summer season will run from Wednesday, December 27 to Sunday, January 28 with guided tours held at 11am daily (excluding New Year's Day and Australia Day).

Guided tours are \$11 for adults, \$9 for children and \$25 for a family of four.

For enquiries phone (02) 6020 6912, and for more information visit www.bonegilla.org.au



Bonegilla by the Weir



[Click to view Bonegilla by the Weir video](#)

Remember the journey taken by friends and family

Do you know someone who migrated to Australia and stayed at Bonegilla? Add them to The Arc, our memorial sculpture which commemorates the individuals and families who arrived at the Bonegilla Migrant Reception and Training Centre between 1947 and 1971.



You can register in the following manner.

- Single person – Family name and given name, for example, SMITH, John
- Couples – Family name and given names, for example, SMITH, John and Jill
- Families – Family name and given names, for example, SMITH, John, Jill, Mary, Jack.

For \$200 you can have the family name and place of origin engraved on a plaque and included in the sculpture. A certificate showing the plaque on the sculpture will be issued to the requesting person. This is a wonderful way to remember the journey taken by friends and family.

Download the [order form](#) from the website or for more information contact our friendly staff on (02) 6020 6912 or email bonegilla@wodonga.vic.gov.au

Upcoming events





Bonegilla by the Weir Labour Day weekend

Saturday, March 10 to Monday, March 12
11am and 2pm daily

Join one of our guided tours, enjoy a self-guided tour or take the suitcase trail. Bring a picnic, play one of our traditional games and enjoy the surrounds for a little longer.

This is your opportunity to explore, understand and appreciate Wodonga's National Heritage Listed site.

Guided tours are \$11 for adults, \$9 for children and \$25 for a family of four.

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