

Jeffery packs a swag for an Outback tour



GOING BUSH: Governor-General Michael Jeffery meets legendary Outback mailman Tom Kruse and his wife, Valma, at Adelaide Airport yesterday. **Picture: JAMES ELSBY**

NIGEL AUSTIN
RURAL EDITOR

GOVERNOR-GENERAL Michael Jeffery and an entourage of 11 people will leave Adelaide tomorrow on an expedition through the Outback that aims to help Australians regain touch with the country.

The Back to the Bush - Bridging the Divide journey through the Flinders Ranges, along the Birdsville Track and through western Queensland and part of Western Australia, is a major Year of the Outback 2006 event.

In total, 43 people will be on

the trip. Mr Jeffery's entourage will include five police officers, a doctor, a physiotherapist, a media adviser, a valet and two aides-de-camp.

Mr Jeffery and his party will take in some of Outback South Australia's historical attractions in the first week. On his arrival in Adelaide yesterday, Mr Jeffery met legendary Birdsville mailman Tom Kruse and his wife, Valma.

The Governor-General said he was keen to help more Australians understand the nation's historic links with the Outback. He hoped this would also include a greater understanding of the vast wealth provided by the Outback and

some of the problems and difficulties that our rural communities have endured.

Mr Jeffery said this had included sustained droughts and recent changes in agricultural operating conditions.

"Australia's provincial, rural and Outback regions are as viable as they are vast and from them we source most of our primary produce, our mineral wealth and increasingly our tourism," Mr Jeffery said.

"The country is a huge contributor to our national economic well-being.

"For those people in Australia who haven't been inland, my message is come out and see your country."

Helicopter hijacker goes shopping



FREEDOM: Lucy Dudko, left, goes shopping yesterday.

GEMMA JONES
SYDNEY

IN stark contrast to Lucy Dudko's first trip out of prison in a hijacked helicopter, the 48-year-old librarian calmly walked out of a Sydney jail yesterday.

Dudko's love for armed robber John Killick motivated her to commit an audacious jailbreak in 1999, earning her a seven-year sentence.

In the lead-up to her release yesterday, she assured prison authorities she would not attempt to rekindle the romance with Killick.

A lovestruck Dudko armed herself with two guns after watching jailbreak movies, then hijacked a helicopter on March 25, 1999. She ordered the pilot at gunpoint to land in Silverwater Jail's exercise yard to pick up Killick, before the lovebirds spent 45 days on the run.

Dudko's first stop after her release was Penrith Plaza shopping centre. "I'm free," she said, before asking to be left alone. Killick will be 71 when he becomes eligible for parole in 2013.

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Source: The Klein Partnership Jan 2006

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