

## 2008 & 2010 Panel - The Tom Kruse Busts

South Australian Robe based sculptor **Patricia Moseley** was inspired by a 1950s black and white hero photograph she saw of Tom Kruse reproduced in **Kristen Weidenbach's *Mailman of the Birdsville Track*** (2004). Before reading the story, Patricia didn't know a lot about E.G. Kruse. The photograph was of a quintessentially Australian bloke and Patricia was intrigued by the image and the story of that bloke – **Tom Kruse**.

Patricia determined Tom would be a good subject for a sculpture. With her encouragement, a group of people from various states, interested in sustaining the stories about the part played by the outback mailmen in opening up the back country, decided in 2007 to raise funds to produce a number of bronze busts of Tom Kruse.

**The Tom Kruse Bust Appeal** was set up and funds from companies, organizations and individuals flooded in. Originally the life sized busts were planned for Birdwood and Birdsville. Over the next three years, sufficient funds were raised to produce Tom Kruse busts for both Birdwood and Birdsville as well as Tom's hometown of Waterloo, the National Road Transport Hall of Fame at Alice Springs and here at Marree. Tom was inducted into the National Road Transport Hall of Fame in Alice Springs in 2000.

The Tom Kruse Bust Appeal Co Co-ordinators were **Neil Weidenbach** and **Ian Doyle** and the bronze busts were cast by Adelaide Hills artist **Tim Thompson**.

Tom participated in the unveiling of each one of the five busts and took great delight in renewing old acquaintances and meeting people who knew the stories but had never had the opportunity to meet the man.

1. The **Birdwood Bust** is located at the National Motor Museum and was unveiled by **His Excellency Governor-General Michael Jeffery** on March 30<sup>th</sup> 2008.
2. The **Marree Bust** is located in the Rural Transaction Centre next to the railway line in the centre of town and was unveiled by **Robert Butler**, son of Henry Butler on June 7<sup>th</sup> 2008.
3. The **Birdsville Bust** is located in the Warrarri Visitor Information Centre and was unveiled by **The Back of Beyond** cast member **David Brook OAM** and **Robert Butler**, son of Henry Butler on September 5<sup>th</sup> 2008.
4. The **Waterloo Bust** is located in the Waterloo Community Hall and was unveiled by **Roger** and **Brenton Kruse** on November 16<sup>th</sup> 2008.
5. The **Alice Springs Bust** is located at the National Road Transport Hall of Fame and was unveiled by **Ted Egan AO** on August 29<sup>th</sup> 2010.

**Photo Credit:** Ian Doyle Collection