Focus on forgotten land

NIGEL AUSTIN

RURAL EDITOR

THE Outback is supposed to be the traditional heart of Australia but many argue it is being sorely neglected by the nation's leaders.

On his Back to the Bush - Bridging the Divide journey through the centre of South Australia this week, Governor-General Michael Jeffery is seeing some of the nation's most beautiful country in the Flinders Ranges and along the Birdsville

More importantly, in the Year of the Outback 2006 to promote remote Australia, he is recognising what hundreds of politicians and leaders generally fail to acknowledge. Even now, the Outback is a forgotten land, neglected by politicians and vastly underfunded, its inhabitants treated inadequately on many issues, including a serious lack of infrastructure.

In focusing on the Outback's fu-ture on his 3000km journey, Mr Jeffery is emphasising the key themes of water, education, youth, regional development and tourism.

He aims to inspire Australians to get more in touch with the Outback, whether through tourism or work, or just to understand problems and complexities of life in the inland.

"I love this country. It's a tough country, it's a hard country, it's a

I love this country ... it's the best country in the world

wonderful country, it's the best country in the world," he said.

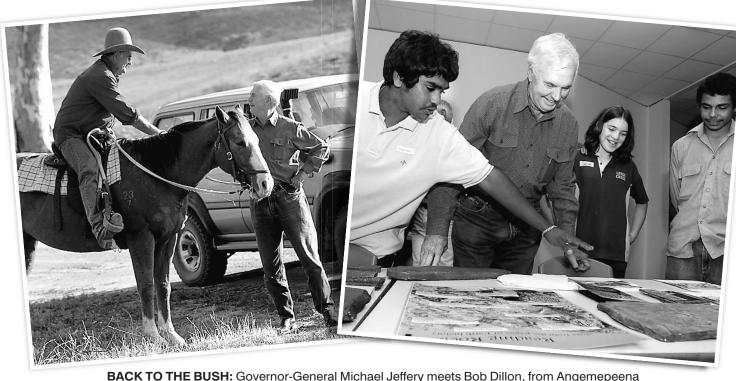
"The people in it have made it wonderful and will continue making it so but it's time to get right behind the Year of the Outback and bring urban Australians to understand it and the problems and get back to

"For those in Australia who haven't been inland, my message is to cross the great divide, come out and see your country."

Mr Jeffery points out much of Australia's wealth comes from the mining and rural industries and increasingly from inland tourism. We want to let all Australians know that so many of our regional centres are not dead," he said. "They are not dying but are vibrant and very friendly and innovate places.'

The Back to the Bush trip, believed by Mr Jeffery's staff to be the first such journey by a Governor-General, is a tribute to the ongoing Year of the Outback concept.

In fact, it would not have happened, nor would it have been poss-



BACK TO THE BUSH: Governor-General Michael Jeffery meets Bob Dillon, from Angemepeena station, and checks out fossils with students at Leigh Creek.

ible, without the Year of the Outback. Mr Jeffery and a party of 43, including personal staff, police, key Outback people, drivers and media, are visiting some of SA's favourite places and characters over five days.

The ongoing success of the Year of the Outback program, began in 2002, is a tribute to Bruce Campbell, 74, the determined and visionary Queenslander who came up with the idea. Named Senior Australian of the Year in 2003 for his efforts, he has devoted the past eight years to helping the people of the inland gain more recognition through the Year of the Outback.

"Among the many objectives for Year of the Outback, one is to point the minds and faces of Australia towards our heartlands because there has been a tendency to point in other directions for the past number of decades," he said.

"Outback is the most powerful word in our vernacular and it has an extraordinary magnetic influence and effect.

What exactly is the Outback? Mr Campbell said the best explanation he had heard is in The Outback, a poem selected as the official verse for Year of the Outback, which concludes: "There's a place called the Outback, we're never far apart, for the Outback's not a place, it's the beating of my heart.



Better small business success?

Better enrol soon.

If you own a small business that you'd like to become a bigger one, we can help.

Right now, we're offering a series of Better Business Series workshops in areas such as accounting and finance, law, marketing, human resources, product development and e-business.

They're all free and designed to provide you with the knowledge and skills needed to grow your business.

> For details on workshops and to enrol, call (08) 8303 2469 or visit www.southaustralia.biz

STATE

47

PUB: ADVERTISER

BMW X5 3.0 Diesel

1,300 km on one tank* - (93 litre tank)

\$299 per week^ (plus one-off payment of \$4,015)

Guaranteed Future Value, no Residual Risk.



Now standard with: TV, Park Distance Control, Bluetooth Phone Preparation.

(As if it wasn't already hard enough to resist.)

^ Weekly finance figure of \$299 based on Manual BMW X5 3.0 diesel with an on road price of \$85,595 plus once off payment of \$4015 (includes dealer delivery & state government charges) over 4 year term at 7.59% p.a with a 15,000km allowance per annum and a Guaranteed Future Value of \$43,636 with the BMW Full Circle Finance Program. To approved business customers of BMW Financial Services. Total amount payable under the contract where the vehicle is fully paid out at contract end is \$109,730 (Including interest charges, GST and Stamp Duty). With Guaranteed Future Vale (GFV) you can at contracts end, trade in the vehicle, pay out or refinance the GFV or providing that the vehicle has not exceeded the contracted kilometer allowance and meets fair wear and tear conditions, you can return the vehicle to BMW Group Financial services with no further obligation. For full terms and conditions contact Adelaide Motors

1328.57 Kilometers per tank applies to X5 3.0 diesel manual with highway fuel consumption of 7.0 Litres per 100kms with a 93 Litre fuel tank capacity

Adelaide Motors **Drive your Desire**

31-39 West Terrace, Adelaide Ph: Craiq O'Brien (08) 8414 3111 or 0403 830 896

www.adelaidemotors.com.au aminfo@adelaidemotors.com.au LVD: 105386

The Advertiser