2008 Panel - The Tom Kruse Marree Bust

Marree was initially named Herrgott Springs by explorer **John McDouall Stuart** in 1859 after his assistant Herrgott who discovered springs in the area. Marree is pivotally located at the junction of the Birdsville and Oodnadatta Tracks. As a settlement, Marree has played a significant role in the development of northern South Australia, including as a road and rail hub.

Like a number of Australian towns post World War 1, its name was changed in 1918 due to anti-German sentiment from Herrgott Springs to Marree. Marree has a rich and colourful history and important connections with European, Afghan and Aboriginal communities.

When Tom Kruse moved the **Harry Ding** Birdsville Track operation from Farina to Marree in the early 1940s, it was a thriving settlement. He set up home here with his new wife **Valma (Fuller)** in 1942. Their family home and Tom's work shed are a short distance from the Hotel. Along with other locations around Marree, it was used during the filming of *The Back of Beyond*.

Marree was the starting point for Tom and subsequent mailmen when they drove the fortnightly mail and supplies to Birdsville. It was most appropriate that the Tom Kruse Bust Appeal committee placed one of the five Tom Kruse Busts here at Marree.

The weekend of the annual Marree Races in 2008 was chosen as a good date to celebrate Tom and Valma's long association with Marree. Long time friend **John Parnell** flew Tom to Marree from Adelaide. Tom was a guest at the Hotel.

Robert Butler, the son of Tom's driving off-sider **(William) Henry Butler** unveiled the Marree Bust with Tom. Robert's young son **Henry Butler** also participated in the celebration. The unveiling was followed by tea and damper and lunch at the Marree Hotel.

Members of the **Butler family**, the **Crawford family**, Tom and Valma's youngest son **Jeffrey Kruse** and son-in-law Max **Pfitzner**, **Keith Rasheed**, bust sculptor **Patricia Moseley** and partner **John Hinge**, Badger restoration leader and Appeal Co-Coordinator **Neil Weidenbach** and **Ian Doyle** along with members of the **Marree community** and local mates including **Darryl Bell** from Dulkaninna Station, **Eric and Bev Oldfield**, Marree Hotel publican **Laurie Kalms** and **Irene Zada**, all attended the unveiling.

The **Tom Kruse 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 **(William) Henry Butler** on June 7th, 2008.

Photo Credit: Ian Doyle Collection