

GOOD NEWS STORY

# Mungo Lodge



THE ENTRANCE TO MUNGO LODGE,  
NEAR BALRANALD, NSW.

Mungo Lodge, acquired by Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) in 2003, is located at the entrance to Mungo National Park, near Balranald, in New South Wales. Mungo National Park, a place of magnificent natural beauty, is steeped in Aboriginal culture.

In 1969, following the discovery of some of the oldest remains of modern man on earth, Lake Mungo became one of the world's most significant archaeological sites. Australian archaeologists unearthed the remains of the oldest known cremation.

They found bone fragments belonging to the skeleton of a young woman, who became known as Mungo Woman. She is now believed to have lived and died some 40,000 years ago. Only five years later, in close proximity to Mungo Woman, scientists discovered the burial site of Mungo Man, a male who was buried about 42,000 years ago.

Mungo Man was buried in a ritual using red ochre, a material which could only have reached the shores of Lake Mungo by trade, and is the oldest discovered example of the practice.

The region is home to the Paakantyi, Mutthi Mutthi and Ngiyampaa people, who are actively involved in managing the area.

When Mungo Lodge first opened its doors in 1994, it provided very basic accommodation for visitors, mainly academics, who were interested in the park's archaeological significance. To maximise the lodge's income potential by attracting more visitors from the wider community the standard of the facility had to be raised to a 4-4½ star level.

Backed by a detailed demand analysis, IBA's board approved a multimillion-dollar upgrade to the Lodge in early 2007.

Approximately 98 per cent of the capital injection into the lodge has flowed on to local businesses, which has generated a lot of support from the community.

Redevelopment works using a local builder commenced in October 2007 and were completed in early April 2008.

The scope and quality of the upgrade has increased interest in Mungo Lodge as a functions venue.