

AUSTRALIAN IRISH TOURS

NED KELLY COUNTRY

The tour will take us to the very sites, towns, villages and landscapes where Ned and his family, his gang and communities experienced life. It is here that we can attain a sense of their place and their life in the prevailing social and law enforcement conditions of the time.

Melbourne

&

Beveridge

Greta

Avenel

Beechworth

Euroa

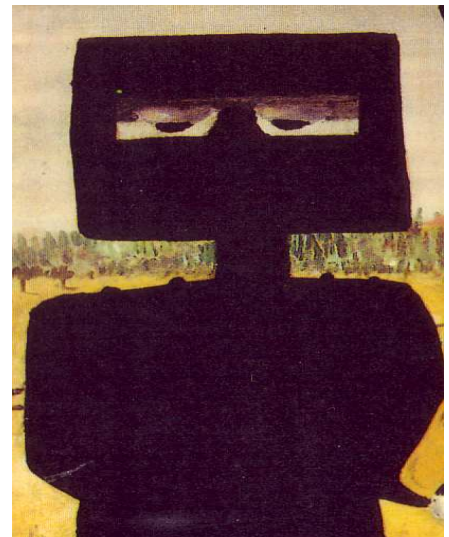
Powers Lookout

Benalla

Stringybark Creek

Glenrowan

Mansfield



NED KELLY READING CIRCLE GROUP

As part of the preparation for this tour, or just for your interest, join our Ned Kelly Reading Circle Group; the theme being – Hero or Villain. Kelly Books for review may include those by :Ian Jones, John Molony, John McQuilton, Peter Carey, Justice John H Phillips and the Jerilderie letter. Reviews or comments may also be made of Kelly films, paintings and other presentations.

BOOKINGS AND INFORMATION – Phillip Moore

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NED KELLY

Ned Kelly- hero or villain – is an archetypal Australian, a famous bushranger and a pre-eminent national icon. His story and portrayal by writers, historians, film makers, actors and exhibitors has been told again and again and far exceeds any other presentations of prominent Australians.

Whilst Ned was affected by his associated Irish culture and background his life and deeds were inseparable from the physical and social reality of the then remote region of Victoria where he lived.

The “Kelly Outbreaks” leading to the “Glenrowan Siege” came in the middle of a Victorian recession where there was rampant poverty, crop failures and an accelerating war between large acreage squatters and small selectors for control of the land. There was also a corrupt and weak police force. These conditions were ripe for an Australian born son of the disaffected and the victims of various injustices, to lead a rebellion against the crown forces of the state.

Ned was a complex and ambiguous character – he took human life but also spared life and even saved it. He bore grudges but was also kind. He was tough and impulsive but displayed sensitivity and chivalry. He received little formal education but proved remarkably imaginative and articulate. Sidney Nolan especially understood this ambiguity and portrayed it in his paintings.

Many Australian writers have expressed their high regard for Ned and his message. They praise his nationalism and his insatiable thirst for freedom from all forms of tyranny. They admire his courage and military skills – a remarkable untrained strategist. They are in awe of his armour made from a plough which gave him a mediaeval halo and they are impressed by his “Manifesto” – the Jerilderie letter, his writings in jail and speech at the docks. Many would say these are the traits of a hero.

Ned reminds us of our passions, challenges, contradictions and mistakes – “Such is Life”. And whilst his story is deeply rooted in place it asks universal questions like – When does a rebel or freedom fighter become an outlaw or as some believe a common criminal or even a terrorist?