

# PHIL TURNER

## Marree Hotel

GeoSmart Asia

11 April 2018

Several thin, parallel white lines are positioned in the bottom right corner of the slide, extending diagonally from the bottom edge towards the top right.

# MARREE MAN

and  
the Case of the  
Missing Genitals







# WHERE IS IT?

- ON THE OODNADATTA TRACK
- 68KM NORTH WEST OF MARREE
- RESTS ON A PLATEAU ON FINNISS SPRINGS STATION
- ON SOUTHERN SHORE OF KATI THANDA-LAKE EYRE SOUTH
- 7 HOURS NORTH OF ADELAIDE





The evidence suggests Marree Man was created by people with expert knowledge of Aborigines

# New clues to mystery desert man

An academic says the huge carving in the South Australian desert is culturally accurate, writes Penelope DeBelle.

Anthropologists in South Australia are arguing over the cultural authenticity of the desert drawing known as the Marree Man, which may be more accurate than was first believed.

A possible source of the drawing has also been identified by an anonymous South Australian academic who discovered similar photographs in journals of the Royal Society of South Australia from the early 1900s.

The figure looks to have been an amalgam of the body of a man photographed in the distinctive throwing stance depicted in the desert drawing and the head of another man wearing a headband and chinon.

The Marree Man, gouged out of red soil on a remote plateau 60 kilometres outside of the town of Marree on the Oodnadatta track, is the world's largest known art work but its authorship is unknown.

It is about four kilometres long and its scale is so vast it has to be appreciated from the air.

The creators meticulously and secretly surveyed the man's outline using a satellite-based global positioning system then ploughed the figure into the earth where it was discovered by accident last July. No crime was con-

sulted and police investigations have been dropped but intense curiosity remains about who did it and why.

"At least 80 per cent of the people who stay here at some point in our conversation will mention the Marree Man and ask a question or two," says Ms Susan McGuire, proprietor of the Marree Hotel.

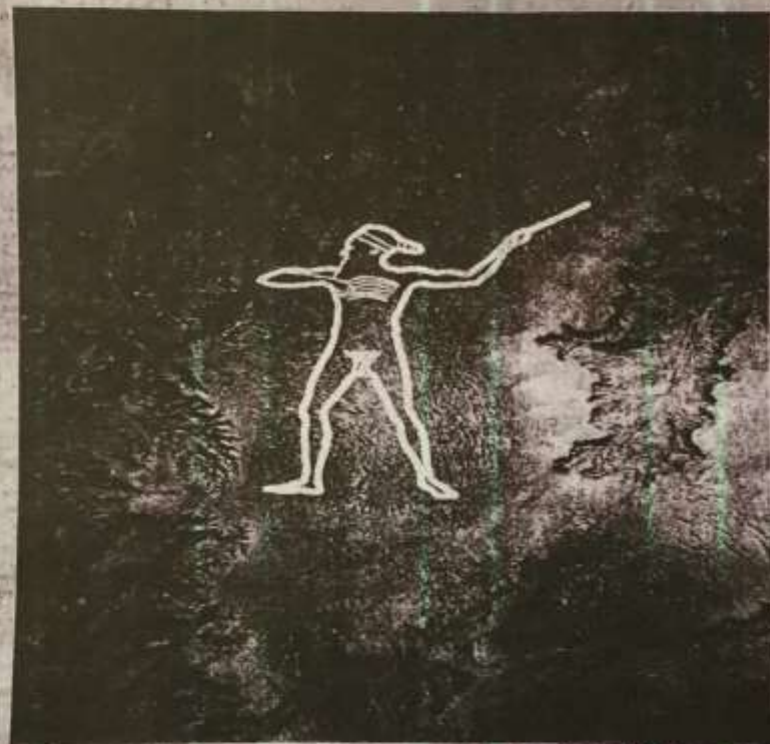
Detailed information sent to The Age disputes the judgment by South Australian Museum anthropologist, Dr Philip Jones, that the figure was "cartoon-like" and culturally incorrect. It also challenges Dr Jones' contention that the figure was holding a boomerang whose shape could not be clearly seen.

The writer concludes this level of knowledge points either to Aborigines themselves, or more likely, to those familiar with details of desert Aboriginal culture, "eg my own anthropological community".

An accompanying letter written by a South Australian anthropologist — and a member of an academic community still scarred by bitter divisions over who said what during the Hindmarsh Island bridge affair — says this is the strongest clue yet to who did it.

"Considering the size of the object, many details are astonishingly accurate, such as the perfect posture of the non-throwing hand in standard Aboriginal throwing technique, the perfect placement of chest initiation scars and the excellent representation of the hair ties," the letter said.

The writer concludes this level of knowledge points either to Aborigines themselves, or more likely, to those familiar with details of desert Aboriginal culture, "eg my own anthropological community".



A South Australian anthropologist says the notable similarities between the Marree Man (left) and the throwing stance of the figure (top, second from left) and the distinctive hairstyle of the man (below, far left) provide clues to who made the drawing.

Picture courtesy of the Royal Society of South Australia.



Meanwhile, the creators of the Marree Man who intended making a tourist icon for this isolated part of South Australia have largely achieved their purpose.

Contract pilot Mr Mark Koster said the figure is still visible although its outline has blended in more with the surrounding land.

However, it has brought more people to a part of Australia rich in

other attractions. "We've got the third-largest salt lake in the world (Lake Eyre), the Moomba gas fields, which are bigger than some in Texas, and Clifton Hills, which is the world's largest cattle station," Mr Koster said.

"We've got everything big. We've even got the longest fence in the world running through."

Mr Koster marvels at the ingenuity that went into the figure and is amazed that, having gone to so

much trouble, no one has claimed it. He said the figure had been carefully orientated to be clear of washouts that would have destroyed some of it by now.

It was even positioned so the man's eye was indicated by a very large tree.

"I love it," Mr Koster said. "I've seen it hundreds of times now and it never fails to amaze me that they'd go to so much trouble. Incredible stuff."

## Seatbelt pioneer dies after long illn

By ANDREA CARSO

Sir Edward Hughes, traffic's leading maverick man who pushed Government to its world's first compulsory legislation, died yesterday.

Sir Edward was a man of international

His outstanding contribution to his profession was not when he was knighted for distinguished service to the field of surgery.

He held many positions in his professional and personal roles, including president of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons from 1975 to 1978. But perhaps one of his greatest contributions was the introduction of compulsory legislation in 1971.

As the founding chair of Road Trauma Care, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, Sir Edward was a supporter of road safety and argued that compulsory wearing was essential.

A friend and partner, Richard Brown, executive director for said Sir Edward was missed.

"It is sad to lose a man of his stature, they don't come very often," he said. "He was a great influence extended to me. He was a great stir around him and his moves in introducing the road toll."

As a young doctor, he worked at the St. Vincent's Hospital, and later at the hospital's top job.

He moved to the UK in 1973 to take on the University's Professor of Surgery.

Sir Edward died of liver cancer after a long illness.

# MARREE MAN GOES VIRAL

- 1998 TWO ABORIGINAL GROUPS AT LOGGERHEADS OVER NATIVE TITLE RIGHTS
- LOCAL ABORIGINAL GROUP LODGE AN OFFICIAL COMPLAINT
- THE ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS MINISTER GOES LOOKING FOR THE CULPRITS
- ONE MONTH LATER POLICE FIND NO EVIDENCE OF CRIMINAL DAMAGE
- 2003 THE MARREE MAN IS EXCLUDED FROM THE NATIONAL HERITAGE REGISTER
- 2012 NATIVE TITLE IS GRANTED TO THE ARABANA ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

# MARREE MAN GOES VIRAL

- 2013 SA GOVERNMENT ESTIMATE RESTORATION WOULD COST \$348,000
- AUGUST 2016 MARREE MAN RESTORED BY 'LOCALS' FOR \$6,400
- NOVEMBER 2016 WARRANTS SERVED ON ADELAIDE ADVERTISER
- WARRANTS ALSO SERVED ON TWO SA PUBLICANS
- LENGTHY INVESTIGATION BY DEWNR COULD RESULT IN FINES UP TO \$100,000
- 15<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2017 FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WANTS 'MARREE MAN' REGISTERED AS "A PLACE OF SIGNIFICANCE"
- LAST WEEK, FOLLOWING A CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT – INVESTIGATION CONCLUDED AND NO CHARGES TO BE LAID



Image courtesy Daily Mail

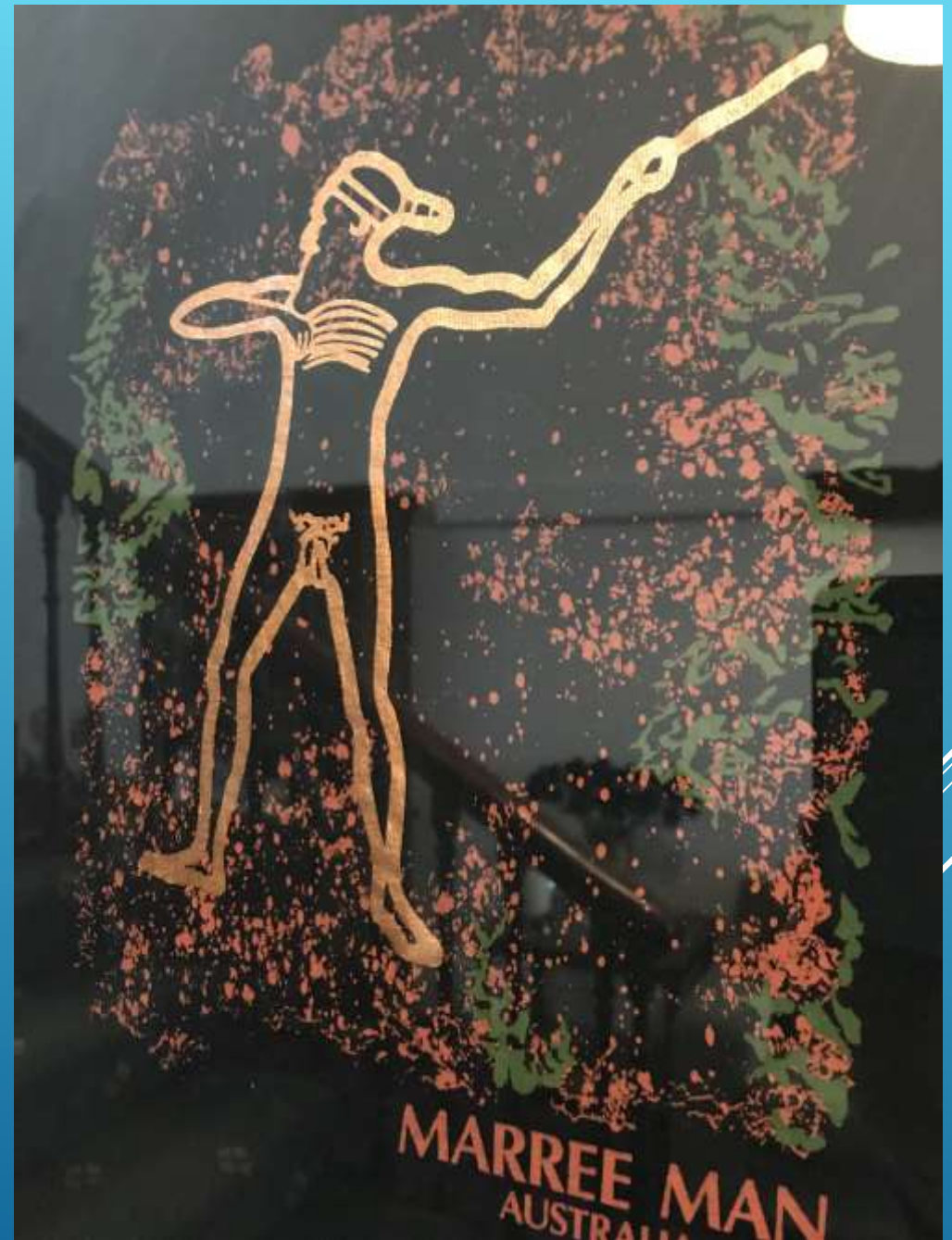
**SOON AFTER DISCOVERY..  
THE GENITALS DISAPPEAR**



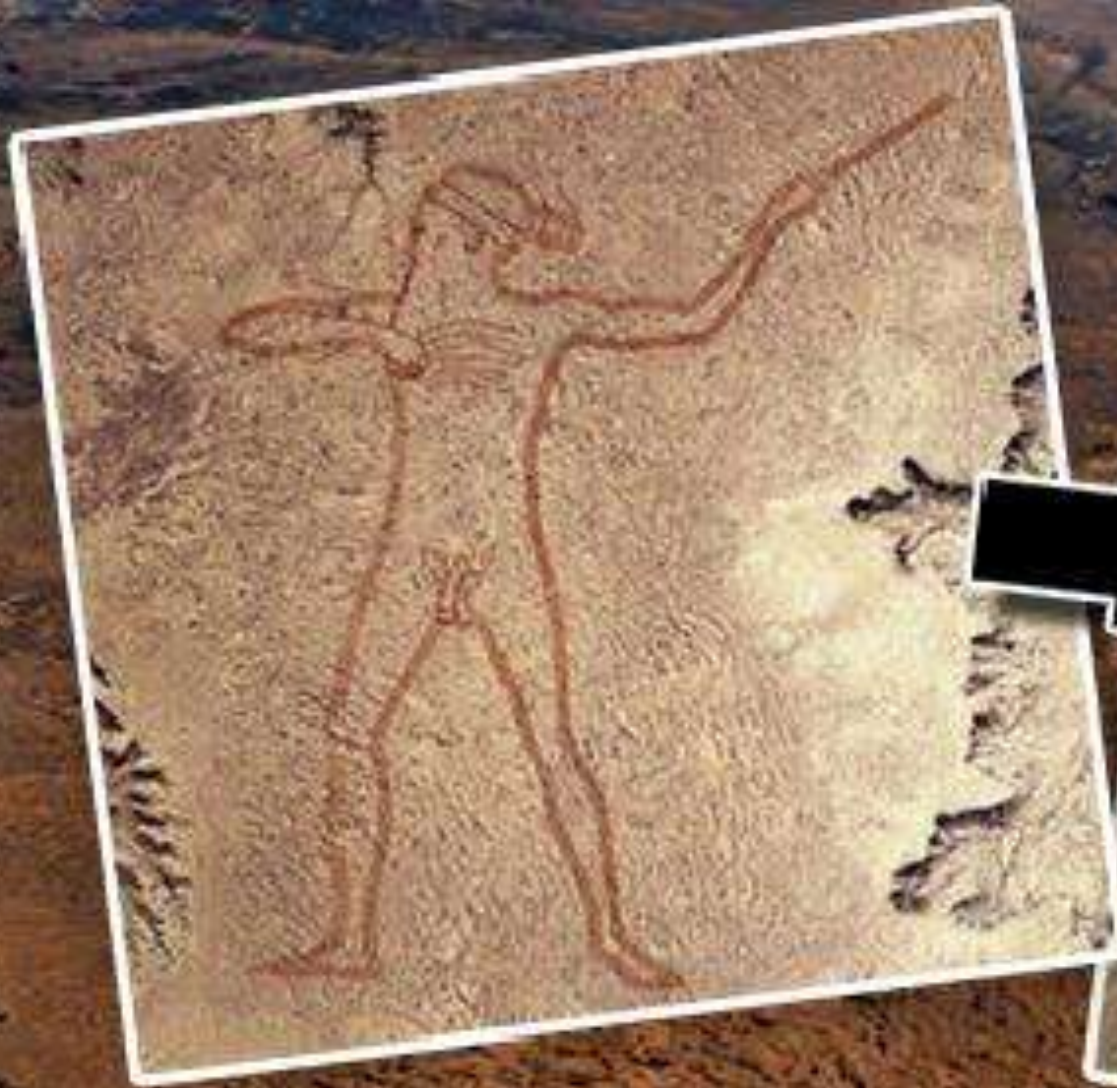


Image of the original  
promotional T-Shirt, 1998

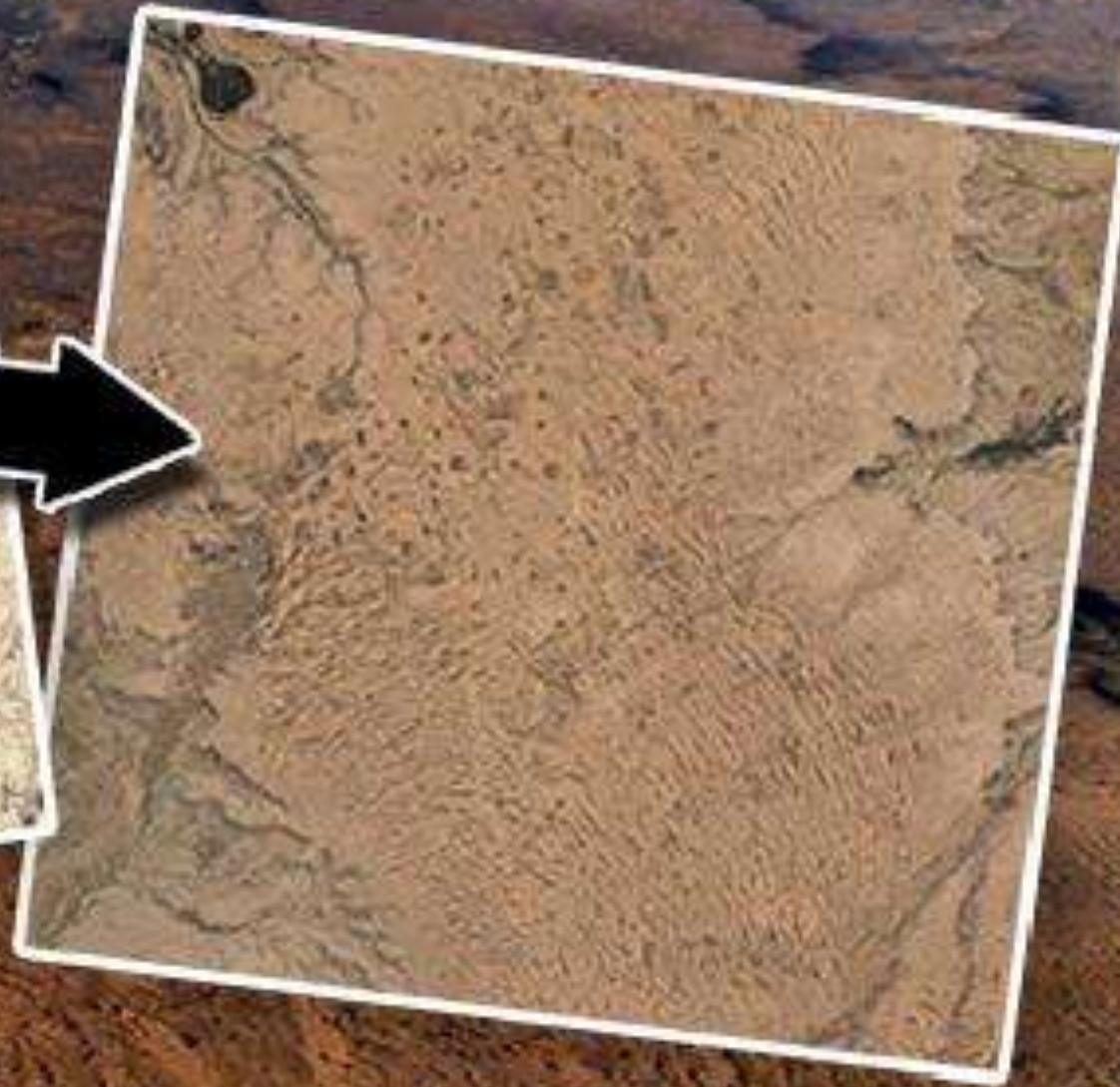
The only one known to  
exist.







1998 (PRE GENITAL SCRUBBING)



PRE AUGUST 2016



**NATURE FOUNDATION SA AND  
ARABANA, SURVEY MARREE MAN REGION**





- 2012, NATIVE TITLE GRANTED TO THE ARABANA ABORIGINAL CORPORATION
- NEW INITIATIVES TO GROW THE REGION ARE SOUGHT
- CONCEPT OF 'MARREE MAN' RESTORATION RAISED
- BOARD APPOINTS TWO LOCAL BUSINESSMEN TO INVESTIGATE RESTORATION OPTIONS

An aerial photograph taken from the perspective of someone inside an aircraft, looking out over a vast, flat, brown landscape. The foreground and middle ground are covered in a dense, textured expanse of dry earth or scrubland, with various shades of brown and tan. In the distance, a large body of water is visible, reflecting the sky. The horizon is flat and extends across the entire width of the image. The sky is a pale blue with some light clouds. The top of the image shows the underside of the aircraft's wing and a portion of the fuselage, indicating the viewer's position inside the plane.

2012 AERIAL SURVEY SEES LITTLE OF THE MARREE MAN











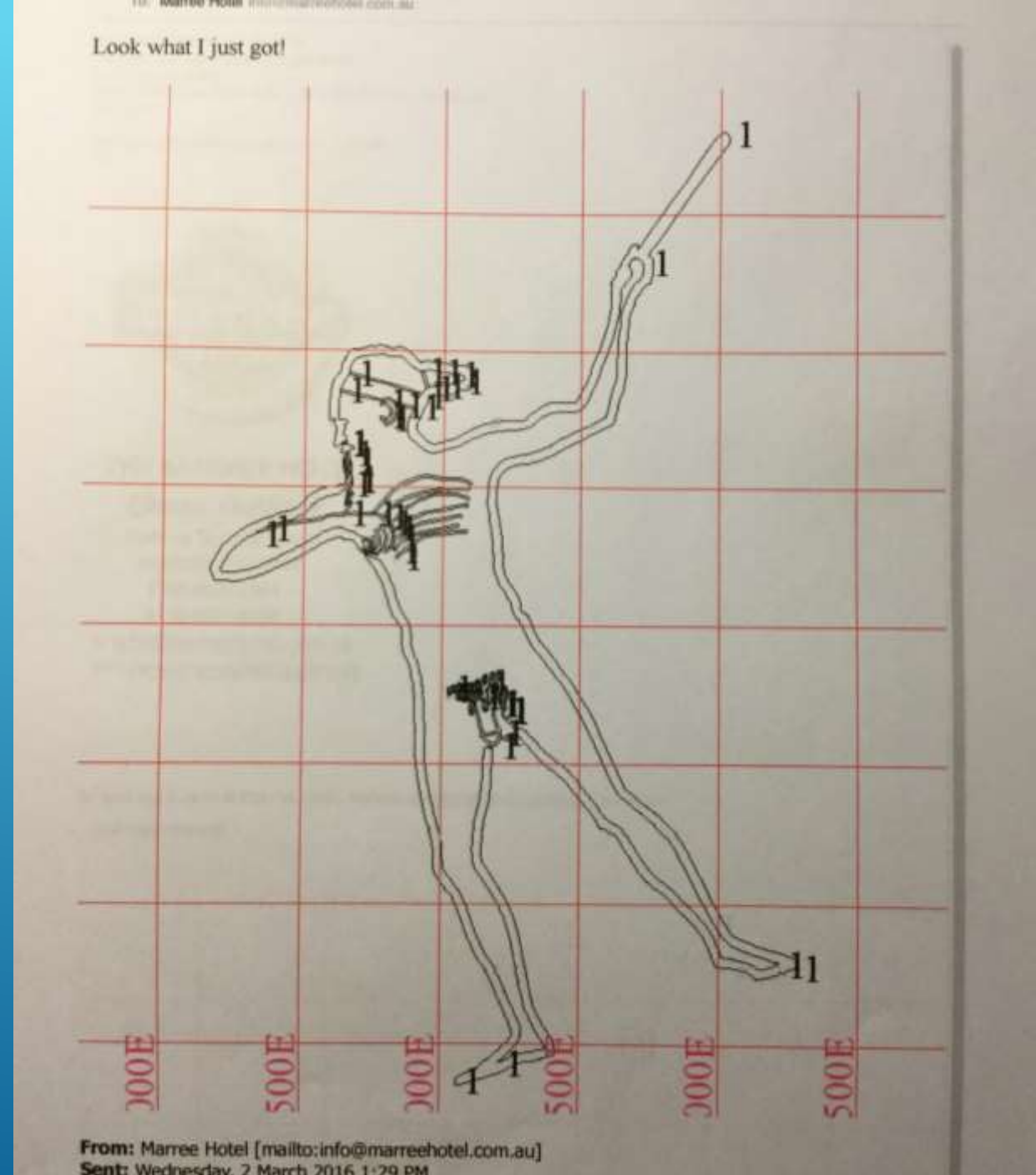




02 March 2016 – mysterious  
file turns up.  
Source not revealed but  
the detail incredible.

Inspired with this new  
'intelligence', the site  
visited to confirm  
accuracy.

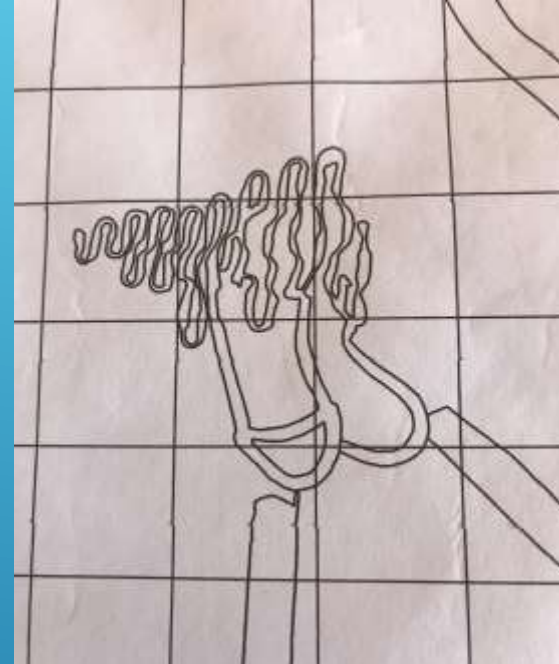
File supplied in MGA94 Z53 in  
DXF format.





- FILE CLEANED UP AND ATTRIBUTED TO CAD
- FIRST SITE VISIT WITH A TRIMBLE R8 GNSS.
- THE POINT MARKED TO BE THE CENTRE OF THE GEOGLYPH TURNED OUT TO BE HIS LEFT TESTICAL

# FINAL DETAILS – ARABANA BOARD MEETING, 2016



## THREE IMPORTANT DECISIONS MADE:

- TREAT IT LIKE A WORK OF ART
- REMOVE THE HEAD BAND (AND TOPKNOT)
- PUT THE GENITALS BACK IN

- A BASE STATION WAS SET UP. THE ORIGINAL OUTLINE MARKED WITH BAMBOO NURSERY STAKES – PEGGED ON THE LINES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE WITH THE GROUND RIPPED BETWEEN THEM
- THE SMALLER LINES – CHEST SCARS – WERE PEGGED DOWN THE MIDDLE WITH ONE PASS GOING EITHER SIDE
- THE DIGITISED LINE WORK HAD TO BE ADJUSTED 10M TO FIT



- ON DAY ONE.

THE APPROXIMATE COORDINATES WERE ENTERED INTO THE BASE WITH THE ROVER ATTACHED TO THE BUGGY. THE DIGITISATION WAS REMARKABLY ACCURATE – WITHIN 100MM

# SETTING UP BASE CAMP ON THE PLATEAU






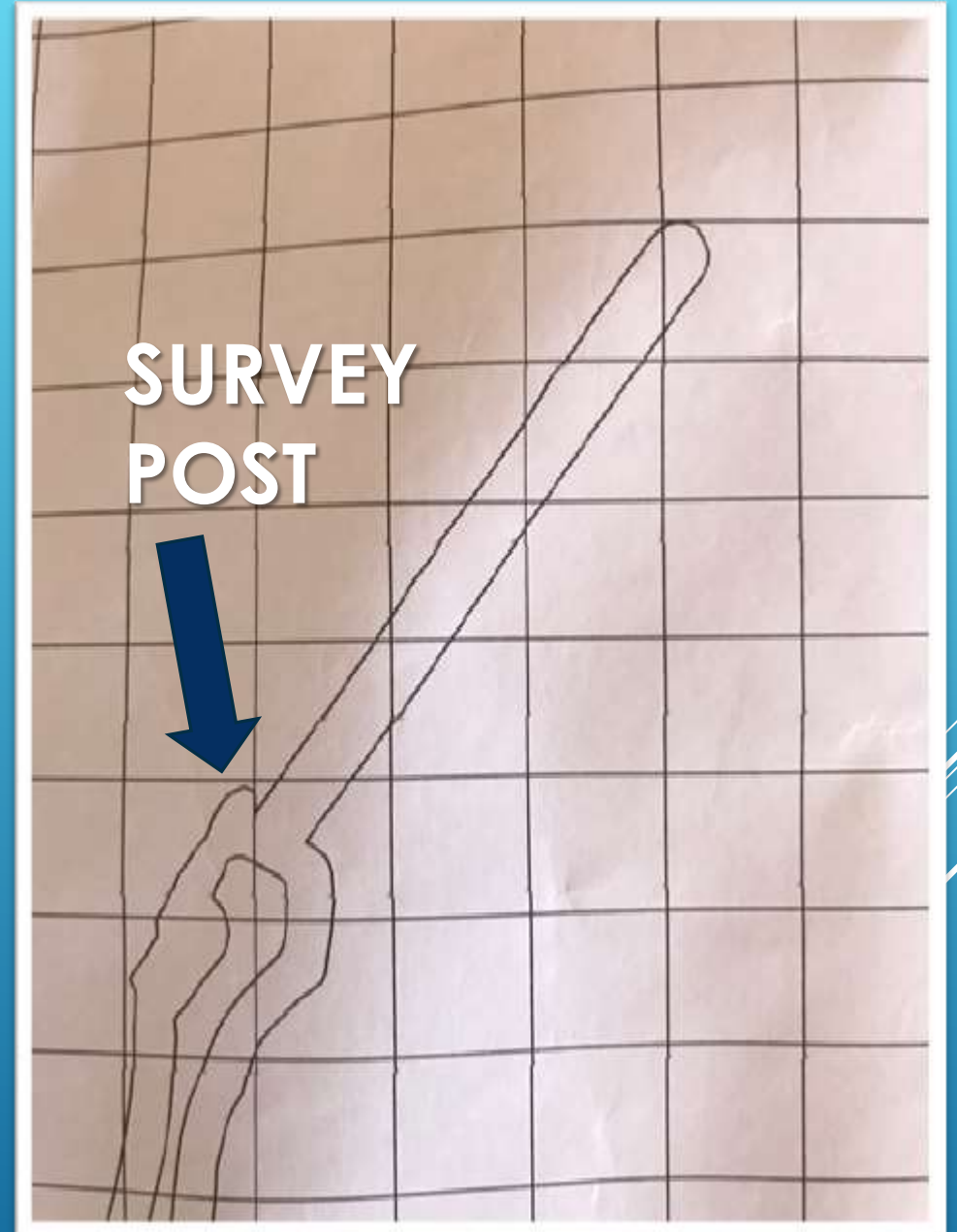
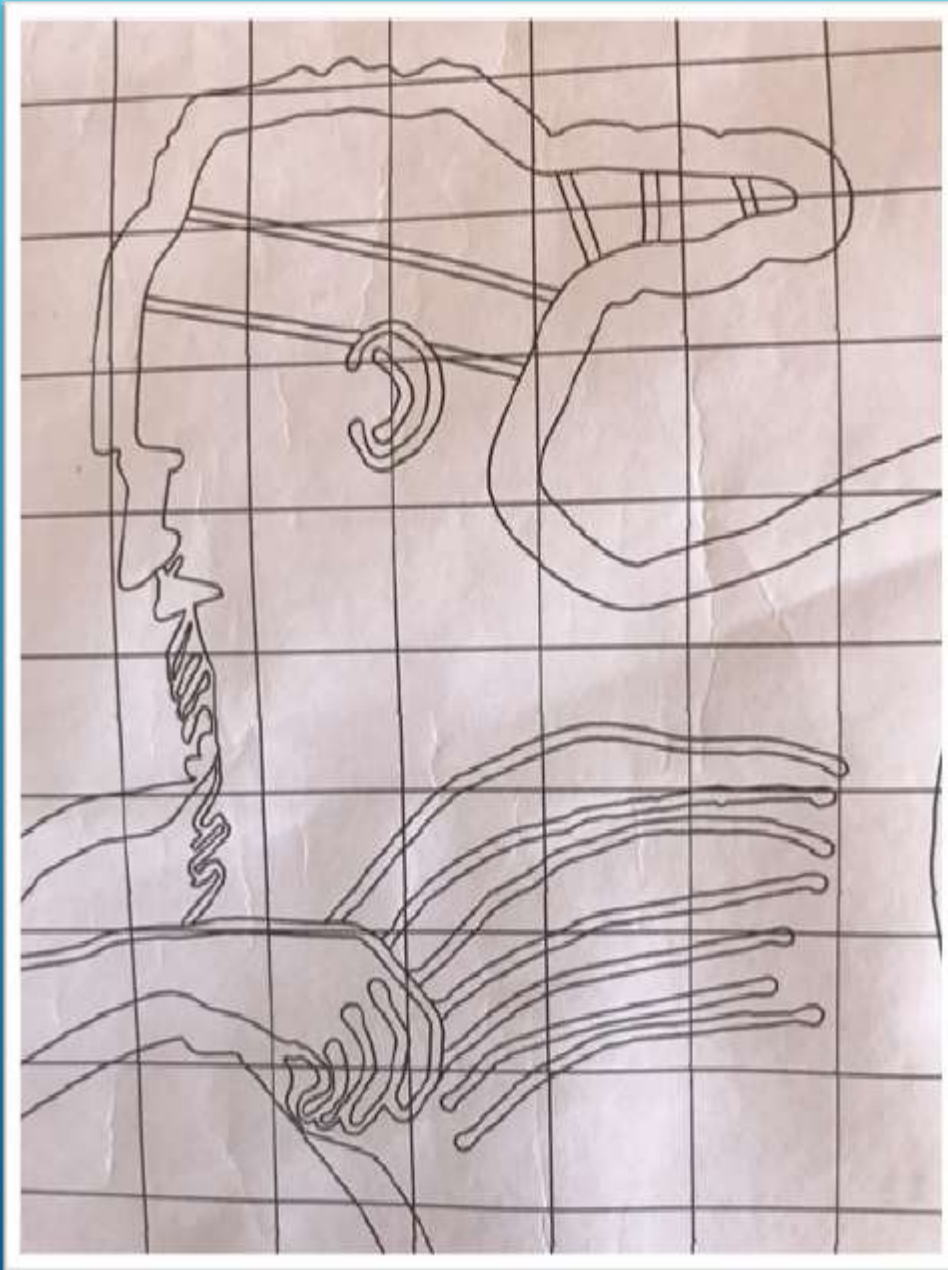
## EVIDENCE:

- GREEN BAMBOO NURSERY STAKES WERE USED
- SEVERAL OLD BITS OF FLAGGING TAPE WERE FOUND BUT NONE ON THE ACTUAL STAKES. WAS IT USED TO MAKE THE STATION SET UPS?
- SOME BUSH POLES OR 'WADIS' WERE FOUND THAT SEEMED TO INDICATE THE JOB WAS SET OUT USING A THEODOLITE AND THE BUSH POLES USED FOR FORWARD AND BACK SITES.

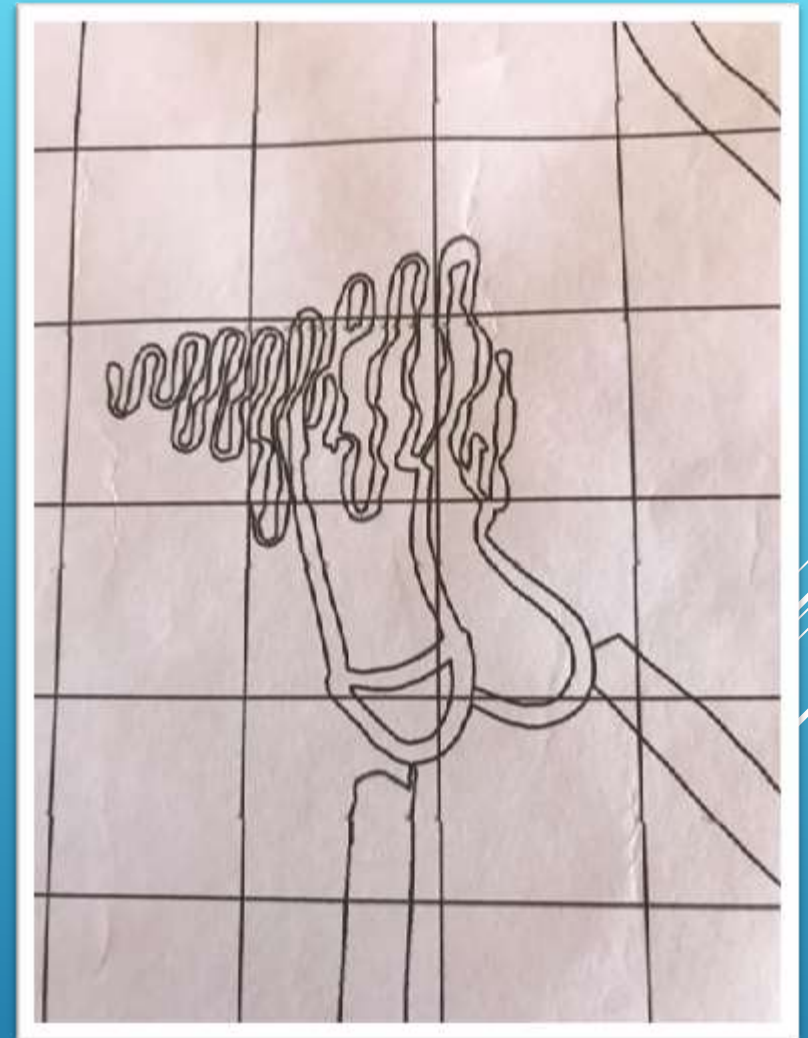
## SOME MARREE MAN STATISTICS:

- HEAD TO HEEL – 2.65KM
  - ELBOW TO WADI – 2.46KM
  - PUBIC HAIR TO PENIS – 240M
  - PENIS THICKNESS – 66M
  - FINER LINE WIDTHS – 10M
  - CHEST SCARS – 370M
  - CIRCUMFERENCE – outer and inner – 28KM
  - GRADE OUTER LINE ONLY – 104KM
  - DIESEL – 418LTR
  - GRADER TIME – 72HRS
- 
- A series of three parallel white diagonal lines on a blue background, located in the bottom right corner of the slide.











# **SURVEY BUGGY**







GPS INSTALLATION





# RESTORATION STARTS, AUGUST 2016

PIC COURTESY CHANNEL 10

- ENVIRONMENTALLY CERTIFIED GRADER OPERATOR
- WINDROWS GRADED TO CATCH SURFACE WATER. MINIMISES EROSION AND PROMOTES REVEGETATION
- NO NEW GROUND DISTURBED – RESTORATION TO ORIGINAL WORK ONLY
- 2M GAPS BETWEEN EACH PASS MAXIMISES REVEGETATION









An aerial photograph of a desert landscape. The ground is a mix of light brown sand and dark, scrubby vegetation. A series of prominent, winding, and overlapping tire tracks in a light tan color dominate the left and center of the image, creating a complex, almost abstract pattern. The tracks appear to be from a heavy vehicle, possibly a tank or a large truck, and they curve and loop across the terrain. The text "TOES OF RIGHT FOOT" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters in the lower-left quadrant of the image.

TOES OF RIGHT FOOT



An aerial photograph of a desert landscape. The terrain is sandy and dotted with small, dark green shrubs. A large, light-colored, wavy shape, resembling a footprint, is the central focus. This shape is composed of many parallel, slightly curved lines that follow its overall contour. The shape extends from the upper left towards the lower right, with a distinct heel area at the bottom right.

LEFT FOOT, DETAIL



An aerial photograph of a desert landscape. The terrain is characterized by numerous wavy, parallel sand dunes or ridges that create a rhythmic, undulating pattern across the entire frame. The color palette is dominated by warm, earthy tones of tan, beige, and light brown, with occasional patches of darker, muted green or greyish-blue vegetation scattered throughout. The perspective is from directly above, looking down on the landscape.

**TOP OF HEAD LOOKING TOWARDS THE FEET**

**NB: NO HEADBAND!**





**MARREE MAN TAKES SHAPE AT 2,500FT**





**MARREE MAN – OCTOBER 2017 FROM 4,000FT**




## **HARDEST PART OF THE RESTORATION?**

- THE RESEARCH AND SET UP TO BE TRUE TO THE ORIGINAL ARTIST'S WORK**
- 3 FULL DAYS TO DO THE GENITALS – A DAY TO MARK OUT, TWO DAYS WALKING WITH THE GRADER – COMPLEX AND DETAILED.**



## THE TOURISM AND ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE:

- SA NOW HAS A LONG TERM SUSTAINABLE PRODUCT IN THE DESERT
  - AN ANSWER TO 'NO WATER IN THE LAKE'
  - \$17M INJECTION INTO THE LOCAL ECONOMY
  - REVENUE AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ARABANA
- 
- A series of three parallel white diagonal lines in the bottom right corner of the slide, pointing towards the top right.





tenplay



eyewitness  
**NEWS**  
FIRST AT FIVE





**Landsat 8**  
**November 20, 2016**

0 2 4 Miles





## SO WHO DID IT AND WHY?

- SUSPECT PART OF A PLAN TO 'CLAIM' – BRAND THE LAND?
- ABORIGINAL MOST LIKELY TO GAIN – POLITICS WITHIN ARABANA – COMPLEX
- WHY NOT AN ARABANA HUNTER?  
NEED TO LOOK AT THE INDIGENOUS ANCESTRY



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

- THE ARABANA ABORIGINAL CORPORATION
- THE EXTRAORDINARY EFFORTS OF THE  
'MAGNIFICENT 7'
- THE SURVEY TEAM – KNOWLEDGE, SCIENCE  
AND ADVENTURE
- THE ADELAIDE ADVERTISER AND OTHER MEDIA



# THE PARTING SHOT

- GENITALS PROVE THE SURVEY DATA FILE PRE-DATES MARREE MAN DISCOVERY
- THE ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT HAS INFORMATION *“LOCKED IN A SAFE NEVER TO SEE THE LIGHT OF DAY”*. WHY?
- INVESTIGATION OVER BUT THE MYSTERY OF WHO DID IT ORIGINALLY CONTINUES.



# THANKYOU

PHIL TURNER  
APRIL 2018

