



## Barmera Visitor Information Centre

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Closed Christmas Day &  
Good Friday



**For guided tours,  
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Disclaimer: Information in this brochure is given by way of a guide only, and is believed to correct at the time of printing (August 2012). However, you should verify details with relevant organizations.

# loveday internment camps

## *Barmera*



Discover the Secrets of the

.....**Riverland South Australia**

## What was an Internment Camp?

An internment camp housed international residents who they thought were a threat to Australia during the war. Such as Japanese, Chinese, Germans and Italians. They were rounded up and taken to internment camps for the duration of the war.



## Established

The internment camp was established in 1941. The site was chosen as there were pipes for irrigation, it was near a highway that was linked to major cities with electricity and telephones, a train service was also available from Adelaide which was very close and was far enough inland away from the seaboard.

## Area

The internment camp was approximately 440 acres and four camps were incorporated.

## Escapes

Only one internee escaped through the perimeter fence, nine escaped from working parties outside the compound. There was also a tunnel dug by some Germans that was discovered before it was fully completed. Jimmy James the famous black tracker was used to recover escapees.



Leaving Loveday  
Internment Camp in 1946

## Closure

The Loveday Internment Camps were closed in 1946. The campsites were divided into small privately owned properties. Some of the buildings were retained by the Government to be dismantled and used as sheds on new soldier settlement properties.



Ruins of  
Internment camp

## Internment Jobs

Internees did not have to work but were paid for their labours. Pocket money was made available by the internees respective government and they were paid a shilling a day in money tokens. They could work in or around the compound in the poultry farm or piggery. They could also join wood cutter gangs, empty toilet pans, pick up garbage or attend the water filtration plant.



## Recreation

Playing grounds for tennis, football, baseball and bowls were provided in all camps. All nationalities made artefacts, using mallee stumps for carving, and tins for a range of metal trinkets. The Germans conducted 33 different classes to fill in their days and ease boredom. The Italians loved music and started up their own orchestra.



Italian civilian internees at the Loveday Internment Camp, Loveday, South Australia, c.

## Camp Commandment

Lieutenant Colonel Dean was the Group Commander of all camps, while each of the three camps was administered by a Camp Commandment.



Prince Del Drago, Italian Camp Leader being escorted to see the Camp

## How and Who built It?

The Loveday Internment Camp was mainly built by internees. But the fencing and housing was built before the first internees arrived by government officials.



# Camp Products

The people in the interment camp grew mainly seed mainly tomatoes, beans, beetroot, lettuce and cabbages 20865 kg was produced.

130 tons of tomatoes supplied to the Berri Packing Union providing 72737 L of canned juice for allied forces overseas.

85 000 tons of wood were cut down and sold mainly to pumping stations.

10 tons of Pyrethrum flower heads were harvested for sale to insecticide firms.

Over 1200 pigs were sold to the market for bacon.

30,000 eggs and 2800 dressed birds for army and hospital use.

More than 49896 kg of soap made from surplus fat and distributed to army units.

30 to 35 tons of poppies which provided more than half of the Morphine requirements of the AMF for 1944.

