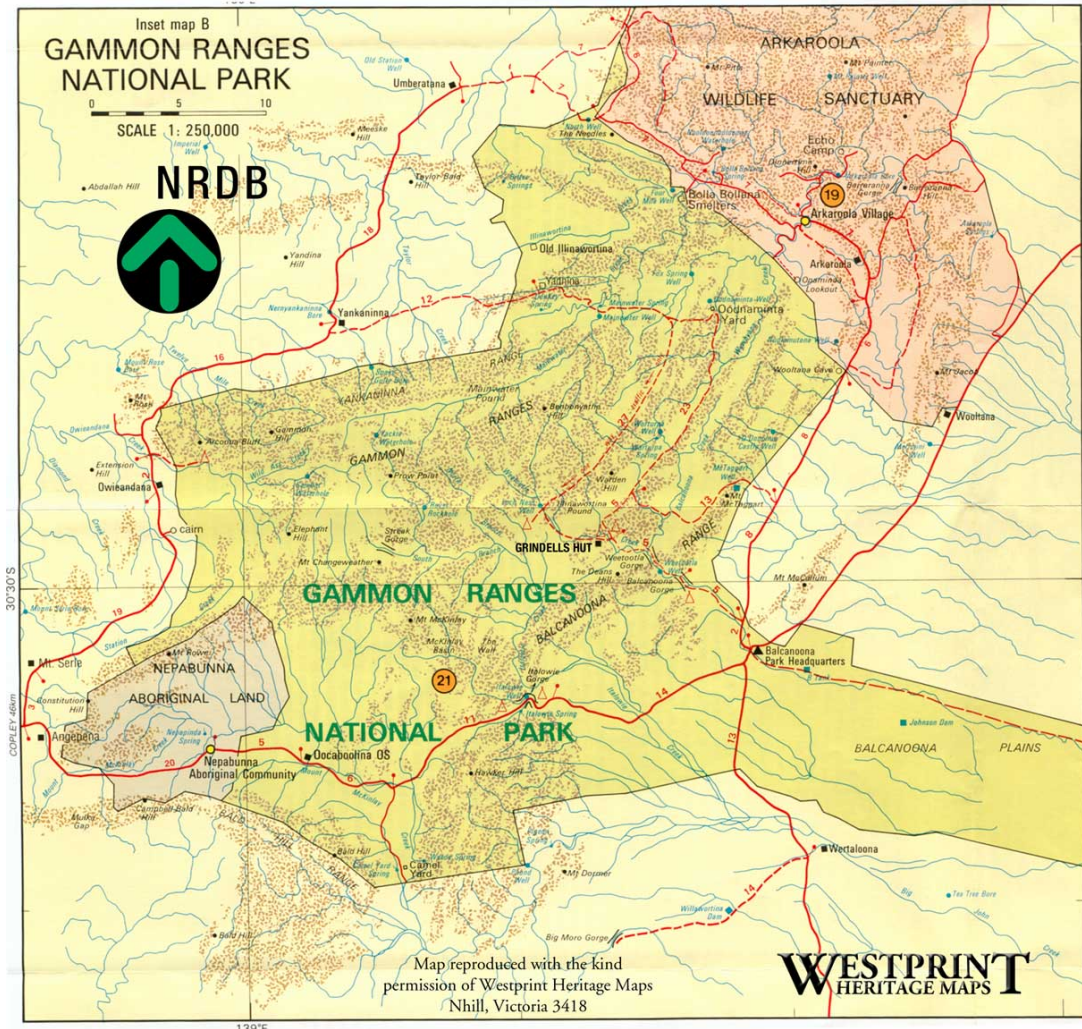


2008

## Grindell's Hut Artist in Residency



Grindell's Hut, deep within the rugged Vulkathunha Gammon Ranges National Park in the Northern Flinders Ranges.

The Vulkathunha Gammon Ranges are situated at the wild Northern end of the Flinders Ranges, providing mountain grandeur, wildlife, camping, and the chance to explore relics of pastoral and criminal history.

Aboriginal and colonial heritage, wildflowers, and a true desert experience. Set in a ring of ranges that forms Illinawortina Pound stands a former shepherd's hut, once a small one roomed stone building covered with corrugated iron hidden behind an outstation cottage built in the 1950's. The tranquil scene at the hut today belies the sinister history of this spot, once the home to a convicted murderer, John Grindell.

Aboriginal occupation - The local people have a story that tells of the giant serpent "Arkaroo" who slithered down from the ranges to quench his thirst. As he dragged his

body back to the Vulkathunha Gammon Ranges, he carved the deep gorge of the Arkaroola Creek. As he rested, his bloated body formed springs and water-holes.

The Gammon Ranges National Park protects significant Aboriginal and European heritage sites and many of the Adnyamathanha community continue to have strong ties with the Park.

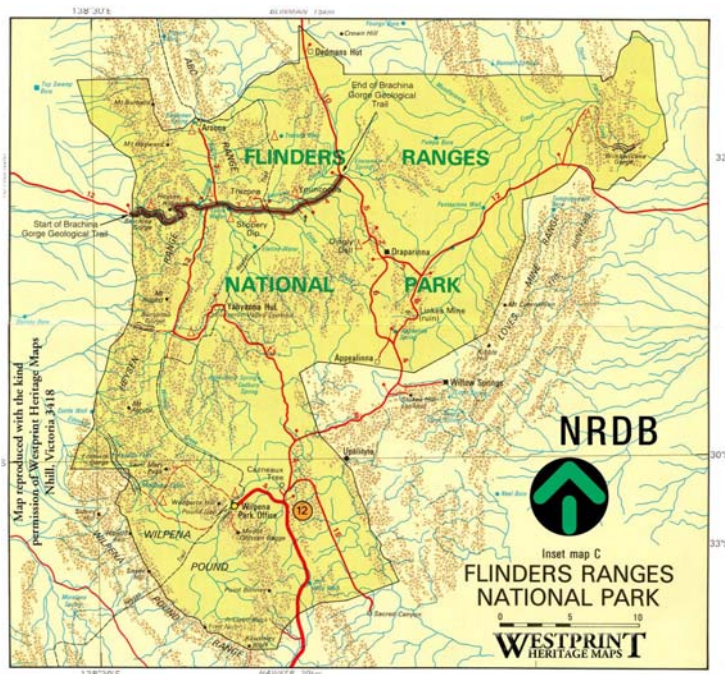
The Vulkathunha Gammon Ranges National Park borders the Balcanoona Pastoral Station. The major part of the station was added to the National Park in 1982. The name Balcanoona is derived from a word in the Adnyamathanha language meaning “old woman”. This is the name given to a rock formation high on the hill over looking the area. Balcanoona was a word used in early years because settlers could not pronounce the word Vulkathunha.

Weather conditions range from very hot to very cold and frosty. Rain occurs at any time of the year, particularly over the summer period. Thunderstorms create a magnificent display of raw power and can result in flash flooding of creeks.

Now we welcome contemporary Artists to create and unearth the intangible qualities that are hidden in the surrounds of Grindell’s Hut and the Vulkathunha Gammon Ranges.

The Vulkathunha Gammon Ranges is a perfect destination for artists.

The organising bodies acknowledge and respect the traditional custodians the Adnyamathanha people whose ancestral lands the Hut and this residency is located on.



## Art in the Flinders Ranges



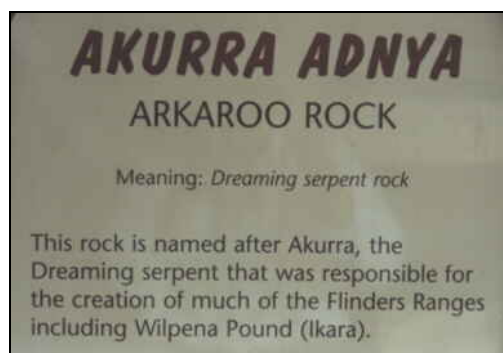
*Aboriginal cave paintings*

Many forms of art have been practised in the Flinders Ranges. The first artists were the Aboriginals during their thousands of years of living in, and travelling through, the Flinders Ranges.

Long before the Aztecs or Egyptians practiced their art, Aboriginals used the rocks as their canvas to make large numbers of paintings or carvings. In traditional Aboriginal societies there was a great interest in art. They expressed their art through painting, engraving, carving and modelling. It can be seen on rock walls, animal skins, and wooden items, on the ground and on their own bodies.

Often their art had a religious meaning. One of the mediums used in their art was ochre, which was highly priced, especially red ochre. Luckily some of these art forms have survived the ravages of man, beast and time and can still be seen and admired at different locations in the Flinders Ranges.

Although some of the best known sites are at Sacred Canyon, Yourambulla, Arkaroo Rock, and Chambers Gorge, there are numerous other localities in the Flinders Ranges where they can be admired.



The paintings at Arkaroo Rock are found on the underside of a huge rock and were probably begun nearly 6000 years ago. They are either drawn, using dry pigments like ochre or charcoal, brushed or applied by finger using wet pigments mixed with water, animal fat or blood. Arkaroo Rock, first discovered by Europeans in 1957 has been used by the Adnyamathanha people for thousands of years.

Non-Aboriginal artists, visitors and locals alike, have tried to capture the grandeur of the

ranges and its flora and fauna as well. The first artist to do so was William Westall. He sketched the still un-named Flinders Ranges in March 1802 from Mathew Flinders' ship the 'Investigator'.

Ever since the occupation of South Australia and the progress of the northern exploration and settlement of the Flinders Ranges, surveyors and artists have used their pen, pencil, brush and camera to draw, sketch or paint the Flinders Ranges in an attempt to capture its vistas and spectacular and elusive atmosphere.

In 1842 Thomas Burr produced some interesting sketches. Edward Charles Frome and James Henderson made some of the first paintings and a few sketches during their 1843 trip to Lake Frome. Samuel T. Gill accompanying Horrocks' ill fated expedition in 1846 was also an early artist. He returned a year later to make some additional sketches and watercolours. George Goyder produced a sketch 'Mud Hut of Mt Brown and Devil's Peak' in 1857 and others of the Willochra Plain, Wilpena Pound and Mount Serle.

B.H. Babbage produced some drawings of the Flinders Ranges in 1858. Many of these early sketches and paintings can now be viewed at the South Australian Art Gallery. The principal role of these artists, especially the surveyors among them, was to record the country for scientific or economic reasons. These artists were the official photographers of these early expeditions into a new land.

Several of the early pastoralists and later some of the wheat farmers also made sketches of their surroundings. Unfortunately most were made in station diaries or in their own and are not readily available to the general public. It was not really until the twentieth century when painters and photographers ventured north and discovered the Flinders Ranges.

Hans Heysen made the first of his many journeys into the Flinders Ranges in 1923. Heysen was enthralled, describing the Flinders Ranges as 'the bones of nature laid bare'. Heysen was the first to sketch and paint the Flinders Ranges for their artistic merit, recognising them as subjects of commercial worth.

During 1926 Heysen had visited the Flinders Ranges and was highly impressed with its scenery, in particular its great variety of beautiful gum trees. Many years later he said; 'The Flinders region has held a 'spell' over me ever since I first went there looking for new material for brush and pencil. Since then my interest in this unique landscape has grown with each successive trip. The great Red Gums in the creek beds fill me with wonder; their feeling of strength of limb, of vigour and life, suggest the very spirit of endurance'. His well-known watercolour, Guardian of Brachina Gorge, was finished in 1937 at his home, the Cedars at Hahndorf, from several drawings made in the early 1930s.

He was not the only one filled with wonder and the potential commercial value of producing paintings of the Flinders Ranges. Many of these artists had visited the Flinders Ranges previously as tourists but came back later to record what they had admired. During the 1960s Ronald Coudrey's Kanyaka Country and Land of the Arkaroo, Gary Gaston's Rawnsleys Bluff, Terry Lewistka's Track to Moolooloo and Margaret Lang's Creek Bed At Telford provided some excellent paintings of the rugged landscapes that form part and parcel of the Flinders Ranges.

Others quickly followed, Margaret Carr, Allan Thomas Bernaldo, Melvine Duffy, Fred Klix, Janine Parsons, Max Ragless, Charles Rawling, Jeffrey Smart and George Whinnen. Artwork depicting scenes from the Flinders Ranges can be seen at several Art Galleries and Museums, particularly in Quorn and Hawker. Since 1982 Hawker is home to the yearly Hawker

Art Exhibition, which is now known throughout Australia.

During the early 1930s a vastly different form of art was in the process of development. It would eventually turn into a multi million dollar industry. This success story started at Nepabunna when local Aboriginal man Dollar Mick showed and taught R.M. Williams all he knew about leather and the items which could be crafted from it. After many trials and errors, Williams was able to make stockman's riding boots, stockwhips, saddles and many other busman items.

It was then that the now famous R.M. Williams relocated to Italowie Gorge in the Vulkathunha Gammon Ranges where he camped with his family near a spring and date palm. He based his first leather shop from here. One of Williams' earliest customers was Sidney Kidman.

R.M started out as a missionary with the United Aboriginal Missions and although he loved his work he was unable to sell his leather good for personal profit due to the rules associated with being a missionary.

Photographers have also been attracted to the Flinders Ranges. One of the earliest photographs taken in the Flinders Ranges was that of the Blinman Police 'Station' in about 1862. After the 1870s government officials often took photographs of the Flinders Ranges. Many policemen, stationmasters, teachers, church ministers and pastoral workers kept photographic records of their experiences in the north.

## History/Background of Grindell's Hut



It was not until 1918 that John Grindell of Worturpa became known, not only in the northern Flinders Ranges but also throughout the whole of South Australia. Unfortunately it was for all the wrong reasons. Hidden in the rugged Vulkathunha Gammon Ranges Grindell ran his small cattle station at Worturpa Pound, where not all that long ago hundreds of gold diggers had camped and worked hoping to make a fortune. Grindell's 'homestead' was a small simple one roomed stone building covered with corrugated iron, looking out over Illinawortina Pound. Already in his sixties it was his last attempt to make a success of the final years of his life.

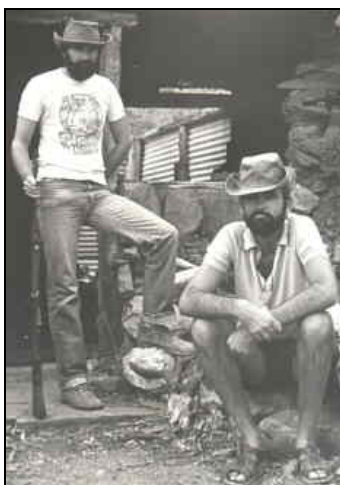
Grindell had many problems. His wife was in poor health and living in Adelaide. His son was at the front in Europe and his daughter Florence married to George Windsor Snell whom he had never liked. Snell and his younger brother William owned Angepena and Yankaninna stations. There were also the recurring droughts, isolation, loneliness and lack of financial resources.

Most of all there was the problem with his cattle. It kept mysteriously disappearing from Worturpa without a trace, this was his livelihood and it was disappearing.

There could only be one person responsible for this. According to Grindell it had to be his son in law, George Snell. Despite the mistrust between them George had assisted Grindell several times with mustering but after the unexplained death of his mule, and a few violent encounters

between the two men, Grindell had no doubt any more about the cause of all his troubles. Even at stations as far away as Wooltana and Umberatana people new that trouble was ahead.

At about this time Grindell was joined by his son George, better known as Joe who had recently returned from the war in Europe. Both son and son in law would assist Grindell with the August mustering of his cattle. After the job was finished Joe was instructed by his father to go to Balcanoona and Snell went back to Angepena where Florence and their children were staying for a little while. Snell never arrived at Angepena.



*Visiting the scene some sixty years later*

When George Snell failed to arrive at Angepena and when after fruitless searching by his brother only his horse was found, without saddle or bridle, the police at Beltana was informed. William Snell also telegraphed his brother Arthur to let him know about the disappearance of their brother. Mounted Constable Edward Waterhouse from Beltana took charge of the case and with the help of Aboriginal trackers William Austin, Edward Treloar and Richard Coulthard and several station men from Balcanoona, Wooltana and Wertaloona, an extensive search was begun.

Recent rain made the task even harder but eventually, little by little enough evidence was found to solve the disappearance of George Snell. First there were the half eaten wild carrots found in a campfire but no signs that the camel had eaten them. Due to the rain there were also no tracks on the ground but the tracker was able to determine that camels had been through the area by the above ground evidence. The next discovery was another old campfire which after some raking revealed a charred bone and tooth. Later again they found some rope and a bridle. The bridle had been presented to Snell by the workers at Mount Lyndhurst station as an appreciation of his work and friendship there.

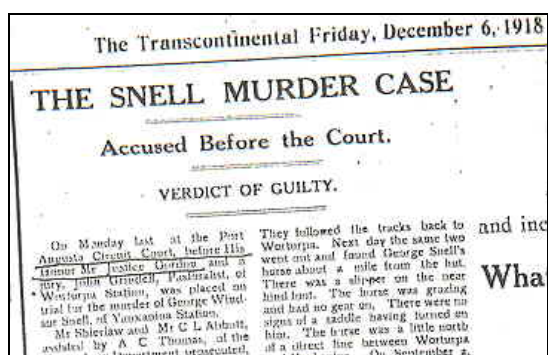
As it was well known that George Snell had lived more than fifteen years in the area and most certainly knew his way around, most men involved in the search now believed that a foul crime had been committed and Snell met his death at or near Worturpa Hut. The next day Waterhouse arrested Grindell on suspicion of murder and took him to the police lock up at Beltana.

Another search party, made up of Farina policeman James Joseph Kerin and a tracker set out from the other side of the Vulkathunha Gammon Ranges and found a blood stained camel

which was also taken to Beltana. Although Grindell had been arrested, the search was not called off yet. Detective Wylie from Adelaide had joined the group and inspected the fires again. This time they found George Snell's badly burned pocket knife and what appeared to be parts of intestines. Nearby they also found his saddle.

It is believed that an initial trial was run by local pastoralist Alec Wilson in Balcanoona who summoned his shearers as a jury who sentenced Grindell to hang. But a local Sergeant at the time decided that it was not a fair trial and even so the jury and Alec Wilson stoned him as they rode off.

Enough evidence was collected and on 23 September 1918 John Grindell faced the court at Beltana for a preliminary hearing. There was great local interest and the hall was filled to capacity. At this hearing before Magistrate John Wood much of the evidence suggested that Grindell had a case to answer. However some of the damning evidence later proved to be inconclusive. Dr Edward Angas Johnson of Adelaide established that the tooth was an upper right wisdom tooth. However, two witnesses stated that the tooth could not be from George Snell as he never had any wisdom teeth. Even so there seemed to be enough evidence to commit him to stand trial at Port Augusta.



On 2 December 1918 John Grindell faced His Honour Mr Justice Gordon and a jury at the Port Augusta Circuit Court. The prosecution team consisted of Shierlaw and Abbott assisted by A.C. Thomas of the Crown Law Department. W. F. Owen of Adelaide appeared for the defence. Numerous witnesses were called, among them Grindell's daughter Florence and sons John and Joe, several station owners and Aboriginal Trackers.

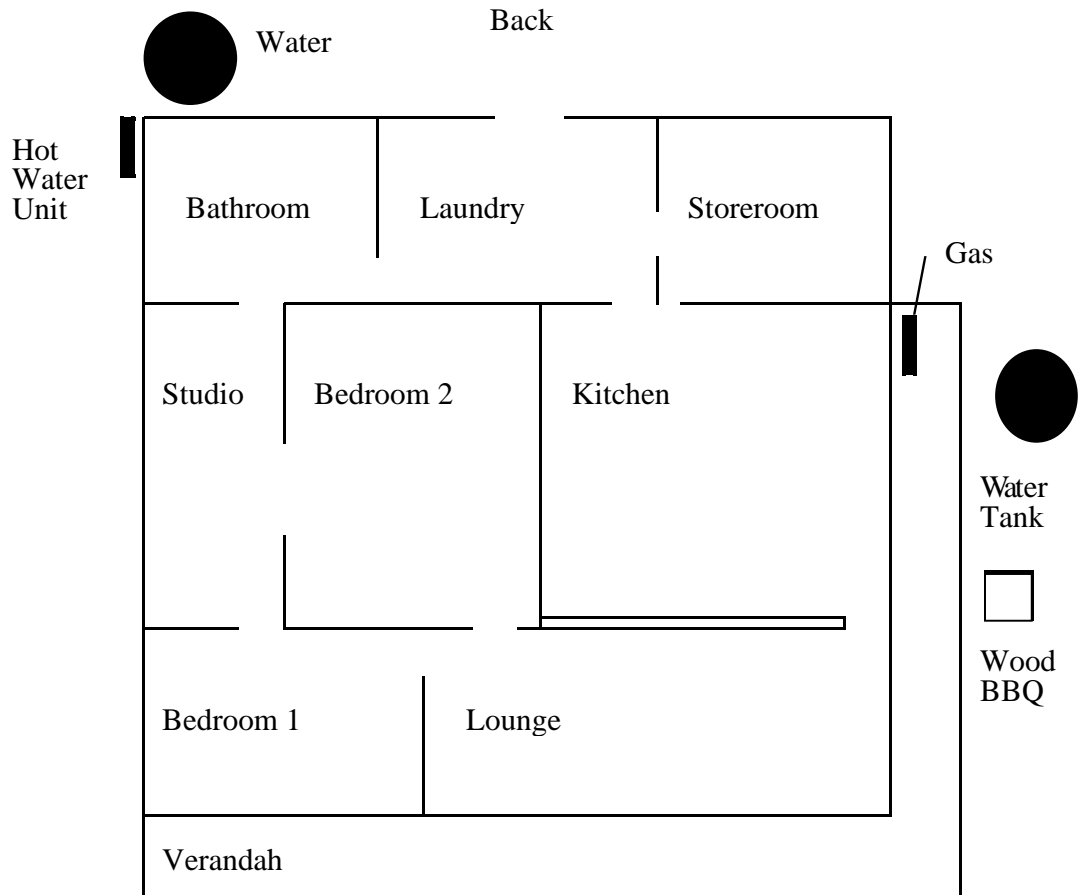
On 3 December the judge summed up the case for the jury, who took only thirty minutes to arrive at the Guilty of Murder verdict. Grindell, who had stated his innocence throughout the trial, was sentenced to death by hanging at the Adelaide Gaol on 2 January 1919.

During December a petition was presented to save Grindell but the government considered the evidence against him so strong that the request was denied. After several more petitions from Grindell's wife, daughter and sons and those from the Rev F. Webb and Mrs Annie Collins the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. Perhaps that was Grindell's only stroke of luck!

Ten years later John Grindell, seventy-five years old, was released from goal. He died in May 1930.

# Grindells Hut

## Description/floor plan/photographs



NB: This diagram is not to scale

## **Residency Program**

Grindell's Hut is available for a four week visual artist residency from Wednesday 15 October to Saturday 15 November 2008.

The Grindell's Hut Artist in Residency Program has been established to provide an opportunity for artists to live and work in this special natural and historic environment, which has long been the source of inspiration for many Australian artists.

Applications must be received by 5.00pm Friday 27 June 2008. The successful artist for the 2008 Grindell's Hut Artist in Residency will be notified by end of July 2008. It is expected that over time the Grindell's Hut Artist in Residency Program will grow to national significance.

The Grindell's Hut Artists in Residency Program is supported by the Port Augusta City Council's Fountain Gallery, the VULKATHUNHA-GAMMON RANGES NATIONAL PARK CO-MANAGEMENT BOARD and Country Arts SA – The Partnership.

Each Artist in Residence will be required to donate a finished work to the Port Augusta City Council Fountain Gallery for permanent collection and also for a print to be located at Grindell's Hut. They will also participate in a public activity, the nature of which is to be negotiated with The Partnership.

Send your application to:  
GRINDELL'S HUT ARTIST RESIDENCY  
FOUNTAIN GALLERY  
PO BOX 398  
PORT AUGUSTA SA 5700  
By 5.00pm Friday 27 June 2008

## **General Information**

### **The Program**

The Grindell's Hut Artist in Residence Program has been established to provide opportunity for artists to live and work in this special natural and historic environment which has long been the source of inspiration for many Australian artists.

### **2007 Residency**

The 2007 Residency will be for four weeks from Monday 15 October through to Thursday 15 November 2008. Proposals are sought from Australian artists for the 2008 Residency.

### **Rental Fee**

No rental fees will apply to the Artists taking up the Residency, however the Artist will be responsible for keeping the premises and grounds in a clean and tidy condition.

### **Bond**

A bond of \$400 is payable by the Artist on signing the Residency Agreement.

### **Capacity**

One artist only is permitted to have continuous occupancy of Grindell's Hut during the Residency however the Artist's partner and children may accompany the Artist during the Residency.

### **Living Allowance**

The Partnership will provide the Artist with a living wage of \$200 per week for the period of the residency.

### **Amenities**

The refrigerator, stove and hot water at Grindell's Hut is run on bottled gas and lighting is run by solar charged battery panels (12 volts). A wood BBQ, wood fired kitchen range and a flush toilet is also available.

### **Contact with the outside world**

National Parks and Wildlife will provide a VHF hand held radio for emergency contact to Balacanoona base. Northern Regional Development Board will provide a satellite phone also for emergency.

### **The Hut**

The Hut consists of two bedrooms, sleep out, lounge, kitchen, storeroom, laundry and bathroom. All linen, blankets, pillows, towels etc. will need to be supplied by the Artist.

- Bedroom one sleeps up to three people – one double bed plus one single bed
- Bedroom two sleeps up to four people – one double bed plus two single beds
- The sleep out area is the Artist's Studio
- The lounge has a large dining table seating up to eight people, sofa plus armchairs and an open fire place
- The kitchen is equipped with a small gas fridge, gas stove/oven, wood fired kitchen range, table (seating four), sink and combined bath/shower (toilet paper is supplied by the Artist)
- The laundry has two large sinks/tubs
- The storeroom provides space for the storage of food and other items and has stocks of cleaning equipment.

There is a verandah at the front and along the western side of the Hut that provides a perfect vantage point to view the changing colours and the play of light across the Gammon Ranges. A wood BBQ is also provided on the western side of the Hut.

The fridge, stove and hot water is run on bottled gas and lighting is provided by solar charged battery panels (12 volts). Instructions for the lighting of the fridge and hot water are provided on the site. There are no power points, as the batteries do not carry sufficient power to run additional appliances. Tap water is currently bore water, however there are rainwater tanks located outside.

### **Studio Area**

The sleep out area of the Hut has been designated as the Artist's Studio.

### **Food and Supplies**

The Artist will provide all food and consumables and will replace any things that have been initially provided.

### **Obligations of the Artist**

The Artist is required to participate in some public activity as a requirement of Residency. This will be negotiated with The Partnership prior to the commencement of the Residency.

The Artist will donate a completed framed art work, based on work undertaken during the Residency, to the Fountain Gallery. The work will be stored and displayed as part of the Grindell's Hut collection owned by the Port Augusta City Council.

### **Exhibition**

The Artist will have the opportunity to present an exhibition at the Port Augusta City Council's exhibition space, either Fountain Gallery or Cultural Centre Gallery.

## **Selection Criteria**

### **Residency**

Priority will be given to South Australian Artists.

### **Qualifications**

Applicants must exhibit a significant level of achievement in their chosen medium through exhibiting history – solo exhibitions, etc. Consideration will be given to applicants who do not have an exhibiting history who display a high degree of dedication and potential, confirmed by references or other forms of support from established figures in the arts industry.

### **Resumé**

Please attach your current resumé outlining training, exhibitions, other achievements and referees.

### **Images**

Attached to your proposal, please include at least ten images on CD of your current work practices.

### **Proposal**

When applying for residency, applicants should clearly state what they want to accomplish during their residency at Grindell's Hut.

At least one piece of artwork will be given to the Port Augusta City Council by the Artist for a permanent collection and a print for permanent exhibition in Grindell's Hut.

The Artist will, at no cost to The Partnership, provide suitable photographs of some of the work undertaken during the Residency for display on a website to be established to promote the Grindell's Hut Artist in Residency Program.