The Kapunda Mural
Crase Street Kapunda

This mural seeks to celebrate the culture and history of the town.

In 1844 Kapunda became the first commercial copper mining town in Australia and was paramount in contributing to the recovery from economic crisis that almost caused the bankruptcy of the colony of South Australia. Kapunda is also renowned for some of its famous residents who lived in the town for various periods of time. The Cattle King, Sir Sidney Kidman lived and worked for some time in the town and St. Mary MacKillop was also a regular visitor. Sister Vivian Bullwinkel, a renowned nurse from WWII was born here and Kapunda boosts that six State Premiers also came from the region.

The name Kapunda is believed to be taken from the Aboriginal “Cappie Oonda” or “water jumped up” and the mural depicts a group of the original inhabitants at the Davidson’s Reserve.

Copper ore samples were discovered by two local residents simultaneously and the figures of Francis Dutton and the son of Captain Bagot are shown together examining the find. In the background is the current mine site superimposed with a painting of the original mine site. Outside the North Kapunda Hotel is a group of dissident locals being read the Riot Act... The reading of the Riot Act in Kapunda took place during a time of political unrest and was the only time it occurred in Australia.

The woman portrayed is Isabel Kidman the wife of Sir Sidney. Isabel was a school teacher in Kapunda and she helped her husband to purchase property across the country which followed water coursed. This enabled Kidman to drive his cattle for long distances with a constant supply of water. Ultimately he is said to have purchased more land than any other person in the world. Near Isabel’s shoulder is a group of women defending their Squatters Rights in a tent city in an area near the mine called Bakers Flat.

The ruin at the top of the mural is St John’s Reformatory. (no longer in existence) A major employer in the town was Hawke’s Foundry, (no longer in existence) where machinery, engineering supplies and wrought iron lace work was produced. Examples of this iron lace work can be seen on many of the older building around the town. Marble mined in Kapunda was used to build the South Australia House of Parliament.

Near the old wooden mill, (no longer standing) is a Trotting Jinker joining a parade along Main Street. The colours of the local football club (said to be one of the oldest clubs in the country are depicted on the airplane).

The three male identities are well known locals named Reg, Brian and Eli Rawady, shown standing in front of their delicatessen. Other images are Sr. Vivian Bullwinkel as a young nurse, a young girl in Celtic costume and a parade of locals during a Celtic Music Festival.

Acknowledgments of support and the community effort in producing this mural have been written in the clouds.

Cut out animals and images along the bottom of the mural were created by local primary school children with input from some High School students.

Our mural seeks to reflect some of the past and show what still exists in the town today. We hope it will arouse an interest in the region and encourage you to explore more of our history.

Professional Artists who assisted with the mural were John Turpie & Siv Grava from Elliston
The Bust of  
Sir Sidney Kidman  
Kidman Square  
Main St, Kapunda SA

Representing Sir Sidney Kidman’s life, this mural depicts the epic journey of one of Australia’s best known pioneers and philanthropist. Known as “The Cattle King”, Sir Sidney was undoubtedly one of the greatest pastoral landowners in the world. Sir Sidney owned over 100 stations throughout Australia which covered an area of approximately 107,000 sq miles, thus enabling his organisation to transport cattle along river systems that where a constant source of supplying feed overland during periods of drought.

In 1885 he married Isabel Wright, a schoolteacher living in Kapunda and made the town his home, where he administered his business empire. During which time he held regular horse sales in Kapunda which were to become the largest sales held in the southern hemisphere. In 1921, Sidney Kidman received a knighthood and during that year moved to Adelaide. His lasting legacy to Kapunda was the donation of his home “Eringa” to the education department for use as a high school in Kapunda.

Acknowledgments
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Light Regional Council, SA Country Arts, Kapunda Main St Project, Kapunda Post Office, Kapunda residents, Kapunda High School and Peter Maclachlan who designed the mural & coordinated the community participation.

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