In December, 1991 a local sheep farmer bequeathed his 100 acre property Meldanda to the Cambrai Area School, to be developed for the benefit of the young people of the district. In the beginning, the only infrastructure was an old tin shed and some fencing. For the first decade, the paddocks were cropped voluntarily by locals and thousands of trees were planted by Cambrai students, resulting in an overgrazed property being brought back to life. Through a combination of school and community grants and the dedicated hard work of students, staff and community volunteers, the vision of establishing an outdoors classroom has become a reality.

In 2003 a ten-year plan was put into motion to develop Meldanda as a campsite providing hands-on educational experiences to all South Australian students, as well as outdoors activities for youth-oriented clubs and organisations. Fast forward 10 years, and the developed property is now yours to experience open classroom opportunities in Environmental Education, Outdoor Education and Aboriginal Education and support projects which are environmentally friendly, ecologically viable, sympathetic to the indigenous past of the land and educationally proactive.

- Programs designed by teachers for teachers
- Suitable for Students at all Year Levels
- Focus on Environmental, Aboriginal
  & Outdoor Education

**Meldanda CAMPSITE**
CAMBRAI, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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The tranquil River Marne flows through Meldanda, and is where Frog Watch and Water Watch activities take place. A separate frog pond has been constructed and contains at least four different species of frog. The property also boasts a natural spring, named Mermaid Lake. The student constructed bird-hide is a great spot for detecting more than fifty species of birds that frequent the lake and the jetty allows for visitors to walk out onto the lake to look for yabbies, tortoises and mini-beasts. Bat Island is the only school-based bat monitoring site in Australia. Three gardens have been planted on the property:
- **The Native Bush Garden** – a botanical garden containing each species of plant vegetation native to the Murray Plains.
- **The Bush Tucker Garden** – containing a broad range of plants used by Indigenous people for food and medicine.
- **The Butterfly Garden** – containing native plant species which are attractive to local butterflies.

Meldanda's programs are written by teachers for teachers. Although new programs are added to the offerings on a regular basis, the following gives an indication of areas of study students can be involved with:

**Environmental Education:** aquatic macro-organisms, bats, bird watching, butterflies, camouflage, frogs, gardens, leaf identification, learning about trees, listening to nature, possum trail, rabbits, river habitat, soil testing, using the five senses.

**Outdoor Education:** archaeological dig, camp cooking, knots, making a campfire, hiking and walking trails, orienteering treasure hunt, survivor challenges, tracking.

**Aboriginal Education:** boomerang and spear throwing, group identity, dot painting, free teacher notes on Peramangk and Ngarrindjeri cultures and on Aboriginal art, rituals, shelter building, x-ray art.

**Facilities for Games and Activities:** beach volleyball court, campfire ring for telling yarns, commando course, extreme croquet court, frisbee golf course, low ropes course, outdoor chess board.

Cambrai Area School is able to provide a chart of offerings, indicating suggested year levels, what equipment is provided and what needs to be brought and per head cost for each activity. These programs are copyright and there is an intellectual property fee for each usage. There is no requirement to use our programs when visiting Meldanda.

**Accommodation:** Meldanda is a true outdoor experience, and accommodation is in the form of tenting. If your school is unable to supply enough tents for campers, Meldanda has fifteen double tents available for hire.

**The Rec Hut:** The central hub of the campsite provides enough table space for up to 60 students. A barbecue, and camp kitchen is available for your use. The recreation hut took three years to construct, working at a pace of one day per week. This was achieved by local senior secondary students interested in a future in the building trade.

**Toilets and Showers:** The Meldanda campsite is totally self-sufficient, relying on the sun and wind for power generation and the rain and a bore for water. It means students staying at the camp are especially conscious to conserve energy and water resources. There are five toilets and five showers at Meldanda. Each of these units is self-contained, so that they can be used by either gender. Because the water for the showers is gravity fed from the bore, students need to time their ‘in-out’ showers to be no longer than three minutes.

**Students learn from:**
- Sorting rubbish and placing in the correct recycling bins
- Setting aside food scraps for the worm farm
- Leaving the Rec Hut, toilets and showers clean and tidy
- Returning hired tents correctly folded and placed inside their bags together with ropes and pegs
- Ensuring the fire has been very definitely extinguished.