



28/50

Mission Mob, Bend Mob, Wilcannia 1950s

BADGER 2009

BARKA

The Forgotten River

Look at the linocut print made by Uncle Badger Bates. It shows a bend in the Barka (Darling River) to the east of Wilcannia in the 1950s.

Trace the river bend with your finger.

Name the animals you can see.

Notice the Mission Houses neatly lined up with toilets and showers out the back.

Find the Mission school nearby where the Mission kids and the River Bend kids went to school.

Locate the two tin huts on the right-hand side of the picture near the Ngaty (Rainbow Serpent or Water Snake) head. This is where Uncle Badger lived with his grandmother, grandfather, mother, and older brother.

Travel upwards and find the home of Uncle Badger's cousins Sonny and Amy Quayle and their family.

Continue moving up to White Sandhill, a special place belonging to bytyuka (the moon).

Follow the crisscrossing foot tracks which show the River Bend mobs and the Mission mobs visiting each other and going fishing.

Imagine a bridge across the river and a town on the other side. There really is a bridge, but when Uncle Badger was a child he was not allowed to cross it. Aboriginal children were being taken away from their families at this time and Uncle Badger's family were scared that he would be taken away if he was seen in town.

Tell a friend what you would do if you lived on the banks of the Barka.

Mission Mob, Bend Mob 1950s by Badger Bates, linocut print, 2009.