

The Hamer Newsletter



13 December 2009

Hello to One and All,

After re-reading the last newsletter it is hard to believe we have travelled so far and seen so much in the last few months. This country continues to amaze us with its diversity and beauty.

After leaving the far north of W.A. we finally found some gorgeous wild flowers and a complete change in the countryside – lots of cultivated land.

Monday 2 November

After leaving Denham we stayed a night again at Whalebone Bay and tried the fishing yet again – still no luck, but it was pleasant standing in the water and watching the stingrays and small sharks cruising around.

Tuesday 3 November

To a free camp at Galena Bridge on the Murchison River near Kalbarri.



Lots of wildflowers on the roadsides and warm, humid weather. At Galena Bridge we met Norm & Irene Brosseuk, ex Cairns people like us and now “on the road”.



Wednesday 4 November

To Kalbarri. There really should be a caution sign at the turnoff to Kalbarri, warning unwary travellers that it could take many hours to travel a few klms – you travel through the national park to arrive at Kalbarri and the sheer quantity and variety of the wildflowers is enough to keep

anyone with a camera occupied for hours. You get out of the car to look at some flowers and before you know it you are meandering through the bush finding more and more new blooms to photograph.



On the way to the town, we also called into 2 beautiful lookouts – Eagle Hawk and Ross Graham. The views over the countryside are really lovely. This place is a

real gem and a must for any traveller in the region.

That night we went to Finlays Fish BBQ for dinner with friends Sue and Jim. On arrival, a storm was in progress and the place was hit by lightning just as we were walking through



the courtyard in the rain. Sue and Bev nearly went through the floor and the sensation of electricity running up our arms was something else! After the panic we had a great meal and a very pleasant evening. However, there were several lightning strikes in the town and our van park lost power, as did several businesses in town. It took a few days to restore everything to normal.



We did a few touristy visits in Kalbarri – to the Seahorse Farm, the Parrot breeding centre, the inland gorges (Nature's Window is intriguing), and of course the coastal lookouts and gorges. The highlight of the stay was a canoe trip along the Murchison river, complete with a cooked breakfast on the river bank. On the way to the launching point the tour guide found a Thorny Devil on the road and we had a close look – what a cute little creature it is.



Saturday 7 November

To Coronation Beach near Geraldton, and a look at Pink Lake (Port Gregory) and some convict ruins on the way. Pink Lake is an interesting phenomenon and the “pink” is



beta carotene harvested from the salt as a food supplement.

Coronation Beach is a council reserve on the beach and became home for the next 9 days. Lots



of hours spent fishing with very little success, and day trips to Geraldton and surrounds. Geraldton is a town on the move, lots of new developments and landscaping of public space along the waterfront. The HMAS Sydney memorial is a very moving monument to the 640+ men who died when the ship went down.

Greenough is an historic village near Geraldton, and has been beautifully restored to showcase times of old. It is run by the National Trust and is well worth a visit. Nearby is the old Hampton



rooms which form the bookshop.

Arms Inn, where you can get a drink and a meal, and browse for hours in the maze of

We did a day trip around the area and came across an enormous wind farm near Walkaway. There are 54 wind turbines spread across the farms in the area – quite a sight all turning together as far as the eye can see.

Monday 16 November

To Port Denison where we stayed in a van park on the beach for a few days. It was very windy and squally so a good time to be parked and off the road.



leave the coast and go inland a bit. New Norcia is a Benedictine Community, owned and run by Benedictine Monks. It was originally founded by Spanish monks and the buildings



her. By pure coincidence, 2 other couples from Cairns were there at the same time, Norm & Irene Brosseuk and Michael & Wendy Rafferty.

We stayed at New Norcia for several days waiting for mail to arrive, and also had Stopalot inspected at nearby Bindoon for the rego renewal. The weather turned from cool to very warm, and the flies were incredibly friendly.

Wednesday 25 November

Leaving New Norcia we made it to the outskirts of Perth, to Advent Park at Maida Vale. This is a

Friday 20 November

To New Norcia via Sandy Cape and Jurien Bay. It was still very windy so we decided to



reflect this influence. The town tour and the art gallery & museum were well worth the visit. Bev also went to observe Sunday Mass and a christening, and to a “meet a monk” session which was very interesting. The Abbey church has the most amazing organ – it sounded really beautiful during the service.

Imagine our surprise to discover that an old friend from Cairns, Carmel Ross, is the CEO of the town. Carmel has a huge job running the various business units which make up the community and it was great to catch up with



7th Day Adventist conference centre which has a caravan park section and is a very convenient place to stay when visiting Perth.

We have made use of the public transport system to get into the city and back, and done a few touristy things – visit Kings Park, (an absolute must for anyone coming to Perth), the Perth Mint, (all that lovely gold!) Fremantle, and a wander around the shopping malls in the city. Perth has changed a bit in the last 30 years since Bev lived here! – and the development is continuing with new construction all over the place.



We have visited friends and done all the usual chores we have to do when in the big city – dentist, optometrist, blood bank and so on. We have also completed stage one of our plan to become volunteer camp ground hosts for the national parks – had our interview and organised to attend the training sessions in March in Perth.



We will stay here for a few more days, then will be going to Busselton for a few days and see some more friends, then Margaret River for a few quiet weeks over Christmas.

So, the end of the year is almost upon

us and we have been almost 3 years on the road. We are looking forward to lots more good travelling around W.A. over the next year or so, and hopefully some stays at national parks as camp ground hosts – maybe we will meet up with some of you in 2010 as we continue this journey.

We wish you all a very happy festive season and a great new year, and hope that all your plans for the next year work out.

Regards

Bev & Frans



