

The Hamer Newsletter



19 May 2010

Hello to One and All,

We finished the last letter at Kojonup, looking forward to the Wagin Woolorama which was an interesting day out. We spent some time watching the sheep dog trials, and watching the judging of the Boer goats. There were very few entries, mainly from the same breeder, and we were the only spectators. The judge (from Queensland) spent a lot of time explaining to us the finer points of



Boer goats and how he went about judging them. Surprisingly, it was quite fascinating and we enjoyed learning about these unusual, very stubborn creatures. The sheep shearing and fleece handling demonstrations were also very interesting and for the first time we could see just what hard work it is in the shearing shed.

While at Kojonup we also spent a few hours at the Visitor Centre (the Kodja Place). It is the most interesting local history museum and interpretative centre we have come across with lots of native and settler stories.

7 March 2010

To Dwellingup van park, situated in a lovely State Forest, for an overnight stop. This is one of the loveliest commercial van parks we have been in.

8 March 2010

To Perth. First to the van repairer to organise for a diesel heater to be installed in Stopalot in April. Then to the worst van park we have ever been to in Queens Park. The only reason to stay there was its convenient location, close to the Dept Environment and Conservation (DEC) offices for our camp ground hosting training course.

Over the next 10 days we successfully completed our 4 days of Wildfire Awareness and First Aid training, and an induction into DEC and the role of the camp ground host. It was interesting and sometimes fun, and we left with our volunteer uniforms and name badges ready to start our new "career".

We went to the Perth Caravan and Camping show and drooled over some new 5th wheelers and the latest gear and toys. The diesel heaters were on display and that confirmed our decision to have one fitted to Stopalot.

20 March 2010

Leaving Perth we overnighed at Binningup and then back to Margaret River to complete the dental treatments – seems to have been going on forever. The weather was cool, wet & windy, with a few sunny days thrown in. Autumn was definitely on the way.

30 March 2010

To Quinninup van park for an overnight stop on the way to Shannon National Park for our first hosting assignment – wet and cool as expected.



31 March 2010 - Wednesday

To Shannon NP just down the road. We set up in the camp ground hosts site next to the Visitor Information and Registration bay and Ranger Sid arrived to induct us and hand over the keys. He showed us how to use the VHF radio, drove us



around the area and told us what our duties were and left us to it. He left us some containers of fresh water, some fuel for our generator and also organised for some more firewood to be dropped off.

There were not many people camped so we had time to look around and get ourselves organised. Frans' main job was to keep the 2 wood fired water heaters going for hot showers and Bev had to attempt to keep the 2 ablutions blocks reasonably clean. The 2 blocks are quite some distance apart, one at the bottom and one at the top of a long slope – lots of exercise for both of us.

We had no idea how many campers were likely to arrive given that the weather forecast was for cool, wet weather, but the Ranger thought probably not too many.

1 April – Thursday to 5 April – Monday

The time flew by in a blur of meeting and greeting hordes of Easter campers, trying to fit them onto the available sites, keeping the water heaters going, cleaning the ablutions and talking, talking, talking! The camp ground was full to bursting and each day we turned away so many disappointed people – they were still trying to get in at 9.30 pm in the pitch dark.

Most days were cool and wet with heavy showers, but there were bursts of brilliant sunshine. It was a very happy camp with lots of lovely people and kids running around having a ball. We were so busy, but thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

6 April – Tuesday

Lots of people left and we had time to relax. The next few days were much quieter and the weather was also sunny and warmer. Took Fang to the Ford dealer in Manjimup to assess a problem with coolant leaking, and they found the heater coil was leaking and needed to be replaced. They could not do the job so we booked it into a Ford dealer in Perth.

10 April 2010

Time to leave Shannon, but we had a flat battery and could not start Fang. Luckily there was a couple with a 4wd who came and jump started us and we headed off to Manjimup to have a new battery installed. We decided to stay at Fonty's Pool van park outside Manjimup for a few days and see out another period of cool, wet weather.

14 April 2010

To Margaret River, for the final dental appointments. Pouring with rain, and when we arrived at Big Valley there was a faint green tinge on the paddocks and it continued to rain over the next few days.

18 April 2010

Time to go to Perth. Leaving Big Valley the paddocks were starting to look very lush with the new grass growing – in 4 days the difference was quite amazing.

We arrived at Forrestfield van park and shifted a load of gear from Stopalot into the cabin we had booked for a few days. The next day Stopalot went to the van repairer for the diesel heater to be fitted. We stayed in the cabin and found it very uncomfortable compared to "home".

20 April 2010

Picked up Stopalot and shifted all the gear from the cabin back in. Although we still had the cabin for that night, we decided to move back home and sleep in our own bed.

21 April 2010

Took Fang to the Ford dealer to have the heater coil replaced, plus the front brakes and a few other service items. They said it would take 2 – 3 days as the whole dashboard has to be pulled out to get to the heater coil. Thank goodness we have extended warranty and at least that covered the heater coil.



24 April 2010

To Perth Vineyards caravan park at Caversham on Perth's north east outskirts. A very pleasant place near the old market town of Guildford with its lovely old Grammar School and Seminary.

We planned to stay for a week or so but that stretched to 4 weeks after Frans had a Molescan and had 2 skin cancers removed,

requiring follow up treatments.

Frans' daughter Karyn came over from Melbourne on business and we had dinner with her 3 times – it was great to catch up with her.

We were invited to dinner by 2 couples we met at Shannon at Easter and also met up with friends Ray & Dawn in their new apartment.



Friends from Cairns, Helen, Roger & Elliot Bairstow arrived in Perth and we met up with them. Their 12 month trip around Australia is now into the 2nd year and they are planning another year after that - this travelling lifestyle is very addictive.

We visited Whiteman Park, had a look around the village and went into the Motor

Museum which has a great collection of all sorts of vehicles. Whiteman Park is impressive with great facilities for family outings and the place was full with families having BBQ lunches.

17 May 2010

We are leaving Caversham in a few days and will get back into travel mode for a while until our next camp ground hosting assignment in mid July near Geraldton. The weather is cooling rapidly and we have already had frost on a couple of mornings. Our new heater will be very welcome in the weeks to come as we explore east and north of Perth during the Winter months.

Regards

Bev & Frans

