

## The Hamer Newsletter



**22 August 2010**

Hello to One and All,

Time for another update before we go bush again. The last 2 months have been very interesting and enjoyable and we are looking forward to the next few months as we continue our camp ground hosting role in WA National Parks.

**Monday 28 June**

A very cold morning (1.6 deg C) saw us packing up and leaving Sandstone, and driving to Mt Magnet. On the way we stopped at the old Paynesville Cemetery with its remaining single lonely grave. Mt Magnet is yet another mining town suffering a gradual decline and with the mines closed down the future looks bleak. Some of the landscape around the town was very similar to the Painted Desert in SA. We stayed at the Mt Magnet van park overnight – a very neat and tidy park



with good amenities, but very noisy with heavy transport passing by all night.

**Tuesday 29 June**

Departed Mt Magnet and drove via Paynes Find to an overnight stop at Mt Gibson rest area. It was very cool and windy but we sheltered in amongst the bushes and enjoyed a quiet night.



## Wednesday 30 June

To Wongan Hills via Wubin and Dalwallinu.  
Wongan Hills is a very pleasant RV  
Friendly town with a good Visitor Centre



and a welcoming attitude to grey nomads. They told us of a free camp 12 klms from the town, so we went there for a very quiet 2 nights on our own. We did the 3 hour Mt Matilda walk with its great views from various lookouts. During the wild-flower season this area is ablaze with colour and we

could see thousands of buds – pity we will not see the flowers. Some of the nearby fields had baby lambs – very cute.



We then stayed at the Wongan Hills caravan park for a few days and spent some time touring the surrounding countryside. There had been just enough rain to start the new crops growing and it was all looking very green and lush.

## Monday 5 July

To New Norcia for a few days where we met up for dinner with Carmel Ross who is still working hard running the Benedictine Community business



interests. It was very cool and on our last morning we had a heavy frost around us and minus 1.4 deg C. It was all very green and so different from our previous visit last November when it was hot, dry and brown.

### **Thursday 8 July**

Time to start heading towards Geraldton, but with a severe weather warning for the coast we decided to stay inland and went to Dalwallinu for 2 nights to sit out the storm.



### **Saturday 10 July**

To Mingenew via Perenjori and Morawa in a mix of showers and sunshine. The countryside was all looking beautiful with the new wheat crop and pastures growing well, although much more rain was needed.

We set up at Mingenew caravan park and drove out to look at Coalseam Conservation Park where we were due to start camp ground hosting in a few days.

### **Monday 12 July**

To Geraldton for a few days to attend to various chores and prepare for Coalseam. We met with the Ranger and organised to move to site on Thursday. While in Geraldton we visited the cathedral, a beautiful building designed and built by the famous Monsignor Hawes in the early 1900's. We also visited the very interesting Maritime Museum with its artefacts from the wreck of the Dutch ship Batavia in 1629 – what a story of horror for the passengers on the ship most of whom were later murdered by mutineers.

### **Thursday 15 July**

To Coalseam. We set up in the camp ground host's spot, signed for all the equipment provided by Dept Environment and Conservation and started "work". The daily routine included cleaning the pit toilets, cleaning and





maintaining the BBQ's, picking up litter and collecting fees from the campers.

As it was the beginning of the season and the wild flowers were not yet out, it was very quiet and we only had a few campers each night. Frans helped the Ranger with roadside spraying of weeds.

The bird life was great and Bev spent many hours with binoculars roaming around watching the



action. Every dead tree had a pair of galahs in nesting holes, competing with the ringneck parrots and cockatiels, and even the red-tailed

black cockatoos. There were red-capped robins and all sorts of other birds, plus 4 wedge tailed eagles. Anyone interested in birds would enjoy this place.

Over the next 2 weeks a few flowers emerged and a couple of rainy days saw more buds appear. A few tiny orchids bloomed – snail, pink candy and blue-beard.





## Tuesday 3 August

After handing over to new hosts, we headed back to Geraldton where we had booked the truck in to Ford for some more warranty work, and the van to have the wheel bearings replaced.

## Tuesday 10 August



With the vehicles fixed up and the food stock replenished, we headed back to Coalseam to spend a few more days hopefully looking at more flowers, and to help with planting of seedling trees. Rain was expected and the Ranger wanted to take the opportunity of planting to give the new trees a good chance.

More flowers were there, but it was still too dry for the mass blooming we were hoping for. We went for a trip out to Mullewa where there were a few different

species and some beautiful clumps of everlastings.

Wednesday night was stormy with quite heavy rain and on Thursday the Ranger arrived with plants and some students to plant them. We put on our welly boots and ponchos and went out in the rain and wind to place bags around the new seedlings. The next day more Dept. staff came out and a heap more seedlings were planted



and bagged.

The following few days saw many more flowers appear and we were delighted to see so many everlastings. Although this was just a preview and we will not see the main event, we were very happy to have been able to



see the transformation from bare earth to beautiful flower gardens.

### **Sunday 15 August**

Back to Geraldton and on the way the roadside bushes were starting to come alive with their flowers. In a few weeks it will all be very colourful

### **Wednesday 18 August**

Frans flew to Brisbane to attend the Queensland Government Parliamentary Inquiry into Rural and Regional Tourism and to present the case for the Grey Nomads desire for free or low cost camping throughout the State. Fingers crossed that the Inquiry Committee can do something to reverse the Government RV Unfriendly attitude and improve things for we travellers.

While Frans was away, Bev sorted out the cupboards and filled them with the groceries we will need for our month-long stay at Kennedy Range National Park. The next stop is Carnarvon in a few days, to meet the Ranger and organise ourselves and stock up on the fresh fruit and veg, then we will go out to Kennedy.

We hope that while there we will see more flowers, if they have had enough rain. Everyone we have spoken to who has been to Kennedy Range has raved about it, so we are really looking forward to our time there. Our next instalment will tell you all about it, and hopefully we will have many photos to show you what it looks like.

Until then,

Bye for now, from Frans and Bev

