

The Hamer Newsletter



Sunday 22 May 2011

Hello to One and All,

Our 2 month stay at Perth Hills National Park campground passed all too quickly. We had a long spell of very hot, dry weather, and it was only in the last 2 weeks there that it suddenly cooled down and a late Autumn arrived with a sprinkling of rain.

We spent lots of time raking and clearing up leaves, pruning bushes, fixing the irrigation system and generally looking after the campground – including shifting a heap of sawdust on to the tent sites.

The Kookaburra outdoor cinema was



operating each weekend, just across the carpark from us and we went to see The King's Speech one warm night, and thoroughly enjoyed it.

Our weekends were mostly very busy and noisy with the campground full, and the car park full of cinema-goers, but during the week it was usually very quiet unless we had a school group overnighing. Some nights we were on our own and it was very peaceful and we

saw the possums roaming around.

On 2nd May we packed up and said goodbye to the staff, and started our travels again. The first stop was the caravan repairer who installed the diesel heater last year, to check why it would not work anymore. After several hours of pulling the heater apart and testing it, they finally discovered that the air intake and exhaust pipe had been blocked by hornets nests – now it works like new.

Tuesday 3 May

After having the diesel heater fixed, we headed up to York for the night.

Wednesday 4 May

We picked up our mail from the York post office and drove to the little wheat town of Quairading, an RV Friendly Town. There we stayed on the Travellers Rest area next to the sports ground, for a \$5 fee. This was the first time for over 2 months that we were not on mains power, and the solar panels and batteries worked just fine. It's a nice little town and we had a very quiet night.



Thursday 5 May

After stocking up with groceries, we drove out to Kokerbin Rock. We stayed here last year for one night, and it was good to

return and spend a few days with a few other motorhomers from Perth. We had camp fires at night and enjoyed good company, and explored around the rock during the day.



Tuesday 10 May

To Bruce Rock, another RV Friendly Town, with a very good council owned caravan park. We are very impressed with these wheat belt towns, they are very neat and tidy and well maintained, with good community facilities. We spent 2 nights here and had a look around the district, visited the historic Ardath Hotel and had a drink – we were the only customers. The “town” has a population of 5 and sometimes the owner sees nobody all day.

Thursday 12 May

Leaving Bruce Rock with no destination in mind, we meandered in a big loop through Merredin, Burracoppin, Southern Cross, Bullfinch and on towards Mukinbudin. Late in the afternoon we happened upon Weira Nature Area, with a small bush camping area with concrete fire pits and plenty of wood lying around. There was no-one else around so we had a quiet moonlit night with a campfire and jaffles for dinner.

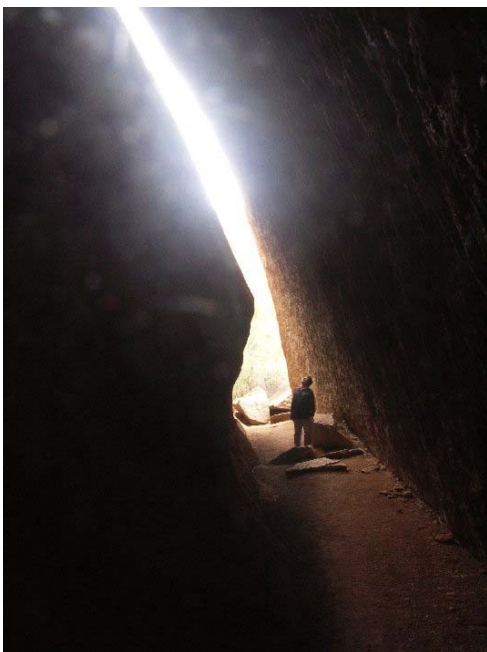


Friday 13 May

To Mukinbudin caravan park for 4 nights. We did a day trip around the area and saw Beringbooding Rock which has a rock wall around the perimeter near the top of the rock collecting rainfall into a tank holding 2.25 million gallons and is the largest rock water catchment tank in Australia.



Then off to Elachbutting Rock which has a large “wave” to equal the famous Wave Rock, and Monty’s Pass, a narrow tunnel formed by a massive slab of rock which has sheared off.



We had a storm and a fair amount of rain, much to the delight of the farmers who have been desperate for rain to start the winter wheat crop.

Tuesday 17 May

To another small wheat town, Goomalling, to have the car serviced and pick up mail. We wanted to stay for a week but the caravan park was booked out by a caravan club for the weekend, so we arranged to leave on Friday. The park manager knew we had no particular



place to go and suggested we consider acting as volunteer caretakers at nearby Slater Homestead, the first building in the district constructed in 1856.

So, after talking to the Council officer responsible and meeting the Council CEO, we agreed to stay here for up to a month to look after the place, and we relocated here on Friday in very stormy and wet weather.

It is open to the public on weekends for free tours, and visitors can have light lunches and Devonshire teas. The weekends

are normally staffed by council officers and volunteers, but while we are here we will be doing it.

On **Saturday 21 May** we had a crash course on how to prepare and serve the food in the tea room, opened up and waited for the visitors to arrive. By the end of the day we had a total of 2 people, and they only looked around – didn't want refreshments, so it was a gentle introduction for us. Sunday started off slow, then there was a sudden influx of people all wanting lunches. The pair of us managed to serve everyone without any disasters, although we were tripping over each other in the tiny kitchen. Those who know us well, will understand that this is quite an achievement, especially Frans in the kitchen actually helping out!

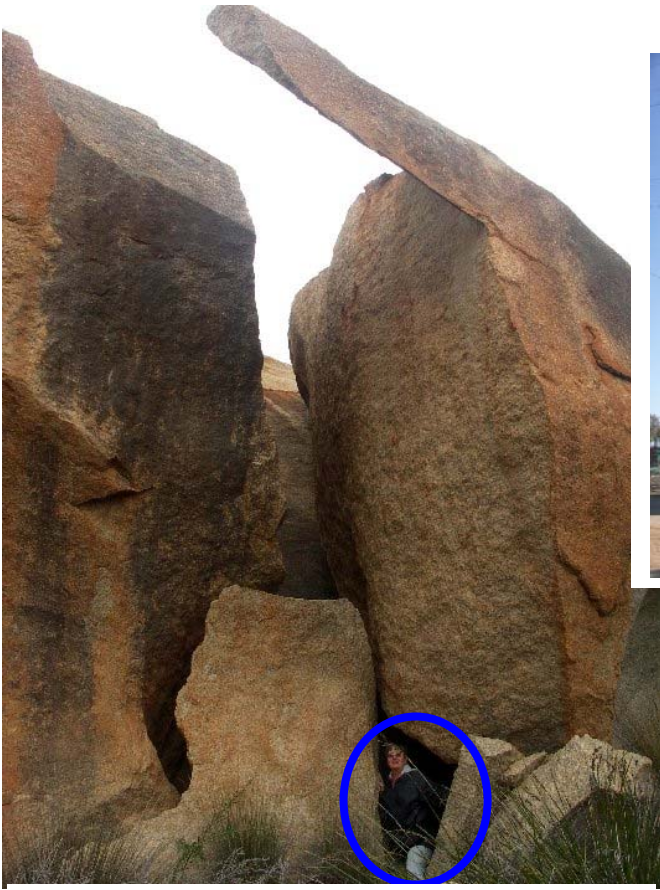
We are set up behind the stone barn away from the road, and we have power and water, and ablutions with a hot shower so once again we have all we need and a great view over the farmland. The weather has really changed and it is very cold at night, and cool during the day. Hopefully there will be more rain for the farmers.

When we leave here we are going back to the Swan Valley outside Perth to house-sit at an organic winery for a couple of weeks, while the owners go on holiday. We will be looking after cats, ducks, a dog and a sheep. Our life is certainly taking some new twists and turns and we are enjoying the opportunity to do new things and stay in interesting places.



Regards,

Bev & Frans



Bev emerging from Monty's pass



Ardath Hotel



Old grain silo



Slater Homestead