

# The Hamer Newsletter



**1 March 2013**

Hello to One and All,

Once again the time has flown and almost 6 months have gone by since our last newsletter. So, a belated Happy New Year to you all and here is an update. We managed to meet up with quite a few friends and relatives during this part of the journey – it is always a joy to spend time with friends and loved ones.

While we were at Crows Nest in September, we had an overnight visit from Barry & Lorraine Beattie, (of Southern Cross Caravans). It was a cold night and we enjoyed a couple of bottles of red to keep us warm.

**2 October 2012**

We left Crows Nest and travelled to



Maryborough to visit our house at RV Homebase. We were able to stay for 3 nights in the guest RV area. The village manager who lives in our house was kind enough to let us in to take a look – we had only seen it once before we bought it and had forgotten what it looked like inside so it was good to refresh the memory. (it is in the background).

**5 October**

To Imbil to house sit for 4 weeks. The highlights were a visit from old friends Barry & Elaine who came and stayed for a few days in their motorhome, and a fleeting visit from friends Mark & Kathryn who called in on their way home from a caravanning trip.

We went into Gympie one day to meet friends Neil & Marieke and agreed to look after the beach-house complex at Woodgate Beach in May & June 2013 while they go away on a well-earned holiday.



## 5 November

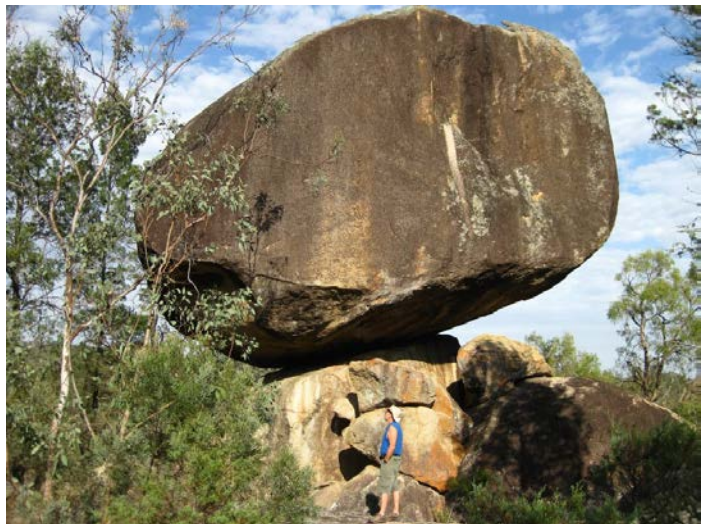
We returned to Crows Nest, and went to see the Kransky Sisters one night at the community centre. That was a lot of fun – a good show with a lot of laughs. After a few days it was time to start heading south to Melbourne for Christmas.

## 12 November

To Yetman where we stayed at the community campground for the night. We were the only campers so it was a quiet night.

## 13 November

To Cranky Rock Reserve near Warialda for 2 nights – a lovely place but very hot. A thunderstorm cooled things down a bit. It was very quiet except for the peacocks which called all day and half the night.



## 16 November

After a night in Gunnedah we went to Trangie to stay with friends Sue & Jim for 3 nights. We helped them with a couple of jobs around the house, and they fed and wineed us too much.



## 19 November

To Tullibigeal, a tiny wheat town where we stayed at the sportsground for 2 nights, all on our own. The main camp area is next to the grain silos, but as the harvest was on it was noisy and dusty with the trucks delivering the grain. We went to the pub for a meal to put something back into the community.



## 21 November

To Lake Cargelligo, an interesting lakeside town. We stayed overnight at Deadman's Point, right next to the lake. Unfortunately it was very hot, windy and dusty, but we had the place to ourselves.



## 22 November

To Tungamah where we stayed in the Lions Park at the weir for 3 nights, again on our own. This is a very friendly town which actively welcomes grey nomads to stay. We had dinner on 2 evenings at the pub where the locals are very friendly.

## 25 November



To Graytown near Nagambie to house sit for a few weeks on a property with horses, sheep, chooks and cats. It was very hot and dry. We soon discovered that an Army munitions testing area was nearby and there were frequent explosions and episodes of machine gun fire.



We had to feed 2 horses and 2 cats twice daily, feed the chooks and visit the other 3 horses with carrots now and then, and just keep an eye on the sheep and guard alpacas – oh, and the goat. Most of the time it was hot, dry and often windy, with the odd cool day and shower here and there.



While there we did a day trip to Bendigo and went on the Talking Tram through the town and up to the Chinese Joss



House. This is the oldest joss house still in its original location, still being used as a place of worship by many Chinese residents and visitors. It is a lasting reminder of the large Chinese population in Bendigo in days gone by. We also visited the Chinese Dragon Museum and the Chinese Gardens and friends Heather & Alex in nearby Murchison one day for lunch.

## 19 December

We left Graytown and travelled to Carrum Downs where we set up in a caravan park until



leaving in January. Christmas Day was spent with family at the home of friends, as Karyn & Sean's house had been flooded by the washing machine. We had a lovely day and as usual ate too much. Frans was given the challenge of "making" a gingerbread house for our hostess, Libby, and did a not too bad job of it. Kym was over from London so it was a great family gathering.



We also went to see the sand sculptures in Frankston and did a day trip on the ferry to Williamstown.



Fang was treated to some new brakes and a bonnet respray and looks much more respectable now.

After some more family time, Kym departed for London and we departed for our next adventure.

### **5 January 2013**

We left Melbourne after a very hot day and night – it was still 34 C at midnight. We overnighted at Holbrook where it was still very hot and the airconditioning struggled hard all night to get the temperature down to a reasonably comfortable level.



### **6 January**

We left Holbrook and after stopping for lunch at Yass, we reached our destination in Wallaroo. It took a while to position the van and we were very hot and sweaty by the time we finished. The airconditioning worked overtime again.

The next day our hosts Rod & Judy kitted us out with fire-fighting clothing and showed us all the fire-fighting gear on the property – bore, generators, pumps, hoses and so on.





With predictions for a “catastrophic fire day”, we discussed our options and decided we were just as safe on their property as anywhere else. Luckily, although the conditions were awful with howling winds and extreme heat, there were no fires near us – although Rod was called out to other fires in the district with the Wallaroo Bush Fire Brigade.

Once conditions improved we set about our task – helping to restore an 1860’s timber slab

cottage which the original owners of the



property had lived in. It was an interesting project and we were happy with the results of our labours by the time we left.



While there we had a day out for Bev’s birthday, enjoying a lunch cruise on

Canberra’s Lake Burley Griffin, and a couple of other days sightseeing around Canberra including visiting the Toulouse Lautrec exhibition in the National Gallery. We also visited friends Mal & Judy for dinner and cousin Anita & partner Ali for Sunday brunch.





## 7 February

We left Wallaroo and travelled to Queanbeyan to have new brakes fitted to Stopalot, then on to Bowral to stay with friends Bruce & Dianne for a few days. We parked on a vacant block next to their place, beautifully mowed by Bruce and so green after recent rains. Bruce had arranged a lunch gathering on the Sunday with other friends we had met on our Canada/Alaska trip, so we enjoyed a very sociable time with them.



## 11 February

To Corrimal Beach at Wollongong for a week and a long overdue visit with Mick & Linda (Bev's in-laws from an earlier life). The last time we saw them their youngest grandchildren were just babies – now they are at school.

## 18 February

To Lane Cove National Park campground in Sydney, a beautiful spot in a busy city. We spent a couple of days in the city, making good use of the Seniors concession day pass (\$2.50 each) and travelling on the trains, trams and the harbour ferry. We went to the Maritime



Museum and inspected an old lighthouse, the replica Endeavour sailing ship, and a retired patrol boat, warship and submarine.

More social visits – we went to Bev's former Mum-in-law's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday party and saw the rest of the in-laws and their children and grandchildren. We also went to visit another of Bev's cousins, Fiona, and her family at their home outside of Sydney.

## 28 February

We leave Sydney on 4<sup>th</sup> March and will go to Woy Woy to visit more friends and another cousin. After that, it is time to start heading back to Queensland, hopefully calling in at National Parks along the coast on the way. The persistent rain and flooding might make that difficult though so we will have to wait and see.

Regards,

Bev & Frans

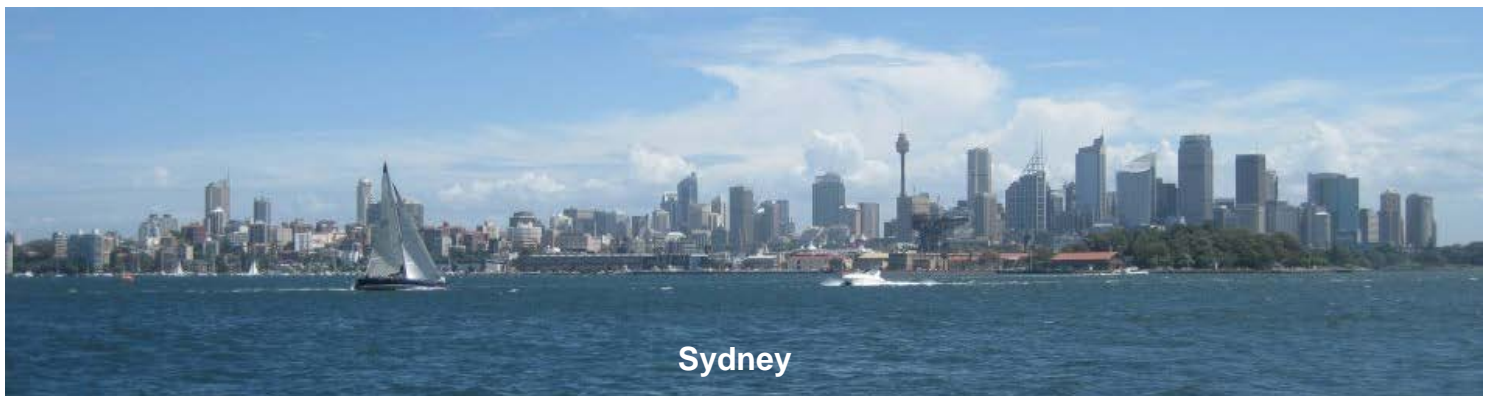




Bev with horses at Graytown



Sand sculpture (fish has bikini bottom)



Sydney





Fish undergoing repairs



Frans' favourite sand castle



Frans' daughters Karyn and Kym



Replacing guttering



Putting slab wall back after repairing foundations