

The Hamer Newsletter



12 July 2015

Hello to One and All,

Another year half gone and we are just about to move in to our new house at RV Homebase so a quick update is in order.

We have spent the last 3 months in one spot, at the Cheery Nomad RV Park & Farm Stay just north of Maryborough. It is conveniently close to RV Homebase (about 15 minutes by car) and has "Lucky's Bar" in the camp kitchen/recreation room where we have spent many evenings playing pool, meeting new people and generally enjoying a relaxing time while we wait for our house to be built.



We have scoured all the furniture and bedding and appliance shops in Maryborough and nearby Hervey Bay and have ordered most of the essentials for delivery when we move in. There went a lot of the savings we had been hoarding!

We have become "Friends of the Brolga", the local theatre and joined up as Volunteers. Last week we had our first "work" session when we learnt the door-keeping role, checking the tickets and tearing off the stubs and letting people in and out. The event was the local community Mary Poppins musical which was a complete sell-out, so there were hordes of families and kids everywhere – a real sink or swim experience.

The show was fantastic and very professional and a credit to all the performers who put so much time and effort into the production. Last night we learnt the usher role at a music teachers concert. This was part of an event held every 2 years where music teachers from all over Australia come for a week of seminars and workshops, with internationally renowned musicians and conductors leading the sessions. It was a great experience too.

A point of interest – Maryborough is the birth place of P.L. Travers, the author of Mary Poppins, so naturally the city has a lot of references to the Mary Poppins story in its tourist attractions and has an annual Mary Poppins festival.

Here is a brief summary of the last 6 months since Christmas in Melbourne.

25 December 2014

We met Kym & Karyn and their Mum Carole & partner Alan and had a relaxing Christmas lunch at Doyles Bistro in Mordialloc. It was a lovely day and a great way to spend the day with no work for any of us.

The next day we spent with Kym & Karyn, indulging in a little more Christmas cheer, then went out geo-caching with them in the evening before a late dinner, then saying our goodbyes to Kym who would be returning to her home in London.

27 December

To the Frankston Sand Sculptures (an annual event) with Carole and Alan. As usual the quality of the sculptures was fantastic.



28 December

We left Melbourne and started heading north. We stayed at Finley NSW Showgrounds, a good spot but it was very hot and dusty. The next day was extremely windy so we moved the van away from the trees just in case, and had to run the airconditioner to keep cool.

30 December

A cool, still morning in complete contrast to the previous day and great for travelling. We went to Ardlethan which has a great free camp and were able to park in one of the 4 powered sites (\$4 for 24 hours of power). We stayed 2 nights and enjoyed looking around the little town and finding some geo-caches.



1 January 2015

A new year and a beautiful day. We drove through the lovely countryside (Ariah Park, Barmedman, Grenfell, Canowindra, Cubal) to Manildra and stayed at the showgrounds which had brand new amenities. We were the only people there and had a quiet time. We went out geo-caching for a while the next day but it was so hot we retreated to the airconditioning again.

3 January

Back to Trangie for a week or so with Sue & Jim. We took the car to Dubbo for a service and went to see the Water Diviner movie – what a great movie and as usual Russell Crowe was a great lead. As usual we had a very pleasant time with Sue and Jim.

12 January

We left Trangie after coffee and “birthday cake” for Bev’s birthday on the next day. Sue obviously went to a great deal of effort on the cake.! We ended the day at Narrabri showgrounds.



13 January

To Yelarbon Recreation ground which is a beautiful camp spot with

plenty of room, an old railway station building for the amenities and a small jail-house museum. We went to the local pub for dinner for Bev’s birthday and had a great meal. The next day was wet and windy and a good day to stay indoors.

15 January

To Stanthorpe. We checked out the showgrounds to see if there was a site we could access to attend the Easter Geo-caching Oz Mega event. We found one unpowered site still available that was big enough so we booked it and registered for the event. Then off to friends Geoff and Gloria nearby to park in their garden for 2 nights, a lovely spot right on the creek. The next day G&G took us out for a drive around the area and we had a decadent lunch at the Cidery, with apple pie, cream, cider ice-cream and of course a glass of cider.



17 January

To Maroochydore State School to join with the CMCA Suncoasters for a few days. It was very hot and humid but there was limited power available so we could not run the airconditioning. Still, we enjoyed a few days there with the CMCA group and looking around Maroochydore.

20 January



To Kenilworth showgrounds where it was still warm and sunny but much cooler than on the coast. It was quite busy with a few fifth wheelers and all sorts of other vans and motorhomes. We stayed a week, went out a couple of times geo-caching and visited the Cheese Factory across the road for ice-creams, cheeses and other delicacies. Then we had torrential rain and developed a leak (yet again) through the airconditioner on the roof. It is not pleasant having rain water pouring through the roof in a van! Frans tightened up some screws and we hoped for the best.

28 January

Down the hill to Brisbane for a few days where we visited friends Barry & Elaine and picked up our mail, Frans saw the skin doctor and had a biopsy taken from his head.

2 February

To the Cheery Nomad RV Park at Maryborough. We were lucky to be able to drive in to the best site in the park, next to a paddock with a view across the grass to the trees. We settled in here and set about organising our new home at RV Homebase. After checking out a display home which suited our needs, we settled on a plan and the colour scheme and they proceeded to draw up the paperwork. We caught up with several friends in the Homebase, went out to lunch, and started to get to know Maryborough.

Then we had a period of heavy rain and the threat of a cyclone and were advised by the owners of the Cheery Nomad to leave because we might be cut off if the nearby creek flooded. We relocated to RV Homebase where we knew it would be safe. After a couple of hours of torrential rain the roof started to leak again through the airconditioner. We moved ourselves in to the RV Wash Down bay and sat out the



next couple of days under cover until the rain cleared. The cyclone passed over the coast north of us and then inland well to the west, so we only had a few strong gusts of wind. However, overnight one of our roof vent covers was blown completely off so it was just as well we were under cover. Frans managed to tape the vent cover back on until a replacement could be bought.

21 February

Back to the Cheery Nomad, then out to lunch with friends for Frans' birthday. Whilst there was no flooding in Maryborough, the Mary River actually feeds from the south and runs north to Maryborough. The rain events further south caused the river to rise and the bridge in Maryborough was closed for a day until the river went down again. Luckily we were not in a hurry to leave.

25 February

To Caboolture showgrounds. We drove to Brisbane the next day for Frans to have surgery on his head, had lunch at Barry & Elaine's house then went to Costco for a look around. There are certainly some bargains to be had there and we were able to buy a few bits and pieces using Barry's membership card.

2 March

Another month gone already. We took the van to a repairer in Caboolture who removed the airconditioner unit from the roof and refitted it with a new sealer gasket. Hopefully this solves our leak! We then went to Woodford showgrounds and stayed for 5 nights. Our house contract was prepared and we drove to the RV Homebase Head Office at Forest Glen to sign it, with a start date of just after Easter planned. On the way back to Woodford we stopped at the Ettamogah Pub for lunch, only to find it is no longer the Ettamogah – now it is just "The Pub". The food was good and the building is still the same quirky place.



7 March

Back to Brisbane for a week.

15 March

Back to Caboolture, this time to have the diesel heater removed and serviced. It has been playing up for a while and with the winter approaching and our plans to spend some of it in cold places we need it fixed.

18 March

To Kalbar showgrounds for 2 weeks. This is a lovely area with a good pub where we



enjoyed Sunday lunches. We had hot weather with some storms and did quite a few geo-caching trips around the area. The football field had been recently upgraded and the inaugural competition day was staged while we were there.

31 March

To Stanthorpe showgrounds for the geo-caching Oz Mega. We met old friends there, and lots of new friends. It was cold and damp. Our gas stove decided to stop working properly so we had to call out a gas fitter to sort it out. Luckily it was a

simple adjustment to the pressure regulator and we were back in action again.

The next few days were spent socialising, geo-caching and enjoying our first geo-caching event. It was a shame it was cold and wet much of the time especially for the many people in tents, but they all seemed to enjoy themselves.

We took one day out to drive to Morgan Park near Warwick to watch Karyn race her Prince Harry (Prince Skyline) in some time trials. She had the slowest car on the track but still did very well.

We spent a few more days in Stanthorpe before preparing to return north to Queensland.

8 April

Our first really cold morning of the year at 6.7 C, clear and sunny. We packed up and headed to Kalbar showgrounds for 2 nights.

10 April

To Ipswich showgrounds so we could take a quick trip to the Ikea store at Logan and buy a few things for the house. We spent a whole \$100 on bits & pieces.

11 April

Back to Brisbane so Frans could see the skin doctor again for a check of his head. All was well.

With some time on our hands until the house construction started we decided to head to a BlazeAid camp at Biloela to see if we could help with fence repair after the floods of a few weeks ago after the cyclone.

14 April

To Woodford for 2 nights, then Linville free camp, Nanango, then Munduberra.

19 April

We arrived at the Biloela BlazeAid camp and set up, met the other volunteers and organisers at evening muster. It was very hot and humid, not ideal conditions for working on fencing.

20 April

Up at 5.30 to a cool, showery morning. Breakfast in the camp kitchen, get some gloves and high visibility vests and other assorted work wear and off to work. We only managed a couple of hours work before the rain made it impossible, so back to camp for the day.

The next 2 days were fine weather and we put in 2days hard work before leaving the next day to head to Maryborough.

23 April

A very cold morning, we packed up and left and stayed the night at Calliope River rest area. It is a lovely spot on the river with plenty of room for vans.



24 April

To RV Homebase for the night. We went to look at our house site and found the garage slab down and the timber house frame already up. Very exciting to see the construction underway.

25 April

After an ANZAC Day ceremony at RV Homebase we headed off to the Cheery Nomad RV Park and set up for a long stay.

12 July

Since we have been here we have watched the house gradually take shape and now it is complete and almost ready to move in to. Thursday 16th is the big day when we take possession, and we will continue to sleep in the van until we get a bed (being made by a local joinery). We have some furniture and appliances being delivered over the next couple of weeks, and then we will be going away at the end of July to the Tara Camel Races.



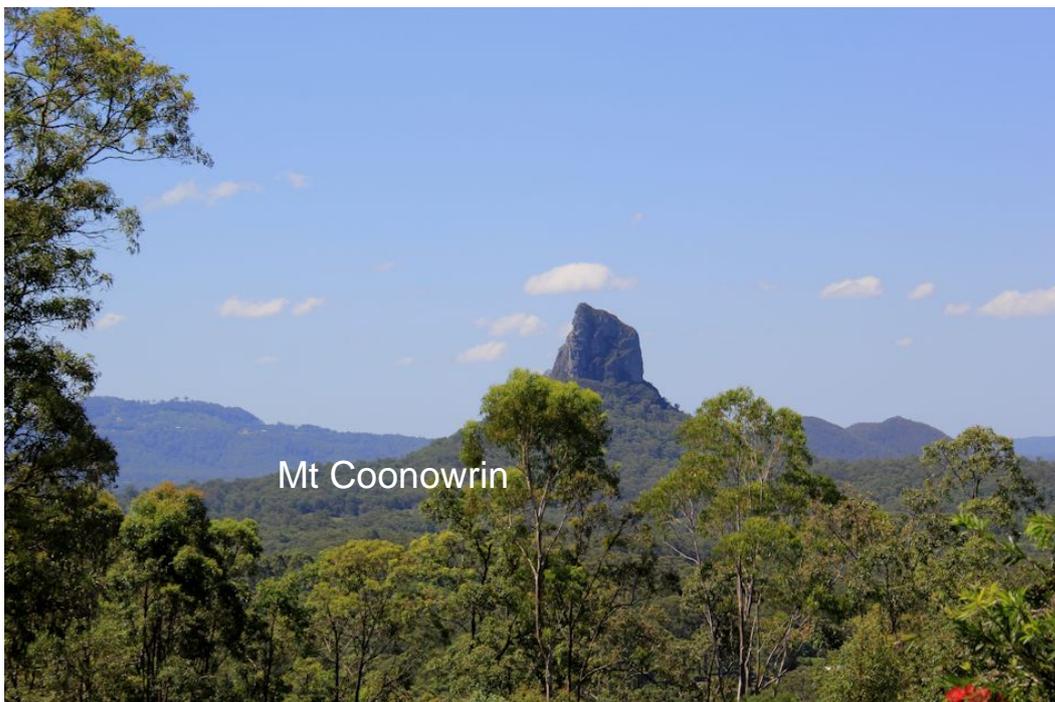
So, we are moving in to a new phase of our retirement life and looking forward to a mix of being at home and continuing to travel this lovely country.

Regards,

Frans & Bev



Glasshouse Mountains



Mt Coonowrin



Somebody had too much time on his hands



