



ULYSSES MEMBERS RV GROUP



The Kermit Kronicle



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From the Editors Desk.

The year is skipping by at an incredible rate. It only seems like yesterday that we had our 2nd AGM at Wellington Caves, and yet that was nearly a year ago and now the 3rd AGM is upon us.

In that time we have had the Ulysses AGM in Albany, and what a trip that was, ideally suited to the Members RV Group for travel. There was also the Parkes Elvis Festival in January, the Repton WGT in April, and the Port Stephens Meet and Greet in May. Then there was Christmas in July at Nymboida and a WGT at Rainbow Beach just gone.

When I wrote that original letter to Riding On way back in 2007, I had this idea of a very informal group of like minded people drawn from a common interest background getting together now and then for a good time.

At our inaugural get together at Brooms Head in March 2008, the 34 members gathered, many from the very early days of the Ulysses Club echoed that sentiment, with a strong endorsement of the idea of the RV Group, and a commitment to keep it simple. One rule to join - financial membership of the Ulysses Club by one of the couple or by single joining member. No fees, no complex structures, no rule books.

Our logo was one of several put forward on that March weekend, roughly drawn by Wayne McAleice, from an original design submitted by Russ McAulley, and then fine tuned by me on photoshop. The logo's design features four elements - the yellow ring the gold sand beaches of our wonderful country, the

orange to represent this sunburnt land with the blue the oceans surrounding, the motorhome, caravan and car and bike and trailer to convey that we are a club for all Ulysses rv'ers, and of course our name.

Since those early times, we have grown to having over 135 members registered on the website, with most of those 135 representing couples.

The website was financed by passing the hat around to reimburse our original setup and domain hosting and registration costs. The purchase of the stickers was recovered by sales, and the purchase of the patches was covered mostly by a raffles run by Ruth Rawlings and Sandy Thornthwaite at the AGM last year.

I will have a income and expenditure sheet at the AGM this year if anyone is interested

Rick Bedford,
Coordinator





COMING EVENTS.

3rd Ulysses Members RV Group Annual General Meeting.

Place: Beachfront Caravan Park

Address: 109 The Parade, North Haven

Phone: 02 65599193

Email: bfront@hastingsparks.com

Website: beachholidayparks.com.au

Date: Friday 22rd October 2010 to Sunday 24th October 2010.

Rate: Powered sites \$25 Extra discount with seniors cards (price as at todays date)

They have around 100 powered sites available.

Park is Pet friendly

Located about 100 metres from surf beach and a short walk to the river with a pathway all along the water. A beautiful place.

Friday night: plan to have a welcome BBQ and social drink in the park with members providing all their own drinks, food chairs etc. at the BBQ area near site N1 on attached map.

Saturday Night:

Dinner at North Haven Bowling Club. Approx 1 Klm from Caravan Park. Nice Club. Excellent food. A band will be at the club on the night at no charge to us.

Menu:

For \$20 per head they have offered:

Main meal of:

Baked Scotch Fillet & Vegies (this is a very nice meal)

Honey Mustard & Cream Sauce Chicken with vegies

Sweets:

Apple Struddle or Lemon Meringue

Tea & Coffee.

Bookings: Essential that members book as soon as possible as this time is leading into their busy season. A deposit for one night will be payable with booking.

As of the time of going to press, we have had 110 people indicate on the forum that they will be attending, with 100 attending the dinner on Saturday night, so if you have not booked yet, get in and do so.

The Annual General Meeting will be held at 2.00pm at the premises of Jackie and Kevin McLeod at 46 Lorne Road, Kendall - this is about 3 km on the western side of Kew and about 15 minutes easy drive from North Haven. Jackie and Kevin will be putting on a lunch for \$5.00 a head and have an undercover area able to seat over 100 people. We decided to move the meeting there as the park did not have an area able to cater to the number who have indicated they are coming .



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South West NSW and the Henry Lawson Festival.

Words by Colleen Edwards.

We had booked in to the Grenfell Caravan Park for a week around the June Long Weekend to participate in the Henry Lawson Festival, which we had heard was interesting. As we had not been away since October and November 2009, when we endured temperatures between 35 and 45 degrees, we were quite happy to go in the cooler months for a change.

So, we loaded our kayak on the roof of the car and headed down the NSW south coast. First stop was Gillards Beach in the Mimosa Rocks National Park where we have previously stayed and enjoyed. Three days of beautiful sunshine with warm days and nights were enjoyed there, fishing, reading and relaxing by the beach. The campsites are well set out with plenty of space between each one and long drop toilets scattered throughout the park, but no showers. Fireplaces and wood are supplied, as well as a garbage service, which is becoming unusual in most NSW parks. You will pay \$10 per night for each adult here.

From the coast, our plan was to head west over the mountains, then travel via the Snowy Mountains, eventually following the Murray River for as long as we liked, before reaching Grenfell. After leaving Gillards Beach we intended staying in the South East Forests National Park, which we visited, but found it to be too cold, so then decided to head to Bombala Caravan Park for the night. We have stayed in this park on previous occasions, and always found it to be good value, paying just \$23.50 per night for a powered site, with lovely clean amenities and everything else you could possibly need.

Next morning we headed up to the Snowy Mountains and were shocked to see all the dead trees, left in the wake of the devastating bushfires. We remember on previous trips, what a lovely drive it was through the forests, but it will be decades before these trees grow again.

We booked in to the Khancoban Caravan Park for

two nights which is not very good value at \$27 per night for two (with seniors discount) but there is not much choice in the area and we wanted to have power for our heater because of the -5 degree nights up there at the time. The park is very basic, and really needs a good overhaul.

We did an enjoyable day trip up the Alpine Way, heading towards Thredbo, where we stopped at some great free campsites, which we thought would be good in milder weather. The Geehi Hut area was particularly good and the history of that area is interesting to read.

The following day we followed the Murray River along the back roads, which was very enjoyable with beautiful scenery along the way.

We had a free camp that night at Granya State Park in dry weather, but the rain was expected next morning, so we made the most of the dry time to walk to the Granya Falls. Unfortunately, the falls had been reduced to a trickle, but would be good after the predicted rain.

Next morning the rain clouds had started to come over so we headed the short distance to Wodonga on the border, for a couple of days until the worst of the rain departed, and booked in to the Oz Park in Wodonga, good value at \$25 per night.

Wodonga has grown enormously and even though the Albury/Wodonga area is huge, we found that there is not a lot to do there, especially in the wet. We did enjoy the Military Museum at Bandiana, where you could easily fill in a half day or more, and the old Migrant Hostel site at Bonadela which has National Trust listing, both of which are very well presented.

After a couple of days spent in Wodonga we headed the short distance to Lake Mulwala where we planned to stay two days.

Lake Mulwala was formed in 1939 with the damming of the Murray River, so it is full of old dead River Red Gums, as far as the eye can see. We stayed here overnight many years ago on a trip home from a Ulysses Club AGM but none of the area looked familiar to us, as it has been transformed in that time with the addition of many new homes.



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We booked in to the Mulwala Shoreline Caravan Park for two days as we had heard the weather was deteriorating, and did not want to proceed any further until the worst of it had cleared. There are many van parks in Mulwala and Yarrawonga to choose from, mostly costing over \$25 per night, so we paid \$27 per night and were happy with the one we chose as it was on the lake with easy access for our kayak.

After a visit to the local tourist information centre, armed with maps and brochures we headed to Chinamans Island where we enjoyed a leisurely walk around the wetlands.

Then it was out to do some kayaking which is quite different to any other lakes we had paddled because of all the dead River Red Gums throughout the area, all supporting colonies of white sulphur crested cockatoos nesting in the hollows. There are magnificent mansions all around the edge of the lake, but a lot look like they are for holiday rental because they seem to be deserted.

With the weather forecast looking much worse for the next few days we decided to stay an extra couple of days because there is enough here to keep you occupied, even if the weather turns bad. Next morning after only a few patchy showers we decided to venture out on to the lake once again, which turned out to be a bad idea. As soon as we started out we could feel there was a breeze blowing which was not evident on shore, and because it was behind us it was not worrying us too much, however, we did notice it was whipping up some small waves. After a short distance we decided to turn around and head back, straight into the wind which had become stronger, producing even bigger waves. After a couple of minutes of this I was drenched from the waves coming up over the front of the kayak, which in warm weather would not be a problem, but the temperature was barely 15 degrees! Needless to say, as soon as we got back to our van, all my clothes had to be changed as I was soaked to the skin. The kayak was packed away immediately as it started to rain again and we decided to go for a drive instead.

Corowa is less than 40 kilometres from Mulwala,

so we headed there and were pleasantly surprised by this friendly town with lovely old buildings everywhere. After walking up and down the main street, doing some shopping on the way, we stopped at the Australian Hotel where they have Seniors two course lunch every day for \$9.90, which was a good selection of soup, main courses and sweets.

As if we had not had enough to eat, we were told about the newly opened Whiskey and Chocolate factory not far up the road in the old flour mill, so headed there. We were greeted out the front where we were taken inside to taste the various organic chocolates, which were all delicious. They have not started actually making the chocolates or whiskey at the site yet but have plans to proceed once they have the building refurbished. Presently all the products are made at their factory in Junee. Soon they are also opening a coffee shop which was being finished when we were there.

In the end, we stayed in Mulwala for five days, due to the increasing rain, but we were in no hurry to leave and found enough to occupy us. The Yarrawonga-Mulwala Pioneer Museum kept us busy for an afternoon while the rain deluged outside. Also, there are many wineries in the area, and the Buffalo Brewery which has some different beers available, all made on the premises, is worth a visit. There are a number of brochures available from the tourist information centre detailing many farm-gate premises which are available for inspection and purchase products.

After leaving Mulwala in sunshine, we headed to the Barmah Forest, reputed to be Kakadu of the south. As we expected, there was mud and puddles everywhere, and even though we thought it would be a good, free camp spot, we decided to head in to Echuca because we really did not feel like paddling around in the mud, and our shoes were already caked in it.

We headed straight for the tourist information centre and armed ourselves with maps, brochures and booklets, then proceeded to the Echuca Caravan Park where we booked in for four days.



I don't know whether four days is really enough time to have a good look around but we decided to try anyway and bought a passport at the Echuca wharf complex which entitles you to entry to the wharf precinct, a ride on a paddle steamer, entry to the Holden museum, Echuca Pioneer museum and the Great Aussie Beer Shed. We walked from the caravan park, the short distance into the town centre at 9.30am next morning and did not get back until 3pm and only managed to see a couple of the attractions, so will certainly need to allocate another full day to see the rest. The passport is good value provided you go and see all the attractions, and they are all very interesting and informative.

Next on our agenda, was to return to the Barmah Forest for an eco boat tour with Kingfisher Cruises which we had been told was well worth the effort. As it is Winter, there are not too many people doing this type of cruise, so there were only seven people on the boat, but it was very relaxing and the guide very knowledgeable of the area. She explained many different aspects of the Murray River and the Barmah Forest area, including the many bird and animal species living there.

On our last full day, we completed the contents of our passport by attending the Holden Museum, Echuca Pioneer Museum and Great Aussie Beer Shed, all very well presented and interesting in all different ways.

Worth a special mention is the Great Aussie Beer Shed which was really different to anything we have ever seen and the owner, Neil Thomas, is a really great character. He has been collecting all sorts of things for over 30 years, and not only beer related memorabilia. He takes you on a personal tour explaining things along the way. Neil also told us he is extending soon to include other items of interest and also caters for group functions which includes fully catered meals consisting of a spit roast for \$20 per head, the cheapest meal in town, he claims. We were so glad we took the time to visit Neil and his unique collection.

You really do need at least four days to see most things on offer in Echuca and to gain an understanding of the history of the area, which is very extensive.

From Echuca we headed towards Deniliquin, then on to Hay to follow the Murrumbidgee River for a while and perhaps free camp for a few days. The mud seems to be drying up after the rain, so that will determine whether we stay by the river.

There are lots of signs pointing to the river and according to our Camps Book, this is where the free camps are, but we had a problem because they are tiny signs and usually you pass them, then realise it when it is too late. We settle on Birdcage Reserve which is about 400 metres from the roadway and a lovely spot right next to the river.

Next morning up bright and early to a thick fog which did not clear until after 10am and headed north to the Cocoparra National Park near Griffith. We were surprised to find nobody else there and it is a beautiful area with immaculately clean free gas barbeques and pit toilets. The area has just been planted out with hundreds of native trees which will greatly improve the camping area, especially in the warmer months. There are some nice walks in the park but apart from that there is not a lot to do there but relax and enjoy the peace and tranquility.

After a very peaceful night, with a light shower of rain, we packed up and headed towards another free camp which we had read about on the Caravaners Forum, Tullibigeal or Tully for short, which is about 40 km east of Lake Cargelligo. The people who had written about this town originally planned to only stay a day or so but ended up staying there for two weeks, because of the welcome they received from the townsfolk. On first entering the town we were not sure where to go, but soon saw the Pioneer Park in the centre of town, with two motorhomes already parked there. Believe it or not, this free camp supplies free power, flush toilets and hot showers all courtesy of the local council.

Getting a powered site for free is unheard of, so it is only courtesy to spend some money in their town, so we walked to the hotel to enquire about meals. The lady told us she was not serving meals that night, but if we wanted a meal the next night she



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would cook one for us when she got her own dinner ready, so we said we would be back next night for dinner. While we had a couple of beers there, we noticed a man sitting at the end of the bar, but he did not speak to us. After we returned to our van, we were talking to our neighbors in the motorhomes, who told us they had been there a few days, and they could not believe the hospitality either. It turns out, the man who was in the bar, whose name was Colin, also runs the cafe and drives the school bus, and he had taken our neighbors out in the bus to show them all the local sites, including a huge Catholic Church, which cost over 4 million dollars to build, a lavender farm and feed lot. When they offered him some money for driving them around, he declined the offer. We could not believe our eyes, when a short time later Colin turned up in his ute, with enough pizza for six of us, which he had gone back and cooked after he had seen us at the hotel, wow – unbelievable. He is really doing his bit to try and get this town on the map and encourage tourists. We told him we would certainly spread the word, because they really deserve it. There is not much here, all farming community, which is nevertheless very interesting, but the hospitality really makes up for it. They are struggling to keep their population, as is the case in a lot of small towns, with the young ones moving out for work. If you are ever in the area, I am sure you will be made welcome. Don't be put off by the size of the town, as really there is not a lot here, just a couple of shops, including a co-op which stocks absolutely everything you would ever need, and the hotel but we are sure you will enjoy your stay.

Next stop was Grenfell for the Henry Lawson Festival, which is held over a week, including the June Long Weekend. We booked in to the caravan park early February, and were told we got the last site for the weekend, as it is only a small park and the only one in Grenfell. We were not expecting much, but were pleasantly surprised, lots of grass and most sites have a large concrete pad for your van and annexe. The amenities were always spotless and adequate for the numbers. But the best thing about this park is the cost of \$104 per week for two adults or \$62 if on a pension. It is also within walking distance to the town, which

is a big bonus, especially on a busy weekend like this festival.

The town itself is very historic with lots of buildings dating back to the 19th century and as is usual in most small towns, lots of very friendly people. There is a lot to see in Grenfell, so we think a week should do it justice, keeping in mind that it is a very full programme of events to get involved in for the week long festivities.

We always expected cold weather when we booked in February, for the June long weekend, so have come prepared with lots of warm clothing. On our first day, the maximum temperature was 6.3 deg. Which really felt like about 3 deg. When we checked the 7 day forecast, it certainly looked bleak, with snowfalls expected on our final day.

The events started several days before the weekend, so we tried to get to as many as possible, starting with recitals of poetry at the local school. There were certainly some very talented children, some reading their own compositions. During the week there were various other things which we could attend, but the weather was so cold, with some days only recording 6 degrees maximum, that we opted not to go and stayed in the van near our heater, reading.

The Festival Concert held at The Henry Lawson High School, was great value at just \$12 per head, and we thoroughly enjoyed the various artists who performed.

The main events were held on Saturday and Sunday, starting at 9am and not finishing until 4pm.

Everything was very well organised with hundreds, if not thousands, of people attending, for the whole weekend. We walked from the caravan park into town, not too far, to attend most events, which was very convenient.

Some of the events which we attended included a terrific photographic display, art produced by artists from all over Australia, woodchopping, lots of stalls set up in the Main Street selling locally made craft and products from the area, busking, lots of people reading poetry, clowns, dancing troupes and singing groups, car club displays, just to name a few. There is something here for everyone.

On Sunday, after the coldest night of our trip, the day was beautiful with not a cloud in the sky, so we headed out of Grenfell to a property about 28



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Website:
<http://ulyssesrv.org>

Kilometres from town for the Pinnacle Guinea Pig Races which are held annually. When we arrived the camera crew from "Getaway" were filming a segment with Kelly hosting the show. The day is hilarious, with guinea pigs put into a run and encouraged to run to the end. With the crowd cheering on, the guinea pigs are distracted by windmill grass blowing into the runs, which they then decide to stop and eat, most of them turning back towards where they have come from, and running in the opposite direction. Absolutely chaotic, but good fun for young and old. The whole set up is something to see, being created over 30 years with bench seating on all four sides for spectators. On a platform set high above the crowd is a lady with a stop watch (who cannot figure out how to work it until race four) at the end of the runs. On another platform, also above the crowd, is a man who comperes the whole event.

Between these two people is a series of cables on pulleys which contain bulldog clips, and between them they convey notes, whistles etc to each other!! Quite bizarre and very unique – you have to see it. Our only problem was, there were so many people there, it became very hard to actually see the guinea pigs racing. Some people seemed to take it very seriously, turning up in their finest racing clothing, including the ladies in their hats. It was a very entertaining day and not to be missed.

Another local attraction was the Wallangreen Sculpture Garden which was most enjoyable. This is a beautiful garden which a local couple have created over the last thirty years, the male in the family creating amazing sculptures from bits of discarded junk. He certainly has a vivid imagination when creating the various pieces, which are mostly for sale. If you go to Grenfell, we thought this was a "must see".

After a very enjoyable week in Grenfell, we left for home, after being away just over one month and traveling around 4,000 kilometres.

The trip was very enjoyable, apart from some very cold nights and a couple of days where the temperature did not go above 6 degrees in Grenfell. After all, it is Winter, and we really wanted to attend the Henry Lawson Festival, which is always held on the June Long Weekend.

Bruce & Colleen Edwards

LATEST FROM THE MERCHANDISE SHOP

Now in stock. (Limited number -20 - only)

200mm Ulysses Members RV Group stickers. These stickers are printed on 7-8yr exterior grade Oracal vinyl with a clear UV laminate to give durability and fade resistance.

Also in stock new 900mm stickers of the same quality as the 200mm stickers.

These stickers are from the same manufacturer who produces stickers from the ACC, CMCA and Caravaners Forum and are of the highest quality.

200 mm stickers can be purchased from our shop for \$11.00 + \$1.60 postage.

90mm stickers are available at \$1.00 each + \$0.70 postage.

If the 200mm stickers sell before the AGM I will order more to take to North Haven, along with the 90mm stickers and patches.

Please note - when ordering shirts from the shop make sure you choose the correct size from the drop down box, and also choose whether you want names embroidered on your shirt. Please include the names to be embroidered in the comment box.

Rainbow Beach WGT. September 3rd to 6th.

The forecast in Brisbane for Friday to Sunday was for rain, but when we hooked up and left on Thursday for the trip north to Rainbow Beach, we were blessed with clear skies and a warm day.

Jurgen and Marie met us at the BP North at Morayfield, towing their brand new Franklin caravan, and after coffee we pressed on to Matilda for lunch, before heading on to Gympie and then out on the Tin Can Bay Road to the Rainbow Beach turnoff.

Some other members were already set up at the park when we arrived early afternoon, having come straight from the Gympie Muster the week before, or just come up earlier. Geoff and Julie and their two little dogs were set up in their motorhome. George and Wendy were there in their last trip with their Golf van before picking up their new New Age, along with some friends from the Gold Coast.



Phil and Louisa arrived from Landsborough, and John and Robyn from Maryborough also set up. Late in the afternoon, Col and Helen with their brand new van in tow pulled in as well.

The campfire was lit late afternoon and chairs were





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pulled around it into the evening for the regulatory chat and chuckle.

More arrivals on Friday saw the addition of Barry, Graeme (with Jess to come later), Gary and Jo (all the way from Canberra), Neil and Faye, Boris and Marg, Tiger and Margie, Jane and Rudi, Dave and Windup and Keith (minus Judy), Daryl and Joy, and Allan and Joy.

I am unable to comment on the Friday night happy hour and campfire chat as Sherol and I had to drive up to Hervey Bay for their monthly meeting to speak to the host committee members about the Ulysses AGM in 2013.

When we returned on Saturday, we were followed by the Blundstones from Maryborough, and also joined for happy hour by Sue and Doug and Di and Burgie who were camping over at Sarawak at Inskip Point.

They took great pleasure in letting us all know that they were "midgie" free over there, whilst we at Rainbow Beach were being attacked each morning and evening by the annoying bitie little beasts.

It took three bus loads in the courtesy bus to ferry us all to the Sports and Recreation Club for our dinner on Saturday night, and whilst there had been a mix up with double bookings, the club managed to get us

all of our meals, and the food was excellent. Overall, a very good night had by all.

On Sunday, some of us aired down our tyres and headed down the beach to the Coloured sands. Unfortunately, the day was overcast, dulling the effect of the sands somewhat, as every now then a few stray rays of sunshine would burst through the



clouds and strike the sands, highlighting the colours spectacularly. We checked out the Carlo Sand Blow as well with its views across the inlet and south towards Noosa.

Many of our group packed up and headed on for other destinations, or simply headed for home on Sunday, so the happy hour that night saw a smaller crowd watch Windup cheat at scrabble against Jess.

I was able to score some sticky date pudding and cream from Windup though, so I wont mention her dubious scrabble skills any more.

A few stayed on Monday night, but for most of us it was back on the road and home after a wonderful weekend (apart from the little bities) with great company and a terrific location.

