

Canberra Caravan Club

information booklet



Canberra Caravan Club Inc
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1. A brief history

The Canberra Caravan Club was formed in May 1972 by a small group of people. In the first few months the members set down the foundation for the club's future, decided on a name and decided to incorporate. The first club outing was gold fossicking and a barbecue at Captains Flat. This was followed by a rally to Cooma in September 1972.

During the first two years, the club raffled a caravan. The money raised helped to buy a great deal of equipment, including a 21 ft × 24 ft marquee, a large barbecue, games and a trailer to transport the equipment.

Since its formation, the club has been represented at all national rallies of the National Association of Caravan Clubs of Australia held in various states. In 1983, the club hosted the 5th National Rally, with more than 600 caravanners making EPIC their home for 10 days, and in September 2016, the club hosted the 16th National Rally at EPIC, with 605 caravans attending.

2. The constitution

The Canberra Caravan Club is an incorporated association with a constitution. A copy is available on the club's website at https://canberracaravanclub.org/?page_id=54

3. The club's aims

- To provide members with regular monthly (wherever possible) weekend or mid-week rallies, and to encourage fellowship and a social atmosphere, which is both enjoyable and relaxing, to a wide range of people from all walks of life.
- To encourage and promote safety while towing caravans.

From time to time the club will arrange guest speakers with expertise in this field. Please feel free to ask other club members for advice or call on their experience.

4. The committee

The following office bearers administer the club: President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. They are assisted by the following committee members: Membership Secretary, Rally Convenor, *Gas Bottle* Editor, Equipment Officer, Social Convenor and Website Convenor. The names of the current office bearers and committee members are printed in *The Gas Bottle* each month.

5. Annual general meeting

The annual general meeting is held in May each year to review the club's activities of the previous year. The club's financial position can be ascertained from the Treasurer's report and the financial statement. Other office bearers and committee members also present reports.

Officer bearers and committee members are elected, membership fees are set for the coming year, and an Auditor and Public Officer are appointed.

6. Monthly general meetings

Monthly meetings are currently held at the Canberra Southern Cross Club, Woden, on the second Sunday of the month, commencing at 7.00 pm. The meeting is usually moved to the first Sunday when the second Sunday falls on a long weekend or because of other special events such as Mother's Day. Many members have dinner at the club before the meeting, from 5.30 pm.

The aim of the monthly general meeting is to conduct the

club's business. Coming rallies are discussed and bookings taken. Monthly meetings are seen by most members as a good opportunity to socialise.

The calendar for the coming year's rallies and social events is normally discussed and approved at the first meeting following the annual general meeting.

7. The Gas Bottle

The club's monthly newsletter, *The Gas Bottle*, is sent to members by email and posted to our website. As many members travel for several months during the winter, this is one way for them to stay informed of coming events and news of other members. The Editor collates contributions from members, including reports of rallies and social events. Contributions from members are always welcome. The minutes of monthly meetings are attached to *The Gas Bottle* for members.

8. Prospective members

Why join a caravan club?

There are many caravans parked in backyards, carports and garages that only see the open road once a year for the annual holiday. Joining a caravan club provides an opportunity to optimise the use of a caravan by travelling regularly with a friendly group of like-minded people to a variety of destinations.

A caravan club provides the opportunity for research before purchasing a caravan. Members are more than happy to show prospective members and others through their vans and to point out the pros and cons of certain types of vans. Information about safe towing and caravan maintenance is also shared by members.

How do I decide whether I want to join?

Visitors are under no obligation to join. The club encourages prospective members to attend several events to see whether the club's activities meet their needs. Most caravan parks have on-site cabins available, so if a prospective member has yet to purchase a caravan, accommodation during a rally is available.

Having decided to apply for membership, prospective members must have attended a minimum of two rallies and two social events or meetings. Applications are considered by the committee and a recommendation is put to the club members. Email is currently being trialed with members for this process to gauge acceptance and eligibility

Before applying for membership of the club, a prospective member must meet the club's qualification criteria by:

- attending two rallies and two social events (including monthly meetings) within four months of the commencement of the qualifying period (see below), and
- possessing a towed or self-propelled vehicle containing built-in living accommodation of a reasonable standard adequate for the prospective member's needs.

The committee, through the Membership Secretary, will determine when the prospective member's qualification period commences. If the above criteria cannot be met within the qualifying period, a two-month extension may be granted by the committee.

If the required attendances have not been completed within the initial or extended period, the committee may either:

- grant one more two-month extension, depending on circumstances, or
- no longer consider the applicant to be a prospective member.

If the applicant is still interested in becoming a member, a new qualification period must be completed.

Prospective members will be added to an email list to receive the club's monthly newsletter, *The Gas Bottle*, and other information about events.

9. Rallies

What is a caravan rally?

A caravan rally is a social activity where club members hitch up their vans and head for a predetermined destination for several days. There are official rally dates, but members often arrive earlier or stay longer, depending on individual preferences.

At the general meeting in June, the Rally Convenor provides members with a proposed rally program for the coming 12 months. The destinations are selected according to distance (usually within a 300-kilometre radius of Canberra), length of the weekend or weekday availability, accessibility for caravans, facilities available, places of interest to visit, ability to erect one of the club's marquees, site fees, etc. The rally program is discussed and then approved by the members. Members' suggestions for rally destinations are always welcomed. The program can change periodically. The program is found on the Website.

Roving rallies of one or more weeks' duration are sometimes organised. Members can participate in the whole journey or catch up with others somewhere along the route.

Bush rallies (also called free or low-cost camping) are held at venues where facilities such as electricity and hot showers are sparse or non-existent.

Getting to a rally

Members usually make their own way to a rally destination, although it is common for some members to travel together or meet up along the way.

Please allow sufficient space between vans to enable vehicles to safely overtake your caravan. By law, caravans travelling in convoy must be at least 60 *meters apart.

What happens on a rally?

Rallies provide an opportunity for members to enjoy each other's company in a relaxed, social atmosphere. Each rally will have one or more members who have volunteered to be the rally marshal. The rally marshal may organise activities or provide information about places of interest in and around the rally destination. Attendees at a rally are free to choose the activities that they wish to participate in, but there is no obligation to participate.

Members attending a rally usually arrive before 4 pm so that they can be set up and ready to join others for happy hour. Each day of the rally there is a happy hour that usually commences around 4.30 pm, depending on what the rally marshal has planned and the season. This is a very popular time for members to socialise. Members provide their own drinks and some snacks to share. The rally marshal will usually provide a roster for happy hour snacks to avoid over catering.

The club owns a trailer that is used to transport club equipment to a rally, if required, including a large marquee and a smaller tent. If either the marquee or the tent is taken to a rally, it is usually erected as soon as practicable.

Evening meals are often eaten in the marquee or tent, sometimes as a formal rally activity and sometimes informally at the whim of members. After dinner there is often entertainment in the form of games or quizzes.

The club owns sets of games: chook-foot dominoes, disc bowls, ladder golf and Finska for use at rallies. Contact the Rally Convenor or the Equipment Officer if you need them for a rally.

The club has a policy of no smoking in the marquee.

At each rally a member volunteers to be the *Gas Bottle Reporter* and write a brief report on the rally for inclusion in the next *Gas Bottle*.

10. Pets at rallies

Members may take pets to rallies if permitted by the caravan park management. This will be noted on the rally booking sheet. Pet owners must adhere to the rules set by the park management. In addition, club rules require that pets:

- not be allowed to intrude or wander onto occupied sites
- are not permitted in the marquee, at happy hour, at social functions of the club, or where food is being eaten.

11. CB radios

When travelling to and from rallies members often travel in convoy. Most members use a UHF radio to communicate with each other enroute and while on sightseeing trips without the

van. Caravanners tend to use channel 18. Some members have a sticker on their caravans stating the channel(s) they can be contacted on.

Trucks generally use channel 40, and many caravanners monitor that channel for information on road conditions.

12. Fundraising

The club has an annual auction, usually held at a long weekend rally. This is our major fundraiser as well as a lot of fun. Members donate a variety of quality items that they no longer need. Often other caravan park patrons join in and buy or donate items for the auction. The money raised from the auction helps to maintain the annual membership subscription at a reasonable rate and assist with other expenditures.

