

NORM AND GLENDA'S BIG TRIP NEWSLETTER #13

Hi everyone – I still have a warrant out for that person who turned the heat off!

Lakes Entrance (cont'd) – it was lovely to catch up with our Canberra neighbours, Mark and Jenny, and sad when they had to leave. We basically sat around and drank coffee for the remainder of our time in Lakes Entrance, soaking up the lovely sunshine. Lakes Entrance has some very nice wood sculptures which were completed in 1998. We appreciated how well looked after the sculptures are (no sign of vandalism!):



Nights are very cool now and happy hours are generally quiet ones, indoors, watching the news – the daily soap opera instalment from the house on the hill in Canberra is worth a few drinks! The most interesting part of the news is the weather report for the following day.

Mallacoota – we travelled to Mallacoota wondering just how cold it was going to be. The last time we were here it was for one night and it was so cold I would not even go for a shower – I waited until we got to Merimbula. On this occasion it was just

beautiful – most of the time the sun shone and the view from our lakefront spot fabulous:



We met up with friends Rod and Cherry who live in Mallacoota. Rod is a former colleague of Norm's and, he is a jazz musician . Rod is now retired but manages a jazz band called 'Dixie Street'. We always catch up with them in Merimbula at the Jazz Festival – last year when we saw them the band was going to New Zealand and apparently the trip was very successful.

Eden is probably one of our least favourite places on the east coast, other than it is where our favourite caravan dealer, ARV, is located. Whilst it is probably a great fishing village, the town itself is dead and totally uninviting. There are a lot of empty shops and the day we went through there was a power failure and we could not even get a cup of coffee. We thought we might stay a couple of days anyway given that we were pretty early for Merimbula for the Jazz Festival in June. After looking at a couple of caravan parks that were totally uninspiring we decided to travel on to Merimbula.

Eden does have a pretty good look out though and we did see a small whale in the distance.



Merimbula - the 32nd Merimbula Jazz Festival was great as usual – over 150 bands were registered, including a number of big bands. It is great to see so many young people are interested in jazz and a number of the bands were from high schools and colleges. We met up with Joe and Maureen from the Canberra Caravan Club and had a great reunion. Not too much sight-seeing happened here – we just soaked up the atmosphere and enjoyed the milder weather on this part of the coast. We did have a little bit of rain and some Victorians were unable to get through because of the flooding further south. The weather in the week prior to the Jazz Festival produced some impressive waves and despite warnings boarders were still game.



Tween Waters Caravan Park in Merimbula was like coming home in a way – the owners and managers are so friendly and, they were happy to see us and hear about our travels. This is our 17th year at the Jazz Festival and we always stay at this caravan park. It is just over the bridge towards Pambula and it is an easy and pleasurable walk into town. The park is well-maintained and the amenities are spotless – I have requested some heat in the amenities but this was not met with very much enthusiasm! The parks ensuite sites are currently being refurbished and, a new deck is being built in the pool area. There are lots of native shrubs in the park and the bird population is entertaining as well as noisy at bird's happy hour.



Not much happens when the tide is out!



On our way to Batemans Bay we went through a foggy bit – the only other place we have struck fog on this trip was at Port Lincoln.



Batemans Bay – Canberra’s seaside resort – we were surprised that we did not see anyone we knew here! We always stay at Easts CP just before the bridge into the bay. Like Merimbula, it is a great spot because it is an easy walk into town. The park is not very big, it is quiet and, it is very well-maintained. We had a quiet week to recover from the full-on injection of jazz and we enjoyed mostly beautiful weather. We walked into town most mornings for coffee and we enjoyed some lovely sunsets.



Well, tomorrow (Tues – 19 June) we will be in Canberra, but not for long. We have our doctor’s appointments lined up for Wednesday and by early next week we hope to be on our way north, until the cold weather is over. I originally said that this would be my last newsletter but I have decided to continue until we actually come home in September – I am sure there are lots more pictures to take. Besides, this is newsletter #13 and that is supposed to be an unlucky number – so, best we don’t push our luck at this point. We did strike a bit of bad luck when we got to Merimbula as our IBIS Air Command stopped working on the heat setting – good job we had an alternative (little electric heater). We were able to get it fixed in Batemans Bay – the part only cost about \$13 but the labour and call out fee to find the problem and fix it was about \$200!. Oh well, considering I give it a fair workout I guess I should not complain.

We hope to catch up with some of you while we are in Canberra for our short stay – we are staying in the caravan and, at this stage, we are planning to stay at the motor village in O’Connor which has apparently had a substantial upgrade recently. If we are not happy with that, we will be at EPIC.

Cheers for now – and keep warm!