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# **A REPORT ON OUR ROVING RALLY**

## **BY OUR RALLY LEADER ERIC**

### Canowindra Balloon Rally Report

Under threatening skies 10 vans set up at Canowindra Showgrounds ,there was a need for some inventive plumbing skills to overcome the shortage off taps with several vans linked together.

That afternoon the threat off rain came into fruition with 24 mm falling putting a dampener on the night markets on the first night . On day two with clearing skies many of us ventured into town who were most welcoming.

Day three seen the balloons able to take off with one landing on the Showgrounds behind us this set the the pattern for the rest of our stay with many of our group braving the cold mornings the gaze skyward to catch a glimpse of the colourful balloons. There was a informative morning by the balloon pilots giving us an up close experience the pilots were very informative and keen to show off their airships and there were a couple that were very innovative one being a wheelie bin and the other a chair with an improvised seat belt.

This left the rest of the day to explore the surrounding attractions including the Cowra POW camp,the Japanese gardens with stunning autumnal hues of the deciduous trees ,a display off murals at Eugowra and also historic Carcoar . There was also some retail therapy as well.

With the aid of the web site for the balloon festival we were kept up to date with launching and landing both in the morning and afternoon with eyes craning skyward I am sure many will a trip to a chiropractor for neck strain.

The festival culminated with Night Lights , markets ,live music and the balloon lighting their burners in time to the music a spectacular sight . The next morning there was a mass takeoff with 14 balloons filling the skies. We bade farewell to Lyn and Bruce

We then left Canowindra to make our way to Young having found a trailblazer in Glenn who was always keen to lead the way to all our destinations . After setting up and settling in the next morning involving domestic catch ups leaving no a space on the park's numerous clothes lines , a decision was made to visit the Chinese gardens which morphed into a firewood collection exercise, having cleared the park off sticks and branches.

The trip fire Marshall Wayne soon had fire crackling and Julie made a damper mix so that we could have damper on a stick (doughboys) with jam or golden syrup these were roasted to perfection . Desert was provided that night jaffle apple pies with custard. Happy hour the next day involved oven hot scones which disappeared in minutes.Isabel and Murray joined us at Young for the rest of our rally

On to Temora Showgrounds as a base to visit the town's many attractions, the rural museum, Temora Warbirds, Paleface Adios monument and Centenary lake. The next day we went on a road trip to the Junee licorice factory for morning tea then on to the roundhouse museum with some off our group going to Wagga, we then continued to Coolamon for lunch and a cheese tasting the staff welcomed us warmly and provided a tasting for our group as well as a delicious meal thanks again to the Coolamon Cheese Factory. Bob and Barb met us there, Bob and Marigold enjoyed watching the pacers train on the track. Fire Marshall Wayne supplied a fire pit and we had a fire blazing for two nights giving us a opportunity to swap yarns and travel experiences.

The group left Temora on two different routes finally meeting at Condobolin Riverside Caravan Park, Glenn once again was the more direct route trailblazer plotting a course via coffee shops arriving well before the group that took the more scenic route along the Lachlan Valley Way.

The scenic route took in the sculptures in the scrub some of which were amazing but don't take my word for it just ask Gai and Marigold they will only too happy to share their amazing experience. The fire Marshall had a cozy fire cranking in the camp kitchen where we planned our upcoming adventures. Sunday seen us off to the RSL for Mothers Day tea the venue provided some entertainment that was not expected or scripted time does not allow me to elaborate but ask any of the group I am shore that they enlighten you. A picnic was had at Gum Bend Lake with a sausage sizzle a truly beautiful place and a great camp spot for free camping keep that in mind for the future. The Ute sculptures just up the road were both comical and colourful as well as the timber carvings

Our Trailblazer led the way to Narromine Rockwall Caravan Park where we were greeted by Joy and Tony. It was bliss to have lush green lawn under our feet and the park managers were happy to see such a large group come to their park albeit not at once. Some of us made our way to Dubbo to purchase items not found in the smaller rural centres, I done a side trip the Royal Flying Doctors information centre which I could highly recommend for any one going that way. A journey to Trangie for lunch and the pub meals were held in high regard, some visited the airport and attached museum. The golf club was the venue for tea and we had a section of the club for our group of 24 with a delicious meal and desserts we left well satisfied. A game of Finska was organised on the lawn with Grace our rally champion. The Fire Marshall sprung into action one again with cosy fires on two nights. We bid farewell to Narromine with our Trailblazer leading the way waving goodbye to Glenn McGrath as we left, to the final rally destination Gulargambone.

David and Bernice gave us all a warm greeting and the news that the park has been sold . It didn't take long for the group to settle into the laid back Gulargambone zone . Wayne and Cathy are the new owners ,with Dave and Bernie showing them the ropes we wish them well.

The rally numbers grew somewhat with John and Margaret , Don and Patricia ,Stephen and Sue with their new van, Kevin and Yvonne , Dianne and Noel , Bron and Eddie also sporting a new van good to see them on the road again and Gael joining us a well. Friday night raffles and Chinese meal at the bowlo unfortunately no raffle winners but Grace won the lucky door prize . A Sunday camp oven lunch was supplied by Dave and Bernie and was delicious the club provided dessert .

The craft shop in town was having a closing down sale with many taking the opportunity stock up on wool and craft supplies at unheard off prices. The recently purchased goods seen craft circles springing up in the camp kitchen . Noel kept us entertained with his yarns poems and songs around the campfire he also amazed a group of students from Green Point Christian School staying at the park .As Margaret and I had to leave early we left the our group with promise of a last supper at the bowlo and bingo thrown in as well.

I would like to thank all of members on this rally for their support and help throughout out trip making it both enjoyable and memorable.

Thanks again Eric Dowling







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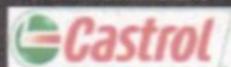


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## Merriwa Rally Running of The Fleece 4<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2025

A little bit of history about Merriwa: The town was established in 1839; the town's streets were named after early settlers who were drawn to the area's good pasturage. The name Merriwa is a Wiradjuri, likely meaning "grass seeds" or flour made from grass seeds, reflecting the area's agricultural significance.

By 1851, there were 20 houses, & by 1858 the town had grown to include inns, stores, blacksmiths & other businesses.

Merriwa is a small, close-knit town that retains much of its historic character.

The "Running of The Fleece", known as the festival of the fleeces officially began in 1990. This event has become a major Upper Hunter Country celebration of rich history of agriculture & sheep farming in the town.

The people of Merriwa are all very friendly & made us feel very welcome in their town.

### Merriwa Showgrounds:



Well, we all survived the very cold nights (-3, -1), the good thing though we had fine weather during the days.

We had 13 members on the rally what a great lot, always lots of fun & plenty of laughter.

Our 1<sup>st</sup> day saw us sitting under cover for morning tea watching the mist rise, then we set up our fire pits. Thank goodness we found lots of twigs to start our fires & plenty of wood.



I was told on the previous rally there were 2 words used continuously, "AMAZING & BEAUTIFUL" well we also had a saying not just one word but a sentence "It's none of your concern". Gai asked the lady in the information centre a question & this was her reply, so poor Gai cope this saying throughout the rest of the rally.

After a cold night we woke to another morning of mist but it soon lifted & we had a lovely day.



Today we had a relaxing day, had a walk into town where the girls did a bit of op shopping while the guys waited patiently outside, then we could not go past the pie shop for some yummy goodies.

Afternoon tea Gai made us dough boys, all firepits were working overtime, with everyone cooking their dough boys, some were a little over cooked more like charcoal. But everyone enjoyed them.

Today Brian handed out his 1<sup>st</sup> award to Gai, he had a few members to choose from but Gai won hands down, even winning another one straight after she received her 1<sup>st</sup> one. Good one Gai





Another day sitting around the firepits. Marlene tested us on some trivia question, we have some very clever people in our group, well most of us.



Brian came out with his garden blower so he could stir our fires up & he did a great job blowing the ashes off Isabel & Murray clothes, what a great leader we have.



Tonight, we headed up to the RSL Club for the official opening of the Running of the fleece. What a great night the Merriwa show committee put on, from raffles, auction & entertainment.

Once more our members had a great night with plenty of laughs, dancing, food & a few drinks. Congratulations to Gai who won the lucky door prize value at \$500.

After another cold night, Saturday morning was a little cool but the sun was out. We started the day off with watching the competition of the dogs rounding up the sheep, wow these dogs are so good.

Then watched the farmers putting the red socks on the sheep

Today the town came alive with stalls, entertainment, food outlets & hundreds of people all having a great time, the parade was excellent. This year owing to the floods, the numbers of sheep running was low, but it did not stop them running.

Back at the showgrounds to start our firepits & waiting for the firework display once more the people of Merriwa put on an excellent display.



What a great way to start a very cold Sunday morning, with a bacon & egg roll, with a fantastic mob. Thanks to the guys & girls who put it all together, it was very yummy.

We managed to find a covered area with the sun to keep us warm, as it was too cold to do anything. Lunchtime Gai & Graham went up to the local takeaway & brought some hot chips, yummo chip butty brought back a lot of childhood memories.

After lunch once more Marlene was our quiz host, another great afternoon of laughter & fun.

Monday, well we all decided to head home early as it was very cold & we all wanted our nice warm homes. Thanks to our organisers for a great rally, even though it was cold.

# An eye for a pie

Exotic pies are on the menu as 'bakery tourists' seek culinary adventure

One of Australia's most remote bakeries, in the South Australian ghost town of Farina, is open for business again this year ... and is already attracting a steady stream of grey nomads.

The bakery will open daily until July 20, and its bread products are still all baked in a 130-year-old underground Scotch Oven. It helps sustain the dozens of volunteers currently restoring the town's stone buildings, as well as hungry visitors.

While the Farina Bakery is unique, it's not alone in drawing 'bakery tourists'. Across Australia, outlets are developing a 'have-to-eat-a-pie-from-them there' following.

In some cases, such as the Birdsville Bakery, it can be a combination of isolated Outback location and 'exotic' offerings – like curried camel pie – that creates an irresistible mystique. The establish-



Fancy a bite to eat? A crocodile pie at Fredo Pies may hit the spot!

ment reportedly sells well over 10,000 pies during September's Birdsville Races.

A good bakery can even play its part on helping a town through the economic trauma of being bypassed.

When the small NSW Mid North Coasty town of Frederickton was bypassed in 2012, the iconic Fredo Pies outlet, known as the 'home of the crocodile pie', was worried. However, with plenty of park-

ing for caravans and trucks, travellers proved happy to turn off the Pacific Highway to grab a crocodile pie, or an emu pie, or wild boar pie, or even a kangaroo with bush spice pie. "Travellers in general, and particularly grey nomads, are on an adventure wanting to get the most out of life," said Oliver Cooke from Fredo Pies. "And new food experiences fit well with that narrative."

COURTESY GNT



The Farina bakery is open

## Quiz corner

1. I am travelling directly between the small SA towns of Beachport and Millicent. Which highway will I spend most of my time on?

2. The Tasmanian town of Penguin was:

a) Named by botanist, Robert Campbell Gunn, in 1861, in recognition of the large numbers of fairy penguins he saw in the area at that time.

b) Re-named in 1947 from the original Bach's Beach by the town's American-born mayor, Jim Daniels, in an apparent nod to the fictional character, the Penguin, who first appeared in DC comics as Batman's arch nemesis in 1941.

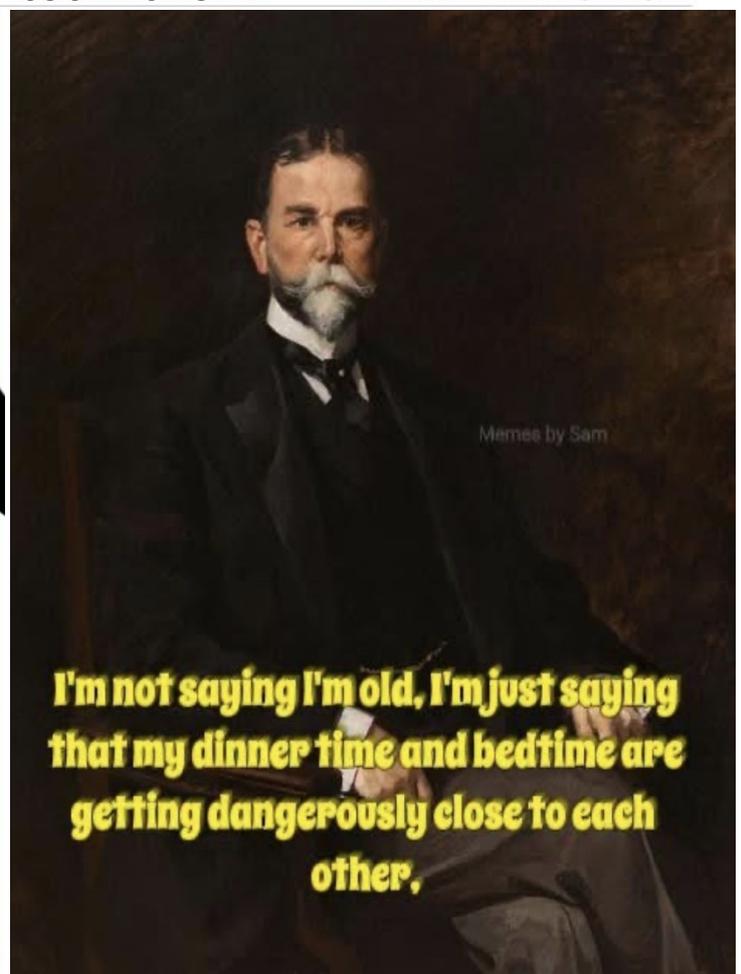
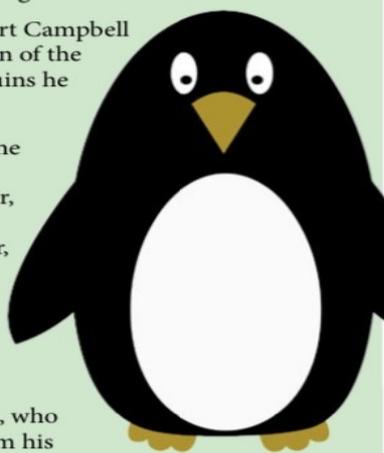
c) In 1862, by explorer and cartographer, Alex Ferguson, who first arrived in Tasmania from his native Scotland aboard the HMS Penguin.

3. Some things go 'off fast', but this town in WA's Pilbara region sounds like it has exactly the opposite problem.

4. Cut Prunes (anagram). Grey nomads heading off down the tracks better be prepared in case they get one or two of these.

5. Shortest road distance between the NSW town of Eden and the SA town of Ceduna?

- a) 1299 kms
- b) 1537 kms
- c) 1989 kms



## **JUNE BIRTHDAYS**

**BRIAN BEAN**

**DARRELL BLUNT**

**JEN ROSTRON**

**BRUCE PECKHAM**

**NOEL CLAIRE**

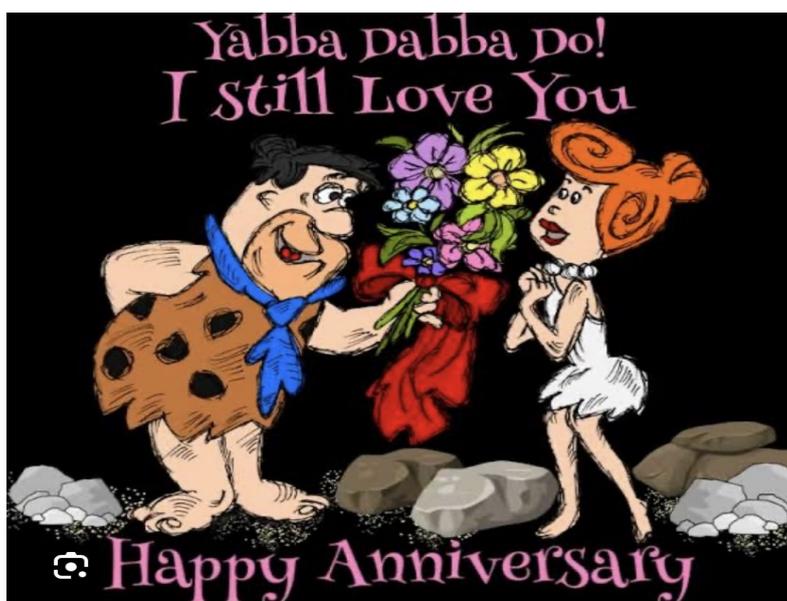
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## **QUIZ CORNER SOLVED**

- 1. Southern Ports Highway**
- 2. a) Named By botanist, Robert Campbell Gunn, in 1861, in recognition of the large numbers of fairy penguins he saw in the area at that time.**
- 3. On slow**
- 4. Punctures**
- 5. c) 1989 km**



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# 'It suits us to a tee'

## Nomads find fun, friendship and great camps at regional golf clubs

Like most grey nomads, Kev and Jenny Giles like to pursue a hobby as they travel ... and theirs has led them to affordable camping spots, as well as some great social interactions. The North Queensland couple, who generally spend December to April in the south, are both keen golfers and play once a week when on the road. "We always get a great welcome when playing in regional golf tournaments," said Kev. "You just can't beat country hospitality ... the people are lovely, 'down to earth', and keen to find out about us and our travels." The couple even won a prize at the George Town Annual Vets Golf Tournament this January for travelling the longest distance (2,877 kms) to compete. "We told them, tongue in cheek, that we specifically drove all that way just to play in their prestigious tournament," said Kev. As well as offering the chance to meet new people, golfing on the road has another useful perk ... great camping. On their 10-week trip to Tasmania earlier this year, for example, the couple found golf clubs excellent places to stay on occasion. Indeed, their first night off the ferry was spent in Devonport Country Club which cost \$10 per night, and the next was spent at Ulverstone Golf Club.



Kev and Jenny (left) travelled to Tasmania with a motorhome and tow vehicle (above). They enjoyed the sights (far left) and found lots of inexpensive and free camps

"Again, it cost \$10 per night," said Kev. "And it was a lovely bush setting with lots of bird-life ... very quiet and peaceful." Even away from golf clubs, Kev and Jenny found getting a good campsite in Tassie straightforward, even in peak season. "The traditional caravan parks are jam packed," said Kev.

"However, if you don't mind being off grid or a less formal arrangement, there are heaps of options.... most of our time was spent off grid." The return trip on the Spirit cost the couple \$2,561, which included their Avida Esperance motorhome, tow vehicle (Suzuki Grand Vitara 5 door), and a cabin both ways.

"Whilst the ferry trip sounds expensive (and it is), if time is on your side and you can have a lengthy spell in Tasmania, with so many camping areas which are either free or inexpensive (between \$10 and \$30 a night), the cost of the ferry pales into insignificance," said Kev.

**COURTESY: GNT**

# The host is clear

**Camp for free, meet people, stay in a beautiful part of the world ... what's not to love?**

It is now 40 years since the national park volunteer campground host program was first trialled in Australia, and it's fair to say it's been a rip-roaring success.

The initiative has given many hundreds of grey nomads the opportunity camp for free and to 'give something back' ... and, despite the odd report of negative interactions with campers, most volunteers have only got good things to say. Campbell Black has been a campground host for more than 35 years and there's not much of South Australia he and wife have not seen.

"Being a campground host is wonderful – you meet people from all walks of life and are in a position to help them appreciate our beautiful national parks," he said. "There are some places, like Katarapko in Murray River National Park and Dhillba Guuranda-Innes National Park on the Yorke Peninsula, that are dear to my heart, but we are so lucky to have so many beautiful parks in South Australia."

The South Australian campground hosts program, launched in 1985, was based on a volunteering scheme that began in 1980 at California's Joshua Tree National Park. Similar programs soon sprung



**Camp hosting provides the opportunity to give back to the community**

PIC: SA NPWS

up interstate, including in WA, Victoria, NSW, the Northern Territory and Queensland. SA's National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) says that more than 450 campground hosts have since welcomed people to parks in 18 different parts of the state, including Deep Creek, Coffin Bay, Little Dip, and more remote locations like Innamincka Regional Reserve.

NPWS Wildlife Service Community and Nature Partnerships Manager, Helen Donovan, said the program offered grey nomads the opportunity to connect with nature and the community through their love

of the outdoors and adventure. "Hosts complete their volunteer responsibilities by staying in national parks for extended periods, an arrangement that works very well for those who enjoy travelling around Australia," she said. "This not only allows volunteers to coordinate their hosting with their grey nomad lifestyle, but it also enables them to experience national parks as representatives of NPWS."

Ms Donovan said that, over the previous four decades, the vast majority of hosts had been retirees and – as it was not uncommon for placements to go unfilled – the NPWS was

always keen to hear from new people.

"Campground hosts often have a wealth of knowledge to offer the public that enriches their time in national parks," she said. "Many hosts have completed incredible adventures across Australia and their experiences add significant value to their roles."

As well as greeting campers, campground hosts' duties include checking in with visitors, offering advice on things to do, and assisting with queries.

• *Have you been a camp host? Would you recommend it?*

**COURTESY: NPWS**

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# Going Greenough



A stop at the magnificent historic settlement of Greenough is an absolute must for grey nomads heading up or down the west coast.

Located about 20 minutes south of Geraldton, the village is home to a collection of lovingly restored 19th-century stone buildings, as well as a superb museum and gardens ... and it sits in stunning countryside boasting some truly unique natural attractions.

Back in the mid 19th century, land in the Greenough Flats area was subdivided into 20- and 30-acre wheat-growing plots and new settlers arrived, quickly swelling the population to around 1,000.

However, further growth was stunted when a major cyclone and major flooding hit in the 1870s and 1880s. Then, the discovery of gold in the goldfields led to something of a population exodus and many of the village's impressive stone buildings were pretty much abandoned and slowly fell into disrepair.

Many decades later though, the area's heritage value was recognised and the National Trust began acquiring historic properties on the Greenough Flats.

Today, visitors to the National



**The Greenough Historical Settlement boasts eleven restored buildings**

PIC: National Trust of WA

Trust-administered Central Greenough Historic Settlement can stroll among the 11 restored buildings – which include the gaol, courthouse, police station, churches, and a school – and get a real sense of the former grandeur of the place.

However, this is just one part of a group of historic sites and attractions in Greenough. Greenough Museum and Gardens, formerly known as the Greenough Pioneer Museum, was established in 1966, and consists of a restored two-storey homestead built in 1862 for the Maley family, a caretaker's cottage, Elizabeth Gardens, and several outbuildings including the Community Hub facility, and

a 'double dunny'.

Also on the property is an 800-year-old leaning River Red Gum, reputed to be one of the oldest trees in WA.

The windswept trees of the Greenough Flats – some of which are bent 90 degrees due to the prevailing coastal winds – are a fascinating feature of the area.

Other fascinating places to discover in Greenough include Clinch's Mill; the ruins of the Greenough Hotel; the Walkaway Station Museum, complete with refurbished locomotive; the convict-built Maley's Bridge; the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel; Gray's Store; the old Temperance Lodge; the Hampton Arms Inn; and the Central Gree-

nough Cemetery.

Away from history, the Greenough Wildlife & Bird Park – and its impressive collection of native animals – is also well worth a visit.

This is, of course, a stunningly beautiful part of the world with sensational coastal scenery, as well as rocky gorges and waterholes like that at Ellendale Pool, just half an hour inland. There is great free camping at Ellendale Pool, and also at Bringo Lookout, about 25 minutes north east of Greenough. There are also two great caravan parks less than 10 minutes from the village, Double Beach Caravan Park to the north, and S Bend Caravan Park to the south.

**COURTESY: GNT**

# Beautiful Brooweena



It would be easy for grey nomads to pass by the tiny Queensland town of Brooweena without a second thought, but that would be a mistake as it is definitely well worth a stop ... and a stay.

Located about 50 kilometres west of Maryborough, just off the Maryborough-Biggenden Road, the dominant attraction here is the magnificent historical village, which really captures the essence of what life would have been like a century or more ago.

Brooweena – which now has a population of less than 100 – came into existence when the Mungar Junction to Monto Branch railway line arrived in 1889. A post office, school, shop, and station master's cottage were built in the following years, before the council chambers in 1915.

St Mary's Anglican Church then held its first service in 1919, and the Brooweena War Memorial Bridge officially opened in 1921 in honour of the nine local men who died during WWI. A war memorial was also erected outside St Mary's Church in 1922. This monument was moved in 1992 to its current location outside the Historical Museum.

It was the construction of a timber sawmill in 1924, however, and the employment it offered which really breathed



**The Historical Museum (above) and the Historical Village (left) provides visitors with an insight into what life was like a century or more ago.**

PICs: Fraser Coast Regional Council

new life into Brooweena. All of this fascinating history is wonderfully depicted at the Brooweena Historical Village and its collection of 12 heritage buildings. These structures include: a barn, complete with a collection of bullock and horse-drawn vehicles; an original settler's slab dwelling; former CWA rooms; an old railway goods shed; the railway station and old carriage; a blacksmith's shop; a butcher

shop; a wash house; and the original 1915 Council Office. Housed within these buildings is an extensive collection of historic memorabilia, including farm machinery and musical instruments.

The museum is open on the second and fourth Sunday of the month from 10am-3pm, although it can open other times by prior arrangement. There is a free overnight camping for self-contained RVs or

caravans at Claude Wharton Park on Smith Crescent in Brooweena. The 2.67-acre park has toilet facilities, picnic shelters, seating, and barbecues. Brooweena sits in a lovely part of the world, and there are no shortage of state forests and national parks – with eucalypt forests, paperbark trees, waterholes, and abundant wildlife – to explore and enjoy in pretty much every direction.

**COURTESY GNT**

# Clunes is pure gold



The small Victorian town of Clunes is one of the best places in the country for grey nomads to get a real sense of the prosperity that the gold rush brought.

While it now has a population of less than 2,000, the quiet community was once at the epicentre of a precious metal frenzy that saw fortune seekers arrive here from all corners of the globe.

The streets are still lined with wonderfully-preserved 19th-century buildings that offer a fascinating insight into the wealth and excitement of an incredible period of Australian history.

Located about 35 kilometres north of Ballarat, gold was first found here in 1850 but it was not until the following year that word got out, sparking a gold rush that triggered rapid growth.

Historic buildings along Bailey Street and Fraser Street, all built in the 1860s and 1870s, include the National Hotel, the Union Bank, the Club Hotel, the town hall, the courthouse, and the Clunes Post and Telegraph Office.

Churches include the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church which was built in 1874, the Wesleyan Methodist Church which was begun in 1864, and St Paul's Anglican Church built in 1870. Clunes Railway Station opened in 1874.

The ancient streetscape actually looks like something out of a movie set ... and with good reason! The town has formed the backdrop for many blockbuster films, including



**The town's historic streetscape looks like something from a movie set (above).**

**Work began on the Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1864 (far left).**

**The memorial to those who died in conflict stands in a prominent position (left).**

Ned Kelly, the original Mad Max, and the 2018 remake of Picnic at Hanging Rock. Of course, besides just walking through it, the best way to get a sense of Clunes' remarkable history is to visit the local museum, which is housed – alongside the Visitor Information Centre – in the 1868-built Nichol and Wallace building, now known as the Warehouse. Artefacts on display include those relating to the traditional owners, the pastoral era, the gold era; the area's military heritage, and exhibits include re-creations of a typical kitchen and a typical parlour in a 19th-century miner's cottage. Esmond Park sits on a hill overlooking the town and this is the spot where gold was first

discovered. There is a walking trail with interpretive signs explain about the gold mining industry here, and some of the remains of the Port Phillip Mine – which operated from 1851-1893 – can also be seen. While Clunes certainly isn't as bustling as it once was, there is still a fair bit going on. There are plenty of places to eat and drink, some interesting little stores, a good range of shops including an IGA, and the Clunes Caravan Park sits in lovely gardens alongside Creswick Creek. The historic town also hosts one of Australia's best-loved literary events, the Clunes Booktown Festival held in March, which boasts author talks, presentations, work-

shops, live music ... and lots of books. Another surprising and fascinating attraction is the Lee Medlyn Home of Bottles Collection. Housed in an old 19th-century schoolhouse, there are more than 6,000 bottles here, dating from the 16th century to now. Located in a steep valley, the countryside surrounding Clunes is dotted with other historic villages, some great wineries, and some beautiful places to drive and walk. It's certainly worth exploring the rocky peaks and bushland at Mount Beckworth Scenic Reserve about 10 kilometres out of town, and there is great camping there, too.

COURTESY GNT

# Winds of change

**In 50 years of camping much has changed, but these nomads still love it**

Grey nomads who have been travelling for decades have seen plenty of changes to the lifestyle ... and not always for the better.

In their half century of camping, Tom and Angie Wallace (not their real names) have used tents, swags, rooftop tents, camper trailers and – for the last 20 years – caravans.

“Eleven years ago, we upgraded to a Kokoda 21’ on-road van with a shower, toilet and solar panels giving us the freedom we enjoy,” said Tom. “The Outback is our favourite place, simply due to its isolation, its beauty ... and the great people we meet there.”

Last year though, the couple spent four weeks travelling between Rockhampton and Maroochydore and were shocked by the coastal crowds.

“Some parks seemed like they were designed for 14’ vans,” said Tom. “People were camping on top of each other, and there were noises like toilet doors banging during the



**Grey Nomads like Tom and Angie enjoy the free camping offered by many country pubs**

night and dogs barking.” And Tom says the parks often charged ‘like wounded bulls’. The couple were much happier when they began travelling inland from central Queensland to northern central NSW.

“The accommodation varied from bush camping beside rivers or lakes, to sports grounds and showgrounds; and from behind pubs to small town caravan parks,” said Tom.

“We found fellow travellers doing this were more friendly, sharing campfires and happy hours, and generally did not

camp on top of each other.”

And Tom and Angie were happy to observe most campers supporting local towns by getting supplies and fuel there. While more crowded campsites is one change the couple don’t appreciate, they certainly do appreciate the improvements in camping equipment they have seen.

“We now have portable toilets and ensuite toilets instead of digging holes, and hot showers at the turn of the tap instead of hanging a bucket under a tree branch,” said Tom. “And there’s

no more using torches held in your mouth for cooking, thanks to gas lamps and now LED lighting.”

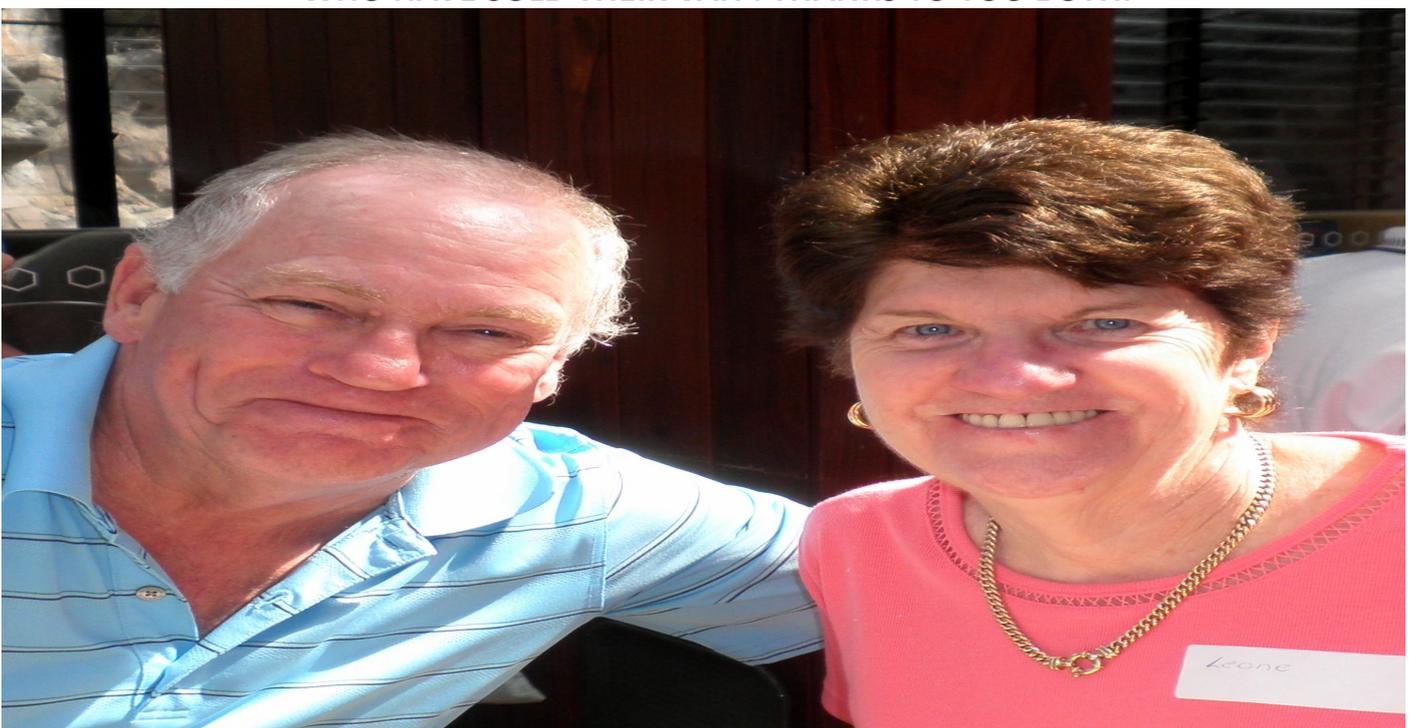
Tom and Angie agree though that the most important ingredient to their happy half century of camping has been the passion they share for it.

“We are fortunate that we both enjoy the grey nomad lifestyle and have the same approach,” said Tom. “We love the freedom of not booking ahead and then, if we like a spot, we stay ... if not, we move on.”

**COURTESY GNT**

**A SAD FAREWELL TO TWO OF OUR MEMBERS, LEONIE AND LIONEL**

**WHO HAVE SOLD THEIR VAN . THANKS TO YOU BOTH.**





***ON BEHALF OF OUR WONDERFUL CLUB, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK GAI, TONY, AND ALL THE CREW WHO MADE OUR BIGGEST MORNING TEA SUCH A HUGE SUCCESS.. YOU ALL KNOW WHO YOU ARE. A ALSO A BIG THANKS TO THOSE COMPANIES AND INDIVIDUALS WHO BOTH DONATED, AND BOUGHT TICKETS. A SPECIAL THANKS TO DAVID, OUR BRILLIANT ENTERTAINMENT ON THE DAY.***

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