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room

australia

01 | Feb/March 2013

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Australian Aboriginal Proverb



Time to Roam
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contact

e 10 Dover Road, Botany Sydney NSW 2019
t +612 9695 7749
e artwork@timetoroam.com.au
w www.timetoroam.com.au
ABN 985 924 526 36

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advertising

new south wales

Todd Buttery
m 0401 963 851
e todd@timetoroam.com.au

queensland

Mary Kilkelly
m 0417 490 350
e mary@timetoroam.com.au

all other states

Phillip Terry
m 0425 255 495
e phill@timetoroam.com.au

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artwork

The print ready artwork deadline for the next edition is **Monday 12 March 2013**. For more information on artwork specifications including our downloads, please go to www.timetoroam.com.au

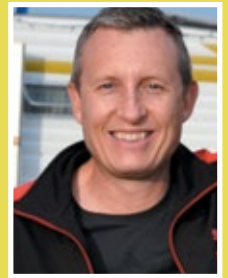
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contributions

Time to Roam welcomes contributions from our readers. Stories should be no longer than 1300 words in a MS Word document including images (up to four) and emailed to editor@timetoroam.com.au
Photographs should be high resolution of at least at least 300dpi – the file size for individual images should be no more than 3mb each. Any material sent by mail should include a stamped self addressed envelope if you wish to have it returned.
All care will be taken but No responsibility will be taken for unsolicited material.
Letters to the Editor should be no longer than 300 words.

EDITOR'S DESK

Rod Bruem



Welcome to Time to Roam.

It's fair to say this magazine was born in a caravan – or at least the idea for it was.

Our beloved van, recently renamed 'Dolce', had been in my family since 1969.

About two years ago we rescued her from my Aunt Dolce's backyard in Lithgow where she'd rested for 35 years. (You can read the full story on page 16)

As we started restoring her and sharing the story, we began to appreciate the love affair Australians have with caravans.

It seems almost everyone has a caravan or camping story of their own. Some, like Pat and Lloyd Ridgeway, have a lifetime of memories. They've shared their story and wonderful photos in this issue.

Our eyes were opened to what an amazing Aussie success story the Recreational Vehicle industry is.

As we've made our way around the shows we've been impressed by the fact that people are so upbeat and focussed on innovation.

As one caravan company veteran said; "This industry is all about innovation and it has been booming for 40 years".

So we set out to create a magazine that captures this spirit.

Our aim is not only to cover the latest creations when it comes to wonderful homes on wheels, but also celebrate the pioneers who helped make the industry what it is today.

We're also very conscious we live in a special country, blessed with unique flora and fauna, spectacular scenery and one of the world's oldest living cultures.

As we set off on our journey, our intention is to cherish all of this too.

It's great so many people have loved the idea for **Time to Roam** and have given us their support.

A big thank you to everyone who's contributed, especially the advertisers who've helped make the dream of a free national magazine possible.

We hope you enjoy **Time to Roam**.

Rod Bruem

editor@timetoroam.com.au

subscriptions

To subscribe to the print version of Time to Roam please contact us via email at info@timetoroam.com.au.

Annual subscription \$30, outside Australia \$80.

Copies are also available for free on our website

www.timetoroam.com.au

legals

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contacts

Time to Roam is published and distributed bimonthly by Time to Roam Australia Pty Ltd.

e 10 Dover Road, Botany

Sydney NSW 2019

t +612 9695 7749

e info@timetoroam.com.au

w www.timetoroam.com.au

ABN 985 924 526 36

managing director

Phillip Terry

e phill@timetoroam.com.au

editorial

Editor in Chief

Rodney Bruem

e rod@timetoroam.com.au

Associate Editor

Liz Jurman

e info@timetoroam.com.au

contributors

Ian Glover, Michael Grealy, Paul Nee, Nigel Smith, Glenn Watson, Garry & Janice Bruem. RV Review courtesy Richard Robertson of iMotorhome.com

design & artwork

Art Director

Peter Reynolds

Design and Production

KYSO Design

e artwork@timetoroam.com.au

w kyso.com.au

printing

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THE VIEW FROM

INSIDE

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COVER Viscount 1969 Duralvan courtesy of Dolce and the late Neville Way.

Toyota FJ courtesy of Toyota Australia.

Photo: Daniel Linnet
www.linnetfoto.com

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LA DOLCE VITA

Viscounts were the hallmark for Australian quality caravan building in the 60s and 70s and are finding new popularity with today's eager restorers. This is the story of 'Dolce', rescued from a backyard and brought back to her former glory

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A 61-YEAR LOVE AFFAIR

Pat and Lloyd Ridgeway went on their honeymoon in a caravan and have been in love with travelling Australia in vans ever since. Four kids, five caravans and one motorhome later, they share their amazing photos and stories with *Time to Roam*

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CAMPING WITH JACK THOMPSON

Legendary Aussie actor Jack Thompson has spent a lot of time in movie 'trailers' – but admits he's more at home camping out in a tent. In our first celebrity interview, Jack shares his tips on how to make the most out of an outdoor adventure



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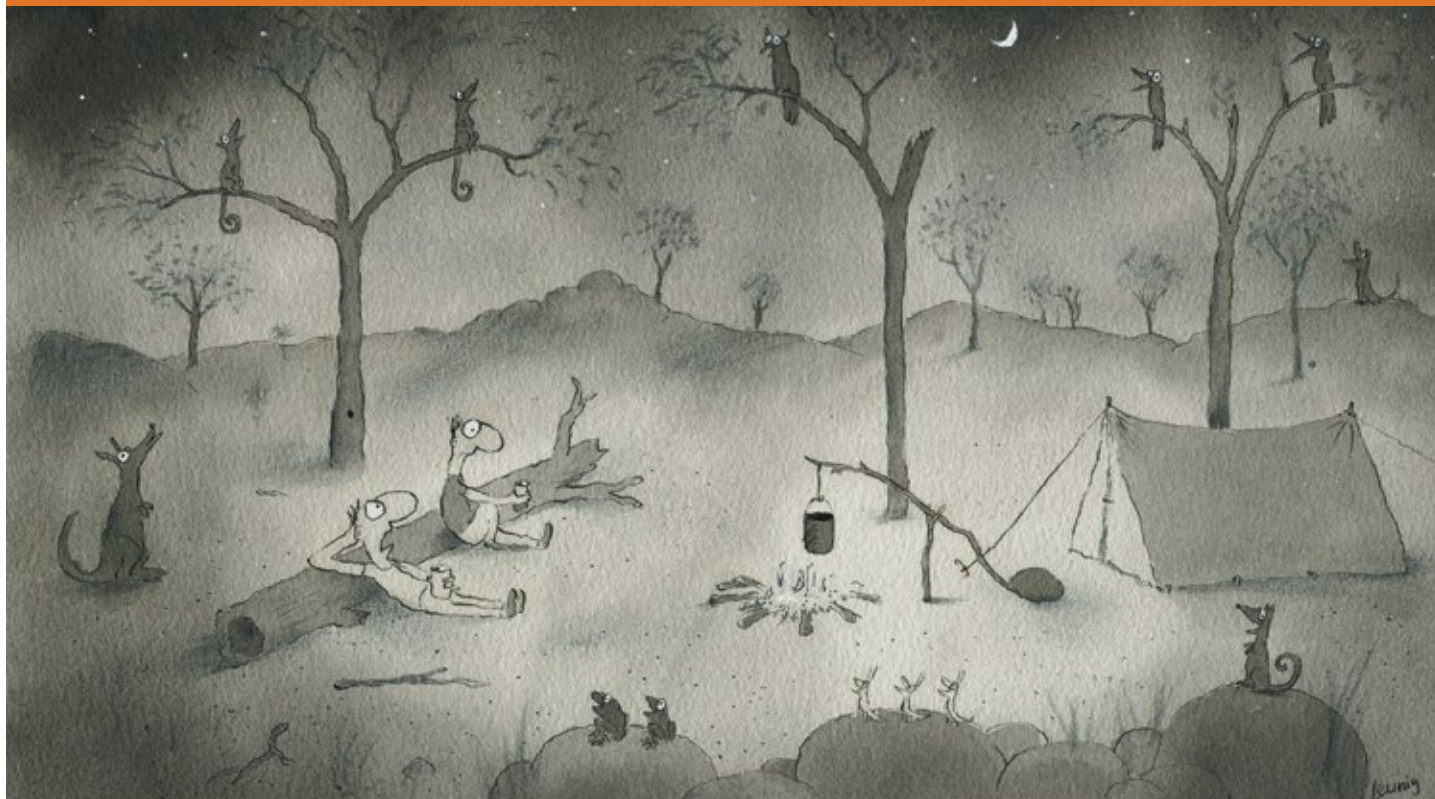
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LEUNIG



"The acoustics could be better? What do you mean 'the acoustics could be better'? What the hell are you talking about?"

What next for **Winnebago**?

Winnebago followers will likely see some subtle branding changes very soon, following on from the Australian company's 2012 court tussle with its US namesake.

While the Australian and US Winnebago companies share the same name and similar logos, they are actually unrelated.

Sydney-Based Knott Investments has been manufacturing its own designs since the early 1980s, while Winnebago Industries, of Forest City, Iowa has been in business since 1966.

While the name is almost synonymous with RVs, the Federal Court in Sydney ruled Knott Investments had engaged in misleading and deceptive conduct by making unauthorised use of the trademark.

Winnebago Australia CEO Max Mayo says the company will appeal the court ruling, but

has already added disclaimers to marketing material to make it clear to buyers what they are getting.

He says further branding changes will be made irrespective of the court appeal, or whether or not Winnebago starts shipping its American-made RVs down under.

While the American company said that was the basis of its court action, Mayo doesn't see it as a likely threat.

He believes Australia's tough road and climatic conditions along with strict compliance conditions would make it tough for the US company to try to break into the market for relatively small returns.

"Australians love caravans and the RV market here is tiny compared to the US.

"We sell around 500 vehicles a year and we have about 40 percent market share," he said.

RV's now welcome in **Australian Caravan Club**

The Australian Caravan Club has now thrown open its doors to all RV owners.

At its most recent AGM in Bingara NSW, members voted to welcome all recreational vehicle owners. Motorhomes, camper-trailers, caravans, fifth-wheelers and campervan users can all now officially take part in the club.

After five years at the helm of the ACC, magazine columnist and caravan identity Lionel Mussell stepped down and the chairmanship passed to Tom Smith, a farmer from NSW.

With 2500 members and branches in all mainland states, the ACC brands itself as a truly national body promoting social activities for members and lobbying to protect the rights of recreational vehicle owners.



Caravan to the rescue

When fire destroyed a popular Byron Bay beachside cafe last year, locals wondered what they'd do for their daily coffee fix.

Byron Beach Resort's Steve Hall had the idea of bringing in a caravan to serve coffee and breakfast until the Belongil Beach Tree House cafe could be rebuilt.

Not just any caravan, but a shiny silver Airstream Tradewind. Built in Ohio in 1966, it's believed to be the only one of its kind in

Australia and has proved a hit with locals and tourists.

Barista Bridget Kearney (pictured) had dreams of running a similar caravan coffee shop outside a train station in her home town of Melbourne, so was quick to put her hand up for the job in Byron.

When the rebuilt Tree House reopens in coming months Steve hopes to relocate the Silver Bullet to another beachside location, possibly Bondi.

DID YOU KNOW?

Airstream is the oldest caravan manufacturer in the US. Founder Wally Byam is said to have created the unique streamlined aluminum 'trailer' in response to his wife's refusal to go camping without a kitchen. Wally built his first van in his backyard in 1929 on top of a Model T Ford chassis and later sold plans to other backyard builders for \$1 each. Airstreams have a reputation for longevity, with more than six out of ten of those ever manufactured over the past 80 years still believed to be in use.

Airstream is now directly imported and sold in Australia by A&A Industries with prices starting at around \$120,000.



Another day, another fundraising opportunity. Ness with her trusty RV loaned by Jayco.

Cruisin for a cure

Travelling Australia in a luxury RV for 12 months sounds like a dream come true. For two-time cancer survivor Vanessa Wyder it was a journey for a very serious cause.

'Ness' was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma at age 21, had treatment and went into remission, but relapsed again four years later.

The young Melbourne woman farewelled several friends with cancer and came close to death herself.

After 18 months of gruelling chemo and radiotherapy, Vanessa finally received the 'all clear' and decided it was time to travel.

A colleague who knew someone at Jayco suggested she take one of their RVs and go on the road for a year.

Rather than just take a holiday, Ness saw it as a great opportunity to raise money for cancer research.

She spent most of 2012 travelling to all corners of the continent and running fundraisers along the way.

The support she received was overwhelming, with more than \$75,000 raised – enough to fund a cancer researcher for a year.

"Australian's in general are so generous. I've had a lot of fundraisers in the caravan parks, and the grey nomads offered to help me cook at sausage sizzles and donated generously.

"People in the caravanning community have taken me under their wing like I am their family, and it has been such an incredible experience," Ness said.

You can read more about Vanessa's journey and make a donation at <http://www.cruisin4acure.org.au>



Photo by Jeff Gill and his legendary Jennison Pathfinder

Hooked on classics

The popularity of vintage and classic caravans has convinced South Australia's biggest show organisers to give them their own Grand Parade.

This muster of caravans from the pioneering days of the industry will be the first of its type associated with a mainstream caravan and camping show in Australia.

The event will be a spectacular feature of the 2013 SA Caravan and Camping Show at the Adelaide Showground from February 20 to 24.

The Caravan and Camping Industries Association of SA (CCIASA) hopes to attract around 100 vintage and classic caravans onto the main arena.

CCIASA Executive Director, Stuart Livingstone, said as a result of many inquiries it had been decided to include

classic caravans, defined as those built between 1970 and 1980, along with vintage – those from before 1970.

"Registered entrants in the Grand Parade will form a circular display on the central grassed arena of the showground from mid-morning on Friday," he said.

"Visitors on the Friday will be able to enjoy looking over the classic and vintage models, many of which will be towed by restored vehicles of the same era.

"While vintage caravan enthusiasts restore their caravans for sheer enjoyment and camaraderie, they also play an important role in the preservation of the past in our industry and we are delighted to present what will be a memorable event."

To register go to www.vintagecaravangrandparade.com.au

Buying a caravan better than going OS

A survey by Jayco has found most Aussies would prefer a caravan holiday to a trip overseas.

Some 63 percent of those surveyed said they'd rather roam Australia on wheels. Just over half said they'd prefer to own a caravan to a holiday home.

Jayco Marketing Director Andrew Ryan said the ability to go where you want when you want in a caravan was the biggest incentive, with 73 percent of those surveyed saying that was the key attraction for them.

Affordability and a desire to see more of Australia were the next popular reasons [63 percent].

Almost half said they wanted a caravan holiday because it gave them the chance to meet interesting people.



The future at a glance

New Zealand architectural and interior design firm W2 has never designed a caravan and The Romotow fold-out luxury caravan is unlike anything we've seen.

The Romotow looks a bit like a high-tech horse float when it's folded for travel. But when you find a place to set up camp, the center folds out, floating the living quarters out to the side and revealing a deck area. Steps lead up onto the deck, which can be weatherproofed with pull-down screens, and the whole thing is quick to setup.

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UNIDENTIFIED VAN

On a recent stay over at Crescent Head Time to Roam met Garry Pryde and couldn't help notice his classic van.

Garry has no idea what make, model or year it is. He says a bloke in Tweed Heads gave it to him for a case of beer back in 2008.

Garry's been enjoying it ever since travelling up and down the coast fishing.

If you have any idea of its history, write in and let us know.

info@timetoroam.com.au

DREAMING OF ROAMING

Over the years, I've lost a lot of friends who never made their 'grey nomad' years, and so I decided that life is too short to put off the things we want to do.

Many years ago, I met a very inspiring lady, on the banks of the Myall River at Buladelah. She was travelling by herself around Oz, in a little campervan, with solar and gas set up, and she slept where ever she ended up.

She was in her early 50's, and had been living that way for a few years. She shared stories with me of her own adventures, the people she met, the places she saw, and I knew what I wanted to take a similar adventure as soon as my daughter Tegan grew up. Tegan is now 4 years off leaving school, and my dream is getting closer. I want to see every part of this great land of ours. I am following a couple at the moment, who are travelling Australia for the next year and a half, testing out 4x4's and all sorts of camping equipment along the way. Your readers may also be interested in their page 'Lap of Australia'.

I will be watching your Time to Roam Facebook updates and my friends and I are really looking forward to the first edition of Time to Roam Australia!

Michelle Jones
Kandos NSW



FOURTH GENERATION VAN OWNER

My family are fourth generation caravan owners and we love sharing our stories and photos from years gone by. We're very excited to hear about the launch of Time to Roam and wish you all the very best.

Attached is a photo of the van I went on holidays in as a youngster. Our family of four travelled all the way from Yamba in NSW to Rockhampton – quite a feat given the roads of the 1950s and 60s!

I look forward to more issues of Time to Roam

Barry Smyth
Boondall QLD

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VISCOUNT 'ROYAL' FOR ALL THE FAMILY

I heard through mates on Facebook that your launching a new caravan and camping magazine and visited your website.

Last year I bought a small Viscount 'Royal' circa 1970 through ebay at a great price. It needed some work but overall it was in good nic for its age.

We cleaned her up and re- fitted the interior with a double bed and bunks for my daughters and decked it out with LED lights. She's looking great.

My wife and the kids have already travelled 15,000 km and we are planning another trip in April.

We love the lifestyle

Can't wait to see the magazine

Best of luck

Colin and Lisa Bradley

Gosford NSW Via email

A RUDIMENTARY HOLIDAY WITH DONKEY

Congratulations on launching your first issue. We are a family who enjoys camping, but have not tried it on wheels yet – we look forward to getting lots of ideas! My husband has been exploring options for a rather rudimentary holiday on wheels – a donkey drawn cart – and I have some misgivings, but feel more confident now that he has completed a donkey handling course. In the meantime, I am keen to explore some more 'modern' modes of holidaying on wheels through Time to Roam.

All the best

Melita Smilovic

Camperdown NSW

Time to Roam Australia welcomes letters and photos or contributions from our readers on just about any subject that relates to caravanning and camping.
editor@timetoroam.com.au

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La Dolce Vita

AT TIME TO ROAM WE THINK MOST AUSTRALIANS HAVE A CONNECTION TO CARAVANING OR CAMPING.

The idea to launch this magazine was sparked by the restoration of a classic Viscount that had been in the editor's family since 1969.

We spent nearly two years restoring it and now it's our pride and joy.

PHILL TERRY takes up the story.

Back in 1974 when I was just four, my Dad's work with the RAAF took us on a four year adventure from our home in the Blue Mountains to France. While living in Paris my family travelled extensively to the many wonderful European countries and that's where I had my first taste of camping. I still treasure the memories from that time. Dad bought all the latest camping gear including a 6 man tent with 3 rooms, blow up mattresses, gas cooker,

The gracious lines of 1969 still turn heads as the restored Viscount is back on the road again.



Photo Daniel Linnet

portable gas fridge and gas lights. Our tent was the 'crème de la crème' of tents in the 70's and easily catered to two adults and four kids.

We stayed at caravan parks in France, mostly in The Loir Valley but also in Holland and Austria.

On our posting back to Australia four years later we pitched the six man tent in my Granfather's backyard in Narabeen. Not the most ideal place for a family of six to live while we searched for a house. Fortunately only a couple of months later we found a home and settled back in the Blue Mountains – an absolute haven for camping. We would spend our holidays roaming and camping in the Grose and Sassafras Valleys. My brother and our mates would combine our pocket money and go shopping for spam, baked beans, lollies and other necessities. . At night we would light a fire to cook our beans and

air guitar to the likes of 'The Angels' 'AC-DC'. We would search the creeks for yabbies and cook them in the billy. We roughed it and absolutely loved it.

But I always longed for a caravan. The idea of a home away from home on wheels was a dream.

Thirty years later that dream came true!

Time to Roam editor Rod Bruem's Aunt Dolce had a Viscount in the back yard at Lithgow where it had been sitting for 35 years.

The van had enjoyed time in Kiama on family holidays and even acted as a temporary home for Neville Way and eldest son Gary when the family prepared to move from Wollongong to Lithgow in the early 70's.

From Lithgow caravan park to the backyard at Dolce and Neville Way's family home and neighbourhood store on Chifley Road, it served as a spare room for the three Way

boys as they grew up. Rod also used it as his bedroom when he moved to Lithgow to start his career as a cadet journalist at the Lithgow Mercury.

In subsequent years it was left empty and pretty much abandoned. Gardens and high colour-bond fences went up around it. The old girl was trapped.

When I first sighted her she was a bit of a wreck, but inside wiping back layers of coal dust and dirt revealed glossy laminates and that distinctive 70's feel.

All but one window was broken and the hatches had leaked so the roof was a mess. The Way boys were planning a demolition weekend to cut her in pieces and take her to the tip.

As soon as I saw her I had other ideas. Dolce was happy to give us the Viscount, but getting the van out was the challenge.

Fortunately there was a very helpful local

January 2011 and after more than three decades resting in the backyard, the Viscount is carefully lifted out by crane so the restoration can begin



The author Phill Terry, Dolce and Largo



Before



After

crane hire company just a few doors down the street.

A week later the Way family and the neighbours gathered to witness the raising of the Viscount.

It took four men, a cradle and very long straps. She was successfully lifted from her

resting place 60 metres into the air, then over the fences and onto a truck parked in the back lane beside the main western rail line. Soon after, she was on her way back to my place in Katoomba.

The plan was to bring her back to her original state, but first we had to clean her up

and strip all the rotted ceilings and walls.

The Viscount Duralvan seemed a little rare. Searching for parts was not easy as there seemed to be none like it around. She is 18 ft on a single axle, with a separate bedroom. There were loads of cupboards and a chest of drawers big enough for the belongings of a family of six. The vanity fold-out mirror and light had to be removed because of the rotted particle board window ledge. The chest of drawers also had to be taken out because of the water-damaged wall behind it. However I kept the drawers and salvaged as much of the trimming as I could. As with many vans her age, the two ceiling hatches had leaked. To get her original again was almost impossible because of the damage.

We tried to stay as true to form as possible but we also wanted to modernise her in small ways like extending the bed width which was more like a large single bed. It is now a double complete with a luxury mattress!

The ceilings were all removed and by the time we took the chest of drawers apart, most of the walls were also replaced.

This gave us the opportunity to fully insulate the van. Inside doing the initial renovations felt like being in a big tin can in the sun, even in Katoomba. Insulating the ceilings and walls has made a huge difference.

I spent a lot of time searching for original materials such as laminate which proved very hard to get.

In the end I found ten huge sheets of original 1970's dark timber coloured laminate on eBay for \$100. A bargain, but the only problem was getting it from Victoria. That cost an additional \$400 but proved a good buy because we were able to use this on a full wall and on repairs in other damaged areas.

features | classic restoration



October 2012: as former owner Dolce Way celebrated her 84th Birthday, the caravan recently named in her honour pays a surprise visit back to Lithgow so she could see the restoration for herself.

The upholstery was mostly in good condition although the fabric needed replacing.

We also took the original blinds to a blind maker and tried to match the material. This was difficult as they don't make yellow/lime linen anymore for blinds. The colours these days are so bland and boring compared to the 70's. The van needed brightening up though so we stayed as close to the original colours.

All the mid and dark tones of laminate used on the original gave the van a dark feel, but once the new blinds were installed it lit up. The original blind poles were used as the repairer mentioned they are excellent quality and Swiss made.

The distinctive curved Viscount Perspex windows at the rear of the van were damaged and had to be replaced. The two front ones were in good order.



pros

- > Great style
- > unbreakable feel
- > retro dashboard knobs that were easy to use.

cons

- > Reversing camera screen in the rear vision mirror seemed like a toy
- > fairly hard ride and seats almost impossible to adjust.



The 1969 Viscounts were the first to have the exterior aluminium painted white. Viscount 'Duralvan' also seems to be the last to be painted with the distinctive 1960s 'thunderbolts'. Our paint work was in fair condition, despite having lived through some heavy Lithgow hailstorms, still we decided on a complete re-spray while keeping colours as close as possible to the original.

The chassis was in good order with just surface rust. She was saved by being in Lithgow, a long way from the sea. The coupling had to be replaced and the old jockey wheel had seized so we used the local welder to do his thing.

The hail had broken or cracked every window except for one which we ended up cracking during repairs, so they were all replaced with new sturdier auto glass.

The entire restoration took about 12 months with some great help from interested tradespeople in Katoomba. Dolce's youngest son Glen, a qualified auto electrician, helped out with the wiring and lights and son Gary also helped out.

We've named her Dolce' - its (painted on the back - after our much-loved benefactor and a genuinely sweet lady.

Now she'd registered and ready to roll, still with all the grace and style of 1969.

Be sure to say hi if you see us on the road or at a caravan park somewhere in OZ. 📍

Got a classic or vintage caravan rescue story of your own? Contact us at info@timetoroam.com.au

ABOUT OUR TOW VEHICLE

Toyota's FJ Cruiser had the curves and style to truly match the 1969 Viscount. It was hard to know which one was responsible for all the stares as we drove by.

Toyota describes it as a 'reinterpretation' of the original workhorse that became a legend in Australia during construction of the Snowy Mountains Scheme in the 1960s.

Based on the 4-litre V6 Prado, Toyota says the FJ will tow a 2250kg braked load and 750kg unbraked.

Prices start at Around \$45,000. You can choose from six colours, but no diesel and auto only.



VISCOUNT - THE HALLMARK FOR 'AUSSIE MADE'

Viscount is arguably the best known brand of classic caravan in Australia, simply because so many were produced from the 1960s through to the 1980s.

At its peak in the mid-70's the Viscount factory in Liverpool NSW was turning out as many as 200 custom-built vans a week at prices that were affordable to most families.

Viscount was started in Adelaide by John Carr in the mid 1950s. He soon shifted production to the Hume Highway in the Sydney suburb of Lansvale, then to a massive site at Orange Grove Road Liverpool.

The company epitomised the halcyon days of Australian manufacturing, with its workforce peaking at 1200 from around 1970-75. They even conducted factory tours on weekends as a marketing hook.

Before the days of cheap imports, Viscount Industries pressed its own aluminium and produced almost every necessary component from nuts and bolts to cupboard handles. Carr was obsessed with reducing the weight of caravans, even importing his own extrusion machine to produce lightweight plastic parts that never needed painting.

Boasting strong 'aircraft-style' all-aluminium frames introduced from the mid 1960s, their sturdy craftsmanship has stood the test of time.

Today Viscounts are popular with restorers, along with the sister-brand Millard which was taken over and absorbed by Viscount Industries when both were at their peak.

Viscount's run of success ended in the 1980s when rising oil prices saw families trade their Falcons and Kingswoods for smaller Japanese-made cars.

It produced a range of 'Aerolite' vans that could purportedly be towed by 4-cylinder vehicles, but the lightweight imported suspension system failed to live up to the company's reputation for durability.

Floated on the stock exchange, Viscount was finally taken over by the Gazal family, who were often in the headlines as they set about re-developing the Orange Grove Road factory site.

While many former workers have taken their fine craftsmanship skills to help build other successful Australian vans, the Viscount brand itself has been resurrected once or twice, but never lived up to its glory days.



Meet the Green Nomads

BRISBANE COUPLE **TRISH AND LYLE NICHOLSON** LOVE TO ROAM AUSTRALIA AND CLEAN UP THE COASTLINE AS THEY GO. TRISH TAKES UP THEIR STORY...



What inspires someone to spend hours collecting litter from our beaches when they could be relaxing on the beach instead?

For us it's a combination of things. A concern for the environment, a love of marine wildlife and the aesthetic appeal of pristine beaches.

There's also a sense of achievement that comes with cleaning up our shore and a feeling of disgust at the laziness of some thoughtless beach users.

Rather than 'grey nomads' we describe ourselves as 'green nomads' or 'clean nomads'.

As keen snorkelers and scuba divers, we hate to see any litter that may harm marine life. Plastics are major polluters in our oceans. In 2011, a visit to the turtle hospital at Reef HQ Aquarium in Townsville reinforced to us how even the smallest pieces of plastic litter can cause sickness and sometimes death of turtles and other sea creatures. From there we were inspired to carry a bag or two with us on our regular beach walks to collect litter and dispose of it appropriately. We were surprised at just how much we were collecting daily and how quickly we could make a visible impact on

the beaches we patrolled.

Last June we attended Eco Fiesta in Townsville and met Heidi Taylor from Tangaroa Blue Foundation. This not-for-profit organisation coordinates the Australian Marine Debris Initiative which monitors the coastline and provides resources and education to help communities keep them clean.

Heidi provided us with a data sheet so our efforts could be added to a national database. Sorting and counting beach rubbish collected then completing the electronic Tangaroa Blue data sheets made the process more meaningful and productive.

The national data is made widely available and can be used to support the case for preventative actions such as eco-friendly packaging and container deposit systems.

Clean Up Australia Day has been coordinating national clean up events on the first Sunday in March for many years. We've participated in cleaning up our local neighbourhood in Brisbane as part of this annual event.

Since 2009, the Great Northern Clean Up has provided northern Australia with an additional opportunity to clean up at a time

more suited to a tropical climate.

Last year we registered Horseshoe Bay at Bowen as our site for on the Clean Up after observing lots of litter at this very picturesque little bay during an earlier stay.

During the registered event we collected 999 cigarette butts, 35 plastic drinking straws, 35 plastic drink bottles, 67 metal bottle caps and pull tabs in just two hours. The total weight of rubbish collected was 23kg including a car tyre and a "cats eye" marker from the road.

Disappointment arose when we returned to Horseshoe Bay in the afternoon of our morning clean up event only to find 90 more cigarette butts among other litter at the top of the beach – in spite of the prominent stainless steel "butt out" container and wheelie bins provided by the local council.

How do we get the message through to some people that cigarette butts are litter and that no litter is acceptable on our

beaches and in the wider environment? Cigarette butts are not biodegradable, they are full of toxic chemicals and they can be mistaken for food by marine animals.

During our 2012 winter travels we recorded data from beaches around Cooktown, Port Douglas, Mission Beach and Cape Hillsborough. One interesting find in Cherry Tree Bay at Cooktown was remnants of a floating Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) used by fisherman to attract pelagic fish such as tuna, marlin and mahi mahi (dolphin fish). This FAD consisted of a bamboo structure lashed together with nylon rope supporting black plastic and fishing net, floated by a polystyrene bouy.

Unfortunately, fishing nets floating freely in the ocean become 'ghostnets', randomly catching unintended species such as turtles, manta rays and dolphins.

Lyle disassembled and carried this structure weighing nearly 20kg over a steep

walking track out of Cherry Tree Bay for almost one kilometre to the Grassy Hill car park.

It is satisfying to leave a beach in a better condition that when you arrived – even better to think you may have saved a turtle from "floating syndrome" after consuming plastics, reduced the toxic risk to marine life from cigarette butts or prevented animal entrapment in a ghostnet.

It is enjoyable to walk, swim and dive at pristine beaches without unsightly litter.

Our clean-ups also give us a great opportunity to interact with local communities and contribute to their environment during our brief stay. And hopefully our efforts may influence some to rethink their behaviour.

Clean Up Australia Day 2013 in on Sunday March 3. You can register and be part of a community clean-up near you by going to www.cleanupaustralia.org.au

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A sixty-one year love affair

BY GARRY AND JANICE BRUEM

1

WHEN PAT AND LLOYD RIDGWAY SET OFF ON THEIR HONEYMOON IN A CLASSIC 1950S CARAVAN, IT WAS THE START OF A 60 YEAR LOVE AFFAIR WITH CARAVANNING AROUND AUSTRALIA.

The Ridgway's maiden voyage was no short trip. They headed down the south coast from Sydney, along Victoria's Great Ocean Road and back to Sydney via the Snowy Mountains.

Their accommodation was a hired van assembled from a kit and towed by Lloyd's Austin A40 ute.

The honeymoon was not without its dramas. The roads were rough and there were few caravan parks. The isolation experienced while stranded by flood waters for several days with a very limited supply of food and fresh water, remains a vivid memory.

While the roads were rocky, clearly the relationship was solid and once they returned Lloyd was soon at work assembling a kit van of their own to keep.

The 12 footer doubled as Lloyd's office and a spare bedroom as the first of four children arrived.

As the family grew, they needed more room so, Lloyd, an experienced architectural draughtsman, designed and built a bigger one.

He said the caravan's sides were Rescote ply, the back and front were aluminium, and the roof was one large sheet of fibreglass, produced by a local manufacturer. While the fibreglass was still "green", it was wrapped around the roof framing, secured and left to cure.

2



3



4



5



An interesting addition to this van which is rarely seen these days, was the “dolly wheel”.

The weight of the van was partially transferred to a third wheel at the front, spreading the load more evenly.

There were two types available at this time, the Jones wheel, equipped with a shock absorber, as used by the Ridgways.

Lloyd recalls it being very durable on the rough roads of the time and is not sure why they went out of fashion.

Another “dolly wheel” on the market at this time was the dual wheeled Hutchison brand.

It wasn't till the early 1970s Lloyd finally purchased a van that was assembled by somebody else. The 18 foot, 6 berth Viscount was followed by a 14 foot Millard.

In 1977 they purchased a Franklin Motor Home, built on a Ford Transit Van with gas hot water system, shower and toilet.

Their caravan attraction however proved too great and they replaced the motor home with a Futura van in 1982. Lloyd has kept since in immaculate condition, also adding a few

modifications of his own.

Now in his 80's and unable to take it out, he's reluctantly put it up for sale. The small 'For Sale' sign pitched on their lawn on a quiet street in Wauchope NSW leads you to believe he's in no hurry to part with his pride and joy.

When the time finally comes to say goodbye to their last van, Pat and Lloyd will still have boxes of happy memories to share from their time roaming Australia.

Their family albums are a spectacular snapshot of holidaying in the 1950s to the 1970s.

The Ridgway family travelled throughout Queensland, NSW, Victoria and South Australia. From the Gulf of Carpentaria to the Flinders Rangers and WA border.

They'd recommend a caravan holiday for any young family.

“It's the best family holiday, our children learned so much about Australia.”

1 On the way to Adelaide, 1964

2 The newlyweds about to begin their life adventure

3 Something borrowed, the honeymoon caravan

4 On the way to the bush capital

5 Sydney Opera House under construction in the 60s. Pat says travelling Australia was the best part of the Ridgeway kid's education.

→ continued page 26

← from page 25



1 Pictured is Lloyd Ridgway and his sister with Lloyd's 1948 Standard Tourer, his transport to Caloundra, Qld. This trip shortly after the war, was taken by Lloyd when still a bachelor. With the then fuel rationing, it required frequent stops at various places to get half a gallon, or if you were lucky, a gallon, of rationed petrol at a time. Turning off the motor and coasting down hill of course conserved much of this valuable fuel. **2,3,4** various scenes from the family tours of the 1950s. **5** Catherine Ridgeway 1957. **6** Caravan and Camping Association Christmas Rally, NSW south coast 1965.



7 Christmas in Adelaide 1964. **8** Nambucca Heads 1960s. **9** The appeal of caravans proved too great however and they replaced the motorhome with a Futura van in 1982. Lloyd has kept it since, in immaculate condition, also adding a few modifications of his own. **10** Celebrating their 60th Wedding Anniversary in 2011.



How caravans became an Australian way of life

WHEN SYDNEYSIDERS STARTED BUYING CARAVANS POST WORLD WAR II, THEY TURNED TO THE SINCLAIR FAMILY FOR THEIR KIT VANS AND PARTS.

GLENN WATSON caught up with industry legend **Allan Sinclair** to hear how it all began.

From the early 1950s through to the '70s it was hard to travel through the Sydney suburb of Kogarah without missing a huge block letter sign "CARAVAN ACCESSORIES".

The unassuming corner building underneath was owned by Harry Sinclair and his family, at the heart of Sydney's caravan industry.

Eldest son, Allan, remembers his father as an entrepreneur. Born in 1912, Harry emigrated from Scotland with his family,

who settled in Cessnock where Harry learned his trade of carpentry and joinery.

In the shadow of the Great Depression he found work with a building company, where he fractured his skull in an accident. "During the war years he was a woodworker on aircraft," Allan said.

"He cut plywood for the escape hatch in bombers so it could be knocked out in an emergency while not blowing out during use."

Married with a young family, after the war Harry went into home construction, but after another workplace injury, he needed to find a less physically demanding job.

"He had recently gone caravanning with

Allan Sinclair relaxes in one of his kit caravans from the 1950s. His father built one of the first folding camper vans in 1950, built on a Fordson chassis.



some mates, and realised the industry suited his expertise in making wood strong, lightweight and waterproof.”

During the Depression he'd also sold the unusual combination of cooking essences and kitchen accessories to farming households, travelling around in a motorbike and sidecar.

“My father wasn't what you'd call charismatic,” Allan says, “but he had an incredible ability to get to know people really deeply.”

The business began in the family back yard, but soon moved to the property on Rocky Point Road where there was a small workshop.

“We opened a tiny shop with displays of nuts, bolts, cabin hooks and other parts.

“Before the opening of Captain Cook Bridge the road only had a few cars an hour because there was a punt at the end of it,” Allan said.

Caravan Accessories retailed to caravan owners and wholesaled to local builders. Their key product was waterproof

plywood, made from Pacific maple by Ralph Symonds in nearby Rosebery.

The post-war caravan industry was booming. Returned soldiers were limited by the infamous six o'clock swill and television was still in the future.

“People had just got their house and quarter-acre block, and nothing much to do except go out and get drunk.

“One day a woman came in and said to my father, ‘I want to give you a kiss!’

“Having a caravan had changed her life – before then her husband had always been drunk, and now he was enthusiastic and involved.”

Caravans, Allan says, were a joint project for a couple.

“The woman did the inside, the bloke did the outside.

“Caravanning gave professional men a relief from their work, and some of their vans were the best I saw.

“One built by a dentist was just superb – lots of gadgets and gimmicks, every thing that could swing out did. The big estate agent would want the best you could get.”

From 1953 the Sinclairs manufactured budget-priced kit caravans, including finished chassis with a loose floor tied on; a pair of sides made up with frames; a roll of plywood; pre-cut cross members and cupboard facings.

The shapes were cut from jigs using the then-new Stanley routers.

Originally the doors and windows were made in wood by the Sinclairs; later ones were aluminium, imported from England until Qualicraft, also English, started making them in Australia in the 1960s.

“People would add their own extras – they'd make their own cupboards and doors and get bedding made to size by people like E.A. Nixons & Sons.

“Our family van wasn't lined, had small wheels and just an icebox



and weighed 660 pounds.

“Once we got stuck going up a hill on a narrow dirt road which wasn’t wide enough to do a U-turn with the van. So we put rocks behind its wheels, turned it around, put it back on the car – and went back down!

“Our kits weren’t an original idea – Caraparts in Leichhardt had one. So did Henderson Springs, but being a bigger company, they couldn’t be as intimate with the people that bought them, and to sell a kit you had to virtually teach someone how to build it! In the end, not enough people were buying them after all that effort.”

In the early 1960s Caravan Accessories started selling aluminium sheets that were new to the scene, breaking up large crate quantities.

“Aluminium was first used was for stone guards for the front of vans, but it quickly took over and soon we were putting it over our wooden frames.”

When water gets into the end-

grain of plywood, explains Allan, it can’t get out, so the wood rots.

Aluminium didn’t split and crack, and didn’t need painting. But it created other problems.

“It expands much more in the sun than wood, so it still eventually lets water in through gaps and your frame still rots. Viscount was one of the first to introduce aluminium frames. It solved the rot for the frame but not the wooden lining.”

By the 1960s, Viscount’s economies of scale and buying power made their prices too competitive for the Caravan Accessories kits, the last of which were also aluminium covered.

But even in crates the soft, vulnerable metal was easily damaged. Eventually the Sinclairs left caravan sales to other suppliers and concentrated on parts and repairs. This included axles, water tanks, sinks, refrigerators and gas stoves, undergear, fitted towbars and brakes.



This caravan was built in late 1950’s by Allan’s father-in-law Otto Wunderlich, an Electrical Trade’s teacher from Wollongong. He is pictured far left with family members, Bruce, Charles and Ellen Wunderlich.

“We couldn’t fit more than a couple of caravans in the place (for repairs), so we booked them in a week or two ahead.”

During the 1950s and ‘60s, this work occupied up to six employees. They also manufactured parts.

In the mid-1960s Allan designed a four rod stabiliser which was better and easier to use than others on the market and sold in its thousands.

Fridges were from the English Morphy & Richards, and locally, Halstrom and Hardy & Spears.

“We were the NSW distributor for Electrolux fridges, very successful in the 1960s and ‘70s for Kombis and other campervans. We went over to Electrolux a few times in the 1980s to see how their fridges were made, how they were combining light-weight with durability.”

The industry’s quiet times generally corresponded with credit squeezes, says Allan, who cites the oil crisis of the mid-1970s as a critical hit.

“People thought, I can’t afford to take my caravan out.

“In 1978 Viscount went from about 700 caravans a month to nearly none over one Christmas period.”

The next wave came with the rise of the “grey nomad” in the 1990s.

Caravan Accessories eventually supplied Australia-wide. In 1978 it split into two divisions, with the retail arm moved down the road into newly built premises.

Harry worked in the business until a couple of years before he passed away in 1994. By 2003, getting older and tiring of the long hours, the family sold to Camec, which still sells specialist

caravan supplies in Caringbah today.

Ironically, says Allan, the Sinclair family never used to go caravanning often.

“In a family business you couldn’t all go on holidays together, and because we were so busy during summer, when we did go out in our caravans it was only in the winter off-season.”

Advancing age is now preventing Allan and his wife getting out as much as they’d like and he recently sold a caravan that had been in the family since 1957.

Looking back on his caravan business life, he has few regrets.

“The pluses are what you achieved ... the minuses are what you’ve given up to achieve it.”



The Warrumbungles NSW, taken by Allan’s brother John in the 1950s



TOP The Sinclair Family on one of their rare holidays: Pacific Highway Coffs Harbour

BOTTOM The popularity of retro 1950s vans with young families was evident as Allan reluctantly put one of the last Sinclair kit vans up for sale. Sydney couple Kyle and Karen Dunsire came to check it out with their daughter. Allan finally sold it to a buyer in WA for almost \$12,000.

Australia's other road toll

THE STORY BEHIND A NATIONAL MOVEMENT TO SAVE OUR NATIVE WILDLIFE

With more Australians taking to the road with caravans and RVs, it's worth taking time to think about Australia's native animals and how they are faring.

Collisions with animals are the cause of nearly one in ten road accidents in Australia, with kangaroos, wallabies and emus the most common victims.

We don't know the exact road toll and research is lagging in terms of what effect road accidents are having on our rich native biodiversity, including threatened species.

A study in Tasmania in 2009 estimated a total road kill for the state of some 300,000 including close to 3,000 Tasmanian devils killed in the previous 12 months.

As for koalas, it has long been known that cars are their biggest threat. A study in the Port Stephens area on NSW found 34 koalas were killed in traffic accidents in just one year.

The NRMA estimates road kill accounts for about \$21m annually in insurance costs.

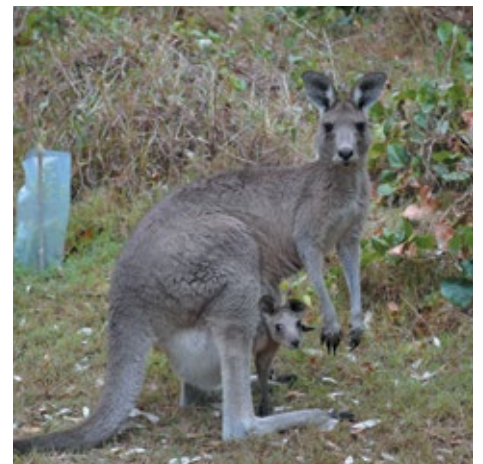
WIRES, the Wildlife Information and Rescue Service, was founded by caravan enthusiast Mikla Lewis in 1985 and today rescues around 100,000 native animals each year.

Mikla has her own caravan and camping stories having travelled in a 'Noddy' caravan and Datsun 1200 in the 70's around Australia with the 'Street Orchestra' - a group of busking musicians.

Mikla has been awarded an Order of Australia for wildlife conservation efforts and says Aussies going bush have a special responsibility, because rural roads are often the last remaining habitat for wildlife.

"Roadsides are the only good patches of

vegetation that still have mature wattles and good shrubs - ideal for wildlife but susceptible to injury and death." ♦



“THE GREATNESS OF A NATION AND ITS MORAL PROGRESS CAN BE JUDGED BY THE WAY ITS ANIMALS ARE TREATED” MAHATMA GANDHI



Pictured in 1985 at the launch of WIRES (Left to right) Mikla and her niece Carly Lewis, Penny Cook from A Country Practice, and WIRES Co-ordinator at the time Valerie Thurlow and her daughter Rania.

Time to Roam Australia welcomes readers' stories on Australian fauna and flora protection and conservation projects.

MIKLA OFFERS THE FOLLOWING 5 TIPS FOR TRAVELLERS

1. Carry a spare pillow slip or cardboard box or woollen bag and disposable gloves just in case you hit or spot an injured animal on the roadside.
2. Don't throw apple cores or left over food from the car. Even though they are biodegradable they attract animals and birds to the side of the roads.
3. Unless you can't avoid it, do not attempt to rescue an injured native animal yourself. Incorrect handling and transport methods can be stressful for the animal and lead to further injury.
4. Avoid travelling at dusk or dawn as this is the time that 'macropods and 'macropods' tend to feed and are on the move
5. Be mindful when collecting firewood as animals rely not only on fallen timber but also dead branches for shelter and food.

If you find an animal that is suffering from an injury, disease or is orphaned, Mikla recommends contacting WIRES or a similar a licensed rehabilitation organisation.

"Make sure to give the operator as much information as possible about the animal's location.

The rehabilitation group will then arrange for trained volunteers to rescue the animal. If possible, you should stay and observe the animal until the rescuers arrive," Mikla said.

Time to Roam is a proud supporter of WIRES.

For more information or to become a volunteer visit contact your local WIRES branch. WIRES national number is 13 00 094 737.





Quality really hasn't gone out of style

AS MICHAEL GREALY REPORTS, A NEW AUSSIE BATTLER SOON TO REVIVE THE REGENT BRAND IS A STICKLER FOR STANDARDS

TESTED: LEGACY ENVOY 630

Beautiful Lake Macquarie north of Sydney is a great place for a holiday and that's where I found Legacy Caravans' stylish Envoy 630 touring caravan.

It's a caravan that says 'home away from home' and it's likely to raise a green eye or two from other travellers or campers.

The Legacy range is manufactured at Campbellfield north of Melbourne – it's only two years old and its parent company is Caravans Australia which also distributes the popular UK-made Bailey caravans. Later this year will begin manufacturing Regent caravans, having acquired the iconic Aussie brand.

Adrian Van Geelen, group managing director of Caravans Australia, told me: "We have a limited Legacy model range because

we are focusing on quality and reproducing that quality on our assembly line. It's quality for the price conscious."

What strikes you about the inside of the Envoy 630 is the comfort and features of this 6.25 metre long interior (20 foot six inches in the old money) caravan.

From the queen size island bed with innerspring mattress, with neat bedside dressing tables, to the full ensuite with separate shower, toilet and top loading washing machine at the rear, it has the finish of a small apartment - and a quality one at that.

You can choose soft leather or high quality fabrics for your furnishings and either a shiny white interior, or a finish of traditional timbers, all with a distinctly Australian colour palate.

There's plenty of shade inside at the comfortable dinette with tri-fold table. Sitting there, you can run your eye across

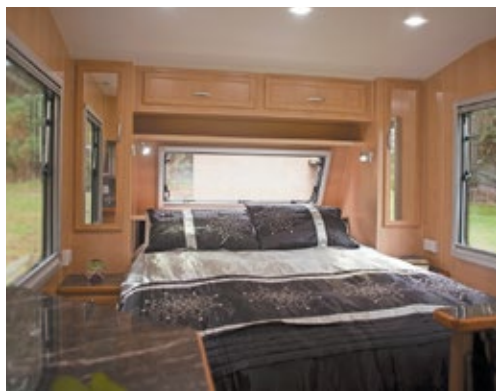
the overhead cupboards, large windows and slide out pantry and an entertainment system that includes a power-booster TV antenna, stereo, radio/CD with multiple internal speakers.

Again the high level of finish stands out – Caravans Australia led the way in using hard-wearing laser-glaze bench tops now standard in most vans.

Underneath, there's solid timber furniture frames made from Tasmanian maple. It's from sustainable plantations, so gets the green tick too.

Heading out, the Envoy 630 has either a centre door or rear door leading to a rollout protective awning, where you can sit at a picnic table and enjoy your surroundings wherever you stop.

External features include two 95 litre water tanks, battery pack and provision for solar panels.



BUILD

As the saying goes, it's what's inside that counts and the team at Caravans Australia is only too happy to sit you down and spend some time telling you about the bits you can't see.

They happily admit to being fastidious about the framework and aluminium clad, having their own self-imposed standards they believe set a benchmark for the industry.

Aluminium stretches when it heats up and needs room to move. For the Envy and other vans coming out of the Campbellfield factory, they set a separation standard of just 300mm, compared to the 400mm industry standard.

It all sounds very technical, but in the long term it's about avoiding nasty gaps, stretching and warping.

Caravans Australia manufacture their own steel chassis using Australian steel and it is 2.8mm thick – compared to the industry minimum (– and often standard) 2.2mm. In fact some imported caravans are now using steel as thin as 1.5mm – enough to make you want to take a slide rule with you when you go caravan shopping.

The A frame on the Envy is even thicker, a full 3mm thick.

The steel is supa-gal treated with a full hot dip galvanise treatment available in the

Melbourne factory for an extra \$2000 – a good investment if you're spending a lot of time by the beach.

Of course all the extra steel adds to more weight to be towed, however for a 19ft van it only adds up to an extra 50 or so kilograms, so hardly a concern when you consider the extra durability for a purchase this big that you want to last.

The wheels are 15 inch alloys with light truck tyres. Once again the company flies the flag when it comes to talking suspension, claiming none of the imported vans can match the Australian-built axles and springs.

There are two independent suspension upgrade packs available, the first 'Simplicity pack' costing an extra \$2500, while a deluxe MacPherson strut system is available for \$5,500.

The beauty of this is it virtually takes a \$50-55k luxury ensuite van into the same league as an off-roader that would set you back \$70,000 or more with the same mod cons.

Although a close read of Warranty shows a rather prominent exclusion clause if you take the Envy off-roading, so you might be on your own if bits start falling off – the quality of the build not withstanding!

TOWING

Ask any experienced old-hand about towing and they will tell you that long-term success is much like a marriage – it's all about how the two vehicles come together.

You need a caravan to suit your car and the caravan design is also crucial to how well it tows. Where you put the fridge, the solar panels or any other weighty extras can make a big difference once you build up speed on the freeway. Just like a marriage, the last thing you want is a case of the dreaded "wobbles".

One of the great features of the Envy is there's flexibility when you order

about where things go, including, most importantly, the axles.

Caravans Australia prides itself on getting the weight distribution right, ensuring the premium ball weight and towing efficiency.

Part of the sales experience is they will look at the towing vehicle you intend to use to ensure that it is compatible with the build and weight distribution of the van.

As Adrian Van Geelen explained, "It's just another advantage we have as an Australian manufacturer.

"Those importing chassis from overseas, with the exception of the larger lightweight caravan manufacturers the likes of Bailey building on an Alko chassis, don't have that flexibility. It's an important safety issue."

SUMMARY

The Legacy range uses state of the art production techniques, proven technology and materials that give a value for money result.

The Envy 630 is available at dealers in New South Wales and Victoria – Macquarie Caravans, a couple of minutes from Lake Macquarie on the Pacific Highway at Belmont North, and Caravans West on the Princes Highway at Springvale in Victoria.

Now a large Australian manufacturer, backed by an even bigger UK parent company, you have the confidence of getting a product built for Australian conditions with the latest technology from overseas. You can also feel fairly confident the company will be around for the long haul should you need to make a claim during the warranty period or get a part down the track..

Aristotle defined envy as the pain caused by the good fortune of others.

Legacy's Envy 630 could be the good fortune you're seeking if you're after a quality caravan at a competitive price that won't break the bank.

→ continued page 36

WE HAVE A LIMITED LEGACY MODEL RANGE
BECAUSE WE ARE FOCUSING ON QUALITY
AND REPRODUCING THAT QUALITY...

VEHICLE SPECIFICATIONS INCLUSIONS & OPTIONS LIST



- Internal**
- Four burner grill cooktop and range hood
 - Microwave oven
 - 184 litre Thetford three-way fridge
 - Double glazed windows with screens and blackout
 - Fully moulded shower unit
 - Air Command Cormorant roof mounted air conditioner

- External**
- Tandem axle suspension
 - 235mm light truck tyres
 - 6.86 metre external cabin length
 - Two nine kg gas cylinder bottles
 - Suburban gas electric hot water service
 - Gas BBQ point
 - 400mm by 400mm skylite rear hatch
 - Easy lift drop down corner stabilisers

- Options**
- TV external outlet
 - Large front boot
 - Lockable water filler
 - Oven
 - 19 inch flat screen TV
 - LED internal lighting
 - 120 Watt solar panel
 - Curtains
 - External speakers
 - Single beds
 - Six inch A frame

Warranty 12 months

Price \$55,000 on the road
Or call 03 9308 8867

For further information Legacy Caravans, Caravans Australia
www.legacycaravans.com.au
Or call 03 9308 8867

pros 

- > Solid Aussie company sure to be around for some time
- > Australian built for Australian conditions
- > Can alter axle locations to suit choice of towing vehicle

cons 

- > Somewhat limited choice in interior layouts (there are 12)
- > Compact size not always popular with long-term nomads
- > Limited warranty

OR YOU MAY LIKE TO TRY THESE OUT



CORONET CARRINGTON

The build, the quality and the luxury this great Aussie builder is famous for, at a keen price. Air conditioning, queen-size bed, leather trim, stereo system, LCD TV and full size shower are among the luxury inclusions, beautifully packaged into 16.6".

Prices start at \$52,000.



JAYCO STERLING

The popular Sterling introduces a completely new look interior with redesigned cabinetry, a selection of new bench top finishes and leather upholstery as standard. There's a range of new layouts and more added features.

Sterling still boasts a hail/dent resistant tough frame, hot dipped galvanised chassis and a 3 year Roadside Assist support.

Priced from \$58,000.



CELL CARAVANS 'THE RIVER'

An imported easy to tow lightweight caravan with push button-slide out section and luxury queen size bed. Measuring 18.5" in length, features include full ensuite bathroom, surround sound entertainment system, LED TV, push-button power electric awning, legs and front jack, Dometic ducted air-conditioning. Manufactured in the USA, Cell is upfront in declaring the range is fully compliant with Australian standards.

Priced at \$62,800 ex Melbourne.

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Wedgetail flies high with style

IAN GLOVER REVIEWS A CLASSY SLIDE-ON CAMPER, DESIGNED BY EMPTY NESTERS, FOR EMPTY NESTERS.

David Hazlewood and his wife got together through a mutual love of the great outdoors – hiking, camping, bushwalking and bird watching. All leisure hours were spent ‘alfresco’. But then their daughter showed a great deal of talent in ballet, and as the parent of any sporting or vocationally gifted child knows, if he or she wants to pursue it, tries to perfect it, that’s the end of holidays and weekends away.

When finally the Hazlewoods had time to themselves again, they were obviously a lot older, and felt the need for a few more creature comforts. They bought a series of camper trailers that David continually modified and improved, with single-minded dedication.

The Oxford Dictionary defines a

perfectionist as ‘someone who aims at perfection in his work’. To be a perfectionist, you need to know what you want, and more importantly, what’s not good enough, what you don’t want. And you can only know what you don’t want if you’ve experienced something that doesn’t really work, and see the way to fix it. David is a perfectionist.

But the focus switched from camper trailers. He decided he didn’t want the limitations imposed by something you had to drag around behind a vehicle, and at that stage, camper trailers were being banned by some tagalong tour operators because of their potential capacity for environmental damage, particularly on desert tracks. A slide-on camper seemed to offer a number of advantages, like ease of parking, greater accessibility to genuine off-road areas (and supermarket carparks), and the fact that you only had to handle one unit, not two, with fuel savings thrown in into the bargain. David looked at the offerings on the market

and found that they were either too big or high, were not particularly space-efficient, or simply too small. There seemed to be little alternative but to design and build one himself...

After seven years of design, research and prototype development, Wedgetail Campers was born. Based in Newcastle, the company has continuously embarked on programmes of improvements and innovation, and the latest innovation is easy living on wheels.

An easy life begins on the road, and on the road, the Wedgetail has a low profile and all the weight – gas bottles and the like – stored down low and towards the front of the vehicle, making for ease of cornering and, on off-road tracks great stability on side slopes. With dimensions measuring 1.22m high, 1.8m wide and a 2.5m overall length, the Wedgetail makes it possible to explore narrow bush tracks with overhanging branches and flanking vegetation without risking the damage possible to larger



vehicles. Fuel savings are achieved by the use of aluminium as prime construction material, combining a light weight with structural strength (and recyclability), and with an extended drawbar, it's still possible to tow a boat.

Extremely important on Outback trips, dust-sealing is excellent, with a huge filtered air intake pressurising the interior, and it's possible to move the unit while fully set up for camping – just the thing if that prime camping spot in the park suddenly becomes available!

Setup is simplicity itself; with a bit of practice, able to be achieved by one person in under ten minutes – obviously less with a couple working as a team. The back folds down through 90 degrees and remains off the ground. Instead of ladders for ingress, there's a set of steps, complete with a handrail that's stored in a rear compartment while on the move. Inside, there's a very spacious living area for two. (The Wedgetail wasn't designed for families; it's more for empty nesters, or a fairly well-heeled young couple.)

It's immediately apparent that with this design, form doesn't follow function or vice versa. While everything is hugely practical, it also reeks of style, typified by the Italianate stainless steel sink, up close to the ute cabin – all curves and chic, complete with stainless steel dish rack.

There's plenty of bench space, with the bench top on the left opening to reveal an 80

litre Waeco fridge and all your switches for running on both 240V and 12V. All the bench tops have rounded and reinforced corners for comfort, safety and longevity.

To the left is a commodious double bed, covered with a sheet of vinyl that serves two functions – one to stop the bedding getting wet when packing up after or during rain, the other to prevent oil splatters from the two-burner stove staining the sheets. The mattress is purpose-built, with box springs and foam, and a breathing layer on the bottom to prevent condensation forming while you're asleep. Flexible-necked individual reading lights lay flat on the bed while travelling.

At the right hand rear of the camper is a full bathroom, including shower and Fiama 1520 chemical toilet. The hot water system is a Truma 14 litre that runs on either gas or electricity, and there's a slatted shower floor that allows grey water to drain away to a storage tank. While travelling, the loo is stored in a snug storage compartment.

What's most impressive about this camper is both the attention to detail and the quality of the fit-out: A cabin cruiser-style multi-

staged CTEK seven amp battery charger tops up to three deep cycle batteries at once, and because it's close to the battery box, there's no current loss; the batteries remain 100 per cent ready to go at all times, with no drain at all on the ute battery; the regulator is a Max Power Tracker – the best for solar panels. Little things count, like the clear plastic tube that reveals how much water remains in the 90 litre tank. But what really sets this design apart is the fact that anything that's accessible from inside the van can also be accessed from the outside: The 'his and hers' wardrobes (complete with a 'smalls' drawer in one); all switchgear, even the shower! So when it's bitterly cold or stiflingly hot, you can stay inside and still do everything you want, and when it's balmy outside, the same thing applies.

As you can imagine, Wedgetails aren't cheap. The topline model goes for just over \$45,000, with a base spec model coming in just under \$39,000. But as with all things, you get what you pay for!

→ continued page 40

WHAT'S MOST IMPRESSIVE ABOUT THIS CAMPER IS BOTH THE ATTENTION TO DETAIL AND THE QUALITY OF THE FIT-OUT

VEHICLE SPECIFICATIONS INCLUSIONS & OPTIONS LIST



Specifications

Length: base 2.2m, to end of storage pod 2.5m

Width: 1.79m

Height: 1.22 m (above tray)

Camper dimensions open

Length: 3.4m

Width: 3.66m

Height: 2.9m (above tray)

Weight: basic camper 420kg (dry). A fully specified camper weighs 650kg

- Electrical**
- Advanced electrical control panel with internal and external access
 - Multi staged CTEK 7 amp battery charger
 - 240 volt inlet socket, 240 volt double power point with internal/external
 - Space for 2nd deep cycle battery

- 4 x 12 volt sockets

- Anderson plug connection (from camper)

- Gas**
- 2 gas bayonets to enable use of gas stove in either internal or external modes.

- Locked/vented separate gas cylinder compartment
- Regulator and 2 flexible gas line to connect gas cylinders.

- Water**
- 90 litre water tank with external lockable filler cap. Can be optioned to a 180 litre water tank
 - Constant on demand pressure cold water system
 - Inline water filter

Warranty Five year structural

Wedgetail www.wedgetailcampers.com.au

Campers Phone: 0458 493 9170

pros



- > Quality fit out
- > Fast continuous battery recharge
- > Easy set up
- > Accessible storage from inside and out

cons



- > Won't fit a dual-cab
- > Luxury price tag

OR YOU MAY LIKE TO TRY THESE OUT



TRAYON 1830 DIESEL DELUXE
Luxurious, light, strong and dependable. Extras include 100 litre fridge, heater, diesel hot water, shower and toilet. Lounge folds down to make third bed. Trayon have been making campers for close to 20 years and have sold almost 1,000 in that time. Incredible 10 year structural warranty, valid even for off-roading. **Price: \$38,500**



PALOMINO MAVERICK 2902
Built with a smooth solid fibreglass construction, and efficiently designed fully furnished interior this model includes features not found in other slide on campers. This new model incorporates an electric slide out for expanded living space. Electric remote control jacks, electric rear awning, side awning, 6 speaker surround sound entertainment system are all standard. **Price: \$43,000**



TRAVELANDER EVRON SC2
Clever design, with the kitchen opening from the back and the bedroom sliding down from the left side, complete with hard floor. Setting up is quick and easy and you can eat on the road without unpacking everything. The fibreglass unit sits just 2cm above normal vehicle height, lowering fuel consumption and feeling less like there's a big box behind you. **Price \$35,200**



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Try it out before you buy

IMOTORHOME'S RICHARD ROBERTSON PUTS AN EX-RENTAL WORKHOUSE THROUGH ITS PACES AND FINDS IT PUNCHES WELL ABOVE ITS WEIGHT.

Few motorhome manufacturers have the wherewithal to run demonstrator vehicles you can truly try before you buy. Mostly it's a drive around the block or maybe a few hours out-and-about, while the dealer anxiously awaits your safe return. The problem for dealers is that, unlike a caravan, putting test miles on a motorhome devalues it.

Talvor might not be a household name amongst campervan and motorhome buyers, but that is changing. The Company is the name behind Apollo Motorhome Rentals and started out manufacturing basic vehicles for its growing rental fleet back in the mid 80s. Today, Talvor is branching out and manufactures a wide range of vehicles – some quite upmarket – as well as caravans, and has plans to become a major player on both sides of the Tasman.

Rental vehicles are usually far from glamorous as they need to be tough and

as idiot-proof as possible. The problem with trying to make anything idiot proof, or course, is that idiots are so ingenuitive. For the most part, rental vehicles seem to survive with varying degrees of success before appearing on the second hand market.

STEPPING INSIDE

Entering the Murana you find yourself facing a four-seat cafe-style dinette, with seatbelts for the two forward-facing seats. Aft of that is the bathroom and at the rear is a generous u-shaped lounge that for some reason lacks a table. Opposite the dinette is the kitchen, which runs through to the rear lounge. Above the Crafter's cab is a large Queen-ish sized bed and above the rear lounge is a slightly smaller bed that stores up by the ceiling during the day and lowers, electrically, at night.

Although the Murana has older-style flat-faced cupboard, they have a modern high-gloss finish and the look and feel of the interior is quite contemporary. It's also bright and quite airy, especially at the rear, with good window space and a mirror-finish bathroom door. Night time illumination is

good, with LEDs the major type of lighting employed.

For a rental vehicle with 55,000-odd kilometres on the clock the interior was hard to pick from new. There were no scuff marks, nothing was chipped and there was no accumulated grit or grime to be seen, except around the fresh water tank beneath the rear lounge. That says good things about AWRV World's maintenance and attention to detail when cleaning, but also the inherent strength and durability of the design.

Matt Sears, AWRV World's General Manager told me he only keeps vehicles in the rental fleet for a short time, up to about 60,000 km, before selling them on. That means the test Murana was nearing the end of its rental life and depending on the asking price it would make an attractive used offering.

LIVING ROOM

Because the dinette is directly opposite the entry door you can slip in and out without disturbing the chef, provided you don't try and get to the fridge. The dining table has an odd leg arrangement that can get in the way of those sitting closest to the wall and

it doesn't provide a lot of support at the extremity. Consequently, the dining table in our vehicle had a slight-but-noticeable droop. I think I worked out how this had happened during the machine's rental life, when Mrs iMotorhome (not her real name) went to climb the bed ladder and by instinct used the table corner as a hand support. The things you learn only by actually using a motorhome...

The table is also a little high for my liking, but the dinette seats are reasonably comfortable and would be much better with a little more back shaping and lumbar support. Above the fridge sits a good 19" HD TV/DVD on a swivel arm and it can be viewed from anywhere in the vehicle. The rear lounge is spacious, but the lack of somewhere to put your drink, computer or dine at is baffling. As it stands it would be a great place for kids to play on the floor and in a four-berth rental that's probably the idea.

Mrs iMotorhome liked the kitchen and cooked for three of us as Malcolm Street (his real name) was travelling with us in an Avan Applause – but that's another story. A flip-up bench extension would be a good idea as bench space is at a premium,



although there is room above the generous 150-litre Dometic fridge-freezer. The F/F has automatic energy switching (AES), meaning it will choose between gas, vehicle 12-volt (while the ignition's on) and mains power and it sits at floor level between the main kitchen area and rear lounge.

Other standard appliances include a Spinflo Triplex cooker with 2 x gas and a single electric element, plus a gas oven and grill. Above that is a Dometic rangehood (beneath the overhead cupboards) while an

LG microwave is built into the cupboards, above the fridge-freezer. The sink is a single-bowl glass-lidded affair that lacks an integrated drainer, but comes with a removable plastic washing-up tub and drainer board. Whilst a good idea in practice, they tended to get in the way and would probably be left in the boot locker for outdoor washing up (for example).

The Murana's standard Air Command reverse-cycle airconditioner worked hard during our middle-of-winter test nights and, of course, required 240-volt mains power. It was also very noisy and for a private vehicle a diesel-fired central heating system would be the only way to go. Not only quieter and more efficient, it would allow you to free camp in colder weather: something we would have liked to have done. ♦

...WHERE IT SHINES IS IN ITS RELENTLESS ABILITY TO COVER MILES COMFORTABLY AND WITH A MINIMUM OF FUSS.



VEHICLE SPECIFICATIONS INCLUSIONS & OPTIONS LIST




Manufacturer Talvor Motorhomes
Model Murana
Base Vehicle VW Crafter 50 LWB
Engine 2.5-litre 5-cylinder turbo-diesel
Power 100 kW @ 3500 rpm
Torque 300 Nm @ 2000 rpm
Gearbox AMT – 6 speed
Brakes Disc ABS
Tare weight 4040kg
GVM 4490kg
GCM 6490kg
Licence Car
Passengers 4
External length 7.70m (25' 3")
External width 2.33m (7' 8")
External height 3.23m (10' 7")
Internal height 2.01m (6ft 7")
Luton Bed 2.13m x 1.40m (7' x 4' 7")
Rear Bed 1.90m x 1.340m (6' 3" x 4' 5")
Cooktop Spinflo 3 burner
Fridge Dometic 3-way AES 150 litre

Microwave Oven LG
Lighting 12V LED/Halogen
Batteries 2 x 100 AH
Solar panels Optional
Air conditioner Standard
Diesel Heater Optional
Toilet Thetford cassette
Shower Flexible hose, variable height
Hot water heater Truma 14-litres
Water tank 150-litres
Grey tank 100-litres
Gas cylinders 2 x 9.0 kg
RRP \$142,750 + ORC

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 Cnr Nudgee & Fraser Rds
 Northgate QLD 4013
 p 1800 825 867 (Aus)
 p 0800 825 867 (NZ)
 e sales@talvor.com
 w www.talvor.com

- pros** 
- > VW Crafter cab-chassis
 - > Electric roof bed
 - > Modern interior
 - > Outdoor barbecue standard
 - > Well equipped
 - > Durable!

- cons** 
- > Potential payload limitations
 - > No rear-lounge table
 - > Somewhat cramped bathroom
 - > Dining table leg needs redesign

OR YOU MAY LIKE TO TRY THESE OUT



WINNEBAGO CEDUNA

An older-style C-Class Winnebago body on a new-generation VW Crafter, the Ceduna is a roomy but old-tech motorhome that can sleep up to six. The VW cab-chassis is the highlight, providing economical and easy driving thanks to a high-tech turbo-diesel engine and six-speed 'automatic' AMT gearbox. Approx \$145,000 drive-away NSW.



SUNCAMPER SOFALA

Based on the manual-only Ford Transit, the Sofala is excellent value and sleeps four as standard but can sleep up to six. Modern and well built, it's well worth a look. Ford's Transit, though aging, can still hold its own and is an enjoyable drive with plenty of power and good fuel economy. Approx \$129,000 drive-away NSW



TRAKKA TRAKKAWAY 770

The best designed, engineered and built of the bunch, Trakka's four-berth Trakkaway 770 comes with a premium price tag that reflects its class-leading pedigree. Built on Fiat's hugely popular front-wheel-drive Ducato, it oozes quality and style. Approx \$179,500 drive-away NSW



Caravan Accessories

In 2003 Caravan Accessories was acquired by CAMEC, Australia's largest supplier, manufacturer and importer of components for the recreational industry and in 2005 the warehouse and administration moved from Kogarah to new, larger, purpose built premises at Ingleburn. In 2008, after 55 years trading on Rocky Point Road Kogarah, Caravan Accessories moved to new premises at Caringbah and changed its name to CAMEC – Caravan and Marine Equipment Company. The company name and location may have changed but commitment to customer service and satisfaction remain our priorities.

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Nover introduces **Corelight** – the waterproof wood plastic composite panel.

Nover, an Australian specialist distributor has recently launched Corelight, a wood plastic composite panel that is lightweight, flexible, high quality, moisture and chemical resistant, and easy to handle and cut. Corelight is waterproof, moisture proof, mildew proof and corrosion resistant and it is ideal for wet and damp conditions. Corelight is the perfect panel product for caravan restoration enthusiasts.

Nover 1300 668 371
www.nover.com.au

The powerful new cordless **HEMIPLUS™** recreational light



It charges in four hours and runs for eight hours and is distributed by GO Distribution. It provides optimum illumination and is great for camping. The HEMIPLUS uses high power LUXEON REBEL LEDs and exceeds a 75W beam while eliminating hot spots, dull areas or irritating halo rings. GO Distribution's Gary Osborne says the tough but light HEMIPLUS was built to meet the demands of families camping.

Phone 1300 544 369.

TIME TO ROAM GIVEAWAY



2013 ourtouringpast.com Vintage Caravan Calendars.

The website www.ourtouringpast.com is considered to be THE vintage caravan restoration website, which was started by the pioneer of vintage caravanning in Australia Richard Potter. Richard has a collection of around 12 vintage caravans and has recently opened Australia's only Caravan Museum at Corrimal NSW.

To celebrate the first edition of Time to Roam magazine ourtouringpast.com are giving away a vintage caravan calendar to the first 5 people to email "calendar" to info@timetoroam.com.au



Fairlie Kingston 2012

Fairlie Kingston is a ceramic artist based in Sydney. Her work which includes ceramic reliefs as well as three dimensional sculptures pays an affectionate homage to the disappearing icons of our childhood.

"CARAVANS", her October 2012 exhibition at Australian Galleries Sydney, comprised of 13 illuminated caravan sculptures complete with furniture as well as an entire miniature caravan park, circa 1960's.



New Winjana RV offroad fifth-wheeler!

The 'Strzelecki 520 Offroad' is the second off-road fifth-wheeler van manufactured by Winjana RV. Winjana's offroad vans are the only offroad fifth-wheelers available in Australia. The new 'Strzelecki' is a single-axle, (5.2m) x (2.3m) that makes it an ideal van to take off-road. Features include extra ground clearance, off-road brakes and tyres, suspension/shock absorbers, and 2 x 150 watt solar panels.

More information visit
www.winjana5thwheelers.com.au



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To celebrate the launch of Time to Roam Australia PPC are giving away a 250ml of the 'Rejuvenator Oil' and 250ml bottle of the 'Prestine' Clean. Send us an email info@timetoroam.com.au or write in and simply tell us why you would like to try Leatherique.



With Happy Camper Gourmet, now you can enjoy delicious Aussie Lamb Shanks or Veal Shanks, Meatballs, Cattleman Stews, Drover's Beef 'n' Bean and even a Bushman's Corn Cob Damper straight out of your caravan, camper or RV pantry! No need to keep these tasty Aussie meals in the Fridge or Freezer and most have a best before date of at least 18 months! Just heat and serve. No Mess No Fuss. Direct from the farm to you. www.happycampergourmet.com.au to purchase online or find

your nearest stockist. OR Call 1300 76 88 44 and order over the phone.

FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN

a 6 pack of Happy Camper Gourmet's farm fresh food tell us in 25 words or less, "Why the cook deserves a day off too, whilst still eating wholesome homemade cooking on the road!" Send your entries to Happy Camper Gourmet giveaway 10 Dover Rd Botany or email info@timetoroam.com.au



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Photo by Nigel Smith

Farina Station, SA.
The abandoned township is lovingly cared for by a group of grey nomad volunteers.
Photo by Nigel Smith



Making a quick getaway

THINKING OF HEADING OFF AROUND AUSTRALIA?

Travel writer NIGEL SMITH and his partner Sandra made a snap decision to head off from their home in Sydney and cross the continent. Now, 10,000km later, they couldn't be happier.

We'd been dreaming about going on a grand Australian adventure for a long time, but it wasn't until June this year, with the cooler weather arriving, the Kimberley was calling.

Hard to believe, but it was just four weeks from when we made the decision to go to when we actually departed.

Sandra and I had been thinking of doing a big trip for quite some time and had been gradually easing ourselves into a position where we could head off at relatively short notice.

Every time we went on a regular camping trip we would make notes about things that we might need. One of the first big ticket items we decided on was a 4WD.

You can visit a lot of great sights in a 2WD or even All Wheel Drive vehicle, but to get to some of the best we knew we needed 4WD. On a previous trip we reached Kings Canyon in our old, trusty 2WD Toyota HiAce pop-top. We desperately wanted to head off on the Mereenie/Larapinta Loop back to Alice Springs but knew we'd be shaken to bits.

And so we said goodbye to Jim (the much loved HiAce) and hello to Hank (the also much loved HiLux and TrayOn). Neither of us really liked towing and we travel light, so this combination suited us down to the ground.

The next big decision was our destination.

A mixture of trawling through blogs, regional tourism websites and good old fashioned guide books helped us decide. Our three months' time-frame seemed to fit the rough plan. I also really wanted to drive the Oodnadatta track, ever since following the blog journey of some friends of mine (www.australiannomads.com).

HOW MUCH TO BUDGET

Budgeting for us is always a bit hit and miss, as in we hit the weekly budget quickly, and tend to miss our overall target quite a lot. We ended up setting a figure of \$1000 a week. The basic assumptions we worked on:

Accommodation	\$300.00
Fuel	\$245.00
Food	\$250.00
Beverage	\$60.00
other	\$50.00

We budgeted for an average of one night a week in a motel or cabin – just in case it was either freezing, pouring with rain, or we simply fancied staying somewhere with an ensuite.

For the rest it is a mix of National Park stops (rates \$10 to \$20 a night), caravan park nights, and free spots.

There are literally thousands of free camp spots around the country, and they can really help contain the budget. They range from simple rest areas at the side of a highway with toilets, to beautiful hidden away spots

with bonus waterhole and stunning views.

National Park sites are loathed by some as they ban pets, often ban fires, and disapprove of generators. On the other hand, they have beautiful settings, good facilities and very handy sources of local information called rangers.

We're definite fans. For the sake of a few rules that are there for everyone's benefit, you get access to some stunning camp spots. It's worth remembering the dollars you pay help with maintenance including thousands of kilometres of walking tracks.

As with all well-planned budgets, ours has varied greatly, with fuel costs the usual culprit.

The Oodnadatta roadhouse at \$2.21 a litre has been the most the most expensive to date.

With a 120 litre tank to fill and Hank getting about 15 litres per 100km, you can figure out where a lot of our cash goes.

Still I'm pleased to say we are actually under budget. At the time of writing we're in Karajini National Park, WA, and we have a long way to go before thinking about heading home. Our budgeted three month stay away has seriously blown out time-wise, but we're happy about that.

WHAT TO TAKE

In a phrase, all you can and as little as possible.

All you can, because if you are travelling across vastly different areas, with different climates and activities, you need everything.

We have thermal underlayers (usually reserved for the ski slopes), beanies, sleeping bags plus doonas. We also have boardies, swimmers, snorkelling gear, singlets and summer frocks (that last is Sandra's). And we've used them all and been glad of them.

As little as possible - not only because

space is limited, but weight becomes a burden in a number of ways. Because you end up lifting things around a lot if you are really packing too much in and all that weight means more fuel to move it.

So the old adage applies - get everything ready to pack. Then try to halve it. Then get ruthless and cut it down again. I'm a big believer in quality over quantity.

Whether it is tools, kitchen knives, clothes or walking shoes, get the best you can afford. It will last longer and serve you better than the cheaper option. I still rue the day I brought a cheap tool kit. Now, every time anything breaks or gets lost I make sure I get a good quality replacement.

Same goes for clothing - quality is worth it. I love wool, especially these days when you can get great merino weaves.

My Icebreaker jumpers and thermals are lightweight, pack small and keep you warm if wet.



AND SO AFTER A FAIR BIT OF HOMEWORK, INTERNET RESEARCH, BOOK RESEARCH... WE ENDED UP WITH A CLEAR PLAN OF WHERE, HOW LONG, HOW MUCH AND WHAT TO TAKE



Above Devil's Marbles National Park, NT. **Previous page** the writer Nigel Smith and partner Sandra with their trusty Trayon camper

EMERGENCIES

Finally, and crucially, it's a must to know what to do in an emergency, either for yourselves or someone you come across.

For an extended trip, especially to remote areas, it's best to sign up for a First Aid course.

As for First Aid kits, Sandra and I are a bit manic – we have three.

One stays in the ute at all times. A more substantial one goes with us on bigger trips and we also have a small kit for bushwalks.

Communications are also worth considering for remote areas. Even Telstra's coverage gives out when you're in the middle of the Kimberley, 200km from the nearest town. There are all kinds of satellite phones, EPIRBs (Emergency Personal Rescue Beacons) and the like. After a lot of research, asking around a few adventurous friends, we settled on the Spot device. It comes in two flavours, and we bought the simpler of the two (in an emergency, I think simple is best). Essentially, it uses the GPS satellite system

for its communications, so it's pretty much always in signal. You can set up three messages that get set to a pre-defined email or SMS list, all set up online by you before you leave. We set ours up like this:

- "OK" Sends a message to ten friends and family (plus Facebook, if you want) and consists of a short message and our GPS co-ordinates. We just press a button at the end of the day, and everyone gets the update.
- "Help" – we have this to indicate we have hit mechanical problems somewhere, we can't fix it and can't get hold of anyone to help us out. It goes to a couple of trusted friends who can then arrange to get somebody sent our way.
- "Custom Message" – I have defined this one as being "non-emergency medical help" - something that stops us getting ourselves mobile but not life threatening. It goes to the same two trusted friends, and I am not sure what this would be, but it is one stop short of the next step...
- "Emergency" – this is the no-holds

barred cry for help. We're in trouble, can't help ourselves and need the cavalry. It routes a message with GPS through to the global service centre which then advises local emergency rescue services.

I've had a lot of feedback from friends and family saying that they love getting our "OK" messages. Not only do they know we are OK, but they also enjoy seeing exactly (to within about 10 metres) where we are. My dad has a map of Australia on his study wall in Hertfordshire, UK, and is tracking our movements avidly!

And so after a fair bit of homework, internet research, book research and also just chatting to friends and neighbours, we ended up with a clear plan of where, how long, how much and what to take. And of course like any good plan, it will probably change once it is put into effect. But without it, chances are you won't leave, will miss out on some things, or won't enjoy the trip quite as much.



WHAT TO TAKE – OUR ESSENTIAL KIT

If you really want to know lots of technical details about the ute and our Trayon slide-on camper, then I'm going to disappoint you.

What I'm actually referring to are those little luxuries that make life on the road just a little bit more enjoyable.

Good coffee is hard to find and as long as we start the day with a good strong shot of black magic, then we are happy and more alert drivers – not to mention less grouchy.

Be prepared. Buy a good quality stove top espresso maker, good coffee, and practice with it before you leave to avoid day one tantrums.

Taking good glasses and crockery may


sound like a recipe for disaster, but packed properly and you can enjoy a decent glass of wine, and that lovely coffee, without the disappointing tang of plastic or clang of tin on teeth.

We use stubby holders to keep the wine glasses safe and after nearly 10,000km, including the Gibb River Road's infamous corrugations, we've had not a single breakage.

Our days often revolve around food with a sense of anticipation and, when stocks are running low, creativity.

We've always found a really good chef's chopping knife makes both easier and safer work of the prep, and the herbs and spices let you go to town on flavours.

At one point when we were down to potatoes, carrots, tinned corn and cabbage yet we still managed to produce tasty food day after day.

Finally, truly the most important item used extensively day after day after day are deckchairs. We're talking proper ones, with solid arm rests and good back support not those sling-over-your-shoulder floppy jobs. They may be a bit more awkward to pack than the usual camp-chair, but the extra comfort is so worth it. 

Above Oodnadatta Track, our writer, Nigel Smith, with the almost mandatory shot at the starting line. The next sealed road is 600km away in Marla, just south of the NT border.

Following Page Echidna Chasm, Purnulu National Park, WA. This 180m deep chasm is amazing at any time. Captured when the sun is at its highest, though, you get to see the colours of the walls come alive, changing as the sun's light tracks across the rock. Photo by Nigel Smith

THOSE LITTLE LUXURIES THAT MAKE LIFE ON THE ROAD JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE ENJOYABLE.



Green Dream Machine



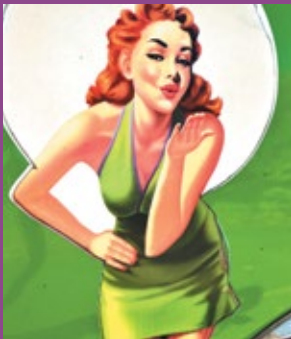
SYDNEY-SIDER PAUL NEE MAKES THE MOST OF HIS QUICK GETAWAY TO THE NORTHERN BEACHES OF NSW. SURFS UP!

Crawling out of a small three door hatch-back at dawn, it's hard not to notice the relaxed look of the nomads emerging from a neighbouring spaceshuttle.

quickly comes to head off for a coastal jaunt in my own Jucy "Crib".

Surfboard in the back and travel companion up front, the city soon falls away and the converted Tarago slips easily along the freeway for a long haul along the NSW

SWEET KIWI



Jucy's NZ homeland is among the world's most vibrant RV holiday markets, also birthplace of brands Britz, Maui and Kea. Campers are so popular with tourists there are on the spot fines of \$1000 for people straying out of designated camp spots.



They get busy preparing a cooked breakfast, sip on freshly brewed coffee and watch the sun rise over a stunning coastline. Are they in heaven? The question comes to mind as I begin a weary drive home, with new eyes open to the huge array of rental campervans available for the making of a dream holiday – they're everywhere!

The decision to satisfy that curiosity is made easy with a van booking and the time

North Coast.

Our sing-along is occasionally interrupted by the urge to wave back at happy campers sharing the spirit of their own adventures on the Jucy trail.

With a bed and fully-equipped kitchen on board, the opportunity to explore is irresistible. Whim and fancy take the wheel and find all the best pit stops.

Smiths Lake near Forster and almost



anywhere on Macleay River around Kempsey make a “drive and survive” break feel like holiday in itself.

Now relaxed, the last leg of my drive is easy, although dreams of complete campervan freedom are interrupted with the unexpected discovery of parking regulations covering many hot spots on the coast.

Getting up early to avoid parking rangers can be exhausting. Paying for a caravan park

seems good value for as much needed sleep in! The company of like-minded travellers and the comfort of a hot shower are a bonus.

The final days of my journey are all about indulging impulses – eat, swim, watch a movie, read, nap and socialise, in no particular order. Naps are worth mentioning again as the van can find the best setting and facilitate Nirvana.

The inevitable trip home is broken by a

night’s stay in the place where it all began. Stepping out into the morning, it’s easy to overlook the sedan parked nearby with a foot hanging out of the window. Coffee down the hatch and breakfast dishes cleared, it’s time to hit the right hander at Crescent Head.

Happy campers return to Sydney, waving at vans that pass to share the spirit of adventure with a community that they no longer envy. ♦

PASSPORT TO ADVENTURE

Campervans are a convenient way to explore the country and there are a range of firms offering an ‘experience’ as well as four wheels.

There’s almost certain to be one that meets your needs, no matter what size or price you’re after.

Based in New Zealand, Jucy Rentals were launched in Australia in 2008 and their signature green vans are easily recognised.

Co-founder Dan Alpe says inspiration

came together over a number of years of travel adventures of his own.

“When we were growing up we did a lot of travel around the South Island and found ourselves waving at almost every campervan we saw.

“On the holiday road, the Alpe family discovered a global village and recognised the potential for a passport on wheels,” Alpe says.

“Everything is green and purple, and

Jucy is at the forefront of it all.

“It’s also an introduction which is really cool. What we hear back from clients is that they’ll tend to congregate in camping grounds and socialise together. Where people might not normally talk to each other, with a Jucy van they have something in common which is a breaking comment to get into conversation.”

It’s an idea that adds a little something extra to a trip and may well advance the Alpe’s intentions to ‘Jucify’ the world!

Half-way Havens

Travelling the Pacific Highway between Sydney and Brisbane and looking for a great stop-over around the half-way mark? Here are three great options.



1) Crescent Head Holiday Park

It's only a short half-hour drive off the Pacific Highway from Kempsey to get a front-row spot along one of the world's greatest surfing beaches.

Crescent Head first shot to fame in the 70s for its incredible right-hand breaks. Even for non-surfers it's a stunning beach and there are more than 30 sites directly fronting crystal-clear Killick Creek.

As you'd expect, it's heavily booked in the peak season, with people coming back year after year, but the park is large enough that it's not too hard to get a place around peak times. The sunny northerly aspect makes it paradise all year round.

For a good feed, the RSL is right next door and we reckon the Crescent Head Bakery is possibly Australia's best pie and quiche maker.

www.crescentheadholidaypark.com.au



2) Park Beach Holiday Park

This park dates back to the 1950s – they obviously picked the best place at Coffs to put a park, and it remains there today.

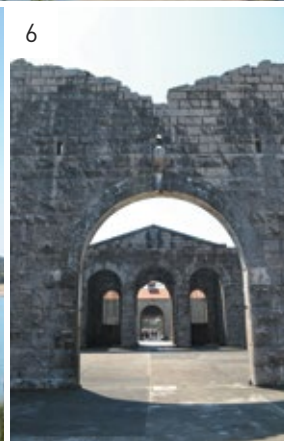
But there is nothing old-fashioned about the facilities. They are first-rate and up-to-date. The two shower blocks had just been refurbished when we stayed.

As for the kids, with water slides, playgrounds and jumping pillows, it would be hard to get them to leave.

Park Beach is close to the beach and everything Coffs has to offer including the jetty and the popular Pet Porpoise Pool.

www.coffscostholidayparks.com.au

1, 2 – A beautiful clear creek running right beside the Crescent Head Park is the perfect place to throw in a line or the kids to paddle. **3** Park Beach Park is a friendly haven at the heart of Coffs. **4** The breakwater ruins at Trial Bay, **5** The sheltered beach behind the breakwater, **6** The striking Trial Bay gaol ruins and museum.



3) Arakoon National Park

This park is a must for history buffs. Spread around the outer walls of historic Trial Bay Gaol, last used to house German internees during World War I.

The prison was originally built to house convicts who laboured on a breakwater in the late 1800s – Trial Bay was meant to become a safe half-way shipping port between Sydney and Brisbane.

The weather eventually got the better of the breakwater project and caused the bay to silt up with sand. The upside was it created a stunning beach fronting today's camp area.

Sites are sheltered and friendly kangaroos

pay regular visits. There's also has a great café where we enjoyed one of the best breakfasts on the coast.

Otherwise, facilities are what you'd expect from National Parks and site numbers are limited. For those wanting more mod cons there's a top-notch Big 4 Holiday Park just up the road and two more excellent tourist parks at nearby South West Rocks, one right in the heart of town.

www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/arakoon-national-park

CAMP WITH OWLS AND GLIDERS

Australia's biggest colony of rare gliders and large numbers of predator owls in hot pursuit are key attractions at a recently re-opened campsite near Nimmitabel in southern NSW.

The Cascades campsite in Wadbilliga National Park was closed after heavy storms in 2011 raised fears heavy trees could come down on campers.

National Parks manager for the Bombala Area Franz Peters said an environmental assessment then revealed the largest known concentration of Greater Gliders.

"Greater Gliders are the dietary mainstay for Powerful Owls and two other endangered owls. These species are all sensitive to habitat disturbance and we had to take this into account.

"In the interest of public safety and in order to protect the habitat trees, we have decided to clearly mark camping sites at Cascades rather than allowing informal camping to continue," Mr Peters said.

Further improvement works are planned for Cascades campground this year, including new toilet facilities and the appointment of a 'campground host' to assist with management.

JIMMY'S BEACH BACK IN BUSINESS

Visitors to the Great Lakes region on the NSW mid North Coast can enjoy new facilities at the Hawks Nest Jimmy's Beach Holiday Park following a \$3m makeover.

The redevelopment includes a new camp kitchen, campfire and amenities block, plus six 'safari tents' with their own bathrooms and facilities.

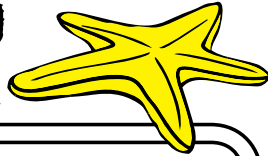
The existing amenities block has been refurbished to include disabled and family facilities and new turf was laid on all sites along with other landscaping and road improvements.

The park now comprises six cabins, three beach tents, 40 camp sites, 105 powered sites and 22 holiday vans.



Word Search

Circle all the words you can find from the list provided. Remember the words can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal.



I	W	S	Y	D	N	E	Y	A	N	O	O	S	A	H	E	A	D	S	Z
C	E	C	N	A	R	E	P	S	E	G	G	O	F	N	F	O	M	M	A
X	R	O	B	R	A	H	R	O	T	C	I	V	J	G	Y	D	Y	T	H
E	D	I	A	L	E	D	A	D	P	J	D	E	R	P	D	E	J	L	A
J	L	D	P	Z	J	C	F	X	C	A	N	B	E	R	R	A	F	C	F
N	F	U	W	D	A	R	W	I	N	J	E	L	L	N	Q	V	Z	R	F
K	U	M	T	I	S	A	U	K	E	X	B	Q	C	N	H	Z	A	J	D
L	O	G	R	B	M	L	E	I	R	A	U	Q	C	A	M	T	R	O	P
X	W	X	J	J	B	Y	R	O	N	B	A	Y	O	F	I	F	K	C	T
E	S	I	D	A	R	A	P	S	R	E	F	R	U	S	A	E	A	E	B
D	U	B	B	O	E	C	U	G	P	C	G	P	L	T	K	I	B	A	Z
A	I	R	L	I	E	B	E	A	C	H	R	T	O	A	R	D	T	E	Y
Z	B	C	I	J	Q	D	N	R	W	X	L	O	W	N	C	E	P	B	E
K	R	H	U	M	E	O	K	X	A	Z	W	L	S	W	M	Q	E	X	U
J	O	V	T	N	M	E	E	N	C	O	D	R	U	A	Z	O	F	V	Q
V	O	X	V	F	E	Q	U	N	O	R	T	A	N	P	S	M	M	J	R
J	M	D	B	F	W	D	N	M	R	J	Z	S	R	A	U	Q	P	A	M
G	E	V	J	B	E	B	B	O	S	O	B	T	E	C	H	U	C	A	I
S	I	A	E	C	U	A	J	W	E	A	L	M	X	J	J	L	T	J	C
T	D	S	J	I	N	D	A	B	Y	N	E	J	D	F	P	Z	O	R	A

- | | | | |
|-------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|
| SYDNEY | BROOME | PORT MACQUARIE | EDEN |
| BYRON BAY | JINDABYNE | CEDUNA | TOOWOOMBA |
| DUBBO | ECHUCA | ESPERANCE | BATEMANS BAY |
| NOOSA HEADS | DARWIN | BENDIGO | LORNE |
| MT ISA | AIRLIE BEACH | SURFERS PARADISE | CAIRNS |

Quiz

From the above cities and towns, answer the 3 questions: (answers are on the back page)

- Which town is home to Australia's most Easterly Point?
- Which town is situated on the Murray River and was once Australia's largest inland Port?
- Which tourist destination was originally known as Elston?

Let's play I'm Going on a Journey

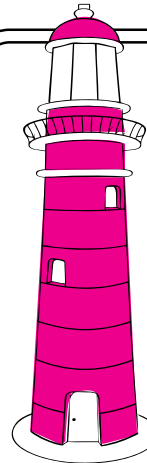
This is a memory indoor party game.

The first person starts the game by saying, "I am going on a journey and I am bringing with me a _____." They name an object that begins with the letter "A".

The next person repeats the line with the object the first person named, and then they add an object that begins with the letter B, and so on.

This goes on with each player trying to remember each object in **alphabetical order** then adding their own object using the next letter of the alphabet.

Jokes



What kind of house is easy to pick up?
A light house

What do you call a cow that eats your grass?
A lawn mooer

Why did the man take his dog to the railway station?
To train him

What goes up and wobbles?
A jellycopter

What's the tallest building in the city?
The library because it has the most storeys

Why did the baker rob the bank?
He needed the dough

What did the fish say when it hit the concrete wall?
Dam

What did the sick baby banana say to its mother?
I don't peel good!

What did the peanut say to the elephant?
Nothing. Peanuts can't talk

What goes oom oom?
a cow walking backwards

Why did the cane toad cross the road?
To visit his Flatmate

Mum, look I've just found a lost football...
How do you know it's lost?
...The kids down the road are still looking for it

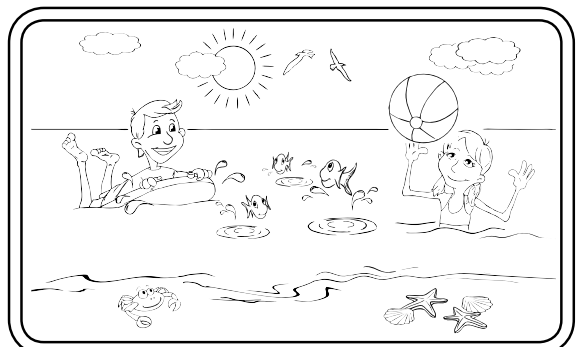
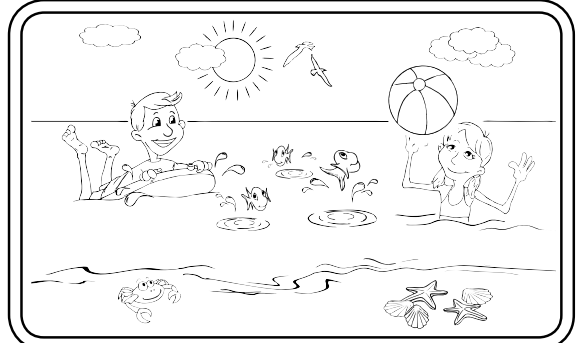
What do pigs do after school?
Their Hamwork

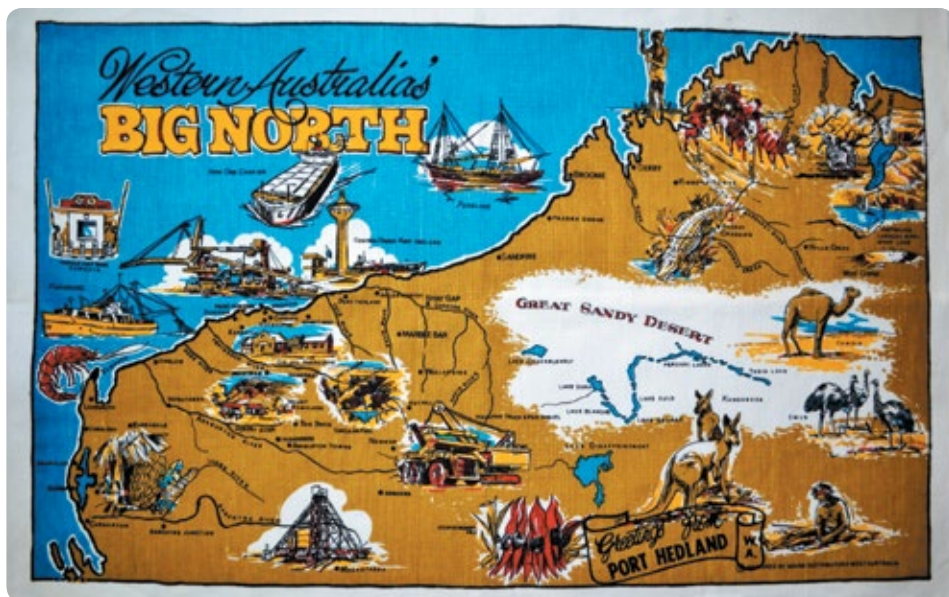
How do you take a sick pig to hospital?
Hambalance

Can you find 7 differences in the two pictures below? (answers are on the back page)



Spot the difference





Tea towel travelogue

We love Australia's penchant for souvenir tea towels and spoons. Beautiful, practical and usually imported! This one from Korea, via Port Hedland circa 1970s. Share your hidden gem with our readers: info@timetoroam.com.au

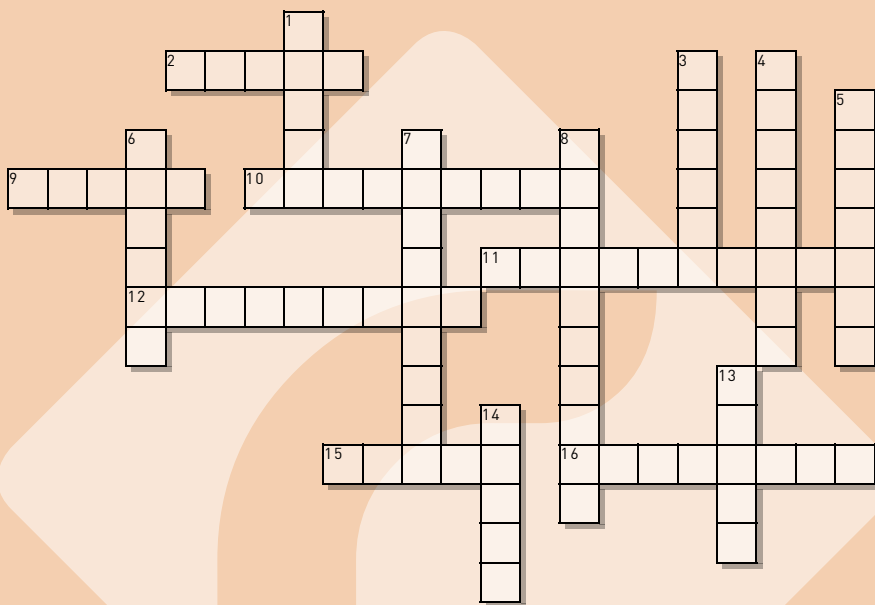


Toying with Caravans

With Alan Stevens

Caravans have always been popular toys and we look forward to sharing some classics in Time to Roam.

This tin gypsy wagon with striking lithograph paintwork was manufactured in England -circa 1920's, (manufacturer unknown). It has a clockwork mechanism underneath and was originally self-propelled. As the wagon moved along, the head of a gypsy pokes out the rear door and a chimney rises up through the roof. It's missing the original draw hitch but still has Alan Stevens is a member of the Vintage, Veteran, Classic Club of Bendigo with an avid interest in old caravans and paraphernalia. We look forward to sharing more from his collection in future editions.

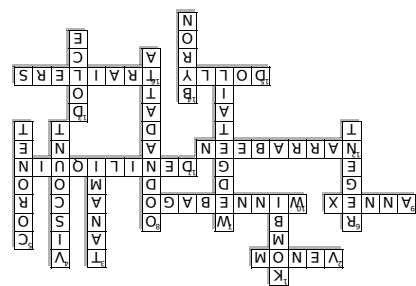


ACROSS

- 2 Snake poison
- 9 Caravanner's veranda
- 10 Place in Wisconsin
- 11 Deni for short
- 12 Sydney northern lake
- 15 Third wheel on a caravan
- 16 America's caravans

DOWN

- 1 Early popular German RV
- 3 NT Desert
- 4 A rank above a baron
- 5 Mini crown
- 6 Someone who reigns
- 7 Eagle
- 8 Small SA town with big name
- 13 Italian for sweet
- 14 Most eastern poet





Snake bite

SNAKES ARE A REAL DANGER TO TRAVELLING PETS. VET **KELLY ZAMMIT** SAYS FAST EFFECTIVE TREATMENT CAN BE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH.

Signs of venomous snakebite can vary, but include:

- Sudden weakness followed by collapse
- Bleeding puncture wound
- Swelling
- Twitching, drooling or difficulty blinking
- Vomiting
- Loss of bladder and bowel control
- Dilated pupils
- Ascending paralysis (hind legs affected first)
- Blood in urine
- Signs of shock such as pale gums, cool skin, and tremors
- Slow or laboured breathing

Get your dog to the vet as soon as possible and call ahead to ensure they have antivenom on hand. The quicker the antivenom is given the greater the chance of survival.

- Keep your pet calm and still to avoid speeding the spread of venom; don't let it walk. Bach flowers Rescue Remedy can calm your animal and help reduce shock – give a couple of drops orally every five minutes. If you're in an area common to snakes, it could be worth keeping some in your First Aid kit.

- Apply a pressure bandage if practical – a firm bandage of any material (ideally wide elastic crepe) over the bite site then continued evenly over the entire limb to the armpit or groin. If the bite is on the face or jaw, just apply pressure with your hand.
- Never apply a tourniquet, wash or cut the wound site.
- Don't give food or drink, except for small sips of water if you are a long way from the vet.

It may be necessary to give mouth to nose resuscitation on the way to the vet. If your dog is paralysed, keep his head down to keep his airway clear.

Many people believe vitamin C delays the effects of snake bite. Vitamin C is not a treatment on its own, but it doesn't cause harm and may do some good. Mix four teaspoons of crystals or powdered vitamin C in one cup of warm water and give 10mls orally every 15 minutes. The injectable form is best avoided as it is painful and can cause abscesses.

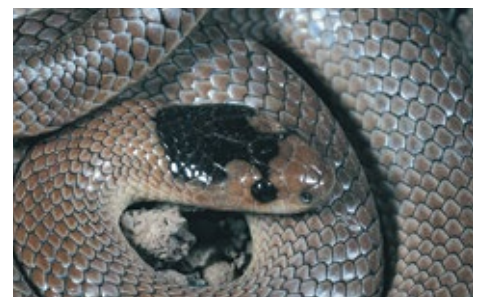
Of course the best treatment is prevention! Keep your dog on a leash and don't let him explore holes or dig under logs. Stay on open paths and keep night walks to a minimum;

snakes are nocturnal in the warmer months. If your dog seems unusually curious about "something" hidden in the grass, back off immediately. 🐍

This is the first in a regular series of columns for people who love to roam with their pets from All Natural Pet Care, Russell Lea NSW www.naturalvet.com.au



Kelly Zammit





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family parks

Holidays for all the tribe



Avan



Graeme Simpson 7th Street Caravans



John Dineen



Judith East & Dianne Cahill



Marcia Pollington



Tony Simmons & Merv King Dubbo

Penrith Caravan Camping and Holiday Expo

Summer camping was definitely on the minds of visitors to the Penrith Caravan, Camping and Holiday Expo held from September 7-9, with exhibitors reporting big crowds and

strong sales.

Staged alongside the enormous Penrith Panthers complex, the Penrith show is the biggest event of its type in western Sydney. The NSW Caravan

and Camping Industry Association also stages the Newcastle Show in February and the South Coast Expo in Batemans Bay in November.



Bradley Roberts



Gary Martin, Errol Morris & Rachel Brown



Mal and Maree Moorby



Neville Dunn & Kim Brownsey

Melbourne Leisurefest

Melbourne Leisurefest prides itself on being Australia's biggest outdoor leisure show, with more than 5500 businesses participating and visitors numbering more than 300,000 last

October. The unique event brings together boats and vehicles and is run by the Caravan Victoria's Trade and Industries Association, Automobile Chamber of Commerce and Boating

Industry Association.

In 2013 Time to Roam looks forward to bringing you more from the people behind Australia's great caravan and outdoor shows.



Briana Collier - Lake Macquarie City Council



Dave Lake - RV Towing Solutions



Heidi Smith, Dean Lieschke and Loretta Payne



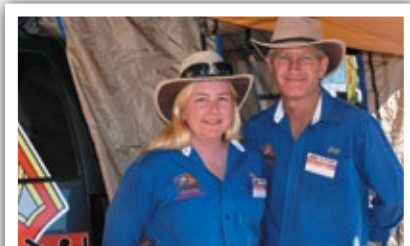
Dubbo: Ian & Danielle Roberts - All Terrain



Jason Ford - Express Tools & Travelander



Karl Greddes - Blue Tongue Campers



Mel Rose & Guy L'Estrange - Aussie Islander



Kylee McKinnon - Hinterland Caravans



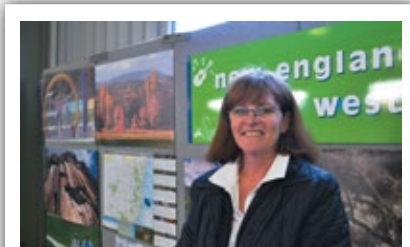
Mary Thornton Tens Ems



Matt McKinnon - Supreme Caravans



Mel Rose & Guy L'Estrange - Aussie Islander



Penny Jobling - New England Tourism



Peter Fenwick & Catherine Panich



Warren & Justine Williams

Rural Scene Promotions – Mid North Coast and Dubbo Caravan & Camping shows

Rural Scene Promotions puts on the popular Orana and Mid-North Coast Caravan and Camping shows in NSW. Spectacular spring weather

greeted both two-day events, the first in Wauchope in August, followed by Dubbo in September. Rural Scene's Dean Lieschke said they continue to

draw eager crowds each year and will be back bigger and better this year. -Check out the full listing of shows dates in our Time to Roam Diary.



WHAT'S ON



VICTORIA

February 15-17

Adventure Travel film Festival, Bright.

Info: adventuretravelfilmfestival.com

Riverboats Music Festival, Echuca.

Info: www.riverboatsmusic.com

Feb 22 – 24

Cool Summer Festival, 'music and indulgence' Mt Hotham

Info: www.coolsummerfestival.com

March 2

Neil Finn and Paul Kelly perform at All Saints Estate Rutherglen

Info and tickets: adayonthegreen.com.au

March 8-11

Port Fairy Folk Music Festival

www.portfairyfolkfestival.com

March 16

Neil Young with Crazy Horse at The

Hill Winery, Geelong. Info and tickets:

adayonthegreen.com.au



NEW SOUTH WALES

March 9

Neil Young with Crazy Horse at

Bimbadgen Winery

Info and tickets: adayonthegreen.com.au

March 9

Neil Finn with Paul Kelly,

Petersons Winery Armidale.

Info and tickets: adayonthegreen.com.au

March 15, 16, 17

CMC Rocks the Hunter, country music,

Hope Estate www.cmrocks.com

March 28 – April 1

Byron Bay Bluesfest, Tyagarah

Info: www.bluesfest.com.au

March 30-31

Deni Blues and Roots Fest, Deniliquin

Info: www.denibluesfestival.com

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

February 23rd

Diesel, Daryl Braithwaite, Pseudo Echo and more play 'a Day on the Green'

Clare Valley. Info and tickets:

adayonthegreen.com.au

QUEENSLAND

22 Feb – March 3

Bleach Festival, outdoor music and arts at

Burleigh Heads www.bleachfestival.com.au

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

March 1-4

Nannup Music Festival

Info: www.nannupmusicfestival.org



Deni adds Blues to utes

The Deniliquin Ute Muster has become famous in southern NSW, now the same site is becoming a regional event centre, with the inaugural **Deni Blues & Roots Festival** over the Easter weekend.

A huge line-up has been confirmed with acts including **Chris Isaak, Santana and the Steve Miller Band.**

Camping facilities will be available on site from Good Friday to Easter Monday, with special 'VIP tents' set up on site and made ready for those who can't be bothered bringing their own.

UPCOMING CARAVAN & CAMPING SHOWS

February & March

National Caravan & Camping Show Listings

FEBRUARY

Newcastle Caravan, Camping & Holiday Expo NSW

February 8 – 10 Newcastle Entertainment Centre and Showground
9am – 5pm Daily (closes 4pm on Sunday)
www.caravan-camping.com.au

Albury Caravan Camping 4WD & Fish Show NSW

February 15 – 17 Albury Showground www.ruralscene.com.au

SA Caravan & Camping Show

20 – 24 February 10am – 6pm daily Adelaide Showgrounds
www.caravanandcampingsa.com.au

Illawarra Caravan Camping 4WD & Fish Show NSW

February 22 – 24 Kembla Grange Wollongong
www.ruralscene.com.au

MARCH

Perth Caravan & Camping Show

21 – 25 March Claremont Showgrounds WA www.caravanwa.com.au

Caravan Camping & Touring Supershow

Thursday March 7 – 12 Caulfield Racecourse VIC
www.caravanshow.com.au

Gold Coast Caravan Camping 4WD & Fish Show

Parklands Showgrounds Southport QLD March 1 – 3
www.ruralscene.com.au

NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Caravan, RV & Accommodation Industry Association of Australia

www.experiencecaravanningandcamping.com.au
Tel: 07 3262 6566

Recreational Vehicle Manufacturing Association of Australia Ltd (RVM Australia)

www.rvmaustralia.com.au Tel: 03 9815 2015

VICTORIA

Caravan Industry Australia (Victorian Trade Division)

www.ciavic.com.au Tel: 03 9329 5311

Victorian Caravan Parks Association (VicParks)

www.vicparks.com.au Tel: 03 9328 3280

NEW SOUTH WALES

Caravan Camping Touring Industry & Manufactured Housing Industry Association

www.caravan-camping.com.au Tel: 02 9615 9999

QUEENSLAND

Caravanning Queensland www.caravanqld.com.au

Tel: 07 3862 1833

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Caravan & Camping Industries Association of South Australia

Inc www.caravanandcampingsa.com.au Tel: 08 8260 4488
South Australia Parks www.sa-parks.com.au Tel: 08 8363 7255

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Northern Territory Parks www.ntcaravanpark.com.au

Tel: 08 8952 6111

TASMANIA

CIA Tasmania www.discovertasmania.com Tel: 03 6383 4536

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Caravan Industry Association WA www.caravanwa.com.au

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Seabreeze Park, 234 Shute Harbour Road, Airlie Beach www.seabreezepark.com.au

Golden Beach Holiday Park, 9 Onslow St, Golden Beach www.goldenbeachholidaypark.com.au

Tannum Beach Caravan Village, Susan Millenium Esplanade Tannum Sands www.tannumvillage.com.au

Oakwood Caravan Park Bundaberg, 15 Old Gin Gin Rd Oakwood www.oakwoodvanpark.com.au

Hervey Bay Caravan Park, Margaret Street Urangan www.hervey-bay-park.com.au

Cotton Tree Holiday Park, Cotton Tree Parade, Cotton Tree www.sunshinecoastholidayparks.com.au

Noosa Caravan Park, 143 Moorindil St Tewantin www.noosacaravanpark.com.au

Big 4 Maroochy Palms Holiday Village, 319 Bradman Avenue Maroochydore www.maroochypalms.com.au

Kingfisher Caravan Park, The Esplanade Tin Can Bay, NSW

BIG4 Tocumwal Tourist Park, 1-13 Bruton St Tocumwal www.tocumwaltouristpark.com.au

Macquarie Caravan Park, 2 Hospital Rd Warren www.macquarievanpark.com

Armidale Tourist Park, Waterfall Way Armidale www.armidaletouristpark.com.au

Valley Vineyard Tourist Park, 137 Mount View Rd Cessnock NSW www.valleyvineyard.com.au



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Aldinga Caravans 118 Lacey Drive Aldinga Beach SA

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Canterbury Caravans 140 Canterbury Rd Bayswater VIC

Clarence River Tourism Cnr Spring Street and Pacific Highway South Grafton NSW

Cobar Shire Tourism Great Cobar Heritage Centre Barrier Highway Cobar NSW

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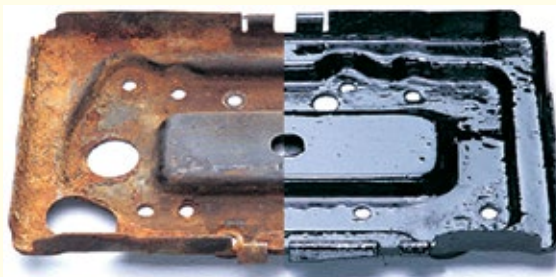
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Albury Wodonga
February 15, 16, 17
Albury Showground



Illawarra
February 22, 23, 24
Kembla Grange Wollongong



Gold Coast
March 1, 2, 3
Parklands Showground
Southport



Hunter Valley
May 24, 25, 26
Maitland Showground

Mid North Coast
August 9, 10, 11
Wauchope Showground

Orana
September 13, 14, 15
Dubbo Showground



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 **HUNT**
FISH 

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Rural Scene Promotions

Show

Muswellbrook
April 12, 13, 14
Albury
Showground

Rockhampton
July 19, 20, 21
Kembla Grange
Wollongong





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Jack Thompson

Jack Thompson launches 'Saltwater People of the Fatal Shore' INSET: Jack Thompson in 'Breaker Morant' 1980 (Getty Images)

AUSSIE'S FAVOURITE ALL-ROUND GOOD BLOKE

When we decided to feature a celebrity camping interview in Time to Roam, it was hard to go past Jack Thompson as our first choice.

Jack is Australia's quintessential 'good bloke' actor - admired by men and women alike, always relied upon to play the iconic laconic bush character in a way no other actor could.

He shot to international fame playing the defence lawyer in the acclaimed 1980 film *Breaker Morant*. That saw him courted by Hollywood, he even landed a role in a *Star Wars* sequel.

Perhaps he's not the most 'world-famous' Aussie movie star, but the fact he's almost avoided becoming 'too tall a poppy' could be what makes him all the more endearing.

Jack Thompson is also not the sort of actor you can expect to see on the TV news preaching his views on the latest political cause, although he does quietly go about supporting many individual and community causes in his own quiet self-effacing way. He established the Jack Thompson Foundation to help indigenous Australians build housing.

Awarded an Order of Australia in 1986, he has many diverse 'claims to fame' from having been the first male nude centrefold

in *Cleo* magazine, to serving as a 'Goodwill Ambassador' for the United Nations Health Organisation.

We caught up with the legend as he launched a new book, 'Saltwater People of the Fatal Shore'. Written by John Ogden, the book traces the history of Sydney's southern coastal suburbs, with incredible photos and historic detail.

Jack loves exploring Australia and camping, however some of his favourite memories go back to his youth, growing up on Sydney's Northern Beaches

T2R: WHERE DID YOU GO FOR CAMPING HOLIDAYS WHEN YOU WERE YOUNG?

Narrabeen Lakes...Northern beaches, Sydney.

T2R: WHAT WAS YOUR FAVOURITE PLACE TO CAMP & WHY?

Deep Creek because there was a waterfall we could play under.

T2R: TELL US ABOUT SOME OF YOUR FAVOURITE CAMPING MEMORIES

We used to row across Narrabeen Lake from Best's boat shed at Narrabeen to Deep Creek.

Occasionally we had to step out of the boat

when it ran aground on a sandbank and push the boat into deeper water.

It was always a bit of a thrill to have to do this.

T2R: DO YOU HAVE CAMPING TIPS? MUST DO'S & DON'TS?

Simplicity is the key -

Do take the minimum to be very comfortable but not burdened with effort... ie. Don't have to do too much "housework"

Do have tent floor that is water/damp proof.... Do always dig a trench around tent for run off....Don't wait until it rains.

Do collect asap & put under shelter plenty of dry firewood in three sizes -small for kindling, medium to get fire burning plus to cook & larger to sit back & enjoy

Do have a comfortable bed...I like foam or a blow up mattress.

I always include..... a small safety first kit, torch, reading material & camera.

T2R: DO YOU STILL LIKE TO GET OUT & EXPLORE AUSTRALIA? TELL US WHAT'S ON YOUR CAMPING LOCATION LIST?

Yes and I intend to do more. Any National Park with beaches or river to camp by. I prefer the peace of isolated locations.



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