

Mary Kathleen (QLD) to Aramac

Stage 2 July 2023

The trip continued on through outback Queensland towns. This region has a peculiar charm, with friendly people, lovely regional towns and wonderful scenery. We travelled through some new territory on this stage of the trip.

There were so many caravans and campers on the road, more than we had ever seen before. Perhaps due to the perils of overseas travel?



Macsland camp near Longreach

The Pinnacles

S21 57 33 E142 37 28

We had lingered at Mary Kathleen for eight days (!!) and it was definitely time to move on. Our sights were set on Longreach and a nice bushcamp we had enjoyed near there last year. But we needed to overnight somewhere to breakup the trip. We had read

about a nice camp site at a spot called The Pinnacles. When we pulled in mid afternoon it was quiet and peaceful. A couple of other rigs were nearby but not in close enough proximity to hear each other. Our van pulled in at the foot of a hill with no one within sight.



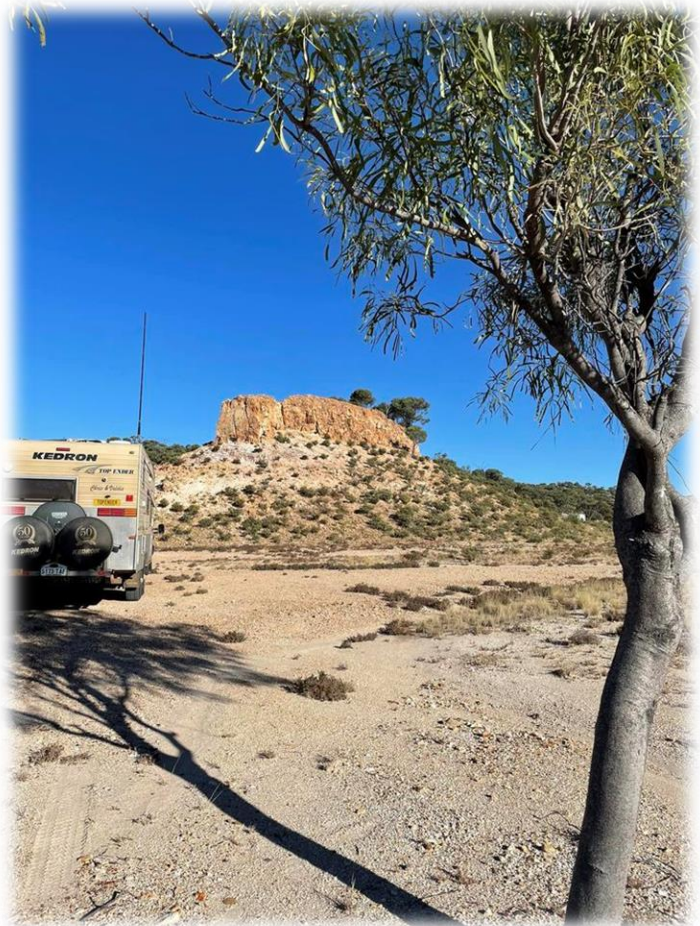
The country around this area has mesas and hills with vivid ochre colours. Really pretty and stark country. Given its peacefulness and how scenic this spot was we decided (yes you guessed it) to stay

another night, making it two nights here.

The weather by now was absolutely beautiful; about 22 degree days and cold nights.

Back at Cloncurry we had filled the van's water tanks with water and this meant we could do a load of washing. The towels and our clothes all went in the machine and were hung out to quickly dry in the afternoon sun.

Although there was internet and phone reception it performed better with the Cel-fi Go aerial deployed (you can see it standing above the van roof in the image above). There were seasonal waterfalls nearby but we didn't want to unhitch the van so they stayed unexplored. Next time....



Macsland

S23 16 36 E144 7 37

This next campground is a firm favourite. We stayed here last year and on that trip we found it hard to leave such a pretty and handy spot. What makes it so special? The scenic location with individual sites set in bushland, its good phone reception and being only 15 minutes drive to Longreach for day trips.

There were two other Kedron vans here too, people we had met back at Mary Kathleen. Nice people who we shared a few campfire yarns with. Indeed, one couple later met up with us a bit further to the North at Muttaborra.



One of the great aspects of Macsland is the proximity to Longreach which is a good sized town. Well, it has a bakery and several coffee shops as well as a hairdresser. I had a haircut here from a Lebanese hairdresser who had impressive cutting skills.

Muttaborra

After four nights here we thought it was time for new pastures. Our initial plan was to head East to Lara Wetlands, but at the last minute decided to go up to Muttaborra, a small town 136ks North of us. Just a doddle, really. What decided us on the location was the campground which sounded (and was) lovely.



Muttaborra's claim to fame is its dinosaur, the Muttaborrasaurus, and an impressive Interpretation Centre which houses the replica of him/her.

We thought it was so nice here we made a quick decision to stay for several days. We had a lovely site with a tap to connect to (oh joy, I could use the washing machine to its Maximum!). We washed sheets, towels, clothes, everything!

Muttaborra had a hotel, which appeared to be popular with locals, so we had dinner there the first night. Alas the power went out in town and the hotel generator then struggled. Luckily our meals had just been cooked before this disaster befell the pub, and we did get our meals. But we had to eat it by candlelight but that's alright - it made for an atmospheric meal.



This town was given a grant to build an interpretation centre to house their local dinosaur recreated from fossilised bones found nearby. Named Muttaborrasaurus, s/he is housed in splendour in the Centre. The work which went into the Centre is beyond wonderful. In 1963 local Grazier Doug Langdon uncovered the most complete fossilized Dinosaur skeleton yet to be discovered in Australia. Being the first of its kind it was named the Muttaborrasaurus Langdoni. The Muttaborrasaurus was a plant eating, land living dinosaur that roamed the Earth around 100 million years ago.

Although the replica of the Muttaborrasaurus Langdoni has a new home in the Muttaborrasaurus Interpretation Centre, the fossilised remains of the dinosaur are currently housed in the Queensland Museum in Brisbane.

Aramac

The next stop was at another small Outback Queensland town, Aramac. It is not too far from Muttaborra, and we took only an hour or so of travelling to get there.

The attraction of Aramac was the sculpture trail which is around 100kms in a loop of statues devoted to rural life. They are quirky and creative. Amazingly creative!

Like the previous town, Aramac had a Freedom Camp, an area of cleared bushland with the odd tree or bush, otherwise just grass to park on and set up camp. It too was \$8 a night. And again we had a water tap to attach to.

Soon after arrival and setting up, we set out to see the sculptures between Aramac and Lake Dunn, about 90 or so kms to the North. These artistic sculptures are nothing short of amazing. From Outback Queensland, a Tourism Commission brochure:

The Lake Dunn Sculpture Trail is a 200 kilometre circuit that loops between Aramac, Lake Dunn and [Jericho](#). Along its route you'll find 40 sculptural installations showcasing Outback elements and life, from emu families to jackaroos.

These incredible artworks are the creations of local artist, Milynda Rogers who lives on a cattle property along the route. And it all began because she created a piece and didn't have a place to put it. So, she simply popped it out by the road. Additional

sculptures grew organically over time, and Rogers would place them at intervals along the route where she lives.

Created from rusting odds and ends found locally at the dump or around [Barcaldine](#), these artworks are both beautiful and evocative. The original piece, a three-metre-plus bottle tree brought to life with steel drums wrapped in barbed wire with cattle tags for leaves, was put in place in 2013. But Rogers is continuing her work, with new pieces coming out or in the planning process all the time.

Here is just a small sample of what we saw.





Sculptures on the Aramac/Lake Dunn trail

While at Aramac (we had two days here) we thought it would be great to go to the local hotel for dinner. I can honestly say the meal we had was the worst I have ever had in my entire life. (Apart from my mother's dishes of tripe, but that is a different story; there would be people who loved tripe. My father certainly did). Back to the Aramac Hotel meal though... We should have been alerted by the blackboard sign out the front of the hotel which said Meals Between 1.00pm to 7.00pm.

The food had been in a bain-marie since lunchtime -or before- and it showed. The pasta dish had gone so hard it made a dull thud when hit by a fork. The chicken dish was not much better. The fried rice had turned into little pellets like bullets. Unsurprisingly we were the only people there that night for dinner. I will be able to laugh about that meal for years to come.

After two days here we headed back Southward, toward Barcaldine and then Lara wetlands.