

## **Stage 15      Eyre Peninsular to Adelaide**

**28 February 2007**

**Mambray Creek Campground, Mt Remarkable NP**

**S 32 50.328 E 138 02.327**

**(Site 14)**

As you may have gathered, we do like national park camping. Over the last couple of years we have enjoyed some particularly lovely spots, and this is one of them. The campground, oversighted by the Parks and Wildlife band of happy men and women, is in a part of Mount Remarkable NP, and is just off the Highway about 40 kms south of Port Augusta. We have stayed here before –in 2004 – and thought it was delightful then too. But it was cool weather last time and they had had recent rains, where this time it was much warmer. However the park was still a haven of cooler and fresher vegetation for birds and animals. It was so warm this time that we decided not to stay longer than a night, and had one of our warmest nights in the van for a long time. Just on retiring for the night Val put the fan on, and we left it on until the cooler breeze came in sometime during the early hours. We knew that the Yorke Peninsular would be cooler, and I could hear its siren call in the wind...

Late in the afternoon another Kedron van came in, with friends met at the Milmerran Kedron-gathering last October in Queensland, Lyn and John. It was so good to catch up with them, and so we had a drink at 5.00pm together. I still have some champagne left.

**1-3 March 2007**

**Port Broughton, Yorke Peninsular SA**

At morning tea we stopped in the attractive little town of Port Broughton, parked the van in a shaded area and walked down the main street. We were so pleased with the town's aspect overlooking the calm inlet, and the jetty at the end of the main street, that we thought we'd check out the local caravan park, and perhaps stay. We ended up staying three days. The town has a really good café/restaurant, and the usual clutch of shops like an IGA.

I think we had dinner at the café and three or four sessions of coffees. I do like a good coffee!

This was a good spot to catch up on the washing, and to have a look at the little towns around the area. Overall, we enjoyed the town and are glad we stayed. A friend and colleague (Raylene) has parents here but I had lost their contact details, and couldn't raise her on email. Next time...

#### **4-6 March 2007**

##### **Port Vincent, Yorke Peninsular SA**

There are two caravan parks at Pt Vincent, and we stayed at the larger of the two (Pt Vincent Foreshore CP) which was interesting... Most of the vans there were fishermen and their families, some of whom had been there for months!

Consequently, they seemed to resent someone new coming in and intruding on their little clique of mates. The van next door to us had a tent and an annexe, as well as a boat and 4WD vehicle, and had also erected a covered area to sit under. As a result, their 'camp' extended right up to our van walls –it was a tight fit getting in there- and at night we could hear their conversation, as they were just outside our bedroom. Oh, and they had a third member of the group in a tent at the back of this setup!

But otherwise it was nice there, and our site (89) was actually quite nice and large. The best part of the park was its site on a peninsular and the beach views were lovely. The small town was five minutes walk away, and had all the services which life worthwhile; a bakery, grocers, butcher, newsagent, and a nice pub for meals. A kiosk on the shore sold good coffees and even freshly made doughnuts. Yum.

The weather was quite nice, although a bit windy, but that's normal for this part of the country.

At this park we caught up with old friends from Finke in the NT; Jane and Potta. It was so nice to have time with them and to see their van for the first time (A Supreme). We all made plans to travel on together to Marion Bay.

#### **7-13 March 2007**

##### **Marion Bay, Yorke Peninsular SA**

Another fishing village, Marion Bay caters for visitors to the nearby Innes National Park as well as surfers and fisherpeople. We arrived here after a short sprint down from Pt Vincent, and set up camp in a nice site (no14) at the caravan park. As it was windy -!!- we set up the annexe to secure the awning and to provide a windbreak. The awning has been worth every cent it cost when we had it made back in Queensland last October. It has provided a haven in cold and wet weather, and is more secure if we have items outside the van. We only use it if we are staying for several days, as a rule. I notice while travelling that many people set up their annexe and retire into it, never to be seen again. Ours has lots of screened windows (screens wall to wall almost) and while in it with the walls rolled up, we feel as though we are sitting in the outdoors. But even so, we make a point of sitting outside a lot of the time, and find people passing by stop to talk to us a lot more frequently than if we are under the awning and inside the annexe.

We spent a lovely day in the national park, and really enjoyed seeing the bays and the views over the headlands. I got some quite lovely photos, and have 'stitched' a few together into panoramas on the computer. I love digital photography. And the Photoshop editing program is worth all its complex secrets and difficulty in mastering it.

Another day we drove across the coastal road (gravel) to Edithburgh and marvelled at the shore views on one section just before Edithburgh. It almost rivals the Great Ocean Road. And it is dotted with nice free camp sites, along the coast and with ocean views. We especially liked Kent Bay and Mozzie Flats, free camps right near or on the beaches. The wind farm is very impressive too. There are hundreds of the wind turbines, all eerily swinging in the wind. It was quite a sight. That day we had a pub meal in Edithburgh and it was not only a great meal but also good value. South Australia excels at the pub meal.

The weather became very windy while we were at Marion Bay and one local was overheard to say that it was the worst he had seen in 30 years. Research shows that most people become tetchy and irritable in windy dry weather (ask any classroom teacher) and folk in the park were all saying that it was affecting their stay. I think the time to come here would ideally be October or November, after the winter rains but before the dry dusty summer.

### **13-14 March 2007**

#### **Point Turton, Yorke Peninsular**

Some time ago someone recommended this park, as a "small but nice park" and they were right. It doesn't have a huge number of sites (maybe 60 or 70?) and it has a great vantage point near the beach and jetty. Many sites have a good view of the ocean. We had a good sized spot and it was fresh and green, and more importantly, sheltered from the wind. The park is nestled into a cliff and is well sheltered generally. We were only able to get a site for 2 days as it was very busy, so booked ahead at Clare, where we scampered on the 15<sup>th</sup>, my birthday.

### **15-20 March 2007**

#### **Clare Caravan Park, Clare**

The drive to Clare was interesting, coming across via Port Wakefield and Balaklava to Auburn, then up to Clare. Once we reached Auburn, the highway passed through lovely little hamlets with old stone cottages, antique shops and tea rooms. Trees were starting to display their amber and yellow leaves. My sort of place altogether. We had lunch at a nice tea room at Auburn and bought some home-made cookies.

The caravan park, on the southern outskirts of Clare was a welcoming cool and green oasis. While staying in Clare, we enjoyed Autumn weather; cool, misty mornings and leaves ranging from gold to russet red. Beautiful. Again, we visited the winery/restaurant at Skillogalee and had a gourmet lunch (twice!) on

their balcony. We visited wineries (of course!) and had brunch at Neagles Rock, which is right on the highway next to the visitors centre. One day we tripped over to Burra and were amazed at how much it has changed since we were last there 30 years ago. So long ago...

**22 March 2007**

**Adelaide Beachfront Tourist Park (Top Tourist)**

Again we had to change our plans slightly. Initially we had booked into the park at Gawler, which is small and pretty, right on a river and just around the corner from the main street. But they were in the midst of major renovations when we pulled in, and I decided we should just move on to Adelaide a week earlier. So, after checking they could accommodate us, we arrived. We will be here for a good month or so, to catch up with family, and to weather out an Easter.

This is also one of our favourite parks. It's small, but has everything we need, including immaculate amenities and a small swimming pool (which we have never used). It is located right on a nice beach for early morning walks, only a small way from the major Westlakes Shopping Centre and close to Semaphore village for shopping or meals out. What more could we want?

Well, then Easter arrived. Ah woe is us. Large groups in camper vans with kids arrived. A basketball competition arrived (at least 6 groups). Holidaying country people with kids arrived. Booked out every site, and chaos reigned supreme. Some parents seem to delight in telling their adored offspring to "go off and play – just make sure it isn't around here, to annoy us with your noise!". After several days of one group of children shrieking and squealing as they raced around the park all day and half the night, Val approached the parents (two sets of, enjoying their not-so-quiet ales) and said something about the noise. When they answered him dismissively, he said "Well, if they need to make a lot of noise to have fun, let them make it around you, and not around us!". They got the message. Another group right near us invited all their Adelaide rellies over for a day of drinking and loud conversation until the evening, but at least they were tuckered out by that time and fell into a drunken stupor. Next time, I think we will go bush for the public holidays...But it can get hectic there too.

Adelaide is a great city for places to go and things to see. There is the Barossa (home of good champagnes and sparkling chardonnay pinot noir) and the Maclaren Vale wine region. Hahndorf was absolutely lovely, with Autumn coloured leaves and cool weather coffee shops and bakeries.

While in Adelaide we arranged to have our Webasto Diesel heater installed. This will allow us to bushcamp in the colder weather, as it only draws 2 amps an hour while running on average heat. Our set up includes the heating ducted into the shower and toilet cubicle, ensuring warmth for those early morning and evening occasions in the shower. The main vent is into the cabin with a controller near the bed, so it can be turned on before we get out of bed in the morning. As it

took a full day to have the unit installed, we delivered the van to the factory at regency Park at 7am – to beat the morning peak hour traffic- and picked it up at 6pm (to beat the afternoon peak hour traffic!). And we spent the day at Hahndorf and Belair NP. It was a lovely day.