

Lincoln NP (SA) to Barossa Valley

Stage 12 March 2019

We started this period of travel on 19 March 2019.

Although only a day from home (albeit a long day) at the start of this stage of travel, we took another few weeks to get from Port Lincoln to home. And it was a lovely three weeks too.



Sevenhills Cellars, Clare

Moonlight Bay

S34 40 32 E125 59 54

Moonlight Bay is about 10 kms from the Eyre Peninsula town of Tumby Bay, and felt like a world away. There was eight kms of gravel and some corrugations to travel over but overall the road was OK. As we came down from the headland and curved into the bay, the sight of sparkling water and white sand was very attractive. There are not really all that many spots to camp there but we managed to get probably the best, a nice big area near some low scrubby bushes and overlooking the water, which was only ten metres away.

The whole of the coast was hopping busy with campers in every available place. (I would have thought by now, well after the school holidays, that people would have finished with their camping. Everywhere we travelled there were high numbers of campers, whether at caravan parks, freecamps or just in coffeeshops and cafes).

Our site was alas big enough for others to try to fit onto it with us! On our first of two nights there, at dusk a couple of professional looking Asians turned up in a small battered car and looked like they wanted to stay. Val persuaded them to camp further afield, pointing them in the direction of an area we knew was available. I explained to the woman that there were no toilets out here and she looked quite concerned....

The next afternoon, about the same time, another car turned up with two young girls travelling together, similarly in a small vehicle. They said there were no other spots available and so that is where they stayed - right in front of our van! I have no idea what they did for toileting as there was literally nowhere to go.

But other than that, we had a wonderful two days out here and soon realised why it is called Moonlight Bay. We had a full moon, a Super Moon in fact, and the whole bay lit up as if it was

illuminated from under the water. Beautiful.



I have to admit that on the second day the wind came up and it got very blowy indeed. But with the awning brought in, all was well.

From Moonlight Bay we headed into nearby Tumby Bay, to the RV Rest Stop.

This is a cheap camping ground provided for self-contained vans, about two or three kms out of town. It has a potable water tap, a dump point and room for about twenty or so vans in an area ringed by fresh green trees. It was very busy though and we counted ourselves lucky that we had a site wedged into the trees and bushes and reasonably quiet. Yes, we had neighbours of course, but not too close.

Towns providing these camping options are smart; travellers stay for a few days and they bring much needed money in with them. Travellers need fuel, groceries (even if it is only milk and bread) and often get a vehicle serviced or repairs are undertaken to the van or car. Also, given the age of many travellers, chemist prescriptions need filling too!



Tumby Bay is a most appealing little town, sited right on the coast and with a lovely jetty. It has a great bakery and a couple of cafes as well as a pub. It also has silo art...and in my opinion, one of the best I have seen.

Our stay here was four nights and we thoroughly enjoyed the time here.

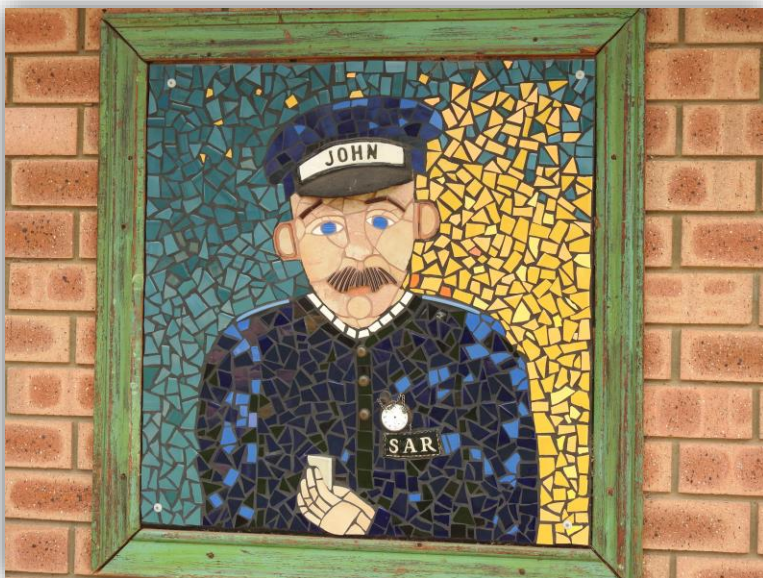
I should mention that on the Sunday before we left, a dreadful dust storm came up and swirled right through the camp area. Unfortunately, as we had gone

out for a drive and left a window open, there was a fair bit of fine white dust through the whole van. Sigh.

From Tumby Bay we travelled almost due North inland to the small town of Cummins. We had heard how nice the and friendly the town is and there was advised to be a good little caravan park. As hot weather was due to arrive, we thought it could be handy to be on town power.

Cummins was everything it was held out to be. One of the friendliest little places you could imagine. Like the Barossa Valley, they had a Co-Operative arrangement with the store and hotel, and also (I think) with the café. The jewel in their crown was the Five Loaves Bakery. Owned and managed by the Lutheran Church, it had a true baker (who made cream buns!) and a range of delicious pies and pasties.

The staff at the bakery declared on the Friday morning that they were having a pizza night. We were told "You should just come, and bring a bottle of wine if you like! The only cost for the night is what you can afford to pay. If you can't afford to pay anything that is absolutely OK". The money raised was for local residents who are doing it tough.



Being a pessimist where such matters are concerned, I mentally noted what snack I could eat once back home in the van, as I was pretty sure there would not be enough pizza to go around. Well was I wrong! We were stuffed to the gills with pizza, fruit and even dessert (which I was too full to eat). We rolled

home, holding our little round tummies.

Cummins had many attractions, but one of the most appealing was the public toilets. Yes, you read that correctly. The town has decorated the entire toilet block with murals, outstanding murals. Oh, and the caravan park was lovely. It was small but with green grass and



nice separating vegetation.

We ended up spending a week at Cummins and were so glad we had. It was a delightful town...and I could easily move there to live.

But, eventually we had to leave. So we headed back to the coast and South to Mt Remarkable NP, and the campground at Baroota. This campground is about 50 kms South of Port Augusta, and a spot we return to from time to time. The larger campground has flushing toilets and hot showers, all in a lovely fresh and well vegetated area. But we chose the smaller and far quieter campsite a few kms closer to the highway, called Baroota. It costs the same amount to camp here but has only a drop toilet and a water tank for water.

However, Baroota is peaceful. We were the only folk there and enjoyed four nice quiet days. We had booked to stay for five days but the last two days were hot. It was so hot we decided to decamp to a powered site somewhere, anywhere. The site we chose was at Crystal Brook.

Crystal Brook was not all that far Southwards. This is a small caravan park but quite appealing. Apart from its nice, neat site at the edge of a (currently dry) creek, it had power for airconditioning. By now the wind had picked up something fierce and dust was swirling around and obscured sight any further than 50 metres. We needed to keep all windows shut to exclude the dust so airconditioning was welcome in the heat.

Indeed, the dusty atmosphere was so bad it caused a fatal accident nearby on the Wakefield

Highway, which was cut for some hours. I think part of the problem was that farmers had just started their ploughing and with the windy conditions, lost a heap of topsoil.

The following day we moved on to Clare. This is a region well known for its exceptional wines, and has pretty surrounding hills and countryside.

I had won a travel auction caravan park site there at half the usual price and we had booked in for five nights. Alas it was a very busy period and the park was full to overflowing. The good news was they put us over the creek in the larger sites (but still with power and water). It was quite comfortable there and a heap more appealing than the standard sites which are quite close together. But it was very dry and dusty and if a vehicle drove past too quickly there were clouds of dust.

One of our favourite wineries in the Clare Valley to have lunch at is Skillogalee. Their wines are worth the visit alone but the food and setting is something quite special. Kathryn and Anna came up from back home, and joined us, and brought Penny with them.



At lunch was the first time in 9 months that we had seen the family since we left home in June last year.

← **This was our table, before we all arrived.**

While in Clare we visited Sevenhills Cellars as well as some other cellars and restaurants. We packed in a heap in our five days there!

Our next port of call (and our last on this trip) was the small town of Auburn, all of about 20 or so kms South of Clare township.

The Auburn caravan park was highly recommended by friend Motherhen, who said it was small and friendly. She was right; it was. I think they only had room for about a dozen powered sites but there was a heap of room for those not needing power and water. Sites were all located on either clean gravel, tarmac or green grass, and nicely shaded by trees or in a more open setting (for those who need sun on the solar panels). And the toilet and shower block was immaculate. These things matter when you are travelling. 😊

We only stayed here three nights but I wished it had been longer. We will definitely be back, as it is a beautiful region and the caravan park is delightful.

As one last hooray from the van, the third spring finally broke. Those who have followed our travels will know that after the Plenty and Great Central Road crossings we had a broken leaf spring on the van. As the springs, all four of them, are a robust and offroad construction, there were none in either WA or SA, and they had to be ordered from Brisbane. Fortunately, after the first one broke, Val had anticipated the others breaking too and had ordered spares. So we did have the spare needed, and with the agreement of both the park and our nearest neighbours, he spent three or four hours under the van replacing the broken spring. There was a little banging and knocking but not an undue amount of noise, so all was good.

Addendum: after arriving home, he has just spent the day today replacing the fourth and final spring, anticipating it will go soon anyway. He plans to cobble together (ahem; 'construct') a new spare out of the various leftover bits from the previous broken springs. So we will have a spare spring to travel with in future. The van is ten years old and done some very rough roads in its lifetime so it is not unusual that it had all the springs go at pretty much the same time.

As the last day of our trip arrived, Autumn weather was well and truly nipping at our heels. Trees in and around Clare were showing their Autumn colours of red and gold, and it was quite cool at night. As we drove down through the countryside back to the Barossa, the countryside was showing clear signs of approaching Winter too. Grapevines were yellowing and dropping leaves, and the trees were in Autumn colours there too. Soon we were back in home territory and pulling into our home block.

It had been nine months since we left home on this current trip, and it has been a special time indeed.

Favourite spots on this trip

One last observation. We sat over a glass of something cold one evening and asked ourselves which had been our favourite camping spots from this trip, which started last June 2018. This was the list of our favourite spots. They are not in any order of priority...

1. Lincoln National park (SA)
2. Cummins Caravan Park (SA) *
3. Fitzgerald National park (WA)
4. Shannon National Park (WA)
5. Lucky Bay, Cape Le Grand NP (WA)
6. Starvation bay (WA) *
7. Hoffman Mill Campground (WA)
8. Canebrake Pool, (WA) *
9. Jarrahdene Campground, Leeuwin-Naturaliste NP
10. Mt Marshall Rocks, near Bencubbin (WA) *
11. Sandstone Park, Carnarvon Gorge (QLD) *



Fitzgerald NP

*** = dogs allowed**

Firm favourite? Fitzgerald NP. The scenery around there was beyond beautiful. And the

campground had hot showers and flushing toilets.