

Willow Wren Club WHEATBELT TAG-A-LONG AND MERREDIN

Four caravans met at Meckering to be part of the first Tag-a-long Rally for our Club – Terry & Geraldine, Ron & Julie, Alan & Chris and Colin & Christine. It was obvious from the start that Terry & Geraldine had already put in a big effort to ensure its success. A detailed itinerary



was provided to all.

The first stop was the ruins of a farm house that had been completely destroyed in the 1968 earthquake. The ruins give a real reminder of how powerful Mother Nature can be. A few of the members recounted their own recollections of that day.



We travelled on to Dowerin for a break and a meeting with Rusty



and Rosie.

Then it was on to Minnivale, for our first overnight campsite. We arrive early enough to visit the small local Church which was kindly opened up by a local resident.

A short walk and we were at the remains of the Minnivale Bakery. Once a thriving



business, only the stone oven remains today.

Then it was time to



set up camp. A beautiful bonfire kept us warm for the evening.

The next morning, we took a short walk to the Minnivale cemetery where a number of previous residents have been laid to rest. The earliest graves date back 100 years and are a testament to the harshness experienced by the early settlers.

Then we were off to Marshall Rock, the next overnight campsite. We passed through acres of beautiful yellow canola and emerging grain crops. **(No canola was ruined in the taking of**



this photo) It seems that another bumper harvest is predicted for 2022 and it was easy to see why. We travelled through Wyalkatchem, Koorda, Gabbin and stopped for a short break and look around each place.

We arrived at Bencubbin early afternoon and after a walk around the town it was time to head to Marshall Rock where Blair & Kathy would be joining the group for the rest of the trip and on to Merredin. Unfortunately, Terry and Geraldine discovered that their car didn't wish to go any further. A trip to a very helpful local mechanic did not bring any success so a quick change of plan meant that the group would stay at the Bencubbin Caravan Park for the night while Terry and Geraldine made all the plans to get them home. Colin and Christine met Blair and Kathy at the planned camp site and they joined the rest at Bencubbin. The next morning most of the group travelled out to see the Pergandes Sheep



Yards which were made of vertically placed split rocks. Quite a feat for early last century! Then a short drive up Marshall Rock to take in the spectacular views. We then farewelled the stranded travellers confident that they were to be well looked after by



the RAC.

Following the original plan, we travelled on through Mukinbudin, stopped at Mangowine Homestead and then on to Nungarin and finally arrived at Danberrin Hill. We had just enough time to set up before the rain came down. After an hour so the skies cleared which



gave us time to start a campfire and setup for the Italian night.

Blair and Kathy did a great job in creating an Italian trattoria in the Aussie bush complete with music and lights. We feasted on a shared meal of Italian cuisine. There was much singing – the joys of having no neighbours!! Early morning walks of various lengths and difficulties and it was time to head to Merredin. There may have been some u-turns after Terry and Geraldine left us but we arrived at the Merredin Caravan Park where we were joined by Graeme and guests Rod and Glenda. Friday night we went to the Merredin Sports Club for a meal.



Saturday was a day at leisure and members took the opportunity to explore many of the local attractions such as the WW2 Military Hospital site, the Merredin Rock and dam.

Preparations were underway for the Christmas in July evening festivities when Colin and Christine received a call that meant that they had to head home unexpectedly.

Over to you Geraldine to finish this off!!!

Not Geraldine but Kathleen:



“Christmas in July” was held in the Merredin Caravan Park gazebo, with the addition of wind breaks and an amazing collection of Christmas decorations provided by Ron & Julie. The finished effect was truly awesome with no shadow of doubt a Christmas celebration! A huge thank you to Chesney from Two Dogs (Home) Hardware, Merredin, for the loan of a gas heater to stave off the wintery chill. We all assembled for Christmas drinkies at around six, with everyone donning appropriate attire for the occasion – Ron and Julie lending costumes from their extensive collection for those requiring suitable apparel. We were



surprised with a visit from Santa Claus (aka Alan), spreading good cheer and lolly bags, but no-one was permitted to sit on Santa’s lap! A sumptuous Christmas feast of roast chicken, roast vegetables, sausage rolls and party pies, washed down by mulled wine (thank you Glenda) and our favoured tipples. Sweets, comprising Pavlova and Christmas cake, rounded out the feast. A collective thank you to all for the shared contribution to our Christmas fare. Kathy and Blair provided Carols and sound system to ensure a true Christmas spirit. Several hours of laughter and frivolity ended with a huge pack-up effort from all participants, leaving the gazebo clean, clear and as (cleaner than) we found it.

Chris officially closed the July 2022 Merredin rally at 9:00 am on a crisp but sunny Sunday morning, thanking participants and acknowledging those that were not able to stay until conclusion. Goodbye and thank you Merredin for a lovely couple of days.

Terry and Geraldine would like to thank the tag-a-long members for their support when we were stranded in Bencubbin and helping with our change our plans.

Tip for future newsletter writers:

Photo Transfer

We used a web based program called “wetransfer” to share photos <https://wetransfer.com>

Free to use and very simple to send and receive multiple photos at a time, getting around email limitations on the large file sizes of most photos these days. Note that the on-line product is free, but the downloadable app is not!

Congratulations to the new grandparents in the last couple of months.

Enjoy the ride!

