



Visitors have a positive view of Cobar

Dear editor,

A few weeks ago I arrived at Cobar Airport in my ultralight aircraft.

I intended to refuel and continue my journey to central Australia, but noticed that the plane was leaking oil.

With some help from local workers at the airport I diagnosed a cracked oil cooler.

A number of other workers turned up, and I was overwhelmed by their local knowledge and willingness to help.

They provided directions and help in finding a hire car, businesses who may be able to help, finding accommodation and transport links should I need to have a new oil cooler shipped in.

I cannot overstate how impressed and grateful I am for the friendly help from all the people I met in Cobar, who were only too willing to go out of their way to help.

Two days later I was underway again, and continued my trip without further problems.

Special mention should go to Paddy Phillips and Herman Jansen at the airport.

They are great ambassadors for your town.

David Edmunds

Farrer, ACT

Dear editor,

As grey nomad travellers for about four months each year, we cover about 20,000 km annually around this wonderful country.

Like many other travellers our caravan is self contained.

We prefer to avoid the regimentation of caravan parks and we look for peace and quiet elsewhere.

Cost is not a major consideration but harmony is.

'Freedom camping' is our preferred way to go, preferably somewhere quiet, roomy, scenic, shady, level, and not too isolated.

What a delight to find such a wonderful spot now in Cobar.

We refer, of course, to the Newey Reserve, where we have spent the last few days.

Despite the warm temperatures we have delighted in the breeze off the water, watching the birds, talking to the walkers and generally enjoying ourselves.

The town is to be commended for its foresight.

In return we have topped up our supplies, eaten out, visited the heritage centre, and spent money in town.

We will recommend it to like-minded travellers and will put it on our list of favourite camp

spots.

Previously we have often just driven through Cobar but in future we will plan to stay.

A suggestion: As found in many other towns which welcome travellers, a solid donation box and sign at the amenities block could be worthwhile, whether it is for the Royal Flying Doctor Service, some other charity, or even just to assist with upkeep.

As with everything not all travellers will contribute, but we are confident that a significant number will do so.

The majority of travellers using the reserve will do the right thing and help keep the area tidy and clean.

Brian and Deidre McDonnell, Buderim, Sunshine Coast, QLD.



Camping

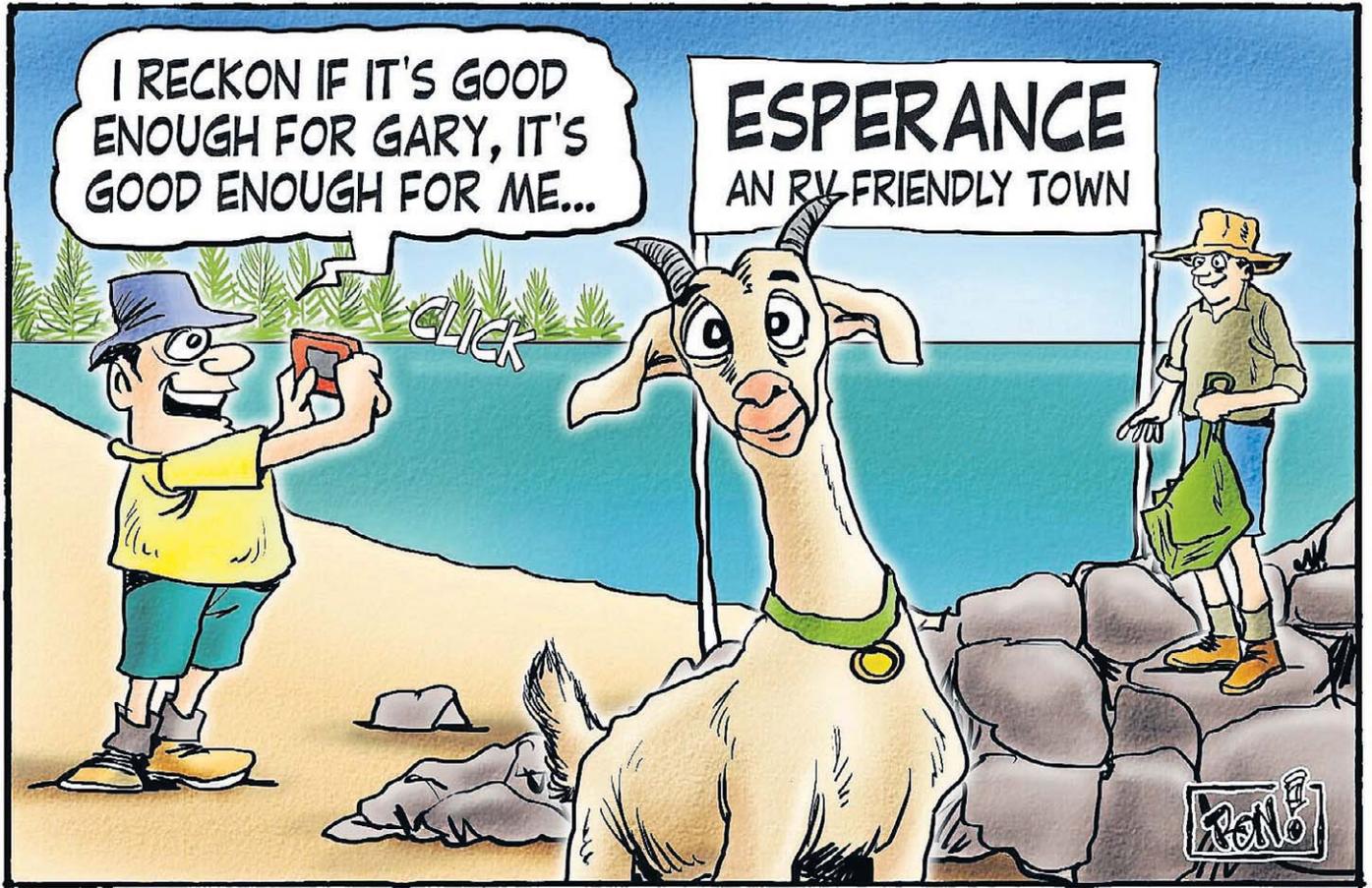
Moving on, a 12-month trial of a Freedom Camping site/s will be explored after Cr Spooner's motion gained support.

Aimed at addressing camper vans that are part of the tourist mix, staff have been asked to identify appropriate partner/s to undertake such a trial through an expression-of-interest process.'

Meanwhile deputy mayor Alan Hunter managed to gain

unanimous councillor support to amend the conditions on operating his storage business at the end of a quiet street in Myocum. Cr Hunter, who previously managed to get a 'change of use for a farm building to road transport terminal,' will now will be allowed, 'a maximum number of 10 truck movements per week.'

No doubt it's another blow to his long-suffering neighbours, who claim the commercial operation is better suited to industrial areas and is not directly farm-related.





Kendall in focus to be RV friendly

KENDALL might become one of the region's first RV (recreational vehicle) friendly towns, joining a list of nearly 50 other locations across NSW that have taken advantage of this growing tourism industry.

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council has given the thumbs-up to working with the Kendall and community to obtain 'RV-Friendly' status through the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA).

Becoming an RV-Friendly town requires meeting a set of essential criteria such as being able to provide appropriate parking within the town centre, having short-term (24/48) hour parking available, access to potable water and a dump point.

There are more than 500,000 registered RVs in Australia and this figure is predicted to increase by 60 per cent in the next 10 years.

The council's acting director of commercial services and industry engagement, Rebecca Olsen, said the council had worked with community stakeholders in Kendall to further assess what was needed to support RV-Friendly accreditation.

"We know that towns such Kendall are already engaging positively with RV travellers and many use the facilities our showgrounds currently have on offer," Ms Olsen said.

"Achieving RV Friendly Town status will help promote our smaller destinations to this growing visitor segment."

Research shows RV travellers spent between \$500 and \$900 per week on a range of products and services delivering real benefits to businesses in regional communities.

Work will be undertaken in coming months to finalise amenities that will ensure Kendall meets the RV Friendly town criteria. The council will then lodge an application for 'RV Friendly Town status with the CMCA.

Wauchope is also one of the towns the council wants to target for RV Friendly Town status.



CARAVAN AND MOTORHOME WASTE DUMP POINT FOR CITY RESERVE

Grey nomad boom tipped

SAM NORRIS

Caravans and motorhome tourism is expected to boom in Maitland with the introduction of a free waste dump as soon as next year.

Maitland City Council will install a dump point at Harold Gregson Reserve, near Maitland No.1 Sportsground.

Cr Steve Procter, a caravan owner, had endorsed the move, knowing from his travels that demand for such facilities was

growing. On Tuesday night, council set aside \$80,000 in the 2015-16 financial year to complete associated projects.

"You don't know how happy I am," Cr Procter said.

"It is a significant milestone for me."

Council will take advantage of a standing offer from Caravan and Motorhome Association of Australia to supply the dump point and council will allocate up to \$10,000 to install it.

The associated projects include an upgrade of the existing toilet block near the skate park, a sealed parking area and a footpath linking it with the toilets and High Street.

Picnic tables and benches round out these latest plans.

"I know it will be well received through the grey nomads and caravanning fraternity," Cr Procter said.

The facility will enable people to stay for free for up to 72 hours close to tourist attractions and services.

"Maitland Regional Art Gallery and the coffee shops will greatly benefit from this," Cr Procter said.

Council will approach the Caravan and Motorhome Association of Australia.

"The initial offer for the supply of a waste dump point was made by the [association] in 2012," council appearance and infrastructure executive manager Chris James said.

"Whilst the offer still stands,

if it is not taken up in the near future it may lapse as other areas have expressed an interest in obtaining a subsidised waste point from the club.

"In that context, council should proceed with the installation of the waste dump point at the earliest opportunity, with appropriate signage and delineation of the parking area, and list the remaining project works for consideration in the 2015-16 capital works program."



Cr Steve Procter



Caravan “dump points” for Upper Lachlan

“Dump points” to allow caravanners to dispose of their sewage into wastewater systems will be established at Crookwell, Gunning and Taralga.

Upper Lachlan Councillors decided this at last week’s meeting.

The aim is to support and encourage motor home tourist traffic and provide environmental managements of waste.

Director of Works Mr. Phil Newham told the meeting that the sewerage facilities at Crookwell, Gunning and Taralga are capable of accepting such wastewater, based on expected low volumes.

Dump point facilities are already available at Goulburn, Boorowa, Yass, Bookham, Braidwood, Cowra and Bathurst.

Essential to the operation of dump points is access to a sewer system, adequate turning area for the caravans, and acceptability to neighbours.

Capital costs include a concrete surrounding apron, water connection and wash down hose, with road access.

Mr. Newham said installation could be around \$4,000 a site, and if subsidy was available from the Campervan and Motor Home Club of Australia this could be reduced to \$3,000.

Operational costs would be limited to a small amount of water and maintenance, expected to be less than \$1,000 a site per year.

Possible sites for Crookwell were the Caravan Park, near Clifton Park, near the old Railway station or at the Showground.

Gunning site possibilities included near the sewage pumping station, the Showground or at Barbour Park.

At Taralga, the Showground or old saleyards sites were possibilities.

However, there are likely to be additional suitable sites.

Cr. Brian McCormack commented that the sites would need a “reasonable amount of room,” and that showgrounds presented a problem as they were not open all the time.

Cr. James Wheelwright moved that Council proceed with the sites, adding: “I personally hate caravans, but it is very much needed in our community.”

Cr. McCormack: “We might, in the very near future, need to include Tuena.”

However, Mr. Newham pointed out that Tuena had no reticulated sewerage.

He suggested the sites be located when Council was considering its budget for next year.

To Cr. Wheelwright, Finance Director Mr. Andrew Croke said funds were currently available – “depending on all other considerations.”

The motion to proceed was carried unanimously.



Residents protest location of RV site

Jasmine Bamford

Accommodation providers and residents in Kalgoorlie-Boulder have joined forces in a bid to force the City council to revoke free accommodation at Centennial Park.

Some of the arguments raised against the recreation vehicle-friendly facility were that people had started calling it “the Bronx”, it failed to boost tourism and the park was being littered with grey water.

Those who attended Monday night’s ordinary council meeting said they wanted to see first-hand the outcome of a motion raised by councillor Mick McKay which requested council relocate the recreation-vehicle friendly destination to a place suitable to appease the caravan park providers.

Prospector Caravan Park

manager Jeanette Hunt argued against claims made by a City officer in the recent agenda that suggested usage of Centennial Park averaged five vehicles a night.

She asked how the City calculated those figures on the basis she had conducted her own inquiries and come up with a figure between nine and 23 per night.

Prospector Caravan Park resident Chloe Gibbs, who takes her three children to Centennial Park to play, told the council she “quite often” saw men urinating in the park and her children had to play near human faeces.

While another resident, who lives 500m from Centennial Park, said park users had turned the facility into a dust bowl.

“People are always using the

bushes for toilets,” she said during public question time.

“It’s devaluing our property.”

Goldminer Caravan Park manager Diane Morgan asked the City for an itemised cost of running the RV facility, while questioning the City’s assertion it was only utilised by five vehicles a night.

Fellow van park manager, John Morgan used the City’s statistics to further question the park’s premise.

“If there are only five vans per night, what is the point?” he said.

Cr McKay’s motion to relocate the RV venue was defeated nine votes to two.