



# A push to have free or low-cost camps

**Emma Reid**

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BUNDABERG resident Arthur Bugden is pushing to get free or low-cost campsites in Bundaberg and Bargara in a bid to increase RV (recreational vehicles) drivers and caravanners to stay here.

Mr Bugden said he had travelled around Australia for the past 14 years and found it vital to have the free or low-cost campsites available which would generate income for businesses throughout the town.

"These places don't necessarily have to be free but the town needs to be RV-friendly and it just isn't," he said.

"Most of the other towns are doing it and we surely will become quite isolated.

"We need to get people staying and spending money in the shops."

He said those who use these types of campsites were normally self-sufficient and only needed a place to stay and dispose of waste.

"The only requirement for these people is somewhere to dump waste, somewhere safe to park and water," Mr Bugden said.

"They normally generate their own electricity through solar, and to fill a water tank

like my own (135L) it has a cost to council of three and

half cents which will last two of us four days."

Bundaberg Regional Council economic development and tourism spokesman Greg Barnes said the region was already well-equipped with this type of camping.

"The Bundaberg region is quite well-catered to with the availability of free or low-cost camping facilities," Cr Barnes said.

"Free, short-stay campsites for caravans and motorhomes provided by Transport and Main Roads are available at Childers (two), Gin Gin and Bundaberg.

"There are at least five free stopover areas in the region that cater in varying degrees

to vans and motor homes or people wishing to pitch a tent."

Cr Barnes said there were several budget campsites throughout the region.

"Obviously while there may be 'free' sites available throughout the region there is a cost to (the) council, and ultimately the community, to maintain these facilities," Cr Barnes said.

"By opening up the availability of free camping across the region, while perhaps advantageous to shop owners, would possibly be to the detriment of commercial accommodation providers."

Chamber of commerce pre-



sident Yale Morgan said an increase to tourism was always good but wasn't sure Bundaberg was missing out on tourism by not having these.

"I really do think they still come to Bundaberg," Mr Morgan said.

"We along with BNBT are confident we are getting our fair share of the grey nomad tourism."

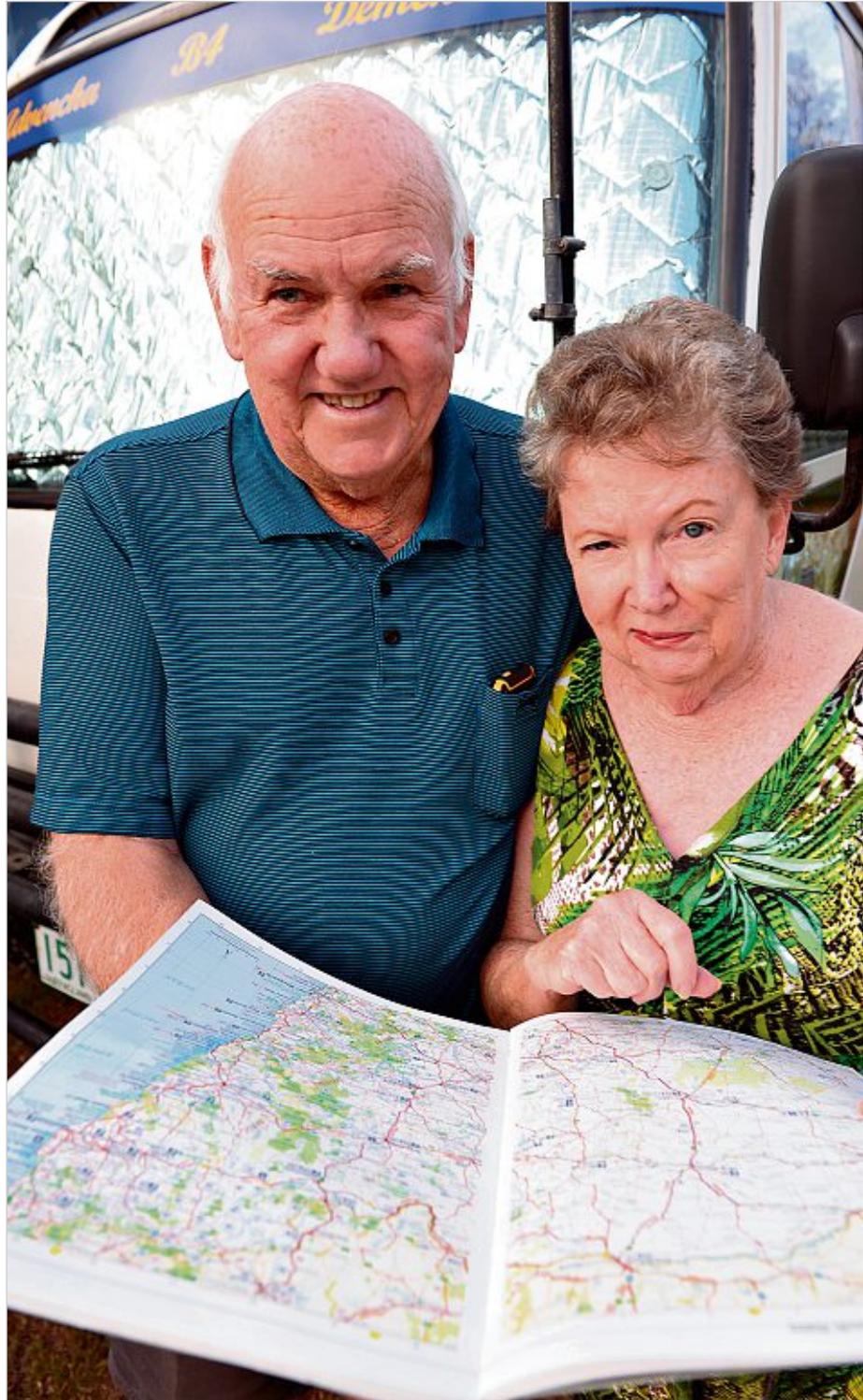
Mr Bugden said he did not agree with Cr Barnes and there were no low-cost or free campsites in Bundaberg and the nearest one was at Sharon Gorge but it was small.

"These are located 20-30km out of town and when they stay out of town they are likely only to stay one night before moving on," he said.

"There most definitely is not the parks Mr (Cr) Barnes is referring to; the ones he is talking about are 20-hour stays only."

"I just know we are missing out on the RV tourism which is a \$7b industry across Australia."

**“There most definitely is not the parks Mr (Cr) Barnes is referring to**



**LOW-COST CAMPING: Arthur and Wendy Bugden want low-cost or no-cost camping available in Bundaberg.**

PHOTO: MAX FLEET BUN151015ADV8

**YOU'RE WELCOME: Livingstone Shire Council to launch pilot caravanning campaign**

# Life's a beach for campers

**Amy Haydock**

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IT'S the ease of being able to pack up and take off wherever, whenever that Chris and Lillian Cook love most about caravanning.

The retired couple from Cooloola Cove near Rainbow Beach said this was their third or fourth time visiting the Capricorn Coast after travelling the Queensland coast for months on end over the past eight years.

"We love the change of scenery, and towns and people you meet," 69-year old Chris said yesterday while parked up at Beachside Caravan Park.

The Cooks were pleased to hear the news that Livingstone Shire Council had been invited to be the first Queensland council to lead a new pilot signage campaign welcoming RVs and caravans to the region.

Community Welcomes Recreational Vehicles campaign, being launched by Caravanning Queensland, will see Livingstone Shire promoted nationwide as a welcome stop and destination that actively encourages all types of recreational vehicles.

Mayor Bill Ludwig said this was a great partnership opportunity to promote the fantastic caravan and camper facilities in the shire.

"Caravanning is a

\$17 billion-a-year industry and we want to let the rest of Australia know that we have some of the best facilities and spectacular scenery anywhere in the country and Livingstone

Shire is open for business," Cr Ludwig said.

"Long-term, council will also be making provisions for additional RV and caravan parking areas in the planning of major

infrastructure projects, including the revitalisation of the Yeppoon and Emu Park foreshores."

Caravanning Queensland will also provide council with entry signage.



**STOPPING IN: Caravanners Lillian and Chris Cook enjoy the sea air and sunshine at Beachside Caravan Park in Yeppoon.**

PHOTO: CHRIS ISON ROK161015CCARAVAN2