



# Caravan and Camping Show

by Brad Elborough

THE interest in caravan and camping in Western Australia is certainly strong. More than 48,000 people attended the RAC Perth Caravan and Camping Show, held at the Claremont Showground in March.

If you missed it, don't worry, next year's dates have already been set – Wednesday 16 to Sunday 20, 2016.

Caravan and Camping Industry Association CEO Simon Glossop said that the change in opening days, helped boost attendance by

almost eight per cent from 2014.

"This year the show opened on a Wednesday for the first time and this proved to be a popular move with more than 5,000 people visiting on the day," he said. "We will be sure to repeat the full five-day experience next year."

The Show featured around 100 exhibitors, with more than 400 brands and designs of caravans and 130 camper trailers available to be viewed.

Pundits certainly enjoyed the rare chance to be able to view them all in one venue and compare the various makes and models before making a purchase. And purchases were made.

It's difficult to keep up with all of the new technology and designs, but the show provides a rare chance also to speak directly to manufacturers, in some cases.

The pavilions were also full with exhibitors who were selling gadgets and just about every caravan and camping accessory that you could think of.

And by the look of the parcel pick up area, where visitors to the show could leave their purchases and then continue enjoying the event, these

were popular too.

Mr Glossop said that several initiatives that the show took on this that would be repeated in 2016.

"With free travel on Transperth included with online tickets, many people decided to leave the car at home and this proved to be a winner for visitors," he said.

"And, thanks to the Department of Health, additional parking was made available at Graylands Hospital. The courtesy buses were full of people, most seemed to be bringing goodies from the show back as well and the parking was much needed over the weekend with so many visitors.

"Saturday and Sunday saw the RAC Family Fun Zone kick into action and there seemed to be hundreds of kids taking advantage of the free rides and activities at any

one time. The rock climbing wall was a hit as was the face painting and fairy floss.

"Old MacDonald's Farm was the hot pick for the little ones and NaturePlay ran a tent pitching competition which, thanks to Getaway Outdoors putting up a \$50 voucher for the 10 races, saw a lot of parents keenly cheering on their kids to win."

The demonstrations were well patronised and those in attendance picked up some handy tips.

There will be a lot of campsites in WA with smells of sausage rolls and scones in the coming months, courtesy of Jo Clews recipes... while we should also see an improved towing skillset. The guys who demonstrated this at the Show, did so by reversing between two very expensive cars... gutsy!

In fact, we should see an overall increase in those heading out for an outdoors holiday – whether caravanning or camping – as interest in the industry continues to grow.



Above: Crowds were entertained and informed at the show  
Left: Brad Elborough



# Rallying up some tourism

MORE than 1400 members of the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia – who will be in South Australia this week – have been encouraged to visit the Riverland as part of a State Government initiative.

Tourism Minister Leon Bignell said the club's 29th anniversary rally was an opportunity to highlight the accessibility of South Australia's stunning, natural attributes.

"The State Government has developed five touring routes across multiple regions, highlighting our world class food and wine, scenery and wild-life," he said.

"These touring routes make South Australia more accessible – and make planning a road trip easier – as they highlight must-do experiences in an easy to follow format.

The five routes are:

- ❑ Epicurean Way – McLaren Vale to Clare Valley via the Adelaide Hills and Barossa

- ❑ Explorers Way – Adelaide to Darwin via the Flinders Ranges and Coober Pedy

- ❑ Seafood Frontier – Adelaide to Eyre Peninsula via Yorke Peninsula

- ❑ Mighty Murray Way – the Murray River from Renmark to the Mouth

- ❑ Southern Ocean Drive – Mount Gambier to Adelaide via Kangaroo Island

"The club's members are important to South Australian tourism and we hope their time here will inspire more self-drive holidays for the group," said Mr Bignell.

According to the State Government, about 80 per cent of the four million domestic overnight leisure trips in South Australia last year involved visitors using private, rented, hire vehicles, campervans and motorhomes.

"The self-drive holiday market is one of the fastest growing tourism sectors. Promoting these routes puts us in a great position to attract interstate and overseas visitors," Mr Bignell said.

Tours of the Murray

region as well as other South Australian regions are on offer for CMCA members to participate in prior to, during and after the rally.

For more information on touring routes visit the website ([www.southaustralia.com](http://www.southaustralia.com)).



State Tourism Minister  
Leon Bignell



## Motorhome owners converge on Murray Bridge

*by Alannah Williams*

Motorhome enthusiasts from every corner of Australia have begun to roll into Murray Bridge for the 2015 CMCA Motorhome Rally.

Over 800 motorhomers are expected to stay on the school grounds at Murray Bridge's Unity College and explore the surrounding Adelaide Hills and Murray River regions.

Event organisers David and Lyn Fricke said there will be a programme, activity or tour to interest everyone.

"We really wanted to make sure everyone is entertained throughout the whole week," David said.

Some of the many activities

include demonstrations from the Men's Shed, tours to Hahndorf or Melba's Chocolate Factory, line dancing, cards, Murray River cruises, and a Friday night fluoro party. A poet's breakfast will run from Tuesday to Friday and include guest performances from author and renowned bush poet Bob Magor and Aussie songwriter and radio presenter Greg Champion.

David said this year will welcome 180 new motorhomers to the event.

"We just want people to have fun and make new friends," David said.

"At 4pm each afternoon we will hold a happy hour for everyone to have a drink and a yarn," he said.

David and Lyn have attended every CMCA Motorhome Rally since 1998, and have organised three of them.

"I guess we bring some experience because we know what people enjoy doing," David said.

"The evening entertainment is going to be first class."

A photography competition has also been organised for this year's event and includes six different categories: everything is beautiful in its own way, a bridge, this is life, man's best friend, CMCA media gallery and a stream of six photos. For more information on the rally or how to enter the photography competition visit [www.cmca.net.au/events/rallies](http://www.cmca.net.au/events/rallies)



### Body of opinion ignored

AND so it came to pass; the holes were drilled, the pipes were connected and, despite our efforts, the deed was done.

Opinions are like dogs with tails - everybody has one. Our individual opinions really don't matter unless we think they are based on evidence and a sound analysis of the facts. Even then they don't matter unless, of course, you find that others have arrived at the same conclusions and formed a similar opinion to yours. When a larger group arrives at the same conclusion and it includes many individuals who have formed similar opinions, then it does have some credibility. It becomes a body of opinion.

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It is our opinion that the installation of the RV dump point in the present location is an unsafe mistake and we are duty bound to express that opinion.

It is also our opinion that this exorbitant cost was unnecessary when safer more suitable sites were available.

It is also our view that the process of consultation has become a sham.

When consultation is sought it is essential that the views of the people being consulted be valued and included in the decision making process. When this is ignored and the agenda does not represent the input of those being consulted, they rightly feel insulted. Why were we consulted if we were to be ignored all along?

The council will say "We are held responsible for the final decision."

Consultation can provide for good decision making as it provides a forum for all the pros and cons in preparation for the final decision, which is the responsibility of the council. In the case of the RV dump site, council staff have ignored the views of the consultative group. They have refused to listen. Numerous attempts to achieve better outcomes have been rejected. We now have a situation that is unsafe through the wilful rejection of alternatives.

This raises the possibility that should an accident occur, the wilful rejection of safer sites and the hazards identified in the consultation process could give grounds for negligence. Insurance claims are difficult to make if negligence can be proven. needless to say, this is pure speculation, but that is only an opinion.

A full report will be sent to the Caravan

and Motorhomes Club of Australia by the consultative group. They can form their own opinion.

Stop press: The Showgrounds caravan park are now installing their own dump site. They are fully supported by the CMCA who will assist with costs. The white elephant installed by the Shire of Murrindindi is now redundant. Go figure.

*Geoff Hall, Alexandra.*



# RV sites, not camping reserves

Visitors treating the town's RV sites as camping reserves have worn out their welcome according to councillors at Tuesday's ordinary meeting.

Signage with RV specific site rules will be implemented at both the 48 and 72 hour sites, leaving Council in a better position to police the areas.

Concerns were raised by a ratepayer with Cr Peter Gain regarding non-recreational vehicles usage of the site, prompting Cr Gain to take up the matter at the meeting.

"I don't think the ratepayer wanted to be unwelcoming, but if we're not careful we're going to have a similar situation that has developed in Wagga, that they're finding difficult to deal with," Cr Gain said.

Upon inspection of both sites, Cr Gain said while each area was being kept tidy, he noticed a predominance of caravans and very few RV vehicles using the facilities at the time.

"Some of these (caravans) may have had onboard toilets but certainly not all and probably not most," he said.

"In each area tents were erected. I did not see any signs indicating what could and could not be done in the areas."

Cr Gain said the ratepayer expressed concerns in relation to sanitation and the overall impression created.

General manager Phil McMurray said council had, on one occasion, moved a camp on since the creation of the RV site in 2013.



Signage with site rules will soon go up at both the 48 hour and 72 hour RV sites in a bid to stop travellers treating the areas as camping grounds.

"To date the RV site has not been signposted with the RV specific site rules sign," Mr McMurray said. "I have held off to gauge usage and need."

The wording of the sign has been finalised with input from RV users, and a quote for signage has also been obtained.

"With a substantial increase in use, and potential for abuse, I would consider it appropriate to purchase and install this signage," he said.

Councillors agreed that with appropriate signage, council will be in a better position to police the sights.

Mr McMurray said the sign

will go before the next development committee meeting.

When asked if any provisions have been made to seek voluntary contributions from users to help towards the cost of maintenance of the areas, Mr McMurray said council has received and accepted a quote from Gundagai High School to construct three steel donation boxes to be erected at the sites. These will be constructed in the next school term by the metal work class.

In relation to any assessment being made to determine the sites' economic cost/benefit to the community, the general

manager said while no formal assessment has been undertaken, a survey has been developed to collect data from RV users pertaining to if/how they are spending money in the shire.

Mr McMurray said Cr Mike Kingwill has accepted a volunteer's offer to undertake the surveys.

Cr Kingwill said both sites are being kept "spotless", while mayor Abb McAlister said main street business has benefitted from the RV users.

"There's no doubt, the sites have brought money into the town," he said.



# Free camping project report for councillors

By Kieran Moran

FREE camping in the Kempsey Shire during peak holiday periods is causing some angst within the Kempsey Shire Council, where the decision to allow or not to allow free camping will be debated at the council meeting today.

The growing problem of free camping and parking was highlighted during the holidays last December and January, when illegally parked vehicles (campervans and RVs) impeded on community activities and council operations at Crescent Head.

The agenda for today's council meeting states that, "the rapid growth in recreational vehicles presents a growing challenge in seeking a balance between maximising tourist visitation with the need to maintain parks and reserves for the benefit of residents and tourists".

"Of particular challenge is the growing free camping sector by those seeking out informal options for utilising parks and reserves outside of licensed camping and caravan parks," the council agenda states.

"While some councils along the coast are reported as adopting a zero tolerance approach to the problem, Kempsey Shire Council has adopted the approach of moving campers on without infringement."



**Causing concerns:** campervans packed the Crescent Head foreshore during the summer

It is not an offence to camp overnight in parks and reserves, unless there is signage specifically prohibiting all types of camping or parking between restricted hours.

The potential options for the council range from zero tolerance, keep the status quo, facilitate free camping or increase council patrols during peak times.

"Having regard to the requirements of the Local Government Award in respect to overtime, increased patrols during the Christmas-New Year and Easter peaks will require an additional allocation of approximately

\$12,000 per annum," the council agenda states.

Council is participating in the Freedom Camping Project that reflects growing support from within local and state government to investigate solutions.

The project has set up a reference group to assist councils on how to manage free camping.

In the council agenda it is recommended to councillors:

1. That awareness of free camping continues to be raised through targeted patrols during peak visitation periods and through increased provision of information through social and traditional forms of media.

2. That a further report be provided to council on a range of management options following receipt of recommendations from the North Coast Destination network – Freedom Camping Project Reference Group.

☐ TODAY'S Kempsey Shire Council meeting will be held at the South West Rocks Surf Club hall, 1 Livingstone St, South West Rocks, from 9am. For the meeting agenda please go to the Kempsey Shire Council website: [www.kempsey.nsw.gov.au](http://www.kempsey.nsw.gov.au)

☐ **Talks on bats and buffers: Page 5**



## In Brief

### Motorhome rally

MORE than 1400 members of the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia in South Australia last week were encouraged to visit the state's regions including Eyre Peninsula.

Tourism Minister Leon Bignell used the club's 29th anniversary rally as an opportunity to highlight five touring routes across a number of the state's regions such as the Seafood Frontier, from Adelaide to Eyre Peninsula via the Yorke Peninsula.

"These touring routes make South Australia more accessible - and make planning a road trip easier - as they highlight must-do experiences in an easy to follow format.

Mr Bignell said the self-drive holiday market was one of the fastest growing tourism sectors and promoting these routes put South Australia in a great position to attract interstate and overseas visitors.