

Clearbrook Village Newsletter

April 2008

Coffee morning will be on Saturday 2nd of May. Tea and coffee this month will be served by Jocelyn and Les from Rosehill. We would like to restart the Bring and Buy element of the Coffee Mornings, so bring along any surplus plants, veg, cakes etc.

March's **prize draw** winners were John Brindle and Anna Doyle - congratulations.

The village walks are starting soon so don't miss out. The first one is led by Chris Britton on April 25th. It starts at 6.30pm from the Royal Oak at Meavy. The bluebells will hopefully be out so come and enjoy a fantastic evening walk. If you would like to eat at the Royal Oak at the end of the walk please let Chris know so that we can reserve a table or two - tel 852584.

The dates for the next two walks are as follows:

- May 9th. Dewerstone walk led by Chris Britton
- May 23rd. The Walkham Valley Walk led by Ray Moorhouse

Just to remind you all there will be no Friday **games evening** on May 23rd, this is due to the hall being decorated for a wedding reception the following day.

Recently there have been very few bookings in the Village Hall. Please can everyone try to promote the availability of the hall for anything from parties to work meetings. If bookings go down anymore we may have to start more fund raising!!

Yelverton ladies group are still meeting at Yelverton Memorial Hall, Meavy Lane at 7.45 pm. This includes,

- 8th May – Annual General Meeting
- 22nd May – Meeting to be held but no speaker as yet.

If you have any enquiries call Helen on 01822 853140

We are publishing in full the news letter we received from John and Glyn as it contains an item of local interest.

The Grey Nomads - Aussie Tour

John & Glynnes' Circumnavigation of Australia



We have just completed over 11,000 kilometres, or 6900 miles in pommie language, and we have only used 10 gallons of diesel. What a bargain! Oh sorry, that should read 202 gallons.

We are driving along between Coral Bay and Karratha on Western Australia's North West coastline. Before us on the road ahead there are rocky outcrops on the right and flat scrubby plain on the right and this stretches for hundreds of k's in every direction. The one bonus after recent torrential rain is that everything is green. This is a real treat since leaving Adelaide in South Australia on the 24th January everything has been unbelievably parched following the extensive drought that has plagued much of Australia for up to a decade. It is a relief to see so much lush green vegetation.

The temperature is in the high 30's, the sky is blue and the soil and rocks in this area are a rich red ochre. There is nothing else on the road as we head briskly north at a steady 100k an hour. Not so brisk in pommie terms really, that's only 60mph and we are doing 500k a day at the moment while we head toward Darwin. We don't really want to travel too fast since we aren't totally out of the Tropical Cyclone season and apart from the risk of being hit by one of those, it still too hot and humid for comfort. But we do need to get some miles under our belts if we are going to be able to have time to enjoy Queensland's greater variety. We just had to pay Aus. \$2.00 dollars a litre for diesel, it's normally \$1.50, that is daylight robbery, nearly up to U.K. standards, but there isn't much choice when you are at the only roadhouse for hundreds of kilometres.

Yesterday was a bit of a first for me after we had been to the surf shop and bought snorkelling gear and some flippers. I seem to remember that I always wanted these items as a kid, but as my mother never ceased to point out, where was I going to use them in South East London! Now fully equipped I was ready to plunge into the waters of Coral bay in search of a coral reef and myriad marine life. This wasn't quite as intrepid as it may sound as the coral was on the edge of a gently sloping sandy beach and so close that you could almost wade out to it at low tide. I only nearly drowned myself once as I tried inhaling the ocean and then got cramp in my left leg, but I survived and kicked my flippers back to shore. Actually I could have walked. I saw a turtle, lots of coloured fish and some weird coral, not bad for a first time. Mostly I saw lots of other virgin snorkelers with their brand new fluorescent masks and flippers! Glynne had a good old splash too but without the snorkel!

Back in January we had left Adelaide without knowing which way round we were going to attempt the journey. We have bought a seven year old Ford Transit Camper van conversion, a bit basic but with essential air conditioning to plug into the 'lekky' at caravan parks and a toilet and shower for when we weren't at one, a bit more flexibility for our voyage into the unknown. Informed opinion wanted us to go anti clock wise to avoid the cyclonic season in Western Australia. We were then supposed to avoid the cyclonic season in Queensland and the Northern Territories by exploring New South Wales and Southern Queensland. However the wettest Christmas and New Year on record left so much of the east looking distinctly flooded that we ignored all advice and decided on a clockwise approach. We were also impatient to cover some new territory. The rule of thumb is don't head north before March. So we haven't, and have thereby avoided two cyclones although we still felt the after effects, with turbulent winds and heavy rain. However there is still plenty of time to run into a late one!

The Nullarbor Plain is the zeitgeist of Trans Australian Travel, and we set out after a long build up and some trepidation. However we had a following wind and cooler conditions, driving it in two long days. The Nullarbor is not as treeless as the books would have you believe, it is mis-named in my opinion. It should be the Somearbor. However there is also no shortage of dead kangaroos and on the second day, hundreds of them in a variety of states of decay, and they are big creatures!

Fremantle or Freo as the cognoscenti call it is also by lucky chance the home of ex-Clearbrook resident, Lillian Lethbridge. So we gave her a call on Easter Saturday and were round her place drinking tea an hour later, after a sweaty half hour cycle. The 96 year old had such a full diary that the rest of her Easter was already booked. We were met by a lovely lady who might have been 20 years younger. We spent 3 full hours discussing Clearbrook and mutual acquaintances. Lillian left Clearbrook at the ripe old age of 79 with her husband, as those who knew her will already know and went to join their son in Perth. Sadly both her husband and son pre-diseased her but Lillian has a full life and other relatives who visit her. We knew of her from the book she wrote encapsulating her Clearbrook memories, and Tony and Patricia, who keep in touch with her, suggested we pop in. She has an immaculate bungalow and a lovely garden. We left her a little hoarse after all the talking, but we had a splendid afternoon and she sends her regards to everyone who remembers her. If any of you have friends or relatives you would like us to visit clockwise of Darwin then please feel free to email us!



See you next winter,
regards

John and Glynne

