

the Grey Nomad Times

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In this issue: • Reading the future • The Price still paradise? • Mr Know-it-All

Taking the Big Lap to make a difference

Breast cancer survivor raises awareness of the disease as she travels

While Yvonne Jex enjoys sunsets, happy hours, and magnificent camping spots as much as the next grey nomad, their importance pales into insignificance compared to her primary motivation for travelling. Nearly a decade after being diagnosed with breast cancer, Yvonne is now the National Breast Cancer Foundation's (NBCF) only Roving Ambassador and she works tirelessly to raise awareness of the disease as she criss-crosses the country. During her 13 months of full-time travelling, Yvonne has given numerous talks at Rotary, Lions and Zonta clubs – all as a volunteer – and she has touched the lives of thousands of people. The grey nomad lifestyle has enabled Yvonne to visit the smallest of communities, places where potentially life-saving information about breast cancer might not otherwise have reached. "Our trip is generally planned around my engagements which are scheduled ahead through research and direct contact to as many organisations and



Life on the road means Yvonne can speak at remote towns

clubs as possible," says Yvonne. "On average I do one or two talks per week - occasionally more - and I also pass the information around in caravan parks whenever I can." Yvonne, 59, who travels with her husband Russ and 'Misty' the Chihuahua in a 24' Jayco Heritage, says she has received strong and positive support wherever she has spoken. It was while having her regular mammogram 9.5 years ago that Yvonne learned she had a 2.5cm lump sitting on her rib cage. "Your attitude to life changes dramatically and it really makes you reassess what's important and what's not so important," she said. "Life takes on a whole new perspective." Following her diagnosis,

Yvonne had a lumpectomy followed by six weeks of radiation treatment, then five years of taking a chemotherapy drug, as well as annual mammogram checks and six-monthly oncology checks. Yvonne is urging all grey nomads – both men and women – to have regular checks and to join the NBCF's www.register4.org.au initiative, which aims to collate an online database of 1,000,000 people to help researchers find a cure for breast cancer. "We plan to keep doing this for as long as circumstances allow," said Yvonne. "And I plan to continue to spread the Register4 message no matter where life takes us, and wherever we may be."

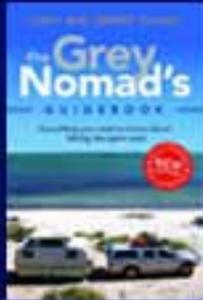
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'We can look after ourselves' – GNT readers

National parks are inherently dangerous places and there is no need for more and more warning signs/safety barriers ... and so say (nearly) all of you. In the last GNT, we reported on the tragic death of a man in WA's Karijini NP. We asked whether more should be done to make wilderness areas safer. An overwhelming 96% of you said 'No', while just 4% wanted to see more barriers and signs erected. "Natural places are dangerous places and we don't want to change that in order to experience another bureaucratic nightmare," said Tony. "Let's keep them as natural as possible." Roger agreed. "I think I would rather see nature as it is ... not fenced in by signs and rails," he said. "A bit of commonsense is all that is needed." Kevin argued that, regardless of what is done, there will always be some who will stretch the boundaries. "More signs would only detract from the beauty of the parks," he wrote. See 'Letters' for more.

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the Grey Nomad Times



Characters of the Road

Ron, Shirley and Spike enjoy life in the bush

Melbournites Ron and Shirley, both 64, travel for up to 3 months at a time (and Spike comes, too).

What do you travel in?

Nissan 3.0L GU Patrol towing a solar-equipped 15.5' Goldstream Off Road Cutaway. We tend to travel back roads/dirt roads and often head off down tracks to get to a campsite.

Where do you camp?

Being bush campers from a very young age, the bush has always called. We do spend a couple of nights in the independent country caravan parks for laundry and restocking the pantry from time to time.

Lifestyle likes?

Spending time outdoors relaxing whilst absorbing what nature provides. In the evenings talking to one another, or fellow campers, around a modest fire and watching the stars light up the night sky. You just don't get that "back to nature" experience in caravan parks.

Lifestyle dislikes?

Those that come into a beautiful bush setting then start up the 'genny' and run it well into the night, but worst of



Ron and Shirley often hit the dirt with their dog, Spike

all those that believe you will enjoy listening to their music/ TV etcetera.

Do you travel differently now?

A couple of years ago a dog, a Pug we call "Spike", came into our lives. Travelling with a dog adds another level to trip planning, however we would not leave him home.

On the-road hobbies?

I enjoy four-wheel-driving over challenging tracks. Shirley enjoys reading and crossword books.

Favourite spot to camp?

We often go to a couple of spots on the edge of the Victorian High Country, but really anywhere that is inland and away from streetlights and the blackout.

Scariest nomad experience?

We got rained in on the Darling River Run and the roads were closed. When we finally received the all-clear it was very much a white-knuckle slippery drive for the 50 plus kilometre trip back to the black top.

Tips or advice?

Always learning from those that have been there and done that, be it on the road or via forums. Acquiring local knowledge from the information centres, servos, pubs etc is invaluable.

Recommend the lifestyle?

It doesn't matter whether you camp out in the bush, or in a caravan park ... just get out there.

Nomads in Brief

Toad in the 'Smoke'

A 'dinner-plate sized' cane toad has been found in a western Sydney backyard. "It was huge and puffed up," said Quakers Hill resident Gwendolyn Spare. "It looked like a small Chihuahua." It is believed the toad was a 'one-off' invader that hitched a lift south from Queensland on a tradies' truck. Experts say cane toads would struggle to survive in Sydney's climate.

Cycle horror

A tragic accident on the Mornington Peninsula has highlighted the dangers cycle-loving grey nomads face. A 55-year-old travel-loving couple on a tandem bike were killed by a truck as it reportedly swerved to avoid a wandering dog.

Pig V Parrot

Rangers in Queensland's Staaten River National Park have killed 3,500 feral pigs in order to protect a threatened parrot living in the area. The porcine pests have reportedly been damaging the habitat of the endangered golden-shrouded parrot.

Slip sliding away?

Work has begun to build a 60m rock wall to protect the beachside caravan park at Kingscliff in northern New South Wales. Massive erosion in front of the park is currently threatening its amenities block.

QUIZ CORNER

GRAB A CUPPA AND TEST YOUR GREY MATTA

Find the power to get going

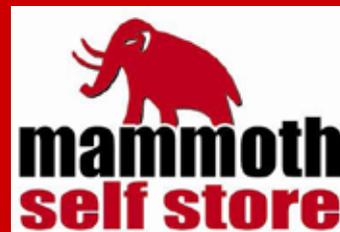
Do You Know



1. Metal is attracted to which Queensland beauty?
2. Which NT town is a landlord's favourite?
3. How many states does South Australia border?
4. How far is it from Sydney to Perth by road?
A) 2,945km: B) 3.950km: C) 4370km
5. Red and yellow come together to pick fruit where?

(Answers on page 4)

the Grey Nomad Times



Letters to the Editor **Share your thoughts with fellow nomads**

Dear Editor,
 Re: relationships on the road (GNT: Issue 8). My husband, Dan, and I sold up in March 2010 and have since covered 28,352kms. We give each other space when we stop to do the things we love to do. I cross stitch and Dan has started doing nail art - winding copper wire onto nail pictures. We both love reading and tramping and fishing so have a lot in common besides our own special activities. We have been married 41 years and this long trip has made us appreciate each other more.

Valerie & Dan

Dear Editor,
 Re: Nullarbor (GNT: Issue 8). My wife and I crossed the Nullarbor from east to west in Feb, 2007. Everyone said we were going the wrong way, the head winds would be hideous, and the temperature would be in the 50s. In fact, we had a tail wind all the way and temperatures of 23-25. The Nullarbor was a breeze ... but a fascinating one.

Dave & Colleen

Dear Editor,
 I travelled the Nullarbor alone in a slightly unconventional VW buggy towing a small trailer (apologies to anyone caught behind me). I camped where I made it to at any particular time, in a "conventional" camping area one night only. I carried enough petrol to get almost the entire distance without worrying about refills. I had a ball.

Don

Dear Editor,
 Re: Jaclyn and Heidi laundry Etiquette (GNT Issue 8). Infuriating though it is, I have

to agree with Jaclyn and would wait. The one time I didn't (after waiting 5 minutes for a drier that had finished) the lady returned and accused me of stealing some of her drying time.

Bren

Dear Editor,
 To any grey nomad who touches my washing, not only will I pull yours back out of that machine, you will find your clothes in tatters. Grow up!

John

Dear Editor,
 I leave my basket on the washing machine and, if it finishes before I get back to the laundry, the next person can put it in the basket. I always go back to my van to do some domestic chore or other for the 25 minutes it takes to do my washing. I've never had a problem.

Chris (Cruising Granny)

Dear Editor,
 Love the 'News'. Heidi, you certainly have a problem. Where's good manners and respect gone from all the people who can't, or don't want to, think of others? We shouldn't have to think FOR others. I would not put myself in this position.

Glen

Dear Editor,
 This is one person I would not listen to. How dare she put another person's laundry on the grass?

Claire

Dear Editor,
 RE: Great Ocean Road toll (GNT Issue 8). Where does it all end? Tourists ARE price-sensitive. We object to having to pay see the whales, to get into national parks, the Apostles (what a joke and rip-

off they are) etc. What we are now paying for is the upkeep of cafes and souvenirs shops at these 'used-to-be' views of our coastline.

June

Dear Editor,
 Here in WA we don't have any toll roads (we have the best roads in Australia) so I don't see why we have to pay to travel on Commonwealth-funded roads when we travel east.

John

Dear Editor,
 Well, I don't mind paying a toll if they use the money to give us some decent facilities but that doesn't happen very often, especially in Western Australia.

Jodie

Dear Editor,
 I would totally object to such a money-making idea. We have just travelled the GOR and definitely would NOT go back if there were a toll.

Lorraine

Dear Editor,
 Obviously Mayor Makin is still working and can well afford to pay tolls/road tax. He has not considered the grey nomad pensioner who has to be careful about travel costs.

Max & Judy

Dear Editor,
 This seems like a good idea to me. If you want decent facilities and services you have to pay for them. Unfortunately Australians are not very good at accepting this principle.

Keith

Dear Editor,
 RE: Gadgets of the Road (GNT Issue 8). If it performs to the hype, count me in.

Jim

Dear Editor,
 RE: people parking too close when free camping (GNT Issue 8). I have also had experience of the "scared of the dark" phenomena. My late husband and I allowed campers on our tropical NQ property. Many's the time that evening saw a tent pitched at the edge of the jungle, and the same tent under our high-set house by morning!

Marianna

Dear Editor,
 What makes me laugh is that they then comment on "getting away from it all" while being a damned sight closer to their neighbours than they would ever be at home!

Wayne

Dear Editor,
 I will be travelling on a budget so free camping will be high on my list and, to me, meeting new like-minded travellers is what it is all about. Perhaps travellers who prefer their own place should carry a large PRIVATE sign and put it up when other vans arrive.

Robyn (Acco)

Dear Editor,
 RE: National park safety (GNT Issue 8). Oh, for heaven's sake! Warning signs on every stone and bump in the path! The only truly dangerous place is one's own home and the most dangerous room is the bedroom. Just look at how many people die in their own bed.

Tony

Dear Editor,
 If they have to do too much in the way of protecting us from ourselves then they will close places and we will all lose. We all need to know our limits.

Bob

the Grey Nomad Times



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Books to get the heave-ho as travellers see the light



In the brave new tech-savvy grey nomadding world of 2011, could our caravans and motorhomes be about to be have a huge weight lifted from their axles ... courtesy of the (at least partial) demise of the traditional book?

Certainly, there are many long-term travellers who now swear by the digital e-book reader which allows numerous publications to be electronically stored. E-paper technology gives the devices excellent screen readability – particularly in bright sunlight – and a long battery life. Unlike a tablet computer, an e-reader is used solely to view files, although some also play MP3s. For grey nomads, who often have the time and the inclination to read a lot, and who are very bulk and weight aware, the e-reader is a potentially invaluable piece of kit. Many e-readers weigh less than



Reading the tea leaves ... is the future of books electronic?

300g – lighter than the average paperback book. Internal memory capacities are typically 2GB – enough for perhaps 1500 books. Most e-readers also support some sort of SD memory cards, boosting storage up to 32Gb or so. And, of course, you can have as many SD cards you like. Although Australian availability of e-books is generally less than in the UK or US, the selection is still very good. You need to be aware though that if you try to buy some e-books on overseas websites you may find they are 'region-locked' and therefore unavailable. With no need for ink, paper or shipping, it would be easy to think that another big advan-

tage of e-book reading would be its relative affordability. Generally though, e-books cost more than \$20 which, if you are used to picking up books from the van park laundry room or second-hand bookshops, is a fair investment. Devices such as Sony's Reader Wifi Touch or the Kobo Touch both cost a little under \$200. They weigh less than 200g, come with a 6" touchscreen and have wi-fi so you can buy e-books anywhere. In the run-up to Christmas some e-book readers are advertised at \$100 or so. Features to look at are memory size, file format, screen size, weight and ease of page navigation.

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Website highlights

Tassie free-for-all

This week our website www.thegreynomads.com.au reported on the growing controversy over free and cut-priced camping on the Apple Isle. With 'boycott' threats swirling around, the Tasmanian government appears to be distancing itself from proposals to make council-operated campsites more costly. It says a review of council-managed camping services will not force grey nomads into caravan parks ... but change is still in the air.

[Read more here](#)

SURVEY

Would you ever consider boycotting Tassie?

Yes

No

Other website must-reads:

Life on the Road

Vote in our photo comp

Losing their bottle

Grand Canyon plastic ban?

Are you sitting comfortably?

Campchairs in the spotlight

You are not alone

Solo travellers hit the road

[Click to comment](#)

Can paradise get out of trouble?

The future of a controversial gas hub project in the Kimberley appears to be in the balance once more. The West Australian Supreme Court this week ruled that notices of compulsory acquisition at James Price Point were invalid because they did not contain a description of the land required ... but debate rages over what the decision actually means. Certainly, it is another blow to petroleum giant Woodside and the state government which have seen the \$30 billion plan attacked on multiple fronts. Many grey nomads and others



Going, going ... not gone yet.

are appalled that this pristine piece of land 60km or so to the north of Broome – and its magnificent camping areas – will be effectively destroyed if the development goes ahead. The Environmental Protection Authority is also due to release its report on the plan next month, and there is growing concern about its environmen-

tal and heritage impact. There are also increasing 'jitters' in some quarters about the economic wisdom of the plan. Nonetheless, WA Premier Colin Barnett remains defiant. He dismissed the impact of the Supreme Court decision, saying the Government will just reissue the notice of intent. "The court says you have to identify the exact 3,000 hectares so the Government will do that," he said. James Price Point, off the road to Cape Leveque, has offered an idyllic campsite for adventurous travellers for years.

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QUIZ CORNER SOLVED

Pic: Batter E Charger (Battery charger)

Do you know answers:

1. Magnetic Island
2. Tennant Creek
3. Four (NT not a state)
4. B) 3.950km
5. Orange

the Grey Nomad Times



Tassie coastal drive simply unforgettable

History, scenery and vineyards aplenty ... this route is a nomad's dream come true

The east coast of Tasmania boasts some of the most spectacular coastal scenery in the world ... and the drive from the holiday village of Orford to the stunning Freycinet Peninsula showcases the best of the best.

After leaving the fishing friendly-town of Orford and skirting Prosser Bay, the Tasman Highway brings travellers to Triabunna, the main departure point for the Maria Island ferry. If your Big Lap is about unwinding and de-stressing, then Maria Island is the spot for you. There are no cars here and so hiking and/or mountain biking are the go. The island is



a bird watchers' paradise and there are also towering cliffs, scenic bays and old ruins to view and explore. If historic buildings are your thing, you can even stay a night at the old penitentiary if you choose. Most visitors prefer to camp in a tent.

After returning to Tasmania proper on the ferry, northward bound travellers will enjoy some truly spectacular views over Oyster Bay as they head their way towards Swansea. Just before arriving at this pleasant town though is Spiky Bridge, which is famed for its unusual 'spike' feature and which was built by convicts in 1841. Indeed, former convicts



Wineglass Bay is a highlight of this incredible drive

built much of the Tasman Highway. History is everywhere in the island state. The Swansea area is surrounded by vineyards and, for that reason amongst many others, is extremely popular with happy hour-loving grey nomads.

About 10kms or so before Bicheno is the turnoff to the pleasant township of Coles Bay, the gateway to Freycinet. Founded in 1916, this is Tasmania's oldest national park and its rugged scenery is world renowned. Here you will find

the famously secluded Wineglass Bay, which was voted by several travel authorities as one of the world's top 10 beaches. It is truly gorgeous.

As you might expect, there are no shortage of awesome walks in the park. The adventurous and energetic might want to take a 2.5 hour return climb over the line of jagged peaks called 'The Hazards' to Hazards Beach itself.

For those who prefer driving, try the trips to Sleepy Bay, Cape Tourville Lighthouse, and the encouragingly named Friendly Beaches.

Wow! Just how much natural magnificence can the human brain appreciate in just a few short days of driving? Well, this is as good a place as any to find the answer.

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ASK JACLYN and Heidi



Our experts solve your grey nomad etiquette dilemmas

Mr Know-It-All is suffering

Dear Jaclyn and Heidi,
We have been on the road for six weeks and my wife is driving me nuts. She has always been loving, kind, and hardworking but living together in the van has made me notice how slow she is at everything. For most of the 35 years we have been married, I have gone out to work and so didn't worry about the domestic duties too much. However, I can now see how poorly things are done. I try to bite my tongue but sometimes I can't stop myself from telling Helena how she would be better off drying up this way, or making the tea that way, or adding the sauce at this point instead of that. She doesn't seem to appreciate my comments but, if I can help her do things more

efficiently, surely she should be grateful.

Eric

I think it is wonderful you are finally taking an interest in what happens in the kitchen and you can probably appreciate a little better how much work Helena has had to get through over the past few decades. Please remember that it will be extra stressful for her now cooking in cramped quarters ... and you peering over her shoulder throwing in the odd word of wisdom probably isn't helping. I appreciate you are keen to help and I am sure you have some good ideas but I suspect your wife is more than capable of running the kitchen successfully. Try to think about her feelings, Eric.

Jaclyn

Welcome to my world, Eric. It is a sad fact that the planet is populated largely by slow, inept and inefficient fools. The fact that it has taken you just a few weeks to work out ways to make your wife's domestic chores easier for her after she has been struggling along for 35 years just proves the point. And then she has got the gall to be unappreciative of your advice! Sounds like you could have done better, Eric. In the short term, the best I can suggest is that you try not to watch her as she works. Perhaps you can read a book, watch TV, or take a walk while she cooks, washes up and makes your tea. Try to be patient. Not everyone's as clever as we are, Eric.

Heidi

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