Let's Do A Lap! Perhaps?



After years of talking about it, planning it, re-planning it, and planning it again, we finally left Perth to begin a new life as semi-retired, itinerant travellers; selling up, repurposing items, and still putting way too much ‘stuff’ into storage (we just know there’ll be another cull to come later) and the rest to the dump.

First destination, Wyalkatchem, to base ourselves to finish up our Wheatbelt Way tour, out further to the east and north, and to look at some relics from the past. That went well, not!

Michael decided to stop at Dowerin for a cup of coffee. So far so good. About to unlock the van, I looked to my left and said, “I don’t like the look of that.” He didn’t know what I meant and I pointed out the front curtain was just moving slightly in a breeze that shouldn’t be there.

No vents or windows left open, no other curtains were moving. On a quick trip up the inside of van, we found out we didn’t have a front near side window!

The gauze and curtains intact, but no window. Whaaaaatt???



We stood in disbelief for a few minutes, looking like stunned mullets. Upon further inspection, we saw that the locks were still locked. Just blew out from the pop rivets holding in the top hinges!

Nothing we could do, but to have our coffee, think about our luck, or lack of it, and then continue on to Wyalcatchem.

The amazing hosts at the Wyalcatchem Travellers Park (the best place to base yourself for a tour of the Wheatbelt Way) Brendan and Michelle couldn't believe it either, asking "How can a whole window fall out?"

Regardless, Brendan leapt to action with a quick trip to his secret stash of just about everything, and loaded up with plastic sheeting and tape, Together he and Michael quickly secured the window space against the elements with a temporary fix.



Just mind-blowing help from hosts of an outback town caravan park. Seriously, these two (Michelle and Brendan) are the best park managers in the country. Nothing is too much trouble for them.

Then onto the phones. Brendan rang a friend, whilst Michael was asking around. Both came to the same conclusion, Northside Caravans back in Perth. They both pleaded for some urgent repairs, but there wasn't any of these type of windows available until June!!!!

It seems they're a custom item imported by Camec. Supposedly from the US, but we suspect on a slow boat from somewhere else.

We'd heard lots of stories on various Facebook discussion groups about post-COVID shortages and delays on caravan parts and extended repair times, but until it happens to you, you just don't consider those things in the grand plan.

It's a bit surreal.

Nothing for it but to spend our time here at the Travellers Park. Not a hardship, but in 35+degree days, it gets a tad wearing, as does the strong winds day and night, rocking the van.

We have done a few touristy day trips and saw some things we didn't notice previously, and there'll be a lot more of that as we contemplate our navels for a few weeks yet.

We know what living in a country town was like after farming in the Adelaide Hills, but found this time, it was different.

First off the food shopping. There is a small general store in town, the owner knows he's the only one, and can charge accordingly. Dowerin is about 20 minutes down the road and has a good butcher, but again, the only one in the area.

A further 25 minutes down the road, on the way back to Perth, is Goomalling. Love the name, and their slogan is "Home of the Possums". That won me over.

It’s a very small shopping centre, well strip, but they are rebuilding the town and gradually getting new businesses built, and refreshing the shops. One fabulous newly renovated one is called The Village Grocer. Very fresh fruit and vegetables, good range of items on the shelves, with a staff with a fabulous attitude.

Bonus is, they don’t charge like wounded bulls. Very reasonable, as the owner says that people are starting to come from outlining areas, and other towns … so they know they’re on a good thing.

Then if you want to do a good weekly shop, it’s off to Northam, a further 20 odd minutes, down the road. They have Coles, Woothworths, Aldi, a Kmart Hub plus various homeware/electrical stores and services.

The only problem with the ‘weekly shop’, is that we’re living in a caravan; where fridge and cupboard space is at a premium.

Our regular 55 litre car fridge/freezer was too heavy for us to bring, when we weighed the car and van before we left, (so that we were legal and would still be covered by insurance, if there was an accident), it was either bring the car fridge, or the baby Q.

The Weber won.

However, we’re used to this remote shopping thing now, and we have a new 15 litre small car fridge/freezer, we’re be able to get frozen food and cart it back.

As for Wyalcatchem there’s no hardship here.



The people here are great, and inviting us into their social life. Happy hour at the Travellers Park is at 5pm sharp for travellers and some of the locals! We bring our drinks, and a huge spread of nibbles is provided by the park hosts.

Friday is Devonshire Tea morning at the craft shop, and since we'll be here a while longer than we envisaged, Michael has offered to volunteer with several organisations, so that he can give back to the town, while we're here.

Would be nice if there was some follow-up rain coming as the farmers need it. They are ready to seed, fertilisers and seeds and past years' crop grain loads are constantly travelling the roads through the Wheatbelt.

It's just a big waiting game.

Meanwhile, another load of washing awaits! The joys of an onboard washing machine. ?