

## CUSTODIAN NEWSLETTER

### WELCOME to 2023 EDITION 2!

We hope that the time you do volunteer for the Club is a positive experience and you will want to continue to provide this valuable service in the future.

Based on feedback from our current Custodians, we are providing some **Frequently Asked Questions** that we receive at NHQ from Park Custodians, with some responses to consider.

Common questions from Custodians

#### 1. What is involved in the Custodian handover?

The handover process to the next Custodian is critical. First time Custodians may find the task a bit daunting, and each park is a little different, so if you are the current Custodian, please take the time to induct the new Custodians. We recommend when taking over, you arrive a day or two earlier (this is a free booking as part of the handover process). Things to consider during handover:

- a. Custodian Folder should be the first thing to hand over with the iPad. This folder contains all the important information relating to that specific RV Park, including contacts and **emergency management plans**. Make yourself aware of the emergency plans, the Custodian is responsible for enacting any plan in an emergency.



- b. iPad operation, including passwords, login, emails, booking system.
- c. Custodian site and setting up the RV (the concrete pad is for the awning, not the RV to park on. Some have sullage inlets, some don't.
- d. Equipment available, please ensure that the fuel cans and gas bottles are full, and equipment is functional.
- e. Identify any issues within the park that could cause problems, such as soft ground, branches that need attention, where taps are, irrigation system operation, fire pit, firewood supply, gas bottles, etc.

- f. Show them how to make a booking when a guest arrives, and where emails are on the iPad and flag any important email information.
- g. Check the supply of stickers, fliers and rules sheets and order more from NHQ if needed.

#### 2. How should the RVs be parked?

Generally, we ask that RVs be parked so that they can be easily driven out in the case of an emergency. For most cases, this would be parked rear to the fence, facing the internal driveway or exit. Some guests will ask to face a different way, whether to facilitate camping with friends, or because they are not great at reversing into tight areas, but even though we have not had an emergency at any park yet (other than medical), imagine that one time when the vehicle and its passengers could not get out of the park in time and perished... the tow vehicle can be parked within the site so that it fits.

#### 3. What do we do if the park is full, and someone arrives late asking to stay?

We have site number limits based on our RV Park approvals, therefore by allowing more than allocated into the park, we are breaching our permit to operate the park. We do get complaints from guests about being crammed in at some parks, so the preference is to keep the numbers at the upper limit, which differs for each park. Please make sure you are aware of the site limits at the park you are looking after. Use the PARK FULL signage when needed.



#### 4. Why are we not allowed to access the guest contact details?

Contact information is managed by NHQ. If you need to contact a guest for a reason, please advise NHQ. If a guest does not show up and has booked, we can follow this up for you.

**5. Can a guest leave their RV at the park for a day or two whilst they are away exploring the region?**

Our RV parks are not storage facilities so people cannot simply leave their van at our parks. If someone books an extended stay and would like to travel for a day or two and leave the RV at the park, this is OK. As long as they communicate this to the Custodians, and they are planning to stay in the rig for most of their booking.

**6. Are the Custodians responsible for the grounds maintenance such as mowing, spraying, weeding?**

Yes, we ask that Custodians undertake grounds maintenance to the best of their abilities, using the equipment provided at the park. We understand that physical and medical issues may prevent this for some Custodians, and we will do our best to assist in these situations, however the cost of using contractors for this regular work is prohibitive. If you believe that the park needs equipment, please let NHQ know.



Director Kim Templeton mowing at Temora RV Park



New vegie garden at Penola



Custodian footpath at Geeveston

**7. Do we have to be in the park all day every day?**

Custodians are important to the operation of the RV Parks, especially in relation to check-ins and check-outs, but we also understand that you need to get away from the park for various reasons. We ask that you be at the park from afternoon check-in onwards. If you are out, please leave the appropriate sign out for those who arrive and want to set up. Some couples will send one person out whilst the other stays on deck to look after the park. Solos find this more difficult which is why we recommend co-custodian roles for solos.

**8. Can I do some work to make the place look nice?**

Yes! If you have ideas to improve the look of the park or the functional area, please let NHQ know. If there is a cost involved, you will need to get prior approval from NHQ before you spend Club money.

**9. What is the process for spending Club money or getting reimbursed for park expenditure?**

As a volunteer you are eligible for reimbursement of legitimate expenses relating to the operation of the RV Park. You need to get verbal or written approval for the expenditure. There is an electronic claim form on the iPad, and printed copies in the Custodian Folder. Retain all receipts and attach or send with the claim form. NHQ will process payments each Thursday, so make sure you have your claim in by Wednesday of the week you want to be paid.

**10. The park signs are out of date or show incorrect information, what should I do?**

Please check the signage and make sure the correct information is being communicated. We do change rules from time to time, but it is difficult to remember which signs have been changed. Let NHQ know if you think there needs to be changes made.

**11. Is smoking or vaping allowed in the park?**

Vaping is considered the same as smoking, and neither are permitted within the park grounds except within the owners RV. Smoking within the RV is only permitted if it does not impact on other guests as well.

**12. What is the situation with pets in the park?**

Pets are most welcome with our guests, but owners need to understand that there are certain rules that must be followed. Dogs must be on leads and under the control of the owner when outside their RV, unless they have a pen for them. Owners must clean up after their pets, this is not the responsibility of the Custodians. Pets are allowed at the Happy Hours if ALL present agree to this (and they must be asked). Not everyone like animals and having them around food and drinks is even less pleasing for some, so be considerate to all.

**13. What are the RV Park portable totes to be used for?**

We provide several portable totes at each park for the use by guests and Custodians. These units are for short term use only by guests to dispose of grey water from their RV grey water tanks. If a guest does not have a satisfactory grey water system (to be discussed in more detail in the next issue), they should be advised that they are not self-contained and not be allowed to stay. These totes should not be left out for guests to access, rather they need to be requested so that you can keep track of who has the units, to make sure they are returned.



Latest grey water tote set-up for parks

**14. Can guests stay longer than the allowed term at the park?**

Not every park has the same maximum length of stay, this is sometimes controlled by the lease arrangements CMCA has with the landowner. Check that you know the maximum stay length for your park. Ingham is only 5 nights and Innisfail is 7 nights. 14 nights is the maximum of any parks at present. It is rare that the maximum of 14 nights is used by guests. If a guest leaves for a week and comes back, it is a new booking period, and the timeframe starts again. We do allow extensions of stays

in extenuating circumstances – for medical reasons or vehicle breakdowns. Any extension needs to be approved by NHQ. Our booking system does allow people to book more than one stay that goes beyond the 14 nights, which is a glitch in the system. We cannot change that at present, so we rely on the custodians to advise us when guests have stayed beyond their allocation.

**15. Can people use the dump point if not staying at the park?**

The dump point is for park guests and CMCA members use only. A member can use the dump point for free if not staying at the park, and this is an opportunity to ask why they are not staying at the park! At Humpty Doo, because it is a private septic system being used, we do not allow non-guests to use the dump point.

**16. What to do if the booking system says the park is full but there are sites still available?**

Call NHQ and discuss. There may be some who have booked but not shown up, or there could be a problem with the booking system, or a group blackout might be in place by mistake.

**17. Should we lock the gates at night?**

For emergency management reasons, the front gates should not be locked when the park is operational. They can be closed at night; however, vehicles must still be able to enter and exit if required.

If for some reason the park needs to be temporarily closed (because we have no custodian for a short period, flooding or severe wet weather, bushfires nearby, etc.), please lock the gates and attach signage to the front gates. Equipment may also need to be moved or stored during this closure, check with NHQ to confirm. The only exception to this rule is at Batchelor NT, this gate is locked each night at the request of the land owner for security purposes.



**18. Is vehicle washing allowed?**

We do not permit vehicle washing, other than windscreens, within the park. There are no dedicated

wash bays at our parks which collect wastewater and remove to a waste system.

**19. What should be done at seasonal parks when closing for the year?**

Some of our parks are seasonal, with permanent closure for 4-5 months each year. When closing for the season end, everything should be locked up, equipment stored within the garden shed, and iPad and keys left as per park arrangements (to be confirmed with NHQ prior to close).

**20. What should be done if I am opening the park for the new season?**

Park opening for our seasonal parks may require some extra ground maintenance to get the park looking good before opening. It is recommended to arrive a few days earlier so this work can get done. You will need to collect the iPad and keys from the designated person (to be confirmed by NHQ). Issues such as waste collection, firewood, and mowing, may need to be arranged by NHQ, and these matters will be discussed prior to or on your arrival at the park.

**21. Do we allow advertising within the notice board?**

The notice board provides information for park guests such as emergency management procedures and other park rules. Limited numbers of business adverts can be included, however these need to get prior approval from NHQ and that approval only lasts a year. Businesses can pay CMCA to advertise or they can provide discounts to CMCA members and place an ad for free. If you are not sure if an ad should be on the notice board, please ask NHQ. Some local community groups might like to put up information as well, however this can become very cluttered and unsightly.

These rules are to make the stay for all at the RV Park safer and more enjoyable. Some are imposed on us by our permits to operate. If you believe that a rule is not suitable, please let NHQ know, don't just ignore the rule or be flexible in the interpretation. Some rules are operational, and some are set by our Board of Directors. We will continue to review our operations at each park and your feedback as Custodians is important to facilitate this.

***Remember, Park Custodians must adhere to the same rules that we impose on our guests. It is not acceptable to have custodians flaunting the very rules we have set in our parks.***

## **PARK CUSTODIAN VACANCIES**

Our Park Custodian Calendar is available on the CMCA website, where you can see upcoming vacancies for each park. All vacancies are shown in **RED**.

We have a few vacancies coming up, so if you would like to undertake the role at any of these parks, please contact NHQ as soon as possible to discuss.

**Boyup Brook WA:**

20<sup>th</sup> September – 9<sup>th</sup> October

31<sup>st</sup> October – 17<sup>th</sup> December

**Gunnedah NSW:**

19<sup>th</sup> September – 1<sup>st</sup> October

**Ingham QLD:**

25<sup>th</sup> September – 31<sup>st</sup> October (close)

**Geeveston TAS:**

30<sup>th</sup> September – 20<sup>th</sup> October

**Humpty Doo NT:**

30<sup>th</sup> September – 31<sup>st</sup> October (close)

**Penola SA:**

15<sup>th</sup> October – 10<sup>th</sup> November

**Railton TAS:**

31<sup>st</sup> October – 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024

If you are looking to be a Custodian, or want to do more of it, please check the **Custodian Calendar** within the RV Parks page of the website. If you are not confident about doing this role on your own, talk to us about the opportunities to be co-custodians at some of our parks.

<https://rvparks.cmca.net.au/Home/CustodiansCalendar>

## **FUTURE EDITIONS**

Please send in your requests for what you want to see in future editions of this newsletter. It is your resource.