

CUSTODIAN NEWSLETTER

Welcome to 2023 Edition 7

This edition's topic is *Ideas for Improvements to our RV Parks*

Here at NHQ we are a long way from most of our RV Parks. Our Park Custodians are our eyes and ears on the ground and are the ones dealing with the park and guests on a daily basis. For this reason, it is important that Custodians advise us of any issues that may arise at the park.

CMCA has a limited budget to develop each RV Park, and the ability to open future parks depends on being able to limit the capital spend on each park. Once a park is open and operating, we can then determine what is working and what might need to be improved, things that are not always obvious when the site is initially inspected.

We get great ideas from our Custodians, not all of them can be implemented, and some may take a bit of time to get into the budget or get contractors engaged, but we do listen and will always try to make our parks better where we can.

In this edition we will look at some of the improvements we have made to our parks since they have opened. You will probably see in your travels how later parks are set up a bit better than earlier parks, this is in response to feedback and operational issues we have learnt from.

Signage

Signage is an important aspect of the operation of our parks. As you all know, people still need to notice the signs, read them, understand the instructions, and then follow them, which appears to be a challenge for many!

We now have park rules, self-containment rules, stop signs, speed signs, dump point signs, water signs, don't wash signs, Stop and see custodian signs, custodian out signs, etc. You can have too many signs!

We have expanded the signs at each park following input from Custodians, and we will continue to monitor this to help improve the operation and safety at our parks.



Figure 1 Signage at Port Pirie

Shelter improvements

Originally the shelters were all open-sided. We have since added solid walls to some sections of shelters in some parks. Please note, due to flooding at some of our parks, we are not able to have solid walls installed. Drop down shades have also been installed at some parks, and we are happy to continue this roll-out if other parks would benefit from this.

Other additions have been fold-out tables, bookshelves, tourist information stands, fire pits and drop-down blinds.



Figure 2 New table at Charleville, provided by local Mens Shed.



Figure 3 Fire pit, new shelter and barbecue at Charleville



Figure 4 New library cabinet at Temora



Figure 7 Custodian footpath at Geeveston



Figure 5 New walls at Innisfail shelter



Figure 8 Firepit and seating at Geeveston



Figure 6 Drop down shades at Temora

Other improvements

We will strive to continue to improve each of our RV Parks over time. Accessing contractors to get quotes can take time, then getting contractors on site can be a challenge, causing delays in implementation of these projects.

Some recent examples are:

Drainage at Innisfail

Those who have travelled in the Far North of QLD would be aware that Innisfail is one of the wettest places in Australia, and therefore we are always trying to balance access to the park during the “dry season” with not damaging the park too much.

Since opening the park, we have extended the gravel driveway, and installed culverts and drainage. Our next project is to install even more drainage around the driveways and some paths to the shelter. This all takes time when contractors have a small window of operation during the dry season.



Figure 9 Innisfail before



Figure 10 Innisfail after further gravel works

Hard stand at Port Pirie

The site at Port Footy Oval had been used as an overflow carpark by the club for home games, and there was a mix of gravel and weeds on the block. With tough dry summers experienced in SA, it is expensive to try and keep lawns alive.

After the construction of the internal driveway, it was decided to lay gravel across the whole site to improve all-weather access and camping.

Port Pirie RV Park is also undergoing an expansion, with a further 4,000m² of gravel being laid next door for an overflow camping area. This space has water points and trees already planted to provide shade in the coming years.



Figure 11 Port Pirie before with just driveways installed



Figure 12 Port Pirie after the new gravel

Amenities at Humpty Doo

As you know, our parks cater to fully self-contained RVs only. Earlier this year, the owner of the Humpty Doo Hotel received a grant to install toilets and showers within the park. CMCA supported this because the cleaning and maintenance of the amenities remains the responsibility of the hotel, not CMCA custodians.



Figure 13 Humpty Doo unisex amenities block

The amenities were completed early in the dry season this year and they have proved to be very popular with our guests. Although basic, they offer an alternative for our travellers, for an extra charge, especially for those without an onboard shower.

This is not something we are looking to install at all our parks though, because we do not want our volunteer custodians responsible for cleaning and maintaining showers and toilets. The cost of contract cleaners would make this option unviable for CMCA unless we charged site fees similar to caravan parks.

Custodian Profile

Lawrence (Webby) & Sally Webb (Q135826). Lawrence is a retired interstate truck driver of 40 plus years and Sally is a retired Teachers Aide and has also worked in Retail over the years. Four years ago, we sold up everything and left our hometown of Laidley Qld. Since then, we have been travelling around Australia. Our caravan is now our home, and we are “living life and love it”.

Volunteering as Custodians suits us well as it gives us a chance to have a break and meet many people. A lot of the people we meet we keep in touch with. Next year we look forward to volunteering at other CMCA Parks on our travels.



Figure 13 Sally and Lawrence Webb (Q135826)

Boyup Brook festival custodians.

The very popular Boyup Brook Country Music Festival is held in February each year. This event runs over one weekend, and it sees thousands of visitors to the country town. The CMCA Flax Mill Caravan Park is very busy during the festival period and for this reason we look to have more than one couple as custodians for that period.



Figure 14 Still smiling! Boyup Brook Festival 2023 Custodians – Paul & Karen Slater (W115419), Wendy & Lin Booth (W59910)

Council staff also assist with siting and checking on guests over the weekend. We have 2 iPads, and the custodians have a dedicated mobile phone for the park use. You would be provided with a level site with access to power and amenities for the duration of your stay.

We have already locked in Wendy and Lin Booth for next year, so if you are interested in assisting them during the Boyup Brook Music Festival for the week of 13-20 February 2024, please contact NHQ to discuss.

Custodian Vacancies for 2023

Ingham QLD: 9th October – 31 October

Penola SA: 29th October – 10th November

Next Newsletter edition

In the next newsletter we will look at entertaining your guests!