**RED CARPET** WELCOME AT RALLY

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ndaberg Recreational Precinct Ground Indaberg Regional Council

### **CMCA 32ND NATIONAL RALLY**

## CMCA members made their mark on Bundaberg at the 32nd National Rally, as Kirstie Bedford discovered

PHOTOS BY KIRSTIE BEDFORD, LIUDMILA SMELYANSKAYA AND ANITA FLYNN Q2119



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From main: Editor Kirstie Bedford driving the Paradise Independence Delxue to Bundaberg for the rally, above; her two boys sitting in the dual cab seat.

undreds of RVs rolled into the Queensland coastal city of Bundaberg in October for the 32nd National Rally, to

a red carpet welcome by the region. On the first day alone more than

600 RVs pulled into the Bundaberg Recreational Precinct grounds, home for the nine days of the rally; while in total, more than 920 RVs attended from all over the country.

A huge billboard welcomed CMCA members on arrival to the city, a literal sign of how we were to be treated during the course of the event.

Mayor Jack Dempsey had been a strong vocal supporter of CMCA, and encouraged locals to do everything they could to welcome members, saying the visit would be a huge economic injection into the

region - and that it was. It's estimated about two million dollars was spent in preparation,

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and over the nine days, by CMCA members, with retail spend at \$363,000.

Rally manager Paul Scully says those are conservative estimations. He says stallholders in the Searles RV Trade Centre alone were pleasantly surprised at the volume of business.

"There was a diverse representation, including a massage business, and mattress retailer, and they were all wildly successful, which was intriguing given the types of businesses participating. "All of those in the trade centre also said there weren't any slow periods, so that was a nice surprise."

Mayor Dempsey was certainly under no illusion as to the impact members had on local trade.

"It was an absolute privilege and honour to have CMCA for the national rally in the area, and certainly the way they contributed both socially and economically. "CMCA is a living national icon that transverses the nation, and certainly all levels of Government should look at this particular group to be able to necessitate how they can do things better in their community."

With support like that, it's clear to see why the city was recently named a CMCA RV Friendly Town.

#### ARRIVAL

I drove to Bundaberg (with stops at parks along the way, which you'll hear about in the January edition) in the luxury of the Paradise Independence Deluxe. While initially nervous about driving the roughly 450 kilometres from Gold Coast (due to it being a 28 foot, seven tonne big rig, and having the family on board), once we got through the busy Bruce Highway, it was smooth sailing all the way! I was surprised at how easy the Paradise was to drive. You just put it in gear, and you're off. It also proved economical and we only filled up once the entire journey.

Perfect for a family of four, our Paradise had a dual cab seat in the back (see photo on page 26) and

a fold down sofa bed. If you have older kids or grandkids, there's also plenty of floor space for a blow-up mattress. Vital for us, during our nine-day adventure was storage to pack away all the suitcases and, in my younger son's case, oversized teddy bear, and the Paradise has it in abundance.

Once parked in our site at the rally (which created some entertainment as I reversed into position), we were out and about chatting with members, including neighbouring Paradise owners Mary and Mike Vigan Q24159, who have had their Paradise for one year, their fourth motorhome. The couple are on the road six months of the year, and as with many who buy a motorhome, Mike says, "I wished we started 10 years ago."

The resounding message from talking to members was, not only that they wished they hit the road earlier, but also that they want to see as much of Australia as possible. Of the many members I personally spoke to, everyone had travelled the length of the country at least once, in varying directions, and various ways, and not just viewed great sights along the way,

### THE VOLUNTEERS

In total, 210 volunteers were involved in the rally, doing everything from taking members to their site, assisting with directions around the rally, to first aid. Without the volunteers, this event would simply not be able to happen.

To be a volunteer for the 33rd National Rally in Gunnedah in NSW contact NHQ at suzannemurray@cmca.net.au



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*From top:* Richard Mainey, Garry Lee and Murray Wall at the CMCA rally. Below, Trish Johnston and Lizzy Saltmarsh in the trade centre.



but participated in all manner of festivals, events and activities themselves. While most travel north during the winter months, a bit of rain certainly doesn't bother anyone, and nor was it going to be an issue at the rally, which was just as well!

#### **RALLYING MEMBERS**

The grounds were awash when members arrived, but whether it was disc bowls on the vast lawn, or meandering around the food court, members were out and about chatting with others; and as is the nature of these types of things, the umbrellas were soon up for a different reason, as the sun blazed down, providing glorious 30 degree days.

When not learning from talking to each other at the rally, there were no shortage of more formal sessions, whether it was a dog



From above left: CMCA members Monica and David McPherson and Heather and Michael Puller on the glassbottom boat heading to Lady Musgrave Island. Snorkelling off the Lady Musgrave Experience.

education seminar with Australian dog whisperer, Chris de Aboitiz, who was providing tips on how to keep your dogs under control while travelling, to a battery and low voltage techtalk and sessions on safety on the road.

In the Searles RV Trade Centre, Bundaberg North Burnett Tourism offered day trips from tasting the famous Bundy Brews, to exploring its backvard of the Southern Great Barrier Reef - and if the queue to book was anything to go by, it was clear this was going to be a win-win for everyone.

#### **ALL ABOARD**

One of my personal highlights was a day trip with members to Lady Musgrave Island with Lady Musgrave Experience. Besides both of my children 'feeding the fish' shall we say, their stomachs soon settled and before we knew it we were walking around the 34.6 acre (14 hectare) coral cay on Australia's Great Barrier Reef. The colours are simply stunning. Crystal clear blue water and the island fascinating, with its enormous number of black noddy tern birds nesting in abundance in the Pisonia trees. Never before have the boys approached a bird so close, which didn't so much as flinch.

The island is a national park and was named after the wife of a colonial governor of Oueensland, Sir Anthony Musgrave, and can only be reached by boat. The boat ride takes about two and a half hours, and beside the birds, trees and coral, it's untouched. You can freedom camp on the island, but numbers are limited and the island has no fresh water supply, and only a composting toilet.

Our transfer back to the big boat was via a glass bottom boat, providing the perfect chance to see the stunning coral and sea life of the southern Great Barrier Reef. Concerns about the vulnerability and pollution of the reef could not be seen here, the fish were vibrant and active, and the coral a vast array of colour.

Then it was a chance to kick back and enjoy a gourmet lunch, before snorkelling with turtles and in the case of our group, a reef shark!

Ladv Musgrave Experience was founded by Brett Lakey, and it's certainly an experience you'll never forget. Lakey also offers an overnight option to sleep on the reef, and has plans to add a luxury arm to the business.

#### **BACK IN BUNDY**

Back in Bundy, we hit the grassed food court, where Ed's Tucker Box was a huge hit with members, with queues up to 30 people deep at times. The food is prepared by former chef Eddie Delves. who dished up such delights as Peking duck pancake with hoisin, cucumber and spring onion; and angel chicken pieces wrapped in bacon, crumbed and shallow fried served with a

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mango sour cream, so it was little wonder the queues were so long.

The food court area was one of two seated areas where members could congregate, and as Paul Scully notes, "people do come to the rally to talk about life on the road and it's a great opportunity to talk to people with a similar outlook."

He says having two lay days was another great way to ensure people have time to chat.

Waking the next morning, I watched the disc bowls and then took a walk around the enormous site, again talking to members and reflecting on all the work which has gone into this mammoth event.

There were people in craft breakout rooms (including the selfproclaimed 'stitch and bitch' group), dozens of people buying from the trade centre (as mentioned earlier), people listening to poetry, seminars, and others simply having a cuppa.

Everyone a proud CMCA member. Proud of what the Club is doing, or has achieved, and proud to say they are part of it.

All members, of course, have varying views on the RV they drive/ or should drive, and how many kilometres you should do per day, or how long you are on the road as this is all based on personal preference, but I quickly realised most share the same dream – to simply get out as see as much of this great country as we can. Something I certainly plan to do more of.

### **BUNDABERG RALLY DISC BOWLS RESULTS**

#### MIXED TRIPLES

**1st Sydney Wanderers** Lead: Lyn Russo N40139 2nd: Svd Bell N10455 3rd: Pat Russo N40139

2nd Wide Bay Wanderers Lead: Audrey Ambrose N49771 2nd: Paul Jensen Q73126 3rd: Peter Ambrose N49771

3rd: Lakelanders 1 Lead: Glennis Wood N84330 2nd: Daryl McPherson N52896 3rd: Dough Stott N84330

#### LADIES TRIPLES

1st: Darling Downs Drifters 1 Lead: Marg Doherty Q50970 2nd: Helen Berlin Q33624 3rd: Beryl Watt Q44885

2nd: Lakelanders 1 Lead: Clare Holmes N82914 2nd Gail Stedman N18738 3rd: Glennis Wood N84330

3rd: Lakelanders 3 Lead: Margaret Kelly N35803 2nd: Janet Payne N95955 3rd: Enid Leech N22133

#### MENS TRIPLES

1st Sydney Wanderers 1 Lead: Syd Bell N10455 2nd: Alan Larsen N51271 3rd: Pat Russo N40139

#### 2nd: Suncoasters 2

Lead: Tom Hawke Q42395 2nd: Noel Sorrensen Q6178 3rd: Leo Aldridge Q27120

3rd: Southern Explorers 2 Lead: Bill Roberts V45792 2nd: Guido Colla V73211 3rd: Greg Greenwood V25743

#### SINGLES

Ladies Champion: Beryl Watt Q44885

Mens Champion Joseph Mancini N77351 Champion of Champions: Joseph Manini N77351

#### From top: Lakelanders Newcastle at the disc bowls; members enjoying the sunshine during

happy hour and in the foodcourt area at the CMCA rally; winning photograph submitted Diana Worner.



- Highly Commended:

- Highly Commended:
- Category C Taking Flight

### Doc Payne N95955

### Category D - Natures Aviators

- Highly Commended:

#### **CMCA 32ND NATIONAL RALLY**

### **BUNDABERG PHOTOGRAPHY WINNERS**

Category A - B is for Bundaberg Margaret Cook W74379 • 1st: Steve Knott V71774

Category B - Agriculture Cliff Everson Q83318 • 1st: Camilla Barker Q42360

• Highly Commended: • 1st - Marja Zids N85377

Lvnda Woods N65113 • 1st: Diana Worner N480

#### Category E - CMCA Media

- Highly Commended: Doc Pavne N95955
- 1st: Jacqui Everson Q83318
- **Overall Winner**
- Diana Worner N480



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JOURNEY 🔁

Bundaberg is a city within Queensland's broader Wide Bay-Burnett region. The city is on the Burnett River, approximately 385 kilometres north of the state capital, Brisbane, and 15 kilometres inland from the coast. Bundaberg is known for its food and wine, and as a gateway to some of

Australia's best natural wonders. It is home to Bundaberg Rum, the Bundaberg Distillery, Bundaberg Botanic Gardens as well as the Hinkler Hall of Aviation, dedicated

to solo long-distance pilot Bert Hinkler. The area also lays claim to the internationally-renowned Southern Great Barrier Reef and Mon Repos Turtle Rookery. Visit www.bundabergregion.org



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## BE ENTERTAINED

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