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Mar 2020

Poetry 4MOTION



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Going Viral

How the world can change in a matters of weeks: From fires to floods and a global pandemic, the summer of 2020 will long be remembered as an annus horribilis. Here's hoping the rest of the year doesn't go further down hill...

Speaking of going viral, news about the mass extinction of toilet rolls on supermarket shelves, people walking about covered in plastic sheeting and with cut-out water bottles on their heads, and dogs being walked while wrapped Laura Palmer-like reinforce my opinion the average person isn't very bright. Thank goodness you are well above average!

But (more) seriously, I do wonder when this all will end. Already, I'm aware of RV manufacturers with supply-chain issues and perhaps it won't be too long before some need to lay-off workers. Meanwhile, tanking financial markets will mean shrinking super and investment returns, so buyers will probably delay purchase decisions and both dealers and manufacturers will suffer. Talk about a vicious circle. Only those people and businesses that are cashed-up are in a strong position in what has quickly become a buyer's market. Meanwhile, the rest of us do whatever we can to get by. However, I urge you to balance pessimism with optimism, take a long-term view and not pull closed your purse strings (you do use a purse with strings, don't you? My silk one is looking decidedly like cheap suede these days).

The Federal Government has been fixated on budgetary surplus despite previous encouragement from the Reserve Bank to dip into it or even abandon it in favour of a national stimulus program. That the Government has now decided to act to some degree is positive, but as travellers we can all do our bit with whatever resources we have to help keep our Country's lights on. Bushfire-ravaged and flood-affected communities need our support in any ways possible, from cups of coffee and fuel purchases to overnight stays, meals, groceries and entrance fees.

In this issue's News section is the story of Adam and Letitia Twist from Suncoast Caravan Services, who are organising a mass tag-along tour from Stanthorpe to Miles from 13 to 22 March. The idea is to travel, have fun – and spend in small towns. If you can't join them perhaps look at organising something with your friends to just head out and sprinkle much-needed Financial Fertiliser across needy communities closer to your home.

Speaking of that, I'm looking at shifting our 2020 iM+C reader Weekend in October to one such community – Corryong in Victoria – home to the likes of country music star Lee Kernaghan and Horrie the Wog Dog (a terrier who was unofficial mascot of the 2/1st Machine Gun Battalion in WW2). Home to fewer than 1400 people, it's just the sort of off-the-beaten-track town that could really benefit from a well behaved horde of RVers like us descending on it for a few days. What do you think?

Also, we're heading back to NZ in November to repeat our highly successful, 14-day Auckland to Christchurch 'Taste of New Zealand' escorted motorhome tour. Watch for details next issue. Then, in April 2021 we're looking at our first 14-day 'Tastes of the South Island' tour, which will be a great follow-up adventure. It's still in the planning stage, so watch for details later in the year.

In this issue you'll see that our Project Polly needs to find a new home. We don't really want to see her go, but as Blackadder said, "Need's must when the Devil vomits on your eiderdown". See the ad and if interested, 'gimme' a call on 0414 604 368 or email richard@imotorhome.com.au.

Also going is the current iMotorhome app. This is the last month you'll be able to use it, but a new and more versatile app isn't far away; one that will include many other functions, work across all mobile device types and doesn't need to be downloaded from any app store. In fact you'll be able to share it with friends via email, text message or social media. In the mean time you'll be able to download all issues from our **website** and/or read them online and also download them from **Issuu.com**. While the the transition will be a little disruptive, the end result will be well worth it. Thanks in advance for you patience.

Finally, this issue we bid Farewell to Malcolm Street, who has graced our pages since the beginning, eight years ago. Commercial pressures mean he can't serve two masters and so another chapter closes.

Stay safe, positive and keep travelling. If you're coming to the COVI Show, look for me and Mrs iM+C in our red shirts and say g'day. And say g'day and goodbye to Malcom, and thank him for his years of great reviews.

Richard

WANTED



New Home for Project Polly

After five years it's time for Project Polly to find a new home. She's not worn out her welcome, it's just we've never really had time to do her justice and so at 10 years of age it's time for her to move on. Here's your chance to own a piece of Australian motorhoming history – and gain some real campfire kudos!

The Good

Polly is a 2010 Ford Transit van conversion by Talvor, the manufacturing arm of Apollo Rentals. In Apollo-speak she was a Euro Tourer and did just under 250,000 km in the rental fleet over 5 years. While that sounds a lot, remember the Transit was designed as a commercial vehicle and an average 1000 km a week of mainly country driving wouldn't have been too taxing. We've added about 65,000 km in the last 5 years and that was almost all highway driving, bringing her total to just under 310,000. The engine starts easily and runs sweetly. And while the six-speed manual gearbox won't suit everyone, it shifts easily and because of the lowish overall gearing, Polly is a real top-gear cruiser on the open road – up hill and down dale.

Power comes from a 2.4-litre turbo-diesel producing 103 kW and 375 Nm, driving the rear wheels. Importantly, her GVM is 3550 kg, meaning you only need a car licence. Standard features included remote central locking (3 units), air-con, power steering, leather steering wheel, cruise control, electric windows and mirrors, anti-lock brakes, hill-holder, electronic stability control and traction control. She also has a (manual) reversing camera, carries 80-litres of fresh water and about the same of grey, plus there's a 17-litre Thetford toilet cassette. Internal 12-volt power comes from a 100-watt AGM house battery.

Inside, the Apollo fit-out is rental-basic but tough and functional. Standard equipment includes a three-burner gas cooktop, rangehood, sink with folding tap, microwave, compressor fridge, air-conditioning/heating and a TV with CD/DVD player plus Winegard aerial. The bathroom is 'wet' and as basic as they come, with just a swivelling loo and flexible hose shower, although we've added some soap/shampoo holders. The beds are single but can be made up into a giant king, while the table is a removable Lagun unit. There's good



storage and plenty of space under the beds for plastic containers for bulky items. Oh, it also comes with a small safe, power lead and a 4.5 kg LPG cylinder.

Polly has regularly been serviced, driven gently by us and, as the iMotorhome Project vehicle, received many upgrades. In no particular order these include:

- Solar – 1 x 100W and 1 x 50W panels
- Webasto diesel heater with programable digital controller
- Redarc Manager 30 battery management system that's lithium ready
- A real Heki roof hatch in place of the useless standard unit
- New windscreen, windscreen surround and front respray
- Restored and repainted roof
- New headlight units and upgraded bulbs
- Hella light bar
- Side and rear-door insect screens
- Isotherm 12V compressor fridge
- Extra slide-out wire pantry
- 12V Scirocco fan with timer
- LED internal lights
- Towel rails
- Custom set of Solar Screens for all windows
- Louvred cab window vents
- Kenwood sound system with hands-free Bluetooth and music streaming



- Tow bar rated at 2500 kg
- Reverse Alert rear parking sensors
- Near-new Continental front tyres
- Genuine Ford wheel trims
- Mrs iM+Cs hand-made curtains, throughout
- New fresh water hose

The Bad

- The Reverse Alert system currently isn't working.
- The old Suburban hot water system is temperamental and really in need of replacing
- The replacement headlights aren't properly aligned
- Sliding side door needs new rollers so central locking consistently locks
- Needs a grey water hose
- Expected signs of wear and tear from 5 years as an Apollo Rental vehicle
- Usual squeaks and rattles

The Ugly

Price? \$40,000 – no hagglers.

Interested? Of course you are! Email **richard@imotorhome.com.au** or call 0414 604 368 to arrange an inspection and test drive.

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RV FRIENDLY

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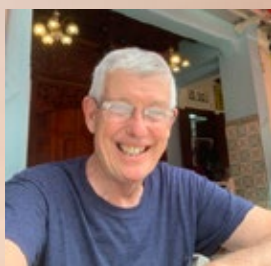
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Download the app today to enhance your reading experience!
All back issues can be found [HERE](#)**

Publisher/Editor

Richard Robertson

(+61) 0414 604 368

richard@imotorhome.com.au



Road Tests

Malcolm Street

(+61) 0418 256 126

malcolm@imotorhome.com.au



Technical

Allan Whiting

(+61) 0410 677 966

allan@imotorhome.com.au



Available on
Your Computer

Contributors

Robert 'Bobby' Watson

Colin Oberin

Published by iMotorhome Pty Ltd
PO Box 1738, Bowral. NSW 2776. Australia.
ABN: 34 142 547 719
T: +614 14 604 368
E: info@imotorhome.com.au
W: www.imotorhome.com.au

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Haere Mai

I'm not sure why but this time of year always seems busy on the Recreational Vehicle show circuit. Just prior to writing these words, the South Island Motorhome Show has finished and not too far away is the Covi Motorhome, Caravan and Outdoor Supershow, which will be happening 13-15 March. I know it's not an RV show as such, but the NZMCA's National Rally is happening in between, at Oamaru over the weekend of 6-8 March. Anyone who has to get to all three events for some reason is going to be very busy. It's the same across the Tasman; just about all the state capital cities have a major show this time of year and there are plenty of regional shows happening in between. Some manufacturers I know spend a considerable amount of time just doing the shows.

In case you are wondering I, along with Mr and Mrs iM+C Publisher will be heading to the Covi Show. I've had a sneak peak at the list of exhibitors and it looks like there will be a considerable variety of motorhomes and caravans on display, from not only a good selection of manufacturers but also a variety of countries. New Zealand is somewhat unique in the world on the RV front, because in addition to the local manufacturers, Australia, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, Spain and North America all have a presence. If you look carefully there's also a bit of Chinese and South African influence as well. Not even nearby Australia has that much on offer.

In addition to new motorhomes, there are a few new base vehicles around as well. Well nearly new. Volkswagen's Crafter is starting to make a presence amongst the motorhome builders, while Toyota's new 'long bonnet' HiAce is making a difference in the campervan world. Up until now, the engine in the Hiace

made swivelling seats a difficult engineering problem, but the new model with the engine up-front makes that much easier for campervan manufacturers. Finally, we are waiting with interest to see when Fiat's nine-speed gearbox makes an appearance in the Ducato.

Unfortunately this is actually going to be my last column and review in the pages of iMotorhome+Caravan. Due to circumstances partly beyond my control I have to move on.

During my time here I have seen the NZ industry expand considerably. To take just one example, when I first met Jonas Ng, proprietor of Zion Motorhomes, he had just two Dethleffs motorhomes on his stand. Now, Zion Motorhomes has a purpose built showroom at Pokeno that expanded rapidly next door not long after it was built. Zion isn't alone in this sort of success story and it's been interesting to see the NZ RV scene change and grow considerably.

Despite moving on, I'll still be taking in keen interest in the NZ RV market and might file future updates on what is happening in Kiwi land. Indeed, I have a motorhome booked for the Covi Show and a few days afterwards touring around. See you there if you happen to be visiting the show, or on the road.

Haere Ra.

Malcolm





This is living

Just arrived. The latest in premium motorhoming with the 2019 Bürstner Lyseo Harmony Line. New features of the range include a more spacious entertaining area with twin couch layout, and a groundbreaking drop-down island bed. Create your 'apartment on the road' with a choice of interior styles in Bürstner's innovative *wohntühlen* design combined with premium fittings for a modern, comfortable home away from home.



Come and see the new Lyseo range at our sales centre in Auckland and Christchurch.



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Reimo Australia Opens Southern Highlands' Store

Reimo Australia has opened a combined retail store, warehouse and RV installation and service centre in Mittagong, in the Southern Highlands of NSW.

Reimo, founded in Germany 1990, is the global leader when it comes to everything from complete campervan conversion kits and pop-top roofs to ad-hoc interior furniture, seats and general camping equipment. As you'd expect, VW Transporters and European vans and people movers are well catered for, but so to is the venerable Toyota HiAce.

The company has a massive presence each year at the Dusseldorf Caravan Salon, where it runs both a retail accessory shop and displays a range of vehicles featuring its many conversions and individual items. In short, Reimo is the king of the van conversion world and now has more than 22,000 products and accessories, available through dealers and online.

Reimo also has an Australian connection, with local man Frank Maley being a cousin of the founder. In conjunction with head office, Frank set up Reimo Australia – the first branch outside Germany – and has just opened a combined retail, wholesale and service outlet at 2/28 Priestley Street, Mittagong, NSW.

The store, which is still in its fit-out phase, is in a large industrial unit that when complete will provide a retail



shop and extensive product display area – think tents, bed-seats, all-in-one camping boxes, accessories, etc – plus a workshop capable not only of installing Reimo products, but also taking care of general RV servicing and repairs.

“Moving into these new premises means Reimo Australia can provide a one-stop shop for people after just about anything for their van, campervan, motorhome or caravan, and even 4x4s,” Frank said.

“It’s great to finally have commercial premises we can operate from and that are convenient for people from Sydney and Canberra, as well as anyone travelling up or down the Hume Highway. Not only does it give us a base to run our retail, online and wholesale business

NEWS

from, we have secure off-street parking and can handle three vehicles in our workshop at any one time. We can supply and install a wide range of products, plus do partial or full van conversions and general RV servicing. We're also working in conjunction with a local automotive service centre that can carry out a full range of mechanical services, meaning we can take care of pretty much any customer needs."

While Frank and his team are busy stocking, sorting and fitting out the industrial unit, Sales Manager Angela Sumners is making sure the business continues to tick along.

"Until now our business has mainly been wholesale to dealers and RV service people, plus online for people looking for specific kits, spare parts or accessories. Now, we're adding a retail outlet plus a showroom that soon will display a wide range of Reimo products and accessories. And on top of that is the installation ability, plus general servicing," Angela explained.

"My job will increasingly see me out and about, visiting dealers and RV manufacturers as we seek to expand Reimo's presence across the local industry".

Reimo Australia is currently in a 'soft-launch' phase with much work still to be done, including exterior signage and the interior display areas. While aesthetically it's a work-in-progress, the installation and service side is already operational.

To celebrate the opening, Reimo is offering 10 percent off its products until 31 March, whether you buy in-store or order online.

To take advantage of this offer and/or find out more about the Reimo product range, call 0414 422 200 (a landline is coming soon), email sales@reimo.com.au, find them online at www.reimo.com.au or visit at 2/28 Priestley Street Mittagong, NSW.

STOP PRESS Open Day!

**Saturday 28 March • 9:00 am to 1:00 pm
SAUSAGE SIZZLE • OPENING SPECIALS**

Come and meet the team and check out the amazing Reimo product range!



Hybrid-Power Caravan Launching Soon

Australian Motor Homes and Caravans (AMHC) has revealed it has been working in partnership with Condor Caravans to release a new type of hybrid caravan; one with dual power supplies for extended off-grid living. Launching in Sydney at the 2020 Caravan Camping Holiday Supershow, from 28 April to 3 May, the Condor Land Bruiser Hybrid will feature a 'Launch Special' tow-away price of \$99,990.

"The new van is based around Condor's 21-foot Land Bruiser model, but where it stands out is the 'hybrid' power system that's being installed. It will still have the standard 12V and 240V installation from the factory, but also a 200 Ah, 48V lithium system running in parallel, giving it the capability to run all 240V appliances – including the air-conditioning – for up to 10 hours," Mat from AMHC said.

"As far as we know there are no other manufacturers adding this as a factory option and most importantly, none of the manufacturers' warranties that come with the Condor van are affected by the installation of the lithium system".

Final details are still to be advised, but an extensive array of solar panels is said to be able to recharge the lithium system in a single day should it be completely drained overnight.

Other features of the Hybrid Land Bruiser include a 3.7-tonne, fully galvanised chassis by G&S; true off-road independent suspension with an airbag option, plus all-terrain wheels and tyres, security lights and more. Inside, under-floor heating, a large Smart TV, induction and convection cooking, a 3000-W inverter and more are planned, providing all the comforts of home.

iMotorhome is planning a review of the Hybrid Land Bruiser, hopefully for the May issue, but if you can't wait for that or the Sydney Show, call Australian Motor Homes and Caravans on (02) 4948-0433 for details.



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Younger People Now Less Likely To Drive

New automotive data from Roy Morgan shows significant changes to who is likely to be behind the wheel in Australia, with the proportion of people in younger age groups driving decreasing while the proportion in older age groups driving rises.

The data also reveals that of those intending to purchase a new vehicle in the future, a growing proportion are older Australians.

As of December 2019, the age group with the highest proportion of vehicle drivers is 50-64, with 93%. This was followed by those aged 65-69 (91%), 35-49 (91%), 70-74 (89%), 75-79 (86%), 30-34 (84%), 25-29 (74%), 80+ (71%), 18-24 (63%) and 16-17 (32%).



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Predator A Frame CRN48985 Rated to 3.5tonnes

Ready Brute Elite
Towbar & Brake Combo



Readybrute A Frame CRN 50255 Rated to 2.2tonnes



Northcoach RV Range of Base Plates CRN50112 Rated to 3.5tonnes

Big announcement for Northcoach RV... Our Base Plates and A Frames are ADR certified

After an intensive eighteen month programme, Northcoach RV is pleased to announce the ADR 62/02 certification of its Predator and Ready Brute A Frames plus the full range of Base Plates.

Call us on 0409 581 471 to discuss all your towing needs.

Iveco and Sunliner Launch New Daily 35S

Iveco says in a press release that a changing demographic within the motorhome market has prompted it to release a new Daily cab-chassis variant in Australia, the 35S.

Working with leading motorhome manufacturer, Sunliner, the Daily 35S cab chassis is being used by Sunliner as a platform for two of its smaller motorhome bodies, the Pinto and Switch, offering buyers a more affordable entry point into motorhome ownership. Sunliner said that while Grey Nomad couples were once the mainstay of motorhome buyers, there was now an increasing number of customers who were choosing to travel alone.

“There has been a notable increase in recent years of buyers who are single but still wishing to travel and enjoy the motorhome lifestyle,” A spokesperson said.

The Daily 35S has many of the same features as its larger 45C and 50C stablemates (widely used in Sunliner’s larger motorhomes), providing a range of specifications that are ideal for motorhome applications.

“There’s a strong preference from our customers for a rear-wheel-drive platform and they also want a

vehicle that’s easy to drive. It needs to be a seamless transition from a passenger car to the motorhome. Features such as the full automatic transmission, a wide range of safety equipment and technology, including reversing camera, Bluetooth connectivity and so on, are familiar to buyers and this is the sort of equipment they expect in their motorhome. The Daily 35S provides all of these benefits.”

One area where the 35S differs from bigger variants is in the engine department. It uses a smaller 2.3-litre, turbocharged and intercooled diesel producing 92 kW and 320 Nm. However, with a GVM of just 3800 kg those figures are more than sufficient, especially when coupled with the 8-speed fully automatic transmission. Another difference is single rear wheels, reducing running costs and making tyre pressure checking easier.

Combined with the more compact dimensions of the Pinto and Switch bodies, the 35S-based motorhomes strike a great balance between manoeuvrability, good levels of space for extended periods on the road, and maintaining excellent drivability. To find out more visit sunliner.com.au.



Apollo Releases Windsor Motorhome Range

An unexpected arrival at the recent Melbourne Show was the first of an all-new 'value priced' motorhome range from caravan manufacturer, Windsor (part of the ever-growing Apollo brand). Below is a press release that arrived just as we were going to press, so watch for more details in upcoming issues.

Windsor is excited to follow up the release of the Daintree with two more motorhomes, the Flinders & Simpson as well as a campervan, the Otway. With names deriving from iconic Australian travel destinations, the range accommodates modern day adventurers offering a future-driven approach in style, design, functionality & build quality. Apollo's National Marketing Manager, Simon Kerr, said Windsor is excited to present an Apollo-built range.

"Windsor's new product range boasts a quality build second to none. Backed by Apollo who have successfully tried & tested their rental fleet of RVs over millions of kilometres throughout Australia. With a range of floorplans & styles available, we encourage those who are ready to start adventuring Australia but are still deciding what RV type is right for them to find out more."

Windsor Flinders

With impressive design and construction technologies, the all new Windsor Flinders motorhome boasts quality features and innovation. Built on a Fiat Ducato chassis owners will enjoy a smooth & powerful ride, with the bonus of being able to drive on a standard car license. The Flinders offers a spacious dual-purpose layout with a fully appointed kitchen including quality brand appliances, a rear of the RV U-shaped leatherette lounge space and a separate shower & bathroom

Windsor Simpson

The Simpson is designed for those who enjoy the comforts of home on the road without compromising on space. The ability to increase your living space at the touch of a button with the queen bed sliding outwards is an attractive addition that can be actioned with ease. The Simpson layout is well-designed for everyday use with a full-size bathroom at rear of the motorhome, clever easy access storage compartments and optimal bench space.

Externally, both motorhomes are visually impressive with striking Windsor decals against fresh white composite panels of one-piece floor, walls & roof.

Motorhome customers will get excited about a professionally designed, colour palette & style, with the option to add personal touches from an attractive selection of modern interior & exterior features.

Windsor Otway

Leading the way for future-driven Windsor campervans, the Otway is the ultimate fully self-contained home on wheels for the avid adventurer. Conveniently compact without compromising on space, the layout boasts a 2-person living zone equipped with captain seats, additional leatherette couch with dining, shower & bathroom, ample bench space, easy access internal & external storage plus a spacious rear bed. Built on a Fiat Ducato system, Otway owners will enjoy a smooth & powerful ride, with the bonus of being able to drive on a standard car license.



VEHICLE

Fiat Ducato
6 speed Comfort-Matic gearbox
2.3 litre Multi-Jet turbo diesel
Max Power: 180hp/130kW @ 3500rpm
Max Torque: 400Nm @ 1400rpm
Fuel Tank: 125 litres (diesel)

CONSTRUCTION

Finish - Gel-coated interior and exterior walls
Roof & walls - Single piece structural composite panel
Floor - Single piece structural composite panel
Composite panels - with insulative foam core
Windows double glazed acrylic

APPLIANCES

Air conditioner, 2.4kW reverse cycle roof top
Stove with grill & oven (1 electric / 2 gas burners)
Fridge 188L absorption (12V / 240V / Gas)
Water Heater 14L (Gas / 240V)
Microwave 25L

POWER & ELECTRICS

Reversing camera with colour monitor
House battery 1x 100Ah deep cycle, fully sealed
BMPRO Battery management system
Solar, 170W panel & regulator
Stereo Player with Bluetooth connectivity
Power inlet & outlet 240V
Power outlet 12volt & USB charge outlets
Lights above entry door and under awning

EXTERNAL FEATURES

Awning, 4.9m windout cassette style
Antenna, King Jack directional over-the-air HDTV
Gas cylinder, 2x 4.5kg
BBQ gas bayonet fitting
Entry door, secure 4 point locking and safety mesh
Roof hatch to living area with LED lights
Entry grab rail with LED illumination

KITCHEN & PLUMBING

Fresh water, 145 litre storage
Grey water, 145 litre storage
Water level monitor
Shower external, hot & cold supply
Pressurised town water connection
Kitchen sink, stainless steel with flickmixer
Laminated plywood benchtops
Kitchen cabinets and drawers

LIVING AREA

Forward facing dinette with adjustable table
Club lounge with east-west electric drop down bed above
Television, 24" (60cm) 12V HD LED DVD/TV

ENSUITE

Vanity with undermount hand basin & flickmixer
Mirror to cupboards above vanity
Fully enclosed shower with frosted glass door
Swivel cassette toilet 18L with electric flush



windsormotorhomes.com.au

*Note: Please be advised this is a preliminary document, and all models and specifications are subject to change without notice.

Doc# 040320

Grass Roots Tag-Along

Family-owned and operated Suncoast Caravan Service in Queensland has weighed in with plans to help drought and fire-affected communities. Owners Adam and Letitia Twist will soon be hitting the road with their Grass Roots Tour, which will see up to 50 caravans wending their way through towns in the state's south-west.

"We were trying to work out how we can help communities and thought the best way would be doing what we caravanners do best – going away in the caravan," Letitia said. "But instead of just doing a trip, we decided to create a tagalong."

It is hoped that up to 110 people will join the 2000 km tour from Stanthorpe to Miles between March 13 and 22.

"The purpose is to raise awareness of how caravanners can support drought and fire-affected communities by travelling, visiting and staying," Letitia explained. "Every dollar you spend when on the road supports local communities throughout Australia." Adam and Letitia will be interviewing local business

people, townspeople and dignitaries about what their town has to offer and how vital it is that caravanners keep visiting, even during drought.

"To make the trip a little different and give directly back to local communities, we are running a Sponsored Happy Hour event in each town," Letitia explained.

These events will give tagalong members the opportunity to engage with community groups including Rotary Clubs, schools, show societies and even a polo club, she said.

"We are thrilled to be able to support these groups directly within each community and are grateful for the support of multiple sponsors to make it possible."

To raise awareness on how much travellers spend when caravanning, the group will tally receipts and present figures for each town. It is also hoped the tour will inspire caravanners to get back out on the road and travel locally to help get drought and fire-affected communities back on their feet during tough times. For more information, email marketing@suncoastcaravanservice.com.au



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Phone / Fax: (03) 50 230 230 - **New Email:** info@wirraway.com.au & **New Website:** www.wirraway.com.au

On The Road Wirraway 260SL Slideout Motorhome - 2012 © Rex Wilmer

TASTED

Poetry 4MOTION



*Trakka builds VW Australia the ultimate mobile office,
reports Allan Whiting of OutbackTravelAustralia.com.*



Trakka's mobile office conversion on the VW Crafter 4Motion isn't your normal campervan, because it's primarily designed as a mobile office and sleeps only one person. However, we reckon Trakka's inventive designers could widen the bed or add an upper bunk to broaden it's appeal.

The VW Crafter 4Motion gets our vote for the best campervan-base in the Australian market. It's much cheaper than the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter and the only limitation is that 4Motion models are single-tyre on the rear axle and hence, gross vehicle mass (GVM) is limited to a not unreasonable four tonnes. The plus side is optional Seikel suspension from Germany, a diff lock and off-road kit that lets the Crafter 4Motion go pretty much anywhere you'd want a camper van to go.

The Trakka Buro Kamp is built on the Crafter 4Motion medium-wheelbase van with twin sliding doors and an eight-speed automatic transmission. Outputs of 130 kW and 410 Nm come from VW's twin-turbo 2.0-litre diesel.



The Buro Kamp was commissioned by VW Australia as an events mobile office vehicle. The overall impression, thanks to Trakka's usual high-quality fit and finish, is all class. The events office rational specified that it needed to have a bunk bed for only one person, but with a concertina privacy door.

The Buro Kamp boasts a kitchenette with microwave, 50-litre fridge/freezer and sink. There's also a workbench above a drawer unit, a wardrobe and overhead cupboards. Dimmable, LED-strip lighting is moulded into the cupboard layout.





The front seats are swivelling types, able to face a removable indoor/outdoor table. A pair of camping chairs could convert this space to a four-seat dinette or a conference suite.

Powered awnings on both sides of the Crafter create a shaded and rain-covered area, while twin sliding side-doors allow easy contact between people outside and the Buro Kamp occupants: a true mobile office.

Underfloor and behind the joinery are a 50-litre fresh water tank, 30-litre grey water tank. 200 Ah lithium batteries and 40-amp 240V and DC to DC chargers. A 200-watt solar panel is mounted on the roof and a digital display and switch panel provides systems monitoring and control.



TASTED

A base-model Buro Kamp 4Motion model can be had for around \$130,000, but the VW Australia machine was given the full Seikel off-road package as well. For the additional \$18,000 the Off Road Pack included the snorkel, rear differential lock, front-and-rear underbody protection plates, door-sill protection plates, hill descent control and off-road 17-inch aluminium wheels with 245/70 tyres, plus the 60mm-raised Seikel suspension.

We're hoping for a test of the Buro Kamp soon and also to bring you a review of the new Trakka Jabiru 2S 4x4 on the equally new Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 4x4. Also watch for a review of the brand new Trakka Akuna 4S on the 2WD Volkswagen Crafter, and look for them all at the 2020 NSW Caravan Camping Holiday Supershow from 28 April to 3 May.







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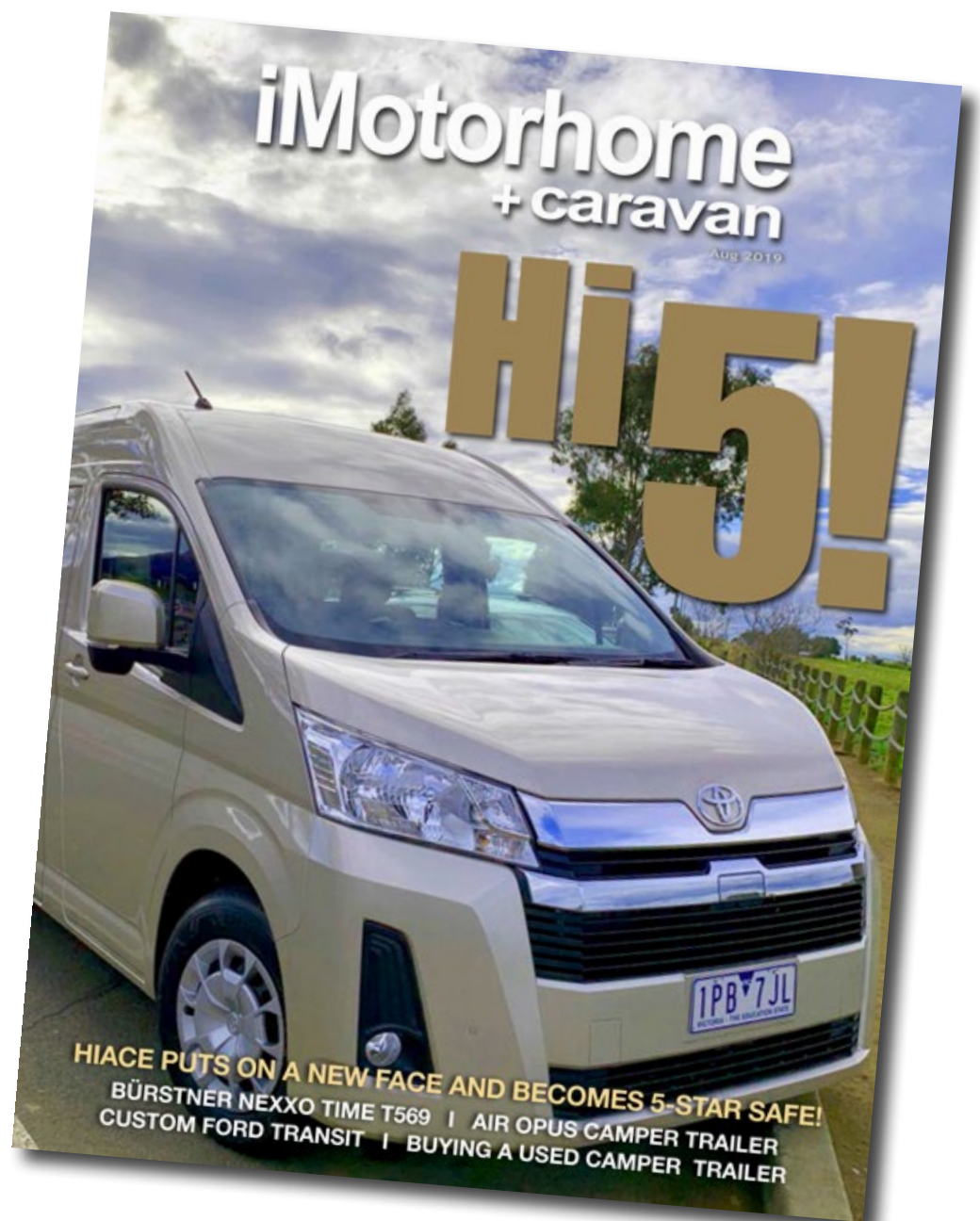
on the **frontline**

Frontline's latest leads the charge to convert Toyota's all-new HiAce into a practical and liveable campervan...

by Richard Robertson

Back in the August 2019 issue I reviewed Toyota's all-new HiAce, which is a quantum leap from the previous white-appliance-on-wheels. Totally different and for the first time five-star safe, the redesigned HiAce meant campervan manufacturers would have to go back to the drawing board for the first time in 15 years to come up with a new HiAce fit-out. At the time I pondered how the new dimensions, including sliding doors on both sides, might impact design and it has obviously been a challenge, given at least six months have passed since the new model's release.

Sydney-based campervan specialist Frontline appears to be first cab off the rank, at least in the volume market, while upmarket bespoke motorhome conversion specialists Jacana also has a new HiAce conversion, but that's another story...





Frontline's new model – the H30-6 Gen – was on display at the 2020 Victorian Caravan, Camping and Touring Supershow in Melbourne, taking pride-of-place at the front of the company's stand. Featuring the requisite pop-top roof and familiar Frontline conversion, it's more evolutionary than revolutionary, which I expect will suit avid Toyota campervan buyers just fine. Here's what Frontline says about its all-new offering...

"The previous HiAce model was in production 15 years, so this model is well overdue. The new model arrived in the Frontline factory mid last year and the team went to work on a new campervan design concept. The biggest change is the engine up the front, creating semi-bonneted access for easier servicing and increased front end collision protection. The vehicle now obtained a five-star ANCAP rating and provides seven air bags. With the engine forward you no longer sit above the engine and front wheels. This allows for better bucket seats with a walk-through cabin for comfort.

"Cabin entry is improved, with a generous step eliminating the old clamber into the cabin seat. Another noticeable change is a generous increase in width. The vehicle is wider, but a bit shorter internally, so clever design has been applied by Frontline to maximise space. The handling and smoothness of the ride are massive improvements, offering an effortless and more car like driving experience.

"Engine sizes are 2.8-litre turbo-diesel, producing 130 kW and 450 Nm of torque. That's 30% more than the previous 3-litre. The automatic in the diesel has increased from 4 to 6 speeds. There is also a 3.5-litre V6 petrol available, which produces 207 kW and 360 Nm. Both are rear-wheel drive, with leaf springs and MacPherson struts upfront. Brakes are ventilated discs for automatic models and rear drums for the manual.

"The pop-up roof offers great ventilation and standing room. A kitchen area with a fridge freezer, sink, two-burner gas cooktop and storage drawers is provided to



whip up those essential meals on the go. Moving down the vehicle, there are various storage compartments for food and clothes. A large boots is accessed by the tailgate and inconspicuous when shut.

“A battery system is charged by the engine or 240 V when plugged into power. The standard battery system will run on everything for two days without charge. Additional solar charging can be added for out-of-the-way stays for more than two days. The battery runs the fridge, lights, water pump and fan. There are 12 V sockets to charge devices or other 12-volt low amp accessories.

“Curtains are provided for privacy and there’s a table near the seating area. The seating area folds to a generous 1.9 m x 1.44 m bed. The water tank stores 50 litres of water, which is electrically pumped to the sink and rear shower. Hot water can be fitted as an option. An opening window with fly screen is a great feature for fresh air. At 2.065-metres high, it may just fit in your garage or local car park, making it very versatile.



TASTED



“This model has been a long time coming, so if it’s comfort and safety you want and you’re in the market for a campervan, the Frontline HiAce could be the one for you.”

Drive-away prices range from A\$72,000 for a V6 petrol manual to A\$79,000 for a diesel auto in GL-trim. There after two layout options – Freedom or Avalon (pictured) – and at this stage the new model is awaiting sign-off on second stage compliance so deliveries can commence. To find out more, visit the **Frontline website**, **email** or call (02) 9939 0600



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HORIZON
MOTORHOMES

TESTED: CI KYROS DUO PRESTIGE

ciao



amici!

Story and images by Malcolm Street. Extra images supplied by CI.



Ciao amici! There are some motorhomes around that have very exotic sounding names, the product doesn't always live up to the expectation. When I came across CI's Kyros Duo Prestige – an exotic name if ever I heard one – I wondered how it would stack up. A brief look at this handsome Italian motorhome suggested that further, thorough investigation was definitely warranted. Capito? CI motorhomes are imported into New Zealand by Walkabout Motorhomes and whilst most of the stylish range are B & C-class motorhomes, the Kyros Duo Prestige is a large van conversion.



Converted Vans

I like large van conversions for a couple of reasons: For those who desire a fully functioning but compact sized motorhome, they are ideal. The second is that because designers have a finite space in which to work it's always interesting to see what they (especially the Europeans) come up with.

Being an Italian motorhome an Italian cab-chassis might be expected. Indeed, the Kyros Duo is based on a converted Fiat Ducato Multijet 130 XLWB van. In this case it was a very eye catching metallic gold colour with a simple decal scheme. Factory fitted 16in alloy wheels round off the generally smart look of the van. Being a fully imported European-built motorhome, the sliding side door is on the driver's side.

Being a 'slider' means that even when opening the door on the traffic side of a road, it doesn't stick out

into the path of cars. Very handy! And although it's not high off the ground, as electric step is a thoughtful touch for clambering in and out. Around the outside there are a few clues that the Kyros Duo is not a delivery van, but a classy looking motorhome.

There are a minimum number of cut-outs in the van body; the passenger side having the toilet cassette door, heater exhaust outlet and 230-volt connection point, whilst on the opposite side is the water filler and the fridge vents. The gas cylinder locker (1 x 9 kg) sits just inside the passenger-side rear barn door. More or less out of sight on the roof are the satellite dish and solar panels. It's not visible, but the Kyros Duo does have factory fitted insulation. Consisting of polyester fibre with aluminium backing, it's used all over for the floor, walls, and roof.





Windows

The bubble-style tinted acrylic windows add a touch of style. Like many a large van conversion built in Europe, there are no windows on either side at the rear. The back doors have opening windows that look quite large, but actually have smaller openings, and these help provide nighttime airflow. Not having an opening window on the driver's side, does resolve the issue of accidental conflict with the sliding door!

While a weakness with this style of motorhome is that an open sliding door will let in the local insect population, in this case a concertina screen covers the entire door opening when pulled across.

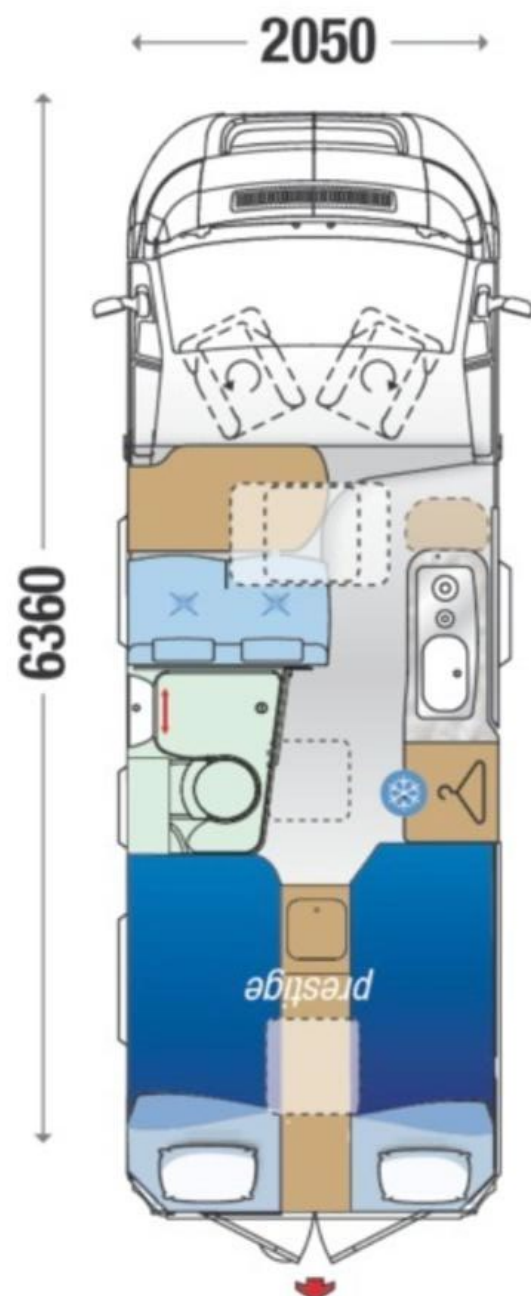




Hop Aboard

The initial impression when stepping aboard the Kyros Duo is that of a slightly cramped interior. However, that is somewhat misleading because the Fiat van does have plenty of interior space and European motorhome builders are masters at the use of it.

Overall the layout matches that found in larger motorhomes; that is there's a front lounge/dining area, a driver's-side kitchen with bathroom opposite and a bedroom in the rear. Done with a bit of Italian flair, the colour scheme is a mixture of beige, brown and white in various shades. No dark colours in this confined space makes all the difference. Eco leather upholstery is used for all the seats to give a good service life. That comes from experience in the Walkabout rental fleet where the same material is used. Surprisingly, there are three different floor levels in this motorhome: one for the cab, a lower one for the mid area and an extra high one in the rear (this to create an underfloor storage area).





Flexible Table

Upfront, swivelled cab seats form an integral part of the lounge/dining area and they are more comfortable than the somewhat square rear seats. However, being seat-belt equipped the rear seats do let you carry two additional passengers. A little bit of space saving and practicality has been achieved with the table, which can be lifted out of the way if not needed. Interestingly, it's hinged down the middle and has an extension piece that swings around to the driver's seat. There are power points and light switches located under the overhead lockers above the table.



What's Cooking?

Like any delivery van, Fiat's sliding door opens much wider than is needed in a motorhome application. What CI has done is use part of the doorway for the kitchen bench. That's quite handy when the door is open because cooking odours can waft straight out without circulating through the van first. Built into the bench top is a two burner hob with a moulded sink alongside.

There really isn't any bench-top space, but there is a hinged bench extension that takes up most of the rest of the door space. Underneath the bench top are three good-sized kitchen drawers, more or less essential in a van space like this one. Adjacent to the bench top, towards the rear, is a cabinet that contains a Dometic 80-litre fridge above and small wardrobe below.





Washroom

I have to say that the bathroom in the Kyros Duo is a bit like Dr Who's Tardis – it looks bigger inside. There's just enough space for a Thetford cassette toilet, wash basin, a flexible-hose shower that uses the same faucet as the wash basin and a couple of cupboards – quite amazing. There's an opening window but no fan hatch. It's a wet bathroom, there's not really any choice about that. However, there is a shower curtain that does cut down the arm waving space, or an alternative that utilises the studs under the overhead lockers. A curtain can be draped over the toilet and sink to keep them reasonably dry – much better than a wet shower curtain.

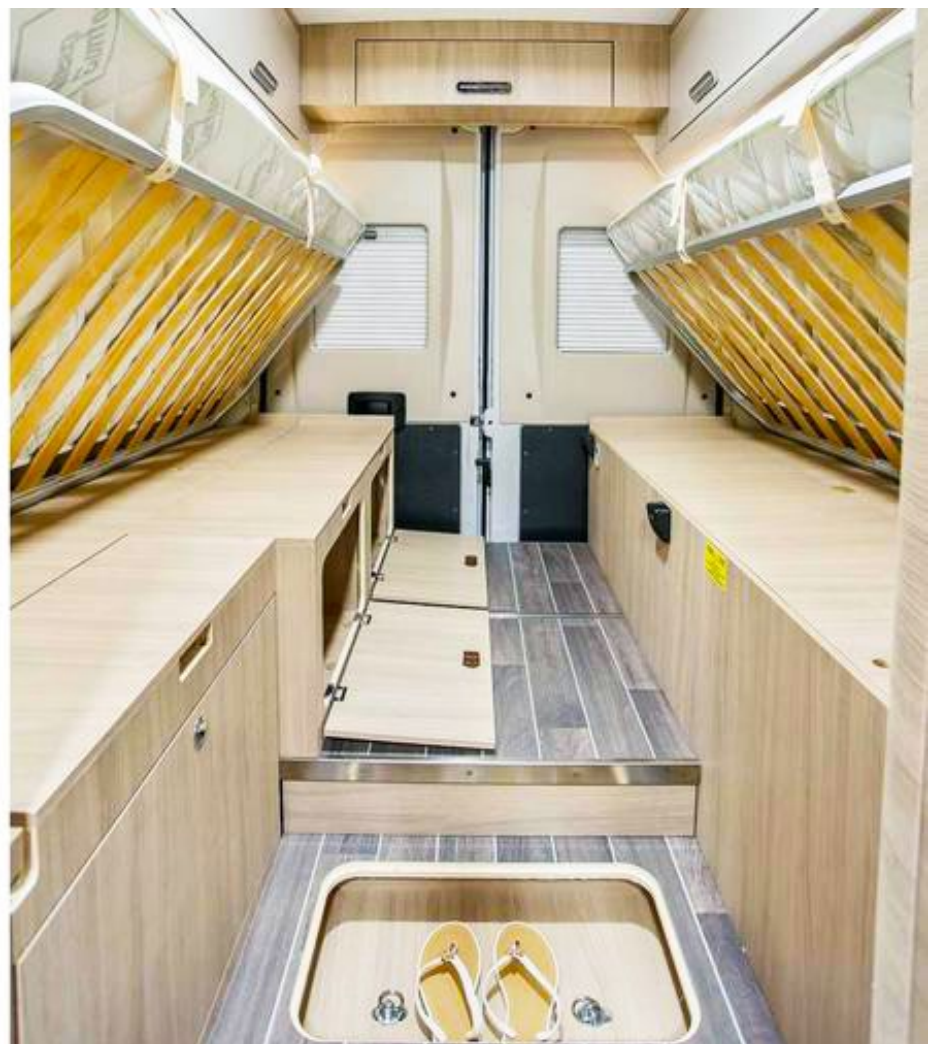




Down the Back

There's considerable flexibility built into the bedroom area. For sleeping, the options are 1.9 m x 0.8 m (6' 3" x 2' 7") single beds or a 1.9 m x 1.6m (6' 3" x 5' 3") double. All have reading lights and both single beds can be lifted and attached to the wall to improve the already generous storage space. Overhead lockers are fitted along both sides and across the rear wall, and there's a small locker under the first step. Apart

from the gas cylinder locker (kerb-side) and water tank (driver's-side) there is still plenty of storage under the beds. Two of the floor lockers under the driver's-side bed can actually be removed – ideal for storing something like bikes – and left at home if desired. Items like camping chairs and a table could easily be stashed under the false floor area, which is accessible via the rear barn doors.





Off-Grid Living

Certified as self-contained, the magic number for the Kyros Duo seems to be 100: Both fresh and grey water tanks are 100-litres, the house battery is 100 amp-hours and the solar panel is rated at 100 watts. About the only thing not 100 is the 15-amp smart charger, which can only be used with mains power anyway!



On the Road

Absolutely no surprises in the motive power department: Fiat's 2.3-litre 96 kW/320 Nm turbo-diesel in tandem with the six speed AMT gearbox propels the Kyros Duo along well enough. To say the least, given its 6.36 m (20' 10") length, it is a very easy handling motorhome along the highway. It's also not too much drama when trying to park. There are not too many squeaks and rattles, either





What I Think

C I's van conversion is well designed and ideal for a single or couple who like to have all the motorhome comforts, yet not travel around in an overly large vehicle. And what CI has done in the rear for storage, for instance, is quite creative in that it helps with the problem that many a large van conversion has, which is lack of any external bins. I reckon the Kyros Duo is a grande camper – that's Italian for great motorhome in case you are wondering. Arrivederci!

GENERAL	
Make	CI
Model	Kyros Duo Prestige
Type	Van Conversion
Berths	2
Approved Seating	4
Licence/Certification	Car/WOF
VEHICLE	
Make/Model	Fiat Ducato Multijet 130
Engine	2.3-litre 4-cylinder turbo-diesel
Power	96 kW @ 3600 rpm
Torque	320 Nm @ 1800 rpm
Gearbox	6-speed automated manual (AMT)
Safety	ABS, ESP, driver and passenger air bags
Fuel	90 L
WEIGHTS	
Tare Weight	3165 kg
Gross Vehicle Mass	3500 kg
Max Payload	335 kg
Braked Towing Capacity	2000 kg
DIMENSIONS	
Overall Length	6.36 m (20' 10")
Overall Width	2.05 m (6' 9")
Overall Height	2.81 m (9' 3")
Internal Height	1.86 m - 1.62 m (6' 1" to 5' 4")
Single Beds	1.90/1.95 m x 0.8 m (6' 3"/5" x 2' 7")
Double Bed	1.90 m x 1.60 m (6' 3" x 5' 3")
EQUIPMENT	
Slide-Out	No
Awning	No
Entry Steps	Electric
Hob	2-burner
Rangehood	No
Sink	Stainless Steel
Fridge	80 L Dometic RM5380 3-way (LPG/12V/230V)
Microwave	No
Lighting	12 V LED
12 V Sockets/USB Outlets	Cab only
Air Conditioner	No
Space Heater	Truma Combi 4E (LPG/electric)
Hot Water System	Truma Combi 4E (LPG/electric)
Toilet	Thetford cassette
Shower	Wet/Flex-hose
CAPACITIES	
Batteries	1 x 100 Ah
Solar	1 x 100 W
LPG	1 x 9.0 kg
Fresh Water	100 L
Grey Water	100 L
Hot Water	10 L
Toilet	17 L
PRICE - NZ	
As Tested	NZ\$119,900 on road
Warranty – Chassis & Habitation	2 years/100,000 km

Pros...

Layout works well
Multi-function bedroom
Surprising kitchen
Easy driver and parker
Smart looking
Clever table

Cons...

Remember 3 floor levels
No double power points
No rear side windows
Limited payload

Contact

Walkabout Motorhome Sales

51 Ash Rd

Wiri. Auckland. 2104.

T: 098 108 8999

E: sales@campervansnz.com

W: cimotorhomes.co.nz



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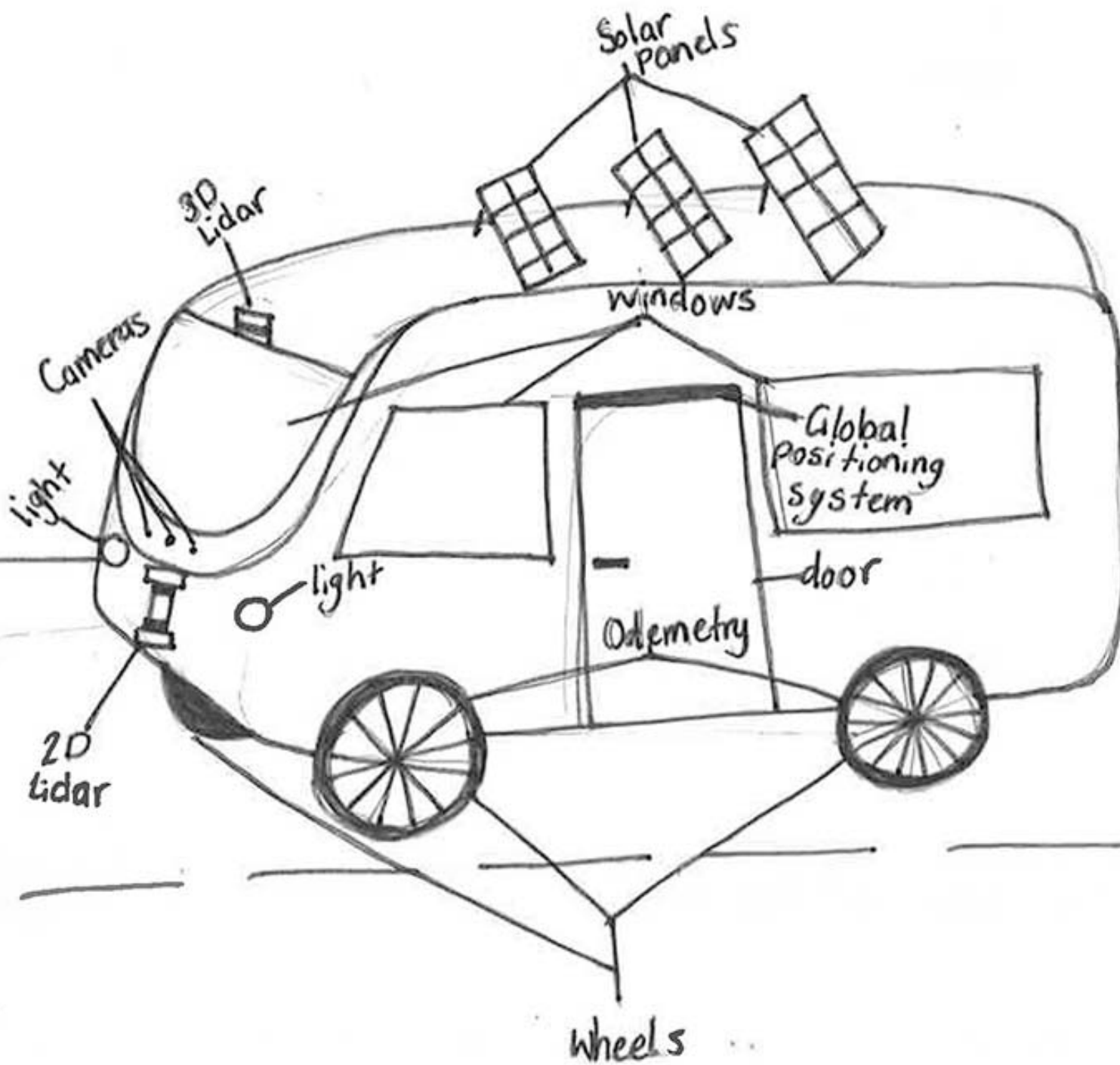
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an autonomous caravan



Auton-Almost

Could an Australian hybrid drive system power the first production electric and semi-autonomous caravans, asks Robert Bobby Watron...

One of the most interesting RV concepts of last decade, German manufacturer Dethleffs' E.Home Coco, shows how a caravan can take some of the tow out of towing: It uses an electric drive to create its own motive power and lessen the load on the tow vehicle. Far from a one-show wonder, the E.Home Coco has appeared at consecutive Dusseldorf Caravan Salons and seems to be headed for production sooner than later. As it turns out, Dethleffs isn't the only company pondering that very idea.

Australian company OzXcorp is hard at work on a supplementary electric drive to turn off-road camper trailers and caravans into semi-self-propelled all-terrain RVs with considerable autonomous capabilities. Not only can its hybrid drive cut the load on the tow vehicle, it can manoeuvre the 'van to and from the vehicle, plus through sand and mud that might otherwise turn it into an anchor.





Company co-founder and chief technology officer Andrew Huett says the marketable hybrid drive could take several forms, but OzX is currently leaning toward hub motors for each trailer wheel versus a single motor and differential at each axle. Hub motors provide precise wheel control and improve overall system efficiency, according to Huett.

Each hub motor puts out up to 8 kW (11 hp) of continuous power and is capable of a 30-second peak-power burst of 16 kW (22 hp). The system continuously adjusts motor output to keep the trailer and tow vehicle in sync, lightening the effective weight on the hitch without overpowering the trailer and creating handling and safety problems.

The trailer packs energy in a 14.3-kWh lithium battery pack, the same size pack OzX supplies for the ERV gas-free solar caravan. OzX doubles the battery to 28.6 kWh for four-motor, dual-axle caravans. Huett believes that by year-end, advances in battery density might add about 22 percent to those capacity figures.

“One aspect of caravanning that remains a burden on every driver is the constant reminder that your caravan is affecting the performance of your vehicle,

fuel consumption, manoeuvrability, traffic flow,” OzX explained when introducing the hybrid drive last year.

“Many adventurers opt to buy tow vehicles that are equipped with significant engine capacity and gross vehicle mass to mitigate the burden of towing and power loss; however, this improvement in driving experience comes at a significant cost in the purchase of vehicle, fuel consumption and the environment.”

It's not yet clear if a combination of OzX self-powered camper trailer or caravan and a modest tow vehicle would end up being all that much cheaper than a modest ‘dumb’ ‘van and heavy-duty tow vehicle, but OzX's e-drive boasts several advantages that could prove invaluable to caravan owners. With the trailer helping to ‘pull its own weight,’ the tow vehicle should enjoy significant fuel savings. The electric drive also smooths out the overall ride, decreasing the pull of the trailer during acceleration and hill-climbing, while applying torque vectoring, real-time stability control, anti-lock braking and brake-blending when needed. Suddenly, towing a large, heavy trailer is much smoother and less onerous, not to mention safer – and more enjoyable.

Handling advantages aren't just limited to bitumen driving. Mud and Sand Assist help the two-vehicle rig keep its momentum over soft ground that otherwise threatens to leave tires spinning hopelessly. A software-based electronic differential lock and Hill Assist mode help maintain traction in other challenging off-road scenarios, including rock-crawling.

The OzX drive also helps ease possibly the most nerve-racking part of caravanning: parking. With help from an accompanying smartphone app, the trailer can drive itself at a max speed of 2 km/h, manoeuvring into a campsite, navigating in and out of storage, or lining up with the vehicle for hitching. OzX is also exploring the possibility of an advanced Level 4 breakaway system through which the trailer could self-drive at speed, navigate traffic and pull to a stop off the highway.

When camping, the large battery run all or most onboard equipment, including air-conditioning and heating, induction cooking and appliances like toasters and coffeemakers. The hybrid drive's regenerative braking couples with solar panels to charge the battery, both at camp and on the move.

OzX introduced a working on/off-road prototype last year, which you can get a look at in this video, and plans to continue testing and development through 2020, with a market release to follow thereafter. It will also be announcing the names of partner caravan manufacturers in the coming months. The hybrid drive could certainly benefit any style of trailer, but OzX is refining the concept specifically for the needs of the caravan and marine sectors. Watch this space for developments and news of who reaches the market first. My money's on OzX.



TECHNICAL

BRIGHT IDEAS

You don't have to be a genius to understand how the many types of lights now available work, says Allan Whiting of OutbackTravelAustralia.com.au



Lights that lit the way for motor vehicles used to be variations on the same incandescent-globe theme, but now there are HIDs and LEDs. In this article we'll take a look at how they came about and what makes them tick.

First up, if you've been to a trivia night you'll probably know already that Thomas Edison didn't invent the incandescent light globe: what he and his 'muckers' did in 1879 was make reliable ones. However, until 1906, when the Osram company came up with a globe using a tungsten filament that could withstand vibration, motor vehicles relied on acetylene-gas headlamps.

Once electric globes were available and the ignition magneto supplied current to them, you could see for miles. Well, metres anyway. Incandescent – from the Latin verb *incandescere*: to glow white – globes rely on the simple principle that virtually all substances

glow when they get hot. When an electric current is run through a thin wire the resistance to electron flow causes the wire to get hot and emit light.

From the early days, incandescent globe development concentrated on increasing the brightness and extending the life of the filament. It was realised at the outset that it was necessary to exclude oxygen from inside the globe, because the white-hot filament oxidised and literally burnt-out very quickly. Even in a so-called vacuum-globe the filament gradually vaporised, coating the inside of the globe with a black layer. The impossibility of creating a perfect vacuum led to experiments with inert gas filling that was found to decrease blackening, while limiting oxidising. And that's pretty much where things stayed until the 1960s, when the halogen-quartz globe was released.



Halogen-Quartz

Halogen gas inside the globe performed a neat trick: as the filament surface vaporised, tungsten atoms combined with the halogen gas and then re-deposited on the hot filament. The globe needed a higher operating temperature for the 'halide' cycle to work, but the result was far less loss of filament and a brighter light.

To tolerate the higher temperature a quartz globe material was used and, because that material reacts adversely with many common substances, required gloved hands to install a halogen-quartz globe. Incidentally, halogen-light development occurred in Europe, because the USA had legislated in 1940 for one type of standard, seven-inch sealed-beam headlamp that was the only permitted fitment on all US-registered vehicles.

The Yanks didn't get a halogen sealed-beam until 1978, but it was still restricted to the same size and shape until 1984, when the US joined the modern automotive world and allowed variable-shape headlights with replaceable globes.

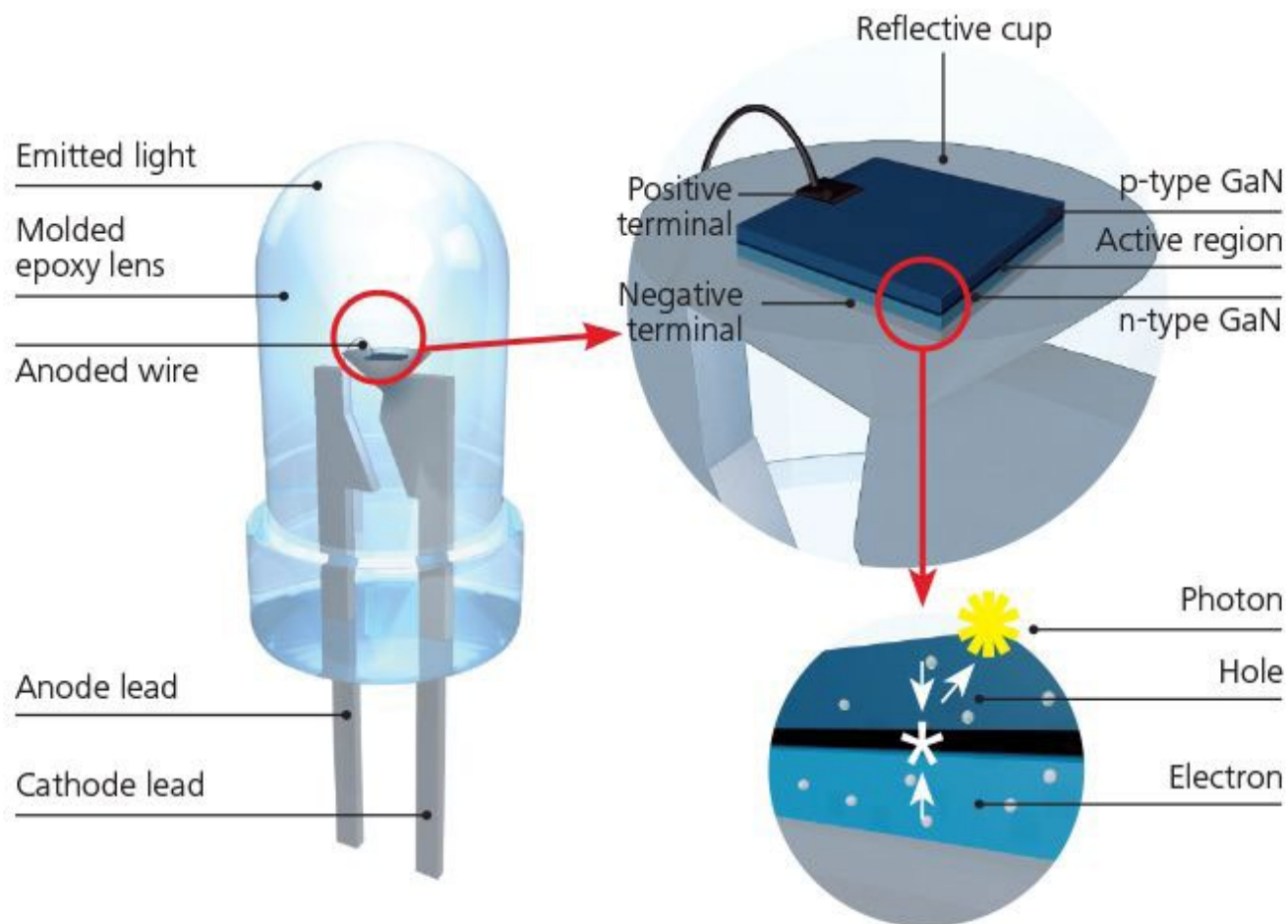
HID

In the 1990s came the next leap in lighting: high intensity discharge (HID) globes. In the HID globe the halogen globe's 'halide' effect is employed, but the tungsten filament has been replaced by two electrodes and the gas charge is highly-pressurised xenon. The globe also contains a small amount of metal salts, usually compounds of sodium and scandium.

An electrical arc is struck between the two electrodes and the initial glow comes from ionised xenon gas. In a matter of seconds the heat from this discharge causes the metal salts to form a white-hot plasma around the electrodes and the result is brilliant light.

Because high-voltage is required to strike the initial arc, HID lights come with internal or external 'ballast' units that convert 12-volt vehicle battery potential to around 20,000 volts. Once the arc has been struck the ballast units discharge.





LED

Light Emitting Diode (LED) lights work completely differently from incandescent and HID lights, generating photons of light at the atomic level.

A diode is an electrical device that allows current flow in only one direction – well, almost. In practice, a diode isn't a perfect current-blocker and some current 'leaks' past, but it's a very small percentage of the diode's capacity.

A diode is also a semiconductor, which means it has a variable ability to conduct electricity. The basis of most semiconductors is silicon, one of the most common elements on the planet and being the principal element in sand and quartz. Crystalline silicon is most commonly seen on solar panels and has a silvery, metallic appearance. Pure silicon is not a good electricity conductor and is almost an insulator. However, if minute amounts of the right impurities are incorporated into silicon its crystalline structure changes and it becomes a reasonable conductor.

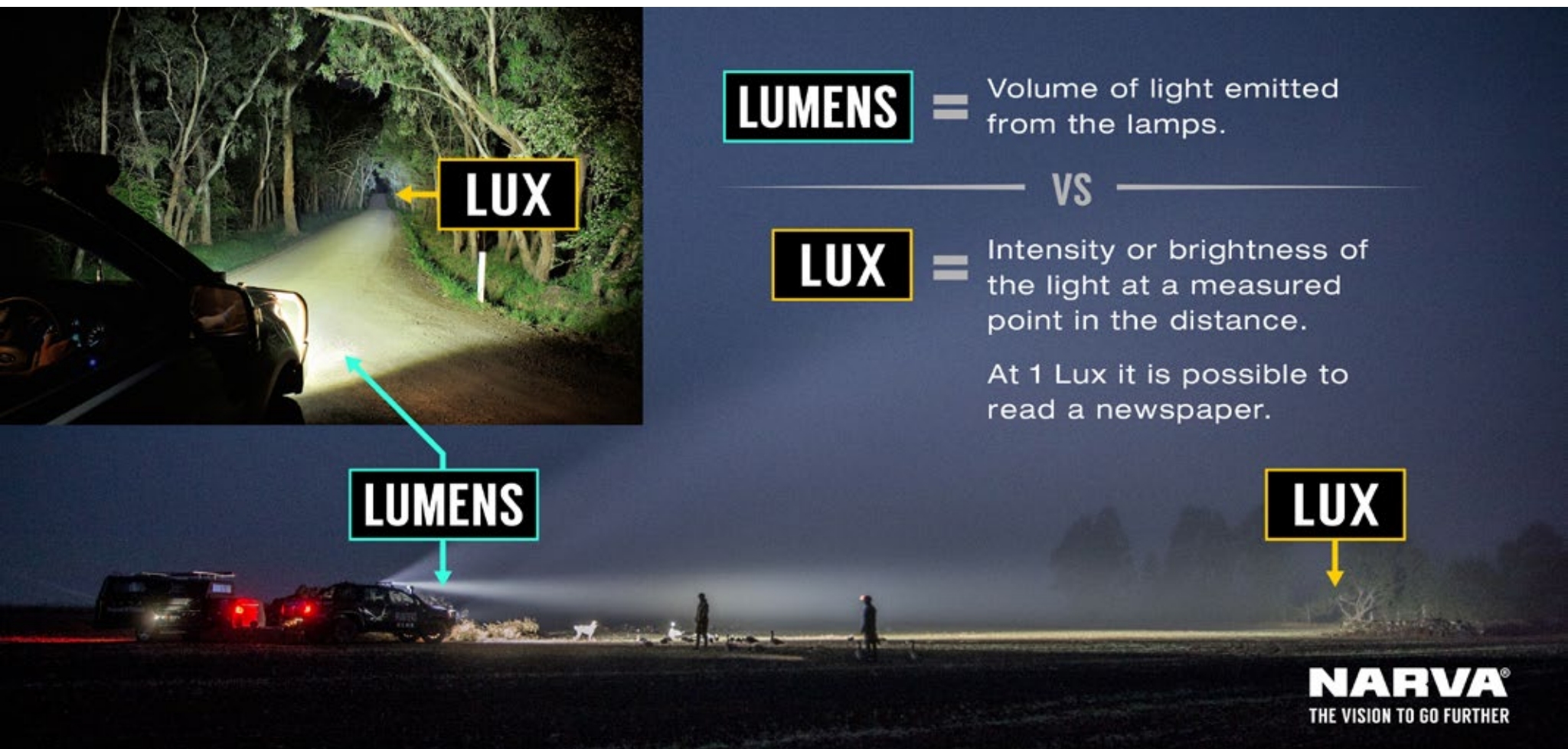
In California's famous Silicon Valley, where the whole semiconductor business began in 1947, the process of modifying silicon crystal behaviour is known, appropriately enough, as 'doping'.

Silicon 'doped' with phosphorus or arsenic has surplus electrons that give this material the name N-type silicon – N for negatively charged – and these free electrons can conduct an electric current. Silicon

doped with boron or gallium has a depleted electron count and is therefore known as P-type silicon, because the absence of electrons creates a positive charge effect that seeks electron flow. In a diode, P-type and N-type silicon layers are matched face to face, with electrical terminals connected to each. Without any current flow the electrons from the N-type silicon neutralise the positive charge on the P-type silicon at the interface and no current flows through the terminals. However, connect a positive end of a circuit to the P-type terminal and a negative end to the N-type and repellent action in both materials causes current to flow through the diode.

Reverse the circuit polarity and a very interesting event takes place: no current flows through the diode, but the central 'neutralised' zone increases in size and the incoming electrical energy is converted into light energy.

Early glass-valve diodes emitted energy in the form of heat, but in the case of a solid-state LED the energy is emitted mainly as photons of light. Low-energy LEDs emit in the infra-red spectrum and are used in appliance remote controls. Higher-energy designs emit light in the visible spectrum. LEDs emit light directionally, so they can be arrayed with small, individual reflectors, as in LED light bars and driving lights, or with a large reflector, as in Hella's Luminator LED and Narva's Enhanced Optic LED lights.



Lumens and Lux

When evaluating incandescent headlights and driving lights, including halogens, the common comparison method is 'wattage'. Most driving light makers settled on the 100-watt halogen globe as the best compromise between light output and service life. However, our laboratory and field testing over many years showed that wattage isn't a reliable guide to performance, because the optics in the reflector and/or lens are critical to beam shape and avoiding wasted, 'scattered' light. Beam distance is another function of reflector shape and some manufacturer-quoted distance figures we've found to be misleading.

Wattage used to be of even less importance when evaluating HID lights, because they were mostly in the 35-45-watt range. So, their makers are now quoting lumens, lux and colour temperature. However, the wattage race is on in earnest in the LED field in 2020.

Like using wattage to evaluate the useful light spread and penetration of a pair of driving lights, lumens and lux figures need qualification. Both measurement units indicate brightness, but there's a catch. Sure, a light putting out 10,000 lumens has ample power and, if spread over an area of 50 square metres, a value of 200 lux, but if spread over 100 square metres the lux figure drops to 100. Beware the light chart that displays beam shape and distance in intensity of only 0.25 lux. A much more accurate measurement of beam intensity is the Isolux system, which measures beam distance at one lux intensity.

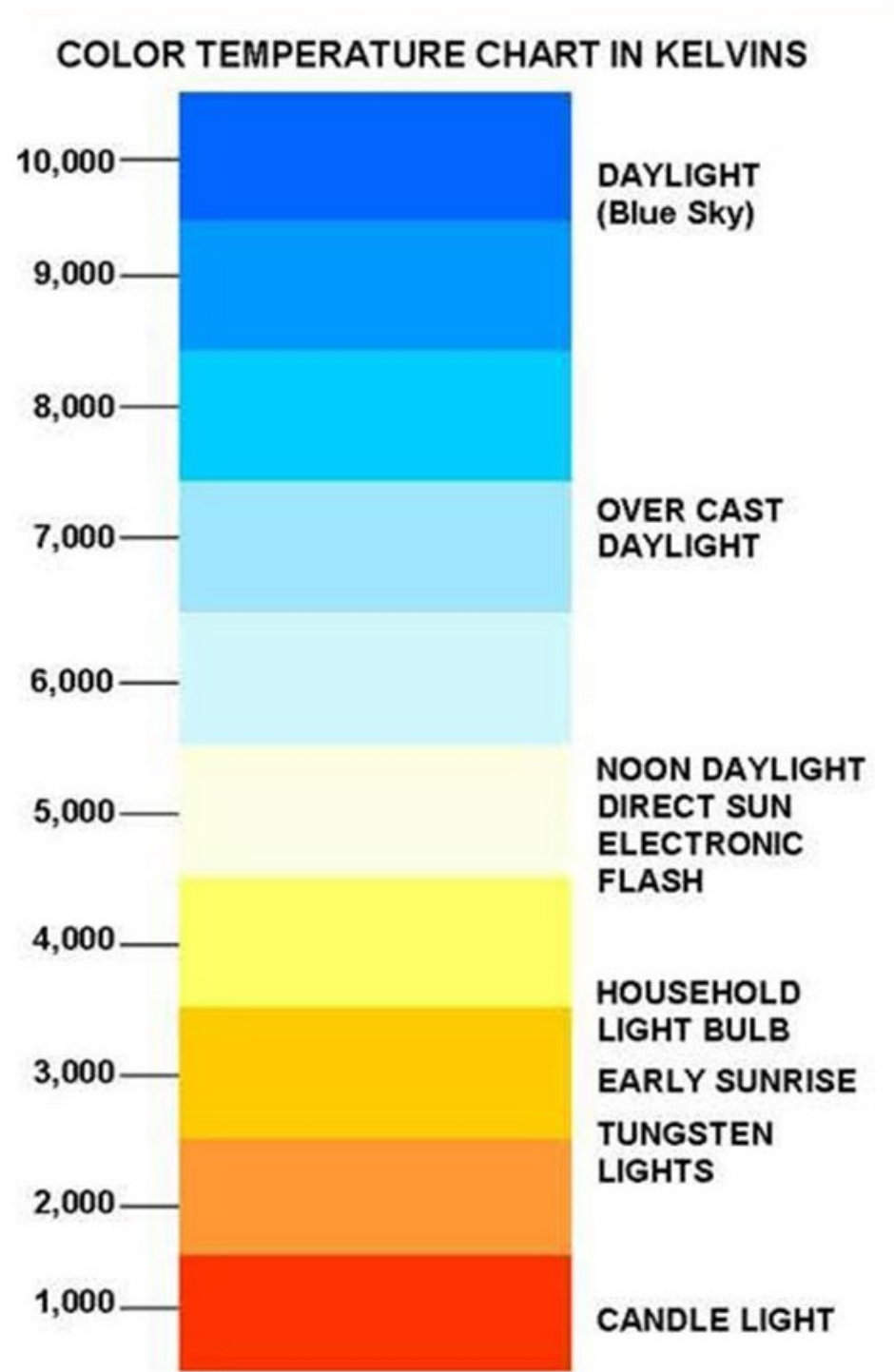
Colour Temperature

This is by far the most confusing of all light statistics, because it compares the Kelvin absolute temperature scale with the visible light spectrum.

Sir William Thomson – First Baron Kelvin and commonly known as Lord Kelvin – was an eminent Irish-Scottish physicist in the late 1800s and developed a temperature scale using Absolute Zero (-273C) as its starting point, thus eliminating the minus numbers you get if the freezing temperature of water is used as the starting point. Scientists welcomed the Kelvin Scale, because calculations are much easier to do without minus numbers.

In a series of experiments Kelvin heated carbon, noting that it changed colour as its temperature rose: dim red, bright red, dim yellow, bright yellow, yellow-white, bright white and blue-white. Kelvin temperature points were later added to colour-temperature charts. Back in the days when light brightness was a function of induced heat – making a filament glow bright yellow to white hot, but stopping short of melting it – the scale had relevance. Back then, the higher the temperature the whiter the light, but now there are cooler light sources – gas discharge (HID) and light emitting diodes (LEDs) – it’s plain confusing.

Checking out a colour temperature chart, it’s obvious that if you evaluate an HID or LED light purely on its colour temperature, more isn’t necessarily better. The ‘sweet spot’ is in the 4000-5700K region, because higher numbers give too much ‘blue’ cast and head for eventual darkness at the end of the visible spectrum.





Which is Best?

Our testing over many years has shown that HIDs outperform halogens and all but the most powerful LEDs for spot-beam distance, while using less than half the electrical power. Globe life is around 10 times that of halogens, but shorter than LEDs.

LEDs are brilliant in the mid-distance area – out to around 750 metres for the best performers – but use much more alternator current in the process. Large LED lights and light bars have 300-plus watts of power and that means more than 20 amps of current in a 12-volt system and 10+amps in a 24V system. LEDs should also last the life of the housing.

Halogens are now often the cheapest lights, but while some very high powered ones rival HIDs for distance and LEDs for brightness they have very high current requirements.

Be sure to compare apples with apples when choosing driving lights, light bars or even internal lighting for your RV or home. Finding the right balance of price, current draw, light output, colour and beam spread takes research and time, but can make a significant difference in the end. The bottom line is don't rush out and buy the first 'great deal' you see in-store or online. Check out all the features, take your time and you'll get it right...

Changes on the HORIZON

After going through the process of finding and then purchasing my ideal RV – a new **Horizon Waratah motorhome** – I thought I had covered every possible eventuality in carefully choosing the vehicle and deciding which options to include. Viewing the van in the showroom and going through all the features in the delivery session, I was convinced my new van had everything I ever wanted in my new RV.

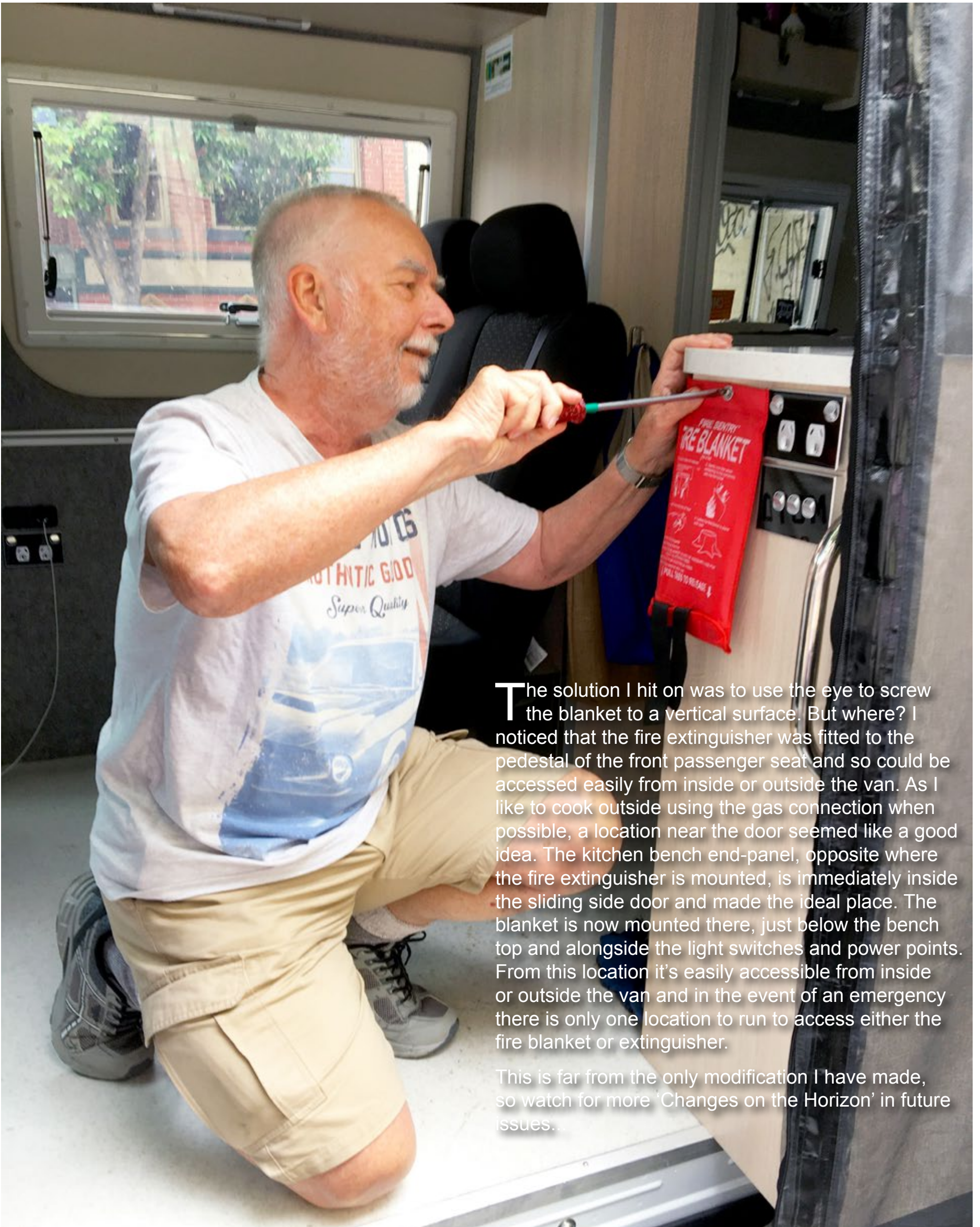
However, once I got my van home I had an itch to make a few modifications to personalise my new possession and so make it my own. From speaking with other RV owners it appears I am not alone in my love of tinkering with my rig to make things just how I like them. Now, I'm not talking about major modifications like replacing a whizz-bang door with a hinged door or buying an old van, gutting it and fitting it out myself. I've met people who have done both of those things but that's not me and I'm certainly not taking on my own version of Project Polly. Rather, I'm talking about a few small things a handy – or not so handy – man or woman can easily do to make their life on the road safer, more comfortable and personalised.



Firey Matters

My sparkling new motorhome came complete with a smoke alarm and fire extinguisher, but as anyone who has ever set off a fire extinguisher knows, extinguishers create an unholy mess. I therefore like to have a fire blanket on hand to smother any small fire that might break out, without creating too big a mess. Although the smoke alarm in the van goes off whenever I cook toast, thankfully I have never had to use a fire blanket. Nevertheless, I wanted to install one in the new van, just in case.

The blanket I purchased had an eye at the top to mount it on a hook and a pair of tabs at the bottom so you could pull down and release the blanket instantly when needed. However, the hooks in the van were all too big to fit through the eye and none of the hooks in my numerous jars full of bits and pieces would fit.



The solution I hit on was to use the eye to screw the blanket to a vertical surface. But where? I noticed that the fire extinguisher was fitted to the pedestal of the front passenger seat and so could be accessed easily from inside or outside the van. As I like to cook outside using the gas connection when possible, a location near the door seemed like a good idea. The kitchen bench end-panel, opposite where the fire extinguisher is mounted, is immediately inside the sliding side door and made the ideal place. The blanket is now mounted there, just below the bench top and alongside the light switches and power points. From this location it's easily accessible from inside or outside the van and in the event of an emergency there is only one location to run to access either the fire blanket or extinguisher.

This is far from the only modification I have made, so watch for more 'Changes on the Horizon' in future issues...

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HORIZON

MOTORHOMES

Best Laid Plans

It takes more than a setback or change of plans to deter Colin Oberin from ticking off his bucket list wishes...



"Kilmore East farmers Rhonda and Kevin Butler (pictured) established BlazeAid in 2009..."

Some years ago I heard about the fledgling charity BlazeAid, which was established in 2009. The charity was founded by Kilmore East farmers Rhonda and Kevin Butler after they were helped by locals to urgently rebuild fences for their sheep when their fencing was destroyed in Victoria's Black Saturday bush fires. Rhonda and Kevin wanted to similarly help other working farmers recover from natural disasters such as fires and floods and so started BlazeAid.

In the early stages they were desperate to obtain more equipment to help in their work. As we had various suitable tools such as a chain saw, axes, a block splitter, sledge hammers, etc, which we no longer used since moving to the suburbs, we drove up to Kilmore East to donate them.

Bucket List

Becoming a BlazeAid volunteer was thus added to my extensive bucket list. Somehow it never got to the top of the list until I attended the CMCA Rally at Elmore in October 2019, where one of the seminars was all about the work of BlazeAid. During the seminar there was a lot of talk about the importance of restoring lost fencing. As an office worker all my life and with no fencing experience, I asked whether people like me would still be needed as volunteers. The answer was a resounding “Yes!”.

The presenter explained there were many jobs that needed to be done. Some were on-site and others back at a BlazeAid camp. Many volunteers are Grey Nomads and jobs for those not suited to actually building new fences include removing damaged fences, threading wire through posts already erected, preparing meals for volunteers, doing work rosters and so on. To become a BlazeAid volunteer you simply choose where you want to work, from the list on the **BlazeAid website**. You then call the coordinator at the camp, who will let you know if you're needed and if so, where and when to meet. All camps at the time were in NSW.



Best Laid Plans

On my way to the iMotorhome + Caravan Readers' Weekend in early November 2019, I rang the coordinator of the Ebor camp as it was closest and we agreed I'd arrive on the afternoon of Tuesday the 12th. Ebor is about half way along the Waterfall Way, which links Armidale and Coffs Harbour. Although the coastal route from High Range was a little quicker I decided on the less trafficked inland route. As a result I discovered the delightful town of Coolah, where I spent an evening at an excellent little caravan park.

Next morning was cool, but in view of the dire forecast and the catastrophic fire rating I headed north early and made Tamworth about lunch time. The town was smoky due to a fire to the north and the road to Armidale was closed. I let BlazeAid know I would be a day later, assuming the road reopened, but next morning the conditions were worse and Ebor itself was very smoky. As a severe asthmatic I was advised to wait a day or two to see if things cleared, but in any event the road was still closed next morning and as conditions worsened I reluctantly turned for home in Melbourne.





Black Summer

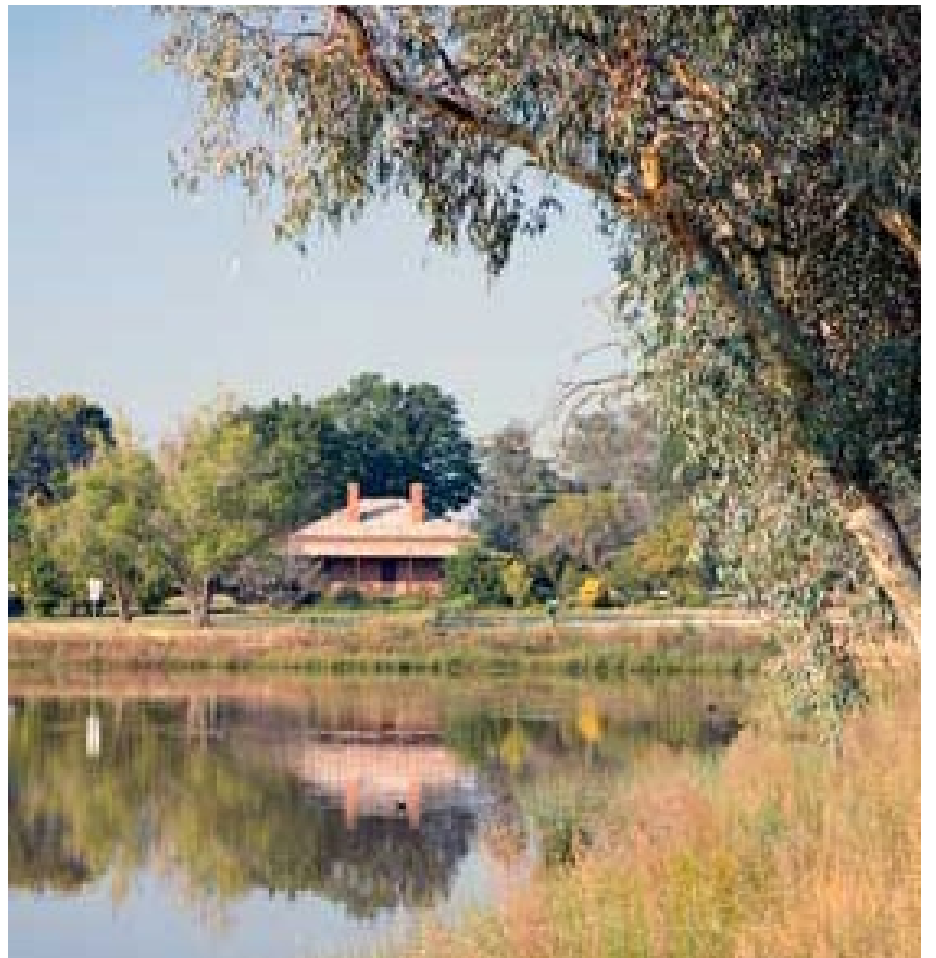
As the fire situation steadily worsened over this Black Summer I realised that BlazeAid would need volunteers for a long time to come and so it stayed at the top of the bucket list. One Wednesday in mid-February my wife Anne and I realised the following week was free. We quickly planned a trip to the National Art Glass Gallery in Wagga Wagga, but by the end of the week it had evaporated due to an unavoidable development for Anne. She then suddenly said, “Even though I can’t go, why don’t you go away somewhere? It’s time you had a new adventure.” And so, Plan B was quickly hatched.

Like many Australians we donated to charity to help those who lost their homes and/or businesses in this summer’s fires. However, having seen up close the trials and tribulations of family members who lost their home to bushfire, we were keen to do more than just give money. We were well aware of the “Don’t Delay Your Visit” tourism campaign and so I quickly decided Plan B would be a visit to some fire ravaged area to support locals financially and morally by visiting their towns.

Financial Fertiliser

The very next morning I headed north up the Hume Freeway toward the hard hit north east of Victoria. After stopping in Euroa to stretch the legs it was on to Chiltern, for lunch, which is where Anne grew up before moving to Melbourne in her teens. Chiltern is a little town about half an hour south of Albury/Wodonga and is only one kilometre off the freeway, so it's no great detour. Until bypassed in 1990 the Hume Highway ran along the main street, which is lined with old buildings, many of which are now museums or antique shops. Lake House, the childhood home of well-known author Henry Handel Richardson, overlooks the lake in Chiltern and is a National Trust property open to the public. Chiltern has a caravan park, motel, bakery and tea rooms, and is well worth a visit.

After lunch I took the old Hume Highway to Barnawartha, then rejoined the M31 Hume Freeway towards Wodonga, from where I took the B400 towards Tallangatta. I decided not to revisit the Hume Dam wall or the Bonegilla Migrant Experience as I had visited them not long ago. Both are only a short side-trip off the B400 and are well worth a visit. I had previously stayed at Ludlows Reserve, which overlooks the Hume Weir 5 km south-east from Bonegilla, and when I arrived there mid-afternoon to find a nice shady spot with a great view of the weir, I decided to make camp.





Next morning I headed to Tallangatta for breakfast, took in the view from the lookout and stopped to admire old Tallangatta, which was flooded by the Hume Reservoir in the 1950s but is again high and dry. Heading next for Corryong I stopped off to check out the historic Boggy Creek trestle bridge.

Although Tallangatta had been the base for news crews and was thick with smoke during the fires, I saw no evidence of burning until much further up the road. About 25 km from Corryong I spotted the first patches of burnt trees, obviously the result of spot fires ahead of the main front, but it was not until about the 20 km mark that I saw large swathes of burned bush. Rain in recent weeks meant a cover of green in places, but when I looked closely I noticed burnt patches under the new green shoots. Also, many of the burnt trees were sprouting from the trunks, as eucalypts do after fire.



A Sign!

As I rolled into Corryong I noticed the BlazeAid sign. Although I'd only planned to visit the area to support local businesses, I dropped in for a chat with a view to volunteering some time in the future. They quickly reassured me that even this long retired former office worker would be useful and so signed me up!

Unfortunately, I could only stay for a few days as I needed to head back to Melbourne by the Saturday. It was then back to Corryong to get some lunch – and a pair of work boots. I also took the opportunity to visit the Man From Snowy River Museum and took a picture beside the statue in town, before filling up with fuel. I asked the guy at the servo about the effect of the fires on businesses in town and he simply replied, “Massive”. It was then time to go back to BlazeAid to set up camp and get ready to start my volunteering.



TRAVEL



Next morning, decked out in my new boots and Op Shop shirt, I quickly found myself loading fence posts onto a trailer for transport to where a burnt-out fence had been removed the previous day. The posts then had to be positioned where they were to be knocked in. Next, I was holding new stays as they were welded to the corner posts and then holding new posts vertical as they were knocked-in to the desired depth. Tying barbed wire to the new posts followed, plus stringing new straight wire, and, by the end of the day, admiring a brand new fence.

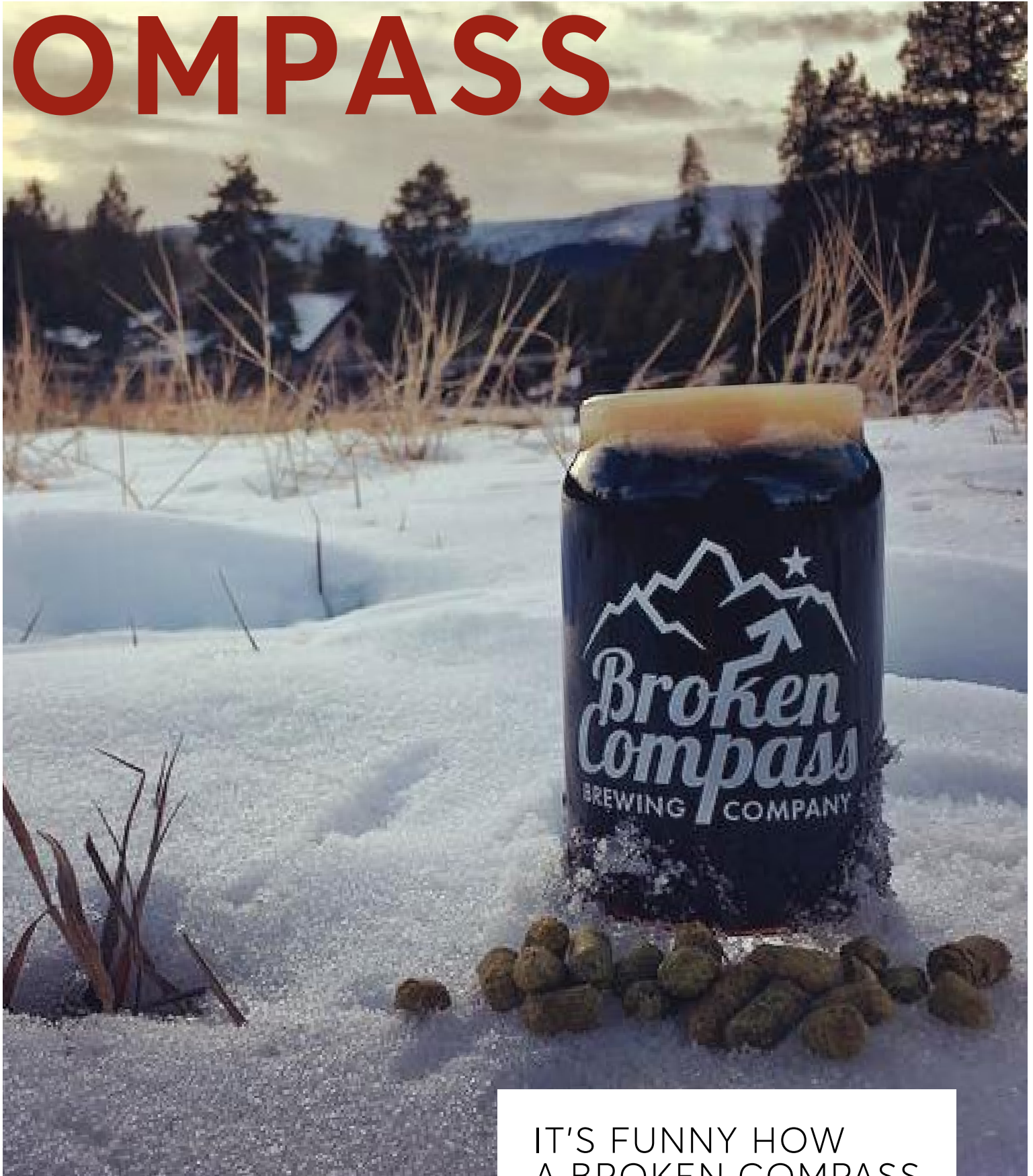
The next day was more of the same and by the third day I was into the swing of things and had learned how to remove and roll barbed wire; how to attach a chain to a post so the tractor can lift the damaged post, how

to mark-out the new posts and – most importantly – experienced first-hand the much touted resilience of Aussie farmers.

All too soon it was time to say good bye to my new friends at BlazeAid in Corryong and head for home. Several volunteers I spoke with, like me, had initial misgivings about whether they were suitable to be a BlazeAid volunteer. However, we all contributed in our own way and I for one will be back volunteering again in a week or two. One of my sons even plans to take a week off work to join me at BlazeAid, helping Aussie farmers impacted by the summer's fires. More information about how to volunteer or how to make a donation can be found at www.blazeaid.com.au



BROKEN COMPASS



IT'S FUNNY HOW
A BROKEN COMPASS
CAN STILL LEAD
THE WAY...



When you're considering a life on the road and you're a beer geek, what could be more poetic than rolling up to a brewery called Broken Compass? Well, how about if said brewery is plopped down on the edge of Breckenridge, CO, and the epically picturesque Tenmile mountain range?

Yeah, that's about as poetic as it gets...

That's exactly where my wife April and I found ourselves when we took RAIF, our 2003 Gulf Stream 24-foot BT Cruiser, out for a first test run through the Colorado mountains. A must-have on our hunt for our new full-time home on wheels was that it had to be spacious enough to live in, but nimble enough to navigate the peaks that are home to many of our life's passions.

Breckenridge was the perfect testing ground for us as we already knew the former mining town well from numerous snowboarding forays from our sticks-and-bricks home in Denver. Taking the 80-plus miles of backroads into Breck, now a ski resort centric town, there was no doubt it would be a stern test to see if RAIF could handle mountain roads – and if we could handle RAIF. ➡



BROKEN COMPASS

We were fairly sure we had made the correct choice before we rolled into Broken Compass. Already being familiar with the brewery, there was no way we could pass it by because Broken Compass embodies the spirit of the RV life into which we were deciding to leap.

When Jason Ford launched Broken Compass in 2014 it was his way of recapturing what many of us are seeking by opting for a nomadic life in an RV: Freedom.

“I had been a chemical engineer my entire career. I loved what I did and made a lot of cool things. And like a lot of people, I took a management position, and all of a sudden that creative outlet went away,” Ford explained.

“In management, you’re running people instead of creating the products anymore. I wanted to be able to create again.”

An avid home brewer with a hobby-job at a brewery in Denver, it dawned on him that opening a brewery could be a great opportunity to recapture the freedom he once felt at his engineering job. “Why not turn my passion into a living?”

That was the spark that eventually ignited Broken Compass Brewing, home to consistently great flagship beers like Coconut Porter and Chili Pepper Pale Ale, as well as weekly Wacky One-Off Wednesday small batches like Molé Stout, Chocolate Raspberry Porter, and Oaked Belgian Black Ale. Ford’s creative possibilities were now limitless. ➔



NEW DIRECTION

April and I haven't been particularly unhappy with our lives. We've raised two outstanding young men and have been fortunate enough to travel to numerous parts of the world. But we have long known that stepping away from our sticks-and-bricks home a couple times a year wasn't going to cut it forever.

Our youngest son is now in his second year of college and that was our target to make a move. Initially, we thought we would seek to follow our passions by moving to the mountains, but more and more we realized only a portion of our passions lay there. Trading one sticks-and-bricks home for another still hampered our primary passion - travel and discovery. Downsizing was always a portion of the equation, so it finally dawned on us, why be tied down? Why not go mobile? Why not live in an RV?

As we researched we realized that there was a niche of other crazies out there already doing what we were contemplating. That led us to RAIF, which in turn led to our test run that landed us in Breckenridge. ➡



Broken Compass Brewing has always made community a priority. When Ford decided upon the outskirts of Breckenridge to launch his brewery, he quickly realized it wouldn't simply be a place of business; it would fold into the fabric of the community that is woven through the mountain town.

"One of the unique things about Broken Compass is the community that surrounds us. It's no secret that we are driven by tourism, but we are who we are because of the locals and how much they love us, and the community that we've been able to create with them," Ford said.

"And that's a niche that you can't get in a lot of places. It's hard to live in the mountains. It's hard to be up here. People play hard and pay hard. They work their butts off and live life to the fullest. And to have that type of community; you don't get it in a place like Denver, where I thought of starting this brewery to begin with. But you get in a place like this, where everybody counts on everybody to make it work. The community we have... I can't explain it. It's stellar, wonderful, exemplary, all those words."

Sound familiar? If you've spent any time around the RV community, it should. ➡



DECISION MADE?

My wife and I hadn't even hit the road full-time when we made our pilgrimage to Breck. In fact, we hadn't even been 100 per cent sure of the move at the time.

We decided to stop at Broken Compass to contemplate our test drive and found ourselves next to another couple at one of the communal beetle-kill pine tables, in a taproom teeming with skiing paraphernalia. Though Abby and Travis had been playing cards, we soon fell into conversation.

Remember when I asked what could be more poetic than rolling up to a brewery called Broken Compass in a picturesque mountain town called Breckenridge? There was only one more thing...

As we talked with Abby and Travis about the purpose of our little test run, their faces lit up. Somehow we had stumbled across probably the only two people at Broken Compass that night already living full-time in a travel trailer in Northern Colorado. We had already been well on our way to deciding to hit the road full-time, working and living as nomads in our RV, but if we hadn't, the poetry of the moment would certainly have tipped the scales. What better way to make a major life decision than over a fantastic pint of beer with new friends? ➔



REACHING THE SUMMIT

Following our test run we took RAIF on our first full-fledged outing – the RV Entrepreneur Summit created by nomadic superstars Heath and Alyssa Padgett. That’s where we realized how much RV life and community intersects with the same ideals that we’ve always found appealing about mountain life and community.

When April and I decided that we would live nomadically – eventually launching our business Living A Stout Life – we knew it would come with hardships. We knew making a living on the road would at times be challenging. But we also knew that we didn’t want to continue plodding away on the traditional route of toiling our lives away to make more money and accumulate more stuff; only occasionally stepping out into the vast expanse of the world.

It’s an attitude we have encountered from the vast majority of nomads we’ve met. It’s an attitude Ford had when he started his Broken Compass journey, and one he embodies to this day.

“When we first started talking about starting up Broken Compass, we’re like, what’s the point? Why are we doing this? One thing that kept coming up was we’re doing this so we could have a good life in the mountains,” Ford said, adding that the plan was never to be the biggest brewery possible, but to continue to lead a life he loves.

“We plan to stay small and stay crafty, and focus on the beer. Most importantly, we plan to make the most of what we can be with the community, and that’s a circular loop that just makes everybody better.”

What a revelation: that we could find our way with the help of a Broken Compass... 🚐

CMCA

RV Friendly Towns



image: Joey Csunyo

The RV Friendly program is a **Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia Limited (CMCA)** initiative aimed at assisting RV travellers as they journey throughout this wonderful country.

An RV Friendly Town (RVFT) is one that provides a certain number of amenities and a certain level of services for these travellers.

When RV travellers enter a town displaying the RVFT sign they know they will be welcome. Certain services

will be provided for them that may not be available in other centres, and they will have access to a safe place to stay overnight and possibly for a longer period.

On the following pages are this issue's featured RV Friendly towns. If possible please include them in your travels and support the communities going out of their way to welcome those of us fortunate enough to be travelling. Enjoy!

Saddleworth, SA

Located approximately 100 kilometres north of Adelaide, the town of Saddleworth is situated in the Gilbert Valley and was established to service the farming community.

Visit Saddleworth to experience a traditional country town atmosphere and an authentic slice of country life. A walk through nearby intimate villages and a cycle on the Riesling Trail will have you falling for the region’s natural charms.

For RV travellers passing through the area, Saddleworth Recreation Grounds Caravan Park offers unpowered parking for a rate of \$10 per vehicle per night. Power can be accessed for an additional fee and a length of stay can be negotiated. Toilets, showers, a dump point and potable water are available on-site.

Tourist/Visitor Information Centre	Saddleworth Council Office 19 Belvedere Rd, Saddleworth T: (08) 8847-4096
Casual Parking (near retail centre)	Belvedere Rd, Saddleworth
Short Term Parking	Saddleworth Recreation Grounds Caravan Park, Marrabel Rd \$10 pvpn non-powered, negotiable stay limit, showers, bins, toilets, covered seating, BBQ, water, power (additional fee), pets allowed on leads
Dump Point	Saddleworth Recreation Grounds Caravan Park, Marrabel Rd
Potable Water	Saddleworth Recreation Grounds Caravan Park, Marrabel Rd



Brookton, WA

Brookton is 138 kilometres south-east of Perth and is a typical small wheatbelt town. With a population of only 576 (according to the 2006 census), the town today is a key agricultural centre for a rich mixed-farming industries.

Those looking to spend some time exploring the region will not be disappointed with the array of local attractions. Travellers can keep busy visiting the Old Railway Station and Pioneer Park, Nine Acre Rock, Boyagin Rock and the Brookton Museum and Heritage Centre.

Lions Park welcomes self-contained vehicles to stay overnight at no charge. Vehicles must not exceed the 24-hour maximum stay. Pets are permitted on leads and access to bins is available. Potable water and a dump point can be located at the Brookton Caravan Park.

Tourist/Visitor Information Centre	Brookton Community Resource Centre 89 Robinson Rd, Brookton T: (08) 9642-1377
Casual Parking (near retail centre)	Robinson Rd, Brookton
Short Term Parking	Lion Park, Brookton Hwy Self-contained vehicles only, 24 hrs, pets on leads, mobile coverage, bins
Dump Point	Brookton Caravan Park, Brookton Hwy via Stan Wall Memorial entrance.
Potable Water	Brookton Caravan Park, Brookton Hwy via Stan Wall Memorial entrance.



Glen Innes, NSW

From World Heritage wilderness to gem fossicking, fascinating history and wonderful festivals, Glen Innes is a captivating town set high in the beautiful New England High Country of New South Wales.

Glen Innes is on the Fossickers Way touring route and nicknamed Gemstone Country because of the sapphires and other gems discovered nearby. During a stay, pick up a fossicking map from the Glen Innes Visitor Information centre and try your luck searching for sapphires and other precious stones.

RV travellers passing through town are invited to stay at Glen Innes Showground for a negotiated length of time. CMCA members have access to an exclusive rate of just \$12 per-vehicle per-night for an unpowered site. Standard rates are \$15 per-vehicle per-night for an unpowered site and \$20 for a powered site. Showers and toilets are also available at the showgrounds, while potable water and a dump point can be found at Lions Park.

Tourist/Visitor Information Centre

Glen Innes Visitor Information Centre
152 Church St, Glen Innes
T: (02) 6730-2400
W: www.gleninneshighlands.com

Casual Parking (near retail centre)

Rear of the VIC on Church St

Short Term Parking

Glen Innes Showground, Torrington St
Negotiable stay limit, \$12 pvpn non-powered, \$20 powered.
Water, covered seating, showers, bins, toilets, pets on leads

Dump Point

Lions Park, cnr Gwydir Hwy & East Ave

Potable Water

Lions Park, cnr Gwydir Hwy & East Ave





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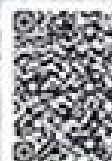
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