

Robe, Mount Gambier & Halls Gap December 26th 2004 until January 9th 2005.

This trip was for our annual December/January holiday period starting from Adelaide and travelling to Robe before moving onto Mount Gambier and finally to Halls Gap within the Grampians.

SUN 26th DEC: With all of the Christmas activities over, we arrived at Bruce and Maree's home early, ready to leave for Robe in South Australia's South East. We all headed off at 8.10am in ideal weather conditions heading for Robe where we arrived at 12.56pm after a short stop over at the Bakery at Meningie for an early lunch. Once set up in the Caravan Park, it was full on relaxation for the remainder of the day.



Robes Longbeach and coastline.



MON 27th DEC until WED 29th DEC: For the duration of our stay at Robe, the weather remained cool with no rain. We did the usual things that most tourist would normally do while stopping here. We even went to the local cinema and watched the film called "Meet the Fockers" which was very funny and well worth watching. It was an ideal time for us to visit the Mount Benson wine area where we sampled lots of wine as well as collecting a few bottles.

THURS 30th DEC: We were all packed up and heading towards Mount Gambier by 8.44am where we stopped on our way to visit the Tantanoola Caves which are located between Millicent and Mount Gambier right on the Highway. This cave is small in size with a pool of water located in the middle of the cave.



Inside the Tantanoola Cave.

Each of the caves that we have visited have been different in their own way, but all have a beauty of their own which makes them worth stopping for. It was on to Mount Gambier from here where we arrived at 11.18am where we booked into the Kalganyi Holiday Park. All of the powered sites for caravans in this Park had their own en-suites blocks.

FRI 31st DEC 2004 until SUN 2nd JAN 2005: As this was our second consecutive year at Mount Gambier, we ventured off to look at some of the things that we had missed out on before. It was a disappointment to us to see that very little had been done to the sunken garden near the main street to promote it as a tourist destination. It was very pleasing to see that Umpherston's sunken garden was still as lovely as ever to visit with all of the large hydrangeas out in bloom.



Mount Gambier's Blue Lake looking from the viewing platform which the people are taken to on a guided tour. The tours are booked from the new Information Office at the top of the lake.



The water Pump House at the Blue Lake.

Saturday saw us heading out to the Coonawarra wine region for some more wine tasting and purchases. While out this way, we went onto the Naracoorte Caves to look at the Alexander Cave. This cave had mainly a clay floor which was very different from the other caves that we had been in. It also had one small section with water which gave off an incredible reflection of the area above it. Sunday saw us heading South to climb Mount Shank, an extinct volcano. From here we drove to the Little Blue Lake which allowed people to swim in it should they desire to do so.



Mount Gambier's Little Blue Lake where swimming is permitted

MON 3rd JAN: As we left for Halls Gap in the Grampians at 8.46am, today was to be one of the warmest days for our entire trip. When we arrive at our destination at 12.19pm, the day was hot with shade from the sun being very welcome. This part of the trip was the first time that Bruce and Maree had been to Halls Gap, and only the second time for Sally and I. We were booked into the Halls Gap Caravan Park making it only a walk across the road to be in the main tourist precinct of Halls Gap. Late in the afternoon, the rain and a cool change arrived making the temperature drop which remained with us for the next four days.



The backdrop to the Halls Gap Caravan Park.



TUES 4th JAN until FRI 7th JAN: With the rain persisting, we didn't venture too far on the Tuesday, rather opting for short walks within the Caravan Park and Halls Gap shopping area. Not to allow the rain showers to spoil our visit, we headed off on the Wednesday to have a look at MacKenzie Falls. This is a spectacular area to visit with great scenery and one huge waterfall. If only we hadn't lost all of our better photos of this area.



Spectacular MacKenzie Falls.



We completed our trip to the Mackenzie Falls with an evening meal at the local Halls Gap Hotel which was enjoyed by all. The following day saw us heading off to have a look at the Balconies lookout which gave us views across the mountains.



The Balconies lookout.

From the Balconies we drove to the Sundial car park to walk to the Pinnacles lookout.



Sally standing on the Pinnacles lookout

This is by far one of the best lookouts within the Grampians which offers views of the township of Halls Gap from an elevated position.



Views looking from the Pinnacles lookout.



The wildlife that was around Halls Gap at this time of the year wasn't as great as when Sally and I were here in July, two and a half years ago but we managed to find lots of Kangaroos, Rosellas, Blue Wrens and even a Deer. The kangaroos were tame enough that with a bit of coaching, Bruce was able to hand feed one of them.



SAT 8th JAN: With the weather now on the improve, it was time for us to leave Halls Gap and start to head for home. It was 8.23am when we started to head for Stawell on our way to Bordertown where we were to stop for one night allowing us to catch up with Sally's relations which we hadn't seen for some years now. Arriving at Bordertown Caravan Park just before 12.00 midday, we were very disappointed to be told by the Caravan park Managers that we were too early and were required to leave and not to come back for at least an hour. With our plans to catch up with the relatives, we had no choice in the matter or we would have kept on moving and found somewhere else to stop. After an afternoon of catching up with the relatives, it was off to the Bordertown Hotel for an evening meal with more relatives. It was good to catch up with them and hopefully it will not be so long between visits next time.

SUN 9TH JAN: Leaving Bordertown at 8.56am, we travelled home via Pinnaroo and Lameroo which were areas that we had always wanted to visit, but for some reason never found time to get there. This put a few extra kilometres onto our days travelling, but as we were not in a hurry to get home it didn't matter. We arrived at Taillem Bend for lunch before arriving home at 2.40pm.

