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There are so many amazing reasons to travel our country in Australia. The experiences, the wildlife, the beaches, incredible scenery, stunning sunsets, the places you see, the National Parks, incredible Gorges and Waterfalls all around our Country.

What you soon learn about this life lived through your windscreen is the people you meet will become the greatest highlight of your travels.

We met some of the most wonderful people and some we spent months travelling with together, others just a few days but they have all left a lasting impression.

We asked 7 of those we met if they would like to be involved in this book and each of them said yes immediately and they each took time to share their insights, their stories and their travel experiences around Australia. We thank them for giving us their time.

They all have a different story and have different responses to our questions although most tell us a similar story of why they chose to travel and what made them decide to go.

We asked each of them similar questions about everything someone travelling Australia would want to know as well as finding out their personal story and reasons for doing the Big Lap.

We hope you enjoy the book as much as we did creating it.

We look forward to Travel Chat 2

Safe Travels

Kev & Adele



CONTENTS

1. Davin, Anji, Hayden and Rohan.....	Page 04
2. Jason, Denise and Millie	Page 24
3. Kara and Trent	Page 38
4. Vicki and Terry	Page 51
5. Scott and Kerry	Page 72
6. Tim and Amy	Page 93
7. Mick and family	Page 110



Name: **Davin, Anji, Hayden and Rohan**

Home town: **Sunshine Coast Qld**

Travel Blog: **Where The Wind Takes Us**  



Davin and Anji are currently travelling Australia with their two young sons Hayden and Rohan.

We met them at the Workman's Beach Campground at Agnes Water in May, 2018 as we were heading up to the Whitsundays. We caught up with them again in Mackay where they had stopped for approx. 5 weeks while Anji worked and we enjoyed lunch together at the famous Eimeo Pub.

We really enjoyed hanging out with the guys for the few days that we did. In today's interview we chat with them about their ongoing travels around Australia.

IL: *When did you begin your trip?*

Davin: October

Anji: Yes, October 2017

IL: When you left how long were you planning to be gone for?

Davin: I thought we would go for around a year, that was our original plan

Anji: Yeah we thought around a year, Davin potentially tried to get a year unpaid leave off work and that meant we would have been back in a year, but that didn't quite work out.

IL: No you're about to head home, aren't you?

Anji: We would have, yes we are very happy that didn't eventuate to be honest, while the security would have been good of knowing that there was that job to go back to.

IL: But did you mention that Davin was heading home for a month

Anji: Davin is yes, sorry I thought you meant we would just about almost be wrapping up now if we had only the year.

IL: Oh, yeah, so October last year, you would have been!!

Anji: Yes

IL: How much longer do you plan to be gone for?

Anji: Probably another year or so, I would imagine

IL: *Awesome, where did you leave from?*

Davin: The Sunshine Coast in Queensland

IL: Which direction did you go when you left?

Anji: We went south to start with a long the NSW Coast and ducked inland at times and then down towards Tassie

IL: Was there a reason you went that direction

Davin: The weather, as it was heating up, we wanted to get down south and we planned on being in Tassie over the Chrissie period.

IL: When did you get to Tasmania?

Anji: The 15th December we caught the Spirit across

IL: And how long were you there for?

Davin: 2 months

Anji: Yes 9 weeks

IL: *Awesome, how did you find it over that period?*

Davin: Busy, it was quite busy, but fantastic, we couldn't say enough about Tassie, how great it was. There is so much to see in such a small place and there's so many options depending if it is food or if it's hiking or..... it's just got so many attractions over there.

Anji: And the weather was really good, which is what we were hoping for.

A bit cooler through the days, had a jumper on – I did (Anji laughed as she is a bit of a cold frog),

Davin was still swimming, it was perfect especially as family back home were sweltering through the hot month and we were very comfortable.

IL: Yes and one of the things, as Davin was saying, I loved about Tassie was unlike Western Australia for example or Northern Territory, everything was so close. You'd have one stunning thing and you'd drive half an hour down the road and you'd stop and there's another amazing place or thing to see.

Davin: I think you could put Tassie on a map anywhere in the world and you'd struggle to have that many things to do in such a small area, I was incredibly impressed.

IL: *What were your highlights, what did you love the most about Tassie*

Davin: I really love hiking, so Cradle Mountain, and also the Huon Valley.

IL: It's beautiful down there isn't it!!

Davin: Yes some of the nature and the food, that was probably the two and then you've got the beaches up in Bruny Island, we loved the beaches around there too, so it's hard to have a highlight but Cradle Mountain is right up there for me.

Anji: I liked when we went to Mt Field National Park, which we just stumbled across it, and we were really amazed and they have really good things like the Free Ranger Program over the school holidays.

When you stayed in National Parks, their activities, most days, that the kids could go to, they were really quite in-depth and full on and the kids were hunting in the river bed for invertebrates and it was just great from a home schooling perspective to have that tick for the day and they loved it and made it a lot more real. I love learning about stuff so that was really great and yes the beaches, I was really shocked at how beautiful they were. I thought we had beautiful

beaches and I just wasn't prepared for that beautiful blue..... amazing!

IL: Yes the clearest beach I saw around Australia was Spring Beach in Tasmania. It surprised me too, the beaches are just stunning there.

Anji: You think you're in the Whitsundays, if you just look around in a photo it's picture perfect and you have no idea that you'd find that sort of beauty in Tassie.

IL: Yep, as far as a beach is concerned, because most people I think talk about, as you said, food and culture and entertainment and lots of other things. They don't talk about the beaches so much.

Anji: No.

IL: OK, where was your first stop?

Anji: It was a bit of a convoluted start. So I finished earlier than Davin and went to my Dads who lives near Toowoomba and then we went back and got Davin and then we started our journey. So our first stop was actually at a friend of Davin's family's farm which is in Woodenbong in Northern New South Wales.

Our very first night was in a non-powered non-water....

IL: (slight chuckle) So a fast learning curve

Anji: Yes especially considering in the week leading up to our departure, we got a terrible case of Gastro.

IL: Both Kev and Adele in unison – OH NO!

Anji: (laughing while talking) yeah we were lucky we were at Dad's in that initial part but then.....

Davin: We didn't have a toilet, thank God we had a toilet at this...

Anji: We had a toilet at this farm thankfully! The kids were OK, but we just had to go as far as we wanted to start the trip so badly, that we were happy to just get on the road, but it was handy to have that loo still. (lots of laughter).

Davin: It was a 'shitty' start

Anji: Yeah it was a shitty start

IL: laughing while repeating– it was a shitty start

Anji: You can quote us on that (still laughter all round).

IL: Was there a reason you picked that place to go to first?

Davin: It was just kind of a couple of hours, it was just a good distance from Anji's Dad's house and it was lovely country around there. I'd been there for a wedding and they have this, its kind of like Maleny, it's rolling fields and really nice and waterfalls and there's a few hikes you can do. It's a lovely area, we just couldn't make the most of it because of how we were feeling. So we couldn't go for any hikes or do anything, we were just laid up (little chuckle).

IL: Do you have any children with you

Anji: We do (while laughing). I've had a bit of a day today so my answers might be ummm.....

IL: Haha, "We do now but tomorrow maybe not"

Anji: Exactly

IL Adele: So two adorable boys

Anji: Yes, we have our gorgeous boys, Hayden and Rohan, who were 4 and 6 when we started.

IL: How old are they now, 5 and 7, must be?

Anji: Yes 5 and 7, they have both had a birthday on the road, we all have.

IL: How are they enjoying it?

Davin: I think they are really enjoying spending so much time together, everyone having so much time together, I'd say they're enjoying it, there's also challenges particularly Hayden missing people back home.

Anji: I guess the last little leg of this vision has been forming of what we are wanting when we get home and the kids talk a lot about home and getting back to our dog and the sort of things they are looking forward to when we are not travelling. I think they are enjoying travelling but

also liking the idea of not doing it forever. I think they like the idea of going back home and creating that. Often when we stop and play, they'll build a home out of sticks and whatever and that's probably quite normal, but I wonder sometimes if they're yearning for that a little bit.

IL: Does missing his friends back home and, we know Hayden, he's a very affectionate boy and took us about 5 minutes to get hugs from him.....

Anji: Yeah exactly.

IL: So he makes friends no doubt very easily, does that make up for those friends he's missing by making all of the new friends on the road?

Anji: I think so, he's actually coping better than I thought he would. He's getting better at the 'Good-byes' I guess but he is very affectionate and often will not want to leave an area. "I don't want to go" and we're like, we are going to the next place and he loves that and then he doesn't want to leave that place. I think he is getting better at that and we sort of just talk about all of our new friends that we occasionally get to meet again on the road and that's always super exciting, so yes I think that's better than I thought it would be.

IL: *They're certainly two lovely boys, we enjoyed their company. We've got this opinion that children on the road we find are better behaved than children at home. Have you noticed that?*

Davin: I'd say they've probably got attributes like their ability to communicate with adults and stuff like that, they practice along the way. They seem like they are very good at communicating, very good at sparking new friendships, new conversations, because they've had to do that.

Anji: As far as behaving though...

IL: Maybe behaviour's not the right thing. Most of the guys we've talked to, have said they agree and say we can have an adult conversation with them.

Davin: Sorry, just going back, sorry I kind of missed the behaviour. I would say having your parents around you all of the time you can actually work on certain things and you are not left to school or left to day-care or other people so much and you can take responsibility for different things and work on different things. I think having all that time together they are not craving attention hopefully as much, they don't play up as much.

Anji: I was just going to say about the interacting with adults, just right now we are staying with my Aunty and her friends here and they've actually said tonight, the friend said, I have to keep remembering that they are only 5 and 7.

IL: Yes, that's so true

Anji: Because I keep talking to them like they're older because that's how they are talking back to me so that was an interesting comment.

IL: *What are Hayden and Rohan getting the most from the trip?*

Anji: I would probably say a big advantage is not being in the schooling system because they just, their love of learning has just been able to be fanned where with Hayden it was being squashed. I can't even imagine Rohan in the schooling system yet. I think that is a huge advantage to them and they are just soaking up knowledge left right and centre and enjoying it and wanting to know more and learn more.

IL: *Are you home schooling?*

Anji: Yes we are. We looked at Distance Education and thought that would be too restrictive at with having to be in certain areas and also with the content it seemed to be a real drag. I keep seeing on Travelling Families that schooling seems to be the biggest hardship for a lot of them and home-schooling seemed a bit easier but you still have to register. I have done the teaching degree as well and I focus on the Australian Curriculum Maths and English end

points for the year and I make sure I am covering them.

IL: How did you go saying goodbye to all your friends and family?

Anji: Our family were quite supportive which was good. My friend had a Wedding on the very last night before we left which was quite handy so I got to say goodbye to all my friends that way. The last month we spent just trying to rotate through and saying goodbye to everybody.

IL: So just over the course of the last month you caught up with people as you could

Anji: Yes we didn't really have a party or anything. I finished up at work so we had a dinner and I said goodbye to everyone there and that was pretty much it.

IL: What was your reason for doing the trip?

Davin: My reason, I felt we were on a bit of a hamster wheel and I felt like we had to earn a lot of money to keep the household running and

we were working, both working a lot and only seeing the kids on weekends and weekends were also running around after kids birthdays or sporting events or picnics and I didn't feel I was getting much quality time with anyone. I just didn't know what the point of it all was really and why are we doing.... why are we so busy. So we had a chat to find another way basically and this is what this is.

Anji: I'm pretty similar. I'd kind of wanted to do something like this for a long time, just the idea of getting up and going to the same job and coming home and then it's the next day and the next week and so on. It just freaks me out. I feel like some of our most memorable times are when we are in a different situation either moving to somewhere for 6 months, moving to England or travelling to Europe, I just felt like that's when you get the most out of life and I wanted that again and it's just amazing how time flies but when you're travelling it doesn't. I was just really reflecting on that when I was working a couple of months ago and the year, people kept commenting how fast the year had



gone and “aargh it’s almost Christmas” and going on about it and, yeah it has, but I’m just trying to think of all the stuff we’ve done this year already and we’ve been getting the most out of it.

IL: *Excellent, how would you describe life for you guys before you left on the trip?*

Davin: Just busy.

Anji: Busy, just really busy everything.

Davin: Juggling

Anji: Juggling, making sure this was done and that was done and just fitting everything in was just such a logistical nightmare every time and it was really just surviving.

Davin: We used to get through the week and be surprised we made it through the week sometimes.

IL: Wow.

Davin: And like everyone’s been fed and everyone’s got clothes.

Anji: I literally used to think, we did it! You know everyone had their school uniform and everyone had their lunch and we did the shopping and everything worked well and then it was the weekend and we did it all again, and again and again. It was very busy, I’d work and come home and I’d get the kids to bed and I’d sit up working for another few hours. It was just busy, too busy.

IL: Even listening to you guys, your voices, thinking back 12 months ago to what that was like for you, you sound exasperated still now and you sound..

IL Adele: Exasperated thinking about it, not exasperated now

IL: Yes and like you are reliving the stress all over again, it was that full on for you was it?

Anji: It certainly became clear to me on this trip, I just don’t want to go back to that and occasionally we have stayed with friends and in around that busyness with them and it’s like life doesn’t need to be like that and I feel like a reformed drinker or something and I don’t

want to prattle on at them about it and I just feel people choose to be busy a lot and I just think..... that is not what I want anyway

IL: Not healthy

Anji: No it’s not and people don’t seem to think that they can get out of it, that’s the thing, you know there is a choice.

IL: Yeah I understand everything you’ve said for sure.

IL: *When you left, what were you expecting from the trip*

Davin: I was hoping to get a bit closer, feel a bit closer and more connected to the boys and Anji, just as a family but more the boys and particularly Rohan and I’ve felt like we’ve really clicked on this trip and I was hoping that would happen. We are clicking more and more and getting closer and closer so really, just for me, you think about what your priorities are and where you should focus and those priorities should be where your focus goes in terms of your energies and things like that and I just realised that I wasn’t living by my priorities. So that’s what I hope, that the priority is the family and I hope to get closer and to really enjoy our time together as a family.

IL: Fantastic, that’s awesome

Anji: I probably expected it would be a bit hard as well. I was aware that would be the case having followed others families and I knew it would be a bit of a transition as well. So I was excited to go but sort of ready that things would be a bit tough. I think everyone’s different, they were tough in different ways to what I expected but otherwise being together and the freedom of, if we liked somewhere, staying a bit longer, or moving on if we didn’t like a place.

IL: *Ok Has it met your expectations over the 12 months*

Davin: Yes I think it has. Some days are, we have tough days or periods of time where I just feel

like, the two little guys (chuckles) are kinda, I just find it's very full on and there's not much harmony and we are always just hassling them. I certainly have those moments, but as a big picture I feel a lot more connected.

Anji: Same for me and allowing us to take a step back from all that craziness to just focus on what I want out of the next stage of my life has been good, but it has certainly been hard. It's probably been a different hard to what I expected but it has certainly been hard however also very very good.

IL: Have you had any big changes along the way

Davin: Subtle. I'd say subtle changes for me, not so much big. Having a period of time where you don't get distracted by other things so much and you can actually focus on something, for instance, Exercise. I was a bit patchy with my exercise but I didn't really see such a clear benefit for exercise as I did on this trip. When I have had days or weeks where I haven't exercised much and then weeks where I have exercised, I can really tell the difference because I am so focused on my own and I can just be aware of myself a bit more rather than when I'm at work or things are a bit crazier. So I realised all these things like Anji mentioned, things that are really important and I've got more clarity around the importance of different things.

IL: Excellent

Davin: Exercise and meditation and having your goals and stuff like that. They are all really important things for me and I probably didn't realise as much when I was so busy before. So for me its just subtle little changes that I've probably just realised now the importance of different things. Nothing huge, nothing I don't know.

Anji: We've been toying with different career options but nothing's jumped out at us. That's something we're able to focus a bit of time on. Changes in behaviour with the kids again are

subtle but then we meet up with rellies that go oh wow that's improved or that's really great that they're doing that now.

Davin: We didn't and it's just happened so slowly when you are in with it you don't realise how much speech has improved or just different skills along the way have improved so those kind of things we probably don't notice it as much.

IL Adele: Because you're with them all the time, you don't notice those things but other people do.

Davin: Like when someone has grown and you don't notice it.

IL: Exactly, you're so close. Look I take my hat off to you guys I would have loved to have done it with Matt and Cam when they were young like your two. I can't imagine the terror it would have been. It would have been just some of those things you've described, it would have been more challenging for us, but at the end of this you are going to get so much out of it, as are both Hayden and Rohan.

Davin: Bulk learning

IL: The benefits are going to far outweigh any issues.

IL: You mentioned work Anji, did you guys have jobs before you left?

Anji: Yes, we were both working

Davin: I was a Disability Adviser at the University of Sunshine Coast. I'm an Occupational Therapist but working as a Disability Adviser at the Uni.

Anji: I am a Community Pharmacist and a Consultant Pharmacist as I conduct Home Medicine Reviews.

IL: What was it like making the decision to quit?

Davin: It was a bit scary to be honest. I'm pretty conservative generally. It was quite a scary decision. Getting a permanent job on the

Sunshine Coast isn't particularly easy so it was quite a big decision but I'm definitely happy I made it.

Anji: It wasn't such a big decision for me (laughing while speaking) and I was very happy I made it. It was good timing when I left.

IL: *You mentioned travelling Europe, have you done much overseas travel?*

Anji: Yes in 2008, we lived in the UK and travelled through Europe in a van and a tent and we did that for 4 months. On the way over we went through Asia and Thailand and on the way back we also did Greece, we went across to Turkey and then we went to Egypt, then to China and then home. We were gone about a year and a bit. That was our pre-child, pre-children exploration of the world.

IL: *For this trip, what vehicle did you choose to travel in?*

Davin: Isuzu D Max. We got it basically for the towing capacity and Anje's Uncle is a mechanic and he's pretty happy with their truck motors and it seemed like a solid reliable car.

IL: OK, what are you towing?

Davin: Towing a Jayco Expanda Pop Top

IL: Why did you choose that set up?

Anji: When deciding we kind of went through our options and we wanted something that could detach from what we were driving in so that we could go, as opposed to going in a Camper van for example, so we wouldn't have to pack everything up to go into town to get some milk or whatever that sort of issue is and we were looking at a Camper Trailer and I didn't want that much set up with 2 young boys.

I thought that would be a complete pain but we had never towed caravans before, didn't have a huge amount of experience and we were concerned about fuel consumption so we

wanted the smaller end of the caravan spectrum, that's why we went with the pop-top and we saw the Expanda's which we also quite liked so we had a bit of look online and ended up hiring one through Camplify for a long weekend to see how we liked it.

That clarified a few things, it wasn't an Outback version and was very low so that was a tick in the Outback column and then we also, from looking at a few second hand ones, knew there was a layout with a bunk which we quite liked so it gives us a bit more room, a couple more beds than we physically need as such but it's been a really good compromise for us. Simplicity and rather quick setup first was a huge thing we wanted, also comfortable and didn't want as much money to be spent on fuel consumption.

IL: What do you like about your set up?

Davin: It's all pretty easy once you get the hang of it, it wasn't easy the first week or month or whatever, it was just getting your head around everything. But it's now all pretty clockwork kind of stuff, we can pack up/set up all very quickly and we didn't take up a heap of room. We fold out and we feel like we've got a heap of space and everyone that comes in says WOW you know it looks really roomy! It's great to have the bunks, we've got all the sleeping options if there's one kid can't sleep, it's just options.

Anji: It's very homely, I like it. Yeah it just feels like home.

IL: *If you were to do a lap again, would you go with the same set up?*

Davin: To be honest I think I would because you've got to look at money too. If you get the shower and toilet and everything else, all those options, you are looking at a lot more money. I probably would, what do you think?

Anji: Yes I think so, the only thing is I'd probably try and find a different lounge configuration because it does drive me a bit crazy but that's

about it. You know again, we just make do with the toilet and that, I don't think I'd be bothered to change it for next time as far as the caravan. But we have talked about with the car, we would probably prefer not to have the canopy.

IL: Oh really!

Anji: We would probably prefer to have the tray back with the steel whatever it is

Davin: More of the builders type, like the ones that.....

Anji: Open up from the side

Davin: So you don't have to reach up or in as far, it's come from about waist height. That would definitely be recommended if people can afford them, that would be a lot easier on the back

Anji: We just find trying to get into the fridge through the side window of the canopy can just wear a bit thin. I've even got to get a little step otherwise I'm taking a bit of a lucky dip to try and get what I am needing

IL Adele: (who is all of 5ft 2in) I'd need a whole ladder (laughing)

Anji: Yeah you would (also laughing)

Davin: Or obviously you get the pull out – again it's just how much money do you want to spend.

IL: How long have you been on the road now – 12 months isn't it?

Anji: Yes 11 months I guess, coming up to 12

IL: How are you enjoying it?

Davin: I'm enjoying it a lot. It's not a holiday, that's probably the key. It's got a difference. People who travel in general and travel with kids and all that, they understand when we say that. It's not just like sitting down at the beach for a week fishing. (chuckle). You're moving, you're thinking ahead, you're planning a lot of things, home schooling the kids so it's still.....

Anji: Trying to find the nearest dump point, how much, where's the nearest petrol station, how far have we got to go.

IL: Not just trying to find a fuel station, but also trying to find one that's a reasonable price as well.

Davin & Anji: Yes

IL: And trying to find shopping centres and where to park.....

Anji: You'd have to think about that a lot with your height and length and all of that. You're certainly just not sitting back having cocktails at a pool.

IL Adele: A lot of planning goes into it

Anji: Exactly

IL: I always call it an adventure, I agree, people are always saying, Oh you're having a great holiday.

I always say we're on an adventure, but I certainly wouldn't call it a holiday!

Davin: Yes the reality is there is work and things you've obviously got to sort out and all that stuff but in general, being able to sit down with a cuppa and relax and read and at all different times and all these luxuries. We used to get the occasional Sunday afternoon where it was really relaxed and we'd be down the park with the boys and we get that now about 4 or 5 times a week, we get to have really relaxing afternoons.

Anji: Nice times

Davin: Depending on what's happening, we get that all the time now, all these great moments....

Anji: Yes and I think also for me has been, I'm just enjoying being around Davin more to be honest. With the busyness that we talk about we really, you don't drift apart but you become these bit of a robots really, because you're so busy trying to figure everything out and juggle everything. It's just been really nice to be with him all the time, driving and having a laugh and it's been really, really great. And that's another reason why I don't want to go back to the grind because I don't want to miss all that!

What a sook huh....

IL Adele: No

IL: I think your message then was a really important one. We talk about meeting lots of other people and making friends on the road. I don't hear people talking as much about how they have attached or become closer as a couple and people don't want to get mushy or whatever but it's a really important part of travelling together!

We had Matt with us for our big trip, and we miss having Matt with us, but it has been awesome also the last 6 months just being Adele and I where we've got to spend time together. We're together 24/7 and I just love it!

Anji: Yeah no it's good, and I know it's not for everybody and some people don't like to be around their partners like that all the time and that's fine, each to their own. But I think it's great to reconnect again as you say, yes it's wonderful!

IL: Do you have moments though, in saying all that, where you guys feel you need space? And if so, what do you do to have some space?

Anji: Yeah, look a lot of the time it's the general pressures of, for me, just family life more than anything and I just need a cup of tea and a bikkie and a 'drizzle' – our new favourite bikkies. We're not endorsed by Cadbury although if they'd like to come on board that would be great!

IL: Yeah. You're taking invitations (laughing)

Anji: Yes

Davin: Its Green's by the way (laughing)

Anji: Oh Green's not Cadbury! Oh no!

IL: You've just blown that one (more laughter)

Anji: Yes I think we again know each other pretty well which is great, where Davin will often pick up the signs that I'm getting a bit to the end of my tether and he'll be like, oh let me, I'm going to take the boys and throw the

frisbee around and I'll get to have a cup of tea and read my book and recharge the batteries a little bit. Similarly with Dav I try and give him opportunities to just do what he'd like to do so he's got a couple of games of golf in already on this trip

IL: Well he's doing better than me

Anji: He'd like to aim for a few more. Even just to slip away for half an hour and watch a TV show or something, just chill out by yourself. We've certainly got better at allowing each other to have that space as the trip's gone on, we're learning more and more and that's one of the things we've realised is beneficial to all! Dav's just slipped away with Rohie again, he'll just be a sec

IL: That's alright

Anji: Rohie's rousing on us for waking him

IL: aaawww

Anji: He hasn't changed (laughing all round) he's so funny

IL: Did you have a house before you left?

Davin: Yes we did, we are renting it out.

IL: OK. Do you have an opinion on what others should do with their house if they've got a property? Do you think it is more wise to sell it or rent it?

Anji: Well I think every situation is different. For us I think it's been the right decision. We've come across a fair few people who sold their house but they've just made a mint. You know people who have come from Melbourne and Sydney.

Davin: A lot of people we seem to speak to have been selling it for well over the million mark and making a good \$5 to \$6/\$700,000.

Anji: And looking to relocate to somewhere they

can look at getting back into the market quite easily again anyway.

Davin: Without a mortgage really.

Anji: So each to their own, but that's not the case for us on the Sunshine Coast. I feel quite comfortable with the decision we made. I just feel comfortable with the way we've done it.

IL: Our house prices in Queensland don't match Sydney and Melbourne markets, do they?

Anji: No

IL Adele: It would be alright if you could do that.

Davin: I'd think of selling up, if it was doing like down south, if it was like Melbourne or Sydney we would have sold up just before the bust and it would have been happy days.

IL: Has the rent been covering it or how much of the mortgage is it covering?

Davin: Yes it's basically taking care of itself.

Anji: It's slightly positively geared which means it covers our expenses to do with the house. So it's been good it can just tap away which has been a nice feeling and it's not too stressful.

IL: What have you done with all your belongings? Where's all your furniture and all your gear?

Davin: In the shed at the house. So basically there were 2 sheds, the tenants just use the small one and we have packed all of our stuff in that and we have lent some stuff to friends and family.

Anji: And we sold a fair bit on Gumtree as well.

IL: Awesome. And you'll go back to home when you're finished?

Davin: Well...

Anji: Well that's been one of the things lately that we've been mulling over, I don't know, we're not sure? We're not against going back there but I guess the vision that we've been forming doesn't involve that home so we won't make any rash decision but I'd aim towards probably not,

who knows in the scheme of things.

IL: So would you still go back to the Sunshine Coast?

Davin: I think so, we've got very strong family ties there. We just might move somewhere out a little bit, maybe a little bit inland further with the kind of picture that we want we can't really afford anywhere near the coast and we might have to move a further....

Anji: A bit further away.

Davin: A bit further in, we're not 100%, we're still mulling over that!

IL: Do you work as you travel?

Davin: Yes, we've worked a total of 3....

Anji: A total of 3 months of the 11

Davin: I've worked 7 weeks so far and I'm about to work another 3 weeks and Anje has done....

Anji: I've done 5 weeks, oh no did a bit on the coast so I've done about 6 weeks as well

IL: How do you fund your trip?

Davin: We've got basically an offset account that we use and we also work. So basically going backwards slowly is the plan lol

IL: So you've just been using savings?

Anji: We have managed to refill it to some degree which is really great because it was going backwards quite quickly but it has slowed to a trickle with all of this work we've been putting in which is great and it just makes the coffees a little bit less guilty.

IL: So basically you just use some savings and you work along the way and top up.

Anji: yeah exactly.

IL: What have you learnt about yourself from doing the trip?

Anji: Phew, what have I learnt about myself

Davin: I've learnt I need goals, something to

strive for, something to be aiming for. I don't feel like I can just sit around.

Anji: Yeah that's the same with me. That was probably one of the things we struggled with a lot in that initial stages of the trip, in that settling in period was the fact that, which we didn't realise at the time, that we lost perspective a little bit. We didn't have, obviously we're travelling and seeing new things and all that entails, but our own personal goals we didn't have any. We got onto that and it's given a bit more purpose as well to our days in amongst the travelling and being together and all that. That was pretty huge actually for us.

IL: What has surprised you about travelling?

Anji: Probably been a bit surprised how friendly everyone is in the travelling community and that's been a really nice surprise. And probably how welcoming people have been with the boys. I was a bit unsure with grey nomads, I thought they'd get a bit more "cold shoulder", a bit more should be seen but not heard type, we've had a couple of those, but most people have just loved the kids, just really embraced them.

IL: How good is that.

Anji: They are probably missing their own grandchildren.

IL Adele: Yes I was going to say that

Anji: It's been really lovely actually and that's allowed the boys to interact which has been really, really good

IL Adele: It works for them too, if the boys are missing their grandparents

Anji: Exactly

IL Adele: They get a bit of 'grandparently' love

Anji: Exactly, and they just get such different experiences then.

Davin: Not that long, a couple of stops back, they wrote a book, they wrote a little bit of a book with pictures and everything.

Anji: The boys did that is...

Davin: Yes the boys did, about Minecraft and what they're into and they were talking about it to this lady and then it was too late, we had to go to dinner and she's like "what time can I come and see the book tomorrow". And she came back at 9 o'clock in the morning, when we said what about 9, she comes back to get the book read to her and she was there for 20 minutes or 30 minutes with the boys

IL: That's pretty amazing isn't it?

IL Adele: Yeah that's nice

IL: That's just not going to happen on the Sunshine Coast is it?

Davin: No, (jokingly) no you're more likely to get the book stolen. (We all laughed) No it's quite a community and I really like it. And even if anything goes wrong, there's always little things that go wrong in the van or the car and that, it's just the way it is. There's little bolts that break and the door handle just broke the other week and things like that and there's so many people willing to help if you ask. There's always someone handy, someone's an Electrician and someone's a Plumber and someone's a Chippee. Anji: It's a very nice community, which has been lovely.

IL: I agree and my comment was more about that in general, as you guys talked about, everyone back home is so busy and no-one stops for 5 minutes whereas on the road people just give their time and they're so much more friendly, there's no stress.

Davin & Anji: Yes

IL: People give their time

IL Adele: People have more time to give

Anji: Exactly, exactly

IL: Do you prefer to Free Camp or stay in Caravan Parks?

Davin: (Chuckles before answering). I enjoy a

deal, anything on special I'll buy, even if I don't need it.

IL Adele: You like ALDI

Davin: Yes. So basically Free Camping, I prefer Free Camping and then you go out feeling less guilty about buying coffee or whatever.

Anji: I do like a good shower though, so sometimes a Caravan Park is a nice stopover in between Free Camps

Davin: And if the boys are happy I'm happy basically so if it's a Caravan Park or Free Camp, if there's things for them to do or anything like a pool or place for them to just play or anything like that, that is usually when we are at our most peaceful.

Anji: Which can be a dirt pile and a shovel, so it's not like we're talking BIG 4 slides or anything. It's sometimes the smallest thing keeps them happy.

IL: You're favourite stay is probably Caravan Parks as it gives more for the boys to do? Is that your thinking?

Anji: Ah, no, not necessarily. We kind of found that the Caravan Parks often aren't as entertaining for the kids because they enjoy it more if we stay at a dam for example or a lake. That seems to be our favourite places at the moment, so just normally a Free Camp or a Camp ground as such where the kids can paddle board is a huge thing or find insects around.

IL Adele: Spiders (Hayden loved showing us the spiders he had caught and explaining to us about the different types of spiders and showing us his poster of spiders. He knows so much more than we do about spiders, it's amazing!)

Anji: Whereas the BIG 4s often we have to walk to the playground or walk to get to the Jumping Pillow and there are other kids that are sometimes a bit rougher, yeah I don't know we often haven't enjoyed the Caravan Parks as much for the boys actually

IL: What is your favourite Free Camp you've stayed in so far?

Davin: Wuruma probably just for the people around us

Anji: Probably Lake Wuruma which is 3 hours west of Gympie. It's a bit North West. I think it's inland of Bundaberg-ish way. It's a free camp on a dam, a lake, and that was the first time we had our paddle board out and we were doing a bit of fishing

Davin: And we weren't expecting much either and we just didn't know, it's quite a busy spot and there were maybe 70 other people there around the dam and we just happened to get a spot right on the water. Someone I think pulled away they said 20 minutes before we got there so we had a spot 10/15 metres from the water and just the community there was incredible. Everyone was out catching red claw and fish and they'd come back and there'd be surplus red claw and they'd come around.....

Anji: So generous

Davin: Yeah they'd come around, we don't really fish much, don't have any crab pots or anything and they'd always have more than they could eat so they'd come around.....

Anji: And one neighbour had it all cooked up and brought it over in a bowl

IL: Wow

Anji: Another neighbour, I went out in the morning when I woke up and he's like, are the boys awake? He'd caught a female and she had all eggs on her tummy and he wanted to show the boys.

IL Adele: How nice

Anji: Yeah it was just a lovely community so it was a similar, I don't know, I really liked Corella Dam between Cloncurry and Mt. Isa as well. It was a similar feel to that. Probably a bit more community where we were.

IL: Corella Dam is right up there for us, we loved it.

Anji: Oh it's so pretty, wow it was quite spectacular.

IL: *Your favourite Camp ground?*

Anji: Um.. (thinking)

IL: I would have thought it was pretty bloody obvious.

Anji: (The penny drops) Oh of course!!

IL Adele: Have to be Workmans because that's where we met.

IL: Because you met us there!! HELLO

Anji: Actually I think that was.

Davin: Yes that was right up there. The Wilderness Retreat at Tassie wasn't real low cost, so that one right on the water in Tassie

Anji: Yes that was really special

Davin: Yes let's go, I would say

Anji: Agnes

Davin: Up on top of the hill there (laughing)

IL: Very cool (and there was no twisting of Davin or Anji's arm there by the way lol)

IL: *And Caravan Park, you're favourite Caravan Park?*

Anji: The boys loved Bathurst.

Davin: They still talk about Bathurst as it's got a big screen.

Anji: A computer game.

Davin: A computer game and a movie centre and they've got the water....

Anji: I think I just told you a few questions back though we didn't like the Caravan Parks but that was one that they loved!

IL: Do you know what the name of that one was?

Anji: It was the BIG 4 at Bathurst.

Davin: My one was the Wilderness Camp at Huon Valley, right on the river. It doesn't get much prettier than that. Literally we were just a stone's throw from the water, we had our own big grassy site and it was forest at the back

Anji: It was pretty well set up too, it had a Frisbee.

Davin: Yeah it had a platypus viewing area, oh yeah it had frisbee golf.

Anji: It was fun

Davin: You had to throw the frisbee over the thing and you got par, there were score cards and everything.

Anji: I can't remember what that was called but I can find it and flick you the name if you need

IL: Yeah that would be good if you could, that would be awesome

IL: Alright, any more to add?

Anji: I loved the Platypus Bush Camp at Finch Hatten

Adele: That was that quirky guy wasn't it?

Anji: Yeah he was, but geez it was a beautiful place.

IL: *What about your favourite places that you've seen or visited?*

Davin: Cradle Mountain

Anji: Carnarvon Gorge, I thought was amazing

IL: Yeah isn't it awesome, where did you stay there?

Anji: Takarakka, but we just didn't time it well. We only had the two nights and so we're hoping to go again when we loop back around. That's our plan!

IL: OK, any more places?

Davin: I really loved some of those beaches around Sydney, near Hailey and Clinton's, actually those beaches.

Anji: Yeah Bouddi National Park, which is like just north of Sydney was really gorgeous.

Davin: I love even now what we are doing, to be honest, I don't like Alice Springs, but I love the surrounds. It's just incredibly beautiful, so different than what we're used to. That's probably the key, one of the things you want out of travelling, you don't want to see exactly the same as back home. (Anji agreeing in the background)

IL: Yes exactly

Davin: We're getting the landscapes where the red soil against the blue skies with the white gums and these cliff faces, the reds. The sun sets off these cliff faces with the red rock and it's just beautiful country and so different than what we've got at home. I'm enjoying the western leg for the differences

Anji: Yes same, it just learning about the country as we go. I've never been a geography fan for example but I've found the whole artesian basin and these granite... Devils Marbles and all of that. I'm finding that really interesting because I am here, I am seeing it and I am really enjoying it.

IL: You guys are about to head off to the West Macs I call them, the West MacDonnell Ranges aren't you, out of Alice? You're in for a treat there.

IL Adele: That's amazing

Anji: Yes, I am looking forward to it, that's tomorrow.

IL: It's stunning, it was one of my favourite regions on our trip, for sure!! It was just beautiful

Anji: Oh wow! Yeah OK

IL: All those things you described, it's different from home, totally unique but visually stunning. Terrific walks and hikes, you're going to have the greatest time, you're going to love it!

Anji: Yes

IL: Who do you use for phone coverage?

Anji: I am with Boost which is Telstra. We thought we were so clever. Davin went with Optus because we thought we'd have the best coverage between us and Davin really got the shitty end of that stick.

IL: lol yep

Anji: I think he's got one month on the contract and then I think he'll probably change as well

IL: Any thoughts on what he'll change to?

Davin: Boost is a pretty good option for the internet. It's cheaper than Telstra and same coverage. I think it's just 3G rather than 4G at times. I think that's probably the only difference. I think I'll probably go with Boost. I think Optus is only good where we are, here up to Darwin and down to Adelaide. I've heard people say that Optus is a bit better than Telstra out this way but other than that, it's been so many places where I've got nothing and Telstra's been great. Definitely overall some sort of Telstra coverage option if you are travelling around seems like the best go.

IL Adele: We had all three – Telstra, Vodafone and Matt had Optus, they varied all the time

IL: For the most part Telstra would have coverage and the other ones, Optus uses Vodafone and Vodafone uses Optus at times. At Uluru I actually had better Vodafone coverage than any of them.

Anji: Oh really!

IL: That was quite funny

IL Adele: Is Boost a pre-paid type of set-up?

Anji: Yes it's really easy too. You just do it all on your phone at the end of the next month and you keep going. I pay 40 bucks a month now for 15 gig, it's amazing!

IL Adele: That's good value

IL: That's my next question, how much data do you have available each month?

Anji: I don't tend to use it all actually, so that's been really good

IL: Well that's the next part of the question, is it enough? So you're answering them ahead of time lol

Davin: I have 14 gig with Optus and I would say I use maybe 10 of it. Netflix basically takes up a fair bit, downloading Netflix or stuff like that, or streaming Netflix episodes. We probably use

about 10 on average but we could use a lot less if we didn't stream so much or we tried harder with wifi but that's probably about it.

IL: Do you look for free wi-fi as you travel?

Anji: Yes we go to Libraries.

Davin: Libraries are good.

Anji: Sometimes Maccas but certainly Libraries is a big one that we'll go to because we tend to go to Libraries with the kids, they love them.

IL: Excellent, any other good places that you find free wi-fi?

Anji: Bunnings, is another good one that we've used.

Davin: Some of them are a bit of a pain, you've got to sign up for this and that and you only get a very limited amount. Generally Libraries are great and coffee shops.

Anji: And there was this random IKEA. We thought we would go to IKEA a bit travelling around because the food was cheap and wi-fi was free and they often have a kids club but we haven't actually used that yet (laughing)

IL Adele: How many IKEA's are there around?

Anji: Yeah, exactly.

Davin: Like where do you find ALDI's.

Anji: Yeah we're missing ALDI.

IL: When we stayed at the Hobart Showground we backed onto the Bunnings so we used to hook into, well Matt mostly, he would just stream/download movies or whatever, he'd just let it run all night while he went to sleep off the back of the Bunnings free wi-fi behind us.

IL: Do you communicate with your family and friends back home while you travel?

Anji: Yes we give them a buzz

Davin: Maybe once a week

Anji: Once a week, yes, we're in contact with them often actually.

IL: What do you find is the best way to communicate with them?

Anji: We just give them a call

Davin: Families call and friends are mostly Messenger or occasionally call

IL: What social media do you use?

Anji: Instagram and Facebook, which is kind of my thing, Davin doesn't really use it.

Davin: I just use Messenger for a few friends really, that's about it

IL: I love your Facebook and Instagram posts

Anji: Aaww thanks

IL: You do a great job with them. Your travel blog is called Where The Wind Takes Us

Anji: Yes

IL: What about favourite Apps you use while you're travelling?

Anji: We use Google Maps that's a good one.

Davin: Wikicamps.

Anji: Wikicamps and the Travel Mate app as well. It's not an app, but Willy Weather is a great website to look up for the wind.

Davin: It is an App actually

Anji: Oh, it is an App, my apologies.

IL: Yep I use it too

Anji: Yeah it was really good in Tassie, you never knew when a wind was building or not so that was helpful

IL: You haven't been to Western Australia yet have you?

Anji: No, so it will be helpful there too

IL: Yeah wait til you get there you'll need it. You know WA stands for Windy Always

Anji: Oh really

Davin: We got a Budgeting App, AndroMoney

Anji: AndroMoney

IL: Ok, I haven't heard of that one.

Anji: Its really good, we love that.

Davin: We just pop in what we spend and sync and it comes up with what we spent per day, week on food or everything.

Anji: You can do graphs. It's really great to be able to outline where you're spending and where the money has gone and everything so that's been really good.

IL: *Do you have any tips for saving money while you are travelling?*

Anji: Don't buy lunch, pack your own lunch.

Davin: Food and accommodation are probably the biggest things you can do something about. Food, accommodation and fuel are usually people's biggest expenses and then fuel is just obviously dependent on how efficient you can get your set-up and how much you are driving. But in terms of accommodation it's obviously getting yourselves set up for Free Camping. You need enough water and electricity and you need all that sorted and then you can save a lot of money on accommodation costs. And then with food you've still got to live a bit. That's our opinion, we don't want to be really, really frugal because I really enjoy a coffee and I just figure it's worth the money as I enjoy it that much. It's really just being smart with your food and not buying too much takeaway.

Anji: Or if you do get takeaway, we've kind of realised you can get \$8 bucksworth of hot chips and make your own fish

Davin: We'll get the ALDI frozen fish and we just pop it in the Weber. And basically don't buy the whole meal and just buy the chips and it's still a bit of a treat for the boys

Anji: Or get a hot chook and chips or something and spend half the price or less and everyone feels like they haven't had to cook and had a little bit of a treat. So hot chips are the way to go.

Davin: Also RSL's, Kids Eat Free sometimes. Like Maroochy RSL had \$15 meals for Adults and

Kids Eat Free so for \$30 bucks...

IL: That's pretty cool

Davin: 4 of us are eating and they've got an awesome kids playground too

Anji: Yes stuff like that

IL: You were saying there about chips. Our boys when they were little, we used to buy chips and put them on a bread roll and they loved it, don't know healthy it was, but anyway that's what we did occasionally.

The other thing Adele and I do, often we go out and we'll just order one Steak Sandwich or something and they're usually big steak sandwiches or a burger and we cut in half, split the chips and usually we find that's enough. We will have a \$15 Steak Sandwich and it ends up being \$7.50 each.

We don't eat out much at all though, very rarely.

Anji: Yeah same

IL: *What's the funniest thing that's happened on your trip?*

Davin: There's so many comments with the boys. We mostly get hilarious things from the boys, that they will do.

Anji: The Goat

IL: So it wasn't laughing at Adele for falling over and cutting her knee open or anything like that.

Anji & Davin: Both laughed

Davin: Rowie had a goat, he said I've got a pet goat

Anji: So I'll give you a bit of a back story. We had been in discussions, we talk about the body and we use the correct anatomical words so it's always been penis and vagina, it's not a big deal it's your knee it's you know whatever, just a word. And the boys are so mad keen on pets so we stopped in Tassie and while we were doing something random, there were two goats on the side of the road. As we drove off we could hear



in the back seat the boys talking about these goats and how they were going to be their pets. And Hayden said I'm going to call mine I don't know, 'Goaty' or something, some name. And he said Rohie, what are you going to call yours? I'm going to call my goat 'Vagina' he said.

IL Adele: Lets out a loud laugh

IL: Laughing, I just knew that was coming

Anji: And we are in the front seat just laughing away, you know have to turn around and say that's a lovely name but probably not something you want to call a pet, cos he just thinks it's a word.

IL: That's definitely going in the book!!

Anji: Just stuff like that because you hear their little talk and they just crack you up with what they think.

IL Adele: That's funny

IL: What Photography equipment do you use?

Anji: Just our phones, I've got a Samsung

IL: Which Samsung do you have?

Anji: An S7 Edge

Davin: A Moto G5

Anji: Yeah a Motorola Moto G5

IL: What's the photography like with a G5?

Davin: I'm impressed.

Anji: Same

Davin: I think it's as good as the Samsung

IL: That's a big call, those Samsung's are bloody great

Davin: Yes, it's cheap, a quarter of the cost or a third of the cost or something and the quality of the camera's great. I'm happy with it.

IL Adele: Do you have a GoPro or anything for underwater footage?

Davin: We've got a Konan, it's a K something, I'd have to go and check. It's an underwater camera and we've got a whole bunch of things to go with it like little accessories and that. We got it for a couple of hundred bucks and we've basically used it twice. It seems like every time we go to use it, it's not charged and we are just about to leave and we go aaahh, then it's not charged or we just forget it. Basically it's just another thing to remember. We went to Airlie Beach and that would have been a pretty good place to take an underwater camera when we went snorkelling.

IL Adele: Yes

Davin: And we forgot, so yes we've got that but we really haven't used it.

IL: You guys have a bit of a signature move with your photos, don't you?

Anji: Laughing, we do!

IL: You've kept it going I've noticed

Davin: That kinda happened accidentally, or organically or something.

Anji: He was walking down to the beach. We were in NSW, the trip had only been the first month or so and the water was really pretty and he was walking into have a swim and I just said oh, just stay there and I'll take a photo and he said how about I do a jump and that just started it, that was the jump, the signature pose.

IL: So now you just all do a jump together

Anji: Exactly, it's good

Davin: I've got a mate who does this, he's got them all over the world. He's done a lot of travel and he's got a really cool sideways jump that he does and that kind of gave me the idea but I'll probably have to pay him commission now I guess.

IL Adele: Royalties

IL: Royalties of any money you've made out of it

Davin: 20% of nothing

IL Adele: of no money

Davin: Yeah, it's a bit of fun and now we look for different spots and timing it's always a bit of a challenge.

IL: Has there been any time during your trip that you've felt unsafe?

Anji: Probably here to be honest. The other night there was a bit of hooaaa in the street and we're quite close to the street. So not terribly unsafe but the most unsafe I've felt.

Adele: Just made you feel uneasy

Davin: In Caravan Parks I generally feel very safe. I feel like you've got a bit of a Community

around you and people would come over and help out if you needed it. You know not necessarily Caravan Parks, just in general, any place you are with a lot of other people but there are a few social & alcohol issues in town here. After dark its not the best place, you really wouldn't walk around after dark.

IL: No that wouldn't be wise in Alice Springs

IL Adele: We stayed behind The Gap View Hotel, it had it's issues as well. windows down or any of those things in the places we stayed there.

IL: You mentioned about a dog earlier but you don't travel with a pet?

Anji: No

IL: But you've got a dog back home

Anji: Yeah we do, our beloved Millie. She's staying with Davin's Dad and we look forward to having her when we go home. There was a lot of discussion and heartache but we decided not to take her as we like to go into National Parks and felt that we would miss out a little bit to be honest and also she is a very loyal dog and gets very distressed if she's tied up so that would limit a lot of what we could do. In reflection now, like going to the shops to go into Woollies would be hard and we were already wrangling 2 kids. It would have been too much to be honest, the stress of it.

IL: What sort of dog is it?

Anji: She's a bit of a bitser! We got her from the pound so she's a Kelpie, Cattle, Border Collie cross I think. Lots of energy, very loyal but she's being very well looked after.

IL Adele: It would be too confining for a dog like that

Anji: Exactly

IL: How old is she?

Anji: She's 8 next month

IL: What's been the best thing about road tripping Australia?

Anji: Seeing new things and being with my family

Davin: Yeah Ditto

IL: What advice would you give to someone else planning to travel Australia?

Anji: I find following other families on Facebook and Instagram to be really helpful, and part of forums and throwing up questions and seeing what other people are asking I find that to be really invaluable in the planning stage but also now we are on the road, places to go. That's been a huge research tool for me

Davin: I would say mentally prepare yourself for the first month or so in particular. Getting your head around everything, getting used to just being in each other's pockets all the time and the set-up and all the stuff you have to do with the van unless you've already done a bunch. I reckon there is a lot of getting used to in the first month. Don't think it is going to be a relaxing holiday, for the first month it's a bit tricky I reckon and then it gets easier.

IL: We took probably a month or more just to work out how to get our hot water working!

Davin: yes exactly

Anji: It was all so unknown to us, such a steep learning curve.

IL Adele: We learnt new things two years after we'd been travelling

IL: Oh yes this isn't our story but we'll get into that another day but oh yes hilarious. Stuff we didn't know in the motor home and we found it out 2 years down the track!! Oh dear....

IL: Rate out of ten your experience travelling Australia

Davin: I would say a 9

Anji: I'll say 9 and ½. You've got to have that little bit there for the bad times, otherwise you can't just have completely rose coloured glasses but

gee it's great!!

We can say that right now the kids are sleeping and life is just really cruisy

IL: lots of laughs

IL: Very cool, thanks so much guys. That's the end of it. We're really pleased that you guys said yes and gave us your time, we really enjoyed that time with you (In Agnes Water) and I must admit when I asked the question about would you still be living on the Sunshine Coast that was probably for some selfish reasons because I was hoping you were going to still be there, we'd love to catch up more with you guys when it's all over.

Anji: Yeah

IL: and we're both back here in the South East Queensland

IL Adele: We managed to catch up once along the way

Anji: Exactly. I'm sure we can make it work no matter where

IL: Yes so looking forward to catching up with you guys and seeing Hayden and Rohan again and getting Hayden hugs

Anji: Yeah (Laugh) nothing like them (laugh)

IL: Fantastic. Thank you, it's been awesome catching up again. Safe travels and hopefully we will catch up again soon.

Anji and Davin: Thank you, sounds great.

Name: : Jason, Denise and Millie

Home town: Perth

Travel Blog: West Aussie Nomads  



Jason and Denise are travelling Australia with their daughter Millie who is now 5yo.

We met at Rapid Bay in South Australia and spent the next 4 months travelling together and have now become great friends. They operate a Blog on Facebook and Instagram called West Aussie Nomads and have been travelling Australia for 18 months.

The guys have taken some time out to explore the Sunshine Coast and Jason has just completed 6 months working. They are about to start making tracks once again.

Jason & Denise open up to us about their trip around Australia and we have lots of fun in the interview given we experienced so much together and know each other so well.

IL: When did you begin your trip?

Denise: 9th of March 2017

IL: How long did you plan to be gone for?

Jason: I thought 9 months, I thought we would be back by Christmas.

IL: Are you happy it turned out to be more than that?

Jason: Yes, very.

Denise: Within 3 months you were.....

Jason: Yes, within a couple of months I knew this was going to be well over a year.

IL: Why, what changed?

IL Adele: When did you meet us lol....

Jason: I think to begin with it was so daunting to think of doing but once we were doing it, it was so natural, just so easy.

Denise: Also we're not in a rush so everything was taking a lot longer, so we realised it was

going to take a lot longer to do everything we planned to do.

Jason: We did the hard yards, we had packed up and then we thought, what are we rushing back for?

IL: For you Denise, when you left how long were you thinking?

Denise: I was hoping for at least 1-2 years. Without any real plan of time lines, I wasn't thinking of being back for Christmas like Jas was. I definitely didn't want to be back for Christmas, I wanted to experience a Christmas away from home for a change.

Jason: We did the hard yards, we had packed up and then we thought, what are we rushing back for?

IL: Where did you leave from?

Denise: Perth

IL: Which direction did you go?

Denise: East, towards Kalgoorlie.

IL: Was there a reason you went in that direction?

Denise: Because of the weather.

Jason: It was March and it was hot and we wanted to do some crabbing on the Eyre Peninsula.

Denise: That's right, South Australia was our aim originally.

IL: Ok, so given you were from Perth you already knew the Margaret River and Esperance regions really well and didn't feel a need to go there?

Jason: Yes, we had been to those places multiple times so we didn't need to go again.

Denise: We were considering going north, we were going to leave earlier but it wasn't possible. We were beginning to think we would have to go north if we were leaving it any later but we decided we still had time to go to South Australia, so we headed East.

IL: Where was your first stop?

Denise & Jason in unison: 50kms west of the Southern Cross in a Free Camp called Karalee Dam

IL: You Free camped from the first night?

Denise & Jason: Yep

IL: Did you pick that spot for your first night for any reason?

Denise: I found it on Wikicamps

Jason: Also the drive time wasn't too far

Denise: Yes, I think it was 350kms from Perth. We were also looking for somewhere that was about halfway to Kalgoorlie, we wanted to go there.

Jason: We also had a commitment in Streaky Bay so we did have a loose timing that we needed to be there

IL: Given you went straight to South Australia and we met you in South Australia, does that mean Adele was pretty right that you decided to extend your trip when you realised you were hanging out with us? (More laughter)

Jason: Once I was on the Eyre Peninsula I knew 9 months wouldn't be enough.

IL: Well that's pretty early? That's within the first week or two of your trip.

Jason: Yes, well it had been at least a month and we hadn't even gotten to Adelaide and I knew it was just going to be too much to see. I knew it was going to be longer than 9 months at that stage.

IL: Did you enjoy the Eyre Peninsula?

Jason: Loved it

IL: What did you love about it?

Jason: I loved the weather, the beaches, the fishing, the crabbing

Denise: and the oysters

IL: We had to race through that region because MACKS got so sick so we missed it. We plan to do it when we head back to the West Coast next time.

Jason: If you love fishing and seafood you're going to love it

IL: *When you left, you both had jobs?*

Denise: Yes, both had full time jobs

IL: What work did you do?

Jason: I was a salesman. (pause and then laughter)

Denise: A blind salesman

IL Adele: You were drunk when you sold stuff? (more laughter)

Jason: I wasn't really a salesman, I worked for a blind company

Denise: You were more in Business Development.

Jason: It was more Account Management/ Business Development

IL: And you also have an accountancy background don't you?

Jason: yes

IL: What about you Denise?

Denise: I was working full time for an Architect as a Building Designer.

IL: *What was it like making that decision to quit your jobs to go on this audacious trip?*

Denise: For me it was easy. I was a bit burnt out, I had been there for 12 years and although I loved design I just couldn't see myself staying there but I couldn't see myself applying for another job with another company. I loved my colleagues and my boss but I was a bit burnt out with what I was doing and I needed a change. I didn't know how to do that change apart from escaping.

Jason: Do what you do best....run.... (a lot of laughter)

IL: What about you Jason

Jason: For me it was hard because it was about giving up security.

Adele: Financial security

Jason: Yeah, my life was predictable and secure.

IL: and you had a routine and you liked it?

Jason: No, not really. In hindsight, No.

IL: So it didn't take long for you to get out of that habit of security.

Jason: I thought I did, I thought I liked it, then I realised I don't need the money, I don't need to be a robot and I didn't enjoy it.

IL: *Given you guys had all your friends at work, your family and friends, how did you go about saying good bye to them all?*

Denise: We had weeks and weeks of parties.

IL: You just had lots of dinners and times out with your friends?

Denise: Yes, because once we had told everybody, especially with work, I told my work in January. We just made sure we saw everybody lots of times before our trip. So from January onwards, I mean we're pretty social so we kept that up and made sure we did see everybody before we left. Lots of BBQ's, lots of parties, lots of dinners out, just the usual really.

IL: *What was your ultimate reason for doing the lap?*

Denise: Mine was adventure and also, I realised that Millie was 3 and she's going to school soon and where did that time go because we were working full on. I felt like I needed time to stop for awhile and I felt like, staying in Perth, the days were just going too fast and clicking over.

So my main reason was to enjoy Millie as well and to enjoy time with her and getting to know her before she went off to school.

IL: I remember you and I having a chat once and you said Millie wasn't growing up to be the girl you envisaged her to be...

Denise: Yes, she was in full time care while we were at work and I felt I didn't really have a handle on the type of girl she was turning out to be because she was often being brought up 5 days a week by other people. We had her on weekends and at night but it wasn't enough time to really mould her. She was picking up habits from other people and I just wanted more of a say in that.

IL: and Jason, your reason for doing it.

Jason: Because I got told to do it. I had no part of the instigating it at all. I fought it and tried to avoid it and I tried to call her bluff and I lost.

(Once we all stopped laughing, eventually, we continued.....)

Jason: I said ok, we'll put the house on the market and we did and then it sold and I was like ok, crap. Ok, we'll just go look at some caravans and then we bought one and then ok, crap, this is actually happening.

IL: and you already had a camper trailer didn't you?

Jason: We had one yes.

Denise: But it wasn't good enough for what we had planned.

IL: So basically you were dragged out the front door kicking and screaming...

Jason: After I quit my job and I started packing up the house it became more real, I realised that we are going to go have an adventure.

IL: *So given what you have said there and going back a couple of questions, what was it like for*

you the day when you walked into work and said, I quit?

Jason: It was actually quite good. I just met with the partners and said this is what we need to do. I'm missing out on my daughter growing up and I want to spend some time with her while I can and this is what we need to do and they were like, mate, this is brilliant, I'm so happy for you guys. It was good and it was a relief.

IL: *How would you describe your lives before you left on the adventure?*

Denise: Busy

Jason: Robotic

Denise: Hectic

Jason: There was work, we came home, we were social but....

Denise: We had a good life, we had a lot of friends and heaps of family, it wasn't boring. We were busy though, too busy.

IL: *When you left, what were you expecting from the trip?*

Denise: To chill

Jason: Yes, to chill and spend a lot of time especially with Millie and get the chance to see our country because we had travelled a lot overseas

IL: Yes, you have been to a lot of countries haven't you? What other countries have you been to?

Jason: We've been to South America, North America, Central America, Asia, Africa, Europe, all through western Europe, Dubai, Turkey, the Mediterranean Islands. We've done a lot.

IL: Yes, you guys have done heaps. You really do have something to compare your travelling now to. How do you guys compare it?

Jason: The World is brilliant to go and travel and see it but it's pretty amazing in Australia because it's so diverse, and we're loving it.

IL: I found every state is different but you guys still have a few to go don't you.

Jason: Yes, we've got 2 to go

Denise: You can go to Europe and see Culture, Architecture and History and all of that, and you can't get as much of that here, but it's different here, what you see and what you explore is different. I love the rawness of Australia, I love how you can go to a beach and you can feel like you're the only one on that beach. You can go to Rome and go to the Colosseum and there's a thousand people within a hundred square metres and that's awesome and exciting, but you can go to the Northern Territory and be in the red dirt and go to Bitter Springs and there's hardly anyone there and it's just as beautiful.

IL: Has the trip met all your expectations?

Denise: Yes

Jason: Yes, I think so

IL: How long have you been on the road now?

Denise: 18 months

IL: Did you have any big changes along the way?

Denise: Facial hair (I assume she means Jason lol). I think domestically I've become more....

Jason: Domesticated

Denise: I was never domesticated before. Loved to cook but never had the time to do baking. I have got back into my arts which is great because I haven't done that for many years. I think getting back to me, to what I was before.

IL: and Jason has got back to playing his guitar... (in house sarcasm, Denise would often rue him not playing and suggest why did he bother to bring it)

Jason: Yeah heaps (sarcastically)

Denise: No

Jason: A little bit

Jason: What else has changed

Denise: I think just slowing down, learning not to have such a busy lifestyle because we were always busy, we'd be booked out weeks ahead.

Jason: It's also when you come back and notice people and in reflecting on their work and



say “aaargh my job” and “my boss wants that” and at the end of the day who cares because they don’t care about you, you can be dropped in a flash. We get so focused on things that don’t really matter, and I get that people need to work and make money but it’s also just prioritising yourself in life.

Denise: Yeah, I definitely think our priorities have changed.

IL: *Have there been any moments in the 18 months that have been life changing for you guys?*

Jason: I don’t know if anything has been life changing, maybe, slowly over time.

Denise: I think I’ve realised I can’t go back to what I was doing.

Jason: Yeah, that’s true.

IL: When you say what you were doing, what do you mean by that?

Denise: I mean as in work, in that corporate lifestyle, I can’t go back to that now.

Jason: I think what it also means for me now is that I like the country more now than the city. I used to be just city and city minded and wanted to live in the city and definitely now I like the small town lifestyle.

Denise: It’s a big one because I don’t think I could have ever got Jas to move into the country...

Jason: Well you got me to buy a house there.

Denise: Yes, I know, but now on his own accord, he’s now loving the country as opposed to the city.

IL: I’m laughing and grinning here and Adele is looking at me going what, and it’s because I just get that. I never would have considered that I could live outside the city and now I loath the traffic, it’s so crowded, my mate back home has Influenza A and he’s been so sick for weeks and you go back to the city life and you get all the

flu’s and illnesses....

Jason: Ohhh mate, there are people dropping like flies here (Jason, Denise & Millie are back in Perth visiting family temporarily), it’s rampant here at the moment.

IL: The only reason I will always go home to Brisbane is because our Mums are there and our sons Matthew and Cameron. Otherwise I’d go live in the Whitsundays and after 12 months if I didn’t like it I’d move somewhere else, maybe 1770.

IL: *Ok, your vehicle, what do you travel in?*

Jason: A Triton

IL: Yes, a Mitsubishi Triton 4wd, blue with a Queensland sun visor across the front. (we are looking after it while they are back in Perth and sent them a photo of it with our Queensland sun visor draped across the front haha)

Jason: Yes, Queensland visor, that’s the one

IL: ok, and behind that you are towing?

Jason: A Jayco Outback Expanda Caravan

IL: How big is that?

Jason: The shell is 18.6ft and it expands out to 23ft.

IL: *Why did you choose your setup?*

Jason: We chose it because we wanted to minimise the towing length

Denise: Yes, we didn’t want to go full bore and have a super long caravan. It ticked all the boxes as far as Millie having her own bed down the end.

Jason: Shower, toilet, Air Con, full sized fridge, full oven

Denise: and separate bedroom areas. That was the first one we had seen that met what we wanted. We saw it on Gumtree and went and visited it and was like, yep this is the one.

IL: Was a 4wd and caravan always the only thing you were considering.

Denise: Yes

Jason: Yes, we had the 4wd already.

IL: *Is there anything you'd like to add to your setup or wish that you had?*

Denise: The car, we wish we had an enclosed canopy because we could put more in the back of the car.

Jason: Like an extra fridge, solar, some swags then we could park up and get off the beaten track and do a bit of swag camping.

Denise: Also with the enclosed canopy we could probably sleep in that too.

IL Adele: Can you add that on now?

Jason: We can but it's about \$3500, so it was a little bit much.

Denise: We got a quote in Nambour but it was a bit too much.

Jason: We figured we've done 18 months as is and it pretty much suits our needs

IL: *Would you do your lap again with the same setup?*

Jason: No, I'd probably do it a bit different.

IL: What would you do different?

Jason: Well we'd do that, we'd set up for camping as well so we could do the Cape.

Denise: Yes, a rooftop tent would be awesome and that would definitely be something we could add to the car.

IL: *Are you still travelling?*

Denise & Jason: Yes

IL: How much longer do you think you will go for?

Jason: I'd say, at this stage, probably until about September next year

IL: About another 12 months?

Denise: That's not set in stone.

IL: *Do you have any children with you?*

Jason: Yes, one.

IL: How are you enjoying having Millie with you?

Denise: Great

Jason: Yeah loving it, really good, time we will never get back.

IL: *It's our opinion that children on the road are much better behaved than kids at home, what are your thoughts on that?*

Jason: I think it comes down to the family but yes most long termers on the road have pretty laid back kids for sure.

IL: *What do you think the children get the most from the trip?*

Jason: They get an education

Denise: They learn to play outdoors and learn to play on their own

Jason: They get amazing experiences, they get social development, they get memories, and even though they are young, we were talking to someone yesterday who took their kids around Australia, and they're coming up to 40 now, and they still remember parts of the trip from when they were 5 or 6. It's just lasting memories.

IL: *You mentioned Millie was 3yo when you started so you didn't need to home school her but you do a lot of educational type stuff with her don't you?*

Denise: Yes, we have done unofficial home schooling but we have just registered officially for home schooling because she's of school age.

IL: Yes she's 5 now, just over 5 isn't she?

Denise: Yes, 5 and a quarter now

IL: I remember because we were there for her 5th birthday party. So what's the plan for home schooling.

Denise: We just registered with Home Schooling WA

Jason: We met with the moderator yesterday.

Denise: He is more than happy for us to do it.

Jason: He said you guys travelling around the country, she will learn more than I could ever teach her in a classroom. That's what he said and he's been a teacher for 40 years, a Principal for 30 and he said, you can't teach that stuff.

IL Adele: The Principal said that to us when we took Matthew and Cameron to America for 3 weeks when they were in Primary School.

IL: You have been house sitting recently, mostly on the Sunshine Coast, tell us about it?

Jason: Our first one was in December, we stopped for Christmas.

IL: That was in Northern NSW wasn't it?

Denise: Yes, we have done 8, actually 9 house sitting jobs now.

IL: We've seen all bar one I think

Jason: Yes

IL: Why did you decide to stop and do some house sitting?

Denise: We were in the Daintree and talking to another couple and we asked what are you doing for Christmas and they said they've got a Housesitting job. I started asking some questions and found out we could do that, because we were concerned we didn't know where we would be for Christmas and we were worried about paying ridiculous fees at a Caravan Park or being stuck not being able to find a spot at a Free camp. So we applied and we got one and we've done them ever since. We didn't set out to do it initially, we found out about it through another traveller.

IL: When you left Perth, did you have a house?

Denise & Jason: Yes

IL: What did you do with it, sell it or rent it?

Jason: We sold it

IL: You sold it and bought another one.

Jason: Yep, in Cowaramup (near Margaret River in WA)

Denise: We bought another one for just over half the price that we sold ours for. It's a nice livable home that we'd be happy to live in. We've got that as a backup so when we do go back we can choose to live in it or have it as a holiday home.

IL: Do you have any thoughts on what you think others should do with their house?

Denise: I think definitely everyone should keep some sort of real estate, whether it's the family home or a rental property, I think it'd be a mistake to not stay in the real estate market.

IL: Any reason why?

Jason: Everyone's financial situation is different, if you can afford to have a home and rent it and travel for a period of time then do it, other people do need to sell up everything to have the experience.

Denise: I still think it's wise to have something because it could be difficult to get back into the market when you get back and also you don't know what's around the corner, you might not like travelling or somebody might get sick and you have to go home.

IL: Very true

IL Adele: Look what happened to our others friends we both met. They had to go home when she was diagnosed with Breast Cancer.

Denise: Yes, that's right. Whether it's you or your family, you might need to go back so it's good to have that security.

IL: Where have you stored all your furniture and belongings?

Jason: At my Dad's beach house.

IL: Did you work as you travelled?

Jason: Yes, I've done 6 months, from February to August this year.

IL: What did you do?

Jason: I was a blind salesman (more laughter)

IL: So you went back to a Company doing much the same thing you did at home. You used your skills that you already knew?

Jason: Yes

IL: How do you fund your trip?

Jason: Savings

Denise: and from the proceeds of the sale of our house

IL: and you've topped it up a bit by working for the last few months

Denise & Jason: No

Jason: Not topped up but just maintained equilibrium

IL: What did you learn about yourself from doing the trip?

Jason: What have I learnt? Maybe that material possessions aren't important, you don't need a lot. That there's a lot of nice people out there.

IL: When we first met you, let's face it, you taught us to play Mexicans, slamming down Tequila's, you're not drinking now and you don't have a plan to drink from now Jas, so have you learnt something in there?

Jason: That I was an alcoholic (laughter)

IL: Well you're saying it, I'm not!! Is there a reason you have decided to make that decision for the moment.

Jason: I was drinking too much and in front of Millie all the time and she was associating me with alcohol and would do a mock glass of wine or something, and I was thinking this is not good. Because kids being programmed at a young age like that, I don't think it's good. I want her to be able to see that I can live and socialise and have fun without it.

IL: What has surprised you most about travelling?

Jason: Headwinds and cost of fuel

IL: Yep, I can relate to that. Coming down that WA coast I reckon I could watch that fuel gauge going down, it was insane.

Jason: I guess getting out of WA because it's so far from anywhere, it was a bit of a shock....

Denise: but there is sometimes a cheap fuel place in the middle of nowhere.....

Jason: Yeah yeah, I've heard about that (A lot of laughter)

IL Adele: I heard they have really cheap fuel at Wycliffe Wells.

The story: We pulled up at Wycliffe Well on the Stuart Highway in the NT, 380kms north of Alice Springs and not far from Devils Marbles, but essentially the middle of nowhere. The fuel turned out to be really cheap compared to anything else we had seen for ages and despite car after car all driving in, filling up and driving off, including a Highway Police car, Jason refused to put any in. He was adamant for it to be cheap there must be something wrong with it. Denise was not happy when she found out as they drove off that Jas hadn't filled up. We filled up including our fuel containers with no issues and never let Jas forget it.

Any time we found cheap fuel, sorry Jas, this one isn't for you mate lol

IL: Do you prefer to Free Camp or stay in Caravan Parks?

Denise: Free camp 100%

Jason: Free camp for sure or cheap camp on Farm stays etc

IL: What was your favourite Free Camp?

Jason: Gregory River or Uluru

IL: Your favourite Campground?

Denise: Does that mean paid campground

IL: Yes

Denise: Greens Camp at Cape Tribulation, it was pretty special

IL: Your favourite Caravan Park?

Jason: Yeppoon, the Beachside Caravan Park

Denise: It's not a fancy Caravan Park, it doesn't have a playground or pool but you're right on the beach.

Jason: You hear the waves all night and you're right there on the sand dunes.

Denise: it's more about the location than the actual caravan park

Jason: For sure, it's not about the amenities or anything

Denise: No, they were pretty basic

IL: What are some of your favourite places that you visited?

Jason: Lawn Hill National Park

IL: Ohhh yeah, just rub that in, thanks..... (we left in our Motorhome from Gregory River and 10kms in, Jason & Denise caught up and went past us. They spent the day in Lawn Hill and Adels Grove while we turned around and went back, the corrugations just too rough for a day trip in the Motorhome. We got to hear all about how fantastic it was that night)

Denise: Sorry guys! (she's not really!!)

Jason: Uluru

Denise: Bitter Springs

Jason: Bungle Bungles

Denise: Cape Trib

Jason: 1770 & Agnes Water, Fraser Island sensational

IL: Whitsundays?

Jason: Yes, I enjoyed Whitehaven Beach, that was beautiful.

Denise: It would be close but not in my Top 5

Jason: Definitely Top 10. I just loved Whitehaven Beach and the day we had was just beautiful. We had perfect weather, beautiful food, swimming, it was great.

IL: Who do you use for phone coverage and how is it?

Jason: Telstra

IL: Both of you with Telstra?

Denise: I actually started out with Vodafone and travelled for 9 months with Vodafone and then just realised it was absolute shit and there was no point paying for a service I could hardly use. So I had to fork out a lot of money to pay out my contract and go with Telstra. Reluctantly because I dislike Telstra but you get the coverage.

Jason: and you get to watch free AFL

IL: How much data do have on your plans?

Jason: 16 gig

IL: Between the two of you or each

Jason: Total

IL: Is it enough?

Denise: Sometimes it's not

Jason: Yes it is. Lately we've had all the wifi from the house sits we did so we haven't noticed it for awhile but when we are back on it you've got to be conscious of it, I mean we're not streaming videos but for general internet usage it's plenty.

IL: That's only because you always had Matthew to hand you all the Netflix and Movies lol (our son Matt was amazing at finding Free wifi to download his TV shows and Movies and would share them with Jason & Denise)

Jason: That's right...

IL: You're on your own now (Matt is no longer travelling)

Jason: Yes haha. It's ok, we can do it, we can make it work.

Denise: We don't want to pay more money for it.

IL: Are you guys on a plan?

Jason: Yes

IL Adele: *Did you utilise Free wifi when you could to help you get through it?*

Jason: We use Free wifi wherever we can, yes

IL: Where do you find Free wifi?

Jason: Libraries,

Denise: sometimes National Parks have it, Carnarvon Gorge had it, Kings Canyon...

Jason: Cafes

IL: Caravan Parks?

Denise: We've never experienced Free wifi in a caravan park have we?

Jason: No, we haven't. We haven't stayed in a Caravan Park for so long.

Denise: We don't really pay for an expensive Caravan Park, we haven't stayed in a Big 4 or anything like that.

IL: Information centres?

Denise: Yep, information centres

IL: *How do you communicate with family and friends back home?*

Jason: Facebook, Messenger, Facetime, Phone, SMS

IL: What Social Media do you use?

Denise: Facebook and Instagram

IL: What do you like to use the most?

Jason: That's her department....

Denise: Both for different things really. Facebook is more for family and friends because they can see the posts on where we are up to and what we're doing but Instagram I love for the photos.

IL: *What are your favourite apps that you use while travelling?*

Jason: We use Wikicamps, Fuel Map, I've just got another one now called Windy.

IL Adele: Is that a weather one?

Jason: It gives you wind directions so I guess it can assist you if you are going to take off on a certain day into a severe head wind. Aus Rain Radar is another one.

Denise: and Google Maps....

IL: Going back to Fuel, What was the funniest thing that happened on your trip?

Denise: Haha, we'll let you fill in that one.

Jason: An Alien took over my mind, I wasn't thinking straight.

IL: So I'll just write that one up, fill in the dots

Jason: Yes, you can write that up, I prefer to sweep that one under the carpet.

IL: *What have you found the hardest part or hardest thing about travelling?*

Denise: For me, Role change, because....

Jason: you're used to me being your bitch....
(laughter)

Denise: Because I've had to learn to do more the female roles

Jason: like dusting....

Denise: Well because Jas does more the outdoor stuff like the dump point, the hitching, you know he does everything that is to do with outside the caravan

Jason: Repairs and maintenance

Denise: Yeah, so we're doing more traditional roles which is really different from what we're used to. Before I was working full time and pretty much busy not being able to do much else and Jason was doing the shopping, I wouldn't say most of the cooking because we'd take turns but he was doing the house work, the shopping and that sort of stuff and I wasn't doing that and now I've had to take on that role so it was pretty

hard for me to get my mind around at first and then I've slowly realised this is now my job.

Jason: Yeah but I cleaned a 4 bedroom house for 20 years, you've cleaned about 6 square feet of space for 18 months so you've got some catching up to do (at this stage Adele and I are laughing hysterically)

Denise: I know, I'm not very domesticated, I'm not going to sugar coat it.

IL: I do remember coming over one day to say hello to Jason, you and Adele were out, and he had a needle and was sewing the curtain or some bloody thing so..... (more laughter)

Denise: That gives you an insight but when we were both working full time I always wanted to get a cleaner because I didn't want to spend my weekends cleaning after working all week but Jas preferred to keep the money so he'd do the cleaning. I was never going to be a housewife, I've always said that but now I've kind a become a housewife. That's been the hardest thing for me is that transition.

Jason: and the hardest thing for me is actually listening to her complaining about becoming a housewife.

IL: Jason, anything more for you to add about the hardest thing about travelling?

Denise: Dump points?

Jason: Nah, that's alright, I've got used to that.

IL: Now there's a change

Jason: haha yeah. Hardest thing, it's you're quite confined in the van. If you're feeling a little bit average and maybe just need some alone time, everything is intensified because everyone's right there. It's not like you can go to a different room, you can get out and go for a walk but it's just more intensified because you are living so close to each other, all the time.

IL: *So when you have those times where you need your own space, what do you do?*

Jason: It depends where we are, up in North Queensland I'd go fishing or go to the coffee shop and have a coffee. What do you do, read a book, go shopping...

Denise: Yeah, I escape to Facebook.

Jason: We'll watch a movie...

Denise: I don't need my alone time as much as Jason needs his

Jason: I don't really need a lot of alone time but it's nice to be alone, sometimes.

Denise: and he goes surfing

Jason: I can go surfing yes

Denise: and he can do that early, he can get up and do that while we are still sleeping

Jason: Yeah I'll come back and they're still in bed so it's not like I'm missing out on family time.

IL: *Denise clearly loves taking photos and is very good at it, what photography equipment do you use on your trip?*

Denise: Most of the time, I'd say 80% of the time it's my Samsung phone.

IL: Which Samsung phone do you have?

Jason: The S7

Denise: Recently I got a new camera for my birthday and I'm learning how to use that. It's a CanonEOS 1300D.

IL: You also have an underwater camera

Denise: Yes but we haven't really used that as much as we thought we would. It's not as good as what we thought, in hindsight we should have bought a Go Pro instead.

IL Adele: We find once you're in the water and you come out of the water you get all the water marks.

Denise: We wanted it for when you're at nice places like Bitter Springs, it'd be nice to take photos but we found we don't take that many.

IL: What do you really love the most about travelling?

Jason: Freedom. The choice to go wherever we want, when we want. Seeing our Country

Denise: What I like is not having our life mapped out for us. I like that our future isn't written, whereas before it was. We can change, we can go left on the road or go right, it's a day to day decision, it's not mapped out.

We actually don't like being stuck to a schedule because every time we've booked a caravan park ahead of time, we've almost always regretted it because we've seen something along the way that's great and we want to stay longer or we've met people who've said you've got to go to this place or come with us to here and then we've got that booking which we have to go to and we don't want to go.

Jason: Yes, we try to avoid doing that now

IL: Did you travel with a dog or pet?

Denise: No

IL: What advice would you give to someone else planning to travel Oz?

Jason: Simple, don't over plan it. It changes all the time.

Denise: I'd say be open to options and don't put yourself on some sort of schedule, you won't enjoy it as much.

Jason: I think wing it, don't plan it

IL: Rate it out of 10, you're experience travelling Australia?

Denise: 12

IL: Great answer

IL Adele: I was thinking about you guys, having the opportunity of your family travel with you. You were unique in that you were able to have Stacey (Jason's Mum) and Gerry and Dolores (Denise's Mum) and Cliff come to you.

Denise: Yes that's been great

Jason: Yes that was nice. It kind of helps that my

Mum has done the Lap before and so she left with us from Perth, they were with us the first 6 weeks. They left with us from Perth and we left them at Port Augusta and that gave us a bit of confidence as well because they were quite experienced.

IL Adele: And this is your 3rd time back to Perth now?

Denise: No second....

Jason: It is our 3rd actually.

IL Adele: So on average every 6 months

Denise: We've probably only done that because they were all Free flights, because we had Frequent Flyer. I don't know that we would have paid for all those flights.

IL: That's where we went wrong

IL Adele: We spent a fortune

Jason: maybe spending another year on the road will encourage more people to come out to us. We had my sister come over to the Sunshine Coast, we've had Denise's Mum come over 3 times once was with her husband Cliff, and my Mum has been over twice, plus we've had friends come over from Perth and Sydney.

Denise: Yeah that helps.

Jason: It's nice to catch up with friends and family, so hopefully they'll do that too in the next year.

IL Adele: When you've been travelling have you come across any family that live outside Perth that you've been able to visit?

Denise: Yes we visited Jas's aunty near Mullumbimby who we hadn't seen for a very long time, that was nice. And we have family on the Sunshine Coast as well. We will also visit family in Sydney, I've got quite a few cousins we want to catch up with and we have friends in Sydney and Melbourne and in Queensland of course.



Jason: Our family on the Sunshine Coast have been a big help, they've allowed us to park on their property for at total of, when we get back, 19 weeks now. They've been a big help. Fantastic, thank you heaps.

It's great talking to you, enjoy your time back in Perth with your family and friends and we look forward to seeing you again very soon.

You can follow Jason, Denise and Millie at West Aussie Nomads on Facebook and Instagram.

Name: **Kara & Trent**

Home town: **Sydney**



We met Kara and Trent at Gregory River and for a few days we had a great time sitting around the fire, swimming in the river, riding tubes and boards, telling stories and having fun.

They are a great young couple from Sydney who spent 15 months on the road travelling Australia in 2017 and 2018 and they agreed to tell us all about their Road Trip around Oz.

IL: *When did you begin your trip?*

Kara: February 2017

IL: *When did you guys finish your trip?*

Kara: Late May 2018

IL: *How long did you plan to be gone for?*

Trent: A year or 2

Kara: Well I said a year and Trent said 2 years. We didn't know but I was saying probably a year it would take at the most, I thought, but Trent thought it'd take 2 years.

IL: *How long were you gone for in the end?*

Kara: 15 months in the end. We didn't get to do Tasmania because of the weather so it could easily be a 2 year thing.

IL: *Have you been to Tassie?*

Kara: No, it's definitely on our to do list but we didn't have to do it all in one go. We weren't going to go in the middle of winter

IL: People kept on saying to us, you need to stay longer or you can't miss this or what a shame you didn't go there, even though it wasn't in our plan, but I kept on saying, we don't have to see everything on this trip, we can do it again another day.

Kara: Exactly.

IL: *Where did you leave from?*

Kara: We left from Sydney and we went immediately west.

IL: Was there a reason you went west?

Kara: We didn't want to go north or south because we knew we'd probably turn back home (laughs).

Trent: We've done most of the coast.

Kara: We wanted to go as far out as possible in a direction we've never been before and just get as far away as we could.

IL: *Where was your first stop?*

Kara: Haha, our first stop was Foster on the Coast, that was the first night of our trip. We drove up 4-5 hours, then we went west from Foster

IL: Why there?

Kara: Because we had to go west from there anyway and we had a friend that was going to be up that way and we stayed with him the second night. He had travelled Australia a lot in a caravan, had a lot of information to tell us and he told us a route to do and places to see and go, so we saw him on the way up.

IL: Did you find stopping and talking to him helped you over the course of your trip?

Kara: Yes because it was him who told us about Lawn Hill where we met you guys and he told us about Karijini and all these other places that we've never heard of and he was like, these are must do's.

IL: Yes, how good was that up there where we met at Gregory River!!

IL: *Did you guys have jobs before you left?*

Trent: Yes

Kara: Yep

Trent: Full time jobs.

IL: What did you guys do?

Trent: I was marine construction, building wharves and marinas.

Kara: I was doing sales.

IL: *What was it like making the decision to quit?*

Kara: We had made the decision 2 years prior, it wasn't that hard (lots of laughter) We didn't have anything holding us back, we didn't have a mortgage or kids or anything like that.

IL: *How did you say good bye to friends and family?*

Kara: I found it hard, Trent wasn't too bad were you?

Trent: No I was alright.

IL: Did you go out to dinners or to a Pub or have a party?

Kara: We had a big party with all our friends and family and we had several family get togethers before....

Trent: A good piss up....

IL: Who needs an excuse, right?

IL: *What was your reason for doing the lap?*

Trent: To see the Country

Kara: My parents did it when they were 20 so in the back of my mind it was something I always wanted to do. We just wanted to see what was in our country. We've travelled a lot overseas so we wanted to see what was in our country.

IL: Where have you been overseas?

Kara: I can't, there's too many places

IL: Really

Kara: America, Thailand, Europe, Hawaii, Bali, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, New Zealand

Trent: Australia is the best

IL: I was about to ask you that, you've travelled so much overseas, how do you compare Australia to what you have seen overseas?

Trent: Everywhere has it's own beautiful places but, it's the safest in Australia probably.

IL: How would you describe life for you before you left on the adventure?

Kara: Stressful, just the normal....

Trent: Bubble

Kara: Yes, living in a bubble and just doing the day to day things and the week to week tasks and keep on going. Spend money, work, spend money....

IL: Yes, it just becomes Groundhog day doesn't it.

Trent: You get to see how other people live and work, how other parts of the country work, they're not all like Sydney. Different towns and Woolworths shuts on a Saturday.

IL: One of the big things for me was I came to a point where I figured there had to more to life than just working all week and spending the weekend having to mow the lawn and wash the car, do all the chores around the house, do the washing and then it just starts all over again and it's just Groundhog Day week after week. It's so monotonous.

Trent: Same mould hey.

IL: Yeah, I figured there just had to be more to life.

IL: When you left, what were your expectations from your trip?

Kara: To be honest we didn't know what to expect, we just jumped out with no idea what to

expect. It was the weirdest feeling because we'd never done anything like that before. We really didn't know what was ahead of us.

IL: Well there goes my next question, did it meet your expectations, because you didn't have any?

Kara: Yeah, we didn't know what to expect, I mean we had done little trips in the Hiace van...

Trent: I thought the Free camping would be a bit easier. A lot of places where there is Free camping, it's just a roadside pullover. I was hoping there'd be a bit more community based camping that was cheap or free, especially in outback towns. There's a few good ones but.

IL: I can understand the problems they have with offering Free camping but I found if we had a really good free camp we could just relax, take our time, see the town and enjoy the place but if you're in a Caravan Park and it's costing you a fortune than we limited our time there and rushed in and rushed out.

Trent: Yes it can be \$40 a night so that's \$280pw.

IL: And we had Matt with us so we were regularly paying \$50 and \$60 a night

Trent: Yes, \$350 it's a lot of money.

IL: Did you have any big changes that happened for you guys along the way?

Trent: Drank a bit more beer.

Kara: Haha, yes quite a lot of beer so I guess that was a bit hard.

Trent: Went in and out of that, drinking too much and then not drinking for a month and then drinking again. It was never in the morning but sitting around the fire from 5 until 10 or so.

IL: I remember early in our trip we got to 1770 and caught up with some guys we had been following and had now settled there. One of the questions he asked me was, do you find you

drink a lot more and I said Hell yeah lol.

Kara: Yes it's an every day thing because you're meeting new people and they say lets have a beer around the fire and it just ends up a lot.

IL: It's just such a social thing.

Kara: I just love that simple side of the life of living on the road, meeting new people, listening to stories, everyone was like their own community it was really good

IL: Were there any times that you had a big wow moment?

Trent: Yeah, the WA coastline, it was pretty Wow. I mean in terms of the East Coast is much more greener, a lot of that WA coastline, until you get to Perth, is very dry.

Kara: Yeah I guess it was a Wow, the East Coast to the West Coast is so different. It's like we're in a different country. It's beautiful, but it's just the landscapes are a bit of an eye opener.

IL: What vehicle did you travel in?

Kara: Land cruiser with a slide on camper on top.

IL: Why did you choose your setup?

Trent: Just a good vehicle for Aussie conditions. I was planning on towing a boat but I got sick of spending money. That was the idea though, to tow a boat as well.

Kara: We didn't want to tow a caravan, we wanted to be able to fit into one spot and we wanted to be able to 4wd as well so this was our option because we could take the camper on and off also.

I wanted a Mini bus but I'm glad that we didn't because it's just not practical.

IL: Why do you feel it's not practical?

Trent: I wanted a 4wd

Kara: Well sometimes we'd get off road and if we were in a really long bus you can't find parking or can't get into a caravan park or there's

low trees and stuff like that. We just wanted it to be easy and quick.

Trent: We still had problems with it because it was high and it took a little bit longer to set up if we wanted to take it off. If we kept it on the truck it was heaps quick.

Kara: We kept it on the truck the majority of the time, we only took it off about 12 times in the whole 15 months. We only took it off if we were going to stay for about a week.

IL: Did you buy it as it was?

Trent: No we bought it separate and made it work

IL: Were there any times that you had a big wow moment?

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Trent: No we bought it separate and made it work

IL: *Is there anything you'd like to add to your setup or wish you had?*

Kara: Yes, bikes

Trent: a boat

Kara: Yes bikes and a boat

IL Adele: Motorbikes or Bicycles

Trent: Just Bicycles

Kara: The reason we didn't have bikes was because our door was on the back, so it was a pain in the arse to have a bike rack.

IL: *Would you do the lap again with the same setup?*

Trent: I'd change it

Kara: We'd probably change it just to change it up but I'd recommend it to people. Everyone's different depending on what you want to get out of it.

Trent: There's no one setup that does everything.

IL: Yes exactly

Trent: There's always a sacrifice somewhere

Kara: It was definitely perfect for us

Trent: You just adjust to what you've got.

IL: Yes, our setup was very different to yours.

Trent: Yeah look how comfy it was.

IL: Yes but we couldn't get to some places that you did. As you were saying, there's no perfect model.

Trent: All you need is a little car

IL: Yes, that's right..... Anyway this interview is about you not me (laughter)

IL: *Are you still travelling?*

Trent: No

Kara: No, Trent's about to leave to go back up to Airlie Beach to work for a bit and then when he comes home we're going to Byron Bay, we're going to do a little road trip up and back from there. We're just going to take a tent.

IL: *You mentioned you don't have children but no doubt you would have met other people and seen other kids out there. It's our opinion that children on the road are better behaved than kids at home, did you notice that?*

Kara: Absolutely. It's like you're talking to a well behaved adult. All the kids we met had so many good qualities, they could talk to adults, they wouldn't talk to adults like that if they were at home. They would talk to you about things they had seen or where they'd been or what they'd done, yeah it was good. I talked to a lot of kids and it was like OMG and I was talking to children like they were my age.

IL: *You mentioned about space, what did you guys do for time alone if ever you wanted it?*

Kara: That wasn't too hard because I'd always go for runs or walking and Trent would go fishing, so we did have time apart because we liked doing certain things as well. I didn't think it was compact because we had outside.

IL: Yes, people say that to us, how do you live in such a small space and I'll say, Australia is my backyard.

IL: Did you have a house before you left?

Kara: No, we don't own anything

IL: Do you miss travelling?

Kara: Yes

Trent: Yeah

Kara: But we were ready to come home, we were definitely ready to come home and get a bit of normal, plus we needed some money. We were sort of getting over it. Well I was.

IL: You had a major injury at the end didn't you Kara? That wouldn't have helped.

Kara: I was in constant pain for the last 3 months so that massively impacted on everything. It was also getting colder and we didn't want to have cold showers, things were getting tired, things were getting broken, we had flat tyres happening at the wrong time, shit was going down and we were just a bit over it.

IL: Talking about broken, you broke your tail bone or something didn't you?

Kara: Yeah (Kara says through a grimaced laugh)

IL Adele: How did you do that?

Kara: I fell out the back of the camper

IL: Ohh no....

Kara: Yeah that was our second day in South Australia

IL Adele: Were you near medical help?

Kara: We were about an hour and a bit from the hospital but somebody took me in the back of their car to get to the hospital because I didn't know what I was going to do and when I got to the hospital, because that was in Ceduna, they said there's no-one here to help you I'm sorry, you have to go to a different hospital 7 hours away.

IL Adele: We had the same problem in Ceduna with MACKS. There's no Vet and an hour and a half later there's still no Vet and we ended up driving for 5 hours.

Kara: To get to Port Lincoln or something?

IL: Yes we had to get to Port Lincoln.

Kara: It was hard, I didn't realise how long it would take to heal. I was positive and thought it's only going to be a week or two I'll be in this much pain but it just kept getting worse and worse and I'm still having issues with it now, I'm constantly.... But that's ok, the pain has definitely subsided but there's still issues. It was bad timing, I just couldn't believe it had happened, it was just a stupid mistake, an accident that just happened.

IL: Would you do the trip again?

Kara: Yes, for sure.

IL: What was it like settling back in after you finished?

Kara: I actually found it difficult and I didn't think I'd find it difficult and I had quite a few little breakdowns. I went for a job interview and I had to go on the train to the city and I don't know why but I just found it overwhelming and I'd get really upset and cry. Just stupid things like that. I've found that a lot of people don't say hello or acknowledge you or wave and I found that really hard to adjust to as well. I've been so used to being on the road and everyone says hello.

IL: Yes, I really get that. I remember one of the times we flew back to Brisbane during our trip and I'd be in a shopping centre and wanted to wave to everyone and I thought, I better not or I might get arrested lol

Kara: Yeah I know and I found that really weird and just the amount of people and trying to find a park, I thought this is ridiculous how everything is so busy and fast paced.

IL: How about you Trent?

Trent: I went alright but I just told myself I didn't want to go back to the same job that I was in, but I've found myself doing that because it's the way it worked out....

Kara: Only part time though.

Trent: I wanted to try and get a job outside of Sydney and it just hasn't happened yet.

Kara: That's his goal still.

Trent: Still my goal, yep.

IL: How did you fund your trip?

Kara: We saved up money, we've always saved up for any sort of travel. We didn't aim to have a certain amount of money before we left, we just worked with whatever we had.

Trent: We've always both saved.

Kara: We were always saving for the opportunity to buy a house but we just used that money for a Van.

IL: Did you stop and do any work during your trip?

Kara: No

IL: During your trip, you saw a lot, did you learn anything about yourself during that time?

Kara: I think I learnt a lot more, not necessarily about myself because I'm quite a spiritual and in tune person with myself but I learnt a lot about other people and other ways of life living in Australia, the way other people live outside of Sydney. What about you Trent?

Trent: Yeah I learnt a lot about the country, how people live and all the history. About myself I don't know, I learnt I could go without surfing for a lot longer than I thought lol.

IL: Was there anything that surprised you about travelling?

Kara: I was surprised there weren't bitumen roads all the way.

Trent: Kara couldn't believe there wasn't bitumen everywhere.

Kara: I mean what year is it, 2018, we're on a highway and there's no bitumen, I was like wtf haha.



IL: Did you prefer to Free Camp or stay in Caravan Parks?

Kara: We Free camped probably 70% of the time I'd say.

IL: What was your favourite Free Camp?

Kara: I'd say there were 2. Gregory Downs was one and there was one in Townsville, Crystal Creek I really liked.

Trent: Crystal Creek yeah

IL: We had heard about that one but didn't get into there.

Kara: Balgal...

Trent: The problem with that Crystal Creek one is it's very quiet, there might be only one other couple that's there whereas Gregory is really social and awesome.

IL: Your favourite Camp ground?

Trent: Cape Range

Kara: Cape Range for sure near Ningaloo Reef/ Exmouth.

Trent: Yes, the reefs right next to the park

Kara: What's it called, Osprey Campground.....

IL: Ohhh yes, we couldn't stay there because we had MACKS.

Kara: We just kept extending, I think it was like a 10,11 or 12 day thing. We just kept wanting to stay.

Trent: There's just so many, even down around Esperance is so beautiful.

IL: Your favourite Caravan Park?

Kara: I would say the one at Margaret River, Prevelly Caravan Park on the Margaret River near the water. The reason we liked that one was the location, we were right on the beach, we had quite a bit of space.

Trent: There was a good little bottle shop up the road

Kara: There were cafes, the bottle shop, we just loved Margaret River as a whole

IL: Yes us too, so awesome. Everyone thinks of wineries when you think of Margaret River but the beaches are outstanding.

Kara: Yeah, we loved it. From Margaret River to Albany/ Esperance was one of our favourite parts of the trip.

IL: Yes, it's phenomenal isn't it!!

IL: What are your favourite places that you visited?

Trent: Karijini (National Park in WA)

Kara: Karijini was definitely an amazing experience

Trent: Cape York (Qld & most northern place in Australia)

Kara: Cape York was just...

Trent: F.....n awesome

Kara: Everyone has to do that once in a lifetime, it was just an experience, good or bad lol. It's like running a marathon...

IL Adele: Yep got to tick it off.

Kara: I really liked Mackay to Cairns, there's lots of Free Camping and it was beautiful, lots of waterholes and equal first would be Dunsborough to Esperance in WA, I reckon bang on number 1.

IL: Yep, can't argue with any of that.

IL: Who did you use for phone coverage?

Kara: We were Telstra but Trent originally wasn't Telstra and he changed after about 4 months because he had no service the whole time haha.

IL: Who was Trent with before that?

Trent: Vodafone.

IL: How much data did you have?

Kara: I had 10 gig a month and Trent had 3 gig prepaid.

IL: Did you find it was enough?

Kara: Probably not but we used Telstra Air a lot. We just kept what we had and tried to just use it in an emergency. Telstra air and getting Free Wifi where we'd download movies off Netflix,

Podcasts and whatever we wanted, we'd save them until we were within Free Wifi.

IL: Ok, where did you find Free wifi?

Kara: Telstra Air was a major one, they were just amazing, there were a lot of spots where we were even amazed they were there.

Trent: You know the old phone boxes that they put in towns, a lot would have the Free wifi on them.

Kara: You'd be driving along and it might pop in because I always had my data turned off, I only turned it on when I needed it. Also Libraries, sometimes we went to Westpac, they were sometimes very good as well. I know it sounds random but there's quite a lot of banks who would have good wifi.

Trent: No passwords.

Kara: yeah no passwords or restrictions.

IL: That's cool, we didn't find that one.

Kara: I was desperate lol

IL: Did you communicate with family and friends back home while you travelled?

Kara: I did a lot, I'd send a video through when I had reception and they'd send videos or pictures. I'd let them know we are going here and I won't have reception for 5-7 days but I'll call you when we get out.

IL: How did you find was best to communicate with everyone back home?

Kara: Just via Whatsapp or I'd call. Whatsapp was good because we had a family group so that's how I'd personally get in touch.

Trent: I'd call.

IL: What Social Media did you use?

Kara: Facebook and Instagram. I did a little blog on wordpress and we just did a few YouTube videos but that was more just compiling a few videos of our trip really. They were more just for us for the future to look back on.

IL: Yes, you did some awesome videos, I liked them.

IL: What about your favourite apps that you used?

Kara: WikiCamps for sure.

Trent: I'd use Maps to look at the satellites for nice beaches.

Kara: We had 2 books with us in the front and we always reflected all of them off each other so one was a really detailed map of the area and the other would explain towns and things to do and things in the area within 100k's radius etc. We would always look on that rather than look on Wikicamps solely because sometimes it's overwhelming with little pins everywhere and you've got to look into every single one whereas the map shows you different things.

Trent: It's good to look at the map of Australia and get a bit of a idea on direction and roads to use because WikiCamps you get stuck in a bit of a bubble and all the little roads don't come up.

IL: We used a cross section of WikiCamps and I think the maps you were talking about before and then the first thing we would do when we arrived in a town would be go to the Info Centre and we'd get all Maps for where we were heading to and things to do and we'd work it from there.

Kara: Yeah we'd do that too, the Info Centre and Vinnies, we'd go the first Op Shop and Info centre we saw. (Laughter)

IL: The Op Shop, what did you go to the Op Shop for?

Kara: We used to go for books and donate, get more books and donate, we'd get DVD's and random clothes, whatever we found really but a lot of the time it was just getting books and magazines...

Trent: Cooking things.

Kara: Just random things we needed like if we needed a new pan or ...

Trent: something to crack the crab shells or abalone with...

IL: I was so jealous the day you caught that Crayfish, My god you have no idea what we went through to try and get a Crayfish (laughter) Aaarghh, well, that's a story for another day.

IL: What was the funniest thing that happened on your trip?

Kara: Someone else asked this and it's hard to think of it straight up.

Trent: Haha, I know. Remember when we were up in Cape York and I drove through a creek crossing...

Kara: It wasn't funny though....

Trent: I drove through a creek crossing, there's a video of it, I nearly flooded the car.

IL: Haha, how far did the water come up?

Kara: It went above the windscreen.

IL: Ohhh, you're kidding...

Trent: It started coming up the windscreen.

IL: So was it up to your knees inside the car?

Kara: Yeah.

Trent: No.

Kara: Yeah the water came in.

Trent: Yeah it was dribbling in but it didn't come up to our knees, it was just a little dribble but the funny part was there's known...., they call them Chicken tracks, little bypass tracks to go around certain things and I hopped out and had a look around because we were with another couple, I couldn't see one so I said I'll go first, I've got a Cruiser and snorkel so I went first, cruised through well in that the engine was still running, it was all fine and I got out and looked back to the left and I saw the Chicken track and I was like you're kidding....

IL Adele: Ohhh noo

Kara: and we were ankle deep.

Trent: And the Chicken track you only have to go through water as deep as your shoe (lots of laughter)

Trent: My idiot moment.

Kara: We just went straight through it but we were so scared because we'd never done 4wding before and we were like what the hell, just keep going, keep going haha. Yeah it was scary but it was funny after.

IL: OMG

Kara: Yeah and then our friends just drove around the side (lots more laughter)

IL Adele: put them in front next time...

Kara: not to mention just before driving through the water Trent hit a tree driving just 2kms an hour, he just hit the tree and we were like what the hell is going on lol (more laughter). It's cursed, it was called Scrubby Creek and it's not even on any of the maps when you're in Cape York, so to get to one of the beautiful waterfalls everyone has to go through this thing so we thought well everyone must have to do it so we went straight through it lol

IL: Check out the video on YouTube here and look for the 1:18 mark and this Instagram link to inside the vehicle here
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JHnPs1wo-kU>
<https://instagram.com/p/BUqSDeEII6Z/>

IL: What did you find the hardest part or hardest thing about travelling?

Kara: For me, being away from friends and family, and my dog that was hard.

Trent: Finding a different person to drink with every night.

IL: Haha, I don't imagine that was too hard. (laughter)

IL: My next question was going to be did you travel with a dog or pet, and I know you didn't, but I didn't realise you had a dog back home. So you chose not to take him?

Kara: No but we don't have a dog together but we have family dogs that we're really close with. My dog stays with my Mum and his dog stays with his Mum. I always get my Mum to send me a photo, I'd be like can you please send me a photo of the dog lol

IL: Do you regret that at all, do you wish you had taken the dog or do you think it was the best thing?

Kara: No I think it was the best thing for us, it would have held us back a little bit but in the future if we wanted to do it at least now we'd know what to expect. It just means we'd have a different type of trip. I'm happy for the first time that we didn't, we just did whatever we wanted to do, but it's definitely doable, we met lots of people who had dogs, it's just a different type of trip you're going to do and you get used to that.

IL: I don't think we had MACKS when we met you, we had her for the first 16 months of our trip and it was only a month or two before we met you we had to let her go.

Kara: Yeah I remember you saying.

Trent: ohhh alright.

IL: What photography equipment did you use on your trip?

Kara: A Go Pro 4 and iPhone 7, nothing special, we weren't very prepared.

IL: You used the Go Pro a lot didn't you.

Kara: Yes was good having it in and out of the water.

IL: Was there anytime during your trip that you felt unsafe?

Kara: Ohh I love this question. I thought I'd be very unsafe or feel unsafe a lot of the time

throughout but I'd say there was only 1 time where I didn't feel safe and that was in South Australia on the Nullarbor, when there was no-one else around. We've had other nights when there was no-one else around but this was on the cliff top, very, very isolated and we were like, I don't want to go outside, I was really scared. Even Alice Springs and places like that, just a couple of days before there was people breaking into others vans, we never really had any issues at all, we felt very safe

IL: When you talked about that night at the Nullarbor, were you camped up on the Bight, near the edge.

Trent: Yeah

Kara: We were about an hour from the border in South Australia and we drove about 2kms down a track to this cliff top and you could see the sand and the ocean but it was very isolated and it was just very eerie.

IL Adele: Just very dark probably

Kara: Yes that's very true, it got really dark and it was windy and it was just eerie.

IL: What is the best thing about road tripping Australia?

Kara: I liked getting back to nature and living very simply and you are at your happiest when you are like that.

IL: Yes, I agree.

Trent: Campfires

Kara: Trent loves the campfires.

IL: I'm with you there.

Trent: Different places, meeting new people

IL: Actually some of my favourite memories of the campfires were the mornings next to you guys and we'd come out in the morning, kickstart the fire again by the river and cook brekky. It was amazing.

Actually ours was always soaked the next morning, do you reckon that woman beside us was drenching it lol.

Kara: I remember you saying that haha.

Trent: I think it was sucking it up from the creek.

Kara: Yeah I think it might have been sucking it up from the creek but I remember you saying it might have been that woman.

IL: Well the creek's not tidal so....

Kara: We actually met someone about 6 months later and we were telling them about that lady and they said we think we know what lady you're talking about, we were there about the same time, she's so rude.

IL: She was a nut case and after all her carry on, within 2 days she was wanting to be our best friend. I called her Bea as in Bea Smith from Prisoner lol

(We are discussing someone who was beside us when we pulled up at Gregory River. She wanted to tell us how we should park and tell us her rules lol. Then when I told her I was happy as we were she told everyone how evil we are.)

IL: What advice would you give to someone else planning to travel Oz?

Kara: Just do it, don't hold back. Any one can do it. People ask us how did you have the money to do this and we're thinking, we just did it, we're doing it, it is what it is, you don't need that much money to do it. You've got to be careful about your choices and mindful of certain things like maybe don't buy a coffee every day, little things can add up and if you can save up that way or eat smaller meals or have fresh produce that's in season, it helps with the budget.

IL Adele: Do you find it cheaper because you're not paying for electricity you're living off solar, you're not buying new clothes because there's no space for it and so it's cheaper?

Kara: I reckon it's quite cheap, when we worked

out what we spent in 15 months it was pretty good.

Trent: Have a 4wd, you don't have to go 4wding but it just allows you to get down the odd rough road or to certain places.

IL: I think it's more than that, we've done it without a 4wd but we've missed places like the Cape. We plan to have a 4wd, we just don't know yet how to introduce it, I don't want just a little Suzuki I'd like a real 4wd. We missed Jim Jim Falls and Gunlom Falls in Kakadu, Fraser Island we did a one day tour but we'd love to go for 3-4 days, we'd have loved to drive onto the beach at Cable Beach, we didn't get to Warroora Station and 80 Mile Beach, there's heaps of times we wished we had a 4wd. So I agree Trent, a 4wd of some sort really is ideal.

Trent: A little Suzuki would get down onto that stuff.

IL: It would but, for instance if you're going to Gunlom Falls in Kakadu you're going there for 3 or 4 nights so you still need something to sleep in or if you're going to Warroora Station or 80 Mile Beach you want to camp on the beach.

Trent: Yes, that's when you go back to towing then don't you.

IL: Yeah, I don't know.....

Trent: That's where we got caught up, we didn't want to tow but we wanted a 4wd but we wanted the luxuries of a van so we got what we got. There's certain aspects that we missed out on too.

IL: Yes, we're not complaining because we always knew we weren't getting to those sorts of places. We even got to some places we never thought we would, but we always knew we could go back and cover some of the places we missed.



IL: *Rate your experience out of 10?*

Kara: I'd have to say 10, definitely a 10, we learnt so much.

Thank you so much for your time and doing this with us ☺

Kara: No problem, you're welcome.

IL: It, was awesome to catch up. Let us know when you get to Byron and we will come visit, I don't want to leave Trent without a drinking partner. (Lots of Laughs)

Kara: Haha yeah

Thank you Kara and Trent for agreeing to our chat. We wish you both all the best and we look forward to catching up again soon.

Name: : Vicki & Terry Burnett

Home town: Sunshine Coast



We first met Vicki and Terry at Barn Hill Station in Western Australia in 2016 and immediately enjoyed hanging out with this fun and adventurous couple. We caught up again in Carnarvon and then again last year in Evans Head.

They swapped their life on the ocean as prawn trawlers and now travel Australia in their Motor home, usually with other new friends along with them in convoy. Wherever they are there's usually a big Happy Hour party about to happen.

Don't expect a serious interview, not much about them is serious, they are living life to the max and enjoying every moment.

IL: When did you begin your trip?

Vicki: January 2013, 29th if you want the exact date

IL: So you did nail that one down

IL Adele: To be precise

Vicki: Yeah I just wasn't sure of the year but yeah it was 2013

IL: How long did you plan to be gone for?

Vicki: Forever. Until we either got sick and tired of it or died, whichever come first.

IL Adele: Well hope none of them too soon down the track.

Vicki: Hope it's the sick and tired part.

IL: Had you ever road tripped or done motor homing, caravanning before to know that you'd want to be on the road forever?

Vicki: No, only motor home. We did a holiday in New Zealand, 3 different holidays in New

Zealand, for a fortnight, in a motor home but that was about all we had done.

IL: So how did you know you were going to love it so much you would want to do it forever?

Vicki: We figured if we didn't we could go back and do whatever? It wasn't going to worry Terry being contained in a small area, he was in a 60ft boat for most of his life. A smaller wheelhouse than this thing.

IL: Yes we had people tell us you've got to hire one first, what if you don't like it, but we just knew.

Vicki: What's not to like.

IL: Absolutely

IL: *Where did you leave from?*

Vicki: Bauple

IL: That's up near Maryborough Queensland isn't it?

Vicki: Just below Tiaro

IL: Hervey Bay sort of area.

Vicki: Yes

IL: Which direction did you go from there?

Terry: West

Vicki: We went west. We crossed the highway and kept on going.

IL: *Was there a reason you went west?*

Terry: Yes, no phone reception (lots of laughs)

Vicki: And the kids were fighting so we didn't want to know.

IL: Oh Classic

IL: Where was your first stop?

Vicki: Chinchilla Weir. I remember it well, first night, naked man

IL: Naked man??

Vicki: Actually sorry that's where we ended up staying. There was another free camp just on the eastern side of Chinchilla so we pulled in there and thought this is a nice spot. There was only one caravan in there and he was up a little bit from us. So we set the van up and went across to the table and chairs having a drink and I look up to my right and here's this bloke standing starkers outside his caravan with his two dogs. And I said, that's it, pack the van, we're outa here!!

IL: laughs

Vicki: So we got in the van and we went to Chinchilla Weir

IL: I think you're the only people on the planet that that could have happened to.

Vicki: Laughing, so that was our introduction to Free Camping.

IL Adele: Oh Gawd.

IL: So Bauple to Chinchilla, that's a fair drive.

Vicki: Where is it, about 3 hours isn't it.

Terry: 3 hours.

Vicki: It's not far out to Chinchilla, yes that was our first night.

IL: *Was there a reason you chose Chinchilla?*

Vicki: We just drove until we decided we'd had enough, that'll do, we'll stay here the night.

Terry: And there was no phone reception there.

IL: No children there.

Vicki: Might have been more than 3 hours, it was getting late in the afternoon and we thought this is far enough.

IL: *Did you have jobs or a business before you left?*

Vicki: Yes, we owned a Prawn Trawler.

IL: Where did you operate that out of? Around Gladstone area?

Vicki: Mooloolaba. We lived on the Sunshine Coast for 36 years

IL: OK, alright. Why did I think it was Gladstone

Vicki: I have no idea, it is the only place in Australia I don't like (laughing) apart from Happy Rock, yuck

IL: I usually drive past Gladstone. We like to visit Adele's cousin that lives up there at Tannum Beach. We drop in to see them but apart from that there's not a lot there.

IL: What was it like making the decision to sell off the prawn trawlers and go on such an audacious trip around Australia?

Vicki: Terry's mate he used to fish with, friends of ours, he was in the shed, used to do some net work, they bought a motor home and went travelling and we decided to too. He had Peter at home doing some net work and then spent about a month in the shed doing all this stuff and telling him all the stories about being on the road and Terry came home and said that's it, we're selling the boat, we're going to buy a motor home and we're going to travel Australia. I thought yeah right, that phase will pass, but it didn't.

IL: How long did it take from that point to actually doing it?

Vicki: Terry got to work then, he did all the bloody research on-line, he knew what he wanted to buy. We looked at a whole pile of different vans and we actually found this one down in South Australia so we flew down there, had a look at it and liked it. Well liked it, we fell in love with it. So he had to go back to sea and we had to get a license to drive it. So while he did a month at sea, we put a deposit on the bus and I went and did my MR license while he was

at sea. And he come home and did his MR all in one day. He came home from sea, unloaded the boat, went and did his license and test, got on the plane that night, flew to Adelaide and drove it home which was probably 6 months after he decided that's it, had enough, let's do it!

IL: Wow, and how long did it take to sell the prawn trawler?

Vicki: We probably had the boat about another 12 months. Yes 2011 we bought the bus 2012, August 2012 we sold the boat and then we sold the property later on, just after that.

IL: Wow, very cool. You knew what you were planning to do, obviously.

Vicki: We decided we were doing it and just did it!

IL: You mentioned you had lived on the Sunshine Coast for 30 something years, knowing you guys as I do, you must have had a fair circle of friends and family there, how did you go about saying good-bye to everybody.

Vicki: We had a big cul-de-sac street, we lived out on acreage, so every Friday night we used to get together with everyone who lived out there. Probably half a dozen of them were good friends and there's probably only 3 or 4 of them out of the fishing fraternity who we have stayed in touch with.

All the neighbours, friends and what not, we just had a huge party one Friday night. It was a big send-off, we all got drunk, said good-bye and cried and carried on.

IL: As you do.

Vicki: As you do, we told them we were leaving and they said oh no there goes the street.

IL Adele: There goes the life of the party.

Vicki: Yeah you know they have not had a happy hour since, must talk to them about it because

I said as long as you guys keep this going and they said we probably won't now that you're going.

I said don't be bloody stupid.

IL: You probably provided the parties with all the prawns and seafood.

Vicki: Most times, that was our Christmas Party.

IL: What was your reason for doing the lap? What made you decide to do this, Terry decide, hey we want to do this?

Vicki: He had a gutful of fishing. It was getting dangerous. There were too many bloody jockeys out there being idiots and causing chaos and the Government was a big fat pain in the ass causing us grief and we had a lot of friends dying, and they weren't old friends, they were young friends and family and all the rest of it and we thought bugger it, we might be on that list one day so we better go and have some fun. That's all Terry has ever done since he was 14, was fish!

IL: Wow

Vicki: He'd had enough, let's go and enjoy it.

IL: So he can travel all around Australia and keep fishing 😊

Vicki: Yeah we left fishing so we could go fishing. But we're fishing for fun now and if we don't catch anything, it doesn't matter where it used to matter!

IL: For sure

IL: How would you describe life for you before you left on the adventure?

Vicki: We enjoyed our fishing life. We wouldn't be doing what we're doing today if it wasn't for that. He was good at what he did. It gave us a good life, we can't complain one bit, we had a good time up there on the Sunny Coast. We got up the Sunny Coast when it was a sleepy little fishing village back in 82. We used to go there

prior to that with the boat, but not live there. We used to work out of there on and off and down Northern New South Wales. We saw the best of it but then it just got nuttier and nuttier. We lived through it and grew with it, I suppose, and it wasn't until we left it and come back over 12 months later we just thought the place had exploded but it's probably because we weren't living it every day and not growing with it sort of thing, but that made a difference.

IL: When you left, what were you expecting from your trip?

Vicki: Just go and enjoy life and have fun laughing.

IL: Has it met your expectations?

Vicki: Oh Yes definitely that and more.

IL: What vehicle do you travel in?

Vicki: It's a Winnebago on an Isuzu NQR 450

IL: It's a Winnebago Longreach isn't it?

Vicki: No Alpine.

IL: Oh Alpine, that's right, which is a Longreach just a different year.

Vicki: It's the model before. They stopped making the Alpine and the next year they started making the Longreach.

IL: I think yours is a 2007, is that right?

Vicki: That's it, you're onto it.

IL: So a 2007 Alpine Winnebago on an Isuzu. What are you towing?

Vicki: We used to have a little Suzie flat tow. Terry says everything lol. We've got our friends turned up so they're listening to you too

IL: Haha, Giddy friends

Vicki: Gary and Carol. Did you meet Gary and Carol?

Gary & Carol: Yes we met them at the Carnarvon Jetty

Vicki: Oh that's right, you know Gary and Carol

that were at Carnarvon with us

IL: Oh yeah!

Vicki: And little Missie, we walked out on the jetty with them. Yes they're with us.

IL: Awesome

Vicki: So what did you ask me?

IL: You've got the Alpine, what are you towing behind?

Vicki: We did flat tow the Suzuki now we've got the dirty big trailer with the Suzuki on the trailer and the boat on top. And the tackle box freezer in front, to put the fish in.

IL: What a great idea, that's why I want a trailer, for the extra space.

IL: What made you change from flat towing to trailer?

Vicki: The tinnie we had, we used to have a little tinnie on top of the car and she was a bit little and a bit rough. One would stand up and the other one would fall out sort of thing, so we thought we'd get something a little bit bigger and little bit flat floor so it was a bit more comfortable.

IL: OK

Vicki: And we couldn't put anything like that on the car so we had to figure out a different configuration of carting all this stuff around with us.

IL: Why did you choose your setup?

Vicki: Terry this one's yours! He decided on this, hang on.

Terry: Because Isuzu you can get parts all around Australia if you breakdown

IL: Ok so the Isuzu you wanted because it was easy for parts and so forth, why Motor home, why a Winnebago?

Terry: Just to carry the Mrs junk around (laughter all round)

IL: You needed something big enough?

Vicki: We probably went for the Motorhome over Caravan, the thing that clinched it was probably the safety fact. If we had any dramas we could step into the front and drive away and didn't have to get out and face anything.

IL: Yeah that's one of the things that got us as well in the beginning and I didn't like the idea of towing myself.

Terry: Now it doesn't bother us.

Vicki: No, wouldn't bother us now, you know what's out there and no-one's given us a hard time yet!

IL: What do you like about the set-up?

Vicki: Still like all of it. It's just easy to live with, you just press a couple of buttons and you're set up.

Terry: Convenient.

Vicki: Yeah convenience, plenty of room with a couple of slide outs and all that sort of jazz, it just makes it comfortable.

IL: How many slide outs have you got on the Alpine?

Vicki: 2, The dinette and lounge slides out and the bed slides out

IL: We've only got one in ours and it makes such a difference, the space inside yours is fantastic, it's awesome

Vicki: Yes we thought if we're going to live in it... When we first started looking at Motor homes we looked at different configurations, we didn't even realise there was such a thing as a slide out. When we walked into one with all this space, we thought holy shit, how did that happen and then we realised what it was. We thought we'd add a naught to the equation and think a bit bigger! (giggle)

IL: We basically had to double our budget when Matt said he was coming too!

Vicki: We thought if it was going to be home,

we might as well get something a little bit bigger and more comfortable if we were going to live it in forever.

IL: *What do you like about the set-up?*

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Vicki: We thought if it was going to be home, we might as well get something a little bit bigger and more comfortable if we were going to live it in forever.

IL: *Is there anything you would like to add to your setup or wish you had?*

Vicki: mmm No, don't think so. Tez?

Terry: No

Vicki: No, we've got everything we need.

Terry: A safe, that's about all.

Vicki: Yeah a safe with a million dollars in it.

IL: Haha, that would be nice.

IL: *Would you do it again with the same setup?*

Vicki: Yeah, shit yeah

IL: *So you guys are still travelling?*

Vicki: Yep

IL: How much longer do you think you'll go for? Is the answer still the same?

Vicki: Still the same, yep, until we get sick of it or die.

Terry: Beats being home

IL: Yes, I can't do 4 walls.

Vicki: Nah, I don't ever want a house again, I've got a shed that's quite livable and that's fine. I can drop into at any time if I need but I don't ever want another house. Too much work in a house.

IL: Yes, I don't like the concept, and it's just stuff, there's just so much stuff and you've got to maintain it all.

Vicki: You don't really need it, we got rid of all that shit and just took a little bit with us since we had the shed.

Terry: It's just more you've got to maintain, the more it's going to cost you.

IL: Yes that's right

IL: *Did you have any big changes along the way?*

Vicki: Since we bought the bus?

IL: Since you've been travelling, the last 5 years

Terry: Got a bigger gut 😊

Vicki: hahahaha a few kilos extra Tez has got around his waist.

IL: I'd like to say I've lost some hair but I never had any to begin with.

Vicki: (more laughs) You get a bigger circle of friends, that's for sure. We gained a lot of friends.

IL Adele: That's the great part.

Vicki: We've probably made more friends and better friends since we've been on the road than the whole 36 years we lived on the Sunshine Coast because all you did was work, work, work, work!

IL: Yes everyone is saying the same thing, so many people are just relating to the friends they've made and the people they've met.

Vicki: Exactly. The only changes we've made was put the trailer on the back and we've got a different set-up behind us but apart from that everything is still the norm.

IL: I know you guys don't have any children with you, that was the whole idea of escaping wasn't it?

Vicki: Yep, that's it.

IL: One thing we've noticed on the road, is the children that we met while we've travelled we felt were much better behaved than kids back home

Vicki: Oh God yes, yep

IL: So you have noticed that?

Vicki: Same, same. And this year, we've had an extremely big increase in young families on the road with kids. 3 and 4 kids, 2 kids but all the kids are really nice kids, they're good kids. I don't normally like kids, but I haven't come across any bad ones yet.



IL: Same here, they're just fantastic aren't they. They're getting to spend quality time with their parents and they're just settled.

Vicki: They're happier and not stressed.

Terry: They learn more on the road.

Vicki: They're getting life skills out on the road, they're enjoying....

We had a couple of families at Barn Hill come and join us for State of Origin. We had the TV on the wall outside and a couple of blokes come over and ask can we come and watch. Yes come on over and they brought their kids, they were ripper little kids. We put them all down the front, cos we had about 6 chairs deep and we had all the kids down the front and I said to two of them in particular, there were two little blues supporters I had on my side, and I said to them "What are you doing, why aren't you in school?" We're travelling Australia! And I said are you enjoying it and they said yeah we're lovin it. They were having a great time.

IL: How good is that!!

Vicki: They were the best behaved, they sat there the whole time, never said boo, never fought, they learnt, they were great.

IL: That's been our experience too. That's really, really cool. That's our future

Vicki: Yeah, too righty

IL: It's a great lifestyle, it's good for kids too isn't it, not just us

Vicki: Take them out of school and let them learn the real life for a while. Think they learn way more than in the classroom

IL: Agree

IL: Did you have a house before you left?

Vicki: We sold that about, oh how far after that, 6 months? About 8 months after we sold the boat. Sold the boat first, sold the house, we had about 3 acres just out of the Sunshine Coast out Bli Bli Yandina way. We had a big sprawl out

there, sold all that as soon as the boat was sold and we bought our little shed and 2 acres up at Bauple.

IL: Where have you stored all your belongings?

Vicki: Up in that shed, we went looking for a 6 x 9 shed on a quarter acre block and we ended up with a 27 x 9 shed on 2 acres

IL: Holy dooleys

Vicki: It's 3 sheds all joined together, it's a really good set-up, the sheds were empty but the middle one had a pod built in it with a toilet shower and laundry so we just put a kitchen in it and plumbed it up. The toilet wasn't there, we put a toilet cistern in and plumbed it all up and hooked up the shower and put a laundry tub in the laundry and turned it into a little house basically.

IL: Awesome, how cool's that. You guys were there at Christmas time weren't you?

Vicki: Yes we went home, were going home for a month to have Christmas and ended up there 2 bloody months. That's the trouble with going home, you get bogged down, you can't get out again.

IL Adele: Does anyone live in the shed while you're away?

Vicki: Yes our youngest one is up in the shed.

IL: Do you work as you travel?

Vicki: No, shit no. That's a 4 letter word. Don't swear at me Kev 😊

IL: Yeah I agree with you but I had to ask the question lol

Vicki: We said when we left we'll just go and enjoy it and if it comes to a point where we have to work, then we will. So far we don't have to, so we're not gunna!!

IL: How do you fund your travels?

Vicki: We sold the boat, we sold the house, we owned everything so we just invested our money in the stock market basically and we are living off that.

IL: And just living off the savings

Vicki: Yeah, just living off it and so far we've still got what we left with, so it's been good to us.

IL: Do you have any tips for saving money while travelling?

Vicki: No, we just spend it. You know you don't spend as much money on the road as you did when you're at home.

IL: Definitely not

Vicki: You eat and you drink and if you've got a drink in your hand and a feed in your belly, you're doing alright I reckon.

IL: Absolutely

Carol: Free Camps and Station Stays.

Vicki: Yes Carol just said Free Camps and Station Stays that's the cheaper way of living. We don't like Caravan Parks but there's places you have to go into Caravan Parks like here. Just do that briefly so that saves you bucks.

IL: Do you prefer to Free Camp or stay in Caravan Parks?

Vicki: No, definitely Free Camp ones, gravel pit, free camp or whatever as long as it's not a Caravan Park.

IL: Your Alpine is fairly big, isn't it, what size is it?

Terry: 10 metres

IL: And then with the trailer on the back, what's the overall size?

Terry: 17 metres

IL: Do you find it difficult finding places to stay?

Vicki: No, not really. Not when you're free camping and on gravel pits, you've got plenty of room. But most of the Caravan Parks we've

stayed in, we've been lucky enough to have just drive through and big sites but the odd time like Carnarvon the other day and here, we just whip the trailer off and park it beside us.

IL: OK, where are you staying now?

Vicki: We're at Denham. In Seaside, the one right down the end.

IL: Did you go out and have a look at Whalebone Bay?

Vicki: yes, last year we came in here, we looked at those ones. You can only stay there a day though in those ones unless you only want a day out there fishing

IL: We did ask and they let us stay 2 days but they won't let you stay past 2.

Vicki: Yeah Gary and Carol did the same thing last year when they were waiting for mail and they let them stay 2 days as well. We wanted to have a couple of weeks here fishing and bugging around so we just had to bite the bullet and pay for a Caravan Park.

IL: What is your favourite Free Camp around Australia so far?

Vicki: Favourite Free Camp, what do you class as Free Camp? Absolutely no money?

IL: Yes

Vicki: I call \$10 and \$15 ones Free Camps

IL: No they come under Campground, that's the next question.

Vicki: OK Favourite Free Camp. Someone tell me, help me. Terry?

Carol: Corella Dam? Corella's mine

Vicki: Corella Dam, yeah Corella Dam, it's free

IL Adele: It's a beauty

IL: It's right up there for us. Yep, we love Corella Dam

IL: *Your favourite Camp ground? Unless you've got more free camps you want to offer*

Vicki: That's an easy one. You can answer that one

IL: Yeah that's right, don't worry I'll just write that one in, you don't have to answer that

Vicki: Unless you count that one as a Station Stay and not a Campground

IL: No that'll all come under Campground but the real question is do you want me to let everybody know about that because the last time I put it up as one of our favourites, my favourite beach, you were unhappy that I told everybody haha

Vicki: laughing, no I wasn't.

IL: I let the secret out and now the place is packed

Vicki: No... it was packed before you let the secret out. They locked the gate just before, what was it, when did you guys come in '16. School holidays, they locked the gates there in '16.

IL Adele: Oh.

Vicki: It was chokka.

Terry: They kicked Matt out.

Vicki: You're horrible.

IL: I'll tell him you said that!!

(Barn Hill Station just below Broome in Western Australia is the campground we are discussing)

IL: *Your favourite Caravan Park?*

Vicki: Favourite Caravan Park – Evans Head!

IL: Oh yes, we met you there didn't we!

Vicki: Yep you called in and said giddyay on your way back last year

IL: Indeed. We are planning to head south next month and that will be one of our stops as we go down.

IL: *What are your favourite place/s that you visited?*

Vicki: Horizontal Falls

Vicki and Carol: Quobba, the snorkeling; Whale Shark last year at bloody, Whale Shark Swim out of Coral Bay. Coral Bay's a pretty little place. I love Cape Dinnington down at Port Lincoln National Park just out of Port Lincoln. We camped out of there at the end of the Port Lincoln National Park at Cape Donnington just under the lighthouse, it's just beautiful. There's a seal colony there, all the boats are coming and going, there's the big tuna ponds, it's just spectacular!

IL: Aah awesome! We'll keep that one in the memory bank for when we go down there next. That was where MACKS was really sick so we didn't get to see anything down that way.

Vicki: You'll be able to go and stay out there now you haven't got MACKS anymore. You just get your Park Pass and you can stay there as long as you like. It's just a car park but you're allowed to stay in it.

IL: Oh wow

Vicki: We just stayed longways along it and put our feet up. Our awning went out over the rail and put our feet up on the rail and watch. We used to have this little seal come in and play. He'd come past and he'd look, if we were looking he'd start performing. If we weren't looking we would just swim on by.

IL Adele: How good's that

Vicki: It was, it was spectacular. All the trawlers were coming and going out, feeding the tuna in their pens and of a night time the place would just light up because of all the pens and the boats, it was just beautiful. I am looking forward to going back there.

IL: Ok and anymore favourite places?

Vicki: Daly River - Leigh and Jenny's Camp

ground up in Daly River. We went barra fishing up there, that was beaut. We're going back up there next year.

Venus Bay, that's probably one of my all time favourites.

IL: Where's Venus Bay?

Vicki: Venus Bay down the bottom of the Eyre Peninsula heading west from Port Lincoln. Just before Streaky Bay.

IL Adele: Once again that was where we had to bypass quickly for MACKS.

IL: We had to drive straight from Ceduna to Port Lincoln.

Vicki: Yeah you did too.

Terry: That why there's still whiting there. Matt didn't get to go there hahahaha.

IL: It was the salmon that were in danger with Matt.

IL Adele: And the squid.

Vicki: Nice squid. We got two of them here at Denham. One off the wharf the other night when I was talking to Matt and then one yesterday morning. We've already eaten them

IL: *Has there been anything that has surprised you about travelling?*

Vicki: mmmm... that's a good question.

IL: That's good.

Vicki: Only the naked man the first night.

IL Adele: S U R P R I S E 😊

Vicki: That was a big surprise. Ummm Not really. Probably the amount of people on the road now, that's a bit of an eye opener. Particularly this year, Oh my god there's millions of caravans on the road. It's growing and just getting more and more popular. As far as any surprises, not really.

IL: We went up to Noosa North Shore a week or two ago and just going up there, the amount

of Caravans that were driving south was unbelievable!! And Motor homes.

Vicki: Yep all shapes and sizes. This year seems to be, there's just a variety, Caravans, Motor homes, Camper Trailers, everyone's doing it but there all doing it in something different

IL: I rarely see 5th Wheelers though

Vicki: Oh, we've had a few over here this year. We've got two parked here next to us, one just up and one just down. One came in yesterday and one came and had happy hour with us yesterday afternoon. Yeah there's been a few 5th Wheelers around.

IL: *Was there anytime during your trip that you felt unsafe?*

Vicki: Never. A few times Terry takes me on hairy rides (laughing)

IL Adele: That first night with the naked man

IL: Yeah that's what I was thinking

Vicki: Yes I wasn't real fond of that

IL: *Your motorhome has a bit more space to it than most but is there any times where you feel like you need to have your own space and if so what do you do?*

Vicki: I just go to the bedroom and Terry stays up here watching his TV and we're happy.

IL: Cool or he says you're not coming fishing today?

Vicki: Yeah no he doesn't say that. I say you can go and take Gary with you. He's not game enough to say that.

IL: *Who do you use for phone coverage and how was it?*

Vicki: When we first started out it was Amaysim, but it soon became Telstra even though I hate them with passion

IL: Yeah everyone says that. Who did you say you were first with?

Vicki: Amaysim who use Optus

IL: Oh OK. Yeah no wonder you had to change that quickly

Vicki: We didn't go far

IL: How did you find Telstra?

Vicki: A lot better over the west this year. They've fired up a lot more towers. We've had barely any place that we haven't, not just Telstra but Optus too. I've got Optus on my iPad because I bought it through them on a plan and I even had Optus at Barn Hill this year.

IL: Oh, wow!

Vicki: I've had Optus a lot more times than I normally had. Telstra, we've barely had... well Quobba, the first 2 days we had coverage and we thought you beauty this is good, but then the next 3 days the weather went to shit and we had nothing.

Carol: Even that Gravel Pit the other night.

Vicki: Yes even the Gravel Pit before we got here we had full coverage

IL: How much data do you use each month and is it enough?

Vicki: I have that one that has the data bank up to 50 gig and I think it's 7 ½ a gig month and sometime I use it and sometimes I don't, it rolls into the next month. Terry has the same but I'm about to change one up actually because there's a new/better deal out \$59 a month and I can have 40 gig of data so I'm going to change into that.

IL: Yes, that's the new plans that come out now 40 gig.

Vicki: Optus brought out that one with unlimited mobile data so I thought it won't be long before Telstra will have to match it but it will

probably be a couple of dollars dearer but it will happen. So they've got that unlimited one now where you get 40 gig at full speed and then it's unlimited after that but the speed slows down. I wouldn't use the 40 gig to get to that point so it would be fine 😊

IL: So how much do you have now, 7 ½ each?

Vicki: Each a month yes plus I have the one in my dongle, that's on the antenna on the roof for extra coverage and I just buy a 12month block on that so whenever we have crappy reception I can put that one up and we can use that and get a little bit.

IL: So how much data have you got on that?

Vicki: That one I have 25 gig I think, that's for the year but you can top it up at any time. It's an emergency one so I've never used it up.

IL: So, 15 gig you find is enough for you?

Vicki: Yeah we get by with that.

IL: Did you ever look for Free Wi-Fi to use as you travelled?

Vicki: Yeah yep too righty. The Telstra plan I've got if we find the little pink domes, Evans Head was the perfect spot we were right in front of the phone box.

IL: Yes it was too

Vicki: We had free Wi-Fi for a fortnight.

IL: So that's Telstra Air, that's one of the spots you find free Wi-Fi

Any other places that you find free Wi-Fi?

Vicki: In the shopping centres, we just take our phones with us and do the updates while we're shopping.

IL: How do you communicate with family and friends back home while you travel?

Vicki: Me and the kids use Messenger, Facebook Messenger. We have a group chat on that we chat on that every day and we facetime the grandkids or we make a phone call if need be.

IL: What Social Media do you use?

Vicki: Facebook, I do have Instagram but I barely ever use it

IL: Yeah I haven't seen you on Instagram but obviously see everything on your Facebook.

Vicki: Yeah that's me, Facebook's my thing.

IL: What are your favourite apps that you use while travelling?

Terry: WikiCamps

Vicki: WikiCamps for travel. Fuel Maps Australia. Cheapest Gas Refills Aust or whatever Cordon calls himself.

IL: Yes that's not an App though is it, it's a website?

Vicki: It's a website yes. Started it off as a Facebook Page and turned it into a website. The App was too expensive he said.

Vicki: Making strange noises, I'm making a drink

IL: What are you having to drink?

Vicki: Would you like one?

IL: I've got my own.

Vicki: You have one on the east coast and I'll have one on the west coast

IL: OK

Vicki: Keep talking

IL: Ok where did we get to

IL Adele: Apps

IL: Have you got any more apps other than WikiCamps and the Fuel Apps.

Vicki: I'll just have a look at my iPad and I'll tell

you. As in Travel ones, you mean

IL: Ones that are relevant to travelling yes

Vicki: Track my Tour is one I've started using this year which is really good

IL: What's that one about?

Vicki: You can put in where you've been each stop, or weigh point or camp or whatever and it will show up on a map with a little red where ever you go. You can put different information in it, you can put a photo in it. It just tracks your tour basically.

IL: I'll have to check that one out

Vicki: Yeah have a look at it. I picked it up because they were talking about it on one of those forums and I thought I'll have a look.

IL: Ok any others?

Vicki: Just looking at my travel one, probably your NMRA/RACQs for your road conditions and that sort of jazz

IL: What do you guys do each day?

Vicki: We get out of bed, have breakfast and go fishin! If it's shitty I don't know, we always manage to fill the day in.

Terry: Yeah, we always think of things.

Vicki: Always someone to play with, someone to talk to. Depends on where you are and what place you're situated. You go sightseeing and touring. Like tomorrow is supposed to be crappy weather so we're going to jump in the cars and go over to Monkey Mia way and go adventuring out to the beaches around there.

IL: and Francois Peron National Park, you guys going to go there?

Terry: Yes we might do.

Vicki: We're not going out to Steep Point. You need a high clearance and Suzie's not high enough.

IL: Francois Peron National Park apparently is really nice and I've seen heaps of photos from there and it looks very cool.

Vicki: Yes we've got a few days where the weather's supposed to be up a bit so we'll be venturing around and seeing what's on offer.

Terry: That ridge over there faces the east and the wind's coming from the west at the moment so it's behind the dunes.

IL: So it will be protected.

Terry: Yeah Roger.

IL: It will be a good place to be then I guess.

Terry: They're getting a few bream and whiting over there, tell Matt.

IL: Matt's like me, he's not interested in bream and whiting.

Vicki: I'm a bit the same, I like them BIG fish.

IL: Yes, too many bones in Bream, he likes to be able to eat his food fast!

Vicki: I could tell

IL Adele: Thought you might have noticed 😊

IL: What is the funniest thing that has happened on your trip?

Vicki: Aaw gawd, naked man again lol

IL Adele: That's 3 times he's made an appearance.

Vicki: he's engraved forever. Funniest thing that's happened on the trip, I think the funniest thing that's happened on the trip, again, at first, was when we set out and we pulled up for lunch at, what's the name of that little place? Black, no it wasn't Blackall. It's only about an hour out the back of the Sunshine Coast. Just a tiny little town not far from Blackbutt I don't think was it?

Terry: It was half way between there and Dalby on the back road.

Vicki: Yeah on the back road anyway

Terry: It starts with Y

Vicki: Friends had given me, you know those big silver balls, that the outback utes have hanging

off the back of their towbars?

IL: Yeah (said warily)

Vicki: A friend had given us those so we put them on the back of the Winnebago and we mustn't, no we didn't have the car on.

Terry: No we didn't have the vehicle on.

Vicki: Anyhow we had them swinging on the back of the bus and we pulled up, it was lunch time and Terry said we'll find a little bakery and we'll have a pie. I said right to that sounds good so we pulled up the street a little bit and this town's empty, it's like a little ghost town barely no one roaming around. So we went into the Bakery, got our pie, come back to our bus and of course I go to the passenger side, Terry goes out on the road and around to the driver's side and there's a little old lady across the other side street and of course Terry spots the silver balls dangling at the back and he yells to me so I can hear him on the other side of the bus "Me balls are still hanging" (laughs all round) And the little old lady had no idea I was there (in hysterics telling us)

IL Adele: Probably thought Terry was talking to her.

Vicki: Well she took off down the street (still laughing) That's a classic one, that's the best one. That's right "Me nuts are still hangin" (more laughs) So that was obviously a good story to tell.

IL: Well I know of one which I was wondering if you were going to pick up on but seeing how you haven't, I'll start the story and you can pick up on it whenever you remember alright? Barn Hill Station when we first met you and you had your tinny, and you went out fishing.

Vicki: And we got towed home.

IL: You got towed home by the next door neighbour's cardboard fold up boat.

Vicki: It's a paper boat not cardboard. (More laughs). Yep thank god the bloody Barn Hill

Rescue Boat was in tow that day or we would have been bugged. Oh, that was funny!

IL: That was hilarious when we came over and you told us the story. We must have arrived just after it happened the next day or something and they showed us their fold up boat and that's what rescued you guys.

Vicki: And Mick was sitting up the front and he had a stick, this big piece of stick and he wrapped the anchor rope around that and he hung on to it and that's how he towed us (laughing)

(we are all laughing now)

Vicki: You couldn't tie a rope to the paper boat otherwise...

IL Adele: You'd sink it....

Vicki: Ian was driving and Mick was holding onto this big stick with the rope wrapped around it

IL Adele: Did you get a video of it

Vicki: No... No I didn't even think of it. Actually, I do have photos of Mick with the rope and the stick across his vest. Photo proof but not video proof

IL: What photography equipment do you use on your trip?

Vicki: I use just my Nikon, what is it P610 and I have me little cheapy GoPro thing that I take snorkeling with me.

IL: Ok and your phone obviously.

Vicki: Aah I don't use me phone, the odd panorama I use my phone cos I think the panorama in my phone is probably better than the one in my camera. But rarely.

IL: OK. Your Nikon is a point and shoot isn't it.

Vicki: Yep cool pics point and shoot.

IL Adele: How do you get those great moon pics though.

Vicki: You've got to zoom out past your Optical Zoom into your Digital Zoom and that gets rid of

that glare and the bright and it brings up all the craters.

IL Adele: Wow

Vicki: And you've got to have a really steady hand or a tri-pod. I'm usually too lazy to get the tri-pod out and I just wing it. Take a heap and hopefully one works.

IL Adele: They turn out good.

IL: So how do you get them from the camera up onto Facebook?

Vicki: It's got Wi-Fi. I used to use Wi-Fi a lot until I found this little gadget not long ago, you throw your SD card in, plug it into my iPad and choof, you just pick out the ones you want and they choof straight across.

IL: Awesome

Vicki: Which saves a hell of lot of battery, cos when you Wi-Fi across, it chews up a hell of a lot of battery

IL: What did you find the hardest part or hardest thing about travelling?

Vicki: mmm nothing. Terry? We haven't found anything hard have we?

Terry: Finding a decent axe to get firewood, a decent chainsaw.

IL: Do you guys travel with a chainsaw?

Vicki: We had a chainsaw when we first left and we then left that at home and bought a reciprocal saw.

Terry: Burnt two of them out.

Vicki: Yeah we burnt two of them out this year.

IL: Oh wow

Vicki: Yeah that's probably been the hardest thing, keeping the chainsaws up to Terry.

IL: Have you still got the reciprocal?

Vicki: Well we will have when we get to Geraldton in a couple of weeks. We'll take it back and get another one.

IL: Which one have you been getting? I'm thinking of getting one myself that's why I'm asking all the questions about it.

Terry: We've been using the Ryobi, but no they burn out too easily.

Gary: Don't get it.

Terry: No, don't get one.

IL: That's the one with the 18 volt battery?

Terry: Yeah Roger, yep yep.

IL: OK that's what I was going to do.

Vicki: That's what we thought would be a lot easier, but no go back to a little chainsaw.

Terry: Gary got the little Izito chainsaw, about the 14 inch, a beautiful little chainsaw.

IL: That's the \$110-120 bucks from Bunnings?

Carol: They're a \$100 bucks from Bunnings

Terry: That's it. I'll be getting one when I get to Geraldton.

Vicki: That's what we will swap the reciprocal for.

Terry: I just thought I went for the reciprocal because I had my batteries for my drill and the whipper snipper so I thought I'd get the reciprocal saw and you know it all matches up, but nah, not good enough.

IL: Yeah no we're the same, I've got a fair bit of the Ryobi gear and I was thinking ok I'll get the Reciprocal with that but maybe not.

Terry: Save your money.

IL: I'm reading others that are using Reciprocal Saws but must have different ones.

Terry: The Makita ones are pretty good and Milwaukee are good but they're dear.

Vicki: Yes really expensive.

Terry: By the time you go and buy batteries and start off from scratch well you're better off buying a chainsaw.

Vicki: Going and buy firewood.

IL: Yes that's right. Matt got that Izito one so that's what he used as well.

IL: Do you travel with a dog or pet?

Vicki: Only Terry, he's my pet. (laughing)

IL: Don't you guys have a dog with you?

Vicki: No that's Gary and Carol's.

Carol: That's their clayton dog.

Vicki: We have a clayton dog, that's Gary & Carol's Missie.

IL: Oohh OK.

Terry: We carry Smackos.

IL: I kept seeing the dog in the photos and I thought you guys must have got a dog.

Vicki: No that's our clayton's dog, she's very photographed.

IL: What is the best thing about road tripping around Australia?

Terry: Friendships

Vicki: Yeah friendships, freedom, less stress/no stress. All the new places you get to hear about and then you get to see them.

Terry: Don't have to mow your lawn at home.

Vicki: Yeah no lawn to mow.

Terry: We mow now and again.

Vicki: Yes we do have a whipper snipper so we do some whipper snipping on our way.

IL: What do you have a whipper snipper for?

Vicki: You clean up your area when you get there if it's a bit crap.

IL: I've got a blower but I didn't bring a bloody whipper snipper

Vicki: I've got a blower too, yeah that's good. But no we've just got the little...

Terry: Ryobi.

Vicki: The Ryobi Whipper Snipper that fits the battery again and it's been really handy to tidy

up your sites and not in so much Caravan Parks, but Campgrounds and Stations Stays, that sort of thing.

IL: You guys have got too much space in that motorhome!!

Vicki: You gotta take all the toys with ya.

IL: What advice would you give to someone else planning to travel Oz?

Vicki: Do it!

Terry: Have a go.

Vicki: Simple as that, do it.

Terry: Have a go while you're still able.

Vicki: Don't think about it, while you're still young enough to do it, do it.

Terry: And don't travel too fast.

Vicki: Yes go slow.

IL: Why do you guys think don't travel fast, what's your point to that?

Vicki: You miss too much and it costs you too much.

IL: There's just so much to see isn't there?

Terry: Oh for sure.

Vicki: And cost wise, fuel wise you just gotta slow down.

Terry: And every little town is different from the next one up the road.

Vicki: And you have got to spend more than a few days in one place to get the feel of the place and get to know the locals and then you learn so much more when you get to know the locals.

IL: You guys are back in WA, you spent 15 months there last year didn't you?

Vicki: 17 months yes. April 16 we came across the Nullabor.

IL: And spent 17 months over in WA and you're back over there now. How long have you been back over there?

Vicki: we crossed the border in....? No we went up. May, we crossed the border.

IL: After spending so much time in WA last time are you still seeing different things?

Terry: Shit yeah

Vicki: Yeah things we never got to see, now we'll do on the way back down

Terry: It's half of Australia, it'll take you 5 years to see this place.

IL: Yes

Vicki: Not only different places, the places we're doing the second time, we're spending more time in. Seeing things we didn't get to see and the same places

IL: OK Northern Territory, what do you think of the Northern Territory

Vicki: Yeah love the Territory.

Terry: Beautiful.

IL: What do you like up there?

Vicki: Again it's sparse and it's remote and it's not bloody busy. Even Darwin is a bit like that, it's not busy like the rest of the country.

Terry: Daly River is good up there.

IL: You guys get out there and catch a heap of barra don't you?

Vicki: Yes, we're heading back up there next year.

Terry: There or Dundee.

Vicki: Yes Dundee was nice.

IL: We like Dundee.

Vicki: Tomato Island was great, once you got there. Loved it and didn't want to leave then.

IL: What did you have to do to get to Tomato Island, what was the road like to there. How long did it take and what was it like in the Motorhome?

Vicki: You seen the photos??

IL: I did

Vicki: Once you got there, you won't want to leave, you just don't want to get on that road again. I was staying until they bitumened the road but they made me leave. The road's horrendous. Actually the first bit what is it 100 something kms!!

Terry: 90 of bitumen 60....

Vicki: 40 and yeah 40

Terry: and then about 60 and 40.

Vicki: 40 of dirt to Roper River, Roper Bar and they told us that wasn't too bad and that was shocking and then they told us the 40 from Roper Bar onto Tomato Island was the probably the worst bit or something wasn't it and it's alright, it wasn't too bad. But if we had of gone a bit slower it probably wouldn't have been so bad. hahaha

Carol: It still took us 2 hours to do about 80 kilometres.

Vicki: We hit a washout, the first washout, we didn't see it and busted the trailer, it went sideways.

IL Adele: Oh no!!

Vicki: We got a bit airbourne.

IL: Oops!

Vicki: We knew it was there on the way back, so it wasn't as bad coming back.

IL: Have you been up to the Cape?

Vicki: Nooo, not yet, that will be in our 4 wheel drive life once we finish doing all the bitumen.

Terry: Need the Hi-Lux to make it up there.

Vicki: Once we're satisfied we've seen everything on the bitumen and places, some dirt, we'll hand this over and we'll get a 4wd set-up and go and do all the places we can't do in this.

IL: So have you got an idea around what you would do for a 4wd set-up?

Vicki: Tezza that one's yours.

Terry: A Caravan and an Isuzu truck with my boat on the back.

IL: So you'd go an Isuzu truck.

Terry: An Isuzu 300, I'd be able to put a 20/22 foot Caravan on the back of it, the boat on the back of the truck and off you'd go

IL: hmmm. Good idea. I've considered a truck like that or a Mazda. I've thought about that once or twice as well, that might be an option for us too.

Terry: You might as well get....I think they're about 4 tonne aren't they? 3 ½ tonne /4 tonne?

IL: I'm not sure, I haven't looked that closely at it yet

Terry: I think they might be 4 ½ tonne, I think they are. They use the small Winnebago's on the same truck. I think they're an NFS. You could put 3 or 4 tonne on the back of a truck, as in a Caravan.

IL: Awesome, have you guys been over to Tasmania

Vicki: Not in the Bago, we went for our Honeymoon 32 years ago. We're thinking about heading there next year, probably at the end of the year. Hopefully.

IL: Ok, its magnificent, I'm sure you guys will love it. What about, did you spend much time in NSW and Victoria?

Vicki: We've done a little bit of Victoria, a little bit of NSW but not a lot. I was a bit surprised, I was looking at the map the other day...

Terry: We did a lot before we retired

Vicki: Yes we used to go off and do short trips here there and everywhere. We'd done a fair bit around Victoria more than I thought we had actually.

IL: Ok Since I met you I haven't seen too much of you down in that area. Do you just prefer where it's warmer up the north.

Vicki: Yes follow the sun. We haven't done winter for 4 years. This is cold, this is too cold.

IL: Rate out of 10 your experience travelling Australia?

Vicki: 10

IL: That was easy wasn't it!

Vicki: 11 maybe even 12.☺

IL: Well you wouldn't be the first one to say 12, someone else did too.

That's about it guys. Thank you very much for participating

Vicki: No worries, Did we pass?

IL Adele: With flying colours

Vicki: Do we get a Gold Star. No that was fun.

IL: Yeah it was, thank you very much for doing that, really appreciate it

IL Adele: It was good chatting

Vicki: You're very welcome

IL: It was great to catch up again. Where's next after Denham?

Vicki: We're heading down to Geraldton and then we're going to go inland a bit and have a look at all the wildflowers. Then we'll go to Dongara. We have friends at Dongara, well they're not there but their yard is and we'll stay there for a little while and maybe do a bit more fishing depending on what the weather's like. Then just tread water until it gets warm enough to go a bit further south.

IL: We've just been waiting for it to get warmer.

Vicki: We've got friends at Jurien Bay, they're managing the Caravan Park at Jurien Bay so we'll go and harass them for a while

IL: Ok you've probably stayed at Sandy Cape before?

Vicki: Yeah we, yes that's Adele's favourite hill

IL: That's the one

IL Adele: Yes that's mine.☺

Vicki: I sprained my ankle on the same bloody hill.

IL: Aaw did you

Vicki: We stayed there in 2016 and we stayed there last year too. I did the one into the water last year too which was a lot safer. Didn't break my ankle or nothing (laughing)

IL: It was too cold when we were there to go in the water.

Terry: We got wetties.

Vicki: Yes we got wetties this year.

IL: I've got a wetsuit since then too.

IL: Have you been into the Hutt River, The Principality of Hutt River

Vicki: Yes we went and met Prince Leonard in 2016.

IL Adele: Same

Vicki: That was fabulous I enjoyed that day. He's a fascinating man, you could sit and listen to him all day

IL: Yeah for sure

Vicki: He's so tiny

IL: So what's the plan, you're obviously heading further south

Vicki: We're going to do the same housesit again down in Janebrook, down in Perth over Christmas

IL: Ok

Vicki: And then we'll do the bottom end because there was that section last year we went down to Esperance and we were going to going to go from Esperance across to Albany but that big rain event came and wiped out the highway.

IL: Oh yeah

Vicki: So we haven't seen that part so we'll go back down. From Albany across through Bremer Bay, that's the main part that we missed. Ravensthorpe and all that, then back across the Nullabor

IL: You mentioned you don't have any too many issues finding parks with your length, the motorhome and the trailer on the back. Do you find you have to do some pre-planning to not have those issues?

Vicki: Yes, pretty much. You look at WikiCamps. WikiCamps is pretty good with the Big Rig sign but you can't take that as gospel either because there's a lot of places that just has the Caravan sign that we can fit into but if you open your map up on WikiCamps you can get a fair idea from your satellite map what the place looks like. Caravan Park wise, we'll always ring up and ask and tell them our length and all that sort of jazz so it's not too big of an issue.

IL Adele: How far ahead do you plan then?

Vicki: Day to day, not far. Don't like to be booked in to anywhere.

IL: That's all you use pretty much, WikiCamps and just call ahead to the Caravan Parks and stuff

Vicki: Pretty much, I think WikiCamps is all we ever use, isn't it. It's the Bible.

IL: Yeah it is, that's what I call it, Travellers Bible.

IL: Alright awesome I will let you good people get onto those Bourbons and enjoy the rest of your night.

IL: Thanks again so much guys and hopefully I can catch some fish and make you guys a little bit jealous.

Vicki: Big one. Aahh you should have seen what I got today, oh he was a beauty.

IL: I look forward to the photos. I've bought a bait dropper for my Mavic Pro, for my drone.

Vicki: Oh yeah

IL: We went up to Noosa North Shore last week and the Campground Manager offered me to use his bait release for his drone.

Vicki: Nice

IL: So I had a crack at it, it was really good, I got out 400 metres off shore

Vicki: Oh good

IL: So I'll give that a crack up there on Fraser as well and see if I can amongst some tuna or mackerel or some bloody thing

Vicki: Yeah good stuff, there was a bloke at Barn Hill the year you were there and he was taking the bloody bait out and dropping it. Don't know whether he caught anything but he was fascinating to watch

IL: Probably wouldn't have been when we were there, we were only there 2 nights and how long were you there?

Vicki: 3 months. What drone did you buy Kev?

IL: Mavic Pro

Vicki: Mavic Pro, that's what I'm looking at, I'm going buy myself one. Reckon that's my Christmas Present. Are they easy to operate?

IL: Yeah they are, yes

Vicki: That's what I need, I bought one when we first hit the road. I bought a little drone, a little cheapie out of China to get the feel of it and to see if I liked it and know what they were about. It was a heap of shit and it spoilt me for the fact I couldn't calibrate it. I could get it to go up and it would go off in front of me and I couldn't turn it. It didn't matter what I did, I couldn't calibrate it because the instruction manual was in bloody Chinese. So all I did was chase and picked it up and ran and chased and run into Caravans.

IL: Oh no. We bought an ALDI one for \$100 bucks and the first day I took it out into the park, I had a bit of a fly and I landed it up into a tree. It was hooked up in a tree so we waited underneath until the wind blew and then it fell down. So we took it back out, we backed onto a park, so we went back out in the middle of the park. I had another quick fly and Matt came out and said can I have a go. I said yeah

sure, thinking Matt will be better at it than me, I mean the old rule kids are better and first fly, he landed it into the pool of one of the houses backing onto the park.

IL Adele: So that was the end of that one.

Vicki: (laughing away in the background.)

IL: And it was winter so the pool was all green so we couldn't even find it.

Vicki: Wow

IL: That was the end of that one. So that was what put me off buying one before we left.

Vicki: Yeah too expensive.

IL: I thought oh no, it's not for me but these Mavic Pros have got sensors all over the place, it's just really hard to go wrong with the bloody thing.

Vicki: Idiot proof that's what I need, something

that's idiot proof.

IL: Yes

Vicki: Well as long as you can chase it, right?

I give it to the Grandson and he was happy to chase the thing up the paddock, pick it up and start again. And I thought, you're younger than me, here you can play with it.

IL: Good stuff, thanks heaps guys. Nice talking to you

Vicki: Ok Kev

IL Adele: Talk to you again soon

Vicki: We will, good to catch up, see you guys

Thank you to these two legends for sharing their enormous experience travelling Australia. If you see them say hello, they are great fun to hang out with.



Name: **Scott & Kerry**

Home town: **Wagga Wagga NSW**



We first saw Scott and Kerry's Fifth Wheeler in Barn Hill Station WA and we remembered it because their names are on the back and we have great friends at home who have the same names.

As we made our way south we kept seeing their vehicle at the same places as us so when we arrived at Coral Bay we were determined to say Hello. Turns out we were both thinking the same thing, Kerry had been following our Facebook page from our beginning and had also decided she was going to say Hi.

We travelled together for a month or more from Coral Bay to The Pinnacles near Cervantes in WA before joining up together again in Perth. We then caught up again in Ceduna in SA and spent time together in Port Lincoln and then Christmas at Moonta and then did the Barossa Valley. They were great times and they taught us to Free

camp and helped us a lot in fixing a few things and outback living. We spent a month with them last year at their home in Wagga NSW and enjoyed a fabulous week on the Murray River together.

We have so many wonderful memories with these guys and our trip wouldn't have been the same without them. We really look forward to sharing this interview with you.

IL: When did you begin your trip?

Scott: March

Kerry: 8th March 2016

IL Adele: You were only a month or so behind us

IL: How long did you plan to be gone for?

Kerry: About 12 months

Scott: 12 months was our plan to have off yes.

IL: *How long were you gone for in the end?*

Kerry: Shhhh

Scott: aaah 11 months wasn't it?

IL: *Where did you leave from?*

Kerry: Wagga Wagga

Scott: Wagga Wagga Wagga Wagga

IL: But hold on you're from Wagga Wagga so you don't say Wagga Wagga do you? What do you say?

Kerry: We say Wagga

IL: Just Wagga, we learnt that from you. Locals don't call it Wagga Wagga, they just call it Wagga

Kerry: Wagga!

IL: *So when you left from Wagga Wagga that's actually called Wagga, which direction did you go?*

Scott: Aah South West

IL: Towards Melbourne?

Scott: No further towards South Australia

Kerry: Deniliquin

Scott: Denny yeah

IL: Why Deniliquin?

Scott: That's where we got to on the first day

Kerry: And there was water

Scott: Yes it was HOT

Kerry: It was 40 degrees

IL Adele: oh Wow, that is hot!

Scott: And we were going to have a swim but the blue green algae stopped us, actually the ranger stopped us because we actually got in the water

IL: *Was there a reason you went in that direction?*

Kerry: We were originally going to South

Australia and across to Perth but we changed direction due to....

Scott: Repairs to the van

IL: Oh OK, what happened with the van?

Scott: That was when the back wall got filled up with water.

Kerry: We left here on the 8th March and Friday

Scott: Good Thursday

Kerry: Good Thursday, whatever, we found....

Scott: We found the wall

Kerry: We found the wall had started to rot

IL: So where were you when you found that?

Scott & Kerry together: Mt Gambier (it's like interviewing the Veronica twins lol)

Kerry: At the Showgrounds

IL: Yep, we stayed there. Did you get it fixed in Mt Gambier?

Scott: No, we had to travel around for a couple of weeks until the Insurance assessor caught up to us and he caught up with us at Tallem Bend. We had been in touch with 5th Wheeling Australia and when we got the approval from the Insurance Assessors and we rang them, he said if we could have it there the Monday afterwards he could work on it and get it done in a week after originally quoting it would take 2 weeks. So we arrived in Ballarat on the Sunday night.

IL: So you had it fixed in Ballarat

Scott: Yeah, that was about 3 weeks after we noticed it

IL: How long did that take out of your trip?

Scott: A week

IL: That's not so bad, could have been a lot worse

IL Adele: Did they put you up in some accommodation or something

Kerry: Insurance Company did

Scott: Put us in this lovely little motel

Kerry: No it wasn't

Scott: This lovely little Caravan Park that had cabins that were the size of Tupperware dishes

IL & Adele: Both laughing

Scott: And about as glamorous as a Porta-Loo

IL: Oh no

Kerry: It was shocking

IL: What was your reason for doing the lap?

Kerry: Really what it came down to was I had the health scare and Scott rolled a truck.

Scott: We were always going to do it but we were planning to do it a couple of years from now but after Kez's health scare and my truck falling over, we went hmmm we could have lost the opportunity to do it, so we fast tracked it.

IL: OK because when we met in Western Australia, and travelled together for a few.....

Kerry: Coral Bay

IL: Coral Bay indeed, and we travelled together for months after that and during that time you guys had an Anniversary, was it your first or second. You guys haven't been married long have you?

Scott: The first.

Kerry: It was our First Anniversary.

Scott: That was at Sandy Cape.

Kerry: Yep 11th October.

Scott: And I put on my rainbow pants and rainbow beanie and you lovely people decorated the front of our little truck.

IL Adele: Yeah with MACKS's poop bags...as streamers.

Kerry: Yes.

IL Adele: They were pink.

Kerry: Yes they were pink, they matched.

IL: So you guys had been through a bit in the early stages of being together.

Kerry: Yes

Scott: We don't like doing anything by half.

IL: No, you don't like mucking around lol. So you had health scares and that just made you decide bugger it, we were going to do this later, let's just go now instead!!

Kerry: Yep

Scott: Correct

IL: How would you describe life for you before you left on the adventure?

Scott: Busy

Kerry: Busy, hectic, full on

Scott: We were both working and heavily involved in the Children's Charity

Kerry: We were actually co-ordinators for a Children's Charity Camp

IL: Which is where you met, right?

Scott: Correct

Kerry: Yes

IL: When you left, what were you expecting from your trip?

Scott: We didn't expect anything

Kerry: We didn't really have any expectations. Probably to see as much as we could in the 12 months, without rushing it.

Scott: We didn't really have any expectations, we just wanted to poke along and see the world.

IL: Well that doesn't help my next question.

IL: Did it meet your expectations?

Scott: It was beyond any expectations

Kerry: Ohh, yeah

Scott: Because we didn't have any expectations

IL: That's right

Scott: It took me 5 or 6 weeks to stop getting up at the crack of dawn wanting to go out and fix things, chop things, mend things.....

IL Adele: Stop being so busy

Scott: It took me ages to get out of the habit and getting up and wanting to go and find something to fix or go fishing or to just go and do something

IL: You do like doing something all the time don't you?

Scott: Yes that's it. Relaxation is not in my home study book.

IL: Did you have jobs before you left?

Kerry: Yes both full time work

IL: What were your roles, what jobs did you have?

Kerry: I was an Office Manager.

Scott: Truck Driver, Garbologist. Industrial Garbage.

IL: What was it like making the decision to quit?

Kerry: We didn't quit.

Scott: We took time off.

IL: Ok, so you asked for Indefinite Leave?

Scott: Oh haw haw haw.

IL: See, see what I did there.....

Kerry: Yep, I did. We asked for 12 months leave

IL: How did you go saying good bye to friends and family at home there in Wagga Wagga that's only

called Wagga?

Kerry: Went to the races.

Scott: Yep.

Kerry: And went out for tea.

IL: You like those races.

Kerry: The horsies? Yep.

IL: The racecourse knows how to put on some events, don't they?

Kerry: Sure do

(While staying with Scott and Kez in Wagga we went to the Rock at the Races concert. A fantastic annual music festival in Wagga)

IL: Did you have any big changes along the way?

Scott: I don't think so, I may have relaxed a bit.

IL: You did

Kerry: Probably the biggest thing, we missed a 21st, a Funeral and a Wedding, a surprise Wedding!

Scott: Really surprised now, cos they are no longer married

IL Adele: Oh dear, oops!

IL: Ooops, well saved a present there for no reason then I guess (giggles)

How did you feel about it, a mate of mine - one of my best mates here at home, his Mum passed away while we were in Broome and then when we were on Kangaroo Island my cousin passed away and it was really really sad and it really.... I struggled with not being able to be there. How did you guys feel or cope with being away for those events?

Scott: Well it's funny because we were in Broome also, when Jamo passed away. We were actually on the plane heading out to.....

Kerry: Heading out to Derby

Scott: We got on the plane to head out to Horizontal Falls and got the message that he'd passed away

IL Adele: Aaww

IL: It was 2 days before our Horizontal Falls Trip.

IL Adele: And we had already booked.

IL: Yeah, it was already booked and we had to wait 12 days for it or something and it was 2 days out from that. So the cost for me to have flown back via Perth and miss that trip and then have to reschedule it and stay in Broome longer, I just couldn't get back, I felt so bad. I looked up flights but they were via Perth, couldn't just catch a quick flight there and back.

Scott: I didn't worry about the cost, I said to Kez if she wanted to go, she could go you know but.....

Kerry: Jamie was a little down syndrome boy who I'd known all my life and I'd worked with at the local Narrandera Pool and his parents actually run the pool and I watched him grow up. He developed Leukemia before we went away but he was put into remission so there was no concern there, but when we were away he lapsed out of remission and ended up passing away.

IL: That's horrible

Kerry: Yeah

Scott: Just the time, the amount of time it was going to take to get there and then Kez rang his Mum and she said look don't even want you to come home from the holiday, blah blah blah so we just had our little grieving for him.

IL: Yes, I found that the hardest thing about travelling.

Kerry: Yes.

IL: But what can you do, you know it's hard.

Kerry: You're so far away from someone when something goes wrong

IL: Yes, or the flipside if you're missing a wedding or a special birthday or something too.

Kerry: Yes.

Scott: I had a daughter planning a wedding and it got to the point she rang to make sure I was actually going to be home for the wedding.

IL: *Were there any moments that were life changing for you during your travel?*

Scott: I don't know about life changing, I found some great experiences

Kerry: Wouldn't say life changing

Scott: No, wouldn't say life changing

IL: *What vehicle did you travel in?*

Scott: Iveco 50....

Kerry: 50C18

Scott: Thank you

IL: Towing a?

Kerry: 5th Wheeler Wildcat.

Scott: Forest River Wildcat.

IL: Forest River Wildcat! Tell us about your Wildcat and the reason I ask that, I keep an eye out for Fivers and you see heaps of caravans and motorhomes but I don't see very many 5th Wheelers. We loved your wildcat and each night we hung out in there and we used to call it the 'Travelling Apartment'. It's an absolute ripper but it's a different trip for most people isn't it?

Scott: Yes, Bingara just had a 5th Wheeler Convention up there and I think they had about 35.

Kerry: It just gave you more room and it made it still homey because if it came to a night where we were working in Darwin, Scott could go to bed early and I could still sit up and do whatever I needed and it wasn't intruding on him going to sleep.

Scott: You still have your own space. You could shut the bedroom door, that was the big winner for us if Kez wanted to stay up and watch telly or I wanted to watch the footy and Kez wanted to go to bed. We looked at a heap of motorhomes and it wasn't possible to do that.

Kerry: You didn't feel like you were living on top of each other for the whole 12 months.

IL: How big was the wildcat?

Scott: 30 foot

IL: With the Iveco what was your total length?

Scott: 14 ½ metres

IL: A lot of people would say that's just so big and it must be really hard for space and to find places to stay and things like that? How did you find it?

Scott: If you put a 20 foot Caravan behind a 4wd, we're about 1 foot longer

IL Adele: That's not much difference is it?

IL: And I remember when we went to Kalbarri and had to do a u-turn, you did it a lot easier than I did in the motorhome.

Scott: That's true too.

Kerry: I think what frightens a lot of people about us is our height more so than our length.

IL: Yes

Scott: Because the 5th Wheeler, the bedroom is over the tray instead of having a drawbar that's wasted space, you know what I mean.

IL: Yes with what Kerry is saying there. Height's probably the main thing that turned it off for us.

Scott: Height's our biggest problem.

IL: It's an awesome vehicle to travel in, as I say we called it the 'Travelling Apartment', it was just amazing. How much water can you carry?

Scott: We carry 200 litres in the van and we had capabilities of 100 litres that we could carry in the back of the truck.

IL: Awesome and that just allows you to stay in places so much longer. I mean, we first noticed you guys in Barn Hill Station, how long did you guys stay there for?

Scott: A week wasn't it?

Kerry: I think it was about a week.

IL: And you probably could have stayed much longer as far as your facilities allowed you to?

Kerry: Yeah easy.

IL: And since then you've put in another generator. We were staying with you guys when you changed that over, what have you done there?

Scott: The other one was just noisy and unreliable so I put a more reliable quieter one in. Now we have a Cummins 3.3kva.

IL: Awesome. That will run everything you need!

Scott: Doesn't even raise its revs when you've got.... I tested it with the air-conditioner, toaster and the microwave going and it was just purring

IL: Serious, I'm so jealous!!

Kerry: The other one was a 10kva and it could have run everyone!!

IL: You're not wrong, we'd be plugging into you each night

Scott: It was just noisy and rattly.

IL: Why did you choose your setup?

Scott: Due to the fact that we had the space. We looked at motorhomes and others for 18 months or more and we weren't happy with what we could find in the motorhome setup and

then we were looking at the 5th Wheelers but thought they were too dear. We started to look at second hand ones and thought hang on a minute these are doable.

IL: You found that one, made him a ridiculous offer and he took it.

Scott: Yeah, that's it.

IL: You did well, anything else you particularly like with your set up?

Scott: Well you know, the standard thing, rear kitchen so you're not looking through the television to the kitchen, the lounge room. It's set just like a flat, you've got kitchen, lounge room, bathroom, bedroom. Plus you know the difference between motorhome, caravan and 5th wheeler, the motorhome as you guys know, you've got to pack up and take everything with you where we can unhook and go for a cruise if we wanted to.

IL: Yep, for sure and that certainly has appeal.

IL: *Is there anything you'd like to add or wish you had?*

Scott: Yeah a Trike, but I've got no room to put it there.

Kerry: Laughing – No.

IL: Is that a 'No' Kerry?

Kerry: Yes that's a No.

IL: *Would you do the lap again with the same setup?*

Scott: Yes definitely, if the lotto man paid his way we'd be gone tomorrow.

IL: *When did you finish your trip, must have been in March?*

Kerry: February

IL: Do you miss it?

Scott & Kerry united: YES

IL: Do you want to think about that?

Scott & Kerry together again: No

Scott: Well even on the way home, we got to Albury and spent 2 nights in Albury which is only 123 kms away and then we got to the Rock which is 40 odd kms away and we thought about stopping there for a night.

Kerry: We didn't speak from the Rock onwards.

IL: Aaawww

Kerry: We didn't want to go home.

Scott: We spent 2 nights in Wangaratta which is only another 100 kms past Albury as well.

Kerry: Actually rephrase that, we did want to come home to see family and friends

IL: Yes

Kerry: BUT we'd love to still be travelling.

Scott: We didn't want the journey to end, that's for sure.

IL: *Will you do it again?*

Scott: Yeah, yes mate

Kerry: Yes

IL: There was no hesitation there.

IL: *What was it like settling back in after you finished?*

Scott: The house was too big.

Kerry: Yes, the house was massive, we've got used to it now. You look at everything you have like what's in a house and you think why do I have this?

Scott: You become minimalists when you caravan or motorhome or 5th Wheel around as you guys know.

IL: *You sure do, and there's nothing wrong with that is there.*

Kerry: No, you sort of think all the time I want this, and then you sit back and you go, do I really need it. Is it something that I really need or is it something I just want.

Scott: You know the funny thing just sitting here talking to you Kev, I feel like having a beer now.

IL Adele: Happy Hour

IL: Well I just had a rum so I'm doing alright.

IL: *Was there anytime during your trip that you felt unsafe?*

Scott: We felt a bit isolated when the truck broke down.

Kerry: Where at, Kalbarri?

Scott: Kalbarri, when we were away from the van

Kerry: Yes, when we broke down in town and really couldn't....

IL Adele: We had to take you back to get clean undies.....

Kerry: I wouldn't say unsafe, but it's just we had no phone service. We couldn't get in contact with you guys, we couldn't get things fixed, we couldn't just ring a mate and say hey, can you come and fix this! We had to wait.

Scott: Kev, are you listening. (Sound of a can of beer opening)

IL: hahahaha

IL Adele: Name that sound

Kerry: The only place I felt unsafe, but that was just me, was Coober Pedy, but that was because of the locals yelling out to each other.

That was probably more me than anything.

Scott: There was no reason to feel unsafe, Kerry was just unsure of why they were yelling and screaming but it was just the way they communicate around the town.

IL: When you felt isolated, it was Murchison House Station we stayed I think from memory. Were you guys there and we were in town, I can't remember.

IL Adele: No

Kerry: No you guys were out at the station and we were in town

IL Adele: They broke down

Scott: You guys went to look at Nature's Window and we come into town because the truck was playing up, so I thought we'll go to town where there's a mechanic

IL: That's right

Scott: And then the truck wouldn't let us out past the 60 zone, it kept playing up so we stayed in town so we had somewhere to eat and sleep I think. Lil knew what she wanted.

Kerry: No fresh undies.

IL Adele: Disastrous.

IL: No, we had to take you back for fresh undies, didn't we?

Kerry: That's it.

IL: *Did you have any children with you?*

Kerry: Nope

Scott: Yeah Matt

Kerry: Yeah Matt

IL Adele: Adopt a Matt (they are referring to our son Matt)

IL: *It's our opinion that children on the road are much better behaved than kids at home, what are your thoughts on that?*

Kerry: No

Scott: No Darwin we had some terrorists

Kerry: They had ones from Tassie next to us at Darwin and they were shockers.

Scott: They were throwing rocks and filling the washing machines up with dirt. They'd walk out of the caravan and just stand there and have a wee!

Kerry: They were feral

IL: Oh dear, oops! We'll have to take you to meet some of the kids we've met.

Scott: We met some that were really good kids, don't get us wrong but unfortunately.....

IL: Yeah, the ones that stick in your mind are the others.

Kerry: Yep

Scott: We met some lovely kids in Darwin that stayed in the Van Park.

Kerry: Oh yeah those couple that put their kids into the school.

Scott: They were real good kids.

Kerry: Yeah they were good ones.

IL: *Did you have a house before you left?*

Kerry: Yes

IL: What did you do with it, sell it or rent it?

Scott: Shut the door

Kerry: Shut the door, closed the door, locked everything up, hired a lawn mower man.

IL: So you just got a lawn mower man in to look after things, who picked up your mail and stuff?

Scott: Redirected it

Kerry: We redirected everything, we got as much sent by email as we could and then I had my Mum come in every month and either stay a



night or checked it.

Scott: And you have to do that to keep your insurance up. You can't have the building....

Kerry: I think it's 60 days.

Scott: Unoccupied for 60 days.

Kerry: We just covered it, Mum just come in every month.

Scott: We had friends come and swim in the pool all the time when it was summer and they'd send us photos of them, not pool parties, but them in the pool having a beer and a game.

IL Adele: It looks lived in then.

Scott: Well that was it and we've got really good neighbours.

Kerry: And I had my Aunt came round, she only lives a couple of streets away from here and she would come round and water my plants or she'd collect the mail

IL: Did you work as you travelled?

Kerry: Yes, we did, I worked for 6 weeks for the Electoral Commission in Darwin.

Scott: And I did 8 weeks for NTRS.

IL: And that was in Darwin too, wasn't it?

Kerry: Yes

IL: And then you guys also did Harvest in South Australia?

Kerry: In Ceduna!

Scott: Yes, we were down there for a couple of weeks

Kerry: With Vitara

IL: How did you fund your trip?

Scott: We had enough when we left home to do it. The work was just to see if it was available so if we wanted to keep doing the lap again and again and again, we knew that we could find some work, so it was a bit of a test run.

IL: So basically savings, you guys had savings to do the trip

Kerry: Yes

IL: Do you have any tips for saving money while travelling?

Scott: Yes, eat at home.

Kerry: And Free Camp

Scott: Less Takeaway and Free Camp, yes.

IL: Until we met you, we didn't free camp at all. I suppose we had a bit of a test run of a couple of days at Barn Hill, but we still had problems there, we only stayed 2 nights.

You guys taught us to Free Camp, it was awesome

Kerry: Yay! We had set ourselves up before we left so we knew that we could Free Camp. We did a trial run with the Van as part of our Honeymoon.

IL Adele: Aah cool.

Kerry: Yes we Free Camped our very first night, we went away on our Honeymoon at Carcoar Dam and we more or less did a test run with the solar, the generator, everything.

Scott: Played with everything, you know what it's like, you gotta test everything.

Kerry: And then we actually stayed at a Caravan Park at.....

Scott: Katoomba

Kerry: Yes Katoomba, but then we rolled into The Entrance. We stayed there the week but we didn't eat out, we tried to live in the Van as if we were living on the road.

Scott: We went to a couple of events that were on, there was a Hot Rod Show and Rock N Roll dances and things like that. We still went to the events but we tried to eat at home. We had a

couple of nights out with different people we met there. It was just a bit of a shakedown to see what you could do, couldn't do and it was funny because everyone kept saying to us, don't cook meat in the Van it will smell. So I kept getting the Barbecue out and everything else and we did that I reckon for the first nearly 2 months when we went around and one day we got bad weather so we said I'll just cook inside, so we did and then we started doing just brekkie inside so I didn't have to get the BBQ out, but it makes no difference, the van doesn't smell any different.

IL Adele: Yeah, We don't find it smells either.

IL: I read yesterday or the day before on one of the Facebook pages, that people were saying don't cook inside and I thought that was weird. Because as you guys know, I cook inside all the time!

Scott: That's right

Kerry: Yes

IL: And we don't have any problems.

Scott: (the penny drops) You cook inside all the time....

Kerry: Yeah you cook (laughing)

IL Adele: And we used to cook on the BBQ a lot, the one we didn't have.

Scott: That's true

Kerry: I think cooking inside the van, it depends how you keep your air flow going, you make sure you turn your exhaust fans on and vent the van at the same time. Then you clean up more or less straight away, you don't let it sit until the next morning so your smells haven't got a chance to sit.

Scott: Baby wipes.

Kerry: Oh yeah Scott's baby wipes.

Scott: Got to have baby wipes.

IL Adele: Yeah I use paper towel to wipe everything down.

Scott: Yep, I just used to use baby wipes and breakfast and lunch we'd just wipe everything with baby wipes and wash that night.

IL: The other thing we started with you guys was having fires, but we didn't actually have that many fires together.

Scott: We had one out on the way to Monkey Mia, wasn't it?

IL: Yep on the way back, for my birthday.

Kerry: That's right.

Scott: At Telecom Tower.

IL: Yep and a coloured fire at that.

Kerry: Yes

IL: I don't remember having too many others.

Scott: We didn't have too many fires. We bought a brazier when we stopped at....

Kerry: Ballarat

Scott: Renmark

Kerry: Oh yeah

Scott: At Renmark at Pussies Bend

Kerry: Plushes Bend (Correcting Scott who calls it Pussies Bend on purpose)

Scott: Which is actually called Plushes Bend with another pommie couple we met and they had a little brazier thing and they used to put a little fire in that and so we went and bought one but we never ever used it. It's still in the van unused.

IL: *What did you learn about yourself from doing the trip?*

Kerry: Patience.

Scott: And lack of....

Kerry: How you can live with someone in a confined space.

Scott: The other thing is food becomes more versatile. You can't go, I'll just duck down and get what I want, so you have to go, we'll just make this work.

IL Adele: You get creative hey.

Scott: Yes.

Kerry: A lot more planning goes into things because you're thinking forward so you become more organised.

Scott: And flat bread's your friend.

Kerry: Aaw yeah, it's your lifesaver some days. That's the thing, a lot of people say I take a bread maker and you think, well you haven't got enough room to put everything in the Van, so we sort of went ok, let's go more or less the wraps and that would keep longer than buying bread.

IL Adele: How are you supposed to run a bread maker, you might not be on power and you'd have to run a generator?

Kerry: That's right.

IL: What surprised you most about travelling?

Scott: probably the friendliness of strangers to be honest.

IL: Yes but you're the one that starts it all.

Scott: Oh well I mean it's just the comradery, the friendships, as you guys know. We met lots and lots of lovely people, it was just terrific.

IL Adele: Yes, the same for us.

IL: Yeah we were the same, just amazing isn't it. Most people have responded when talking about or looking back at their trip, the big thing

they get out of it is the friendships they've made.

Scott: Yes

Kerry: Yep

IL: You might have already answered this one but what do you do to have your own space?

Kerry: Close the door. I suppose there were times where we both went on walks, like individual walks, but not that far away that we'd get lost or anything but you just took your own time out.

Scott: And I'd tinker, I'd be out at the truck and get my tools out and just tinker.

IL: You love to tinker

Scott: That's it

Kerry: Understatement

IL Adele: (Chuckles)

IL: We are the complete opposites in that regard aren't we?

IL Adele: Yeah Kev's tinkering with the caulking gun, remember that one?

Kerry: Yep laughing

Scott: Grease gun

IL Adele: Yes

IL: My attempt at using a grease gun, how stupid of me. I thought I was a mechanic all of about 3 seconds. Oh dear!! I had the slideout serviced again the other day. It was so much easier.

IL: Do you prefer to Free Camp or stay in Caravan Parks?

Kerry: Oh that's a silly question Kev 😊

Scott: Free Camps Kev. They're blessed plus you have less stuff pinched at Free Camps too.

IL: Where was your favourite Free Camp?

Scott: Quobba

Kerry: Yeah Quobba

IL: It was so good there.

Kerry: Yep

IL: You guys coming from Wagga and you reckon it's not cold down there at the moment and it's 2 degrees overnight, no wonder you didn't worry about swimming at Quobba.

Kerry: Ok it is cold at night, I never said it wasn't cold overnight.

IL: It's maximum is 16 during the day, that's still friggin cold.

Kerry: That's warm.

IL: My point to it is, no wonder you were fine with swimming at Quobba. I had to get my wetsuit on.

Scott: The water at Quobba was cool.

IL: It was cool, but gee that wind got up, didn't it? But have to agree Quobba was an awesome free camp, any other ones that you liked?

Kerry: Dartmoor.

IL Adele: Where's Dartmoor.

Scott: South Australia.

Kerry: No it's not its Victoria down near the....

Scott: Aah it's Victoria/South Australia border.

IL: Ok I'll have to look that one up.

(technically Quobba isn't free but while we were there no-one came to collect the fees)

IL: Your favourite Campground?

Scott: Barn Hill.

Kerry: Agreed Barn Hill.

Scott: Oh no, woah woah we stayed at one at Wooramel and it had thermal tubs.

IL Adele: And then we went up after you.

Kerry: Yes

Scott: Wooramel Station and Barn Hill Station.

IL: You know the one I quite like too, that we stayed at, was Whalebone Bay.

Kerry: Oh yeah.

Scott: Yes.

IL: At Denham, I enjoyed that one. They were magic sunsets and Matt was catching fish and it was a nice walk. We stood up there on top of the cliff and looked out at all the stingrays.

Scott: Yes that's right.

IL: Your favourite Caravan Park?

Scott: Oh probably Darwin because we spent so long there.

Kerry: Yeah Noonamah.

Scott: 30k's out of Darwin. It's got a Tavern, had a pool, General Store and Service Station that sort of thing.

Kerry: It was just so laid back and relaxed.

Scott: That's where the girls used to take the boys to the pub on Thursday night to see the strippers.

IL Adele: Was it reasonably priced?

Kerry: Yes

Scott: It was \$210 a week.

IL Adele: Gee that's good, for Darwin.

Scott: It was nearly \$500 if you stayed in town.

IL: I think I know where you're talking about. Was there a rodeo out that way somewhere?

Scott: They had a rodeo, they had a Blues Festival, they had something else there.

IL: So is it Rod-ee-o or Rod-ay-o?

Kerry: Rod-ay-o

Scott: Rod-ee-o

Kerry: Scott says Rod-ee-o, I say Rod-ay-o

Scott: Scott says black, Kerry says white

IL Adele: chuckling

IL: What are your favourite place/s that you visited?

Kerry: Bitter Springs

Scott: Bitter Springs at Mataranka, that was awesome. Wangi Falls, Litchfield National Park, Uluru, Quobba.

Kerry: Litchfield National Park, Kings Canyon (the rim walk)

Scott: Kings Canyon, the list goes on and on Kev.

IL: It does, doesn't it.

Scott: Trying to think of the name of it, where we spent Christmas, even with that big storm.

Altogether: Moonta.

Scott: Moonta, I was going to say Moorooka. It was a nice place but what makes it stand out sometimes, it's the people you're with, you know what I mean!

IL Adele: Exactly!!

IL: How good was our Christmas Day, 21 crabs or whatever it was.

IL Adele: Matt's squid he cooked up.

Scott: Oh geez he did a good job with that.

Kerry: We didn't have our own family around us but we made it like it was.

IL Adele: That what I thought, if we weren't going to be home with family, what next best is to have it with friends.

IL: We'd missed from Ceduna to Port Lincoln, so I was really keen to do Port Lincoln up to Port

Augusta and we'd been through a lot at that stage because.....

IL Adele: MACKS was sick

IL: MACKS was so sick and you guys had told us about that spot where the dolphins came in.

IL Adele: Whyalla

IL: At Whyalla and we were so keen to see that. We thought about it and thought about it. In the end it came down to we couldn't be home for Christmas, and we'd met these people on the road that felt like family so we thought that was the next best thing, so we said stuff it, let's just get to Moonta.

Scott: Loved it!

IL: We made that a lot of fun didn't we, I loved jumping off the Moonta Jetty.

Scott: That's it yeah.

IL: We had a blast there! And MACKS was able to sort of just relax and continue her recovery as well.

Kerry: Yes

IL: That was one of the few times we've seen a movie in the last 3 years, with you guys at Moonta.

Scott: Oh Yes

IL Adele: We saw Red Dog, Blue Dog whatever it was called.

IL: Blue Dog (laughing).

Kerry: Speaking of movies, our trip was the first time I'd been to a drive in picture theatre.

IL Adele: Oh did you go to Coober Pedy?

Kerry: Yep

Kerry & Scott: And we saw Kung Fu Panda

IL Adele: And there's another one you can actually camp at, I don't know where it is, there's

another drive-in, you can actually stay there after the movie and camp there the night.

Kerry: Gawd imagine us taking the 5th Wheeler.

IL Adele: No-one would see over the top of your guys.

Scott: Puts a whole new meaning on let's sneak into the back seat.

IL: Who did you use for phone coverage and how was it?

Scott: I had Vodafone and Kez had Telstra

IL: Ok, How was Vodafone for you and Telstra for Kez

Scott: If I was near the Coast or near water, Vodafone was pretty good but Kez had more coverage than me.

Kerry: Yes by far

Scott: Heaps more

IL: How much data did you guys have, do you remember?

Kerry: I think we were up to 12?

Scott: Yeah 12 or 13 wasn't a great deal but we didn't do much with it. Wikicamps I had all the maps downloaded before we left and we only did a bit of facebooking and stuff like that.

Kerry: Facetime back to the family was a big thing with us to communicate back to family, we did Facetime.

IL Adele: Does that take data does it?

IL: Yes. Did you find that was enough data for you?

Kerry: Yeah we didn't run out, we come close but we never ran out.

IL: Did you find Free Wifi to use as you travelled?

Scott: Maccas

IL Adele: You didn't go looking for it, libraries or anywhere?

Kerry: No

Scott: Actually yeah we went to Palmerston Library, but I can't remember what that was for.

Kerry: That was to do our applications for Ceduna.

Scott: We used to use Bunnings Wi-fi too.

Kerry: Oh yeah we did

IL: Did you communicate with family and friends back home while you travelled?

Scott: Sure did. Our little Facebook page, our bloggy thing. They knew by that. Just ring or BookFace.

Kerry: Ring or Facetime.

IL: Haha BookFace, oh Scotty I miss those Scottyisms.

Kerry: Facetime was really good with my niece and nephew because we could actually show them where we were. We could actually watch them growing up, we didn't feel that we missed out. In 12 months they seemed to sprout up so much but we didn't actually miss it because we could actually see them.

IL Adele: That's good

Kerry: We used Facetime with Scott's daughter. She bought a house while we were away and Facetimed us to showed us the actual house.

Scott: They were doing the reno's.

IL: You did Bookfacetime with Shae as well?

Kerry: Yeah Shae and Skittles

IL: What Social Media did you use?

Scott: Bookface

Kerry: Bookface

IL Adele: Do you have Instagram?

Kerry: Nope, do now but didn't at the time!

IL: What are your favourite apps that you use while travelling?

Scott: Wikicamps

Kerry: Wikicamps, and Petrol Spy

Scott: Oh, the TAB (laughter in the background)

IL: So was that so you could have a punt on the Melbourne Storm?

Kerry: There were ones I was told to get like where the toilets are, where the public toilets are, emergency, but we didn't use them.

IL Adele: You can find all those landmarks on Wikicamps.

Kerry: Yeah that's right.

Scott: Wikicamps is the one that we live by

IL: What was the funniest thing that happened on your trip?

Scott: Adele shooting across a road, no?

IL Adele: Yes we had a similar thought.

Kerry: Sandboarding at Sandy Cape

Adele: Yes that came to our mind. It was one of our funniest things.

IL: We thought Kez faceplanting might have been up there for you.

Scott: Yes it sprang to mind.

Kerry: I've had a tailbone that has been sore since.

Scott: Since you fell off the roof.

Kerry: No since I fell off the sandboarding. It didn't recover probably until April this year (to put that into perspective the timeframe was October 2016 to April 2018)

IL: Oh wow.

IL Adele: You've got a bad back at the best of times?

Kerry: Yes, but I actually bruised my tailbone that hard from falling off that sandboard.

IL: Was it from falling off or just laughing so hard when Adele went shooting across into the bushes (laughing while saying it)

Kerry: Yes until we figured out there was a fence there!!

IL: That 's one of my most watched videos on my YouTube channel.

Scott: We had a few laughs in Darwin at Noonamah too. We were with a large group of people and we did some funny things together.

IL: What did you find the hardest part or hardest thing about travelling?

Scott: Oh, mine was just trying to relax to start with... just trying to get into a slo-mo.

Kerry: I don't know what mine would have been.

Scott: And 30 second showers.

Kerry: Ohhh yes.

IL: mmm I don't mind the quick showers.

Kerry: It was alright once you got used to it, but I've got a husband who stands under the shower at home for at least 20 minutes.

Scott: I have a shave and all in the shower at home.

IL: Laughing, I do not want to say anything at all about that.

Scott: Shave my face Kevin.

IL: Let's just change the subject, moving right along, as fast as we can. What photography equipment did you use on your trip?

Kerry: Scott used his iPhone only. I had a Sony Alpha 100 DSLR.

Scott: And your underwater camera

Kerry: And I brought an underwater camera in Darwin.

IL: Which is the one that we copied and that's a Fujifilm.

Kerry: Yep, and it's the best thing ever.

IL: Yeah I don't know how you did it because you got great photos with that but we just don't even use ours anymore, we're just going to stick to the GoPro

Kerry: Yeah see I love that, I absolutely love my little Fuji. I used a selfie stick otherwise we would never ever have got photos together. I took my video camera but didn't even use it. Then I found my video on my phone was easier and quicker.

IL: Did you travel with a dog or pet?

Kerry: No, you can't call Scott a dog.

IL Adele: Here Scotty scotty scotty.

IL: Well I don't know, I think there was a moment or two when you might have muttered something similar.

Kerry: Actually the child thing, you could say I've travelled with a child.

Scott: I admit....

Kerry: You are hyperactive.

IL: What is the best thing about road tripping Australia?

Scott: Probably because you're in Australia.

Kerry: It's amazing what's out there that people don't realise!!

They have to get on a plane and go overseas to see something that's in their own back yard.

Scott: Even when you're driving up the middle, you drive for 5 or 6 hours a day, you don't do many hours as you know, and the whole place changes anyway.

You're in the middle of Australia but it's just

different when you get there. And then when you're going down the coast, every corner's different. It's just an amazing place to travel.

IL Adele: You don't realise it.

Kerry: No.

Scott: I was talking to my brother and he said what's the best bit of info you could give someone? I said just get in your car and drive 200 kms and have a look around. There's stuff we don't go and do around our own town.

IL: Yep, you guys were really good at that. Friends we've made, we hung out with for a few months up the middle and across into Queensland and got to know really well, they're a lot like you in that way. You guys would always get out and explore, you'd always be driving off. Maybe we'd do that even more, if we had, as you said before, if I had a separate car that we could go and do that in. We were pretty good though.

Scott: Oh yeah

IL: But I think you guys and Jason & Denise get us out even more.

Kerry: Yep, we used to, our first thing when we drove into a place, the first thing that we did, we went to the Tourist Information Centre. Our question was, what are the best things to see in town or outlining area, and then we'd get that list and we'd grab as many brochures as we could on what we thought we'd want to see and then we'd ask wherever we were staying what other people had already seen.

IL Adele: Yes, our first stop was always the Info Centre, grab all the brochures.

IL: They're good questions to ask though, that's cool.

Kerry: We used to watch people walk in and just grab brochures and they'd miss so much. A lot of things you think are in a brochure sometimes aren't.

IL: Great point Kerry.

Kerry: And it's the local knowledge, people say Oh you've got to go and see this. It's not signposted but if you go this direction, and they give you the direction to it, and you get out there and you think I would never have found this if they didn't tell me about.

IL: I think your point is so spot on. I found the brochures give you a lot of information and tell you a lot of the great stuff to see but some of the best spots we saw were from just talking to people whether it was someone at the Info Centre or someone around the campsite.

Scott: Word of mouth

IL: Barn Hill Station, Quobba, these places came from just talking to people

Kerry: You look at Andamooka. We went there and if we didn't speak to people we probably would have never gone out to Roxby Downs or Andamooka.

IL: You guys loved it out there didn't you?

Kerry: Oh yeah loved it, yes!

Scott: That's another great spot and I also thought new Norcia is another great place.

IL: Yes, I was just ready for Perth by that stage. New Norcia is a place we'll go to and it was always a case of we were going to do this again, there's just too much we've missed so we'll do that next time.

Scott: I think you can keep going for the rest of your life Kev, you're still going to miss stuff.

IL: What advice would you give to someone else planning to travel Oz?

Kerry: Do it

Scott: Do it. Don't leave it too late so that your legs and arms and everything work, so if you need to walk 10ks in a day you can!

Kerry: Probably the thing that woke us up, we went to Kiama? Was it Kiama, on our honeymoon there was an elderly couple sitting at the top of this lookout and we watched an elderly gentleman coming back up the hill and his wife was sitting in the car, she had the caravan in tow and we said to her, Aren't you going down to have a look, and she said No, I can't. We went, you can't? My husband will go and look at everything, take photos and bring them back to me as I can no longer walk that far because of my heart.

IL Adele: Aaww

Kerry: And we went Wow, we're not leaving it to do that.

Scott: Even to climb Uluru. I did it 2 year ago now, another 5 years I don't reckon I'd be able to do it, even if you were allowed to.

IL: Yes we say the same thing. Some of the things we did, snorkeling with the Humpback Whales off Exmouth and snorkeling with the seals in Portland Victoria and stuff like that, climbing the gorges, we still felt physically capable of doing those things whereas in another 10 years with my back and things like that I just don't think we'd be able to do a lot of those things

Kerry: No

IL: Last Question: Rate out of 10 your experience travelling Australia

Kerry: 11 laughing

IL: That's the second highest so far

Kerry: I was going to go higher

IL: Denise said 12

Scott: It's infinite. You want to go again you know what I mean. I'm ready to go again but we've got to get our shit in a row.

IL: Well that time will come no doubt.

Kerry: Oh yes

Scott: Yep

IL: When you start again, where will you head to and what are you looking forward to?

Scott: We will do Queensland and North Queensland, we haven't been there yet

IL Adele: Oh Ok!

Kerry: We haven't done the very bottom right hand side of Victoria. So we would do that area, we've done the Grampians, we've done all that bit but we've missed the very far peninsula. And then we've covered most of NSW except for Burke and Silverton.

Scott: But they're probably things we might do when we have a few weeks off here and poke out and do those little bits.

Kerry: Yes but we haven't seen Queensland.

Scott: No

IL: So you've left the best state til last, is that what you're saying?

Kerry: No WA does it, I reckon.

Scott: How are them footy finals going by the way Kev?

Kerry: I reckon WA's the state, I just like WA.

IL Adele: It's pretty impressive.

Scott: Plus it's slow.

IL Adele: Did you guys go across to Tassie?

Scott & Kerry: No

Kerry: We have to do Tassie yet, but we're working out what's the best way to do Tassie for us whether we just fly over, hire something and do Tassie because we have been quoted a small fortune to get our Van over.

IL Adele: As you said it's not much longer than a Caravan and a 4WD, is it the height they take into account as well?

Scott: The Van is 10 metres, they count that as 10 and they count the truck as full length as well.

IL Adele: Oh really!

Scott: It's weird, it's not the combined length plus it's up there with the weight, we're 8 ½ tonne.

Kerry: Only Tassie Victoria and Queensland to go, we've more or less covered New South Wales.

IL: Will you go back to WA?

Kerry: Yes, shit yeah. And Darwin!

IL: We loved Darwin, loved WA but as you said before Scotty, every state is completely different to the other. I couldn't think of any two states that I would suggest were similar.

Scott: I was just thinking then too, Zebra Rock was pretty cool also.

IL: Where is Zebra Rock?

Scott: That's where we swam with all the crocodiles and ate silver cobbler, which is catfish.

It's on the NT/WA border up the top. On the top of Lake Argyle, it's on the flow into Lake Argyle not the dam wall out.

Kerry: It's just before you go over Quarantine. It's about half an hour before you go over the Quarantine border. It was brilliant. Oh you know something else we wouldn't live without?

IL Adele: Your Mum

Kerry: No besides my family.

IL Adele: That's the Mum deodorant slogan.

Kerry: The food vac, what do you call that?

Scott: The cryvac.

IL Adele: Oh the vacuum sealing.

Kerry: Yes

IL: Why do you like it so much?

Kerry: It compressed everything down.

Scott: Creates more space.

Kerry: More space, yeah that's what I was looking for. It keeps things longer.

IL Adele: Your shelf life isn't it.

IL: How many litres is your fridge?

Scott: 210

IL: We only had 150 and we had to cater for Matt!

Kerry: Yes, we cry-vacced everything

Scott: Plus we had the car fridge!

Kerry: We cry-vacced cheese, we even did vegies when we were going up the middle and they kept a lot longer.

IL: I'll have to put that in your tips.

Scott: You can buy them at ALDI when they have them on special

IL: At this stage, when are you thinking you might get back on the road?

Scott: I was thinking next June but it's the June after.

Kerry: So a couple of years.

IL: Ok oh well you might be home when we come through next year then?

Scott: Yes we're still doing little trips but yeah.

IL: Like us you don't have a 4WD, did you miss not having one?

Kerry: We did miss some things that we would have liked to have seen, like Nature's Window.

Scott: We didn't need a 4WD for that but....

Kerry: It would have helped.

Scott: Yes.

Kerry: There was something at Coober Pedy we couldn't get out to

Scott: Oh yes, out to Old Timer's Mine or something it was called at Coober Pedy. I think you can get there in a normal car but Iveco's are not designed to do bloody....

Kerry: Gravel road/corregations.

IL Adele: Tell us about it.

IL: Oh yeah, tell us about it. We drove, I don't know an hour and a half or something ridiculous or more, and we ended up turning around from Lawn Hill 17 k's out, we were spewing!

Scott: We are the same. I have looked into the 4WD Iveco's.

IL: Oh yes, they're so expensive.

Scott: Also they've got no speed in them the way they're set up. They're towing capacity's only 3.5 tonne, but I can get it up to 5 tonne if I want to, but they reckon 80k's an hour will be your top speed otherwise you'll just chew through so much fuel because they're geared so low.

IL Adele: Wow

IL: What's the Wildcat weigh?

Scott: It's 4.75 tonne.

IL: It'd be right on the limit then?

Scott: Yes we run on our limit now. 8 ½ tonne's our maximum that we can be on the road as a combined unit and we're right on that now

IL: I've got to find a way to get a 4wd into our adventures. I just had a week on Fraser Island, it was just bloody magnificent. Actually you want to find a way to get yourselves over to Fraser when you come and do Queensland.

Scott: A Question you didn't ask. Dearest fuel - Uluru

IL: Fraser was \$2.20 to \$2.30 for both petrol and diesel while we were there

Kerry: Holy smoke.



IL: Yes we paid \$2.20 and also saw it at \$2.28 and we were told \$2.30 at one of the other places. Actually that would be the most expensive I've seen but it would be dearer now than when we were on our trip. I think Kings Canyon was the dearest we saw.

Scott: It was actually dearer but we didn't buy any fuel there.

IL Adele: We got it for just under \$2 at Uluru.

IL: I think it was about \$1.90 when we were there.

Scott: When we were there it was about \$1.70 or something.

IL: I think it was \$1.98 at Kings Canyon from memory. Insane, but I did see it \$2 somewhere I think it was at Kings Canyon I saw it \$2 somewhere else there. That was pretty Cray cray but we didn't get, like I guess yourselves ,we didn't get far off the beaten track but you know you can pay a lot more in some places.

IL: Alright guys we better let you be.

IL Adele: You'll be too tired.

Scott: Thanks for the chat.

IL: No thank you so much. It was so awesome to catch up again, it's always a laugh.

IL: Cheers guys

Scott: Pip pip

IL Adele: Bye

You meet a lot of terrific people travelling our country and Scott and Kerri certainly made it fun and interesting and we really enjoyed their company and friendship.

We remain in constant contact and look forward to hanging out with them more in the future.

Kerry: Bye

Name: **Tim, Amy and Eve Hockey**

Home town: **Sydney**

Travel Blog: **the_hot_tip** on 



Tim is Kevin's second cousin and he and his wife Amy did a 6 month Lap of Oz, looking for the best surf beaches, great wineries and any crazy antics he could discover.

We met the first time in Tasmania, again on the Great Ocean Road and a third time in Darwin where they shared exciting news with us.

Their trip is different to most of the others in this e-book in that it was quicker and they travelled in a Whizzbanger (Campervan). That makes there perceptions different and interesting because they weren't looking as much at exploring places.

These guys are true Aussies, fun, loving, kind, funny and Tim is crazy. There's no ego's, nothing pretentious, what you see is what you get. They love the beach, love to surf and Tim taught us a lot about the ocean as we caught Abalone, searched for Crayfish, Swam, snorkelled and also

tried to learn to Surf.

I call Tim my brother from another Mother.

Tim and Amy show that it's important to just go do it, regardless of what you travel in or how long you have.

IL: When did you begin your trip?

Tim: Think it was the 21 January, wasn't it?

Amy: No, it was a few days before because we were on the ferry

Tim: Sorry, the 19th January

Amy: Yes

IL: 2016? 17

Tim: 2016

Amy: 16

Tim: No 16

IL Adele: 17

Amy: 17

Tim: Really??

IL: 2017

Tim: 2017

IL: yep, cool

Amy: We are really good at these questions 😊

IL: You've started so well

IL: How long did you plan to be gone for when you left?

Tim & Amy together: 6 months

IL: When did you finish your trip?

Tim: Amy finished Jun 14, I still drove home but yes, June 14

Amy: It was slightly sooner and we ran out of money

Tim: Because that's when you're scan was.

Amy: And I fell pregnant.

IL: Yes, there was a couple of reasons wasn't there and I'm going to come to that one

IL: Would you do it all again?

Tim: Yes

Amy: Yes

Tim: Straight away

IL: I knew you wouldn't hesitate (referring to Tim)

Amy: I'm not as fast as Tim, but I would say yes

IL: What was it like settling back in after you finished the trip?

Amy: For me it was easy. I was ready to nest and stuff. It was very hard for you though, wasn't it Tim?

Tim: For me it was like a big culture shock so I baulked at things. Like the very first morning I walked into the kitchen and I stopped and baulked at going in because it seemed so small even though we'd been living out of the van. Yes it was culture shock.

IL: I get what you mean though and even though you were living in the van, your back yard was the whole of Australia, wasn't it?

Amy: Yes

Tim: Exactly, yes

Amy: Like the beach or the boat ramp or where ever we were

IL: And a lot of your cooking was done outside I think?

Tim: We cooked mostly in the van

Amy: But ate outside

Tim: But we ate outside

IL: Yes

Tim: Same for a cup of tea, we boiled the kettle in the van but we then drank it outside. I think that was a big part of the culture shock other than there's a million cars whizzing outside, it's being locked inside the house so much.

IL: Where did you leave from?

Tim: Manly NSW

Amy: Actually it should be Narrabeena, my Grandma's house because we had to get out of our house sooner and we had the barnies with our van breaking down and false starts leaving and then coming back

IL: Oh

Tim: Sydney

Amy: Yes, Sydney to cut a long story short (laughter)

IL: Which direction did you go?

Amy: South

IL: Was there a reason you went in that direction?

Amy: We had booked the ferry for Tasmania for the 21st January so we kind of had a deadline.

Tim: We had to get to Melbourne in 2 days

IL: 2 days!!

Amy: It was meant to be like a week or two but that was with all of the van kind of, the van wasn't ready to go

IL: Ahhh ok.

IL: *Where was your first stop?*

Amy: Eden

Tim: No.

Amy: Yes. Oh Burrill

Tim: Burrill Pines

Amy: 4 hours south. Burrill Pines is just south of Ulladulla

IL: *Did you pick there for any particular reason?*

Amy: We actually stayed in a friend's shack on the beach there.

IL: Oh nice

Tim: Stayed with friends

Amy: Just parked the van up and stayed in our van on their patch of grass. It was Point Nor Easter where we stayed.

IL: *You're Lap was a fairly quick one, how do you look back on it? Are you glad you did it even if you wish you had more time or do you wish you waited until later when you had more time to do it?*

Amy: No so glad we did it then, even though it was stressful travelling, especially while it was hot in WA, it was still the right time. Still better to do than to wait I reckon.

Tim: If we didn't do it then, there was more chance we would never have done it so you've got to get out and do it when you can.

Amy: Just do it, when the opportunity's there.

IL: *Did you have jobs before you left?*

Tim: Yes

Amy: Yes

IL: *What work did you do?*

Amy: I was a School Psychologist at a swanky girls school.

Tim: a private girls School.

Amy: Yes

Tim: And I was a Carpenter

IL: There was a song that just came to my head as you said that

Tim: (starts singing) I was a Carpenter

IL: (Kev joins in with) You'd be my lady. Trust me my singing is not going into this

IL: *What was it like making the decision to quit?*

Amy: My school was really good. I told them I was really stressed and needed a lot of time off and they let me go with a blessing. They said go for a time and come back refreshed. I was very lucky I didn't have to quit

IL: I imagine your role would be fairly demanding or stressful?

Amy: It was, and I needed a break. It was all part of the catalyst for us going travelling. Tim had always wanted to travel and I said no. Then girls at school were attempting suicide, I just needed to get away for a bit.

IL: Tim, for you

Tim: My boss was really excited that I was going.

IL Adele: Excited for you!!

IL: Was that because your work wasn't good enough or... ? (laughing)

Tim: I work for myself

IL Adele: Excited for you

Tim: Yeah I mean the decision to leave, I was pretty confident that I could find work when I came back so working for yourself has it's positives

IL: Cool. So as a Carpenter you actually work for yourself don't you, you contract?

Tim: Yes I contract myself to builders

IL: *How did you say good bye to friends and family?*

Tim: We had a pretty big thing with our friends, just a bit of a fun night to say goodbye and

everything. We caught up with Amy's family a few times for dinner and we caught up with, oh you didn't catch up with my family, did you? I flew up to Brisbane because we bought the van, my Dad bought the van for us so I flew up to Brisbane and I saw the family and a few friends up there.

IL: What was your reason for doing the trip?

Amy: To have a break from work and I thought I just didn't want to sit around. I also thought I couldn't afford to sit at home and pay our rent and stuff. Have a break from work and do something different.

Tim: And mine I've always dreamed of travelling around Australia and even though it was a lot quicker than what I planned for the last I don't know, 20 years, I didn't mind, I've always wanted to do it.

IL: How would you describe life for you before you left on the adventure?

Amy: Ooh very, very busy. Very busy, we would see people maybe a few times during the week and weekends we'd go between three different things, a picnic and a party then being up at night. Very social, very fast pace, yes a bit crazy.

Tim: Pretty hectic mentally I think for me. My mind never shuts off, because there was always something happening. Fun but very busy.

IL: When you left, what were you expecting from your trip?

Tim: Best adventure of my life!

Amy: I was going to say adventure, have an adventure.

Tim: A lot of laughs, a lot of smiles.

Amy: See some cool things that you only see in books or on the telly. Meet some cool people, that's probably one. Meeting people is probably up there with the things we've seen.

IL: You guys made a few friends on the way didn't you?

Tim: Yes, we made heaps

IL: Did it meet your expectations?

Amy: For me yes, it probably exceeded my expectations

Tim: Yes for me it came pretty close. I thought I'd surf a bit more but other than that yes. It exceeded my expectations as well in some ways just the fun we had with people. The closeness of the friendships that we made.

IL: Well we were obviously witness to that. We caught up together 3 times on the trip, didn't we?

Amy: Yes

IL: First time in Tassie and then we caught you up again on the Great Ocean Road

Amy: Yes

IL: and then you guys went west and we went up the middle

Amy: Yes

IL: And we caught up again in Darwin

Tim & Amy: Yes

IL: Which was awesome and when we caught up in Darwin, it was one of the best moments of our trip

Tim: (Chuckles)

IL: You had some news for us

Amy: Yes

Tim: Was a dicey moment you found out. Did you find out when Amy was having a little issue?

Amy: That day I think.

IL Adele: Yes we saw you before that night you started to feel unwell. We caught you at the Mindil Markets and then you started to go downhill a bit

Tim: Yes that's right at the markets.

Amy: And I was in the hospital that night.

IL: So what was it you told us?

Tim: Amy was up the duff. (lots of laughs)

IL: Indeed. So you were a bit crook and there were a few concerns at that stage wasn't there?

Amy: Yeah, yeah. Ended up in Emergency that night and that kind of changed our plans because we were going to be in the van but stayed in a hotel instead for a few days and then we had to stick around to see some specialists and to the hospital to get some scans like 3 days later as well

IL: How far along were you by that time?

Amy: 8 weeks

IL: So most of the time coming up the WA coast?

Amy: Yes

Tim: Yes pretty much, she fell pregnant in Adelaide, in South Australia

IL: At Rapid Bay?

Tim: No, we've got a photo on Eve's wall where we reckoned it happened

IL Adele: Oh cool

Amy: A beautiful stretch of coast and I can't remember what it is called but it was very different

Tim: There's a really good photo I've got, it looks pretty desolate sort of thing

Amy: Like a post.

Tim: There's a lot of telephone posts in the ground and it's set up to be like an AFL team. Players in positions.

IL Adele: Oh that's like at Geelong isn't it? No

Tim: Well I don't know, we didn't see it at Geelong but basically you're driving along the top of a cliff.

Amy: And you free camp right on the cliff edge. We tried to backtrack and couldn't find out

exactly where it was. It was before the Nullabor heading when heading west.

IL: By the time you got to Darwin Amy you'd probably had enough by that stage, you were ready for home, weren't you?

Amy: Yes, because I was a bit sick. I had 'all day sickness' not morning sickness, but all day sickness and it was very hot. We didn't have air con in our car, it was a bit more of a rough type set-up in our van.

Tim: We had aircon but we didn't use it because it would drop us down to about 70ks an hour

Amy: Yes so we couldn't get where we did if we had the aircon on

IL: Yes, and that sort of explained really why the trip ended up being cut that little bit short!

Amy: Yes

Tim: Yes and that we ran pretty short in money. We had to be back in Brissie for, well we nominated Brisbane for our 13 week....

Amy: For the 12/13 week scan or whatever it was

IL: Ok awesome

IL: So that led into my next question. Did you have any big changes along the way?

Amy: Yes that's probably the only big changes.

Tim: Yes, I don't know. That was a big change for both of us that way. Also I don't know if you'd say mentally or what it was, but it was very freeing and liberating for me.

IL: Yes

Tim: I had a second thought about what it was I really want out of life. It probably cemented that in my head more than anything.

IL: What came out of those thoughts? Did you come up with any distinct thoughts about, in answering that question What you want out of life?

Tim: I think I became a lot more, I don't know if you'd say confident with who I am, but I thought you know what, people can tell me how I should lead my life but I kind of got a bit more cemented with no the way I think about life is actually a very good thing and I don't need to do what other people think or say. I don't need to live life like everyone else lives it, sort of thing.

IL: Yes

Tim: There's a lot of people who have the attitude of let's just go do it. Travelling with kids, travelling without kids.

IL: So you got to Darwin and gave us that fantastic news that you were up the duff, what was the outcome of being 'up the duff'?

Amy:Eve

Tim: The outcome was a girl

IL: A beautiful little girl

Amy:Little Evie

Tim: Eve Louise June Hockey

IL: And when was Evie born

Amy:15th January 2018. Very cool, very late, she was about 2 weeks late

IL: What vehicle did you travel in?

Tim: We had a Nissan Urvan which was a Japanese import. It was a 4wd pop-top camper

Amy: Similar to the size of a Toyota Hi-Ace

IL: Why did you choose your setup?

Amy: The freedom of being able to drive on the beach or off-road, be a bit more adventurous. So I guess we cut corners with more of the comfort of things to be able to do more of the adventure things.

Tim: I basically thought of what I'd like to travel in and I spoke to Amy about it and we actually prayed about it and even said how much we could only spend and that is exactly what happened. So we were like yep then that's the van we're buying!

IL: You guys love to surf don't you

Tim: Yes

IL: You were wanting to get to places that aren't on the main tracks and would be wanting to get to the great surf spots too I'd imagine?

Tim: Yes

Amy: That's right yes. Get close to the beach and to be able to go on the sand

Tim: Yes beach driving

IL: We were really impressed every time you guys took off onto the beach and left us behind.....

Tim: hahaha

IL Adele: We piled in one time

Amy: That was so fun, that was time with the photo of us in the air.

IL: Yes

Tim: But yeah you piled. Didn't you pile in with us when we went, was it the back of Robe when tried catching crayfish.

Adele: Yes that was the time

IL: The time you were talking about Ames was at the end of the Great Ocean Road.

Amy: Yes

IL: It was an amazing photo that one of Matt levitating.

IL: What did you like about your setup?

Amy: Very quick and easy to pack up and down

Tim: I liked everything about it which isn't to say that it doesn't have cons. Everything was contained, it was simple and easy.

IL: Would you do your lap again with the same setup?

Amy:No I wouldn't

Tim: Not now we've got a baby.

Amy:And I wouldn't want to do it the same way even if we didn't have a baby. I would want a little bit more livability for longer time. Like things we had in our van, we had furniture that

converted to a bed basically if that makes sense. Could be couches in the day and a bed base at night but it wasn't comfortable at all and was like in 3 bits when you pushed it together. I think I would definitely want a mattress. We bought one of those eggshell mattress protector things to try and make it softer and put it on top but I would need a proper bed. That would be one of my biggest things.

Tim: (was laughing in the background while Amy was talking about the bed) I didn't have any issues with that. I would do it again in the van in a heartbeat but it's too small to have a baby with.

IL: Did you work as you travelled?

Tim: No

Amy: No

IL: *How did you fund your trip?*

Amy: We had a big chunk of money beforehand we just lived off that

IL: Just off savings?

Tim: Yes

IL: *Do you have any tips for saving money while travelling?*

Amy: Freecamping as much as possible

Tim: Freecamp and I would say a lot of DIY when it comes to any repairs. Even people we met on the road, there were people I helped and they bought us a couple of drinks that night. Just that sort of thing, you do a bit of bartering on the road.

IL: Is that how you did it when you took off and left us behind and went to the wineries and started getting free grog at the wineries and got yourselves smashed without me?

Tim: That's just because we're amazing people, that's why. If you're amazing....

Amy: That was Lore

Tim: Sander

IL: I don't know. I still haven't forgotten that one you know....

Tim: Oh well we can always do it again.

IL Adele: Yay!

IL: Yes, I like that answer.

IL: *What did you learn about yourself from doing the trip?*

Amy: I think for me I do like a bit of routine and structure. I learnt that more about myself, I kind of like to know what's going to happen some days and those kind of things which on the road is very spontaneous. It's good to be spontaneous and have all those different days but I do like routine I guess. That sounds so boring.

IL: If that's the case, who did the planning?

Amy: I think I did.

Tim: Most of it.

IL: Did that help you to get control over that feeling you have?

Amy: I think so, yes.

Tim: That didn't always sit well with me.

Amy: I can't remember really.

Tim: I don't know I found out anything new about myself but I did find out something about Amy.

I found out that she can be enjoying herself even when she's seems like she's not.

Adele: chuckled

Tim: And I also found out that humour can be great for disarming people.

Amy: Me?

IL: Are we referring to the time when you locked him out of the van and Tim climbed through the top.

Amy: Yes

Tim: Yes (laughing)

Amy: And I heard this little climber up the top and I thought shit I locked everything except the pop top, I should have pulled the pop top down.

Then the zipper comes undone and I hear him climb in and go "great success" 😊
(everyone laughs)

IL: Tim had great joy telling that story over and over

Tim: I was climbing up and I'm like you can't keep me out of there.

IL: Did you prefer to Free Camp or stay in Caravan Parks?

Tim: Financially, free camping is a good option but as far as meeting people is concerned, I think we did both, meeting them in Caravan Parks or Free Camping we met people and hung out with them. But Caravan Parks did have good creature comforts and facilities.

Amy: Creature comforts were nice at Caravan Parks, we didn't have a shower really, we had a kind of make shift in the back of the van but there wasn't really.....

Tim: A toilet

Amy: We didn't have a toilet and just to be able to use the kettle or watch a bit of telly. I know the bigger vans had all those things but it was just nice to go to Caravan Parks I guess because we had more of that limited facilities in our van.

IL: Fair enough

IL: What was your favourite Free Camp?

Amy: Oh I liked that one, but that's because you guys were there.

Tim: Portland?

Amy: Portland was my favourite Free Camp because of the experiences we had there, being with you and then meeting Lore and Sander. (Lore and Sander are a young Belgium couple we met and travelled with for some time)

Tim: Did we get to free camp where those kangaroos came right up to the van?

Amy: Yeah where was that.

IL: Lucky Bay

Amy: Lucky Bay, no.

Tim: We were by ourselves for a couple of

nights. You know what was a good free camp. Remember when we with Lore and Sander and all the backpackers and we went spearfishing in that lagoon.

Amy: Oh yeah that's going to be hard to remember though.

Tim: Did we free camp though? You had to pay for those sites so that's not a free camp .

Amy: What's the best one we stayed at?

Tim: Wasn't that good.

Amy: You know what some of the best free camps were in Tasmania like all those ones down in the Bay of Fires area, they were beautiful. Swimcart I loved it, that was my favourite free camping experience. There was no where else with as many good free camps right on the beach and they had reasonable facilities from memory.

Tim: The one where we made Eve that was pretty sweet hey, right on the cliff.

Amy: Yes that was nice, there was nothing there that night.

Tim: Tassie was good, Tassie was really good for free camping

IL: It is isn't it, really good. Western Australia I found was really good but you guys were hooting it pretty much through WA

Tim: You know what else there was 2 other free camps that stick in my mind, you will remember it where our awning got broken.

Amy: Derby in Tasmania

Tim: Was it Derby?

Amy: Where all the bike tracks are so if you.....

Tim: Mountain biking

Amy: Where we met you and went across to the Bay of Fires, that was a really cool one. It's by this little brook and there's trees and that was gorgeous, Derby

Tim: And the other one was the same sort of thing, near Forster, I mean Foster in Victoria. Toorag or something.

Amy: And we picked up a hitch hiker



IL: That's alright, you were telling about a hitch hiker?

Amy: So we actually ended up in this really great free camp which we should figure out what the name of it is. We didn't really know where we were going, we didn't really have a destination for that night and this girl was at a Servo and I don't know how but we started talking to her.

Tim: I was worried, she was talking to a truckie and I didn't really want her hopping in a truck and so I just said "Where are you going" and did she need a lift and she was going an hour and a half the opposite way from where we were going but we took her and it worked out perfect.

Amy: Yes, she had been working in a pub near Wilsons Prom.

Tim: Wilsons Prom's the National Park.

Amy: Is the National Park and it's this little place that starts with T - Too something, so we ended up there

Tim: So that was a really good one, it's just

outside Foster

(NB - Amy remembers the name of the town later in the interview - Toora)

IL: Your favourite Campground?

Amy: Litchfield.

Tim: Litchfield was really good

IL: How good is that. What about Rapid Bay, how did you rate it?

Tim: Rapid Bay - that's where we stayed with you guys

IL: Yes and we snorkeled

Tim: and the sprinklers came on

IL: That's where we jumped off the jetty

Tim: Yes Rapid Bay was awesome, actually that one's really, we had a lot of fun there, didn't we?

IL: We did, it's one of our favourites.

Tim: And there's plenty of room there, it's good scenery, so yes loved that too.

IL: Your favourite Caravan Park?

Amy: Eden Big 4 Caravan Park, we stayed there the second night on our way down to Melbourne.

Tim: It's south east NSW, it's very close to the border in Victoria.

IL: What are your favourite place/s that you visited?

Amy: Lucky Bay, all that National Park where Lucky Bay is

IL Adele: Cape Le Grand

IL: Cape Le Grand yes

Amy: It was beautiful, all that was amazing and Frenchman's Peak, the big walk that you can do

IL: Frenchman's Peak, yes, I didn't get up there.

Amy: Stunning

Tim: Tassie. What did I love about Tassie babe? Oh what was that, where did we go over to, it's not Bruny Island?

Amy: Bruny Island's where you surfed at Cloudy Bay

Tim: What's the island where they were pulling the squids onto the jetty. We were only there for the day.

Amy: Bruny Island

Tim: Bruny Island, I loved Bruny Island!

IL: Yes we did too

IL Adele: That would have been Adventure Bay

Amy: Oh yes Adventure Bay, we just did a quick drive through

Tim: I loved the Great Ocean Road, so I'd say Bruny Island was awesome, the Great Ocean Road was possibly one of my favourite parts, possibly top 2 in my favourite parts of the trip.

IL: It's funny how all these places and things you keep naming were where we were with you. Is there a connection there? (laughing)

Tim: Yes

Amy: Yes. My favourite time, when I think about our time around Australia, I think of you guys.

That was a big part of our trip.

Tim: And you know what else is funny. You know when we stayed at that Caravan Park, you know that place in England – Swansea

IL Adele: Oh yeah

Tim: That was a pretty awesome area and that was good fun and we had the best oysters.

IL: It was good and I agree with Amy, the time we spent with you guys was fantastic and it was really great and we met Lore & Sander just added to it all and the 7 of us just had great fun didn't we. One of my favourite photos is that photo of us at Kingston S.E and there was about 10 of us, 12 of us sitting around, that was a good one as well

Tim: That was with the German Backpackers there as well

Amy: That was a fun night, 1 or 2 nights, can't remember how long we stayed

Tim: Also Portland, Portland was one of my best experiences of the whole trip

IL: Yes loved Portland. I got to have a surf there.

Amy: Yes you did too

IL: Swimming with the seals, how good was that

Amy: That was the amazing, those baby seals, that was the best. And the whole fear thing of being out of the cage and a shark might get us

IL: We were still in that water which was freezing cold and with the threat of a great white shark and we were still in there for about ¾ of an hour

Amy: Yes I know. That was amazing, that was a great thing in terms of wildlife stuff and we swam with the whale sharks as well

IL Adele: Yes

IL: Where did you do that? Exmouth?

Amy: Exmouth yes, that was really special

IL: What surprised you most about travelling?

Amy: How big Australia really is. I remember thinking we were on this big trip and I google mapped how far away we were from home and it was 10 hours.

Then I google mapped how far left we had and it was ridiculous, and it was like about 40hrs, or something like that, don't quote me on it. We had barely touched the surface on how far we had to drive and just the coast of WA, oh my gosh that was like mind-numbing driving that. It was more so than the Nullabor for me, it was just the amount of driving, the amount of vastness of the country!

IL: You certainly nailed a few of those there. Western Australia you just had to drive such long distances didn't you to get to the next town, in comparison to the East Coast.

Amy: That's right

Tim: It's a lot of distance to cover.

IL: Sorry we're just getting some chocolate, because we can. I haven't had a drink all week, I decided to have a week off.

Tim: Good on you

IL: It's been hard, I tell you.

IL Adele: He'll be making up for it next week.

IL: I'm going to Fraser on Saturday for a week. Fishing trip.

IL: Who did you use for phone coverage and how was it?

Amy: I had Optus and I didn't get much coverage

Tim: And I had Amaysim

IL: Oh, you had Amaysim as well?

IL Adele: Is Amaysim with Optus?

Tim: Optus network

IL Adele: Yes. So there would have been places you didn't have coverage because you were only with Optus

Amy: Yes, barely had any coverage

IL: How much data did you use each month and was it enough?

Tim: I had about 5 gig or something?

Amy: I had 5 gig as well

IL: Was that enough for you

Tim: No

Amy: It was because I wasn't able to use my phone that much

Tim: It wasn't because we were using Google Maps

IL: Did you find Free Wifi to use as you travelled?

Tim & Amy: Yes

IL: Where did you find was good places to get Free Wifi?

Tim: Caravan Parks, a couple of Council buildings like Council....

Amy: Libraries

Tim: Council Chambers or Libraries yes

IL Adele: Info Centres, did you hit Info Centres and catch up free Wifi there at all?

Amy: Yes I forgot about them

IL: Did you communicate with family and friends back home while you travelled?

Amy: Yes

IL: How did you find was best to communicate? Phone, Text, Facebook, Messenger?

Amy: Tim had a Facebook Page, a Facebook what do you call it?

Tim: Closed group. I had a closed group on Facebook and then also a couple of phone calls.

IL: What Social Media do you use?

Tim: Facebook and Instagram

IL: You've had an Instagram Page, The Hot Tip

Tim: Yes

IL: What are your favourite apps that you use while travelling?

Amy: Wikicamps.

Amy: There was a fuel one but it was on my old

phone I can't remember what it was called

Tim: I think there was one called Campermate or Campmate

IL: Campermate, yes

Tim: We didn't use it a lot, but a little bit. There was that fuel app but other than that there wasn't really many apps we used.

IL: What was the funniest thing that happened on your trip?

Tim: Oh I'll tell you a really funny moment, I don't know if it's the funniest, but it's very funny. When we were staying outside of Di Giorgio Wines with Lore & Sander, the 4 of us were sitting outside around the table having a few wines and we'd just finished dinner and we were just hanging out and then Amy said, Oh I got to go to bed guys and I thought oh gosh I was hoping we'd have a big night so she heads off to bed and we'd been playing music through her phone, using her phone to play music through our UE Boom (our Bluetooth speaker)

IL Adele: Yes

Tim: She went into the van and Lore Sander and I were still chatting and the music stopped and then when we thought Amy had gone to bed we were talking and the next thing we hear this Next on Shark Week and Amy was watching YouTube videos of sharks and she had forgotten it was still connected to the speaker (laughing) We all jumped in the van and we're like AHAAH and she's like No no no

IL: Sprung

Tim: Yes that was funny.

IL: So what was the problem there Amy, everyone was really boring so you felt you had to go and watch YouTube?

Amy: No I think I was just researching sharks.

Tim: You wanted your downtime for yourself .

Amy: Yes wanted some downtime but also we were surfing a lot of big waves with sharks in them so I was getting some education around sharks.

IL: That's classic, very cool

IL: What did you find the hardest part or hardest thing about travelling?

Amy: For me it was roughing it, not having a toilet and you can't make a cup of tea, all those things, a bed - no bed that's big.

Tim: Keep going, Amy's got a list

Amy: You get the general gist

IL Adele: And probably the harder parts were after you fell pregnant you weren't comfortable and you were hot too and all that stuff.

Amy: Yes I wouldn't recommend getting pregnant on the road if you are in our kind of set-up it was just too hard.

IL: Yes

IL Adele: Were you expecting that might happen though in the back of your minds, while you were travelling?

Amy: Yes we thought it might but we weren't planning or anything.

Tim: We were planned as far as not using birth control

I think my hardest part, was probably, its nothing against Ames, but I found it hard to, Amy seemed to be not enjoying herself a lot. So when she wasn't, I found that hard, it seems like she couldn't just go 'whatever I'm just going to enjoy it'. We had a lot of fun but I think the hardest thing was trying to please Amy but not.....

Amy: Sacrifice your own

Tim: Sacrifice the fun of the trip

IL: What do you love the most about travelling?

Tim: Everything, everything! I loved even getting stuck on the side of a cliff on the Great Australia Bight.

Amy: Yes what I loved was the hardest times or the things that seemed to go wrong the most were actually the best times of the trip.

Tim: The biggest blessings.

Amy: And our biggest blessings. Our biggest example would be getting stuck on the side of the Great Australian Bight in our van because we went over the hill and didn't get back off. We thought we were going home after this but the people kind of came to rescue us and it was a real highlight of the trip.

Tim: You learn a lot about yourself in those times too. It's one of the photos on our wall at our house.

Amy: We bumped it, we went over this cliff, literally down, we wanted to check out the surf on one of the first entrances after the 4wd track but a very big monster truck 4WD track. And we went over and I had to get out of the van to go downhill because I was so scared, it was that steep and crazy and I just thought I can't even sit in the car There was no way we were getting back up and we had to park down on the Bight and the car was on such a slant, you couldn't put anything in it, it would roll down. We put it all up on rocks.

Tim: We stacked it up on 4 rocks high

Amy: And there was no way we were getting out the next day but we went up and the last person pulling out, there was like a free camp place at the top.

We said can we get a ride into Ukla, because we wanted to try and get some help and I didn't know who would be able to help us and in the end these people had the brand new Land Cruiser with all the special technology, that kind of cm by cm up a hill.

Tim: And they'd been doing it for about 30 years

IL Adele: Did they winch you out?

Amy: Yes, they winched us out

Tim: Yes they towed us up and there was also a guy that works for the Roads Department in a

bobcat and he came over and helped get us out

IL Adele: Wow

Tim: They pulled us up a little ledge and once we were up there, we drove it out of it and then we ended up driving back to the little spot and having.....

Amy: Biscuits and a cup of tea

Tim: Biscuits and tea, the five of us

Amy: Bobcat man, the couple and me and Tim

Tim: Have many people said that they found it hard to be away from friends and family?

IL: That's probably one of the most common responses

Tim: I was just saying to Amy that I think I miss my family and friends more when I live in Sydney than when I did on the road. When I was on the road I'd see street signs with my friends names on it and things like that and I'd take a photo and send it to them or whatever and say you've popped up in our minds on the road and stuff like that. I miss hanging out with my family when they had get-togethers but I didn't miss family and friends as much on the road because it was an adventure and you were hanging out with people and I think I lived in the moment more on the road than what I do at home.

IL: Yes

Tim: I found it really interesting, I thought I probably should have missed my friends and family a lot more but I didn't so I was just wondering what other people think.

IL: Your trip was a bit different from most and some of that's around the fact that was it was for only 5-6 months.

Tim: Yes

IL: As opposed to most people, it's a 12 month minimum. Hence why I was keen to interview you because your trip is different. The other things we mentioned last night as well, you were

in a Campervan whereas most people are in a Caravan or Motorhome or something bigger so your trip is different from pretty much everyone else I'll be interviewing, hence why I was keen to have you guys in it because it's a different perspective.

Amy: Yes

IL: And that is where all of this is going to give a good all round picture because different personalities doing different trips under different circumstances for different lengths of time.

IL: Alright, are you ready for the next question?

Tim: Yes

IL: We're going to chat HARD

Tim: haha

IL: What photography equipment did you use on your trip?

Amy: Phones. I had an iPhone 5S

Tim: And I had a Samsung Galaxy 5S and we also used a GoPro

Amy: Oh yes the GoPro

Tim: GoPro Hero 4 I think it is

IL: You guys didn't travel with a dog or pet did you?

Tim: No

Amy: We had a mouse for about a month. We killed him with a trap.

IL Adele: We got one too

Tim: It wasn't a month

Amy: It felt like a month

Tim: He got in the van when we came back home.

Amy: We left the car to get fixed and the little rat got in there.

IL: Oh bugger! Well you got to enjoy MACKS for part of your trip

Tim: Yes

Amy: I liked MACKS. I liked the happy hour with MACKS at that free camp site we were at. I think we've got a picture of it

IL: What is the best thing about road tripping Australia?

Amy: It's relatively safe and easy I think compared to maybe other countries, it's quite well set up for travelling, for what we did, well set up. It's kind of like there's Caravan Parks everywhere, Free Camp sites pretty much everywhere.

Tim: I'd say the people. The people that you meet. That's what I reckon is the best thing about it! Even the scenery and that is amazing, but it's the people you meet that make the trip the best.

IL Adele: And it's the places you go to, depending on the people you are with at the time, how much better it is as well.

Tim: That's right

Amy: If you did half the things by yourself, you wouldn't have had such a good time.

IL Adele: Yes

IL: I can understand that for you Amy, you are only with Tim, whereas I've got Adele so wherever I go it's always good

Amy: Yes (laughing)

Tim: Amy went swimming down in those little pools at Huon Ponds by herself when we were with Lore and Sander, she didn't have much fun then!!

Amy: You heard about that didn't you? I got lost and I nearly died

IL: Actually, I don't know how that didn't make the funniest moment reel.

Amy: That is probably was the funniest time.

Tim: There was no way that I would say that was the funniest.

Amy: No it was pretty scary and then it was funny.

IL Adele: The scariest.

Tim: No, I was concerned that day, it wasn't funny.

Amy: I thought the brown snakes were going to get me. I thought there were 5 ponds not

3 so I just kept going and I wondered why it was getting more and more weedy and I kind of scraping my stomach over all the flowers and stuff like that. Then I realised oh my gosh I've gone too far and you can't go back up the stream so I had to plough my way through the tall bamboo and grass and I knew there were brown snakes there.

IL Adele: Oh yuck

Amy: And I had my flippers and my snorkel and I had to run a couple of kilometres back along the road in my wetsuit and I had my flippers off but I still had my snorkel and mask on my head.

Tim: That's the funny thing, picturing Amy when she tells you the story about how it happened.

Amy: In outback Australia.

Tim: You can see it in her mind, that was pretty funny

IL Adele: That was awful.

IL: I must admit when you finished telling me the story, I was laughing by that stage.

Amy: It was scary though.

IL: Only you Ames.

Amy: I was so happy, I was like lalalalala another pond.

IL: What advice would you give to someone else planning to travel Oz?

IL Adele: Don't go too far in the ponds!!

Tim: I would probably just say, make sure you've got the equipment you need if you are going to go 4wding on the beach.

IL Adele: Recovery gear.

Tim: Just because I think if you get stranded overnight for too long or whatever it can be really stressful and you can end up hating the thing.

Amy: Have a 2 way radio rather than just your phone because you don't get reception everywhere. It's really important to have that.

IL Adele: UHF yes

Amy: That's it.

Tim: Other than that I would say just be open to the experience. If you're a planner, do your research, plan it out, that's cool but just be open to the experience.

Amy: Have a flexible plan. Try and have a plan of this is what we want to see and do but be ready to change it if things come up.

IL: I reckon that's some of the best advice I've heard!

Tim: Oh really

Amy: Good

IL: A lot of people say don't plan it and I am a planner. Rather than saying one or the other, I think you're right, whichever it is your personality suits just remember to have fun and enjoy the experience

Tim: That's it, that the best thing. You'll have fun if you're not stressing out.

IL: Was there anytime during your trip that you felt unsafe?

Amy: Yes, just before we got on the ferry, the Spirit of Tasmania, we had to stay in Melbourne city at a Caravan Park. We turned up and it was a lady with no teeth at the window waiting to collect our money and she just looked like the scariest person, I know that sounds mean

Tim: She just looked like she enjoyed a drink and she was a bit low socio-economic but there was definitely more of a.....

Amy: Like a Housing Commission type

Tim: Yes and drugs

Amy: Glass on the ground

Tim: So that was one that was a bit....

IL Adele: Dodgy?

Tim: What else? There were a couple of times where I was hanging onto the lock. When we got stuck on the side of the Great Australian Bight.

Amy: That was scary.

Tim: I spent a lot of that night awake and praying to God about that. I thought we were going to lose the van, I didn't think they'd be able to get it back off the cliff which was pretty silly because it was pretty easy to get it back off the cliff

IL Adele: You didn't know that at the time.

Amy: No

Tim: No and we didn't know if there were people around to help.

IL Adele: Yes

Tim: There was a time in New Zealand.

Amy: Yes the New Zealand one.

IL: Well, we need to talk to you more about New Zealand because we're planning to head there at some stage.

Amy: It's amazing, you'll love it

IL: Yes, we love New Zealand be awesome to go and explore it and drive around it.

IL: Rate out of 10 your experience travelling Australia?

Amy: 10

Tim: 10. I'd probably say a 9.

The only reason why, is I think the governments whether they be local or state need to do more for free camping and we touched on this in Portland where they say move on. Between the 3 of us we probably spent over a couple of grand in 5 days there so I think local government or local councils hamstring the Caravan Parks by charging them too much rates and then the Caravan Parks have to charge far too much for people travelling. I think the Caravan Parks should be looked after a bit better so you can afford to stay in Caravan Parks more and there should be more free camping facilities, I think.

IL: I agree entirely. My thought is that like you said with Portland, I calculated out I think we spent about \$650 bucks or \$800 or \$900 or

whatever it was and you just relax and stay longer. We stayed 5 nights in Portland whereas if I was staying in a Caravan Park I imagine we would have stayed 2 nights.

Tim: Exactly, yes that Caravan Park in Portland, we stayed in that for 1 or 2 nights, \$50 bucks a night, do you remember?

IL Adele: Yes, we came to you.

Tim: We had to stay in the Caravan Park because our fridge wasn't working.

Amy: Oh that's right, that was expensive.

Tim: That would be the only reason, I'd drop a point for the experience, is just that I'd love it to have been longer but I reckon that needs to be sorted out.

IL: We met heaps of people at Portland as well because that's where we met Lore and Sander and we also met Mick and L who we're great mates with now

It was a really good spot, it was a perfect location wasn't it? That Seal by Sea tour was awesome.

Amy: It was great. Surf, cafes, seals.

IL Adele: It was close to town

Amy: That's right

Tim: Koalas that's wee on you Amy!

Amy: Yes the Koalas that wee'd on me.

IL: That was the end of the questions

Tim: Cool. You know what, just talking about it gets me going. We went to our friends 40th and I must have spent half the night talking to her Mum or her husband's Mum and Dad about travelling around Australia

I was like, right, I've got to find the right vehicle to travel in and we've got to go again.

Amy: Yes

IL: It's a pity everyone can't do it.

Amy: Yes

IL: When I think about that and I look at the way some things are today, you have to wonder if our kids today are handed too much, given too much and maybe they need to be taken back to times just sitting around a campfire and a tent.

IL Adele: The simple things

Tim: Oh yes

IL: Going and catching your feed, I think there is a lot to that. Maybe parents should get out there and go camping more and just get away and do the simple things in life.

IL Adele: Go back to the basics

Amy: That's right

Thank you Tim and Amy for your time and being part of Travel Chat with Indefinite Leave.

Little Eve is doing really well and Tim and Amy are settled back in to life in Manly, Sydney..... for now.



Name: **Mick & L, Ethan and Dylan**

Home town: **Gold Coast**



We met Mick and L in Portland in Victoria and over the next few weeks we kept bumping into each other before getting setting up beside each other in Rapid Bay in South Australia. We met up again at Uluru and Mick joined Adele and I in walking Kings Canyon. We met up again in Darwin and now are really pleased to call them our mates.

This interview is about much more than just travel. It's also about character, it's about facing one of life's most harrowing curve balls and smashing it out of the park when all the odds are stacked against you. It's about being challenged as much as any human should have to be. It's a travel plan with a temporary diversion.

These guys are raw and honest. They have had far from a privileged life. Their planned never ending road trip took a turn for the worse and their life was thrown in turmoil when they were

about to leave Darwin to head to Western Australia.

A year on and we caught up with the guys at their home on the Gold Coast to discuss their trip and all the ramifications with being diagnosed late after 3 misdiagnosis of Breast cancer. You will read why L has preferred her name not used, she has been unfairly burnt online recently and it was a massive decision for her to even agree to doing this but this is a woman who is so brave and hers is a story I really thought is worth sharing, so we are really glad she has agreed to it.

IL: *When did you begin your trip?*

Mick: December 2016

IL: *When you left how long did you plan to be gone for?*

Mick: Forever, that was my plan. At least 5-6 years

L: We thought 12 months

Mick: 12 months isn't long enough

IL: I 'm pretty sure when we met in Portland in Victoria and that must have been March 2017, back then you were talking 5 years. Laronde you were saying 12 months and Mick you were saying forever....

L: Well he just wanted to go

Mick: Yes I just wanted to go. Normality is boring

L: There wasn't really a plan because we needed money. We were broke when we left.

IL: So you guys left and you were already fairly broke?

L: Yes. Most people have saved up money but you had been off work hadn't you?

Mick: Yes

L: We had planned to do it and if we waited it wouldn't have happened.

Mick: If we kept making excuses that we needed money well we could be making excuses forever. We could be 65 and still not have enough money and have wasted our whole life.

At the end of the day you've still got to pay for fuel, still have to pay bills, pay rent, why not travel and forget about rent, electricity and everything else and just wing it. At the end of the day you can do it cheap.

L: Most people save up a fortune before they leave don't they?

IL: No, I don't think a lot do

IL: Where did you leave from?

Mick: We left from here on the Gold Coast. We spent a week down south.

L: That's right we spent Christmas at your Mums.

IL: Which direction did you go?

Mick: We went south

L: We had to go to Victoria

Mick: We were going to Wollongong for Christmas anyway and we've seen all through Qld and NSW. I'd like to have gone west.

L: We thought if we could find work in the Pilbara we could make some money then we wouldn't be back this way in a long time.

IL: Where was your first stop?

L: Ballina with a broken water pump

Mick: That's right, I was crook as a dog wasn't I.

L: You were so sick

Mick: Yes we left here and picked up Ethan at school, he had his school concert and graduation, we parked on the grass area out the front and everyone wanted to come out and take photos and look inside the caravan because they'd heard about it from Ethan. We went to his concert and left straight from there.

We drove to Ballina and I went to wash my hands and there was no water pressure. I thought what's going on here and it turned out the pump had shit itself.

I thought where will we get a pump from so I said we'll stay the night in Ballina and stay in a caravan park and in the morning I'll source one in Ballina.

I bought an old pump in Ballina, it was a good start to the trip.

IL: Did you have a job or a business before you left? L, you're a nurse aren't you but you weren't working?

L: No I'd just had Dylan. He had just turned 1.

Mick: I'd taken leave, we had to do some work on a house in Victoria.

L: Then we got to Portland, only an hour and a half up the road and I did my back. Then we met these people in this weird Motorhome with this big hairy dude and they'd just been diving... (everyone laughs)

IL Adele: I wonder who that was.....

IL: Yes, that's where I first met Mick, because you were parked right in front of the tap and I came up to use the tap.

Mick: First thing I do when I come into an area is look for the tap and try and get as close as possible.

IL: So you didn't really quit work, you just took some leave because you planned to keep coming back and doing more work.

Mick: Yeah. Then they made me redundant in the end.

IL: What was your reason for doing the lap?

L: Because we could, we always travelled, we like it don't we.

Mick: I don't like living in a house, I'd rather be on the road seeing different things all the time. It's not even about seeing Australia, it's not about driving around doing the lap. It's another day another adventure, seeing different things and meeting different people.

L: I don't know if there's an answer to that. Because we could, why not?

IL: That's an answer in itself.

L: You get old quick!!

Mick: There's a hell of a lot more to life than going to work to pay bills. There's so much more to life and so many people get caught up in I've got to go to work to pay for my nice suit, go to my job that I fucking hate, to pay for my car, to pay for my house that I never live in because I'm at work all the time to pay for this shit.

L: Yeah, and look at the kids too.

Mick: There's so much more to life than living like that. When I go past these canal houses in my little tinnie past their million dollar boats, you never see a single person outside or in their pools, having a BBQ or anything, you never see anybody, because they are too busy at work having to pay for it. They can't enjoy it because they are at work having to pay for it.

L: One of the main reasons is probably because we wanted to go west, I just want to go west.

Mick: We still haven't been there yet.

IL: You're so right though Mick, I wrote about how the more stuff you've got the more it ties you in to work to keep funding it.

L: Yes it does, that's right.

Mick: Simplicity. Sometimes the simplest life is the best. You see kids from countries who have nothing, never will have anything yet they have the biggest smiles on their face.

It's good to have a nice caravan, a nice car to tow it with that's reliable that won't break down in the middle of nowhere, just reliable stuff and get rid of everything else.

IL: How would you describe life for you before you left on the adventure?

Mick: I had worked away for all of Ethan's life pretty much, 6 years I was never home, I always worked away, so it was nice to have time away with the kids.

IL: When you left, what were you expecting from your trip?

L: Adventure

Mick: See things I'd always wanted to see, some that turned out to be disappointments such as shitholes like Coober Pedy and Alice Springs. I'd always looked forward to those places and it was like, really, this is it?

IL: Uluru?

Mick: Uluru was amazing.

L: We loved Uluru

Mick: Loved Uluru, but to me Katherine, shithole, Coober Pedy was the shithole of shitholes. They've drilled a million holes and no-one fills them in. It's disgraceful they can leave it like that.

L: What was I expecting, Mud crabs, big mud crabs.

IL: Did you get any when you were in Darwin?

Mick: No

L: NO

Mick: Because the NT was the worse place I've ever seen for people emptying your pots. Where we were at Gunn Point, Martin (another traveller they had met) had his pots where you could see them at low tide so he could go and inspect them but at high tide they were about 7m under water. He watched a guy one morning who drove over and started putting them in the back of his ute and Martin chased after him. The guy said, they've been sitting here for a week and I didn't think anyone owned them. There was a lot of that.

That's where we had a lot of trouble in Darwin and the Territory.

IL: What vehicle did you travel in?

Mick: A 2016 Toyota Hilux diesel. We are towing a New Age caravan

IL: Why did you choose your caravan?

L: We wouldn't recommend.....

Mick: Because it was one of the biggest mistakes I ever made haha

IL Adele: Did you buy the Hilux especially to take on the trip?

Mick: Yes

L: Yes pretty much because the Prado was too small.

Mick: It would still tow it but I couldn't take the boat.

IL: Why did you choose the Hilux?

Mick: It's a Toyota, they don't break down.

L: Towing capacity and price

Mick: Towing capacity, not price.

IL: What did you like about your setup?

Mick: The boat, I could take the boat. (laughter)
I had a boat and a 4wd

L: It was nice to have a comfortable 4wd because you spend a lot of time sitting on your bum.

Mick: And it was fuel efficient

IL: Would you do the lap again with the same setup?

Mick: No, I'd have a bigger caravan

IL: How big is your caravan?

L: 27 foot

Mick: That's the total length, drawbar and everything. Internal...

L: They say it's 19 foot internal. We need another foot, 3-4 would be lovely but that won't happen (laughing)

Mick: Shower over the toilet was a pain in the arse. Good with 2 young boys that piss all over the seat and you can clean it off easily but not so good when you have a shower and you have to dry everything afterwards.

L: They (the males) found it fine, I was the one that struggled.

Mick: Yes L was the one who struggled, we don't have to sit down to pee.

L: Yes, each time I went in there everything was all wet.

IL: Well that was to be the next question, was there anything you'd like to add to your setup or wish you had?

L: Yes, separate shower and toilet, an ensuite, because I've got 2 boys and had no privacy.

Mick: Yes full ensuite.

L: Bunks that run the opposite way because I found them really hard to get into to change the sheets.

An oven. Although that's an individual thing. We had 3 caravans before this one and they all had ovens and I used it once to heat up garlic bread.

Mick: But we didn't have kids then.

L: We didn't have kids with allergies. (Their eldest son has issues with food allergies). We could make do for us but yes, I need an oven, definitely.

Got to have sirocco fans, wind out windows. We've had a lot of time to think about it (laughs)
Get one of those blinds that they put in these

new ones rather than the old fashioned pullover curtains.

Mick: Yep, so much better.

L: Instead of cupboards at the bottom we'd have pull out drawers. It was great that we had the big washing machine but they do make a front load 4kg washing machine now.

Mick: It's not so bad when it's 2 adults but when you're travelling with kids you're washing all the time. It would cost a fortune to go to Laundromats.

L: What would we change was the question wasn't it? God that's a list.

Bigger fridge. Because the kids again, Icy pole, Icy pole, Icy pole.....

Mick: Freezer was full of Icy poles.

IL: How big is your fridge?

Mick: I think it's 150L, it's only got the small freezer.

L: We only have a small freezer like yours.

Mick: That's why we have a 60L Engel Freezer under the bed.

L: Proper flyscreens. Proper old fashioned ones that go on wind out windows. An extra roof hatch.

IL: Would you take the boat again?

Mick: Yes. A smaller boat, no not a smaller boat, a lighter boat.

IL: Well you're lucky to have that boat, you do realise that don't you? Possession is 9/10ths of the law and I had it (everyone laughs)

(In West MacDonnell Ranges I had to take it back to Alice Springs for Mick and L)

Mick: It was no good to you without the motor.

IL Adele: It looked good behind the Motorhome.

IL: When did you finish travelling?

L: September 2017 was when I was diagnosed wasn't it?

Mick: 28th of August

L: We were packed then ready to go to WA, we were going to Kunnunurra.

IL: Do you miss travelling?

L: Ohhh yeah

Mick: That's a stupid bloody question.

IL: Well I have to ask it to get the answer for everyone (laughter)

L: I miss a lot of people. I'm going to say Yes and No, because living in a small box with 2 young children and sometimes a grumpy husband.

IL: and one that is very sick after a night of playing Mexicans (Tequila drinking game) and doesn't remember it the next day.

L: Mmmmmmm. Yes.

And a child that vomits a lot.

IL: Just to clarify, you're talking about Ethan (eldest son) and he's got allergies to food?

L: Yes he's got allergies to....

Mick: Better off just making a list of what he isn't allergic to.

L: He's getting better as he's getting older. (Ethan is almost 7). He's growing out of it.

He's got a lot of allergies and he gets sick if he eats something he shouldn't.

IL: What was it like settling back in after you finished?

L: Settling back home...?

IL Adele: Life wasn't settled when you got back.

L: No

IL: We will come to what you are talking about there but I suppose from the perspective of not travelling?

L: How do you translate, it fucking sucks, into the book.

Mick: We haven't finished travelling, we were just forced into not travelling from a really shitty situation.

IL Adele: And there's been no settling down

Mick: No it just went to complete shit. Life's just not normal anymore.

IL: You had two boys with you?

L: Yes, aged 5 and 1

IL: Where the boys enjoying travelling?

L: Yes, Ethan loved it, he always asks when can we go back on the road. Dylan was too young.

Mick: He doesn't care, as long as he's got food and toys (laughter)

IL: Did you notice if the boys got anything out of the trip?

L: Life skills, life experience. Street wise to an extent. Educated in some ways beyond what they needed to be for their age. The whole stranger danger thing that had to come about quite early.

Mick: We had to push it into Ethan's mind that we have the rule you don't go inside anybody else's caravan. Also no other kids are allowed inside our caravan because their parents can't see what's going on. They can't go inside any Caravan, Motorhome or Tents unless there's permission from both parents.

L: Ethan will come and say, can I play with so and so, is it alright to go in their caravan. They are so much more wordly, he will talk to his teachers whereas the others kids don't.

IL: We are here at your house on the Gold Coast and you had that before you left and you rented it while away didn't you?

Mick: Yes

IL: Would you recommend people to keep their property and rent it?

Mick: It depends how broke you are (laughs)

L: That's an interesting one Kev because we've talked to people about that, we've met people who've said No, we want to remember how it was so we sold it because we didn't want to

come back and find there was problems and we came back to problems.

Mick: But if we sold it we wouldn't have this house when we came back.

L: No

Mick: So I'm glad we didn't sell it.

IL: What did you do with all your gear, where did you store it?

L: Gumtree

Mick: Gumtree and the tip. We took about 4-5 boatloads, I don't have a trailer, to the tip.

L: We put stuff out the front for people who needed it. We put some stuff into storage.

IL: Where did you have your storage shed?

Mick: Toowoomba

IL: Why did you have it at Toowoomba?

Mick: It was half the price of the Gold Coast. It was only 2 hours drive, not far to go.

L: There's just some things you want to keep plus we kept the Prado in the storage shed.

IL: Did you work as you travelled?

Mick: Yes

IL: What did you do?

L: Worked on a suntan (laughter)

Mick: I did Caravan repairs for some beer money.

L: We got paid in fish and wine sometimes.

IL: You have some signwriting on your Hilux about Caravan repairs, did that work?

Mick: Yes it did. Worked the best in Darwin, I got a lot of work in Darwin.

L: You did other work in Darwin

Mick: Yes I did 3 months with an earthmoving company.

L: You had to finish 3 weeks early because of me.

IL: You mentioned you had run out of money before your trip, how did you fund your trip?

L: We had a little bit that got us through to Darwin and our Credit card. Tip, increase your

credit card as much as you can before you leave
(laughing)

IL: Do you have any tips for saving money while travelling?

Mick: Don't drink..... but that's not going to happen (everyone laughing)

L: Free camping as much as possible.

IL: Was there anytime during your trip that you felt unsafe?

Mick: Glendambo, there's nothing there. Near a salt lake, beautiful spot, but the energy there, nah. There was no phone service, no internet, no nothing.

IL: What did you do to have your own space?

Mick: Wasn't a problem, we had Happy Hour. It was really nice when the kids finally went to sleep.

L: Yes, well there wasn't any.

Mick: Maybe we better get a 5th Wheeler then.

L: Occasionally I'd spend longer in the bathroom. I'd think, I'll just sit here a bit longer. (hysterical laughing)

Look when you live with 2 boys in a tin can with no backyard there is no time to yourself. There just isn't.

Mick: I know you were starting to struggle when we were in Darwin

L: I was losing it.

Mick: That's why I said we'll put them into daycare, we are here for a couple of months even if it's only a day a week or two days, whatever you want.

IL: Do you prefer to Free Camp or stay in Caravan Parks?

Mick and L: Free camp



IL: What was your favourite Free Camp?

L: For convenience, for cleanliness, ease of things with the kids I liked Portland Camp.

IL: The Henty Park Campground

L: It had water, there were toilets, it had things for the kids to do. You could take them for a run over the park, you could take them to the museum, it was a close walk into town and it was Free.

IL: That was good. We loved Portland.

L: Gunn Point (close to Darwin in the NT)

Mick: Yes Gunn Point is Number 1

L: Coorong in South Australia, it was really pretty.

Horsham in Victoria was another good one. The Free camp on the river.

IL: Your favourite Campground?

L: Rapid Bay, it has to be doesn't it.

Mick: Yes, Rapid Bay was pretty good but I have to say Tomato Island.

L: Yep, Tomato Island.

IL: Ok, you had to pay at Tomato Island?

Mick: Yes, \$3 per night. Better than Rapid Bay, toilet facilities, dump point, endless hot water showers.

L: The facilities were better than Rapid Bay but nothing else was.

Mick: The views weren't as good as Rapid Bay but you didn't get out on the boat.

IL: What was it called?

Mick: Tomato Island campground.

Another one was Little Roper Stockcamp at Mataranka. Ethan was so busy there and it was so cheap.

IL: Your favourite Caravan Park?

L: Punsand Bay (Cape York) and Crayfish Creek (Tasmania)

IL: What are your favourite place/s that you visited?

L: Cape York, the top end. I'd have liked to have gone over to Thursday Island. And the West Coast of Tasmania.

IL: Who did you use for phone coverage and how was it?

Mick: Telstra

IL: How much data did you have?

Mick: 10 gig each.

IL: Was it enough? You guys aren't big users though are you?

L: Yes it was enough.

IL: Did you find Free Wifi to use as you travelled?

Mick: We didn't look for it.

IL: What Social Media do you use? Just Facebook?

Mick: Not really.

IL: What are your favourite apps that you use while travelling?

Mick: Wikicamps. We've been using Wikicamps for a long time. We found it when it first came out and have had it for at least 10 years.

IL: What was the funniest thing that happened on your trip?

Mick & L both laughing.

Mick: Are you thinking the same one I am. We were bogged in the middle of nowhere with no phone coverage, you'd have to walk a month before you got phone coverage, there's not a single tree within probably 10kms to winch to and L says - at least the caravan is level. (everyone laughs)

Laronde: I was thinking if we were going to be stuck here for a few days at least, by the time we get someone to pull us out of here.

Mick: We were there 20 minutes and I said that'd be right, now I'm busting for a shit. I had to go for a walk and there's no trees, there was

nothing, not a tree for kms and kms, there's nothing.

IL: What did you find the hardest part or hardest thing about travelling?

L: The kids, Money.

Mick: I wasn't going to say that, I thought I better not say kids.

L: No it is, it's bloody hard travelling with kids.

IL: I think anybody else travelling with kids would recognise it, there's times when it's just wonderful and other times where it's just hard bloody work.

We had a kid with us and it was hard work.

IL Adele: And he was 13 remember (we asked Ethan once how old he thought Matt was and he said 13 lol. He was 24)

(Lots of laughing)

IL: Only kidding Matt, just kidding.

IL: What photography equipment did you use on your trip?

L: We had a big camera but I sent it back with Mick to put into storage. Carrying a massive camera around your neck with 2 kids when you are on walks just isn't going to work so I went and bought a great little quality handheld point and shoot.

It's a Panasonic DMC TZ80, it has a 30x zoom and takes photos in 18mp. I can put it in my pocket or the pram.

IL: Did you travel with a dog or pet?

Mick: No

L: We had a few pet spiders along the way we didn't want.

IL Adele: We got a pet mouse from Rapid Bay, did you get one....

L: Ohhhhh, we got a mouse from that camp, the camp where the school used to be on the oval, he was in the head of the mop and he travelled all the way to Port Augusta in the head of the

mop on the front of the caravan in the wind.

Mick: And I knocked him off and this is evolution, he went under the van and he's running, birds are swooping and a big crow, whoosh.

L: He hung on and travelled 200kms on the head of this mop at 100kmh.

IL: So you were in Darwin, you had 3 months in Darwin, you were about to head to Western Australia, everything changed.

L: Wow, yes it did.

Mick: Something like that.

IL: What happened?

L: Where do I start. I had that checked out on the way out from Rapid Bay. I had that checked.

Mick: You had it checked before we left here too.

L: Yes

IL: As we talked about before, you were a nurse and you had felt a lump and you had been to doctors a couple of times and they had told you it was just....

IL Adele: A blocked milk duct

Mick: and a Cyst

IL: Which is what they told my father.

L: Initially the first query with the doctor was it was a blocked milk duct so I thought ok, don't worry about that and then we were on the road and I was like, no don't worry about it, it'll be fine. Then it was Adelaide where I had pins and needles in my arm and I could only feel one lump in my right boob at that stage. But it was really hard to feel because I was still breast feeding Dylan.

So I had a full neuro exam in Adelaide, it was fine, she didn't query anything. I still had pins and needles which now I know was related because I don't have it any more. Then we got to Darwin and I saw 2 doctors there in the same surgery and one sent me for an ultra sound and a mammogram and they both came back saying

I had a blocked milk duct and a cyst, a cyst in my arm pit. I queried their margins so he sent me off for a biopsy and both biopsies came back, one on the breast lump and one on the cyst, both came back as Grade 3 cancers.

Not all health care is equal, I've heard of some people who will have a biopsy today and have their results in a week. In Darwin it was a 3 month wait if I went Public to have the biopsy and then longer for the results. If I went Private I could get in a lot sooner, it was 2 or 3 weeks I had to wait and then another month until I got the results. Even when I got back here to the Gold Coast we were still waiting on some results, they had to find them they weren't sure if they went to Perth or to Sydney and they had gone to Sydney and they couldn't start Chemo because they were still waiting on results. It took so, so long.

Mick: In Darwin they said if you're going to cut it out, fly out.

L: I rang my doctor and she referred me to the best guy she thought could fix me and we thought.....Fuck!!!

I mean, I had 2 little kids, I need it fixed its as simple as that. I don't know how you can word that because it's exactly what I thought Kev.

Mick: It took us 8 days to come back.

L: Yes they wanted me to come back straight away that week but the only way I could do that was to leave the kids and fly back but I had to say look this is how long it will take to get back.

Mick: We allowed 10 days and did it in 8.

L: They worked around me and then when I got back it was straight away from day 1 bang bang bang, doing Tests, chemo.....

Mick: We got back on the Saturday and you started your first test on the Monday, you had a portacath put in on the Wednesday and you started Chemo on the Thursday.

L: Yes, it was so so quick. I started what turned

out to be 8 months of dope stents and accelerated chemo.

IL: Dylan was 18 months old and Ethan was 5?

L: Yes we were home before their birthdays.

Mick: We were on the road when it was my birthday and we didn't mention anything about it because, I said don't worry about it there's more things to be worried about than my birthday.

L: We knew the kids would want to do something for Dads birthday so we said we'd do something when we get home. Because they still want to do that and they could see what was going on, they can see that Mum was upset and all our friends were upset....

Mick: We had told them we were going to catch up with Martin and Jay, we were going to Western Australia, that seed was planted in Ethan's mind and he was looking forward to the next adventure and all of a sudden we were turning back.

L: And I had to explain to a 5yo, Why!!

Mick: He's a smart enough kid that he could sense that, you know, something was wrong.

IL: *You had some friends and people here that you had to support you but really, you had a 1yo and a 5yo and you were going through Chemo and Radiation, Mick was trying to work between all this and you guys are from Victoria and you are here on the Gold Coast. You didn't have family to support you, you didn't have a big network of friends to support you did you? You were pretty much on your own.*

L: Work has just not happened.

IL: Mick couldn't work, he had to support you. We're leading to one of the things I wanted to bring up because it really pissed me off big time as a cricket tragic, I love the game of cricket, and I talked to Mick about talking to McGrath Foundation and Mick contacted them and there was no support because you had private cover.

L: Yep

IL: And so these places that were set up to support you, to support women with breast cancer...

L: No, they don't...

IL: and they weren't even there for you. You had no friends, no family, no income and the agencies that are set up for you and we are spending and donating so much money to....

L: You're wasting your money

IL: You've already said you left without much money, Mick couldn't work and these agencies that were there to support were failing you!!

Mick: They're not there to support you.

L: No the agencies aren't there to support you.

Mick: Cancer is a cash cow.

L: Very much so.

We both had to go get pensions, Mick a carers pension. Ethan went to school and Dylan went to Daycare which of course comes with costs as well. As far as support and services go the one we found was Little Kids, most of the foundations, and there's some fabulous ones like the Starlight Foundation and those types of ones, usually it's from 8 years of age so mine don't fit.

Mummy's wish were amazing, they give little care bears for the children with little voice recordings inside them so that you can record a little message for them so when you go into hospital you can record something for them, not very long but enough to say Mummy loves you, have a great night, you can cuddle Teddy. Ethan loved it.

They also offer a wish to Mums, and Dads, up to \$300 of whatever you need and at that time we needed food so we took fuel and food vouchers, something else they would organise that for you. The Cancer council offered a weeks library and that was handy.

Otherwise, financially and emotionally, there's not a lot. There's the Salvation Army.

Mick: They were a great help.

L: They were more helpful.....

Mick: They were more helpful than any Cancer fund. If people are going to donate, donate to Salvation Army for cancer. They were 10 times more helpful. Cancer Council is a big business that makes a lot of money out of selling its products and didn't offer us any help.

They never told us about the Cancer Bus that would drive you around to Chemo....

L: It was the Salvos.

Mick: It was the Salvation Army that told us that the Cancer Council had the Cancer Bus.

L: Yep, we didn't know about it when I was doing Chemo, we found out about it 8 months later after I'd finished Chemo.

IL: I'm still so angry about it.

Mick: I'm angry because you mentioned it to me and you said you've had cricket things to raise money for the foundation. I sent an email from Darwin before we began to head back because I was thinking what are we going to do, L needs some sort of support and help and all that, I don't know we'd never been in this situation, so I sent an email and there was no response, I rang when we got back to the Gold Coast and I sort of got palmed off, then I rang another day and I finally got someone, I think I rang about a dozen times and I left messages but no-one ever returned any of my calls. I eventually ended up speaking to someone and they informed me that because we have Private cover and we are going in to the Private system the McGrath Foundation doesn't help. I was really dumbfounded.

IL: As you've described, it's not about just financial support, its emotional support as well.

Mick: It wasn't about Financial but these foundations have been created and they know all the other services that are out there, they are all linked to each other. So if they can't help you with something they might know the next place that can. That was the hardest part was to try to find information of who can help with what.

LL: So you struggled through all of that, Chemo, Radiation, lack of family, lack of support from Cancer Councils and then you had a friend who set up a Go Fund Me page for you. Then you started copping abuse for your friend setting up a Go Fund Me page.

L: Yes being posted on Facebook and social media we copped a lot of abuse.

Mick: L was having a lot of problems sleeping at night so I said stop posting it on your Facebook page.

L: Apparently they are called trolls, that's how much I know about Social Media.

LL: So what were they doing?

L: Just a whole lot of nasty comments about its all just a hoax, I don't have cancer....

Mick: Saying it's a scam.

L: I had one person contact me through Facebook and it was just nasty. Here I was having Chemo trying to defend myself to these people who thought I was full of shit. So we stopped the go Fund Me page because it was just...

LL: So your friend had put up the Go Fund Me page and you had to stop it?

Mick: It's still there but we just stopped promoting it.

L: Yes we just copped too much flak from it.

Mick: I got jack of it at Easter time when we were at Coffs Harbour (where the family went because local Gold coast council contacted homeowners to tell them to leave because of the Commonwealth Games), the amount of nasty comments we were getting, one nasty comment was – this woman is a liar and its all a con, she's actually got 4 kids, I've seen her on A Current Affair, it's all Bullshit, she doesn't have cancer and then the trolls just started, they were running with it claiming its all Bullshit, it's all Free (the treatment). There was another Indian fellow at Coombabah saying it's all Free you don't have to pay a single cent, I got jack of him.

LL: *The truth was, even though you had private cover, you were still forking out a lot of money for medication, treatment and a range of things.*

L: Thousands and thousands of dollars Kev, and we had a lengthy discussion with my doctor when I was diagnosed about what we were going to do because financially we didn't have the money to go private and we discussed having treatment here on the gold Coast and I mentioned what about going to Brisbane and having it done there and my Doctor who was very experienced in this area said No, you're going to have to wait too long. My cancer had already been missed for over 12 months. I was told I had a Grade 3 Stage 3 when I was diagnosed and the next stage after that is a cancer that can't be fixed. We didn't have time to wait.

We have a 1yo and a 5yo and all we can think is Fuck, this needs to be fixed and we'll sell the house to do that.

Mick: No money in the world can buy your health.

L: We have been to the Salvation Army asking for food, we have been to St Vincents De Paul asking for food and it's horrible to be in this situation but we had to because we had to pay for treatments, it's as simple as that.

It's not Free, I couldn't get my chemo in the public system.

And I've got people on Facebook saying, I had Breast cancer and I got mine treated for Free and I managed to do it on a pension, and I'm like that's great, it doesn't help me any.

I've got friends who got their treatment done here in the public system. People were saying well you chose to go Private, all cancers are the same, all treatments are the same and it's not like that.

IL: *That's one of the things I've learned through your experience. Not only is their different stages, Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3 etc but under each stage there's different gradings.*

L: Yes and then there's so many different types of Breast cancer

Mick: Dr Michael Slater in our first appointment ever, said there is not one single case that's the same. Every single case is treated differently, every Chemo formulation is different, it's a mixture, a concoction, Michael is the best and he makes his own potion for the specifics of his patient.

IL: What people won't be able to see through reading this is that most of this time we have been talking you're close to tears most of the way though.

L: Yes, there's been a few of them.

NB: There was a lot more discussion about issues they face financially due to new Government

Legislation and problems with Medicare that effects them greatly from a financial perspective however they also involve some deeply personal matters and therefore I won't reveal that here.

Be under no illusion, these guys have been to hell and are still fighting their way back.

IL: It's been 12 months now and there is some good news?

L: There is good news, my Tumor margins are clear.

IL: You still have a long way to go but that is great news.

Mick: Yes, they got 98% of it and the remaining 2% is dead and mutated. Under a microscope it cannot reproduce.

IL: That is great news but you do still have a long way to go don't you?

L: Yes, I've had a portacath in, a porticath out, another portacath in because I was sick, I've had

plastic reconstruction that had failed clear margins, I had to have a total mastectomy and full auxillary clearance a week later, then 8 months of Chemo, 6 weeks of Radiation, then because my cancer was Eostrogen drip in I had to have my ovaries out, a total hysterectomy and now I'm looking at having the other Boob off and starting reconstruction and getting my balance back (laughing). No-one tells you how much you are off balance. I nearly tripped myself up the other day just putting in eye drops.

IL: Because you're missing that boob?

L: Yes, I guess at a rough guess a D cup is about 1kg and I'm a bit bigger than that. I have struggled, you wouldn't think it.

IL: *I do want to say L, you've carried yourself through this with so much dignity, your bravery and your strength has been inspiring.*

L: You think?

IL: You have been so inspiring. You've taken all this on your own plate and fought your way through it and we've never heard you say a single word that you were down, you were always positive, you were always determined and you've done it on your own.

L: It's funny because that's not how I see it from my side.

IL: It's certainly how we've seen it.

Mick: You have, I don't know how you've held yourself so positive all the time.

L: I don't always

IL: It's natural to have moments but overall you've been beyond incredible, we are very proud of you.

IL: *Well I still have a couple more questions to go. What is the best thing about road tripping Australia?*

Mick: The freedom of the great unknown!! What I like is I don't like a plan, I hate a plan. I don't want to know where I'm going next. When I turn up, if I like it that's where I'll stay.

L: For me it's growth, personal growth. Because it takes you away from your comfort zone and challenges you in ways you'd never have been challenged living in a normal environment.

IL: I agree 1000%

IL: What advice would you give to someone else planning to travel Oz?

Mick: Don't do it, stay at home (everyone bursts out laughing)

IL: I note some sarcasm there lol

Mick: Just do it.

L: Yes, just do it.

Mick: Too many people make excuses for everything. People don't want to get out of their comfort zone, people are just too comfy in their recliner chair and their Monday to Friday, 9 to 5 job, just normal routine, get up at 6am each morning, go to work in that shit show of traffic and to me I can't think of anything worse.

IL: Rate out of 10 your experience travelling Australia

Mick: Come on..... (laughter)

It's a 10.

L: Hell no, Really. Ohhh God, you had a good time.

M: I just have to win Lotto to fund it haha

L: 7 for me.

We really want to thank Mick and L for opening up about all they went through.

It shows how easily and quickly things can change when travelling.

L has completed her next lot of reconstructive surgery which has gone well and is now home recovering. More surgeries are booked for the coming months and if all goes well there will be a long recovery time.

Ethan has just had his 7th birthday and Dylan had his 3rd birthday, they are great kids and we really enjoy our time with them.



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