

Christmas - New Year *Calendar of Events*

22 December 2006 to 5 January 2007

A range of activities were held throughout the Christmas-New Year holiday period and a good time was had by all who attended. The daily programs were open to both male and female consumers, and the Salvation Army coaster bus was made available for five of the scheduled activities and was a great asset to have. Jerry Fitzsimmons reports ...

Christmas dinner

The program commenced with the MHACA Christmas dinner at the Memorial Club on 22 December which was attended by around 25 people.

A touch of Christmas spirit was entered into when Santa made a fleeting visit to offer everyone presents, goodwill and cheer for the coming season. Before leaving Santa commented on the spirit of volunteerism and good work shown by his helper for the evening. A good evening was had by all.

Bike ride to Simpson's Gap

Nine people took part in the bike ride from Flynn's Grave on Larapinta Drive to Simpson's Gap on Wednesday 27 December. The

coaster bus was used to transport bikes, consumers and staff from MHACA to Flynn's Grave where everyone started the ride at 7.30am.

The 15km-ride took about 1.5 hours, with a brief rest at Simpsons Gap before commencing the return journey. Alice Bike Hire provided bikes and helmets (at a minimal cost to MHACA) for those who did not have their own. Following the return of the riders to Flynn's Grave consumers and staff returned to MHACA for a BBQ prepared by staff at the office. The weather was fairly cool and provided for a wonderful day all round.

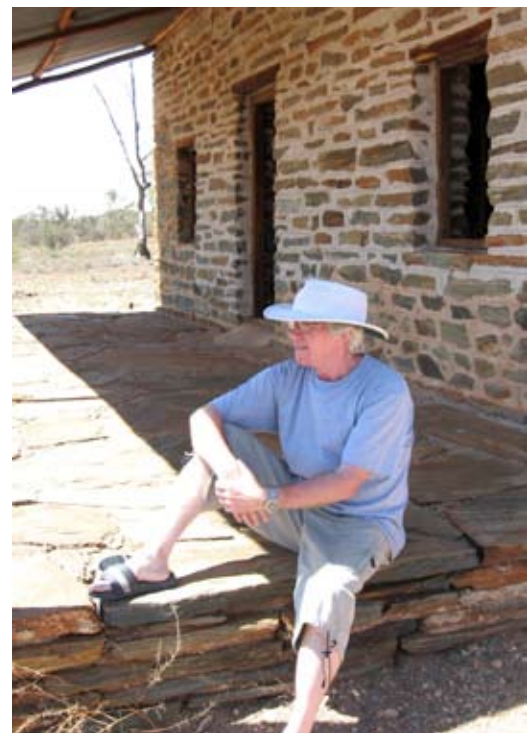
Western Macs Trip

Our tour of the Western MacDonnells got underway at 9.00am

on Friday 29 December. Seven people took part on the trip out to Glen Helen Gorge with a few sightseeing and rest-stops along the way.

A small group took a closer look at the Ochre Pits and

the beautiful surroundings of the waterhole at Glen Helen. Following a hearty lunch and rest at Glen Helen it was time to regroup and head back to town. Once again it was a splendid day (and starting to warm up again for the weekend).



Jerry checking out the scenery at the old police station at Arltunga

Ross River Resort

Two MHACA vehicles took a small group of seven out to the Ross River Resort on Tuesday 2 January which also included a sightseeing trip to Arltunga after lunch.

As a result of changes in management there was no camel or horse riding available. However, access to the pool and spa was made available before lunch while others relaxed under the shade of the large trees in extreme (over 40°C) conditions. Lunch was served in the old homestead bar and dining area and the mention of a trip to Arltunga soon gained momentum.

At Arltunga the Visitors Centre provided an insight into the history of this first Central Australian town born out of a gold rush in 1886-87;



Santa makes a fleeting visit at the MHACA Christmas dinner

and from this the South Australian Government commissioned surveyor and explorer, David Lindsay, to survey the town of Stuart, now Alice Springs, which would supply the new Alrtunga goldfield. Information sheets are available on the tea room notice board.

Following a visit to the Old Police Station it was time to head home. Another interesting day for everyone.

Tour of Alice Springs

The group for the Tour of Alice Springs on Thursday 4 January was small (the temperature was again over 40°C) but went ahead as planned.

The first visit was to the RSL Club War Museum which provided an



Clayton and Tim checking out an old mine shaft at Arltunga

opportunity to appreciate the sense of bravery and mateship of the men and women who were a part of the Air, Naval and Land Forces who have served for Australia since World War I.

This was followed by a visit to Adelaide House Museum, built

in 1926 to become the first hospital in Central Australia. When the Rev. John Flynn visited the Alice Springs Telegraph Station and the adjoining

tiny township of Stuart in 1913, he proposed that the building of an outpost Bush Hospital was vital.

The Story of Adelaide House written by Graeme Bucknall is available for reading and a copy is on the noticeboard in the tearoom.

A short video narrated by the pioneer women outlined the historical significance of the building and a walk around the various rooms with displays and photographs captures the imagination of this significant heritage building.

From here we travelled on to a visit at the Mbantua Gallery and Museum which exhibits not only the beautiful arts and crafts of Indigenous Central Australians but also houses a wonderful display of Indigenous artefacts and culturally significant displays providing information not readily available. An informative self-guided tour

was available with a short video based on stories from the men and women from Utopia, Central Australia. Our tour concluded at 12.30pm - just in time for lunch!



A well-earned rest stop on the ride to Simpsons Gap

Pool at the Oasis

Our final activity was held at the Oasis Sports Bar on Friday 5 January. Ten people came together to enjoy a light lunch and had a great opportunity to casually sit around and chat about the Christmas and New Year festivities. Some took advantage of management's offer to use the pool while others enjoyed a game of 8-ball, playing against other patrons in the Sports Bar.

It was a genuinely good-spirited day with everyone getting together to play doubles games and socialise with others. The outing concluded around 2.30pm with those consumers requiring a lift being transported home.

Thank you to everyone who helped make these activities possible.

Jerry



Another enjoyable day out at Glen Helen Gorge