



# Matt Deer Camp 2008



## Glen Helen Gorge

**17-19 May 2008**

*MHACA's annual Matt Deer Camp  
was held on 17-19 May at Glen Helen Gorge. Thirteen people attended  
and a good time was had by everyone,*

***as Felix Meyer reports ...***

# Our Getaway to Glen Helen ...



## Off to a fine start ...

On a fine sunny Saturday morning in May, a group of us headed out in two vehicles for our weekend destination of Glen Helen. There were five staff and seven consumers—and one carer met us up there—so in total we were a bunch of 13 happy campers.

Having left later than anticipated, we arrived at Glen Helen around 3.00pm—and then pretty much took over the lawn camping area! Everyone chipped in and helped unpack the trailer, grabbed a swag each and set up where they wanted to sleep. Half a dozen of us then set up the storage tent. Thanks Rob for your guidance; it was a bit fancy for most of us, but experience shows!

Felix and a few campers sorted out the storage and a late lunch, while Brian and the others went on a fire-wood hunt. We managed to get almost a trailer load of wood and then headed back to get a u-beaut fire up and running. It really is amazing how a campfire brings people together.

We all familiarised ourselves with the location of all the amenities and then all piled into the vehicles to go and watch the sunset from the Mount Sonder lookout. It was absolutely beautiful.

Then it was back to camp for a quick wash and brush up, then down to the homestead for a 2-course dinner. It was wonderful food and good service. A big thank you to the Glen Helen Resort staff for their hospitality.

## Nocturnal activities ...

Saturday night was somewhat interesting. Just when we thought everyone was settled down for the night ... zip zip ... that's one swag opened ... zip zip ... someone else was getting up too. Chatter and singing round the (by this time very small) fire, then zip zip ... back to bed ... then zip zip zip zip ... someone else was getting up for a chat and a prod at the fire. This went on for a good part of the night! Needless to say, we didn't get too much in the way of sleep. Oh well, there's always the next night!

Sunday morning came, and Felix showed off his cooking skills for breakfast. A group then headed off for a walk round Glen Helen Gorge. One hardy person even had a swim (brrrrr shiver shiver!). Then we had another trip to gather more wood, followed by a delicious lunch.



Above:  
The  
stunning  
sunset over  
Mt Sonder

Below:  
Enjoying  
a tasty lunch  
between  
walks

Below:  
Camping in style!  
Treating ourselves  
to a delicious  
2-course dinner  
at Glen Helen  
Resort



## Up, up and away...

After lunch came what was the highlight of the trip for many of us—a ride in the helicopter. As the rides are weight based, some went up in pairs and others went up singly. What a fantastic experience, especially since the chopper had no doors! It was a truly magnificent view from up there. And the pilot was an absolute delight, patient and kind with all passengers. A hearty grateful thanks to the pilot.

After the chopper ride, we all piled into the vehicles once again and headed off to the Ochre Pits, a place that never ceases to amaze no matter how many times you see it. There were lots of photos taken, as well as a nice gentle walk.

Back to camp for some chilling out and then BBQ for dinner. Brian was the main cook and was ably assisted by a number of people and the meal was magic round the campfire. Not surprisingly, Sunday night was an early night for most of us, and there were no ups and downs like the night before. Thankfully, a bit more sleep was had by all.

## A new day ...

Monday morning again dawned crisp and clear. No one really wanted to think about going back to Alice—we all decided that a week there would have been great! But alas, some of us had to get back to the grindstone, so we started to pack, but not before an enjoyable light breakfast.

After packing up we decided it would be good to call into Ormiston Gorge or a walk and some lunch before heading back to Alice. Ormiston was crisp and beautiful, and we spent a pleasant hour or so there before heading back to town round 3.30pm. Brian and Sue unloaded most of the gear whilst Felix took people home and then dropped the trailer back to Waltja (a big thanks to Waltja). We finally got home around 5.00pm. How nice it was to have a hot shower and a bed to sleep in on Monday night! Then it was back to work on Tuesday as if we'd never been away ... But thankfully, we had.

## A big thanks to everyone ...

Thank you to everyone who came along and joined in with the camp—it was a great way to get to know people a bit better. Thanks also to Glen Helen Resort and Alice Helicopters for your help in making it fun. And thanks to Waltja for the use of your equipment; it's great when we can make the most of resources and help each other out.

Not surprisingly, before we all went home, we discussed ideas for the next camp. Everyone all thought a longer camp would be great, and perhaps to somewhere like Darwin or Yulara again. All ideas will be considered and explored and we'll keep you posted.

*Felix Meyer*



Above:  
Catching the golden morning rays on the cliffs of the Gorge



Wakey wakey! Slowly rolling out of our swags on a cool crisp Glen Helen morning



Above:  
One of the highlights of the camp - going 'up' courtesy of the local chopper

Checking out the amazing colours at the stunning Ochre Pits

