Good day fellow members, the end of year is on us and I have to apologise for being late with the newsletter.

The display at Rollingstone has come and gone, there was a good crowd earlier in the day but petered out towards the end. I think they should move it to a cooler month as it gets hot up there that time of the year.

Our club dinner went well, we filled three tables and the food was tops. Only trouble we sat one long row and you could only talk to a few people. Last year we sat at oval tables, much better. Maree Nicholson’s story about their horror trip from Western Australia starts on page 2.

Seasons Greetings

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The next club meeting will again be held at Brian Pumps place at 60 Coates st MtLouisa and the next news letter will be 1 January.

The club would like to welcome another new member Robert McNielly of Malanda.

This is the last newsletter for the year so I will wish you all a merry Christmas and happy new year.

Keith.

Exmouth to Townsville with 18 wheels.

By Maree Nicholson

We left Exmouth on Saturday the 29th October for our trip to Townsville, with the Ute = 5 wheels, tandem trailer= 5 wheels, Falcon = 5 wheels and the box trailer = 3 wheels.

We got up early so that we could make Port Headland around 3 to 4 pm. Well were off, Andy in front driving the Ute with the tandem trailer and Alex and I in the falcon towing the box trailer. 50k out of Exmouth the tread came off the right hand tyre of the box trailer, so Andy put on the spare and we are off again. It’s OK everybody has tyre trouble, nothing to worry about. Another 20k and the left tyre blew out, now there is no spare for the trailer so there is only one thing to do, unhook the trailer and return to Exmouth in the Falcon and get two new tyres.

Alex and I stayed with the Ute and tandem trailer while Andy did the 140k round trip back to Exmouth. He returned around 10.30am, after installing the two new tyres and replacing the spare where it belongs, I asked Andy whether he had fueled the Falcon. No; so in goes a jerry can. OK we are off again. We pull over 50k from Nanutarra and Andy informs me that the Ute is using more fuel than expected, so in goes another jerry can, he then tells me not to be alarmed at the smoke that might come from the Ute because the fuel was a strange green colour (two stroke, he had picked up the wrong can). I can handle this I told my self, but to my amazement no smoke.

Off we go again, Andy in front and me following with a view of a Fuller and Johnston and a shearing thingy, looking great all tied down with red and yellow tie down straps. This was to be the view in front of me for the next 9 days. We arrived at Pt Headland at 8.30pm, 4 hours later than planed.

Next day Sunday the 30th Oct we set off at 6am to make our way to Roebuck (40 degrees) nothing much to look at scrub, ant hills, small trees and dry grass.

Monday the 31st we left Roebuck at 6am for Fitzroy Crossing (48c) stopping at parking bays in between fuel stops to top up the Ute from the jerry cans.
By now I understood that the Ute required vast amounts of fuel, because of the “load” it was carrying, in other words all the engines in the Ute and all the ones in the trailer. More scrub, ant hills, trees slightly bigger and dry grass.

Tuesday the 1st Nov. off to Kununurra (45c). We decided to start at 5.30am to beat the heat. Stopping again at parking bays to top up the fuel and something to eat. Ant hills, scrub, taller trees and cattle were the order of the day. Alex is sitting next to me wishing that she was anywhere else I the world but here.

Wednesday the 2nd. Off at 5.30 to Katherine, cooler today (38C). Hills starting to appear, with sheare rock faces depending on the angle of the sun are fascinating to see. Trees are getting bigger and we even saw some green grass. It sure is different scenery along this stretch, apart from the Fuller and Johnston and Sheering thingy in front of me.

Thursday 3rd. We head off for Tennant Creek at 5.30. The anthills, scrub and wildlife is really starting to bore us now. Alex is really sick of the trip now, 17 year old girls are not supposed to follow a Fuller and Johnston and a shearing thingy from one side of Australia to the other. Apart from that we were going along fine until 40k from Tennant creek. The rear right tyre blew out at a 100k, well I ended going bush, through gravel and ant hills. I was sure that while we were in a huge cloud of dust that we were going to rollover, but we came to a stop, very shaken. We were helped out of the car by a couple with a caravan. Andy did a u turn and came back to us as another couple with a caravan pulled up. They went on to the Three Ways to get a tow truck sent out to pick up the trailer as it had a bent axle. Apart from some dints and back bumper bar the other rear tyre was damaged, spares were taken from the trailers to replace the two rear tyres. The first couple stayed to help change wheels and comfort a very shaky Alex and my self. The tow truck arrived and loaded the trailer. We headed for Tennant Creek, I was very shaky and drove at 60kph.

Friday the 4th. Andy organised new tyres and for the trailer to be transported to Townsville. He then contacted the insurance company and tried to explain that I had had a blow out, broke the axle bent the towbar, destroyed the other tyre, ripped the back bumper off and dinted a guard and door. All in all we were lucky not to have been hurt and so we spent a couple of days in Tennant Creek making us a day behind our schedule.

Saturday the 5th. We headed off for Mt Isa as we were a day late the motel couldn’t change the booking, but we were able to find another. By now I did not care what the scenery looked like, I was transfixed to the back of the Fuller and Johnston and shearing thingy. When we stopped at Camooweal we noticed that the tread on all 4 wheels of the Ute were looking very sad. The worst tyre was swapped for the spare, the problem was due again to the “Load” we were pulling. We arrived in Mt Isa and unless we found some one to fit tyres on tomorrow Sunday we would have to stay two nights. With luck and a few phone calls we found some one to open up in the morning.

Sunday the 6th. Andy took off at 9am to get the tyres fitted and we were soon on our way to Richmond. Things going to plan we pulled into Cloncurry only to discover another tyre going flat. So off it comes and on goes the spare and we arrive in Richmond with nothing else going wrong.

Monday the 7th. Up at 6am and off to Townsville, today was a good trip no problems, made it on my spare wheel. Driving into Townsville, what shock, a “motorway” where did that come.

For all your insulating requirements on roofs, mobile homes, caravans etc see the new space age Thermashield from Jesse’s Quality Paints - Your One Stop Paint Store - 14 Carlton St Kir-
from? I had no idea where we were going, so I just followed the Fuller and Johnston and shearing thingy and soon arrived at the caravan park where we are resting up for 8 nights before heading for Weipa. We had a good trip and were lucky. Very lucky, out of the 18 wheels 14 of them have been either moved, rotated or replaced. The only 4 that did not move were on the tandem trailer. The rest of the trip to Weipa to follow in the next Newsletter.

Maree.

Over heard Ian Williams telling Russell how he had made a MISTAKE in measuring a bracket, to fit on the front of his ute, to carry long lengths of metal battens. He says he used a string line to get it right, then subtracting the thickness of a cross bracket before cutting it, any way it ended up too long when he went to pick up the steel. I think he might have added instead of subtracting.