



SILO TRIP MAY 2020

Trip Leaders: Terry & Jan Eldridge

Report by Jan Eldridge

Some of the WA border restrictions were lifted so we headed out for a few days away from the isolation.

The Lakes Service station for coffee break where we met up with Woody, Mike and Clare.

First silo stop was Northam and although not able to get really close to the artwork it was very impressive and hard to believe it was painted onto the high silos.

The project Public Silo Trail paintings commenced in 2015 and completed in 2018, started with FORM a cultural organization and CBH Group, spanning 1000 kilometers of local landscapes.



NORTHAM

The left-hand section depicted the tourist attractions of Northam.

The right-hand section was dedicated to the Aboriginal area of Northam

MERREDIN

Merredin was our next stop.
The silo paintings took 168 days to complete and 200 litres of paint.





Our first overnight stop was at Old Narembeen Ski Club Area. Great spot but the lake was very low and a muddy trek to the water's edge. We took a portable fire pit so were able to have a fire to cook on and keep warm. The beauty of the portable fire pit is that no ash is left on the camp site once we leave.

Continued on the trail but had to stop at the Hyden Bakery for pies, sausage rolls and coffee, only place in town that was open. The

usual social distancing was required inside and outside the shop. The food freshly made and the staff very friendly.

A long drive to Ravensthorpe to see the next silo only to be stopped at the police check point at the border. Terry and I were leading the convoy and the very friendly lady police officer let us go through to take our photograph. The others were turned back by their police officer. We drove the short distance to the silo took our "special photo" as the lady police called it and we were able to continue back across the border to catch up with the others.



Our stop for the night was at Lake Chidnup Rest area, site was at the back of the roadside stop via a small track, room for us all and it even had a fire pit so we were able to keep warm and cook. A slight shower of rain as we were having dinner, did not last long so were able to congregate around the fire. Mark Wheeler joined us about 8.30 to do the rest of the trip. Woke to any early morning mist which soon disappeared as the sun raised it's head above the horizon.

NEWDEGATE

Newdegate next silo depicting some of the local inhabitants.

Newdegate great little town, IGA served good coffee and large sausage rolls and



fruit slices, not able to eat at the café section because of the distancing rules. As we were enjoying our morning tea local people stopped to say HI and made us feel very welcome.



PINGRUP

Pingrup – obviously a horse racing town as the silo shows.

My favourite of the art works is the one of the dog on the trackor.



Next venue Dumbleyung to see the replica of Donald Campbell's Bluebird in which he broke the then world water speed record. Also had a look at the Lake and a Memorial Site. The Lake was vast but water level currently very low. Not able to make camp near the Lake but found a camping spot off the road large enough for us to make a wide circle and put up the fire pit in the center. A local farmer came in to check up on the fire and when he saw our set up, he was not concerned and stayed for a chat. That night we had roast beef, potatoes, carrots other vegies and Clare provided chocolate rolls sweets.

In the morning did the scenic drive to the other side of Dumbleyung Lake, which is the Ski and Swimming area, again water level very low. Continued on through The Stirling Range National Park but the Bluff Knoll café was closed.

Mark contacted a friend who had a property east of Mt Barker and we were able to camp there that night for the cost of a bottle of Red Wine, which we bought from the Ironwood Winery. A fantastic evening joining them around their campfire.

Our first stop next morning was the Mt Baker bakery – wow factor for home cooked goodies.

ALBANY

Into Albany to view the last of the silos – not as impressive as the other.

We called into the Sculpture Drive, woodwork sculptures all done with a chain saw and well worth the drive through.



We had planned to spend our last couple of nights at the Queerarrup Lake ski area but the shire had closed the road so had to find a roadside stop, did not want to do the long drive back to Perth in the dark especially as the weather forecast high winds and heavy rain. Found a site at the junction of Robinson Road and Albany Highway. No fires as there was a total fire ban due to the rough weather that was come down our way. Decided to just camp for one night then head home before the storm.

A good six days getting out and about and free from complete isolation mood.