



Ken in his Easter Hat

**CLUB EVENT**

HUNTER COASTAL CARAVAN AND CAMPING CLUB



Saturday Pub Crawl, all responsible of course!

# Have fun, **LOVE** THE LIFE

A club with big heart  
and bigger adventures!

WORDS BY JONATHAN PULLEN, PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
HUNTER COASTAL CARAVAN AND CAMPING CLUB



Rally participants proudly  
display their Easter Hats



## CLUB EVENT

HUNTER COASTAL CARAVAN AND CAMPING CLUB



Rabbit races: winners are grinner! Christine with her trophy

Every so often an RV club comes along that embraces all the qualities that draw us to the caravanning and motorhoming lifestyle; warmth, sincerity, smiles and laughter and of course, unparalleled travelling experiences. This month, we bring you a club that has all of these endearing qualities and continually strives to make RVing an unforgettable experience for all – the Hunter Coastal Caravanning and Camping Club.

It was our honour to speak with Susan Sams of the HCCCC to discuss

what it is that's drawing so many travellers to this modest coastal club.

Susan first started caravanning in 1988 after she and her husband Alan purchased a Windair Sunwagon. This proved to be an invaluable source of affordable holidays for the whole family. After Alan retired, the pair moved to the quiet shores of Coff's Harbour, where they came across the Hunter Coastal Caravan and Camping Club.

"We didn't want the van to waste away on the front lawn," says Susan. "So we looked around for a while to see if we could find some like-minded nomads. That's when we met some other members of the club."

Initially, the club was a small group of travellers who were looking for a caravan club to join. The membership quotas of all nearby clubs were filled, so they took matters into their own hands and banded together in 2002 to form the HCCCC. The rest, as they say, is history.

Today the club boasts a fine fleet of 25 vans. When it comes to adventures

on the road, it looks upon itself as an equal-opportunity club; there are zero restrictions on the way members travel or camp. Susan explains: "There are no rules about the age or work status of members. We welcome families with children; they are thoroughly encouraged to join in and participate in club activities. They can travel in whatever rig they like – members are free to choose tents, awags, campers, caravans, motorhomes or fifth-wheelers – essentially, anything that meets their own requirements."

Some previously enrolled families have relocated and stepped away from club life, but the HCCCC continues to hold its arms wide open

Alan Sams in his Easter Hat



to any family that makes sure that attend...  
"Presently with children the holidays kids travelling having Santa and giving t

The ongoing events is six times! "At a grand dinner "It can range smorgasbord night." In a walking members h and solve t of their pal was a walk

Happy h saw every a hat parade they prepara follow by a races. This



Sausage Sizzle on Saturday night after a very long and eventful day

OUR EMPHASIS IS ON HAVING FUN AND ENJOYING THE LIFESTYLE"

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Men's business!

to any family membership and always makes sure that any grandchildren that attend will also enjoy activities. "Presently we don't have any members with children," Susan says, "but during the holidays we always make the kids travelling with us feel special by having Santa or the Easter bunny visit and giving them a small gift!"

The ongoing theme at HCCCC events is simple: good food and great times! "At most rallies we organise a grand dinner for all," says Susan. "It can range from a camp cooking smorgasbord to a simple hamburger night." In April, the club enjoyed a walking tour of Gulgong where members had to find hidden items and solve the puzzle along the route of their pub crawl – good thing it was a 'walking' tour!

Happy hour the following evening saw everyone don their bonnets for a hat parade, and on Sunday evening they prepared a glorious baked dinner followed by a unique version of rabbit races. This involved windup bunnies



Sunday evening communal baked dinner

racing down the dining room table: an activity that resulted in such roars of laughter the attendees decided it was necessary to 'breathalyse' the 'jockeys'!

While these upbeat, friendly affairs are nothing out of the ordinary for the HCCCC, Susan has a stand-out memory that we think really showcases the heart of this fantastic club. "On our 40th wedding anniversary we got a big surprise," says Susan. "The members organised a 'renewal of vows' ceremony in the park at Boggabri where we were staying for the Drover's Camp Fire. They even had a veil and bouquet for me, and a jacket and tie for hubby. One



Competitors displaying their bunnies



First pub we visited on our Saturday adventure day

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**CLUB EVENT**  
HUNTER COASTAL CARAVAN AND CAMPING CLUB



Sunday morning street breakfast



Surprise Easter visitors, John Ray, Ronald Tate and John Montgomery as the Easter bunnies



Rabbit races, Hunter Coastal Caravan and Camping Club style

**“BUNNIES RACING DOWN THE DINING ROOM TABLE RESULTED IN ROARS OF LAUGHTER!”**

member, Alan, came as the celebrant, resplendent in his white gown and cap! We went on to a local cafe that had opened especially for us that night for dinner. This will be one of my fondest memories ever!”

You won't be surprised to hear that the HCCCC's happy hours are always a hoot with "Lots of laughter, telling

of tales and jokes and just nattering to each other". HCCCC events go off without a hitch largely due to the energy and enthusiasm of all involved. "Members often come up with ideas for things to do on the weekends away," Susan tells us. "Sometimes they are just quiet walks, or fishing, but everyone lends a hand with communal dinners, with everyone trying as hard as possible."

So far this year the club has visited Fort Scratchley, Clarence Town, the State Rally in Bathurst, the Tractor Pull in Dungog, and spent Easter in

Gulgong. These excursions were followed by a roving rally to Barradine, Pillaga and Boggabri for the Driver's Camp Fire. May saw the club tour the Maitland Gaol, June was spent at the Gresford Showground, and in July the Aberdeen Highland games were a highlight. If you love adventure, the HCCCC has plenty more planned for the rest of the year and they would love to hear from anyone thinking of joining them!

We'll let Susan have the final word on what makes the Hunter Coastal Caravan and Camping Club so special. "Everyone in our club gets along so well; we all enjoy the time spent together in the great outdoors," she says. "And as for guests... people who have not travelled with us before are always made extremely welcome. We do lots of fun things and try to not break the bank!"

Thanks to Susan and the wonderful team at the Hunter Coastal Caravan and Camping Club for reaching out to us. Happy Travelling! ■

**DO YOU WANT TO SEE YOUR CLUB IN C&M?**

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