

## Character of the road

# Grab the confetti ... here comes the nomad bride!

After more than a decade as a couple, Rod (62) and Dee (57) are tying the knot ... on the road

### So, wedding bells?

Yes, we will get married in Carnarvon in April between camp-hosting gigs! We've been together for 13 years, and have planned to get married in the Outback for the past three years. Now, the pieces have finally fallen into place for this to happen.

### Many congratulations!

Thank you. Our 'wedding party' will be us, the celebrant, some seagulls and a couple of witnesses, grabbed as they go past. But any grey nomad who is in Carnarvon on April 7 is more than welcome to come help us celebrate!

### So, the Big Lap suits you?

Yes. We have been on the road now for almost a year-and-a-half, with no immediate plans to stop. We left northern NSW in late 2014 and now, wherever we pull up for the night, is home. While we are travelling, we keep an eye open for some place to call home again.

### What do you travel in?

Our off-road caravan is a 16' New Age Manta Ray affectionately called 'The Wombat.' Our tug is 'Leo', a Nissan Navara 40D. He is six years old now. The Wombat is self-contained and built to handle the dirt, allowing us to get to magical places off the beaten track. This past year we've tackled the Gibb River Road and the Oodnadatta Track, for instance. Our Nissan has been very dependable, but a little extra power wouldn't go astray, especially when we encounter sandy, muddy or steep roads.



Rod and Dee tackled the Oodnadatta Track

### Where do you camp?

For the most part, we prefer the serenity of bush camping or more remote national parks. We spend very little time in caravan parks because we don't usually need the amenities provided. We not only save money by being self-contained, we get to camp in more peaceful, secluded places.

### Likes of the lifestyle?

The freedom and variety. There are no claims on our time, so we can follow the weather, avoid the crowds, change our plans, move on or stay a bit longer, as it suits us. And the diversity of scenery, culture and climate of this outstanding country means there is potentially something new and interesting around every corner.

### Has your trip evolved?

Yes, we travel much more slowly now. When we first started on this adventure, we rarely stayed more than a few days at any one place. Now, we have embraced housesitting and national park camp hosting, stopping for a week or a few and really getting to know a place before moving on. We did our first stint of volunteering at WA National Parks at the end of 2015, looking after a campground in the Perth



Dee enjoys a peaceful camp

Hills. We are lined up to do another couple of gigs at Shark Bay and Ningaloo Reef in the coming months. This will undoubtedly become a regular activity for us.

### On-the-road hobbies?

Rod is a gifted photographer and loves bushwalking. Creative cooking is my 'thing', and I especially love to use fresh local ingredients when they are available. I also love swimming and snorkelling.

### Favourite place so far?

Currawinya National Park on the Paroo River in Queensland has been a special place for us over the years. Great photographic and kayaking opportunities, and so serene. But, since starting on The Big Lap in late 2014, there have been a number of other magical, secluded spots. They're still out there ... it's a big country!

[Click to comment](#)

## Nomads in Brief

### Caravan calamity

A fishtailing caravan is thought to have led to a truck rollover, which closed the Bruce Highway at Chatsworth for about four hours. Gympie police said the caravan appeared to have jack-knifed and collided with a truck carrying molasses, causing the truck to run off the road and spill its load. The caravanner, in his or her 70s, suffered non-life threatening head injuries, while the male truck driver, in his mid-40s, suffered fractured ribs and minor head injuries.

### Campervan crash

A 66-year-old man has escaped injury after driving his campervan into a guard rail and damaging two safety cameras on the Dukes Highway at Ki Ki in South Australia. The motorist was reported for driving without due care and will appear in court at a later date. A crane was brought in to remove the vehicle.

### Outback bore

The Outback town of Winton is gearing up to switch on to thermal power. Bore water which comes to the surface at 86C will be used to create enough power to run all council infrastructure. Bore water has sustained the town since a hole was first drilled in 1890.

### Bruce bonus

Work on a \$4.5 million Bruce Highway project to upgrade various intersections between Apple Tree Creek and Childers is to start shortly. The aim is to improve safety and operational efficiency for the 6500 road users who use this section of the highway each day, 23% of these being heavy vehicle operators.