

The Grower's Word

from Jim Mitchell - Mandeville

Yes, washing out sorghum contracts, yields of 2t/ha with even green sorghum shot & sprung (regardless whether it was sown October or November) at Premer the home of the sorghum, "is it worth it" and no more forward contracts for me.

191ha Urambie Dual purpose barley sown 7/4/14 after wheat short fallow, growing well with good root establishment - needs rain.

The barley country had 4t/ha chock manure with Petrik Evergreen & Petrik Headstart at sowing.

430ha Drover oats sown late February early March, cattle have been grazing since 16th April. The oats are sown on the red & loam country along with Sub Tropical grasses that are established, this country is returning more per/ha than black soil farming country . Mandeville has no long fallow for wheat and there is only 40-50cm moisture in the sorghum stubble so we will need at least 90cm before I will even think about sowing. Donating to fertiliser, fuel, seed & chemical companies as well as all the contractors is about all we are achieving in these boom & bust seasons we are having.

Away from farming:

Lyn, myself & a group of friends began a trip on the 12th April in our 23year old Landcruiser wagon & camper trailer to Hay, Mildura, Renmark, amongst all the river boats on the river Murray across to Port Augusta up to Coober Pedy where we stayed two nights.

We then travelled off the Stuart Highway to Mount Barry then across to Arkaringa Station home stay and stayed the night.

Travelling through the Painted Desert (which is outstanding) to Oodnadatta where we met a very young policeman that had been posted there by himself three days before & was ready to leave anytime.



Painted Desert

From Oodnadatta through the Pedirka Desert averaging 20-30km/hour on the roughest to Hamilton Station through the Witjira National Park to Dalhousie ruins then Dalhousie Springs where we swam in a hot artesian lake on the edge of the Simpson Desert.

Travelled into the Simpson Desert along the French Line 150klms then between the dunes on the Colson Track to the Rig Road and back out.

The French drilled for Petroleum in 1963 and found it 1880 metres @ 18/Lt/second but were made to cap it and other bores because it had a huge effect on the artesian water at Dalhousie Springs. Temperature of 85°C at the bore head through the artesian water at Purni Bore.



Travelling the French Line in the Simpson Desert



Wild camels on the western edge of the Simpson Desert

Out of the desert to Mount Dare on the SA & NT border and stayed at the park. Leaving the picturesque Mt Dare Station through Charlotte Waters Station (old telegraph station homestead) following the old Adelaide to Darwin telegraph line (which only took 2 years to complete in 1872 by Charles Todd and his crew) to Finke where they have the desert car & bike race on the old Ghan railway line, which is the road now, dodging railway spikes to Mary Vale Station where we travelled through the 1.6million acre station to Chambers Pillars & stayed.



Roads became rivers at Mt Dare after the 9inches of rain the week before



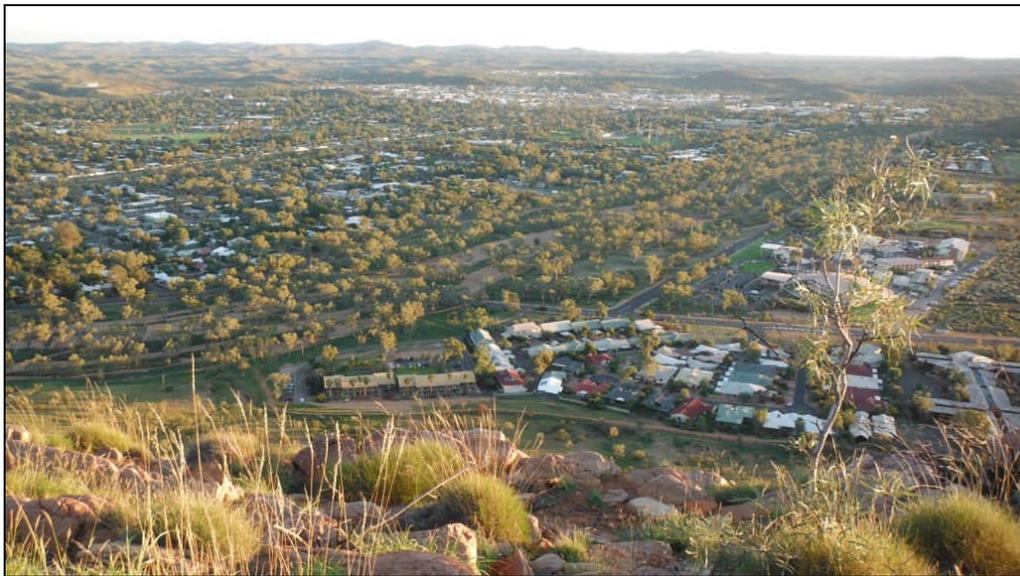
Chambers Pillars on Mary Vale Station



Cattle grazing on Mt Dare Station

Explorer John MacDouall Stuart arrived at this prominent landmark 6 April 1860. Until the rail way in 1920s the Pillars was used as a landmark in the desert on the long overland journey from Adelaide to Alice Springs.

On to Alice Springs seeing outstanding hills & green Mitchell grass half a metre high closer to Alice.



View of Alice Springs on hill behind Big 4 Caravan Park

Lyn & myself left the others and travelled up the Stuart to Tennant Creek, the three ways across the Barkley Tablelands to Barkley Homestead & stayed at the park. The Barkley country again had Mitchell grass knee high.



Barkly Tablelands country

We did a diff seal & the air conditioning around about the same time at Camooweal where I borrowed a socket off three young blokes who where baling contactors baling a large number of large square bales further north in the NT.

Mount Isa, Winton Longreach & half way to Augathella was the only country we saw in drought on the trip, the big rain from cyclone Isa hit Central Australia not Central QLD when we had the 100mm late March.

This might be boring for some but I think Central Australia is outstanding. The trip was educational as Australia has a lot of magnificent sights & country to see. Camping sites are everywhere with toilets and showers.



First road train in Australian owned by Northern Cattle Transport Co. Helen Springs NT