



# CONDO CAMPER CONVENTION

We travel inland to Condobolin to check out the annual  
campertrailer.org meet-up

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CAMPERTRAILER.ORG  
Condobolin 2016 Annual Meet





**C**amper trailers open up a whole new lifestyle to their owners. It's not really a caravan lifestyle or a tent camping lifestyle, but something in between. We can take our campers further off the beaten track than a caravan, but we have more luxuries and storage space for longer trips than tent camping allows.

There are so many different brands and styles of camper trailers around, and many more places we can take them. There are different accessories for camper trailers and different ways we can modify them to suit our needs. With various levels of complexity, there are several things that can go wrong with them too. There are also complex laws governing trailers and camping matters. Everyone seems to have an idea or a method they use to make camper trailer touring easier. This becomes obvious the more you take your camper out and share campsites with other camper owners.

With so much information out there and a need for sharing ideas, knowledge and skills with other camper trailer owners, it makes sense to have a common 'library' that we all can use. With the internet becoming more widespread and accessible, campertrailers.org have built such a library, and combined it with a forum that we can all use to communicate with each other. Between the website and forum, you're sure to learn something you didn't already know, meet new friends and feed your obsession for camper trailers.

We often look at their website for ideas and inspiration, and during one of our visits we saw details for the 2010 national get-together from Monday 27th September to Friday 1st October. Being the camper trailer fanatics that we are, the temptation was too great not to come along and see what their annual gathering was all about. We only stayed one night, but although



Susan and Marty Alford show off their new Complete Campsite camper trailer

we felt we'd missed a lot of the action, we still had a great time meeting couples, families and their camper trailers.

Campertrailers.org arranged a great venue next to the Lachlan River for the event. Upon arrival, we were greeted in true relaxed camping style and treated to tourist information bags with name badges, stickers and an itinerary. We were made to feel very welcome by everyone we met and we could see everyone had been enjoying their stay.

A wide variety of members attended – singles, couples and families of all ages and from all walks of life. Many parents hadn't seen their kids all day as they were off to play, participate in activities and

make new friends. There were different tow vehicles from 2WDs, AWDs and 4WDs with varying levels of modifications and accessories.

There was a huge mix of camper trailers from top shelf, fully kitted out off-road hard-floor campers and T-Vans to basic box trailers with soft-floor tent tops and homemade campers. We met one character who camps in a tent, but has built an enclosed tradesman-style trailer to house his complete bar and kitchen on long stays.

We met all sorts of campers, from new camper trailer owners to seasoned travellers who'd taken time out from a hot lap around Australia to be there. People carried all sorts of different equipment

## CAMPERTRAILER.ORG SHOULD BE ON YOUR FAVOURITES LIST IN YOUR INTERNET BROWSER



### WHERE:

Condobolin is just south of the geographical centre of NSW. The journey from Sydney to Condobolin takes about six hours travelling 460km west of Sydney. As the crow flies, Condobolin is about 150km south-west of Dubbo in outback NSW.

### CAMPING:

The event was held at Condobolin Sport and Recreation Area, Diggers Avenue, Condobolin, specially made available for the event by Condobolin Council. There was a huge grassy paddock with toilets, town water, hot showers and powered sites. Dogs and fires were permitted and firewood was provided. Lachlan River water was not suitable for drinking or recreation due to reduced flow at the time of writing. There was a \$5-\$10 admin fee, and camping was \$10 per site per night or \$12 for a powered site. The site can be booked for camping purposes via the local council, otherwise, there's a caravan park across the road and free camping at Gumbend Lake with toilets and showers but no rubbish bins.

### SUPPLIES AND FACILITIES:

There's an IGA supermarket and Foodworks store, both of which stock groceries, and fishing gear. IGA also has camping gear for sale.



Carolyn's cooking with alternative heat sources workshop





**The Conway, Fuller and Bannister families enjoy their stay**



**Alice Chaffey and Michael Wookey love their new Ultimate camper**



**Chris and Diane Gray are set to continue their 37 years of 4WDing with a little more luxury**



**Darrell, Terese, Kailee and Cameron Merlo have recently purchased their camper and look forward to more trips**

based on personal choice and what they found they've needed. We also met a few people who didn't own trailers, but were thinking about buying into the lifestyle.

People explore other people's camper set-ups, gathering under bonnets and around kitchens. Bright ideas, recipes, new products and DIY projects were shared. Formal workshops were held by members around the campsite including:

- solar, 12V and batteries
- beading for kids
- camper walkabout (where members present their trailers to the group)
- OziExplorer mapping
- camp oven cooking
- dual-battery systems
- craft and chat
- hard floor vs soft floor competition
- travelling and schooling
- storybook making
- pamper session for the ladies
- making kids' magnets
- using a UHF radio
- Dreampot workshop
- 12V lighting
- scrapbooking
- cooking with a Cobb
- tame the toilet tent and happy hour
- kids' treasure hunt
- trivia night
- wheel bearing maintenance
- cooking with alternate heat sources

If you're a camper trailer owner or are in the market to buy, campertrailers.org should be on your favourites list in your internet browser. It's another great way to meet fellow camper trailer owners and expand your knowledge on all things camper trailers. A great time was had by all at their annual gathering, so get involved and think about attending next year's event.

The next campertrailers.org national meet will be held at Camp Cypress, which is the old showground complex in Baradine, in September 2011. Baradine is located 45km north-west of Coonabarabran off the Newell Highway on the New South Wales north-west slopes and plains. Camp Cypress has been set up by a town committee to encourage tourism into the area. Details can be found on the upcoming events page of the campertrailers.org website.



**Alan and Amanda Haworth's kitchen and music trailer**





# CAMPERTRAILER.ORG Condobolin 2010 Annual Meet



### TRIP STANDARD:

Sealed roads lead to the campsite, so it was suitable for all vehicles, trailers and caravans. Exploration of tracks in the surrounding plains may reveal moderately rated 4WDing. Off-road exploration should be suitable for most off-road camper trailers, but rain could result in swampy conditions in some areas.

### FUEL:

There are three petrol stations in Condobolin.

Gas: \$0.79c

Diesel: \$1.31

Unleaded: \$1.28

\* All prices are approximate

### RESTRICTIONS AND PERMITS:

Much of the surrounding area is private property, so be careful where your exploring takes you or stick to state forest areas. Remember your NSW fishing licence and check with tourism information about water levels and current condition of the waterways. You'll need to take your rubbish out with you from Gumbend Lake.

### BUDGET ATTRACTIONS:

As well as the genuine remote country town feeling with endless surrounding farmland, you can:

- explore, bird watch and fish around the Lachlan River
- see utes in the Paddock (an artistic display of reborn utes representing outback life)
- camp, water ski, fish or canoe at nearby Gumbend Lake
- see 360° outback views from the top of Mt Tilga or Reservoir Hill Lookout
- drive an hour to the massive Lake Corrigello for water-skiing and other water recreation activities, there's even a museum and a stone butterfly collection
- do an alpaca or lavender farm tour
- see the railway or newspaper museums
- visit the Kings grave site memorial found by explorer John Oxley
- drop into Condobolin Community Centre, Visitor Information Centre and Western Plains Regional Development Centre

### CONTACTS AND INFORMATION:

Campertrailers.org: [www.campertrailers.org](http://www.campertrailers.org) and [owners@campertrailers.org](mailto:owners@campertrailers.org)

Condobolin Visitor Centre: (02) 6895 3301, [www.lachlan.nsw.gov.au/tourism](http://www.lachlan.nsw.gov.au/tourism)



Alan and Amanda Haworth make many friends at camp with their custom bar, kitchen and music trailer



The faces of campertrailers.org, Kevin and Rob

## INTERVIEW WITH ORGANISERS

We managed to get a few minutes with Kevin Phillips and Rob Sanderson, the organisers of the event and the men who maintain the website and forum for a little inside information about campertrailers.org.

### What gave you the idea for campertrailers.org?

The website was started in 2001 by Ari Palsson. He had an Ultimate camper trailer and wanted to meet more camper trailer owners for social networking, to share ideas, and generally learn more about camper trailers: where to take them, how to tow them, what to bring and so on. The idea was never brand specific to Ultimate Campers; Ari simply saw a need for an internet resource specific to our lifestyle and our different camper trailers.

### When did you get involved?

We took the reins from Ari in 2004. We are about to announce sharing our duties with a third organiser, Jason Cox.

### How did you start out, always as a website?

Campertrailers.org originated as a Yahoo forum and has progressed into our website with links to the Yahoo forum. Our forum is moderated, so there's no spam or naughty stuff, and inappropriate posts are dealt with accordingly.

### How many members are there?

The forum has more than 5500 members with about 400 regular users. The website receives around 50,000 visitors per month generating over 4,000,000 hits.

### Are there any costs to join?

No, membership is free.

### How many annual meets have you had now?

This Condobolin event in 2010 is our sixth annual meet. Last year we held it at Nyngan, the year before was at Peak Hill.

### Why did you choose Condobolin?

Any location we choose must be a win-win situation for our group and the local community. In this case, we needed a large venue with toilets and showers that's close to a town. It also had to have power available and allow pets.

The Condobolin Sporting Centre ticked all these boxes, and furthermore, they've had a real struggle to recover from the recent drought and tourism is an avenue for recovery. We were hosted by the local Council and Lions Club, so any profits will be returned to Lions Club.

### What do you offer your members?

Above all, we like to think it's all a bit of fun. After all, that's what camper trailer touring is about. We also offer information, resources, social networking, sharing experience, sharing

skills and jobs, meeting new friends, trading and swapping (about 600 campers bought and sold so far), camaraderie and also fun for the kids while they play and meet new friends. We have technical advice and tips on all things camper trailers, even a stolen camper register.

### Who should join?

Anyone who has an interest in camping. You don't even have to own a camper trailer. We have many members who started without one and have found our collective knowledge useful in choosing a camper trailer. We also have members with caravans.

### Who shouldn't join?

Anyone who is trying to use our site or forum to sell something or to spam our members is discouraged from joining. We will quickly weed out those that are inappropriate.

**How many members turned up for this 2010 meet-up?** About 90 members plus their families.

### Are you a profit or non-profit organisation?

Non-profit. We have no paid commercial advertising on the site, only links.

### Are you intending to have next year's meet-up in VIC or QLD?

As most of our members are from NSW, QLD, VIC and SA, NSW is in the middle, so our annual meet-ups are always in NSW.

### What other kinds of events do you run through the year?

Weekend, week, or month-long trips and events are run by members all throughout the year. Our upcoming events page carries the details.

### How do you join?

Go to [www.campertrailers.org](http://www.campertrailers.org) and follow the links to the Yahoo group forum. Our website is public, our forum is membership only and controlled.

### What's your favourite campsite and why?

Kevin: Bendethera Valley Camping Area in Deua National Park, NSW. It's local to me, accessibility is challenging but good, it is a magnificent campground, there's plenty of 4WDing, excellent grass cover and you can camp near the river.

Rob: Gloucester River Camping Area in Barrington Tops, NSW, for exactly the same reasons as Kev. ■