



MERRY CHRISTMAS

Tom Maxwell Newsletter November 2019

G'day

Well here it is, the final Newsletter for 2019. What a busy year it has been; hard to believe Christmas is nearly upon us again. As the last newsletter went to print, we were still at Daly Waters Pub NT where I still had a couple of weeks' work to do before heading down to the Drovers' Festival at Camooweal late in August. Again this year, we had some great nights at the pub and will be heading up there again next year. We had a great time at Camooweal, as usual, as when we arrive, it is like a home coming. From Camooweal, we travelled cross-country to Townsville with fellow balladeer, Bruce Lavender and wife, Gail, where Bruce and I had a show at Tom's Tavern, which turned out a good night. While in Townsville, it was great to catch up with family and the grand kids, who thought it was a great idea to stay with Nan & Pop in the caravan. Grandparents, heed the warning, if you don't have bunks in the van, this is not a good idea! I think Linnie was more exhausted than I was, though I felt buggered too, but at the end of the day, it was great to spend some time with them as we don't get the opportunity too often, due to our touring commitments.

Leaving Townsville, we then headed down to Mackay, where Bruce and I had

another show at the Senior Citizen's Hall - we had a great show, along with Sharon Heaslip, who popped in to join us for a couple of songs. Thanks, Sharon. Time to then head down to Rockhampton, where we had another show. This turned out to be a great afternoon with a very appreciative crowd in attendance, thanks to the tireless work of Ronnie & Ailsa Smith, who do a mammoth job up there to keep country music alive. Thanks, Ron & Ailsa. After Rocky, it was then down to Bundaberg to park up at Bruce & Gail's place for a couple of days, where we enjoyed a bit of R & R and downing a few lemonades before heading down to Nanango for the Nanango Country Muster. It was good getting back to Nanango, as I missed last year. Nanango is a popular festival on the festival event calendar, drawing a great crowd each year, and I again look forward to returning in 2020. It was decided at Nanango that troopie and the van were in desperate need of a bath and detail, so on the offer of good friends, Chill & Gloria Reid, we headed over to Blackbutt, along with Des & Lyn Gibbs, for a few days, where Des & Chill had both troopie and van looking a million dollars again, as both vehicles hadn't been washed since Hartwood (April) due to the severity of water restrictions here at home. Thanks, Des & Chill.

At the time of writing this newsletter, water restrictions are on level 5 here in Moonbi, with no sign of the drought breaking yet, along with many bushfires burning up in the ranges just a few km's away. Our thoughts are with those being affected by these very uncertain times.

On the downhill run from Chill & Gloria's, it was home for a few days before heading off again to Mildura. Not sure if there will be a Mildura festival next year, but this year will certainly be a memorable one for me, after picking up the Qantas Southern Star Award for Independent Bush Ballad of the Year for the song "Dust of Australia", a track from my latest album, "Reflections". Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the awards night as I had decided to cut back to 6 days in Mildura instead of the usual 10 days so that I could attend a school reunion back in my hometown of Warren, where it was great catching up with many school mates and old girlfriends. Woops, hope Lynnies misses that bit - turned out to be a great weekend.

After leaving Warren, and with a bit of time to spare before Leeton and Aria Park festivals, I thought I'd take Linnie somewhere to celebrate her birthday and with the Rabbit Trap Hotel (Albert) NSW in mind, the plan soon came to an abrupt halt, having to change direction due to the severe wind and dust storm conditions. Bugger. We ended up at Barmedman sports ground having a few lemonades and milkshakes with good friends, Keith & Carol Dodds. Just so happened that the tractor pull was on there so that made up a good weekend. Back to work, we headed over to Aria Park for the annual Mary Gilmore Festival and, as usual, this turned out a very enjoyable and relaxed festival. Linnie always likes going to Aria Park, as she reckons you can take a deep breath and feel like you've gone back in time. She recommends it is well worth a visit. With a few days to spare again before the Leeton Country Music Festival, we headed over to Junee to stay with good friends, Greg & Lesley Pollard, where Greg went to work giving the old troopie a major service and replacing the back springs in readiness for the 2020 tour. Thanks, Greg. Then (smoothly) we made our way over to Leeton for the festival there, which turned out a great weekend, catching up with friends and fans. From Leeton, we then headed over to Harden and spent a couple of nights there at the showground, prior to doing a show at Yass. Good camp, though the wind would have blown a dog off a chain. Yass was a first time show for me and, thanks to Beth Brown who organised the show on short notice, it turned out a great show – will look forward to returning in the near future.

Now at home, I only have a couple of shows to do to complete the year, those being at Evans Head RSL on Monday 9 December, Casino RSL on Tuesday 10 December and Grafton RSL on Sunday 22 December, then looking forward to taking a break leading up to the Tamworth festival in January 2020. All details are available on my website: www.tommaxwell.com.au.

After Tamworth, it will be time to head out to *Hartwood* preparing for the festival at Easter. Payments now being accepted via the *Hartwood* website. Keep in mind, if you pre-purchase an entry fee online, you have the chance to win free entry to the following year's festival. Check it out at: <http://www.hartwoodfestival.com.au>.

Well, folks, I think that wraps up the ramblings for this year, so on behalf of Lyn and myself, we would like to extend a special thank-you for your continued and valued support throughout the year and to take this opportunity to wish you a MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.

Cheers, Tom

