

In his own words

Bob Wilson

DRIVING

I WAS a truckie - metropolitan and interstate. The last 18 and a half years I was carting milk. And before that I was carting steel. I carted a lot of the steel for the underground train loop when they were building it. That was bloody dangerous. Now they've got big steel plates to protect the driver but in the old days we never had that. I didn't have any bad crashes although I did roll a truck when I was in Townsville once. Come out of it alright. So did the truck. It was an old '35 model Chevy. That would be 60 years ago. When we first come up here I said: "How about this - no roundabouts, no traffic lights, no bloody speed humps." I used to carry milk for the supermarkets, and they'd be stacked five crates high. You've got 350 crates on board stacked five high and occasionally you'd run into a roundabout and you had to pull up without them tipping over, because there was nothing to hold them up.

MOVING TO QUAMBATOOK

GETTING on towards retirement time we had some money in the bank and we wanted to buy a house in the country. We were in Glenroy, which is not a good place to live. If you didn't lock something up, it was gone in the morning. And the bloody traffic - all going nowhere, in a hurry. My wife Joyce read the ad in The Age and when we got up here and saw the place I couldn't believe it. I loved it. We bought it for \$23,500. That was in '84, at the end of a drought. We used to come up here when I had RDOs and I'd do some work on the place and cut the grass. Then in '95, I was offered a package. We didn't owe anyone anything so I said: "Well, that's it. Off we go to Quambatook!" My brother-in-law gave me a hand to move up, and when we were in the truck coming out of Melbourne he said, "Alright the joke's over, you can go back now". I said, "No mate, this is it".

HOUSE

THE house was built in 1913 by Bob Johnson as a wedding present for his daughter. It's the biggest house in Quamby and it's all pressed metal - walls, ceiling - the whole works. I had to rebuild part of the lounge because one corner was rotten - had to pull it all down and put it back together. That came out very good, a work of art! It used to be a hospital during the Second World War. I've got a photo of it when it was. There's five fireplaces and the kitchen fire. I've still got them all but I don't use them much anymore. I'm 85 and I'm on a walking stick so getting the wood in is a bit of a hassle, though I can still get out and split wood with the wood splitter.

FAMILY

I'VE got three kids, six grandkids and six great grandkids so it's real handy having all the extra bedrooms when they come up and take over. Of course a lot of them are in Melbourne in lockdown now so it'll be a while before I see them again. The wife, Joyce, died nine years ago - August

20 nine years ago.

CARS

AFTER Joyce died, I still had money in the bank so I spent some money on the Holden. I've got a HG Kingswood that I take to the shows. It's green with a white top. Graeme Martin in Dingwall restored it for me. I've had it now for 27 years and it's still not burning oil and doesn't drip oil. When the weather's right I drive it into Kerang.

I've got my eye on another car - a 1935 Morris six cylinder. It's in Melbourne so I have to wait until lockdown's finished before I can go down and look at it.

I've also got a '71 model International truck that I've got first prize for three years in a row. I put that out on the nature strip at Christmas with lights on it and I have a blow-up van with Santa waving out the window on the back. I have all sorts of things at Christmas. I've been doing it for about 14, 15 years now, and I couldn't imagine the house not being lit up at Christmas. Everyone comes around to look at the lights. There are four or five of us in Quamby that do Christmas lights.

RALLIES

I GO to the Gannawarra Toy Run every year. Last year we had 122 bikes and 53 cars. God, it was big. I've been to the Kerang Show and Shine, to rallies at Wycheproof, Birchip, Echuca, and couple of other places. I travel with a fella from Kerang - Kevin Cartright. He's got a black FE Holden. We've been doing that for quite a bit. We met in Gospoda - Maria's place, in Victoria St. Maria looked after us. She was a bloody good cook.

CATS

I'VE got a cat, Garfield. He's very pale orange. He weighs about seven kilos. He's bigger than a lot of these smaller dogs. He likes his tucker and he likes catching mice.

He was left behind by someone who moved out of town. Next door started feeding him but they kept bringing dogs into the yard which chased him, so he ended up moving into here. He's great company. I've had that many cats since we've been up here.

In 2001 a female cat had five kittens in the yard and Joyce found them and started feeding them. All of a sudden I had six cats. One of the kittens lasted a bit over 19 years. She went down early this year, Ginger.

LIFE IN QUAMBY

LIFE in Quamby is quiet, the way I like it. It's pretty good actually.

We've got a coffee shop now. It's a lovely little coffee shop - coffee and pictures because the husband takes photos. I go around there nearly every day for a coffee. And people here are always trying to look out for me, make sure I'm alright. If I don't go to the café in two or three days, they get David from over the road to come over and make sure I'm alright.



Bob Wilson.

facebook.com/GannawarraTimes



KERANG AG SUPPLIES

Part of the Swan Hill Chemicals Group

- ✓ Ag chem, merchandise and seed
- ✓ Fertiliser storage sheds in Murphy St, Kerang
- ✓ Bulk fertiliser - small and large loads
- ✓ Fertiliser blending and bagging facilities on site
- ✓ Fertiliser spreading service
- ✓ Agronomy services



With recent good rains and spring just around the corner, it is time to top-dress cereals and plan what crop to be sowing in spring and summer!

GREAT DEALS on Pioneer SSS Sorghum, ideal for summer forage, and a host of other seed varieties. Now is the time to plan for the summer growth.

For all your summer crop requirements, pastures and fodder call up or come in and see one of our Agronomists.

Max Baldissera 0437 055 656 | Gus Blair 0438 500 808
92 Bendigo Road, Kerang



Are you passionate about your community?
Do you want to help drive real outcomes across social, environmental and economic issues?
Are you an innovative, entrepreneurial thinker?

Yes? Then we want to hear from you!

The Victorian Government is seeking expressions of interest from business and community members to join our state's nine Regional Partnerships.

You'll join forces with established and respected regional leaders to assist government on priorities that respond to local challenges and opportunities. This is your invitation to help us ensure that Victoria continues to be home to Australia's most vibrant and successful regional economies and communities.

We are looking for experienced and emerging leaders from a diverse range of backgrounds to provide strategic advice on regional economic, social and environmental issues, to work with us to create local solutions, and to make it happen on the ground.

Applications close on Thursday 1 October 2020.

For more information and to apply, visit rdv.vic.gov.au/regional-partnerships

