

It's Friday afternoon, the sea breeze is about half an hour away, we have just finished a lunch of Barramundi fillets and fresh bread and everybody seems to have found a fan to lie under and digest while the pair of local white bellied sea eagles collect their takeaways.



Like Dorothy said "there's no place like home", though it took a little more than 3 clicks of our heels to get here.

February is a Perth based hunting and gathering time for KCC, so in typical fashion Liz, Bella and Rocky started to organize provisions for 6 months in an isolated paradise. The shopping items ranged from necessities like fuel, tea and flour to the little things Bella just couldn't live without, like new friend tins, silk cushions and hanging lanterns.

Once this was loaded on the truck, to be loaded on the barge, Rocky and Bella started to think about getting themselves home. They planned to fly to Kununurra, get the boat in the water in Wyndham and be home before February bowed to March.

A family funeral for Bella (beloved but very ailing Oma) and tardy boat surveyors laid these plans flat, and it was several weeks in to March before Warabi nosed her way in to the bay.

So it's action stations around here at the moment. We've rallied family and bullied staff to start a bit sooner and the place is looking fabulous already.

The unloading of the barge is always a massive undertaking, especially when the barge from Darwin (complete with handy tractor for unloading) isn't available – at the last

minute. Instead we persuaded our old friend Jimmy from Wyndham to do yet another trip for us. Numerous pallets of food and drink, 20 or so drums of fuel, big gas bottles, timber ... you name it ... has to be rolled, wrestled and wrangled onto the beach and then around the rocks to the Shed and workshop.



This year we talked Jimmy into anchoring out in the bay and then unloading at midnight when it was a high spring tide and a lovely cool temperature.



I can't say we like getting up and substituting some serious hard work and chaos for a few hours sleep, but the next day when it was just starting to get hot, we relaxing around a pot of tea with everything unloaded and Jimmy sailing out to the open sea.

All we had to think about was a long nap under the fans (again) and we felt quite pleased with ourselves.

We are always so lucky to have caretakers who brave the heat and isolation to look after our home - and this year was no exception. Previous guests may remember Karen and John from the 07 Season. They made KCC their home for 5 months.

The gardens look wonderful, the tanks are full, and KCC is morphing in to her dry mode with an effortless grace.



Karen is most at home with a water bottle and GPS in the middle of nowhere. This year she "went bush" with Johno and found some wonderful art sites as yet unseen.



She has kindly shared the waypoints so adventurous guests that don't mind a bit of scratchy spinifex might like to be the 3rd or 4th non Aboriginal person to view some ancient magnificence.

Rocky and Bella had a wonderful wet season with friends and family in Perth. Rocky was kind enough to put up his "itchy" travel feet while Bella studied photography and art. It is the first year in a long time they didn't travel far - apart from a NZ Christmas with Bella's family.

Perth was so full of family, music and art they didn't miss a beat, though Bella has found Rocky converting Australian dollars to US, so travel plans must be back on the horizon...

Harrison the dingo has been mooching around of late – many of you will remember George his father.



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The pull of human company in wild dogs is fascinating.

Harrison is wild and we like him that way. Though he may get the odd bonus meal from us, we've never and would never make him reliant on us. He skulks around the perimeter of the camp and finds a nice high spot to watch us - and when we relax he does too. To an observer he may look like a domestic dog, but he will never know how good a belly scratch can be.

Olly the python visited once or twice, but soon found what she was after - a good fat quoll - and disappeared.

While we sand, paint, and scrub Liz is busy taking the bookings. Another great season with possibly even more repeat guests than last year. I guess this means you like us.

Petracore is the smell of rain in hot baked earth. It is a great smell, and there is plenty of it around here. We are heading for an above average rainfall of 1500 mm. 750mm of that fell in just 2 days thanks to an early wet season cyclone and it's rained almost every afternoon this week.



Such a treat, the sound of tropical rain on a tin roof is such a Kimberley sound, such an Australian sound, and it's slightly humbling.

We were saddened by the news that one of our beloved guests passed away around New Year. Richard Cohen was a keen angler and a treasured guest year after year. He didn't seem at all hampered by his 96 years of age and he will be lovingly remembered around the KCC dining table. Our sympathy goes to Pat and their sons who will be staying at KCC without Richard this season. Some of you may remember this photo in last October's Newsletter.



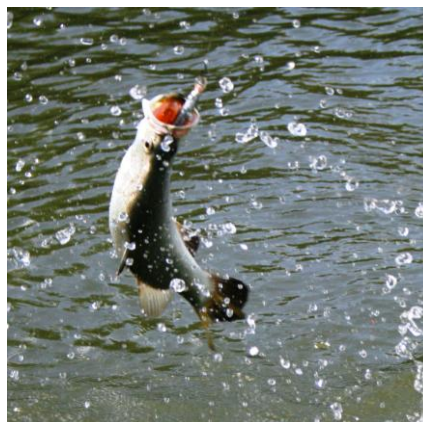
Notes from the Kitchen – Between painting and sanding there isn't a lot of time to spend in the kitchen.

The paw paw trees are dripping with fruit, so that's breakfast taken care of. Lunch is nothing more complicated than a fish fillet & a salad, which is so delicious after 5 months without fresh fish we usually repeat it for dinner.

Rocky and his brother in law PJ keep us supplied with fish and we know it's unseemly to brag, but they really do just pop their boots on and cast a few flicks from the rocks close to Camp. Dinner provided.

Karen and John spent all the time that they were not in the bush, out on the water. We are used to great fishing but even we were impressed with the Boxing Day total of 29 Barra – 1 of which they kept for a late Christmas feast.

They aren't bad photographers either.



Suzie has once again given up her Bali home for six months at KCC. She has whipped us all in to shape again: what did we ever do without her? Stephen joins us for another season on the water, and we are happy to introduce Laura, Liz's niece who is giving up the snow for some Kimberley sun.

Those of you who have seen Rocky hobbling down to the boat on two bugged knees may have wondered how long he can do this for. The same thought has occurred to us, and if it is with a heavy heart that Liz Rocky and Bella have decided to put KCC on the market.

We also know Rocky is not the type to put his feet up by the pool and watch everyone else do the work, so we just have to let this wonderful place go and get some serious surgery done in Perth. The new knees have been on the cards for a years now but Rocky's been warned that the new models wouldn't stand up to the stress of his Kimberley lifestyle.

It has been an extraordinary experience; the stuff dreams are made of. Liz and Rocky arrived on a beach one day with a barge load of building supplies and an even bigger load of determination and sweat. They created a home in one of the world's most extraordinary places. More recently Bella has added her own special blend of charm and cuisine to the mix. It wasn't exactly effortless, as Rocky's knees will attest, but there is nothing we would change.

What stories this place holds. Every day during the dry season, for the last 14 years, we have shared this place with truly wonderful people; our guests are what have made this place so remarkable.

We love our job.

It's not exactly goodbye, not yet, we secretly hope it won't sell, but there it is, the beginning of something else perhaps. We'll be calling for Expressions of Interest in the next few weeks.

The story continues, and if you have booked please don't worry that we won't be here. We have every intention of being around for a while yet. Our hearts are very much still here, and just in case there are changes we have a little dream to make this season the best yet. Carpe Diem, enjoy every moment, hope to see you here soon.

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