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A Little Over Twelve Months

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The Club was formed at the end of October 2011 as Mildura Utez Inc with 5 founding members. Although registered for the promotion of Utes and Vans it is very much a family club. Our Members had grown to 9 by Australia Day 2012 when three families did a cruise to the Australia Day ute competition held on the Glenelg foreshore lawns. One family came along for the fun and used their family car. More details following. We came home to receive a letter and find we needed to change our name due to a Trademark infringement Consumer Affairs had not realised. After legal consultations, all the club members' ideas for names were put to vote and UTEZNVANZ became our new name from April 2012.

Our events...

Our first event was pre Christmas on December 10, 2011 when we headed to Lake Cullulleraine for morning tea, then on to the Nowingi Heritage Park and went through it before enjoying a well earned rest and refreshments at the Werrimull Pub where we had lunch before heading home again. 4 families – 11 people came on the day.

The next major one was Australia Day 2012. Adelaide Ute Club held a competition for the first time ever at Glenelg. They hoped to get 50 utes and got an amazing 109. We left Mildura on Wednesday and all stayed at the Watermark Motel right opposite the lawn area of the foreshore. Some of Adelaide Ute Club's members joined us after the comp at the Watermark Smorgasbord for a meal to remember. Friday morning we left and cruised through the Adelaide Hills visiting some places of interest, like chocolate and cheese factories, before going through the Birdwood Motor Museum. It is impossible to describe the vehicles in here. Quite an amazing collection! The cruise was finished off with a lunch at a local café which definitely hit the spot before separating to go our own ways for the rest of the weekend. Some came back to Mildura and others returned to friends and relatives in Adelaide.

February was taken up with organising our name change and so our next one and as it turned out last as Mildura Utez was our Presidents Mystery Cruise on March 4, 2012. Wayne had to change his plans at the last minute as rain upset his planned route around the river. However we took a detoured track which finally brought us to the public BBQ's on the Highway at Red Cliffs where we had a brekky before checking out the Red Cliffs market. Another awesome, well attended, family event.

In the middle of our name change, Easter saw some members participate in the Ute Convoy from Mildura to Melbourne to raise funds for the Royal Children's Hospital. It was an incredible experience to be driving in a convoy of over 20 vehicles for hundreds of kms. Over several stops along the way, some Auctions were held which saw an impressive amount raised for the Hospital. After handing the donation over we were guided to a shed which had a massive concrete floor and covered apron on which we camped for the night. We were glad for the roof when the rain started to bucket down. Good old Melbourne... although we must say the sound and light show that went with the rain, was very impressive.

Our first events as UTEZNVANZ were a couple of BBQ's and some club members attended out of town competitions, as well as the local one held in the Mall. The first special event was our Heritage Cruise in June which was another very interesting day. Starting with a BBQ brekky at the old Mildura Homestead, we then wandered around the buildings and the old graves before visiting Rio Vista (the old Chaffey Homestead) and seeing the restoration being done there. After a leisurely stroll around Lock Island and the wharf we had lunch at the Soundshell, (Nowingi Place) to finish off.

Around this time we were accepted to be patrons of the 'Adopt A Roadside' program and were given a 6km stretch of highway to look after and began to plan our first clean-up. We have now done a few clean-ups and the rubbish out there, is really an eye opener. One of our clean-ups saw us there for 3 hours when 11 of us picked up over half a tonne of rubbish!!! This one was in the week when Keep Australia Beautiful was focussing on road side rubbish and we ended up getting a mention in the local paper – The Mildura Weekly. Our information was passed on to Canberra about this clean-up and we have been told our efforts were mentioned in an official Government newsletter and we may be featured in a

magazine of theirs early next year. Well done everyone who participated in these days. It is great to see the community consciousness of our members.

July and August saw us double our members. This was really exciting and we had several things happening including fund raising and member BBQ's. Several members travelled to various ute competitions throughout Victoria and South Australia. Many came home with places and we congratulate them. The Club appreciates and pats on the back all of our members who represent the club all over the three states. Competitions are held in many other different times of the year too and so we often have members travelling somewhere or the other. You meet some great people at these shows and certainly have a super time. It is all about the social side really – not about the winning.

September had the highlight of our SUNASSIST Motor Show which saw us have an impressive display of 9 vehicles for our first year of participation in this event. There would have had to be around 200 vehicles on display and a great amount was raised for SUNASSIST. All those who came for a look would have had to be impressed and the town sure showed up. There were people everywhere.

October saw us host our first ever Ute and Van competition which is detailed in the separate show report. November and the start of our second year has seen it all still happening at UTEZNVANZ. The events committee has already started planning to make our competition event for next year even bigger and better. We have found Mildura was the beginning of the van scene and so hope we can expand that side by next year. The history of vanning is being investigated and future editions may see that story evolving. Stay Tuned!!!!

Hopefully there is a member out there who will research ute history and submit it as that would be interesting too.

Another fund raising BBQ was held mid November and the first evening one we have ever had. It was quite different to be cooking at the end of the day. Hopefully next year will see us able to have even more BBQ's. They are a great way to fund raise and also provide another member event and opportunity to display our vehicles.

Our last meeting for the year saw us having a Christmas party at the Irymple Hotel. An awesome time was had by all and it was hard to go home and leave the fun. If you are hungry – go to the Irymple Hotel – what a feed!!!!

Receiving our long awaited approval to be able to offer Vehicle Club registration for Victorian vehicles 25 years of age or older has been another highlight. What will the first vehicle on our registration record be? December 22 will see our last event for the year when we meet up with the Mildura Vintage Car Club and join in their Christmas light run. Should be a very fitting end of year event and will be great to meet up with the others.

January will see our first event happen when we cruise to the Australia Day competition again. Already 8 families are committed to coming so it is shaping up to an awesome event to kick off 2013.

Happy Christmas and New Year everyone! Keep safe in the Holiday season and we hope everyone has a terrific and successful year next year.

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