

» A REAL FURPHY: The Furphy Water Cart Woolshed in Springsure.

PHOTO: GORDON SMITH

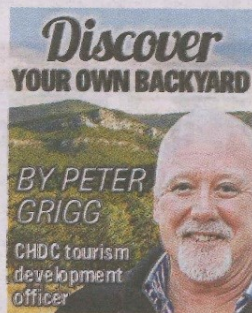
Uncover gems on wet-weather days

IT HAS been raining fantastic rain now for the past couple of days and it has sure kept a lot of travellers in the region for a lot longer.

Even as locals, we all tend to feel a bit "caged up" when we are restricted to being inside.

From my reckoning, being inside you can only play Snap with the kids for so long, so what better opportunity than to head down to the local visitor centre and grab the latest information on what you can see and do in your own backyard.

It turns out fossicking isn't the only way to uncover gems in Queensland's Sandstone



and Sapphire Fields.

So here are my tips, for when the weather changes that is:

» Visit a national park. From easy and comfortable to remote and totally isolated, we have a national park to suit all adventurous

spirits.

» Blackwater International Coal Centre provides a snapshot into the operations of the coal industry and Comet is just crawling with the ghost of Ludwig Leichhardt.

» Capella and Springsure are our pioneering and historical towns that provide a great opportunity to take a walk back in time to the late 1800s and early 1900s.

» Emerald is a vibrant regional hub with shopping centres, accommodation options, cafes and restaurants. You can even book to go on the Footloose and Fancy Free walking tour.

» Sport is big here, so

bring your golf sticks, attend a country race meeting or play a game of netball.

» The towns of Bluff, Dingo and Duaringa are overflowing with points of interest and things to see and do. Where else in the world would you find the World Dingo Trap Throwing competition? And if train spotting is a favourite pastime, then Bluff is your town.

» After this rain, the Sapphire Fields are right for a bit of "speccing" so get out there and spec away.

Need to know more? Contact a local visitor information centre or have a look online at centralhighlands.com.au.