

LAND ROVER OWNERS CLUB OF GIPPSLAND, WARRNAMBOOL TRIP NOVEMBER 2023

Compiled by Helen MacRae

Thursday November 2nd

16 members of the LROCG set off from their homes and travelled to Warrnambool Surfside Caravan Park for the annual Melbourne Cup week away. It was a cool, cloudy day but pleasant for travelling. Alan & Tonee, Jan & Collette, Ross & Sue, Helen & Alan, Phil & Chrissy, Wash and Jessica left home between 8am & 9am and travelled independently via the M1 to Melbourne then to Warrnambool, stopping at various towns for lunch. Ross & Sue stopped at a big bakery in Camperdown. The luscious green grass of the dairy farms along the way was a beautiful sight to see.

Neville & Liz were already set up on their site as the rest of us arrived from approximately 3pm onwards. Alan & Helen travelled via the Hamilton highway and John & Heather travelled via Ararat. At the entrance gate there was a bit of confusion deciding which gate to use to enter the park via your code which we were all sent upon payment. The remainder of the afternoon was spent setting up.

At 4.30pm we had our 1st "happy hour" in the park camp kitchen with everyone bringing some nibbles to share plus your own drinks. A relaxing time was had by all. Alan H gave us a rundown on the various activities for the week. As it was getting quite late some of us walked to the Warrnambool RSL for dinner. It was a rather steep walking path to the top of the hill, but a rewardingly lovely view from the dining room of the RSL.

Ross & Sue

Friday 3rd November 2023

Everyone up and ready at 9.45am to head to Koroit Bakehouse for morning tea, and very nice it was. Alan Harlow had arranged to meet a member of the local 4x4 club to discuss track options.



Alan H. was in fine form as lead car, and we stopped at a scenic lookout on our way to Tower Hill Park. There we encountered eager emus keen to share our lunch. They scored bits of fruit and Alan H's sandwich despite Heather's best efforts to deter them with a deft spray from her water bottle. The highlight for me was seeing several koalas, especially the mother and cub munching on leaves in a nearby tree, and a close encounter with an echidna on our walk.

All gathered back at camp for happy hour and daily briefing. Overall, a very good start to the week.

Liz & Neville

Saturday 4th November 2023

We commenced our day having an enjoyable breakfast at the Pavilion Cafe and Bar in Warrnambool. We had great views over to the breakwater and watched the racehorses exercising in the sea water, the icebreakers swimming and board sailors wrestling with the windy conditions to stay upright.



Wash and Alan MacRae joined the local Park Run walking 5 kms whilst the rest of us had our breakfast.

We then formed a convoy and travelled to Lismore to view an interesting display of Land Rovers from the 1940s and 1950s which showed how these vehicles were so versatile and capable in farming. With various attachments they aided farm production by winching, cutting wood, picking up square hay bales for stacking in haystacks, and grinding wheat for feeding dairy cows during milking and feeding pigs.

We then left the field day and went to a local park for lunch.

After lunch we went back to the field day which was conducted by the Lismore Club and to which many members from the Land Rover Owners Club of Victoria attended.

Several of our members participated in the obstacle course which included various rough surfaces, water crossings, hill climbs and descents, and mud slicks. There was also a 'see-saw' crossing (our vehicles' wheelbases were too wide) but we marvelled at how some of the Series 1 and 2 Land Rovers were able to cross over.



Jessica was the star driver in the course, not only in her Defender, but she was also very competent in the Presidential Discovery 4, showing how to handle the hill climb in one go.

Our group then travelled to Mortlake where we enjoyed afternoon tea at the Macs Hotel. Ross even had an early beer tasting. We then returned to the caravan park after buying our tickets for the Flagstaff Hill night show for Monday night.

We all then went to the Cally Hotel for an evening dinner, and it was particularly noisy with a group of netballers from South Australia enjoying an end of season trip. How appropriate was it that they were singing along to Jessie's Girl as we left. Maybe a few headaches the next day?

John & Heather

Sunday November 5th

The group was ready to head off at 0915 for our day of volcanoes. Well, most of us were ready. Trip leader Alan H had decided that was the perfect time to rewire his caravan. So shortly *after* 0915 we were ready to head off.

Our first stop was Mt Rouse which we got to in a round-a-bout fashion through Warrnambool. The slight detour did take us past the 'Dirty Angel' which is a bit of a local landmark.

From the top of Mt Rouse we did manage our one and only group photograph, and then we headed down to Penshurst for morning tea. And as it turned out, lunch as well! But I digress.

After morning tea around Penshurst, local Volcanoes



and a bit of a wander some of us visited the Discovery Centre.

(<https://volcanoesdiscoverycentre.com.au/>). This gave an interesting insight to how volcanoes are formed in different ways, and what is special about the volcanoes in the south-west of Victoria. This area was active only 30,000 years ago and is said to be overdue for some more activity.



We had lunch at the Penshurst Wetland Garden, and a bit more of a walk around. We finally left Penshurst and made our way to the base of Mt Napier - well sort of. We actually made it to the gates of the quarry at the base of Mt Napier. After backtracking a short way, we eventually made it to the base. As time was getting on, we chose to drive around the base of the mount instead of climbing it. The track narrowed and we had to dodge the odd obstacle, so we all enjoyed some four-wheel-driving, albeit short lived.

Once we made it back to the bitumen the Byaduk caves were only a short drive away. Even though the sun was beating down, everyone did the short walk to the caves. There were four to see, Harmons Cave 1 & 2, and Bridge Cave 1& 2. The caves were part of a lava tube network with collapsed roofs giving them a sinkhole appearance.

Alan H, Ross and Jessica made the perilous walk down the narrow access track into Harmons 1. It was at least ten degrees cooler in the cave, and there was a small sign explaining that this was a habitat for the bent-wing bat during winter.



There was no such access for the remaining three caves, so we had to look at them from above. By 4pm we were back in our cars and heading for the campsite. It turned out to be the longest day in the saddle this trip, but very worthwhile.

And the comment of the day: A certain retired engineer peered into Jessica's new Defender and was heard to mutter "Where's the gear stick?"!

Jessica

Monday November 6th

During the morning a contingent of 14 went to the Phoenix Café Bar which was an old pub from years gone by. Some drove down, but the majority walked the approximate 11/2 kilometres. Arrangements were made with management for our group, so as we walked in, the tables were set for us to sit in a group and enjoy our morning coffee break. After about an hour we made our way back to the park, window shopping and admiring the old township buildings. The rest of the day was free.

That evening the group decided to go to the Flagstaff Hill Museum for the light show experience. At dusk, in the reception centre, we were given our passes. Those with pass number one walked to the theatre, and those with pass number two required transport. Those using the transport to the theatre arrived first and watched the walking group carrying lanterns to light up their way, walk down the hill passing the waterfront buildings, the bay of water and to their seats.

When everyone was seated the show started with a massive bang (volcanic eruption). Simultaneously, our seats shook and rocked. It was a great experience. Next, a fine mist of spray exploded over the bay, and in the spray the projector revealed the Loch Ard merchant ship, its captain and the passengers who were migrating to Australia. Their hardships were also shared. After about 11/4 hours we all went back to reception the same way we had come.

Collette and Jan

November 7th: CUP DAY 2023

The weather was looking promising for us, as, after a relaxed start to the day, we all gathered to our respective tasks... Heather and Colette organised the food and the troops into the kitchen around 9.30am and Alan Harlow began the rounds of collecting money for the cup sweep. By 11.30 we were all organised into the camp kitchen with table places set and food ready, glad rags on and fascinators in place, tv on and cash at the ready.

After lunch, Alan H auctioned off the favourites with some enthusiastic bidding taking place, and then the random sweep was drawn. A total of \$405.00 was available to be divided up amongst the lucky participants, so this year we decided to pay out on last place as well as a random placing, which we decided would be 10th place.

In keeping with what seems to be becoming 'tradition', new attendees took out the winnings with Phil Croft having the winner and Jessica Walsh having the second-place getter. Sue Howell had third and John and Heather Kerr each got a consolation prize for their horses.

During the afternoon some went off for a walk, and when we all were together again, Helen MacRae conducted the quiz. We broke into 3 teams of 5, and despite the very close scores, the Team of Alan Harlow, Colette Parniak, John Kerr, Chrissy Croft, and Wash won the day.

Thanks to Heather's great catering skills there was still plenty of food for us all to enjoy leftovers for dinner.



Another successful event, thanks to all those who participated.

Tonee and Alan

Wednesday November 8th

The last full day of our Cup Day sojourn saw us stopping to view Hopkins Falls, claimed to be the widest in Victoria, before heading onto the township of Timboon to visit the Timboon



Cheesery. It is an organic farm run by the third generation of the Schultz family who originally set up the farm and dairy.

On arriving we all enjoyed morning coffee with a wide selection of cakes and savouries to choose from followed by a very informative tour of the farm conducted by Darius, a young Indonesian farmer who was learning how the farm operated, and with plans to take his experience back to his farm in Indonesia.

We heard how they milked their cows on the rotary dairy machine, with special attention given to how they segregated the cows to be milked for human consumption, those with underlying conditions where the milk could only be fed to poddy calves and, also the cows who were not to be milked. We saw how the milk was pumped from the dairy along to the factory where the milk was

processed, cream separated, cheese made, and milk bottled. All this was followed by a milk and cheese tasting. Very tasty.



Ross noticed an old Chev truck that struck his interest and a new Landrover Defender was noticed parked behind the café. We were told it belonged to the farm owner. Smart man!

After spending money in the shop, we made our way to the seaside town of Port Campbell where we enjoyed a lunch of fish and chips.

On the advice of some men from one of the 4WD groups we met earlier in the week, we planned to make our way to Princetown to visit the old cemetery there, stopping at Loch Ard Gorge, site of the famous shipwreck, along the way. The plan was to enjoy a bit of “off-roading” to reach the cemetery. Alas, this was not to be as we found the track a bit too sandy for one of the vehicles (no names).

By now it was time to make our way back to Warrnambool in time for Happy Hour. A long but enjoyable day was had.

Liz and Neville

We had an enjoyable, but very busy week away. Lots of coffee, lots of conversation, and plenty of activities to keep us all busy. Thank you to everyone for their involvement.