

APEC Weekend Trip Report September 7th -9th

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Trip Participants

Mason family - Ron, Jenni, Toby & Bicky dog	Patrol & trailer	Trip Leader
Evans family - Glenn and Mitchell	Patrol & tiny trailer	
Sunnucks family - Paul, Debbie, Emily and Daniel	Cruiser	
Gendles - Bruce and Trish	Troopy & trailer	
Simpsons - Jack, Pam, plus relatives June & Laurie	Pajero & trailer	
Keys - Mary, Chris and Bugsy dog	Patrol & trailer	
Simon and Kathy	Patrol	
Kynochs - Stan and Noelene	Defender	
Polletts – Robert and Christine	Patrol	
Sheaths – Roger and Jill	Patrol	
Craig, his wife and 7 year old twin boys	Prado	Ring Ins
Dollerys – Shane and Tiffany	Patrol	Saturday afternoon

Friday 7th

Chris and I were making very good time along the Bell's Line of Road when we had an unfortunate and rather smelly doggy incident. Paul Sunnucks, a concerned member of the club stopped to see if we needed help and then hurried on to make sure that the trip report didn't land in his lap.

Simon and Kathy arrived **last** but on time (Kathy's fault according to Simon-Simon's fault according to Kathy) and Ron Mason assured us that arrangements had been made with the man above for good weather. At Yetholme, 35 km west of Lithgow we entered the Sunny Corner State Forrest and began a very enjoyable journey along the Upper Turon Track.

Over the next few hours of our drive the scenery varied from wide open spaces, barren abandoned mining sites, pretty forest scenery to scenes of forest workers who did not qualify for the APEC holiday. Naturally enough the terrain was also changing all the time and although much of the track was fairly easy the rocks were sharp and a few kilometers were quite a steep indeed, providing quite a challenge, particularly for those dragging heavy trailers around narrow bends on steep descents.



Glenn had borrowed what appeared to be a "Lilliput camper trailer" but this proved to be very much sturdier than it looked. According to the radio banter this trailer was going to float away on water crossings and appeared to be the source of much amusement to those traveling behind. As usual the radio banter was thick and fast,

even quite witty. Our trip leader , however, discovered that a radio set on mute simply did not cut in when trying to give directions. Once we could hear the Masons we received very detailed directions and information about the ruts, wheel placements and water crossings. Roger and Jill Sheath took the role of Tail End Charlie for the weekend and Jill did a sterling job shutting gates.

There must have been quite a storm in the area recently as there were several tree limbs across the track – chain saws and muscles were required. Sydney Districts have rendered active assistance to the State Forests by clearing Fire Trails.

Not long before lunch Ron came across a lone Prado - a family was out exploring on their own and they just happened to want to join a family friendly 4x4 club. Both of the Masons were in full membership recruiting mode. Craig and his family joined the convoy and are now going to join the club! Imagine the fun the Organ boys will have with identical twin boys who also like dirt and trucks!

At some time after 4pm. we made it through to Green Point just out of Sofala where we camped alongside the river. Once camp sites were selected, tents and campers were set up and the hunter gatherers went off with Robert Pollett to his nearby property to fetch wood. A fire most worthy of Sydney Districts was the focus for happy hour, dinner , story telling and probably some snoring. For some people this was a very big night - quite a lot of glass to be recycled!

Saturday 8th

A huge day leaving camp at 8:00 am and not arriving back at camp at 5:30 pm. We began the day heading through farmland along quite a high plain towards Capertee. Then we entered a track at Turon Gates and passed through the Turon Gates National Park. There are stunning spots along the river, it would be a great place to spend a few days exploring and camping – a definite must for the future. This was the easier part of the day, there was a lot of track to cover, some fantastic views , even views across to the power station at Portland . At times we had to negotiate alternative tracks around trees , and some very steep and slippery spots where the back end of some trucks went sideways.



Then there was Jackass Hill. I can now claim to have walked both up (last year) and now down this monster. This is the territory that goats inhabit and I didn't see any goats other than people in 4x4s. Pam's sister June, Trish Gendle, and myself were all cowards and walked down rather than doing the white knuckle job. Every vehicle conquered the ruts and steps very well and the drivers were justifiably pleased with themselves.

From there we came back out onto the Great Western Highway at Sunny Corner, headed to Bathurst and had lunch at the park. Shane Dollery and Tiffany joined us there and then we followed the tar seal until it changed to gravel not far from Hill End.

Stan and Noelene were so taken with Hill End that they returned on Sunday to camp there the night. We took in the views from the lookout, sampled the hot chips and the beer and vowed to return and take in Hill End in a more leisurely fashion.

On the way back to Sofala from Hill End we passed by many more splendid looking spots with camp site potential and once again we gathered wood. It was getting very cold, we were all tired and hungry and eager to get around the camp fire.

Happy Hour was taken up with gusto, it was great to have Shane Dollery spend an hour or so with us in front of the magnificent fire. A long day but a good day with every body hitting the sleeping bags much earlier that night.

Sunday 9th



A slow day where we could sleep in, take time over breakfast, chew the fat, pack up and leave at our leisure. I awoke to find a bunch of the guys having a tyre mending fest – I believe the tally was three.



Some of the group went into Sofala for lunch and then on home. I got to drive the Patrol for the first time – up and down the creek bed and around the camp site.

Many, many thanks to the Mason family for organizing a trip that provided so much enjoyment for so many people.

