

8 Days West of Sydney



Day 1 (Carl & Colleen)

We arrived at Oberon for 9.30 early so we went and got some breakfast whilst waiting for the others to arrive. 10.30 Peter and Robin arrived but we are still waiting for Michael and Elena and Brian and Leona. After a while Elena rang to say they were running late and would arrive at 11.30 so we rang Brian to see when they were, to find out he was working and couldn't make the trip. Roger and Jill were making their way from the Goulburn direction as they had been staying with family over Christmas on the coast, we would meet them at the camp ground later in the day.

11.45 We were off down the road to Abercrombie fire trail we aired down at the start of the NP and explored our way into the Sink camping area where we had lunch. After lunch we headed towards the Beach camping site where we negotiated some steep accents and descents, we heard from the top of the hill Roger and Jill on the radio so managed to confirm where we were camping and we would see them later. We arrived at the campsite about 2pm and we all setup for a couple of days to relax and explore the NP. Around 4pm we were getting a bit worried about Roger and Jill so Michael and I went up to top of the tallest hill to try and get in radio range to find out where they were. Still no contact we checked out Silent Creek camp area to see if they were there by mistake but they weren't there so we headed back up the hill again. Then we heard them on the radio and they were on Bald Hill track, we gave them directions and GPS coordinates to our camp and we had to head back as Michael had all the food onboard the car and the kids were getting hungry. Roger and Jill arrived about half an hour later and we all had dinner and chilled out and chatted around an empty fire ring until about 10pm then we all crashed for the night.

Day 2 (Roger & Jill)

We woke in the morning to what was an overcast sky but thankfully NO RAIN!!!

Overnight the heavy rain kept most of us awake for 3-4 hours after which fatigue took over. Michael was oblivious to the torrents of falling from the sky until he was woken at some unearthly hour by Elena enquiring if he had heard "that almighty crash!" "No. What noise?" I believe was the reply. The morning revealed the collapsed awning after a stretcher arm gave way under the weight of water.

The ground was damp, but all standing water from earlier in the night had drained away. The Ranger arrived with news that campers at the Sink Campsite claimed it had rained for 7 hours with about 50-100mm of rain.

We met as a group to decide if we should leave a day early, as another downpour may put us at risk on some of the tracks, and with Michael & Elena's camper requiring some urgent preventative maintenance,, it was decided that discretion should prevail, and as the sun broke through, we set off toward Bathurst.

We had seen a campsite marked on the map at Chiefly Dam, but when we located the site, no camping was allowed, so we settled for the Big \$ Caravan Park at Bathurst where Zac & Hanna enjoyed the pool & playground whilst the adults made the use of the facilities for a welcome hot shower.

The repairs to the trailer required a visit to "The Temple" to obtain the necessary tools & with the facilities of Peter's Mobile Workshop available, the job was completed in 15mins. Michael managed to secure a warning for excessive noise from the site manager for his rendition of "Purple Soup" which put a sleeper on the night & we all retired to catch up on some sleep by 9.30pm, ready for tomorrow's time trial at Mt Panorama!





Day 3 (Michael & Elena)

After having an almost quiet night in the luxury of the Big 4 Caravan Park at Bathurst, we woke up to another beautiful day. Plans were made that we should all be packed up and be on the road by 11.30am and if anyone was interested to meet at the Bathurst info centre at 11am to take a 'burn' around the Mt Panorama Race Track before heading off to our next destination. Today (Day 3) we, the Zaballero's, were definitely getting our first real taste of what it was like to 'tour' with our children and our 'not so quick set up and pack up' camper trailer + ALL the equipment – so we opted to meet at the info centre at 11.30am, that way I could do some shopping and take the kids for a swim in the pool and keep them entertained while Michael packed up – hopefully in time. We all had eaten breakfast by 8am and everyone was packed up (except us) by 10am – Carl & Colleen headed out early for a civilized café breakfast (how envious was !!!) while others took advantage of the nearby shopping centre.

At 11.10am Michael and I could here on the CB that Carl, Colleen, Jill, Roger, Pete and Robin were all out on the race track experiencing the Mt Panorama Track – they had so much fun they went around twice – I think another reason was that the 'Zaballero's' weren't quite ready yet.

After all meeting up at the Bathurst info Centre at noon we then made our way to the Ophir Goldmines campsite – it was a quick easy drive and we arrived about 1.30pm, discussed which would be the best spot to camp, then took our time to set up. It was such a relaxing, beautiful spot by the river (even if it was a bit muddy) – soon after setting up the brave ones (Colleen, Elena, Zach and Hannah) went for a dip.

We went to a walk around the mines in the late afternoon. After our much anticipated 'Happy Hour' and our bellies full from dinner we all grabbed our comfy chairs and set up on the bank of the river – Michael and Colleen entertained us with their musical talents – Colleen was great but Michael needed some lessons to get through some songs on the Guitar – Still very entertaining none the less. Zachary also



got into the grove singing and dancing and eventually falling asleep on the ground all comfy cozy in his sleeping bag. What a great day – and what a fabulous night.....

Day 4 (Peter & Robin)

Left Ophir, Summer Hill Creek at around 9.30am where we camped for the night. Decided to do a small track out, but the trailers wouldn't make it. So we went back to leave along Dixon Long Point Rd to Hill End. Great scenery cutting through people's property. At 11.30am we stopped to stretch our legs for 5mins before crossing the Macquarie River. Had lunch and a quick drink at Hill End Pub before a quick stroll around town. Left to travel down the Bridal Track with no problems, to find a campsite for the night. Went first to Bruinbun Campsite and decided to relocate to Blackgate Reserve Campsite 5mins back up the track. Got there about 5pm set up camp & had Happy Hour. Boys tried a spot of fishing & caught nothing. Had dinner & retired for the night.





Day 5 (Carl & Colleen)

We managed to break camp early as we needed to be away on time today as we had a long drive for the first time on this trip. We got away at 9am and headed down the remainder of the Bridle track towards Bathurst. Those who needed fuel got some in Bathurst whilst we regrouped on the main highway on the Sydney side of town. I was leading this part of the trip as we made our way towards Sunny Corner to do the Sunny Corner Track towards Cappertee.

The track was easy to begin with through the pine forest then it started to head north and got steeper and harder. I was in P1 position with Michael and Elena P2 then Roger and Jill P3 with Peter and Robin TEC. We had a couple of steep accents to negotiate which was a bit tough for Elena (who was driving most of the day) towing the trailer.

We had lunch at the small camp area at the bottom of Jackass hill, we decided to take the chicken run 9km detour around Jackass to pick up the main track again onto the Diggings Campsite.

We almost made it to the Diggings Campsite when I heard over the radio that Michael and Elena had got a puncture. So I turned back to find Michael/Peter/Roger all looking at the trailer axle which had slipped forward due to a couple of leaf springs that had fallen out. The girls went looking for the leaf springs that were missing back down the track while we got busy removing the wheel and fixing the suspension and tyre. It only delayed us for a while but we arrived at the campsite about 5.30pm, we had hoped to arrive at 3pm so we could get a roast dinner going to feed us all for the New Year's Eve celebrations. It was decided to do the big meal on New Year's Day instead as this would give us all day to eat and drink! We setup camp and Roger, Peter and I went off in Roger's car to collect firewood outside the Nat Park. A fire was made and we settled down for a night to remember, of eating/drinking with lots of glow stick action around the fire. Midnight came and everyone was still awake, even Jill, we had some Champagne with Colleen on the guitar and most of us crashed about 2am. What a night!!!

Day 6 (Carl & Colleen)

New Years Day was a relaxing day with most not waking too early everyone was well chilled out especially Michael and Elena as they didn't have to pack down their camp for the day PHEW what a relief. We prepared for the feast that was about to come later on in the day but the weather was rubbish with light showers on and off all day.

Robin and Peter supplied the starter of cheeses and nibbles etc

Carl and Colleen cooked a roast Lamb

Michael and Elena cooked the vegetables and potatoes

Roger and Jill cooked apple crumble for pudding.

We all ate together under Michael's dome shade tent until we retired back around the fire for the rest of the evening. There was still plenty of energy left in most of us and the glow sticks made a final return for the trip.



Day 7. (Peter & Robin)

Left Diggings Camp at 10.00am after having a group photo.

Roger, Jill, Michael & Elena decided to not continue with the last day of the trip, so we left them near Capertee airing up & said our goodbyes. We then continued to the Baal Bone Gap with good track conditions. As we were heading towards Newnes Campsite the heavens decided to open up, not a bad thing as it cleaned our trucks for us. Found our campsite to set up as the sun came out, and sat to enjoy a couple of hands of Euchard. Started dinner while having Happy Hour to enjoy the last of the sun and great company.

Peter & Robin would like to take this opportunity to thank Carl & Colleen for making our first trip in the club a fantastic trip, also to Roger, Jill, Michael, Elena & kids for the great company.

Day 8 (Carl & Colleen)

After a good nights sleep we had a leisurely pack up for our last trip of the week.

First of all we went to see the coke ovens in Newnes, which were amazing, then off down the Blackhand's trail. A brief stop to see the hands, after which we continued down through the Newnes State Forest to air up at the Zig Zag railway where we had a late lunch. From there we said our goodbyes and headed home.

The end.



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