



Event Report

Big River - Mt Terrible - Snobs Ck

09-11 June 2001 - Queens Birthday Weekend

Leader: Allan Layton – Defender Julie & Craig Donaldson – Troopcarrier
Vince Bosua – Discovery Cheryl & Dave Sidebottom – Cruiser Wagon
Maxine & Paul Burke – Patrol Andrew Oldroyd – Cruiser (SWB)
Karen & Grant Thomson – Patrol Neil West – Cruiser Wagon

Saturday 9th June: the day started wet! We congregated at Cambarville (approx. 17km east of Marysville), where it had rained all night. (Further north, at Snobs Creek, our destination, there had been very little rain). Fortunately the rain dried up, with only light, occasional showers. After morning tea we departed, on time, at 1025hrs.



We left the bitumen and headed up the Big River Rd, mostly a 2wd gravel road. The radio traffic was pretty heavy with other 4wd groups and deer-hunters using up spectrum. We had to make a few channel changes before we found a (reasonably) clear one.

The real 4wd stuff started after about 40km, when we turned uphill onto Hope tk. We hadn't progressed far when we encountered a group of 5 vehicles on their way down. They advised that there was another group of 14 vehicles at the top of the track (at the 4-way intersection), but didn't know which way they were going.

We regrouped on the saddle, at the intersection of the Matlock, Hope and Terrible tracks, and in gloomy conditions headed off along the Terrible tk (no sign of the other 14 vehicles, thank goodness, it was starting to become like peak hour traffic!).

At 1235hrs we arrived at Mt Terrible, at the hut, for lunch. The steepish pinch 2kms south of the top, although wet and clayey didn't cause any problems as it has a good rock base. The rocky section 200m from the top likewise, slow and easy over the rocks. Cloud was low, and there was no sightseeing (you could barely make out the Communications/Fire-spotting tower only 50m from the hut).

Another 4wd group were departing as we arrived at the hut, a group of motorcyclists called in, and another 4wd group arrived as we departed. Busy little place!

1335hrs saw us heading down Newman's tk, towards the Eildon-Jamieson rd. Again, no dramas – but an interesting little 4wd trip anyway. Vince left us when we hit the main rd, back to Melbourne to wash the car, pick up Sue and off to the airport to meet their son.

We headed onto the Big River rd, heading south this time, until we met Danes Spur tk. Back into 4wd, and up towards Mt Terrible again. A nice drive, a few steep, wet patches made it interesting.

Likewise when we turned back onto Newman's tk, but going uphill this time – doing it reverse-ways is interesting, it's almost like a different track. Just before the top, we turned north, back onto the Terrible tk (the northern-most end of the track is not often used as it is fairly rough, and starting to become overgrown), and followed it out till it met the Eildon-Jamieson rd near Bald Hill Gap, arriving there at 1535hrs.

From there, a nice 2wd doddle down the rd towards Eildon, turning off just before the township and heading to Snobs Creek (the area from Snobs Creek through Eildon and to the old town, now submerged, of Darlingford was originally known as Upper Thornton). Westy left us here, as he had family commitments in Melbourne early Sunday.

At Snobs Creek we camped on private property, in a secluded area off the main rd, bounded by hills to the south and west and by swamps (dry) and massive Gum trees on the north. The rain which had mostly held off all day, started at around 2100hrs, at which we all declared – bed!

Sunday was to be a slack day. Karen & Grant left us after breakfast – this was their first outing for a few years, and follows a severe back injury (and surgery) suffered by Grant, with ongoing pain. The new suspension seat apparently worked well. Well done, and welcome back to the Club.

The weather was pretty fine, a little fog in the morning, but mostly sunny. We visited the 5th Annual Truck, Ute & Rod show in nearby Alexandra (it wasn't that bad, was it ladies?), and other tourist type things (no 4wd-ing today!). Andrew fixed his exhaust system, AGAIN. The repairs carried out at Craigs Hut many months ago having finally failed with all the chassis and body flexing on Saturday. (Andrew also had a problem with an LPG line which likewise had come loose from a junction, which was also repaired.)

That evening most of the hardy crew dined out – at the nearby Eildon Holiday Resort Bar & Bistro – the remainder (Allan) being even hardier, cooked on the open fire again.

Monday am, Andrew arose early for a spot of fishing – to no avail. He rejoined us at the camp as we were packing up after breakfast. Craig and Julie left us here, to return direct to Melbourne. The stayers: Cheryl & Sid, Max & Burkey, Andrew, and Allan, decided to tackle Mt Terrible again – but from a different angle. Back up the Eildon-Jamieson rd, turning off at Fryers Ck tk, this track has been recently graded by DNRE, and is now the preferred access to Mt Terrible being 2wd in the dry, in the wet it's pretty easy 4wd.

We briefly turned south along the Terrible tk (this section being also pretty good) until Polletti's tk, where headed east, down towards Burns Bridge on the Jamieson-Woods Point rd.

A quick steep uphill run, which we all made OK – Cheryl with a big grin (Sid having been relegated to the passenger seat). Then, down, down, down! Steep, wet and clayey. The track follows the spur-line all the way from the ridge near Mt Terrible, to the Goulburn river below. The track had carried a fair bit of traffic over the weekend as the clay surface was pretty well chopped, although still nice and firm underneath. Lo 1st was definitely the order of travel on a number of the steeper spots, in fact Maxine got out and walked at one point, leaving Paul to steer himself down!

At Burns Bridge we had morning cuppa (although it was nearly 1300hrs), and then Allan left the party to return home to Thornton via Jamieson, and the others doing the touristy thingo with their return via Woods Point, Matlock, Reefton, Warburton to Melbourne.

A nice relaxing weekend, with some interesting 4wd-ing included – nothing designed to catch anyone out (ie. no-one got stuck or bogged), nor cause vehicle damage, but still with a bit of challenge.

Thanks to all participants – a great time.



Report by Allan Layton.