

Geelong showgrounds trip report, July 9th 2017

As a club we certainly do get around and look at many different places. The Geelong Showgrounds was no exception. Some of us have stayed in show grounds before; one that comes to mind was a trip coming back from South West Rocks many years ago when we stayed at Armidale Showgrounds in NSW at the start of winter. The frost was thick on the ground and it was a cold walk to the showers and toilets. When Geelong was mentioned for our 2017 winter outing my first thought was that the West coast of Victoria can be bitterly cold in July and we would definitely need a caravan park for power and warmth. When President Dave mentioned the Showgrounds I thought it was well worth a try; it could not be any colder than Armidale. There was also the added advantage that the IH Club of Australia had offered an inspection of their club rooms and the use of it for the Sunday meeting, which would at least save us from sheltering under tarps and annexes like the previous meeting.



Elaine and I did the usual trick and headed off from home on Thursday morning and arrived at Geelong about 2.00 pm in the afternoon expecting that there might be someone else there. There were about 10 other non-member caravans set up but sure enough there was Ron and Elle already set up in the middle of them although they did only have about 60 km to travel and had some appointments in Geelong as well. Bill, the show grounds caretaker, was well organised and said that the area beside the IH Club rooms was ours and to set up along the wall leaving room for the rest. While setting up there was a couple of trains go past about 50 metres away on the other side of the fence blasting their horns. I thought maybe this is not going to be such a good spot after all. As it turned out there was very little train traffic during the night and for whatever reason they used their horns very sparingly at night until the commuter rush starting about 6 in the morning. In fact I have

spent noisier nights parked on the Sturt Highway in the middle of nowhere with road trains roaring past all night.

The IH Club offered us a snack/afternoon tea and an inspection of their large collection of all things International. It was a good set up and even though the toilets were not far away they arranged for a portable toilet to be placed near the club rooms which was certainly well appreciated. We had 13 people stay the weekend and another 3 attend the meeting on the Sunday, which is a good turn up for winter, considering we always have a few people up in warmer climes at this time of the year. It was a very convenient meeting for Elaine and I as we have family in the area who we visited and I was able have a look at some of my old stamping/fishing grounds from 40 years ago. I was surprised how unspoilt the area was from that long ago; not sure if that is because it is a bit isolated or the fact that it borders a sewerage farm. Although it was obvious from the lack of the smell that I remember, the management of the sewerage farm might be a bit better than it used to be; they probably have better treatment set ups now.



I can recommend the Geelong Showgrounds as a camp spot. It was \$25/nite; is close to the CBD; the amenities were basic but clean and there plenty of them spaced around the grounds. There was even a market that is on every Sunday. It was quite large and had a huge range of stalls from farm produce, antiques, tools, and of course food and coffee stalls. In fact I had the biggest egg and bacon roll I have ever had with 2 farm fresh eggs and half a pig on a huge roll. Anyway a great weekend with interesting people both from our group and the IH Club. Thanks also must go to the IH Club for their assistance and support in making it so enjoyable. Our next meetings are expected be in the Wedderburn area in September and the Christmas meeting East of Melbourne in November. Info will be in future newsletters.

Fred Wright.