

The Convoy you have when not having a Convoy.

Some members of the ISOC decided that they would not have an official convoy to the Black Cockatoo Bush Camp to meet with ILMO but they would still like to catch up along the way. As it was only about 6 hours from Melbourne I said I would be taking about 3 days to get there as Elaine and I wanted a break from being retired. If anyone says they are retired and bored they are not trying, Elaine and I just don't have enough hours in the day. My idea was effectively to do a pub crawl to get in some drinking practice for when we met with ILMO members.



First day, Lismore - as I have over 200 km to get to Melbourne we headed off early to miss peak hour and go through Melbourne around mid-day. Headed down to Geelong and then out the Hamilton Highway as there would be less traffic than either the Princes or Western Highways. I picked small towns with a pub, places with power [expecting it to be cold] and dog friendly. First stop Lismore Hotel where they take the bookings for the small caravan park opposite the pub. The Caravan Park was sloped but the sites were terraced and level, toilets clean. When we got there 3 members vans were already set up and refreshments were being consumed, someone had been for a walk and collected a menu. We wandered over to the pub for dinner and paid our camp fees. Interestingly the pub had a 2 level bar as the front bar is about 1 metre lower than the dining room, when you were ordering your meal the staffs were about waist high to you. We had a great meal with good company and chatted with the locals.



Second day, Casterton- We were in an area that Elaine and I had not travelled before so it was interesting to see the changes in the land with volcanoes and small lakes dotted around the landscape. Lunched at Hamilton where we split up to do some shopping or fuel up, as it is one of the larger service towns for the Western district, we also called at

Wannon Falls once on the way again. The Casterton Park is run by the Info Centre and someone came around in the afternoon to collect the fees. The pub was 100 metres away so after a short happy hour we adjourned to the pub. We walked in to the pub ordered drinks and asked about a meal. The publican was a bit nonplussed as it was one of his busy nights with a Lions Club meeting and several other large groups booked in. He rose to the challenge and had a quiet talk with his staff who quickly set up a table for our group, I reckon he was not going to miss out on a few hundred extra dollars. The staff took our orders, served us all before the bulk of the regulars had arrived, it was quick, well done and an excellent meal at Glenelg Hotel. Casterton is classed as the home of the Kelpie and I recommend the Kelpie Museum which we went to on the way out of Casterton.



Day 3, Black Cockatoo- On this leg we struck driving rain on poorly maintained road, there were rivers flowing down the wheel tracks hiding the pot holes. With the heavy leaf springs on the SWB Scout Elaine was able to get 100 to 200 steps per kilometre on her Fitbit exercise watch just by sitting in the passenger seat of the Scout. By the end of the day she had reached her target of 10,000 steps easily while sitting down. Called at Penola for a coffee, feed and checked out the Mary McKillop display, then on to Naracoorte and the Black Cockatoo Bush Camp. When we got there 4 Victorians and a couple of SA were already set up with a fire going in the shelter that David commandeered. It turned out excellent as it blew most of the time and rained on and off all weekend but we were cosy in the shelter with the fire. Much business was conducted, including members views on the 2023 Nationals, it will all be sorted by the time this comes out.

Fred.

From President David Payne and Elaine

It was good to see a good roll up of Victorian and South Australian members at Naracoorte recently despite the cold and rain squalls that we had to endure. Shelter, wind breaks and a warming fire were certainly required. You also had to be quick in the showers which were just a bit draughty around the nether regions when time came to dry off.

Our Secretary, Elaine, probably summed it up better so I shall reproduce her words here.

Hi, everyone. I do hope that you have been able to settle back into routine after the recent 4 day weekend (in Victoria).

It was an unusual meeting at Black Cockatoo. The "gale" force winds and driving rain cramped our style a little BUT we all managed to find something to do in town. We also had a shelter with a fire and BBQ so we were able to get out of the wind and rain. Our Happy Hours were congenial and all too soon it was time to head towards home.

Liz, Black Cockatoo hostess, was very hospitable even bringing a tray of scones/jam/cream for morning tea during our meeting and organising some extra wood for the campfire.



It was great to meet up with ILMO members - Glen, Natalie, Levi, Archer & Charlie (plus Jess the dog), Brett Rodley and Rob Sawyer.

Take care; stay safe and well.
Elaine (Hon Sec)