

Mansfield Rally Report

November 2020

The Mansfield Rally was our second Covid-19 get-away and a very welcome opportunity for the thirteen couples who attended. The High-Country Caravan Park is small and situated in two halves separated by a “creek”. As we were spread across both sites, we made forays back and forth across the bridge. We all noted what a quiet spot it is, well back from the highway so the interstate trucks at night didn’t interfere with our sleep.

Mansfield is about 180kms north-east from Melbourne between Lake Eildon to the south and Lake Nillahcootie to north. Zac swam, in the now famous “crossing the Nillahcootie”, ably supported by Brian in his canoe. We wish Zac well in his efforts to join the Australian defence force. He sure seems to have the stamina for it!

The Mansfield area’s traditional owners were the Youngillim or Wuywurung people. The town has moved from predominantly sheep pastoral (established in 1840), through gold prospecting to farmers and loggers. Now Mansfield relies on tourism, Mount Buller Resort in the snow season and water sports, fishing and bike riding. The area has an inglorious past as the site where, in 1878, Ned Kelly, along with his brother Dan and two others, shot three policemen. The memorial to Officers Lonigan, Scanlon and Kennedy is in front of the Delatite Hotel.





Saturday night we enjoyed
St & Maroondah Hwy). We
long time between drinks
of the waitresses.



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requirements it was a
to attract the attention



On Sunday Steve and Fred arranged a drive to Craig's Hut behind the Stirling Alpine resort in the Clear Hills. Those with dogs turned back at the Mt Stirling Rd turn-off resulting in the "big split". The Circuit Rd is unsealed with good views and quite manageable, especially with Terry in the lead to warn us of oncoming traffic. Craig's hut was built for the *Man From Snowy River* (1982) film set and has been rebuilt several times since then as it's become an iconic landmark. The hut is 19 kilometres from Telephone Box Junction. We drove the four-wheel drive track that leads directly to the hut rather than walk the 1.6km up to the hut. While the road definitely required four-wheel drive, it was manageable even for us newbies as we took it really slowly. It was well worth the trip as the views were spectacular. We all remarked on the quality of the mountain air and the picnic facilities were a delight. Bill & Madalyn were surprised to meet a friend from home who was on a back-country dirt bike ride from Merrijig. It seems that the general area of Craig's hut is pretty tough on footwear. I think that David managed to lose the sole of his shoe on both trips he's made to the area, years apart!

The debate resulting in the Split at the junction of Mt Stirling Rd and The unsealed Circuit Rd up to Craig's Hut



On Tuesday Bill was keen to try the local wine. About twelve of us sampled the fruits of the vine at Delatite Wines, established in 1968 on bio-dynamic principles. We all found that the lunch of boxed meats, cheeses and goodies were generous enough for us to continue eating at Happy Hour.





Mansfield is at one end of the Great Victorian Rail Trail, which officially opened in 2012. The rail trail is the second longest in Australia, and is used by push bike riders, horse riders, and walkers. Some members might be getting closer to taking the plunge and buying bicycles, especially as the electric bikes are looking very impressive with the owners giving positive feedback on their performance.

We had good weather to pack up and make the very shorttrip to Yea to continue the Jayco fun and fellowship. No doubt vehicles on the highway were wondering why there were so many slow-moving caravans as we all tried not to arrive together and too early.

Madalyn Parlet

The following picture of craig's Hut is from the Vic Tourism site

