

# Omeo-Wombat Post Office Club Trip...

Friday, 22/04/2011 and Saturday, 23/04/2011

## Members Involved:

David Blore: Trip Leader...Toyota 100 Series with the works

David Jackson: Tail-end Charlie...Land Rover Discovery with the works and rooftop tent

Andrew Brown: New member...Nissan GQ Short wheelbase with some modifications

Dean: Riding shotgun

David F: Young David was there also riding shotgun

## APCO SERVO

At 8.00am David J. drove in the servo...on time and ready to go.

About two minutes later, David B. appeared and after a short introduction we were on the road.

Only three vehicles...but, it was Good Friday.

Our first destination was Freeburg, just beyond Bright.

Dean and Jackie offered morning tea and a tour of their lovely new house in return for Dean's ride in the 100 Series. (The last trip may have damaged his vehicle but not Dean's spirit...he was hanging out to be in the bush again.)

With full tummies and a group photo in the camera, we were on the road again.

Our destination: the state forest beyond Omeo.

The drive to Bright had given plenty of time to chat on-air and share some background info about each other and our vehicles, so things were pretty quiet on the climb to Mt. Hotham.

The cloud cover was low and the fog loomed in, especially near the summit. Once we were past the village though, the sky was clear and the sun was shining. It was a terrific drive through Dinner Plain to

Omeo.

## Omeo

After a short stop in Omeo, we headed out on the Mitta Mitta road. 3k's later, we turned right, heading to Hinnomunjie. The historic old Hinnomunjie bridge has been replaced by a modern bridge.



Morning tea at Dean and Jackie's

When we were at the bridge, the owner of the house near the bridge was coming out to clean the air filter on his river pump, so we were able to have a chat. He told us how the water was lapping his feet when he stood on the old bridge during the recent floods. It was a torrent and very dangerous. A far cry from the stream it was on Friday, with campers setting up tents on the banks of the creek for the weekend!

A few more photos and off again.

David B. led us through the private land and onto the Alpine National Park which lay a short distance up the road.

## Taylor's Crossing

A quiet drive through some gently undulating bush land led us to Taylor's Crossing.

Time for some lunch and air-down the tires.

The river was fairly low so we had lunch then crossed the river to check out the toilet facilities on the far side...water



crossings are fun and this was too. Each vehicle just had a wash and loved it. This was also a good photo opportunity, so there were lots of shots of the crossing. Our next destination wasn't far away...Kennedy's Hut.



### Kennedy's Hut

What a beautiful setting for a hut...right on the side of the river...a good place to shelter or go fishing. We then headed off up an innocuous looking track with Wombat Post Office our next stop.

### The Climb

The gently undulating track through the bush was just a

walk in the park.

Fairly open bush with no obstacles to speak of then we came to a short clearing where the track had a sudden climb of 300 meters, up a sandy ridged and rutted track. The rains had washed down the ruts and the soil was quite soft under the surface. This was going to be fun! (We have photos to prove it!) After a short walk to the first ridge, David B. was willing to give it a shot.

Dean was driving and a line was chosen. We were on the sidelines watching to see if the mighty 100 Series would nail this sucker straight up!

A fair run up was taken...momentum was achieved and the vehicle launched up the hill. It was the last ridge that stopped this first run.

The front wheels just couldn't make it over this lip...mind you, it was a good 600mm or more dead straight climb that in the dry would be okay, but in the wet conditions of the day, just was not climbable. Hit it any harder and there could be some tears and a broken front suspension...

Dean reversed slowly down the ruts then applied the brakes....the four wheels locked and the vehicle just slid 10 metres down the ruts! It was slippery.



the sticking point.

### Different Lines

Some more discussions now, on new lines and was it in, or out of the ruts?

IN the ruts and to the left was the next try.

Same outcome.

A couple of more runs at the hill and the same ridge was

### Let's try a different vehicle

The GQ is much lighter than the other vehicles and it has lockers, so we swapped the vehicles on the off chance the short wheelbase might make it over the ridge.



An extreme right hand line was chosen and attempted....all was going well until, the front wheels nearly hit the top of the ridge, then the left back wheel slide into the deep rut...going nowhere, stopped. A bit of an angle on the vehicle...nose pointing to the sky...a good photo op...some deep breaths and then a tactical retreat down the hill a bit.



"I can do this...!" D.B.



One more try...

A short discussion about the LHS line and into it again...no problems...the shorty just ate up the hill.

Now we could drag either or both vehicles over the ridge if need be.

### **Track modifications**

There was a bit of digging and lowering of the ridge with a shovel and some sweat. Just a little bit of smoothing out made a huge difference to the safety and ease of the track. Young David's shovelling effort was appreciated by us all.

Now David B. was ready to have a go at it himself.

He too decided the left side was the way to go....one or two tries and he was over the obstacle and up on the next level...no worries.

### **Two up!**

The Disco had been sitting now for quite some time....alone and lonely...waiting patiently for its workout. A bit more air out of its' muddies, especially the rear and it was ready. (Slightly more smoothing of the ridge with the shovel and we stood back a respectful distance. )

David J. gunned the Disco from the bottom of the hill and came up at a higher speed, with more momentum than the other vehicles (years of experience at play here!). The Disco just shot over the lip and had the front right wheel about 600mm off the ground...he made it up no problems.

(I was taking photos of his ascent and was so amazed at this speed, I just stopped taking the photos and missed the best bit...the wheel way off the ground...I got it just as it hit the ground again. Next time!)

We all made it.



All up!

Vehicles intact and no damage to anything or anyone....this was fun.

### **The Track in and out of Wombat Post Office**

It was all very orderly after the sand pit fun...

David B. led us over some fairly unused tracks with good climbs and descents down into the old mining town where the site of the Wombat Post Office has been recorded with an official plaque. There, two small streams meet and a couple of acres of cleared land show where the gold mining town once stood in the 1850's. It's still a very pretty place to visit.

### **The Club**

When we got to the clearing, there was a lone trail bike rider who was doing a 'recce' for his family's trip the next day.

I'm new to the club so it was nice to see how our men shared maps and information with the rider. After we wished him well, he was off on his way back to his camp.

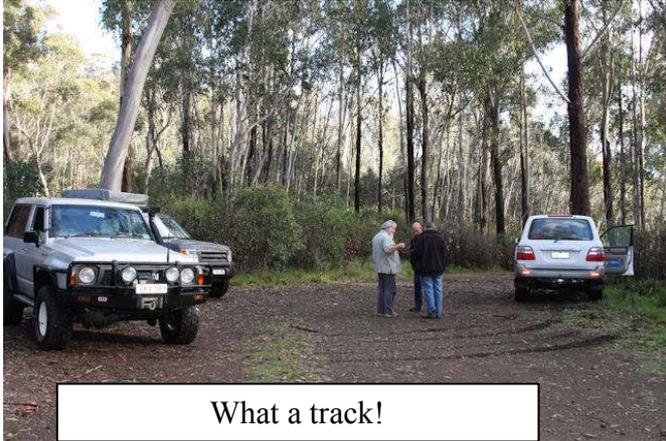
It was now quite late and I was heading back home...so the team just drove out with me!

We headed up the very tight and overgrown Razorback Ridge track.

With foliage reaching the way past the edges of the vehicles, we climbed out of the valley, through a few water crossings and a very tight fallen tree and more scratched panels...we emerged about 10 K's later at the logging track intersection. What a track! What a team! (Thanks guys for your friendship and warm welcome to me.)



Rider and the Guys at Wombat Post Office



### **Time to head home**

After a few minutes chatting about potential camp sites for the three “staying Davids”, we all headed out to the main Omeo-Mitta Mitta road.

There, I aired-up my tyres (aided by the awesome air pump David B has fitted to his machine...) and we said our goodbyes.

Dean was also going home too, so we headed to the Falls Creek Road to get back to Freeberg.

The three Davids were heading back into the bush to make camp for the night.  
What a great day.

**End of Day 1: Wombat Post Office Trip**

### **Second day**

After seeing Andrew and Dean off safely, David B, David J and David F retreated into the bush and set up camp. It was a coolish, come cold night and with local firewood a little damp it took a little while for a roaring campfire to appear - but as always it happened. A bottle of red and hearty meal and quite a bit of reminiscing saw us all hit the sack at about 10.30.

Coldish over night - as we were very close to Mt Wills. David B in his new swag and myself and young David in the rooftop tent.

After breaky and a bit of a chin wag we headed off down Razor Back Spur Track - what a beautiful track. Wide and super smooth, ready for the ski season.

We turned off into Lightening Creek Track and WOW what a fantastic drive - not hard, but at least 20 river crossings - all caught on video.

Out on to the bitumen of Omeo Hwy where we aired up.

Lunch was at the Walnuts then on to Mitta, Lockharts Gap Rd past a very full Lake Hume and to home.

A fantastic 2 days - 3 great vehicles - 5 eager fun filled participants and 3 Davids

**Andrew B & David J**