

Trip Reports:

Camp Howqua – Interchange Camp – Day trip

Over the past couple of years (I think) the Club has run a day trip for kids attending the Interchange Camp at Camp Howqua near Jamieson. This camp is established by the Upper Murray Family Care service and enables parents in families with children having special needs to have some “time out” during school holidays. The aim of the trip is simply to provide another experience for the children; probably one that not many would otherwise be able to enjoy.



Member “Doc” Hair has been the liaison contact for this exercise in the past and again this year called for club volunteers. Four members turned up at 7.30



am at the meeting/coffee spot in Benalla on the 8th July: Doc, David Blore, Barry Richardson and Ian Watkins. The aim was to be at the camp by 9am, pick up our carloads of kids and carers, and head off for a short trip to Mt Terrible, where we might be lucky and find some snow for them to play in. The day started out very cold and foggy, but was looking promising with a spell of fine weather, fortunately.

Getting away just before 10am, we travelled through Jamieson and along the Woods Point Road to Polettis Track which we followed to climb up to the ridgeline approaching Mt Terrible. For most of the 15 we had on board, this was their first experience of off-road travel and the reactions were amazing – excitement mixed with some trepidation when some saw the track rising (or dropping) in front of them! The discussions in the cars were eye-opening but there was no doubt they were enjoying themselves hugely. Reaching the top without incident and enjoying beautiful sunshine, we travelled along the ridge on the approach. Doc decided to give his travellers the opportunity to try the “old” track on a few sections and consequently all followed his lead.

Small patches of snow were starting to appear by this time and the excitement levels were building! Reaching the Fire Tower on Mt Terrible, there was huge excitement as snow lay all around on the banks and ground. Snow fights quickly ensued and the kids had a fantastic time, so much so that we spent an hour there; luckily with no wind and perfect sunny conditions. Finally we herded them back into the cars with the intention of getting them back to camp for a late lunch. By this time the novelty had worn off a little so it was a more subdued crew that travelled along the ridgeline to the Eildon-Jamieson Road and thence back to Camp Howqua, arriving on the knocker for lunch.

The kids universally were a great crew and the volunteer carers we had should be commended as most or all were secondary students who had given their time during the school holidays to assist children in difficult circumstances. All in all a good day and very worthwhile – thanks Doc and those who contributed.



David Blore