

Trip Reports:

Sheepyard Flat - Howqua Valley

10 – 13 June

Murray and Judy McEachern - Ford F250

Barry Robinson - Pajero

Shane, Maria, Lauren and Jessica Lucas – Nissan Petrol

Murray, Judy and Barry arrived at Sheepyard Flat on Friday and picked a great spot to setup camp. They went for a drive to unwind and enjoy the afternoon. The Lucas's arrived Saturday morning to find the wood cut, a cup of coffee and a chat. Good way to start the weekend. This weekend trip was graded as easy – moderate with base camping and that's exactly what we got. The area is very popular but has great drives for all levels of experience.



The Saturday drive was to Fry's hut. A look around there and then a walk to the chimney and what is left of the water wheel. A relaxing walk back to camp for the girls with quite a few stops to take photographs and it was time for lunch. The afternoon drive took us up to Refrigerator Gap and yes we found some snow to play in. The kids had an enormous amount of fun throwing snow balls. On our way back to camp we were stopped by a couple of guys. Was



there an accident? No. They were felling a tree across the road. Not clearing the road but getting themselves some firewood and putting an obstruction across the road. Mind you we passed there the next day and stopped to see if any wood was left.

Evening came about and Murray had his outdoor thermometer hanging off his tent. The night got cooler and we got closer to the fire. With a warming drink it didn't feel like 0 degree out there.



Sunday morning, Barry and Murray had the fire going to greet the rest of us. -2 on the thermometer, lots of frost and ice, but a beautiful Sunday morning. For our Sunday drive we met up with Bruce Doughty and friends who were also camping at Sheepyard. We headed out to the Bluff Hut travelling along the Bluff link track. A smattering of snow along the way but the track is in great condition and we made it to the hut for morning tea. It was an absolutely clear day which enabled a fantastic view of the area and of Mt Buller and more snow play. The Bluff Hut has been rebuilt after the 2007 fires and we weren't the only people enjoying it as a heap of cars joined us.

Next stop was Bindaree hut via 16 mile Jeep track. Fred Fry apparently built this hut as well and I reckon he was short, as it was pointed out to me that it was a hut my size, ha ha very funny boys. As we were heading down a Toyota 80 series was being towed up the track by 2 Toyota 100 vehicles. The 80 had an ops (I don't know how?) and was put on its side. Our members wouldn't do that sort of thing. The track was a little

slippery in places and the little Suzuki in our group was having fun slipping and fish tailing in places but it got up without any problems. Next stop was Bindaree Falls.

On arrival we found that the falls had a large amount of water cascading over them. It was wonderful to see all that water and after we all took a walk under the falls, we took some more photo's. The kids were getting a bit sick of smiling by now so I gave them the camera. Judy and Murray gave some great camera tips and it was really turning into a camera buffs trip.

Monday's drive included a short trip to tunnel bend and a walk through the tunnel. Then onto the old slate mine along Mitchell's track. The track is steep in parts with a couple of rough spots and there is a great view from the mine. It was a great trip, close to home, the driving was fun and relaxing, the scenery great and the company even better. Thanks Barry for leading the trip.

Maria Lucas

