

Trip Report to the National Conference

Twenty-six members from TLCCSA went to the National Conference and Gathering at Mansfield Victoria in April this year. This triennial meeting was hosted by TLCC Victoria.

Attendees included Chris and Graham Adams, Stephen and Mary Arnold, Mike and Pat Barkway, Sue and John Birchall, Kathryn and Trevor Duggan, Jennie and Paul Hoskins, Steve and Kirstie Miller, Andrew Norton and Kerry Mitchell, Chris and Geoff Phillips, Jo Zwar and John Potts, Garry Quast and Sue Brown, Debbie and Peter Young, and Pam and Vlad Humeniuk.

The event was in two parts, with a Conference of TLCC delegates on the Monday and the Gathering of members for the other 5 days.

Delegates from TLCCV met with those from TLCCQ, TLCCWA, TLCCSA and TLCCA(NSW). It was a great opportunity for all to network with each other, exploring issues that were remarkably similar for each state, and learning how each state coped with them. It appears that TLCCSA has been the last state to introduce mandatory training requirements for members when doing trips. As an example, TLCC(NSW) does not give full membership until compulsory training is achieved by a new member.

TLCCSA delegates were Paul Hoskins, John Birchall, and myself.

The whole group is pictured, except for Garry Quast and Sue Brown, who had to go home early when Garry's 1981 Toyota Landcruiser, which was on it's first run since a major restoration, developed a leak from the radiator. After a consultation with Toyota Mansfield (who were very helpful in assessing the damage), a dose of Bar's Leak was administered and a gentle but quick trip home recommended. I believe the Cruiser made it home to the Barossa without incident.

The Gathering organised by TLCCV was great with lots of day trips to the High Country and other surrounding areas, as well as activities and the Showgrounds where we were camping. TLCCV have a large (360 acres) property at Yarck,



some 53km away, where the Conference was held, but also where all could visit, to drive the purpose-built tracks, and enjoy lunch and afternoon tea at the "Yarck Hilton". A wonderful facility for members to enjoy. The publicity video for the release of the current Prado was filmed there.

Each evening a get together was held in the pavilion, with a de-brief of the day's events followed by a formal dinner on the Tuesday, and a bush-dance on the Wednesday with a local band.

Other activities included a "boil the billy" competition where a tin can of water was boiled with limited timber on a tile off the ground.



There were 12 guided trips to the High Country, 8 self-guided trips with detailed directions and 4 activities to local tourist spots, including a personalised tour of the Ned Kelly towns and history as told by the family's descendants.

The guided tours left each morning to places like Craig's Hut, Bindaree Falls, Mt Stirling, Howqua Gap, Mt Buller, the King Billy Tree and Sheeppark Flat.

Vlad Humeniuk



Sue Birchall comments:

"TLCC National Gathering – A Week to Remember. The TLCC National Gathering, held every three years, turned out to be a wonderful experience. Not knowing quite what to expect, we arrived in Mansfield surrounded by the breathtaking beauty of the Victorian Alps, buzzing with excitement.

The week promised a full calendar of fun and adventure, with daily 4WD trips to explore the spectacular high country and local surroundings. For those who preferred a slower pace, self-guided drives were also on offer, allowing everyone to soak up the scenery in their own way.

Our home base for the week was the Mansfield Showgrounds, and right from the start, we were welcomed with warmth and genuine friendliness. Volunteers greeted us with big smiles—one even jumped on his bike to personally guide us to our site, while another made sure we had everything we needed to get settled in. After setting up, I headed over to the registration area and picked up our show bag, car sticker, commemorative National Gathering shirt (which we had pre-ordered), and plenty of helpful information about the week ahead. We were now, officially part of our very first National Gathering!

Each afternoon, everyone gathered at the Pavilion— filled with laughter and stories. We shared jokes, nominated the funniest trail mishaps, drew raffles, and got the latest updates for the next day's activities. There were always tasty nibbles available and plenty of prizes up for grabs, adding to the fun atmosphere.

On the first day, while John attended the delegates' meeting, I joined the craft morning. It was a lovely way to spend a few hours, chatting and creating with some wonderful ladies from both Victoria and Queensland. John enjoyed being included in and being part of the state delegates meeting. Getting an overview of each state's membership numbers, with members participating in various activities and the training available to them. Vlad and Paul provided a comprehensive report on our SA club activities. John was very impressed by the Victorian club property at Yarck. And the main club facility the 'Hilton'. As part of the delegates team he was given a guided tour of the Hilton a BBQ lunch and a mini property facility tour before heading back to Mansfield.

One of the highlights of our week was the Three Summits trip. We set off to explore Mt Stirling, Craigs Hut, Tomahawk Hut, and Mt Buller—each spot offering something unique. The drive along Mt Buller Road to Sawmill Settlement was the perfect way to round off a day full of breathtaking views and 4WD action."

A wonderful, exciting week enjoyed by all.

Sue Birchall

