Traversing Three States and Two Islands
Words and Pictures by Richard Windeyer

Prologue

What to do for the leave break in September 2018? The Bourke Outback Trek was out of contention, as I was unable to obtain time off for the necessary period.

Tossing up between Tasmania and Kangaroo Island and after touching base with my mate and trusty navigator Ross O’Halloran, who was ‘happy to be there’, we decided on Kangaroo Island.

After perusing various maps, I worked out a rough itinerary. The favoured route was NSW East Coast, Philip Island, Great Ocean Road, Kangaroo Island and home via Central Victoria and the Australian Alps.

Prior to setting off the vehicle needed a substantial amount of work to prepare it for a long trip. I also booked ahead for a couple of camp sites I knew would be busy and for the ferry crossing to Kangaroo Island. For other campsites I decided that we would suck it and see.

As has happened several times before, the day prior to setting off there was a problem, one of the injector pipes was cracked and diesel fuel was being pumped all over the engine rather than into it. A trip to the mechanic and with a second-hand injector pipe, scrounged off another vehicle, installed, the vehicle was right to go.

The Journey:
Mon 29th Oct – Sydney to Congo Point

Early morning, we watched Sydney disappear out the rear vision mirror as we headed south through the Royal National Park and onto Stanwell Tops. We stopped for a cuppa and admired the view with the wind blowing a gale, but unfavourable for hang gliders, so we moved on.

Stopping for morning tea at Kiama we viewed the blowhole which put on a small show for us and all the other tourists gathered around.

Near the Sussex Inlet turnoff, I phoned Pete a mate from The Outback Trek to see if he was home, but no one answered so I left a message. As luck would have it he passed us travelling north back home, recognised my vehicle and phoned up. We agreed to catch up with him and his wife Sue at Ulladulla, for lunch at the bakery, where we all enjoyed meat pies.

After lunch we continued south, stopping off at Batemans Bay for afternoon tea. Continuing, it wasn’t long before we passed through Moruya and headed east to Congo Point, our destination for the night. This is a lovely camping area run by National Parks in Eurobodalla National Park and it has flushing toilets and cold showers.
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After setting up camp and booking in with the caretaker I had a chat with her. She told me that she was one of a group of people monitoring an endangered bird species in the area. This was the Pied Oyster Catcher, of which she said only 400 remained in NSW. We watched a family of these seabirds including chicks patrolling the inlet searching for a meal. I offered to take some photos with the telephoto lens and send her copies.

Following the photo session, I took a stroll up to the headland lookout and took in the magnificent views out to sea. As dusk fell we prepared dinner and settled in for the night with a few refreshments.

Tue 30th Oct - Congo Point to Croajingalong National Park

Up at the break of day, with glorious spring sunshine warming the cockles, and before anyone else was up and about, I headed for the beach and a walk along foreshore. The beach was so peaceful, and I gathered my thoughts for the journey ahead.

After Ross awoke we had breakfast and it didn’t take long for us to pack up our gear and hit the road. Leaving Congo behind we headed south and emerged on the Princess Highway at Bergalia heading for our destination of Mallacoota.

At this point I noticed that the vehicle seemed to have an engine problem. It was fine on the flat but ran out of puff on hills, dropping back to 80kph. I thought it maybe the turbo or the aftermarket computer chip, however there were no warning lights and fuel consumption seemed to be fine. I decided I would put up with the problem till I got home. I mentioned the issue on to friends Facebook and received quite a few suggestions, as to what it might be. This ranged from a blocked fuel or air filter. When I had the opportunity, I checked the air filter but found it fine so ruled it out. I carried a spare fuel filter but required some help from a mechanic to change this.

I had planned to take the coast road through Bermagui and Tathra however because of the misbehaving engine and the additional kilometres decided to stick to the highway, although we did poke our nose into Merimbula for a gander.
We had originally planned to camp at Shipwreck Creek in Croajingalong National Park south of Mallacoota township. On investigation we found the campsite a long way from any water with small dirt sites set in amongst the trees. As it was not particularly inviting we returned to the large council run campground at Mallacoota.

The campground at this time of year had quite a few vacant sites but on a previous trip in peak season I found it chock a block. We took some time driving around looking for an appealing campsite and found one on the embankment above the lake, protected by a backdrop of coastal shrubs and set up camp.

While Ross relaxed I took a stroll around the campground circumnavigating the boundaries. I followed a path which led along the lake side, at times following the water’s edge and others requiring me to scramble up the embankment and walk along the top. On my return Ross was up and about and we cooked dinner and had a few refreshments before retiring.

Stopping at Port Eden for a lunch we took a stroll along the wharf admiring the huge trawlers moored alongside before enjoying a feed of oysters Kilpatrick and a Fishos Basket prior to leaving Eden.

Continuing south we turned left at Genoa taking the winding road into Mallacoota.
Wed 31st Oct - Croajingalong National Park to Log Crossing/Lakes Entrance

I was up early again and with a cup of coffee in hand ventured a short distance to a picnic table at a lookout on a point overlooking the inlet. It was very relaxing sitting there, taking in the view and contemplating life.

On returning to camp Ross was up and about so we had breakfast, packed up and left Mallacoota, returning to the highway at Genoa. Our destination was Log Crossing near Lakes Entrance with a couple of stops along the way.

Heading east we passed through Cann River and returned to the coast at Cape Conran where we stopped for a cuppa and muesli bar. This is a lovely remote stretch of coastline with rocky outcrops poking out into Bass Straight. I small jetty with and adjacent boat ramp indicated it was a popular place for fishmen but mid-week there was not much action.

We continued east to Marlo where the mouth of the Snowy River meets the Pacific Ocean. Access to the mouth of the river was not possible, because of the sandbanks making up the delta, so we could only view it from afar.

Stopping for lunch at Orbost I had the RACV mechanic see if he could sort out the engine problem. He replaced the fuel filter with the spare I carried, but no joy. He checked the intercooler pressure which was fine and then ran diagnostics. The only thing that came up was that the inlet manifold pressure didn't change when under load, so he suspected the Turbo Pressure Sensor. With this information I put up a post on Facebook and later received a couple of promising responses from friends who know this engine. They also suspected the Turbo Pressure sensor. Phil said he would send some photos of his setup when he had the chance.
We continued through Nowa and then down to Lakes Entrance where we drove out to Jemmy’s Point lookout to view the entrance to the lakes.

Leaving the lookout, it wasn’t far till we turned off to Colquhoun Regional Park and the Log Crossing campground and set up camp in a lovely free area with a long drop toilet and fire pits. There was a middle-aged couple already set up in their campervan at the site.

Later that evening we joined them for dinner cooking on the well-built fire pit. Afterwards we all enjoyed a few refreshments and a chat before retiring. They told us they were on a shakedown trip for the start of an extended journey around this great continent of ours.

Thu 1st Nov - Log Crossing/Lakes Entrance to Tidal River/Wilson Promontory

I was up early with the birds as usual on a beautiful sunny morning and wandered around the adjacent bushland. A few different bird species were scouring the cleared area around the campsite looking for a feed.

After breakfast we bid our friends goodbye and wished them well for the rest of their journey. Tidal River on Wilson's Promontory was our destination for the day.
We travelled east and passed through Bairnsdale taking a shortcut, bypassing Stratford and stopping at Port of Sale for a wee break and a cuppa. A very picturesque town situated on Flooding Creek. We sat and looked at all the pleasure boats berthed at their moorings along the creek bank.

Leaving Port of Sale, we took a short detour out to Seaspray on the coast for a gander. We found a small coastal village but nothing to take our fancy, so we didn't linger. We moved on to Port Albert and enjoyed lunch of Fisherman's Baskets at the wharf.

Leaving Port Albert, we headed back to the South Gippsland Highway and turned left for Tidal River on Wilsons Promontory, where I had booked a campsite for the night, having expected it to be busy.

We booked in and found plenty of vacant camp sites to choose from so selected a large site protected by coastal shrubs. Setting up camp we battened down the hatches for an expected change in the weather.

During the day Phil had added some photos to my Facebook post of what the area around the Turbo Pressure sensor on his engine, which was the same as mine, looked like. On investigation and following his suggestion, I found a vacuum hose disconnected and reconnected it. The next day's journey would see if the problem had been fixed.

As was my custom I then took a stroll around the camping area and scurried for cover when the heavens opened. While preparing dinner and having a few sherbets we were invaded by a family of ducks looking for a feed. We had a bit of a chat before retiring.
Fri 2nd Nov – Tidal River to Philip Island

Philip Island had been on my Bucket List for many years and one of the objectives for this trip, so it was great that it was just around the corner.

I was again up early under leaden skies and took a stroll along the wide sandy shore of the river out to the river mouth, as it was low tide. It was so peaceful at this early hour and there were some beautiful rock formations edging into the azure water of the deeper pools of the river.

On the way back to camp I passed a young couple and their child playing in the sand and gave them a friendly wave.

We took the opportunity of breaking camp before impending light showers, as it is no fun packing up in the rain with wet gear.

Leaving Tidal River, we headed for the track head to Mount Oberon. This is a steep climb and gave me the opportunity to give the motor a workout. Hooray……., what a difference a day makes with the engine problem now resolved. On the way out, we checked out the nooks and crannies the park had to offer, stopping at the lookouts of Leonard Bay and Whisky Bay.

Back on the main road we stopped at Fish Creek for a cuppa and continued to Inverloch where we toured around town before stopping for a sandwich lunch at a small park adjacent to the beach. There were interesting driftwood stacks in the form of tepees, built over time by the locals, at intervals along the beach.

The story has it that after a severe storm in 2014 the dunes were eroded, and many tea trees collapsed into the sea along the coast and were washed up on the beach. The wood was stacked up and the tradition has continued.

Late morning, we crossed the bridge to Phillip Island and headed for Cowes where we stopped and had a delicious lunch and an ale at the North Pier Hotel.
We moved on for the short journey to our pre-booked digs at Anchorage Park, a small caravan park on farmland just off the main drag. We had just set up camp when a serious thunder storm passed overhead with torrential rain, strong wind and small hail. The sun came out and we were told to move our tents as we were partially on a powered site. This did annoy us somewhat as we believed we were on the site we were told to set up which was ‘anywhere on the grassy area’. There was no sign of any power outlet however unbeknown to us the power point was attached to the back of one of the cabins.

The campground had a lovely dam adjacent to our campsite, so I spent the rest of the afternoon sitting by the sparkling body of water with a nice glass of red. After dinner some fellow campers joined us for a chinwag and a few more beverages.

During the evening the phone spat the dummy and I had to do a hard reboot to restore factory settings. This meant I lost all the data and apps on the phone. No biggy, except for the photos although some, but not all, had been backed up to Google.

Sat 3rd Nov - Philip Island

Up early I spent some time before breakfast reloading all the apps. After breakfast we hit the road and spent the rest of the day sightseeing. The trout farm and Purple Hen winery were closed however we had better luck at the Chocolate Factory where we had morning tea and bought some goodies.

Moving on we checked out the surf at Woolamai finding it closed out and then visited the Grand Prix circuit where the Porsche Club was having a race weekend. We checked out some of the memorabilia in the entrance area but didn’t venture onto the racetrack. As we left I stopped to look through the fence at the warmup session which had been stopped a one of the vehicles was being recovered after crashing off the circuit.
We stopped at the Phillip Island Winery but didn't stay, as it was very crowded.
Continuing our journey, we headed for Point Grant and the penguin colony where we had lunch at the Nobbies Centre and took a stroll along the boardwalk. The coastal scenery was spectacular with purple wildflowers contrasted against the green and russet grass, and blue sea.
There were plenty of Cape Barren Geese around, but only one lone penguin in a nest, as the rest of the penguins were out fishing. Leaving Point Grant, we took The Boulevarde which was a gravel road running along the cliff face. This gave us a spectacular view of this rugged coastline.

On the way back to camp we stopped to view the PI Surfing Pro in action from the cliffs above and then I settled in for the evening, back at camp, by the dam, with a glass of red.

Sun 4th Nov - Philip Island to Cape Otway

We broke camp after breakfast and before crossing the Phillip Island bridge stopped at the Chocolate Factory for a photo as it was not yet open or business. Leaving Phillip Island, we headed north to Doncaster to meet up with Geoff and Wendy, for morning tea. We had travelled with them on a few previous Bourke Outback Trek’s and it was great to see them again.
Unfortunately, we couldn’t stay long and bid them farewell. We crossed through Melbourne city on the tollways heading for Geelong. Stopping near a marina in Corio Bay we had a delicious lunch on the upper deck of the Geelong Boathouse where we had a great view over the bay. The place was bustling, and we were lucky to find a vacant table.

After lunch we headed south, starting The Great Ocean Road at Torquay. We stopped at the iconic Bells Beach to view the surf which was pumping with some good sets coming through and we watched the surfers vying for waves.

We passed through Anglesea, Lorne and Kennett River down to our destination, for the night, at Cape Otway.

The National Park had been booked out, so I had arranged to stay at Bimbi Park. It was very crowded, and the first camp sight we looked at had numerous ants’ nests. We bagged a better spot amongst the gum trees where we set up camp for the night in this lovely bush setting.

At dusk Ross spotted a Koala with a baby on its back scurrying up a eucalyptus tree. I grabbed my camera but was not quick enough for a good shot in the low light. We settled in for the night and after dinner and consumed a few beverages before retiring.
As we packed up camp and left Bimbi Park the weather was very dreary with overcast skies and light showers. Prior to heading back to the Great Ocean Road, we visited the Cape Otway Lighthouse, but it was too early for it to be open.

Continuing along the Great Ocean Road we stopped off at the information centre to view the twelve apostles with the hundreds of other tourists. Strolling along the boardwalk we battled into a strong headwind and with poor visibility, due to a sea haze, noted that a few of the apostles had collapsed over the years. The conditions for photography were abysmal, never the less I took a few images with the objective of tidying them up during post processing on the return to home.

We stopped at other lookouts along the way to view the various outlooks including Loch Ard Gorge, London Arch and the Bay of Islands.

Moving on we reached Robe late afternoon and booked into the Sea Vu Caravan Park and set up camp. In the afternoon I had a stroll around town before returning to camp. Later that evening we had a delicious dinner and a few beverages at the Caledonian Inn before heading back to camp.
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Tue 6th Nov – Robe to Kangaroo Island (KI)

I was up early again and strolled along the cliff-face above the shoreline at Robe Point. The sky was overcast with impending rain. Heading back to camp we packed up quickly just before it started drizzling.

Leaving Robe in the rain, we passed through Millicent stopping for morning tea at the bakery in KingstonSE and then a short halt views the Big Lobster on the side of the road.

We continued along the highway, disappointed that we didn’t have time to drive along the sandy beach of the Coorong. This would have likely required about two days.

Leaving the coast for Meningie and driving past Lake Alexandrina we headed for Tailem Bend. From there we decided to take the long way around rather use the car ferry at Wellington. We stopped for lunch at Murray Bridge before continuing through Mount Barker, arriving at Cape Jervis very early for our Kangaroo Island ferry departure at 4pm.

Luckily, we were early enough to change our booking to an earlier ferry for the trip across to KI. While waiting to board we made sandwiches for lunch in the carpark. The skies were clear, but a very strong wind was blowing.

Whilst Ross walked onto the ferry I drove the car on board and followed directions of the attendants as they packed us in, head to tail, with only a couple of inches between vehicles.

We were warned it would be a rough crossing with the strong headwind and oncoming seas. Rather than take the rhumb-line the skipper had to take a bi-angular course to aim vessel across the waves rather than straight into them providing a calmer crossing and stop the vehicles moving around too much. We had a lumpy ride across the channel and arrived at Penneshaw late afternoon.
Planning to camp at National Park sites whilst on the island we visited American River and did not find it appealing so moved on. Finally, we booked into Kingscote Tourist Park at Brownlow where we set up camp for the night.

**Wed 7th Nov – Kangaroo Island**

Day broke with a beautiful fine and sunny day and we departed early for a day trip around the island. First, we headed to the jetty at Kingscote, spending some time taking in the scenery and observed a Sea Lion sunning itself beside the boat ramp.

Moving on we headed north to Point Marsden then west on the gravel North Coast Rd., taking a rough track out to Emu Bay and passing a cyclist out for a morning ride on the way.

We then headed out to Cape Cassini passing some vineyards and then swung around to the coast at Stokes Bay. Our next port of call was Western River, which had a small basic National Park campground in a lovely location on a small inlet from the ocean.

After checking out this camp site, which had also been on the possible campsites list, we headed south west to Cape Du Couedic, stopping to admire a huge grass tree flower spike on the side of the road.

On arriving at the cape, which we found to be a very rugged location, we stopped and walked along a track to a lookout above the point, gazing down on a colony of fur seals sunning themselves on the pebbly beach below.

We then took the boardwalk down to the Admirals Arch to view this spectacular rock formation. On the way out, we stopped to view the lighthouse which is now automated and still protects ships from this rugged coastline.

Heading back the way we came we turned off down Boxer Dr. and spent some time walking around Remarkable Rocks.
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This wind weathered spectacular pile of granite rocks is partly covered in bright orange lichen. The wonderful formations provide a stunningly brown and orange coloured sculptured foreground to the view of the brilliant blue ocean in the background.

We headed back the way we came and turned east and into Vivonne Bay for a quick visit before heading back to camp.

Dinner was cooked on the communal BBQ where we enjoyed some steaks, salad and a few refreshments before retiring for the night.

Thu 8th Nov – Kangaroo Island to Victor Harbour

Packing up camp early we planned to traverse the other half of the island before departing for the mainland, on the ferry, that afternoon. Heading down Birchmore Rd we then travelled across country through the middle of the island joining the South Coast Rd at Warrawee. We then headed to Seal Bay where the main sea lion colony on the island is located. Entering the visitors centre we decided to do the self-guided boardwalk tour rather than the ranger guided tour.

Leaving the visitors centre the boardwalk zig zagged down the cliff-face passing alongside a skeleton of a beached juvenile hump back whale. The boardwalk then proceeded to a fenced platform running above the beach where most of the sea lions were basking in the sun with a few pups within cooee of their mothers. A few of the mammals were frolicking in the small breaking waves on the beach.

Before leaving the visitors centre we had a cuppa in the carpark before departing for the Emu Ridge Eucalyptus Oil Distillery for a look around. Whilst there, Ross purchased some eucalyptus scented pine balls to deodorise the car and we both bought some other nick-knacks.
Continuing our journey, we stopped at Clifford's Honey Farm and sampled the different varieties of honey they had on offer and purchased a few more nick-knacks before heading back to American River for lunch at the Oyster Farm Shop. Lunch was a culinary highlight of the trip with each of us scoffing half a dozen each of delectable angasi and pacific oysters followed by half a dozen tasty whiting bites.

After lunch we headed to Cape Willoughby to view the lighthouse and museum where we marvelled at some of the old artefacts on display. I took a short stroll out to the clifftop for a closer view of a small and rugged cove below the lighthouse. The waves were breaking onto the rocks creating a seething white foam sea.

We departed the lighthouse and headed back to Penneshaw for our late afternoon trip on the ferry back to the mainland. The crossing was much more pleasant than trip out with following seas and a light breeze.

I had pre-booked a campsite at the Victor Harbour Beachfront Holiday Park prior to the trip as I knew we would be late in, however there were plenty of spaces available along the beachfront. We set up camp late afternoon and whilst Ross relaxed I travelled into the main shopping centre for a look around, stopping at a pub for a quiet ale, before heading back to camp.

Rather than cook dinner we decided to purchase a couple of pizzas for tea and googling likely pizzerias, I found one in town that looked promising, and ordered a large supreme. Driving back into town to pick it up I returned to camp where we devoured it prior to some refreshments before retiring.
Fri 9th - Nov Victor Harbour to Naracoorte Caves

Up before sunrise I strolled over to the beach to watch the magnificent display of colours lighting up the sky over Granite Island. The lights were still flickering on the causeway leading out to the Island and seabirds were already up and soaring about looking for breakfast.

Back at camp I found the phone had carked it again and a factory reset was not possible. After breakfast we broke camp and headed into town to find a shop to buy a cheap replacement. I found an office supply shop where I purchased a new phone and it didn’t take long to get it up and running.

Prior to leaving town we drove down to the beginning of the causeway where the horse drawn tram was garaged and where the driver was just setting up for business for the day. The tram runs on rails along the pier out to Granite Island and back and is a great tourist attraction.

Leaving Victor Harbour, we passed through Port Elliot and stopped off at Tailem Bend to stock up on supplies and have a sandwich for lunch before heading for Naracoorte.
We arrived at the Naracoorte Caves Visitors Centre late afternoon but found the café closed so we had to make do with our own.

We looked around the visitor centre which was still open. There were several different displays showing and explaining geological features and extinct animals from the area.

Leaving the visitors centre we headed up the road to the National Park campsite. There is no ranger onsite and the only option is to book online, and I was able book a site.

Naracoorte Caves have one of the best national park camp grounds at which I have stayed. It has excellent amenities with hot showers and flushing toilets. We set up camp on a grassed paddock in a lovely farmland setting and I spent some time finishing the rebuild of the new phone.

Sat 10th Nov - Naracoorte Caves to Halls Gap

I arose early with a heavy fog covering the campground and took a stroll around the paddock. The birds were up with several different species doing their thing.

After Ross woke up we had breakfast and broke camp heading back to the tourist centre for another look around, but no one was about, so we moved on.

As it was only a short journey to our destination at Halls Gap I set up Google Maps for the scenic route avoiding tollways and highways. We meandered through farmland and at one point were waylaid by a flock of sheep in the middle of the road having to wait while the farmer moved them to the side of the road.

We arrived at Halls Gap in the Grampians National Park late morning. I had booked ahead for a campsite at the Halls Gap Caravan Park in the centre of town and on arriving we set up camp on a nice grassy corner spot. The booking was for two days to give us time for a day trip around the area.
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After setting up camp Ross and I walked across the road to the shops for lunch at the bakery. The area was bustling with people which was not surprising as there was an International BSA Motor Cycles rally in the area for the week with many vintage motor cycles to be seen.

I also checked out available dinner opportunities at the two pubs in town and booked for dinner that evening at the Halls Gap Tavern which also had some entertainment.

In the afternoon we went for a short drive and I took a walk into the Grand Canyon before we returned to camp.

Late that afternoon we walked to the Tavern just down the road where we had a fantastic night. A pot pie and mash for dinner was delicious then live music with the musician, Susan Correll singing some great songs and playing a mean sax. The customers at the pub were a lively mob with many singing and dancing along to the music. I took a couple of photos of the publican in exchange for the odd glass of wine.

After a great night we headed back to camp and retired.

Sun 11th Nov – Halls Gap

On awaking I took a stroll around the caravan park and town. There were not many souls up and about at this hour even though it was late for me at 7am.

After breakfast we headed off on our day trip around the Grampians. First stop was Wartook Reservoir, a large water supply for the surrounding area, where I walked along the dam wall.
Leaving the lake, we stopped off at McKenzie Falls. The parking area was very crowded, and I was lucky to find a spot. Whilst Ross stayed with the car I checked a couple of lookouts before walking down to the bottom of the falls. It was a long decent down a steep flight of stairs and I was dreading the climb back up again. The view of the falls from the base was spectacular with the water cascading down the face of the rocks and glistening in the bright morning sunshine.

We left the waterfall and headed back towards Halls Gap passing quite a few of the motorcycles on the way and stopped at Reed Lookout where there were about one hundred more motorcycles parked. This lookout gave a panoramic view over Victoria Valley.

We then headed back to camp and relaxed for the rest of the afternoon before having dinner and a few refreshments.

Mon 12th Nov - Halls Gap to Bendigo
Leaving Halls Gap, we headed for Bendigo which was another short trip. We travelled cross country through farmland passing through Stawell, home of the famous Stawell Gift, Australia’s richest footrace, stopping for morning tea at Redbank Recreation Reserve.
We continued meandering cross country and arrived in Bendigo late morning. On arriving in Bendigo, we stopped briefly on the side of the road to look at the cathedral from a distance.

Moving on to look for parking for a walk around town we ended up at the Queen Elizabeth Oval and from there walked across the road to the Rifle Brigade Hotel for a delicious lunch and an ale.

After lunch I took a stroll around Rosalind Park before we took the short drive to our free camp just out of town, at Notley Campground in Greater Bendigo National Park. This was basic camping with long drop toilets and located in an open area of a eucalyptus forest. Most of the campsites were taken with campervans and caravans however we found a site away from them all and set up camp mid-afternoon.

Whilst Ross had a siesta I took a circular bushwalk around the outside of the campground. The ground was very dry and apart from the trees the vegetation was sparse with very little wildlife about at that time of day.

On arriving back at camp, we had a few refreshments late afternoon followed by dinner before retiring.

**Tue 13th Nov – Bendigo to Echuca**

After breakfast it was very quick run to Echuca, roughly following the Campaspe River most of the way and we arrived in Echuca late morning. Stopping at the Tourist Information Centre we picked up some information on what the district had to offer. Rather than move on to Cowra the following day we decided to stay two nights in Echuca to see the sites the following day.

Leaving the Tourist Centre, we headed to the Echuca Holiday Park on the banks of the Murray River where we booked in. This caravan park only had 4 unpowered campsites, so we were lucky to score one.
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After setting up camp we made a sandwich lunch and then headed into town, stopping at the wharf area for a look around, before heading back to camp. Free foot ware was available if required.

Whilst Ross relaxed at camp I walked into town for another gander. Strolling up the main street I headed for the wharf area again before walking back down the main street on the other side of the road.

As it was fairly hot I sampled a couple of ales at the Shamrock Hotel before walking back to camp along the Murray River’s levee bank. Walking along the river bank I looked down on all the houseboats moored at the edge.

Whilst I was out an older fellow with his niece and her friend from Bavaria set up their tent next to us. After dinner we had a few refreshments and had a chat to them in which the older fellow told us he was showing the girls some of the sites around their area.

Wed 14th Nov - Echuca

After breakfast Ross and I left camp for a day trip around Echuca. We took the Scenic Drive through the forested area between the Campaspe and Murray Rivers and stopped at the point where they joined to take in the view.

We continued and stopped at a few more points of interest along the shore before we headed back through town and crossed the Murray River into Moama. On this side of the of the river bank we found a large boat ramp where the river boats were taken out of the water to have repairs made. Nearby the hull of an old riverboat called the ‘Ada’ sat alone and forlorn in a sad state of disrepair on ground.
From this point opposite the Port of Echuca Wharf there is a great view of all the paddle steamers moored along the banks of the river.

We headed back to the wharf and booked a trip on the paddle steamer ‘PS Pevensey’ for the late morning run. This boat was the paddle steamer that was used in the TV series ‘All the Rivers Run’.

The cruise was very enjoyable with the clanking of the paddle wheel keeping in time with the piston of the steam engine. The skipper pointed out interesting points along the way including a few turtles sunning themselves on logs jutting out from the river bank into the water.

After the cruise we had a guided tour of the wharf and town prior to having lunch at the Odd Captain Café and Bar. The tour included an old hotel where a hidden door took us downstairs to the beer cellar where patrons used to enjoy an ale after the 6 o’clock swill.

We headed back to camp and relaxed and I watched a young short beaked corella perform some antics in the tree above our campsite including making a few deposits.

Dinner consisted of pork chops and salad at the caravan park and another chat to our neighbours next door over a few refreshments.
Away at a respectable hour with our destination being Three Mile Dam near Kiandra we had breakfast at Beechworth Bakery before leaving town. Nothing like a hot pie, apple slice and a chocolate milk for breakfast.

We again took the scenic route through rolling countryside and stopped for a cuppa on the outskirts of Numurka overlooking the town lake. Heading east we took a detour around the town of Yarrawonga briefly crossing the border into Mulwala before continuing.

Stopping for lunch in Wodonga we stocked up on supplies again for the next two nights of bush camping.

Continuing, we passed Lake Hume and headed for the mountains stopping at Corryong for afternoon tea. Near statue of Jack Riley. He was a local stockman purported to be the “The Man from Snowy River” in the poem written by Banjo Patterson.

We headed into the mountains and wound our way through Nurenmerenmong where we came across a herd of brumbies and foals, drinking and cavorting in the creek, next to the road. It didn’t take them long to realise we had stopped to look at them before they took flight.
It didn't take us long to reach Kiandra and then turn left to arrive at Three Mile Dam. This is one of my favourite camp sites in the High Country. Quite a few people had set up camp with various modes of gear. We found a lovely campsite right on the edge of the lake with access only suitable for 4WD due to the sloped and slippery terrain down to the level ground at the edge of the water.

We set up camp and started a camp fire to cook dinner and settled in for the night.

Fri 16th Nov - Three Mile Dam to Wee Jasper

Rather than hightail it back to Sydney we decided to spend another night on the Wallaby. Near Talbingo we turned to have a look at another of my favourite campsites in the area at Jounama Creek near. We then headed through Talbingo to have a look at Tumut 3 Power Station where we had a cuppa.

Moving on we passed the Blowering Reservoir hoping to spend our last night at Lake Burrinjuck however there were no suitable campsites on the south side of the dam and it was a long drive around to the other side. Heading back to Wee Jasper we decided on the National Parks camping area.

All the best sites were taken so we had some lunch and then spent a considerable amount of time finding a suitable site where there were no ants. We set up camp started a fire in the fire pit and settled in for our last night.
Sat 17th Nov – Wee Jasper to Home

Breaking camp we headed for Yass and the expressway and were back in Sydney before lunch. I dropped Ross off at home where we enjoyed a sandwich lunch before I headed home.

Epilogue

The trip was some 5800km in length and 768L of fuel was used at an average of 13.1L/100. Unusually there were no vehicle issues apart from the initial lack of power.

Another two destinations have been crossed off the bucket list and planning for the 2019 Bourke Outback Trek has already begun.