

St Albans Reccie
Sunday 10th August, 2008

Kim & Glen Coddington + family - Toyota Hilux
Alan Willingate - Mitsubishi Pajero
Carl Bleazard - Toyota Landcruiser
Glen Evans (Mitchell Evans, Michael Johnson) - Nissan Patrol
Andrew & Lucia fox, Judy Yuan - Mitsubishi Pajero
Peter Moss + Rick Vey-Cox - Nissan Patrol
Roger & Destyn Pollett - Toyota Prado
David Ellis + Chris Ellis + Karina Kaftanski - Mitsubishi Triton

The group met at Wiseman's Ferry, after Glen and Mitchell had devoured their morning micro-waved pie from the local take-away.. A most hearty breakfast ?

At the briefing session Andrew offered two routes for investigation and provided some very detailed maps and satellite images of the area. He was well prepared. One route was north / north east of St Albans through to the Pacific highway, and the other, south west of Wiseman's Ferry, along an offshoot of Wheelbarrow Ridge Road to the Putty Road, which looked a little shorter on paper. In view of the possibility of rain we opted for the Wheelbarrow Ridge route. The safety procedures for the day were discussed and the group was roughly divided into two groups "A" and "B" to ensure coverage of the target area. As an observation, does Andrew go everywhere without a binder under his arm?

With a minor mix up on convoy order and groupings as we left Wisemans, we headed south west down River Road to cross the Hawkesbury via ferry at Lower Portland. The absence of boat trailers on the River Road was very noticeable and not missed at all.

On joining the ferry it was noted that the ferry captain was probably put off a little with the volume of traffic. Only three cars could squeeze onto the barge with each crossing and that meant his fishing would be disrupted.. While waiting for everyone to cross, we aired down, and moved off on to Greens Road, turning left onto Wheel Barrow Ridge Road.

It wasn't long before's Andrew's enthusiasm for the trip shone through with the dispatch of Carl and Rick down a private road to "see what's there". It wasn't long before they confirmed, . "yes it was a private road".

Moving on we diverted north off Wheelbarrow Ridge Road and came to a significant track to the north. We soon found an off shoot track to the left which Carl, Rick and Glen C were dispatched down. They found a reasonable picnic area with a track

which lead to lower levels, ultimately ending in a series of steps which were not traversable.

Meantime, Roger, Allan and Glenn, drove along the main northern track and found what appeared to be an accessible track heading south. After approx 100 metres it was noticed that the track was getting narrower and narrow and that the bushes were brushing off the morning's dust. The track ended in an area just large enough for motor bikes to turn around. "so make that a 5 point turn". Of course, Andrew stayed out of this and parked his car on the main road, marking the entry point. just in case.

Further down the main track Roger and Allan investigated an electricity service road, and with nothing of note found they returned to the main group for a cup of tea, chat and to dance around a few ants nests purposely built under the cars.

After the break, the two groups moved on with one heading off further to the north and another finding this time a more substantial track (but not very long) to the west. It was here on the western track that the fun and games started with a grade 3 rocky slope, traversable by most, a challenge to some. Alan without a side step, sill exposed, and Andrew appreciating the low profile of his 'bishi. It was here that Mitchell left his father behind, as Glen assisted Andrew back up a now well worn incline. Glen was forced to travel back to the main meeting point in Glen C's Toyota, much to his initial disgust. although I think el Presidente has now been converted!

We had lunch back at the identified picnic area and then drove out west along Wheelbarrow Ridge Road, to air up as we approached the bitumen. It was here that some of us headed back to Windsor along the Putty while others toured Little Wheeny Creek and up to Kim and Glen C's for a refreshing drink while admiring the view. A good way to end an enjoyable day.

Roger Pollett