

2024 State Rally Report

Report

It was raining “cats and dogs” when Joan and I left home at noon on Wednesday 13 March after I attended a NACC Directors Meeting earlier that morning by Zoom. A lunch stop in the caravan – curried egg sandwiches and a cuppa, then off again. We got to Serpentine late afternoon. Looked to stay overnight parked on a quiet street until a local informed me of the Jarklin Hotel just a few kms further up the Loddon Valley Highway. Free and secure caravan parking behind the hotel with no compulsion to buy dinner at the pub. Nice level grass area. Amenities. No power. Most hospitable hotel managers. Bought a beer or two and chips. Only about sixty kms to Kerang Thursday morning.

Kerang was the venue for the 2024 ACCVic State Rally. ACCVic Vice President Ken Winnell and wife Beverley already setup. Members of other ten caravan clubs arrived over the next two days. Forty-four caravans and three motorhomes. Our State Rally Committee had everything organised from Friday afternoon until Monday morning for everyone to enjoy. The weather was exceptional all weekend.

After Registration, we moved into happy hour with snacks provided by ACCVic; BYO drinks. As ACCVic President, I welcomed everyone and handed over to Stella Breese, State Rally Coordinator to outline the program. After these formalities, the caravan park managers set about cooking a BBQ for us all. The grassy shady al-fresco area was an ideal venue for happy hours and BYOE dinners each day.

Saturday, most left for Swan Hill on the PS Pyap for a one-hour cruise up and back on the Murray. Our tickets also gave access to the Pioneer Settlement on the same grounds to wander and leave for Kerang at our leisure. The Murray was very low causing the Pyap to make an eight-point turn to face the correct way. I took Colin as he was in a motorhome. Joan stayed in the Suncoast. Colin and I toured the township and had a wonderful time together. Back home it was happy hour and BYOE dinner. The evening’s planned Talent Show was cancelled – pity as I was ready with “The Man from Ironbark”. Maybe next time.

Sunday breakfast, supplied by ACCVic, was either a full cooked bacon and egg affair or a Continental version. Tea and coffee was provided by the park. After lunch many went to the local lawn bowling club for a lot of fun. The game is decidedly much harder than it appears on TV. My first two bowls scorched from one end of the green to the other disappearing in the far-gutter. Eventually I managed to keep them on the green. I even won two or three “ends” in my group of four players. Colin did much better as he plays back in his country town. Great fun. Like golf’s “19th Hole”, after an hour or so of bowling, many congregated in the club house for suitable refreshment. The caravan park liaised with the bowling club on our behalf. Much appreciated.

The few not doing bowls were to do croquet at the park but the chap in charge took ill and couldn’t get to the rally. So a free afternoon before another happy hour, BYOE al fresco dinner, and handing completed Spending Sheets to Stella.

Of course, Sunday was St. Patrick’s Day. A few members donned the obligatory green attire, adding to the festivities. We expressed our gratitude to the park Managers and Office personnel by presenting a Certificate of Appreciation which they proudly display front and centre in the office.

Apparently, we were the first big group which booked out the entire park. They were very pleased with how the weekend went, how the park infrastructure held up, and that we enjoyed ourselves.

Monday morning, a farewell cuppa before making for home or elsewhere. Two tag-a-long rallies were organised: one to the Flinders Ranges and the other to Balranald. As for Joan and me we were off to Barham, just 20-odd kms away for a week.

There was one problem however – come time to hitch the van on, my Prado refused to start. RACV to the rescue after a full hour waiting. Nice young man. Got us going. Gave good advice. Gave address of local battery shop. Another \$200+ to the Spending Sheet.

An excellent weekend. Made new friends. Congratulations to Stella and her group of helpers. Everything went swimmingly. But as you may know, we need a replacement for Stella whom, after some years, would like a spell from being State Rally Coordinator. Is that person YOU? Can YOU help organise the 2025 event at Lakes Entrance? Some preliminary enquiries and tentative plans have already been made. Email Secretary Janice: admin@accvic.org.au.

Yes, were going to Lakes Entrance next year. The Eastern Beach Holiday Park. Get full details from a Newsletter. March 14 – 17, 2025. Reserve the dates if you enjoy caravanning and socialising.

Alan Andrews

ACCVic President
