

RIDE REPORTS

Gathering at Nanango

Where The Hell's Nanango? Well four of us know exactly where it is, how long it takes to get there, what you can see on the way, what you can do there and how much fun you can have experiencing 'The Gathering'. Thanks heaps to the Southern Burnett Chapter for putting on an excellent few days in a lovely part of the country.



It's Thursday the September 15 and we pull into Scott's Rd to meet up with Jason and Anne-Maree. At 9.00am, we are ready to roll and I couldn't resist the photo opportunity. Yes we took the camper as it was a bit of a test run for the trek to the National Rally, so three bikes, four people and one ute. Look out Nanango.

We did a run from Casino over Lions Road and stopped at Rathdowney for a short break before heading through Boonah and onto Warrill View where we had lunch in a lovely shady park. We practised boiling the

billy while we ate the sandwiches Anne-Maree had made, then packed up and rode on. Avoiding Ipswich we went around the Amberley RAAF base and fuelled up at the Blacksoil BP before heading north on the Brisbane Valley Highway. We went past the stunning Wivenhoe Dam into Esk and onto Harlin where we turned left for a run up the D'Aguilar Highway. The Blackbutt Range through Benarkin State Forest is currently subject to major road work, luckily on this occasion we did not have to wait, but the entire length of it was 60kms or less. See the picture opposite - we were driving so slowly at one stage I could photograph and drive at the same time! Soon however we were turning right at Yarraman for the last few kilometres into Nanango.



We fuelled up in Nanango and went looking for a supermarket but found the rally site at the showground first. We decided to set up camp then go and get milk/bread/alcohol. Registration was quick and easy and, even though I had not formally registered Gaz and me, there were T-shirts etc to spare so we ended up with a rego pack each.

The camping directions were “Pick a spot”, so we found a shady place not far from the canteen, rally stalls or amenities but as far from the main road as we could - unwound the camper and basically set up shop.



The first night’s entertainment was (sadly) karaoke and while I knew some of the songs in the playlist there was no way I was getting up to sing them in front of everybody. When it was getting obvious that our table was expected to do a number, tactical agreement saw us making a quiet exit. We did however have the privilege of continuing to listen to all the other singers from our camp site.

The first night was cold and whilst Gaz and I were warm enough. I suspect that Jason and Anne-Maree were not. There is also the incident with the fox (gosh I wish I had got a photo) that perhaps contributed to the lack of sleep that night. Apparently Anne-Maree had felt something walking on her outside the swag and when she opened her eyes she was looking at another pair of eyes through the mesh of the swag. I don’t know who was more frightened but I suspect it was the fox as we did not see it again all weekend. Anne Maree is now named “Foxy Lady”.



Yep that cool morning after a relatively sleepless night required a hot cuppa and a laze in the sun and seeing as how we were on Qld time there was no rush.

After reviewing the tour rides we opted for the one that went to the Sponsorin

g Dealer in Kingaroy. Went past Flo’s house then visited the Lavender Farm and Antique shop. Kingaroy Motorcycles put on morning tea for us while we checked out the shop then we cruised Peterson Drive with a quick stop out the front of *Bethany* before visiting the Pottique Lavender Farm.



The afternoon saw Gaz and I compete in our first ever bike games. I am thankful that there was not a large number of people taking part (or watching on for that matter). Gaz did well individually, but the two-up games brought us apart in a big way. Apparently I lean too far to put a cauliflower in a garbage bin and we learnt that if possible highway pegs should be folded in when playing bike games. This is because the combination of the missus leaning too far and your peg being stuck behind a cone can cause you to have to put the bike down and whilst you’re lying on the ground



laughing (more from embarrassment than humour), everyone comes rushing in thinking you are hurt (more embarrassment) and you're just praying 'Lord bury me now.' We hung around till all the games were over but I was thankful for a bourbon and some quiet time that afternoon till our new friends (next closest campers) joined us for some bickies and dip.



I had searched around the ute and found a picnic blanket behind the seat which I loaned to Jason and Anne-Marree for the 2nd camping night. I also don't think it was as cold Friday night but Jason sure enjoyed the sleep. Even Gaz cooking breakfast didn't rouse him in any hurry.



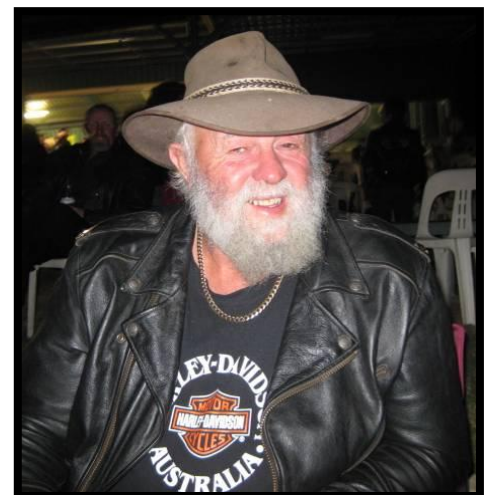
The Poker Run with the Wolverines was slow to begin with as it was actually 'Pass the Pigs' and all five throws were at the beginning but it made for a good run once the paperwork was out of the way. Starting about 45 minutes after the prescribed time the



Poker Run went up the Bunya Mountains (largest stand of Bunya Pines in the world) where the views are just fabulous from the 1100m height then around and down to Cooyar for a pub/fuel stop.



Gaz opted not to fuel up at Cooyar as it was not premium fuel and he was thinking that we would make it back to Nanango on what he had left. Alas that was not to be and we ran out of fuel 12 kilometres from town. Jason gave me a lift into Nanango on his bike (longest 12 klms I've ever ridden – though possibly better than walking) to get our jerry can and arrange a car ride back to Gaz who stayed with the bike. Thanks Jason. What can I say!



That night the Wolverines played long and loud to a very happy crowd.



Sunday dawned hot, with lots of fires in SE Qld for our home trip. Packing up the camper didn't take nearly as long as the wait at Blackbutt Range behind a B-double. The sign to the left of the truck says to stay in your vehicle at all times but no mention of bikes.

We zoomed around the B Double when the lights changed and had a good run back to Warrill View for a late lunch and a cool off before taking the last leg home.

We had a great few days, made some new friends, rode some fantastic scenery and generally enjoyed ourselves. You all who couldn't/didn't come really missed out.



Ali