



In this issue	
<i>Committee information</i>	
<i>Ride information</i>	
<i>A word from your President</i>	
<i>Events calendar</i>	
<i>Member classifieds</i>	
<i>Minutes of last committee meeting</i>	
<i>Out and about with members</i>	
<i>Editor's piece</i>	

## SPONSORS

**Rider Girl  
Motorcycle Hub**

## COMMITTEE

Events Coordinator	Vicki Cronin	0409 434 101
Newsletter Editor	Nicholas Pantelis	0408 502 665
Quartermaster	Heidi Frankl	0418 304 593
Ride Coordinator	Andy Brady	0418 229 338
Welfare Officer	Moiria Burgess	0413 269 022
Committee Member	Yvonne Barker	0417 331 683
Committee Member	Mark Freestone	0437 674 642

## RIDES AND MEETINGS

### RIDES

**Sunday – 3rd of month**, leaving McDonalds, 7-11 Horne Street, Sunbury at 9.30am sharp with full tanks. Refer ride calendar.

**Wednesday – weekly**. Leaving from Caltex Station, 4 Station Road, Gisborne at 10am with full tanks. Destination to be advised on the day.

**Saturday – 1st of month**, leaving Brantome Street, Gisborne (near Jolly Miller Bakery, approximately 11am (following tyre kick). Usually a short ride to a prearranged location for lunch.

<b>WEEKLY GET-TOGETHER "TYRE KICK"</b>	<b>Saturday 10am</b> – Brantome Street, Gisborne – Jolly Miller Bakery and Food Court, Shopping Centre.
<b>MONTHLY SOCIAL MEETING</b>	<b>Monday – 3<sup>rd</sup> of month</b> Sunbury Football Social Club, 47 Riddell Road, Sunbury. From 6pm for dinner. Meeting commences at 7pm. <b>Opportunity for all members to get together, join in the raffle, on occasion listen to visiting speakers and hear what's going on in the club.</b>
<b>COMMITTEE MEETINGS</b>	<b>Monday – April, June, August, October, December</b> Meetings are held prior to monthly social meeting and input from all branch members is welcome and can be directed to any committee member. Members can also see either the President or Secretary if they wish to address the committee. Elections are held annually, usually in February.



## From your Branch President ....

Welcome to the new look branch newsletter, not trying to improve (how can you improve perfection hey Jim?), but to offer a different style and format for information and celebrating riding events. We hope you enjoy both the electronic version sent out to members, but also we'll have a printed version on each table at our monthly meetings, once they start up again. It was one of the things I enjoyed reading when I first became a member four years ago, so we your committee have decided to bring it back. We have even kept the jokes section, though probably too vanilla for some of our "disgraceful" members. A big thanks to Nick Pantelis for taking on the role of editor, whom I think you will agree, has done a fantastic job here. Also to Deb Stuckey for helping Nick iron out some of the teething problems when setting up a new format. Great teamwork from you both!

### Busy in these uncertain times

While things are slowing down due to the Covid-19 and restrictions are strengthening each day, we are the lucky ones who have the best social distancing activity, riding our motorbikes! There's a great article I found that Nick has included here, that outlines just how fortunate we are to jump on our bikes and have some alone time, fresh air and freedom! We were at the start of March, showing responsibility to others by distancing ourselves physically at the tyre kick, not shaking hands, but still having a laugh and great conversation about our riding. Restrictions have tightened since then so for the moment, we cannot offer the monthly rides or any organized event! When an event is cancelled, usually out of our control, you will be informed via email and Facebook and Ulysses has contacted members directly re cancelling the Lismore Rally and Vaughan Springs meet and greet.

Your committee also, has been busy as you can see in the enclosed minutes, retrieving assets, scheduling rides, checking out ride venues and accommodation, booking guest speakers and recruiting new members. So unless we are told otherwise, we will go ahead with planned activities, such as Christmas in July and keep supporting each other through this time of uncertainty.

### Your health

Having said that, we must also look out for the members who are most vulnerable at this time and understand that we must keep our distance. Your health is your priority. Our branch reached out to Daryl and Amanda to

offer support after her accident on the way home from work last week. Having spoken to Daryl after at the tyre kick, Amanda has come through surgery to repair multiple fractures in her right arm and leg and is recovering in hospital. Moira was quick to send flowers and a card and everyone is keen to visit, but at the time of writing, this itself was uncertain. Now we must stay home and use social media for contact. We all send her our love and best wishes for a speedy recovery.

### **Ride calendar**

For those who attended our March meeting, Andy provided a schedule of rides for the next two months that he and Mark Freestone put together. Again, great teamwork thanks to Andy and Freeo. Mark being a past ride co-ordinator and president, was able to give Andy his insight and experience in getting people to commit to leading a ride and yes, they roped me in for a few as well! Prepare to be approached, especially if you have led a successful ride in the past to a great destination. We are also looking for ideas of venues and activities to do once we get to a destination. As always, if you have a contribution, don't hesitate to approach any committee member, but especially Andy so he can put your idea to good use. Also, don't be put off by our current isolation. We just have more time to think of great venues and rides for when we can get together!

Lastly, a personal thanks to everyone on our committee, new and previous (not old) for committing your time to our branch, for turning up to meetings, for bringing new ideas and for great teamwork during any absences. I am personally looking forward to handing over the reins to our new quartermaster Heidi, who has been travelling with Henry and were in self isolation.

Cheers from your friendly president,  
Sylvia



## RIDE & EVENTS CALENDAR

De		
Sunday, 19 April	Monthly Sunday ride	
Saturday, 2 May	Monthly Saturday ride	
Sunday, 17 May	Monthly Sunday ride	
Saturday, 6 June	Monthly Saturday ride	

## UPCOMING EVENTS ..... SAVE THE DATES

**Christmas in July: Sunday, 12 July 2020**

**(Financial affiliated members who attend Xmas in July will be subsidized by the club of \$5.00.)**

**Weekend Away: Friday 16 – 18 October 2020**

**Christmas Party: Saturday 5 December 2020**

All of the above are subject to change

Please see below – as a reminder

**May 4-10 - Ulysses National Rally – Lismore – CANCELLED**

## MEMBER BUY SWAP OR SELL

### For Sale

Givi Xstream Range 60Lt seat bag  
As new, never been used  
\$150  
Contact: Deb 0408 611 963



Got something to sell or buy?  
Send in details to [editor@mrub.org.au](mailto:editor@mrub.org.au)



# MINUTES OF LAST COMMITTEE MEETING

## Macedon Ranges Ulysses Branch

87 Claret Ash Bvd. Harkness Victoria 3337

Web site: [www.mrub.org.au](http://www.mrub.org.au)

Secretary: 0412 078 098 email: [secretary@mrub.org.au](mailto:secretary@mrub.org.au)

### MINUTES OF 2020 A.G.M.

### Held at The Sunbury Football Club - 17/2/2020

Apologies: Michael Bevan, Colin Randall, Richard & Kim Bouchier

#### Meeting commenced at 7.40 pm

The meeting was attended by 21 financial members including all but two of the current committee members and 8 guests. All attendee's membership was checked via current Ulysses membership cards.

Mark Behan (in the absence of Michael Bevan) moved that the minutes from 2019 A.G.M. (as circulated) be accepted, seconded Mark Freestone - passed. John Barry then spoke to the Treasurers report and moved its acceptance, seconded Ken Hager – passed. Mark then declared all positions vacant and asked Stephen Draper to conduct the election of the new committee.

Stephen Draper declared all nominations received as valid and had single nominations for the following positions -

<i><b>Position</b></i>	<i><b>Nominee</b></i>
President	Sylvia Behan
Secretary	Mark Behan
Treasurer	Deborah Stuckey
Quartermaster	Heidi Frankl
Editor	Nick Pantelis
Welfare Officer	Moiria Burgess
Committee Person	Vicki Cronin
Committee Person	Mark Freestone
Committee Person	Yvonne Barker

**As there was only one nomination for each position they were declared elected.**

Stephen pointed out there was no nomination for the position of Ride Co-Ordinator and called for nominations from the floor. Andy Brady was nominated for the position by Mark Freestone and seconded by Nick Pantelis. Being the only nomination he was declared elected.

There being no further business Stephen handed the meeting to Sylvia Behan.

Meeting closed at 7.50 pm.

## MINUTES

MRUB Committee<sup>1</sup> Meeting 1/03/2020  
87 Claret Ash Bvd Harkness 5.15 pm

**Present:** Sylvia Behan, Mark Behan, Moira Burgess, Vicki Cronin, Andy Brady, Deb Stuckey, Mark Freestone, Nick Pantelis, Yvonne Barker

**Apologies:** Heidi Frankl

- Relocation of club assets is a priority as past committee members need to be relieved of the items they currently house (with thanks for doing so).
  - Mark Freestone offered to collect and house the trailer + marquee + flags (?) currently at Michael Bevans.
  - Mark Behan will pick up drinks and any club eskies from John Barry. Pull-up posters currently held by Mark B.
  - Amplifier (if at Michaels) can be placed in trailer with location to be decided (needs to be charged regularly).
  - Projector remain with Vicki and will be coupled with a laptop (Andy Brady to look at availability of one).
  - Ride vests currently with Andy.
  - Deb will purchase suitable new cash tin and retain.
- Newsletter will follow a slightly different format, and it was agreed that Nick can introduce new sections such as “members bought and sold”. Also, the size of the newsletter is variable – anywhere from a few pages to more, reflective of club activities and needs. There will be a few hard copies printed (Deb has offered to oversee that) for club night perusal. Sylvia has asked to proofread the initial few copies. Deb will also help Nick as required with production at first. Editions will be produced prior to club night (3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of month) in April, June, August, October, December, February.
- Vicki suggested that we use the upcoming “Kruze for Kids” day (Good Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April) to not only promote the branch but to possibly fund raise. People were keen to sit on our motorbikes, so Vicki suggested that she has access to a Polaroid Camera, so we charge \$5 per picture. A gold coin donation for those just wanting to use their own phone. All were in favour.
- The ride calendar was looked at and it was agreed that the branch would benefit from having it on the web site 12 months in advance and in the newsletter 2 months in advance. Mark F and Andy will work together to fill the slots for the upcoming year. Vicki noted that she would like to see more photos and fun activities on the rides which will promote the concept and hopefully engage more members.
- There was discussion re whether Colac (which has too unstable weather around October/November) will be replaced by either Horsham or Yarrawonga. It was agreed that at the next meeting the ride to the venue and what activities are available will be presented and the committee will either make a decision or take it to the members to gauge interest. It was also agreed to avoid the actual weekend of the Melbourne Cup in favour of a clear week before or after.
- BREAK FOR FOOD.
- Discussion was held on the submission from Ken Hager re the website and Facebook.
  - Currently Facebook has four administrators. Ken suggested that it be reduced to 2 or 3 and they include the Webmaster and the Secretary which over time will transfer with the title. Agreed and carried. Ken to implement.
  - Ken noted that there are features available in Facebook that are not being exploited / used (e.g. event hosting?). It was agreed that if this is fairly user friendly then we should use. Vicki suggested that it is at the moment too hard – will ask Ken to investigate / implement.
  - Currently the email reminder system is not working ideally. After discussion it was agreed that Ken Hager was in the best position to oversee the reminders and has the committee’s cart blanche to adjust, amend and replace events as needed.
  - The calendar itself is proving restrictive as it doesn’t embed (it’s supposed to) into the web site as well as having limited posting access. Ken recommended that we look at using Google Calendar or some other calendar. Agreed. Ken to investigate / report.
  - The question was raised about the website and whether or not we should be hosting our own site? At this stage we are operating well so IF required we can look at it in the future.
  - The committee expressed confidence in the job being done on the webpage / Facebook by Ken and thought that if it benefited him, he should be given an open invitation to attend Committee meetings to discuss related issues. A ‘Web Master’ badge will also be purchased.
- Our bank account does not allow us to have a credit card and we have been running on the basis of the member purchasing whatever and then seeking a refund. After some discussion it was agreed that although this is cumbersome it works, and Committee members were fairly happy with the arrangement. Further discussion was held re Moira who has a monthly purchase regime of around \$100. Currently she seems happy with the arrangement, but the Treasurer has offered her a float of \$100 if she ever feels the need.
- As part of our Bunnings fund raiser they requested that some of the money be donated to a charity (this was required on the application form). We nominated UCARF as our recipient. Vicky noted that several years ago the committee passed a motion re donations. (Below is the relevant section from 21<sup>st</sup> March 2017).

*A longer discussion was held on the need to formulate a club donation policy. After discussion it was decided that it would be a maximum of \$250 in any committee year with an individual amount of a maximum of \$25 needing approval of committee. Local charities were to be given precedence. Any remaining amount from the \$250 would at the end of the committee year be donated to the Ulysses Arthritis Foundation. Moved Michael Bevan seconded Sylvia Behan. Seven in favour, Richard Bouchier and Jim Alley against. Passed.*

Considering we did not have access funds in the following years no donations were ever made. The committee agreed that generally speaking we work too hard for generous donations, so it was agreed that whilst UCARF is a worthwhile cause some more consideration needed to be undertaken before money is spent.

- Sylvia and Mark will not be attending the 2020 Ulysses Rally so we need two representatives for the branch. The meeting moved (Vicki, seconded Moira) that Deb Stuckey (as a current member of committee) be one and that Stephen Draper be asked to fill the remaining position. Passed

Meeting closed approx. 8.00 p.m.

## MINUTES

MRUB Committee Meeting 16/03/2020  
Sunbury Football Club 6.05 pm

**Present:** Sylvia Behan, Mark Behan, Moira Burgess, Andy Brady, Deb Stuckey, Mark Freestone

**Apologies:** Heidi Frankl, Nick Pantelis

- Subsidising Xmas in July: The meeting decided that in line with past events, and the availability of funds we would subsidise the Xmas in July lunch at \$5 for each financial affiliated member who attends. Carried.
- Assets retrieval has gone well with Mark Freestone having picked up the trailer, marquee, flags, and sound system (special thank you to Mark for this). Andy has also stored (thank you) left over soft drinks from Bunnings sausage sizzle. Mark is going through the equipment and making a list for next meeting (including testing sound system for reliability of the battery).
- We will test the laptop offered by Andy (Vicki already <sup>3</sup>has the machine) and if it is suitable the meeting agreed to pay Andy \$50 rather than accept it as a donation. Carried

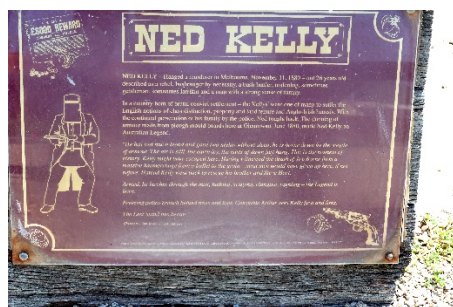
- The exploratory work for Yarrawonga Branch Ride is still to be completed, but it was agreed the projected date for the ride is Friday October 16th.
- The projected ride calendar was tabled up to and including the 19<sup>th</sup> July. Some alterations were suggested / implemented but meeting was really happy with the progress. Thanks were extended to Andy for a job well done who in turn thanked Mark F. for his help and input.
- Deb reported (in Nick's absence) on the progress of the newsletter. A new template has been settled on and Nick is just waiting on a few more articles – but all is on track. New sections include a buy / swap and sell column.
- Treasurer reported our current bank balance as of 13/3/2020 at \$4100.33 including GST liability to NatCom. Forecast expenses for the rest of the year are projected at \$2080. All figures based on accepted reconciliation and future period of January – December 2020. A new cash tin has also been purchased which should allow us smoother operation at future fund-raising activities.
- Facebook is going well as are date / event notification, reminders etc. Ken H. is to be commended for an excellent job and support.
- The meeting formally moved that Moira spend \$400 on the Xmas in July raffle and a further \$400 on the end of year raffle. Carried.

Meeting closed approx. 6.40 p.m.

## OUT & ABOUT WITH OUR MEMBERS .....



Glenn







**A Refreshing & Relaxing Swim**



**Lunch At The Camp Site**







Show & Shine









Dinner In Town



Socialising With Friends









### There Has Never Been A Better Time For A Motorcycle Ride

#### **Bradley Bronwell writes for Jalopnik**

My wife and I are currently cooped up in our house as we now both work from home. I have done this for years, but her office building just shut down thanks to the viral threat. Instead of letting the existential dread of a pandemic get me down, I'll occasionally hop on a bike and head for the hills for an hour or two. Not only does this help me clear my head, but it gets me out of the house in a relatively safe manner. I'm not coming into contact with other humans, keeping viral spread to a minimum. I'm doing my part to flatten the curve while leaning into the apex.

Even if you're going nowhere in particular, the fresh air and time to think helps alleviate some of my anxieties about the current socio-economic climate. Instead of sitting in front of my laptop voraciously consuming the news and not being able to do anything about it, I let my mind focus on throttle, brake, clutch, and lean angle for a while instead. It's probably the healthier way to cope with the unknown.

With a full body of gear on, I'm probably staying better protected from the virus anyway. I keep my protective gloves on while filling up at the gasoline pump, keeping the gross germs of the handle off my fingertips. I keep my visor down to indicate to strangers I'm not interested in having a chat. I pack a snack and water bottle from home.

While our shared hobby has traditionally been an experience best served with friends, it is certainly possible to go it alone for a while. Whether it be wrenching on your long-forgotten project, putting together a scale model that has been at the top of your closet for years, spending some time learning tracks in iRacing, or re-watching your in-car from your most recent track day to figure out how you can improve, you won't regret some alone time.



Report : 19-2-20

Must have been overcast this morning. The Wednesday warriors minus the Wednesday pussies. L/R Macca, Ivan, Colin, Darryl and Wally on camera. Harcourt for smoko, Heathcote via Strathfieldsaye for lunch, return via Lancefield. Slight drizzle to Woodend, clear for the rest of the day.

Regards

Vicki Cronin #63980  
Events Co-ordinator  
Macedon Ranges Branch  
Ulysses Club Inc.



### **Lunch ride to Gordon 8-3-20**

Our March lunch ride was offered on the long weekend, for those of us who didn't go away. We had four bikes with myself, Mark, Macca, Andy with Pamela as pillion and Andy and Louise's backup car. Bit drizzly as we left Gisborne and through the Ridgeback to Bacchus Marsh, then it fined up as we made our way through Myrniong, Greendale and Ballan, on to Gordon. We lunched at the Alexander Gordon Hotel, who always do excellent food in a very welcoming and friendly atmosphere. It was a good ride with good company.  
Thank you, Sylvia & Mark

April 2020 Edition FINAL 18/3/2020  
Macedon Ranges Ulysses Branch (MRUB)

NewMRUB Leadership Team

This past month saw us farewell several Committee members after long years of long service to the club. Thank you to retiring President Michael, Treasurer John, Newsletter Editor Jim and others for your many wonderful years of club support. And a big welcome to newly elected President Sylvia and her Committee. Mug shots enclosed!

Top Tip : rain and slippery road surfaces; think on that and please ride carefully to suit conditions.

It was a mixed February/March as we welcomed back Vicki and Yvonne from a final Women Riders World Relay event in Dubai but sadly farewellled one of our regulars, RIP Bill Graham.

Come meet the new Committee, help craft our future club activities, then join us for a coffee, meal and great company at our regular outdoor, fresh air gatherings: Tyre Kick - weekly 10am+ Saturday mornings, Brantome Street, Gisborne; Wednesday rides - weekly 10am servo 4 Station Road, Gisborne; Saturday lunch rides - 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday 11am Brantome St; Sunday rides - 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday 9.30am Maccas Sunbury; plus monthly Branch Social and special rides/events.

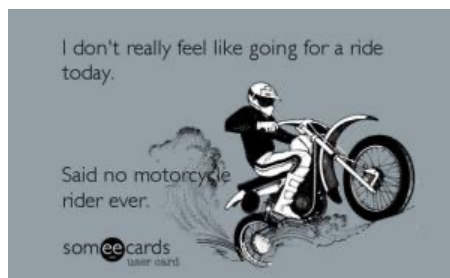
Check future club activities and current news via our Calendar at [www.mrub.org.au](http://www.mrub.org.au) or on Facebook. Come riding with us sometime!

Cherry Cole

Prepared by Cherry Cole on behalf of MRUB committee



"That's not exactly how I intended you to use the treadmill."



I don't really feel like going for a ride today.

Said no motorcycle rider ever.

someecards  
water card



"Some offices have Casual Friday. We thought Motorcycle Friday was a much better idea."

The above have been supplied by our president Sylvia Behan, thank you.



# Corryong, after the Fires

Report by Peter Maguire

Darraweit Guim

17<sup>th</sup> February 2020

The devastating bushfires in the Upper Murray Valley in Victoria were started by lightning on 29<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and burnt for several weeks. In mid-January I circulated an email looking for a few Old Dookie Boys (from the 1967 enrolment at Dookie Agricultural College) to team up to do some volunteer work in the bushfire effected areas in northern Victoria. I had 16 responses to my email and a team of ten of us rendezvoused in Corryong on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

I had arranged to work with a group co-ordinated by the local Rotary and Lions Clubs who had set up a "The Rotary Emergency Fencing Team" soon after the fires. Their primary focus was relacing burnt fences, particularly roadside and boundary fencing and to contain cattle, sheep and goats on farms.

Most of us planned for a 2-week "working holiday". The team were:

Doug Bowen	Greg Skinner
Dave Chandler	Derek Stabb
Chas Dickens	Jim Young
Peter Maguire	Peter van der Zande
Bob Prime	Trevor Verlin

My daughter (Julia) also joined the team for a few days.



We were lucky to have some very useful equipment to help with the work. Derek took his Bobcat and truck, Doug trailered his small tractor with a front-end loader and excavator about 800kms from Penola, Bob borrowed a small excavator and I took Robyn's small 4WD Kubota tractor with a front-end loader and carryall. When you also include several 4WD utes and trailers, chainsaws, hand tools and some experienced "fencer's", I think that we formed a very productive and useful team. Furthermore, we were able to claim in excess of 700 years of experience

The Corryong area has been hit very hard with the fires with a huge area burnt-out although, prior to our arrival, the region had received some good rains so most of the paddocks had a green tinge. Furthermore, while we were in Corryong several thunderstorms hit the area resulting in more grass growth, some erosion and at least one landslide in the burnt areas. Jim, Peter vdZ and Chas also discovered that their tents were not really waterproof! But while the paddocks looked a bit green, the forested areas and hills in the Upper Murray Valley are black and brown with stark burnt trees and there are ruins of a lot of houses and sheds destroyed along with hundreds of kilometres of fences.

During our stay we worked on 15 properties (bearing in mind that a boundary fence is 2 properties!) and our main jobs were

- Stripping out old fences. Most were barb and plain wire several with rabbit netting buried deep in the ground
- Rolling up the wire and carting it to a central point on the farm
- Pulling out the post with some big old wooden corner posts buried deep in the ground. Praise be to the Bobcat
- Clearing the fence lines.
- Digging post holes for end assemblies and braces. Praise be to the excavator with auger.
- Erecting new end assemblies. Mostly 4-inch gal steel pipe with an angled steel brace welded to the corner post and then both set in concrete.
- Mixing concrete by hand until a local farmer stepped in with a mixer on his tractor for one of the bigger jobs. Praise be to Craig and his young son Reece.
- Laying out fence posts
- Driving steel intermediate posts. Praise be to the little Honda post drivers
- Running and straining wires. Usually a top barb and multiple plain wires with an electric wire with insulator tied/twitched to the steel post.



While some of the fencing was on flat country a lot was in really steep rocky terrain, so we had a good work out!



Our first day on the job, stripping a fence in the hills near Tintaladra. This was the flat bit! The farm was about 3,000 acres and all but about 30 acres were burnt. The house and sheds were blistered but saved. Some livestock losses.

The non-fencing work was mostly tidying up the mess around some burnt buildings and felling and trimming burnt trees and putting them into burn heaps.

Derek and the Bobcat did a huge amount of work that would have been impossible without the little muscle machine. Heaven only knows the number of old wood and steel posts that the Bobcat ripped out of the ground or how much wire netting Derek was able to "roll-up" without leaving the airconditioned comfort of the Bobcat cabin! Derek was also called on the pull posts on a number of other properties where teams had stripped the fences but could not remove the posts.





Here is the Bobcat carrying a big piece of a pine tree to put it on a burn heap. A very big tree cleaned up in about 1 hour.



One very special Bobcat job was to try to clean up after a landslide following heavy rain. A house was surrounded by tons of rock and gravel and Derek spent many hours working to get access to the house and garage and dig out two cars that were buried in the rubble. He can tell you more!

One morning we were pulling out posts with the Bobcat on a dairy farm near Corryong; the flies were horrendous. It was hot and steamy and the flies were sticky and in our eyes, mouth, nose, ears, everywhere while the sweat was dripping off my brow. Suddenly, the Bobcat stopped and the cabin door opened slightly as Derek chased a single fly out of the air conditioned cabin. The huge grin on Derek's face made the origins of his Dookie nickname clear. "Smiley".

Our Dookie colleague Robert "Chippy" Wood was severely impacted by the fires. Chippy has a small farm (about 180 acres) at the top of a valley about 25 kms west of Corryong. With the exception of the machinery yard and caravan, all of the property was burnt and all of his fences were destroyed. Furthermore, a subsequent heavy downpour of rain resulted in severe erosion which left tons of rocks and rubble on some of his paddocks. Fortunately, his cattle survived the fire although I have no idea how! Chippy's problems are exacerbated by complications following a broken leg last year and he is currently wearing a moonboot which limits his mobility.

We had two visits to Chippy's to pick up and clear some old electric fences and we were pleased to see that BlazeAid were moving in to do some more cleaning up and erect some new fences whilst we were there.

The Army was also in Corryong and working on the clean up effort. It was great to see the young fit army guys and girls and all of their equipment. However, they were somewhat hamstrung by regulations; they cannot erect fences (allegedly in case a animal escapes and someone sues the Army!), they knock off on time, (even if the job is almost complete) and they do not work if it is "too hot". They also had a lot of heavy earth moving equipment that rarely left camp. Nevertheless, they are contributing a lot of time and effort to the clean-up.

Our days in Corryong started early with a hearty breakfast at 6:45am followed by the compulsory "Safety Briefing" and then the jobs for the day were distributed to the different teams. We were usually away by 8.00am and on the job soon after. We would try to boil the billy for morning Scranno and then lunch would be delivered around noon. Great lunches with a variety of sandwiches, fruit, cake and drinks. Copious quantities of water were consumed. We would generally stop work around 4.30pm to get back in time for a shower before tea. The meals had lots of variety and were prepared by volunteer ladies. After dinner we would have team reviews of the work done on the day and needs for tomorrow. The Dookie Boys would then return to our camp to have a few wines and maybe a beer, relive the past and solve the world's problems. The tiredness would set in around 9.30 - 10pm except for the night that Skins jumped off the wagon!!

At the end of our second week the Rotary/Lions Group were closing their camp and the work was being taken over by BlazeAid who set-up a camp in Corryong a few days before we arrived. The R/L Group had done a fantastic job starting work very soon after the fires. Their logistics and co-ordination were excellent and they provided all volunteers with food and water, tools, protective clothing

and a well organised work program. A huge amount of material was donated and the work assisted many farmers in getting started on their rebuilding efforts.

While the rotary club cannot be certain of the exact figure, they estimate that volunteers had removed and cleaned up over 100km of fencing and constructed in excess of 65km of new fences on over 120 farming properties. It was a wonderful outcome for a volunteer work program that was organised in such a short time. With over 600 volunteers participating over the 5-week period, the Rotary Club estimate having collectively contributed over \$700,000 in donations and kind to the fencing efforts in the Upper Murray area. A fantastic result in difficult circumstances.

I think that I can speak for all of our Dookie team when I say that we had a lot of fun and we all enjoyed working together on this project. The work was hard and the days (including the weekend) were long with mostly hot and humid weather. I was really impressed at the level of work and commitment from our little group of old farts. Overall, I estimate that we provided about 750-man hours of work and the Bobcat clocked up over 60 hours on the job.

However, it was not all fun. There were some very sad and moving experiences, particularly talking to some farmers who had been hit hard by the fires. A lot of people wanted, and probably needed, to talk about their experiences so we did a lot of listening and some consoling. In some places there were dead kangaroos or cattle that had tried to flee the fires but were stopped by fences. Very sad indeed. Personally, I was surprised how emotional I became when an echidna strolled out of a blackened forest as if nothing had happened. At least it had plenty of ants to eat. I was also surprising pleased to see some skinks in the blackened landscape when I was cutting up some dead trees.

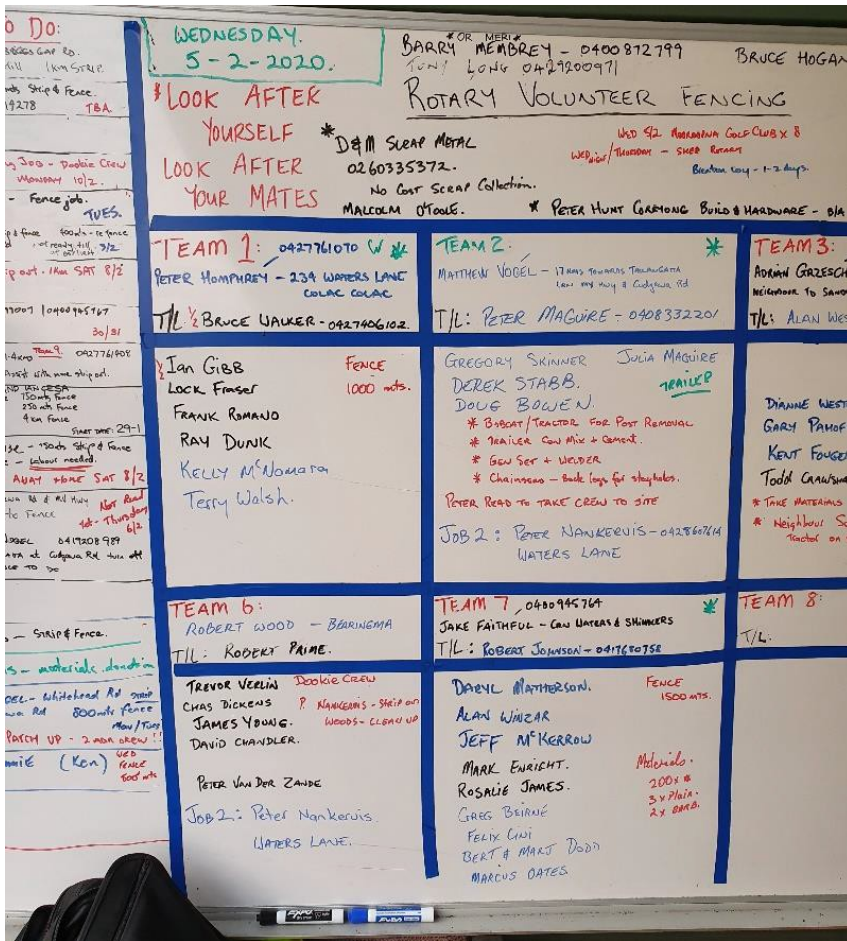
I am sure that we all experienced different emotions during our time in Corryong and I was proud and pleased to work with the Dookie Crew. Our work was miniscule in the big picture, but I hope that we helped some farmers in some small way.

I almost felt guilty that we had such a fun time!

Thanks to everyone for your help and support.



A few more photos follow.



The White Board listed the daily jobs for up to 12 teams of Volunteers.

Some days we split the Dookie Boys into two or more teams.



Sadly, this house  
was destroyed.

Sitting on a beautiful hill, above Cudgewa Creek looking up the Murray Valley at the Snowy Mountains.



Morning Scranno in a burnt landscape. We were very lucky to have delicious cakes baked for us by Liz, Valda and Robyn. Very much appreciated!







Reece ("I am 13 in March!") competently working the excavator and auger while his dad, Craig supervises the job.

Dookie Boys  
version of a  
Pole Saw!



**Club ride to Nagambie on March 21<sup>st</sup>.**

Kept our distance and brought our lunch!









Funny Photos – Thank you Vicki

**From your editor** – a thought or two for this period.



And

“But the most beautiful things in  
life are not just things.  
They’re people, and places,  
memories and pictures.  
They’re feelings and moments and  
smiles and laughter”



