



Towards Batemans Bay? – well, vaguely

Glynis Whitfield

Saturday 21 November saw a group of intrepid ST4WDCer's gather at Macca's Queanbeyan for the requisite early morning coffee to get us in the mood for a day of driving through forests. We left Queanbeyan heading out through Hoskinstown and aired-down as soon as we hit the dirt on the road to Forbes Creek. At this stage, it was Alex and Andrea in the lead, Glynis, Kevin and Vicki, Gavin and Glen, Peter, and Victoria and Isabelle as Charlie.

We had a leisurely drive through a very picturesque Tallaganda Forest with Vickie acting as official photographer. The first stop was Braidwood, where those coffee lovers had a re-supply of caffeine. Then it was off to Monga NP for the next stage of the driving.

We entered Monga on the usual route with an easy track, however a turn which took us uphill on Middle Saddle Road at the turn off to Cutters Road took us in a direction not originally intended. To rectify this, it was decided to go back downhill on Macquarie Road – with Peter warning that he had previously had to turn back on this road due to a fallen tree. Well, we found the fallen tree and although the off-road motor bikers had previously done a bit of road building to get them up and over, we realised that the Zouk would definitely not be able to climb over this one. Good thing that Alex had done the chainsaw training earlier in the year. And now he had a chance to put his skills to work.

On the road again, we headed downhill and back onto Cutters Road once again headed towards the Penance Grove and then to the Kings Highway. However, it was about another 20 minutes of driving which brought Alex to a fallen tree – this one much too big for his chain sawing skills. The word went out for everyone to turn around where they were.

It was a little tricky turning around and when we had finally managed it, tail-end Charlie became no. 3 in the convoy with others in various changed positions. We proceeded along to a



log set in a little clearing where Glynis remembered having stopped for lunch on a previous trip when she had to turn around because of a fallen tree across the road.

On the road again after lunch. Alex missed the turn to Cutters Road (because of a fallen log across the track right at the turn) which necessitated a bit of reversing and shuffling. This resulted in tail-end Charlie becoming leader for a bit. Until we met the next fallen tree. This also proved to be impassable. Hmm. Bit of a theme happening here. Obviously fallen trees across the road is a common occurrence in Monga.

It was turn around time again. So we left the park and came back in onto Reidsdale Road which we followed right through the park to the entrance at the Kings Highway end. By this time it was obvious we weren't going to have enough time to travel down Misty Mountain Road and No Name FT, so we turned around (with another missed turn and re-shuffle of convoy positions) and returned through Monga NP via Old Araluen Road, heading back into Braidwood for another top up of caffeine.

While we didn't exactly tick off the originally intended trip on the day, we certainly covered Monga NP fairly thoroughly. The weather was great and the company just as good.