



**4WD CLUB**

## **TRIP REPORT**

### **DAY TRIP TO FIRE AFFECTED AREAS**

2<sup>nd</sup> May 2009

Event Organiser; Ian Day

Attendance:

John Brandwood

Kate McCracken and Roy Anderson ("Ando")

Ian Day

Vehicles; 1 Landcruiser, 1 Patrol, 1 Hummer

The day started well with Morning tea / breakfast and coffee at the Beechworth Bakery in Healesville before setting off along the Maroondah Highway towards Marysville. It was only a couple of K's before we started to drive into burnt bush, how lucky Healesville was. It is amazing in this area as to how quickly the bush is regenerating. We turned off the main highway and into what little is left of the small hamlet of Marysville. All reports said it was bad, they were not wrong.

Very few buildings survived the onslaught of the fire that has ravaged this town.

However on the day a cycle race was being conducted in the area and the town was very busy.

#### *Marysville*



We moved on through the town of Buxton that was also fairly heavily impacted. After Buxton we headed for Yea for some lunch and a chat. Along the way it was found the UHF radio in the Hummer, that was only fitted on Thursday could receive but was not transmitting, ie: the people in the other two cars did not have to put up with me rattling on over the radio all day.

After lunch we headed on down the Whittlesea Rd, via a small detour to have a look at some land (that had not burnt) between Yea and Flowerdale. Stopped at the Hazeldene store for a well earned ice cream and a bit of a look around.





It was amazing how this old store built back in the 1940's survived the fire as it had come down the hill behind the shop and then crossed the creek and up the hill on the other side of the road.

### *Hazeldene*



From Hazeldene we continued on to Kinglake West, then turned left and into what is left of Kinglake. What a mess, but how lucky were some. Interesting looking at some of the burn patterns. How do you predict it?

Some places totally untouched, others totally obliterated.

It was interesting and heartening to see the great Aussie flag being flown in front of so many destroyed properties. The work going on already is amazing, but every now and then you see a property with no tent, no caravan, no sign that any one has been back since the fire. It is a sad question, why not?

Any way John left us here and went on his way home via Whittlesea, and the remaining two vehicles continued on through Toolangi back to Healesville. Once again how close the fire got to Healesville, impacting into Chum Creek.

Given the short notice for this event a good day was had by all, touring in the lovely autumn sunshine, the sadness of the devastation but, also the true Aussie spirit starting to shine through.