

## **KHANCOBAN**

**9<sup>TH</sup> - 11<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2007**

### **Friday 9<sup>th</sup> March**

The weekend of 9<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> of March began with a delightfully clear and picturesque flight over the Victorian Great Dividing Range to the base of the Snowy Mountains. Flying over Eildon Weir and the Dartmouth Dam only confirmed the drought we were experiencing, as we had never seen the water so low. Some areas were a little green which showed the strange patterns the rainfall had made.



Khancoban is in NSW on the Alpine Way in the foothills of the spectacular western face of the Snowy Mountains where its townsfolk overlook the picturesque Khancoban Lake.

The dam wall was clearly visible as we flew over and landed close by on a 5000ft sealed airstrip.



Two or three planes had already arrived and within the next hour another 10 joined the planes now all safely tucked in for the next two days. A shuttle took us into town and to our accommodation at the Khancoban Alpine Inn where we caught up with the others amidst lots of noise and frivolity. The high noise level continued as friends caught up on all the news over pre dinner drinks. The last plane arrived at approx. 7pm making a total of 42 people in 15 planes.

Dinner was served at the Pickled Parrot restaurant with a welcome to all given by John Macknight. Later we drifted off into the night for a good nights sleep.

## Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> March

Up to a cooked breakfast by 7.30am followed by a bus pick up to 9.30am. Peter Carmen a local takes us on a full day of sightseeing beginning with the bus passing by Toomon Station, the largest grain growing area in the Southern Hemisphere. We pass by the cottage of Eyne Mitchell author of the "Silver Brumby"

We arrived in Walwa for a quick coffee break and look around. Walwa is renowned for Pine Mountain Monolith, the massive granite rock larger than Ayers Rock which has uplifted to more than 1000m. over two million years. Roger and Trevor were late getting back on the bus one can only assume they got on the wrong bus! It's an age thing!

While bouncing along in the bus we saw that some areas looked greener than others due to localized rain falls. Our land certainly needs rain and soon.

We stopped at the Koetong pub to have lunch in their gardens where more discussions over planes of course took place. John Ward provided the dessert with his locally grown canterlopes all of which added to the enjoyment of lunch in the sun. Koetong is situated on the Murray Valley Hwy. between Corryong and Tallangatta and gives access to Mt Lawson State Park with a number of original railway trestle bridges still visible.



After lunch with full tummies and in high spirits we are once again on the bus and taken to Corryong's the Man From Snowy River's Museum and the Jarvis Homestead built in 1876 and the home of Jack Riley who is generally agreed to have been the inspiration for the A.B. Paterson's much loved "Man From Snowy River" poem. The museum is a local history museum with an old lockup, school house, dairy and many displays dating back to the late 1870's. Along with some Victorian era costumes there is an unusual flying jacket handmade of bits and pieces by a world war 2 POW. We were able to spend about an hour foraging about after which we were once again back in Peter's hands on the bus.

Later in the afternoon Peter took us to the Towong Racecourse where the course proper and the grandstand were filmed in the making of "Phar Lap" and back in 1928 the infamous Squizzy Taylor stole a substantial sum of money. Today happened to be the day of the Towong Cup. People had come for miles dressed in their Sunday best and fun was had joining in all the festivities. I am not sure if anyone backed a winner as there wasn't too much rejoicing on our return trip. I for one was a little tired after a pretty full on day.



Dinner again at the restaurant provided more laughter and chatter which I see as a great group of people who come from many, many different fields of work and places with a common interest in flying those great Comanche Aircraft.

### **Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> March**

After breakfast and fond farewells we were taken out to the airstrip where we once again departed in all directions. After departure several of our aircraft flew to Jindabyne for lunch overlooking the magnificent scenery of Lake Jindabyne.



We then flew back over Thredbo Village, Falls Creek and Mt Buller, all without snow and returned to Moorabbin while other aircraft dispersed to their own home airfields.

Thanks to John Macknight and Nigel Wettenhall for arranging once again a wonderful Fly In to the scenic town of Khancoban shared with pilots and partners.

Irene J Lawson.