

Peters Perfect Ride Report October

Flinders Ranges / Melrose Tour 2019



Wednesday 16th October 2019 we made our way by motor vehicles to embark on Peters Tour for 2019 and this was a tour with a difference as such as we were not utilizing panniers etc but instead we were camped in a location for a few days at a time with day rides commencing from our campsite. As per current Peters Tours this tour was fully unsupported and we packed sufficient food and hydration supplies on a daily basis on our bicycles. We quickly discovered that none of us in the group had any mobile phone coverage but as a safety backup in case we did run into difficulties I brought along a UHF Radio which was able to make contact with the Blinman Repeater Network and which is monitored 24 hours a day by the property owners around the Blinman Region which provided us with safety and support if we needed to summon assistance / help if required, as we were on very remote and rugged property / station tracks with no vehicle traffic. The tour was broken into two parts with the group camping at Angorachina Station for 4 days and then moving down to Melrose for a further 4 days of cycling. This permitted riders of the tour to complete certain rides of the tour without having to be there for the whole tour.

We arrived at Angorachina Station which is located in the Flinders Ranges region of South Australia. Angorachina Station is South East of Blinman and is a property which is 1500 thousand square acres in size and we were greeted by the property owners Alice and Ed who welcomed us onto their property.



Above: Our Exceptional Camp Ground at Angorachina Station.

Right: Our personal toilet and shower block which at the end of the day was quite nice to have a hot shower. The picture doesn't do it justice as it really was a nice shower.



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Left: Angorachina Station shearing shed which was located on our camp ground and on the day that we arrived the last truck load of sheep were removed from the property due to the current drought conditions there was not enough feed and water available on the property to maintain the live stock on the property.

Right: Riders on first day ride to Wirrelpa and return, Peter, Michael, Andrew, Alan and Steve. David was taking the photo.

Below Right: Half way view climbing up the hill, really makes you appreciate touring cycling.

Below: Exceptional scenery and what a exhilarating ride up this hill.



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Our first ride was 51.5km on a relatively well made road with lots of corrugations and we quickly learnt how to negotiate the road corrugations. It was an exceptional ride with great scenery and was downhill from 580metres to 260metres well one way anyway with a slight gradient of 1.5percent on the return journey up over the Bunkers Range. We came across this old gravesite on the side of the road which upon research was the son of the property owner although it is quite strange that he was buried there with his back to the station / property and also on the property boundary, and the reasons why?

Above Right: Gravesite Headstone of John Kenny and read the encryption on the head stone, Thought Provoking?

Middle Right: Eregunda Creek Valley, note the dryness and trees that are dying.

Below: My Bicycle that is now 16 years old and has done many of Peters Perfect Rides and Tours without a issue.



The big thing that I took from this tour was the drought conditions and when you wake up in the morning you usually hear birds singing and tweeting but in the Flinders Ranges there was very minimal wildlife sounds and most mornings there was just silence as most of the birds have moved south due to lack of water and feed..

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Above: Donkeys Gully Bore / Well

Right: Donkeys Gully Bore Storage Tank with Alan, Michael and Peter performing a inspection of the facility.



Left: Lunch Stop at Donkeys Gully Bore, again note the dryness and lack of vegetation due to the drought conditions.

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Above: Artimore Ruins and artifact of our past.

Below Right: Artimore Bore and Goat Trap

At Artimore Ruins there was water and the bore was still functioning and we noticed a one way ramp into a enclosure. We were advised by the station owner that this was a goat trap area as the feral goats cause high levels of erosion and feed on the food stock of the farmed live stock. The goat trap works by enticing the goats in for water and then they are unable to escape and the property owners come and gather them and remove them from the grazing area.

The next day we headed out to the Artimore Ruins which was a ride of 55kms in length. The route that we took was along a public access road which at the start of the track had a warning sign of a extreme 4WD track only and to proceed with caution. We never realized at the time the gradient of the track and what we were climbing at until the turnaround point at Artimore Ruins and wow what a exhilarating and technical ride it was back down this track, it was just a exceptional and fast down hill ride but required great caution and respect as well due to the state of the track



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We were lucky enough to attend the annual Blinman Cup / Gymkhana Event. This event brings the whole Blinman community and surround together. The event has a fall range of activities for young and old with events like egg throwing and catching, Wool Bale Rolling contest, Nail driving for ladies and of course many horse events which culminates in the 1600metre Blinman Cup horse race.

We partied on at this event and we could not believe that the drink prices alcoholic and non alcoholic drink prices were cheaper than being at Adelaide Oval. We took in the hospitality of organizers and we stayed for the dinner of Roast and Ribs and Roast Vegetable for dinner.

We also did a tour at the Blinman Mine and I can highly recommend this tour when you visit Blinman. The history of this mine is exceptional and steeped in a great story and what these miners endured with conditions etc, it is hard to believe in today world.

Above Left: The Blinman Cup Horse Race and the winning horses in action

Above Right: The Rider of the winning horse Andy , note all the celebratory drinks in hand and shirt pockets

Below Right: Doing a personalised tour of the Blinman Underground Mine Site. Michael and Peter doing it tough underground.



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We left Blinman with fond memories and travelled down to Melrose where we camped at the Melrose Caravan Park. We were joined by Kevin at Melrose and Andrew had left the group as had work commitments on the Monday along with Alan who headed back to Adelaide to get his caravan ready for his next tour, It was the beauty of this tour as people could choose to do all of the tour or parts of.

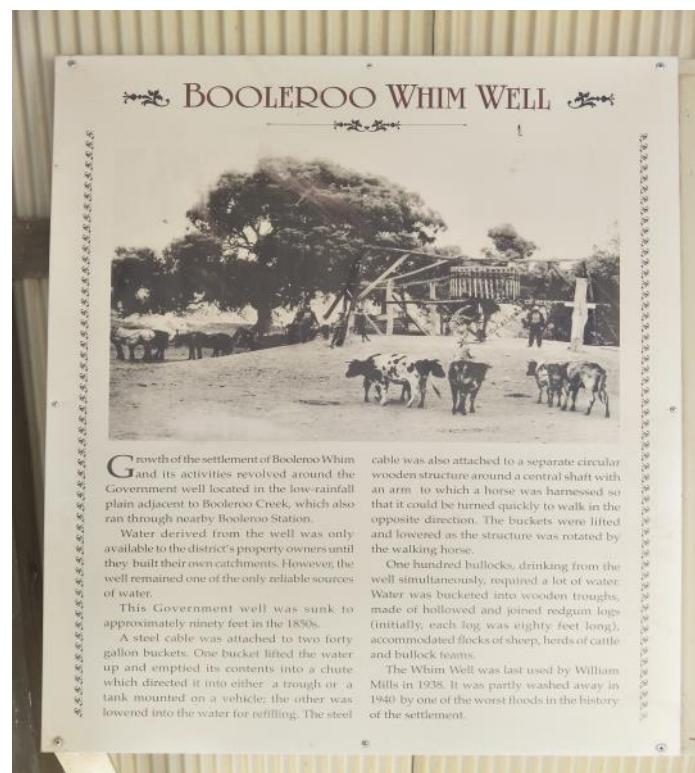
We completed three rides around the Melrose region, Booleroo Centre, Pekina and Yatina Gorge with the average riding distance on these rides of 48km's.

The road to Pekina to Yatina Gorge was being freshly graded and this made the track quite slippery as there was lots of loose soil covering the road and we needed to ride with caution along this part of the ride. When we did arrive at Yatina Gorge it was remarkable to see all the greenery and there was water in the bottom of the gorge which was quite a distinct contrast to the Blinman Region

Above Left: On the Bridle Trail having lunch overlooking the Spencer Gulf with Whyalla In The Distance

Above Right: A very large lizard climbing a tree to get to the birds nest to eat the eggs

Below Right: The story behind the Booleroo Whim Well



Growth of the settlement of Booleroo Whim and its activities revolved around the Government well located in the low-rainfall plain adjacent to Booleroo Creek, which also ran through nearby Booleroo Station.

Water derived from the well was only available to the district's property owners until they built their own catchments. However, the well remained one of the only reliable sources of water.

This Government well was sunk to approximately ninety feet in the 1850s.

A steel cable was attached to two forty gallon buckets. One bucket lifted the water up and emptied its contents into a chute which directed it into either a trough or a tank mounted on a vehicle; the other was lowered into the water for refilling. The steel

cable was also attached to a separate circular wooden structure around a central shaft with an arm, to which a horse was harnessed so that it could be turned quickly to walk in the opposite direction. The buckets were lifted and lowered as the structure was rotated by the walking horse.

One hundred bullocks, drinking from the well simultaneously, required a lot of water. Water was bucketed into wooden troughs, made of hollowed and joined redgum logs (initially, each log was eighty feet long), accommodated flocks of sheep, herds of cattle and bullock teams.

The Whim Well was last used by William Mills in 1938. It was partly washed away in 1940 by one of the worst floods in the history of the settlement.

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We were lucky enough to have Steve's wife Wendy staying back at the caravan park who rewarded us with Hot Scones and Lemonade Icy Poles following our return from a ride on a rather warm day. We also visited Magnetic Hill where our Tour Leader pointed out with his Engineering Experience that it is all a optical illusion and there is nothing Magnetic about the hill, I beg to differ as my compass needle was fluctuating. We dropped into the Pekina Hotel where we were shown the Mystical Wall Mural by the Publican along with a few cold refreshments and it is quite well worth dropping into this hotel to experience this mural and the illusion it gives.

The tour organised by Peter was exceptional and only one puncture occurred over the tour which is remarkable when you consider the terrain that we were riding on and we all got home safely with no injuries sustained or damage to bicycles although the same can't be said for Steve's motor vehicle following a close encounter with Skippy

Above Left: Steve's wife Wendy stayed at the Melrose Camp and tirelessly cooked scones for the riders following a good ride

Above Right: A very large Magnet at Magnetic Hill / Illusion or Not??

Below Right: At the Pekina Hotel in front of the Mystical Wall Mural and what a truly mystical experience it was, and the cold beer just to die for.



Ride report written by David Wilson SARCC Member.

