



*I dedicate this book to Laena
D'Alton our second
granddaughter*

July 2004 by John C.E. D'Alton Toowong Queensland
Australia.

I produced this book 2004 Victoria Journey using
OpenOffice.Org (OOO) an Open Source Software application.

I scanned images with my Olympic colour scanner.

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www.paradox.com.au/~jcdalton/JCED15.htm



Victoria is the small state at the southern part of Australia, across Bass Strait from Tasmania.



**Map of part of Victoria
the part where we travelled**



Green is our route by car
Red spots are our night/s stays

Entry costs are for each person.

Accommodation costs are for the two of us, for the room.

Friday 30 April 2004

We departed

Temperature about 16C. Travelled today 57km.
Our suitcases, mine weighed 20 kg, Marie's 19 kg. My weight 61 kg.

We departed at 9.10am Maria took us in her car to the Brisbane domestic airport. I had booked and paid for our Virgin Blue seats on the Internet some time ago. Cheaper seats but not the \$99 ones. Our seats 7E and 7F were on a Boeing 737-700. Somewhere over NSW we bought a coffee and muffin each for \$10.50. When we could see the ground through clouds it was just as dry and brown as when we flew to Tasmania October last year 2003. This includes the last 15 minutes from Melbourne. Our country is still in drought. So sad to see.

Arrived Melbourne Airport

We arrived at 1.10pm and arranged our Hertz rental car inside the airport. We walked over the street to the big building which is a hotel and the ground floor houses the various rental cars. I drew attention to a Hertz woman to various scratches and marks which are usually marked on a drawing of a car. She put little clear plastic stickers about the size of a 50cent piece on about ten places. It was the usual cold almost drizzly weather as we drove our car with the registration number of 393 HHD of a silvery Toyota Camry which was quite new having only 26585km on the odometer. As soon as Marie saw her number plate she gave her the nickname "Heidi".



We drove along the highway to Melbourne and exited onto Bell Street so that we did not have to pay a toll on the new City Link. We saw trams at a couple of places on streets which were the terminas' so we knew we were in this lovely old city of Melbourne. Even after only a half an hour we noticed how much better the vehicle drivers were which we have mentioned in detail in our previous travel books. So much better than Queensland drives. So much more patient and courteous.

We arrived at Lilydale and booked into our first night at the Best Western Billanook Country Inn for \$98.00 at 4.10pm. Our seniors card gave us a small discount.

We drove about 500mt to the shops where we had dinner of pizza at a pizza café. The pizzas were about the best we have ever eaten. It rained most of the night. We 'phoned Lyn in Eltham.

Saturday 1 May 2004

To Morwell

Temperature 13C Travelled today 164km.

Still a bit drizzly but negated by lovely scenery in this hilly part of northern Melbourne. We checked out a lavender farm at Wandin North of which we had found information about it at the Brisbane ABC Garden Show in April. It was to open at 10am but we didn't wait as the lavender was not in bloom so it wasn't much of a disappointment. Then a few minutes later at Seville t buy some food, bread, butter and so on. We had morning tea in a lovely little tearoom at Gembrook. Gembrook is the eastern terminus of the Puffing Billy train.

Driving south were very close to the town of Officer where I got my first job decades ago. Then past Pakenham on the M1 Princess Freeway.

We stopped at a big fruit and vegetable shop then on to Moe. Past Drouin, Warragul and Trafalgar to Moe.

Moe

This is where the Gippsland Historical Museum is situated. \$4.00 each entrance fee for a very good museum with old restored buildings. Some parts are used for various functions. The was a man teaching a woman woodworking in the woodworking shed. Then on to Morwell where my step sister Jill lives with her husband Laurie.

Morwell

We arrived at their home at 3.15pm.

Jill and Laurie Porter



Jill is my Step-Sister. We had much to talk about in their centrally heated home. Laurie worked in the electric from coal power stations almost all his working life. The big mines and power stations in Yallourn and Morwell.

Jill put on a nice dinner for us. Laurie has an illness which makes it very hard for him to eat. Jill has to puree all his food. He had his meals in the lounge.

Sunday 2 May 2004

To Walhalla

Temperature 5C Travelled today 64km.

Just around the corner from Jill's home we bought Heidi's first drink. 27Lt at 97c/Lt for \$26.00.

We took Jill but not Laurie in Heidi to Walhalla. The C466 is a good road to Walhalla winds up into the hills and mountains through Erica and Rawson where gold was discovered in the 1900th century.

We arrived at Walhalla at 10.30am at a cute old town. We walked around and had lunch in a café which was so big. I ordered a baked potato with the fillings but it was two spuds. So another "doggie bag" for me. We drove up to the old mine shafts where one is still open for tourists. We three didn't do that so we watched a video tape about the towns golden history. Very interesting!

We left at 2.00pm to drive a different way back by Jills navigation on C481 to arrive home at 3.15pm.

I had a sleep while Marie looked through Jill and Laurie's travel albums, one being in Europe. They have travelled a bit but unfortunately it's not now possible due to Laurie's illness.

Monday 3 May 2004

To Lakes Entrance

Temperature 8C Travelled today 183km.

After a sad farewell we departed Jill and Laurie's place at 9.30am. We drove into the city centre then took the wrong road to proceed eastward. We drove on A1, now called the Princess Highway because it's not the new wide M1 but nevertheless a very good smooth flat road through Traralgon and Sale. At 11.30am we had lunch in Stratford which prides itself of being a little bit of England in Australia. At the little tourist toilets near a school I took a photo of a plaque which marks the place where a time capsule was buried on the 1st of January 2000 which is to be lifted on the 1st of January 2050.

On to Bainsdale to Lakes Entrance. We arrived at 1.15pm and I went into the Tourist Information Centre. I asked about the Great Alpine Road B500 highway up via Omeo to Mount Hotham which was closed yesterday due to a snow storm. I was advised to check again tomorrow. They gave me the 'phone number of the RACV service station in Omeo. We drove along the pretty Esplanade to a Budget motel. We booked into the Lakes Waterfront Motel for \$63.00.

Lakes Entrance is a bit similar to the Gold Coast in Queensland only smaller, it could become Victoria's GC if it was closer to Melbourne. There are about fifty accommodation places so for off season there would be no need to book ahead.

We drove the 1km to the shops and walked around then back home for dinner in our room.

Tuesday 4 May 2004

To Bright

Temperature 12C Travelled today 242km

We woke to a sunny warmer day and hoped that we could go to Bright via the Great Alpine Road through Mt. Hotham. I 'phoned the RACV place in Omeo who operate the sign outside their premises as to whether the Alpine Highway was open or whether people must fit chains to the vehicle's wheels. Rental cars do not generally allow fitting of chains so we hoped it was open. The highway was clear but we shouldn't waste time driving up as the weather on mountains can change very quickly. We didn't want to have to drive back through Melbourne then northward to Bright. Bright is about 120km from Wodonga/Albury. I also 'phoned the Omeo Tourist place and they told me the same, the highway was open.

We departed Lakes Entrance at 9.15am. We bought Heidi another drink, 28lt at 95c/Lt costing \$27.00.

It was still sunny but there were some clouds up in the mountain area so we crossed our fingers.

It is a pretty drive along the Tambo River with plenty of autumn trees making a lovely display. The Alpine Highway is a gentle rise in altitude, not what one expects driving up to a mountain. At Omeo we saw the RACV petrol station sign that still read "**Road Open**" but as the clouds were close by we did not even stop and visit the Post Office and other historical buildings. The weather looked as if it was closing in. This was at 11.30am.

Another half an hour or so we were driving in drizzle, fog and wind with the visibility about 30mt. Snow knee deep which had been pushed off the highway by snow ploughs.

Marie became frightened, no, terrified.



She didn't want me to stop anywhere but I just had to so I could at least take a few photographs. See the photos in the album showing how bad it was. This was through Dinner Plain and a few minutes to the Mt. Hotham ski resort. I so wanted to show the beautiful views of the mountains here where I skied for a week in 1986. Lovely memories!

Mount Hotham

We knew that we should not stop because if it was cold enough the water on the highway would freeze which meant it would be slippery and dangerous. I took four

photos then over the top driving down the western side. After about twenty minutes Marie felt much better, may I say "relaxed"?

At the bottom is the town called Harrierville which is where one would be stopped or to put chains on wheels when approaching from this side.

Here we had lunch at 1.15pm beside a log fire at a motel/hotel. The highway to Bright is quite flat but a bit windy past tobacco, chestnut and walnut farms. Also a lavender farm but of course no blooms.

Bright

We arrived in Bright at 2.30pm in the middle of their Autumn Festival week so accommodation could have been a bit scarce. We booked into the Avenue Motel and Cottage for two nights costing \$200.00 for the two nights.

What a fine cute motel.

We had dinner in our room then 'phoned Maria in Brisbane. Marie was wondering how Mate, her new budgerigar was behaving. He was OK albeit a bit agro.

Wednesday 5 May 2004

Sightsee Bright

Temperature 8C Travelled today 22km
Sunny all day.

Up at 8am. It rained during the night. Today was to just sightsee Bright. They have their Autumn Festival each year which commenced a few days ago and would continue until the weekend. We drove to the Historical Museum which used to be the Bright railway station as there was a lot of activity in this area due to gold mining then later logging. The museum was closed and after I took a photo of the "station" we drove back to the town centre, parked Heidi and walked around the town. A lovely little town with a clock tower in the main street.

We came across a Town Crier suitably dressed and ringing a hand bell. Then drove about 1km out of town to The Tobacco Sheds. We did not expect to see such a place. Tobacco is grown in the district but there was no tobacco here, the shed was a big tin shed about 50mt x 20mt filled with junk. Actually a lot was quite useful and no doubt valuable. Just about anything one can imagine. Furniture, white goods, radios, telephones, roller skates, nuts and bolts, electric power insulators, toys etc etc.



Another separate building with lots of separate rooms with much of the same only in better and some antique.

Clothes, books, records, etc etc. While we were at the place there was nice music playing, old 40s to 70s music.

In the newer part Marie purchased a CD of the music. Then we had a nice simple lunch in their little café. Open sandwiches. Marie bought some bottles of raspberry and blackberry sauces for \$6.40. Also a bottle of ginger cordial for the D'Altons, yummy.

Then over the other side of town we visited the Gold Mine Battery. The people who run this are old people who also operate the Historical Museum, they can't be in two places at once. This place has a gold battery, a battery which is not an electronic battery as in a radio but the machine that batters the gold ore. It consists of six or more big rods that act like pistons in a car engine. Up and down onto the gold ore to smash it to a gravel size. This is separated by mixing it with water and mercury. The gold sinks to the bottom.

We had afternoon tea which was included in the little entrance fee of \$5.00. Then back where we parked Heidi at the rear of the Information Centre.

We walked along the Ovens River where I took a few photos of lovely autumn Bright. One particularly good one shows the reflections in the water.



We drove back along the river where I took a photo of the Federation Swing Bridge, the Old Railway bridge and the Star Bridge.

Back home for dinner in our room.

Thursday 6 May 2004

To Wangaratta

Temperature 5C Travelled today 139km
Sunny all day.

Departed at 8.30am after taking a photo of the ice on Heidi, see the photo in the album of Marie scraping some into a little heap on Heidi's boot. Yes it was cold during the night and was still foggy this morning as we drove out.

Continuing along the Great Alpine Road, at Eurobine we bought two bottles of blackberry wine, a jar of berry jam and punnet of raspberries at a little fruit farm. We passed another lavender farm, chestnut farm, hops farm and tobacco farm. We left the Alpine Road to drive on C527 and headed north to arrive at Yakandandah through some nice country again. We arrived at 10am in this town where the Australian movie was filmed called Strange

Bedfellows with Michael Caton and Paul Hogan. A cute little one street town. We walked along both sides of the street following a tourist information sheet. Very interesting!

Then onward to Beechworth. Another historical gold town and also a lot to do with the infamous Ned Kelly Gang. We had lunch at the famous Beechworth Bakery. We had to be careful of the European Wasps that were flying around everywhere. We were warned to be vigilant when eating and drinking that one does not get into ones mouth. They could cause death!

We didn't visit the Gaol that Ned Kelly was held in but walked along the streets for awhile. We drove westward and arrived in Wangaratta at 2.15pm.

Wangaratta

We booked into a Budget motel, Miller's Cottage Motel for \$65.00. Then did our usual drive around the town. A big well kept clean city.

Marie bought a plant at a plant nursery. Back home for dinner of Chinese noodles, fresh raspberries and cream.

Friday 7 May 2004

To Mansfield

Temperature 7C Travelled today 144km
Sunny day.

We departed at 8.30am and drove to the railway station. I took a photo of the Wangaratta station of the XPT (Extra fast train) track which is below the level and separated by about 20mt of the ordinary rails.

Then we drove a couple of km on the M31 Highway, the main route to Melbourne to the south and Sydney to the north. We visited the Wangaratta Information Centre which has a fantastic Doll's House display. It was built by Mrs Stell who was 87 at the time. She is now 95 and still checks on it from time to time. We left the M31 and got onto the old Hume Highway to Glenrowan.

Glenrowan

This is the historical town due to the infamous Ned Kelly Gang. We visited the Kelly Museum and paid \$15.00 and saw the excellent animated tour which went from room to room. A little like Disney World. We recommend this museum to anyone. A group of primary school children from Melbourne were there with us and were very quiet and attentive. We did another little museum next door then lunch at a café across the road.

We then took a small road to get to Mansfield. We passed a farm of Opuntia cactus so Marie took a photo. It's illegal to grow this cactus in Queensland which caused so much trouble in the early 1900s.

Heidi was very thirsty and was glad that we arrived in a little town called Moyhu where we bought 29lt at 105c/lt for \$30.00. A bit expensive.

Onward through Whitfield. This area has many relics from the Kelly Gang days including the tree where he was hung. From Whitfield the road is narrow which winds up through some mountainous country, just the place for criminals to hide. Of course the views were spectacular. On our way today we saw hundreds of white cockatoos and galahs.

We arrived at Mansfield at 3.45pm.

Mansfield



We visited the Information Centre which again was the Railway station years ago. Two old carriages are positioned at the platform a which houses some of the information. We shopped for our supplies at the local supermarket then onto the Mansfield Country Resort which is about xx17km south-east of the town. We arrived there at 4.15pm to book in. I was given a bunch of fresh flowers for Mothers Day, well for Marie really.

Mansfield Country Resort

This we arranged with RCI months ago. There are about thirty self contained units, almost like a house as are often these resorts.

Our unit was a newer big one. All brick. Kitchen with all the necessary implements, a lounge dining area about 10mt x 7mt, a main bedroom with ensuite, a smaller bedroom with two beds where we slept. The table was set for four people and nice welcoming note. A bathroom,

toilet
and
a



small laundry nook. Air-conditioned by a big reverse cycled unit. Heidi stayed under a carport which was the closest of any resort we have ever been to in the world. From the back of her, the boot to the back door was about 3mt, very close when one has to handle heavy suitcases.

Marie cooked fresh vegetables and chicken for dinner. We watched the TV, ABC and CH9 garden shows then

some footy for me, I saw Essendon defeat the Western Bulldogs (ex Footscray).

Saturday 8 May 2004

Stay Home

Temperature 2C Travelled today 0km

Very thick fog and cold. I walked to the office which they call The Trading Post because it sells a small range of groceries. Newspapers have to be ordered and I was there to collect the Saturday Sun Herald newspaper that I had ordered yesterday.

This resort is alive with various wildlife, kangaroos, white cockatoos, magpies and so on. Some birds came to our unit so we fed them some bread. The fog lifted at about 11.15am. This was to be a rest day so I watched some football after lunch. I saw North Ballarat defeat Box Hill. After dinner we drove around to the Lodge which is a sort of meeting place. The resort had two men who run a little tourist four wheel drive off road tourist drive into the bush. One of them spoke about the making of the film The Man From Snowy River which was made in the area, very interesting.

I bought Brian's CD for \$20.00 which has 49 very nice photos of the area on it. They put on a few little nibbles a little plastic glasses of wine. Marie stayed to see the movie again. Four other people sat around the big log fire and talked for awhile then left. We were on our own. We enjoyed the film which we had seen years ago.

Back home where Marie went to bed as I watched another game of footy, the Brisbane Lions defeated North Melbourne (Kangaroos).

Sunday 9 May 2004

To Lake Eildon

Temperature 7C Travelled today 175km
Mothers Day.

I gave the present that Maria had given to me to give to Marie.

Westward on B320 to Bonnie Doon then south wandering around around the lake and on a dirt track in places and through hilly country.

Lake Eildon is a big lake which primarily is for the use of the fruit growing industry. It was down to 15% capacity not only due to the drought but so much is released to the fruit areas. As I explained before, the lake was dry at Bonny Doon and we did not see water until we arrived at the town of Eildon. It is a nice little town so we had lunch in one of the two cafés, the Billabong Café. A fisherman's basket which was quite big. Then we drove to drive over the dam wall but it was closed. The dam wall was being worked on we were told. So back into town to get onto the Goulburn Valley road B340.

Through Alexandra having passed vineyards, olive farms and deer farms. We did stop to visit and test a couple of wines in Snobs Creek. Onto Merton and eastward to home.

Somewhere today we bought Heidi some more petrol, 28lt at \$1.00/lt costing \$28.00.

Not far from home we stopped at a plaque to show that Hume and Hovel passed this way. Also I took a couple of photos of a rusty farm shed.

Dinner at home. We had read on the resorts information that there was a plague of millipedes in the resort. I found a couple in the bathroom, about 15mm long and 2mm thick.

Monday 10 May 2004

To Mansfield Town

Temperature 7C Travelled today 39km

Today we just wanted to see the cemetery and town. We drove to the cemetery to see the graves of the policemen who captured Ned Kelly and his Gang.

A small nursery visited where Marie bought two echeverias then lunch in a café. I collected my E-mails from the Ski Inn café which cost me \$3.00 for fifteen minutes. We booked a meal at the Delatite Hotel for schnitzel night. For Wednesday night. The town would be a bit busier during the snow season but not exceptional as one shop woman said most people drive straight through to Mount Buller.



Back home at 3pm. I walked around the resort reading the little signs strategically located to explain the resort and area. Quite interesting. I took a couple of photos of trees for our artist Maria.

After dinner we again went to the Lodge for the usual Gettogether which is the time for resort people to meet each other. A couple of wines and nibbles and talk. WQE talked to a couple of young American Air force people, a man and a woman.

Tuesday 11 May 2004

To Shepparton

Temperature 8C Travelled today 297km
No fog, sunny.

Onto B320 again then northward on the Midland Link Highway B300 to Benalla. Flat country past Lake Nillahcootie which seemed full. We arrived in Benalla which is on what was the Hume Highway but now bypassed by the new highway M31 at 9.30am.

Benalla

We went straight to the Information Centre which has a wonderful display of old clothes. Mostly women's beautiful dresses which cost only \$2.00 entry. Also another room with a sound tape about Ned Kelly. Lunch at KFC for a change where we tried their new item, the Twister which is quite wholesome. Then to the park to see Weary Dunlop's statue. The Art Gallery wasn't much though.

Shepparton

At 12.30pm we drove onward to Shepparton on the Midland Highway B300. Very flat country. About 10km from Shepparton we began to see the many fruit orchards. Apples, pears, plums, apricots, peaches and so on.

The SPC Ardmona factory retail outlet shop no longer is open so we went onto the other big Campbells food factory. There we bought some thing mainly for John and Lyn. A map on the wall in their shop showed where Ardmona is now situated in Mooroopna about 5km west of the closed one. So we drove back through Shepparton on to the Midland Highway to the SPC Ardmona outlet which is big. As big as many Coles/Woolworths food shops. We again bought more things for John and Lyn.

On our way back just before the main street in a little park called Monash Park was a herd of cows, not real live cows but fibreglass cows. They were painted in various colours and had some meaningful words painted on them. Another couple photos in the album. They were called Moving Cowart.

We drove on C366 which was a narrow road southward then for a change on a little hilly section to arrive at Euroa. This has also been bypassed by the M31. On to Merton and home at 5.30pm.

Wednesday 12 May 2004

To Mount Buller

Temperature 11C Travelled today 158km

We departed at 9.00am and got more petrol for Heidi in Mansfield before heading to Mt. Buller. A sunny day with a few clouds in the east past the mountain though.

Another drink for Heidi, 44lt at 103c/lt costing \$45.00. The most expensive so far on this journey. The two lane road is a good smooth one which would be busy in a few weeks time. We passed through Merijig and Mirimbah which is where the gate is situated before ascending up the usual windy road to Mt. Buller ski area, arriving at 10.25am. Just past Mirimbah is the entry gate to continue up to Mt. Buller is situated. This is where one could need to fit chains to be allowed to continue. The time we took driving up from the Mirimbah gate to Mt. Buller ski area was 50 minutes which is 15km in length. We saw some advertisements about accommodation at Mirimbah being within minutes of the snow which is rather misleading.

What a change in regards to weather to our Mt. Hotham experience, so nice and sunny and not too cold, probably about 10C.

We drove up to the base of the summit which is past various chair lifts and accommodation places, about 1km further on. There was remnants of the snow fall a day or so ago. Marie stayed in the car as I walked up the small

summit, about 500mt to the plaque at the top. Of course I took a few photos. We drove back down and parked at the rear of the transport centre and went to a ski clothes shop and asked where we could have a light lunch. The woman told us at the Apres Chalet across the street. This street is called Burke Street and is the bottom of one of the ski runs. Marie ordered a beef burger and hot potato chips and I beer battered hot potato chips. We ordered at 11.45am and were finally served lunch at 12.20pm, a long time considering there were only about six other people in the bar. It cost \$12.00.

We drove on the same road back to Mansfield as there's no choice. We arrived home at 2.15pm. At 6pm we drove back to Mansfield for what's called schnitzel Night at the Delatite Hotel. We joined a group of other people at the resort including the two young Americans. It was a very nice meal for \$10.00. On the way back home we saw the light and smoke from a bush fire in the distance. We stopped, turned Heidi's engine off and got out of the car to look at the sky. It is so dark and clear, no lights to spoil the view. The view being the stars in the sky. The Milky Way looked so different and bright compared to seeing it anywhere else we have been, where we have taken notice.

Back home so we watched a TV programme called **Diana's Men.**

Thursday 13 May 2004

Stay home

Temperature 6C Travelled today 0km

We did our packing for tomorrow's journey to John and Lyn in Eltham.

We walked on the dry Lake Eildon bed where there is someone's houseboat gradually being vandalised and falling apart because the owners haven't done anything about. It was high and dry, see photos in the album. A bit further along is a petrol/fuel station for boats that would normally be on the lake. It also was high and dry, see photos in the album. At a guess I think that when the lake is full the depth of the water from the lake bed would be about 20mt. The percentage of water in the lake at the time was 18%. We were told that even with such a low level Lake Eildon would still be holding more water than Sydney Harbour. Amazing!

Back home then I walked around the Resort and played some Putt-Putt Golf.

Friday 14 May 2004

To Eltham

Temperature 4C Travelled today 169km

We made the unit clean and tidy as we always do and departed at 8.45am. I left the Resort's key and got my \$20.00 deposit back at the Trading Post.

We travelled on B320 road again then the Maroondah Highway and arrived in Yea at 10.15am. We enjoyed a hot coffee each at a little café near a wood fire. The café was called Amble Inn Café.

From here southward on the Melba Highway (B310) passing through more pretty hilly countryside. Lots of different farms, olives and vineyards. Quite prosperous we suspect. The grass was green.

Marie bought some fresh mushrooms at a side stall which operated on the honour system. We turned westward through mountainous country as it's the western extreme of The Great Dividing Range. Through Kinglake, a little town John and Lyn took us to last November.

It may have been rubbish clean up week as there were things out on the roadside. One I stopped at and collected two laptop computers.

We arrived at John and Lyn's home at 12.15am.

Lyn was at an art class so John took us to Greensborough to a big shopping centre. It was surprise for John because we purchased a new VCR recorder at Harvey Norman for them, costing \$149.00. Back home for a nice get together and a night by their wood fire. So cosy!

I gave them the CDs of their wedding and Maria and David's wedding which I recorded/burnt onto CDs.

Saturday 15 May 2004

Local sightsee

Temperature 6C Travelled today 0km

John drove on part of where Marie and I would go to get to the Melbourne Airport on Tuesday, a dummy run.

John drove me in his car to Network Overdrive in Coburg which is run by Greg Clarkson, John's friend. This is where the computer which is my ISP server is now situated. Then to Greg and Elizabeth's home in North Coburg to see their baby son, Zachariah, a good little boy who I nursed for about ten minutes. Just before home we went to the Eltham Football ground where we saw most of the 4th quarter of a footy match where Eltham defeated North Heidelberg which is a suburb about 15km south west.

While this was happening Lyn and Marie went to where Laena learns horse riding. Then to a clothes place to buy good cheap clothing.

After dinner we all went to the Eltham Skating Rink to see Joshua compete in a roller blade race of about twenty laps. He is quite good and fast. After dinner we watched most of the Royal Wedding in Denmark, the Danish Crown Prince Frederick marry Tasmanian woman, Mary Donaldson. Mary is rather pretty, Tasmanians are.



Sunday 16 May 2004

To Melbourne City

Temperature not read Travelled today 72km

John was our navigator as I drove in Heidi. The idea was so he could take us to the city to visit the new

Federation Square and on the way drive where there were lots of Autumn leaves and old houses. Through Mont Albert, Surry Hills, Camberwell, Hawthorn and Richmond. We parked in a parking station in Flinders Street for \$8.00 which was for all day as it was Sunday. We had lunch in a cafe in Federation Square then walked over the Princess Bridge to the Victorian Art Centre. Then back to see a bit more of Federation Square. Marie and I don't really like it very much.

Then the same on the way back home, a different way to see more old houses and Autumn. Via Fitzroy, Collingwood where I took a photo of a front of a very small house. John said that these houses are so narrow one would have to position the beds from front to back of the house, not from side to side, so narrow.

We drove into Studley Park for a short distance, Bulleen and Lower Plenty to home. A very nice day thanks to John.

Laena has a budgerigar which she named **Wings** which I took this photo of with its cage door open.



Monday 17 May 2004

Home

Temperature not read Travelled today 23km

John was at work, teaching at Tabor College so Marie and I drove to Greensborough where Lyn took Marie the other day so I could buy some trousers, which I did. We called into a plant nursery at Eltham on the way back, home at 11am. I washed Heidi by using water from a bucket. At present in Melbourne there are water restriction which seems strange in a place which one considers has plenty of rainfall.

Tuesday 18 May 2004

To Brisbane, home

Temperature not read Travelled today 23km

The 1st petrol stop for Heidi about half way to the airport, 47lt at \$1.00/lt costing \$47.00.

It was easier because I did a dummy run with John although we almost took a wrong turn at a roundabout. Then west of Dalton Road we had to be careful as Lyn explained to me to exit the M80 to drive to the airport. The next and last tricky bit was to get to Hertz' rental drop off place. The last 50 mt at the terminal is a bit chaotic. We could not see the Hertz sign anywhere. Luckily there were two traffic men next to red road barriers showing people where to drive. I pulled over in the point off the road and asked one of them. He kindly pointed us to the left of where we were, then as we turned we saw the Hertz sign. Rather confusing. I remember in the USA, when we

returned our rental car in Denver, there were signs about a km away which gave me plenty of warning.

We returned Heidi and pointed out to the Hertz woman about the round plastic scratch markers. She was the same woman who put them there a couple of weeks ago.

She took one of my dockets, tapped into a handheld device and said for us to go to the office, 20mt away to finalise it. When we did the Hertz office woman said that the rental fee had been already charged to our bank so there was nothing else to do.

At baggage check-in we knew we would be overweight. Both our suitcases weighed 25kg. My backpack was 12kg and Marie's hand luggage was 10kg. The Virgin Blue young man said we would have been charged overweight if the plane was full. We were lucky again. Thanks VB.

Our seats 2e and F on a new 737-800 were great. We took off at 2.15pm and arrived in Brisbane at 3.45pm. The decent was about from the Qld-NSW border with the Gold Coast on our right. We had never seen the Gold Coast like that before. The decent is usually further west.

We got a taxi home which cost \$32.60.

Back home to 39 Agnes Street. Home sweet home.

My weight 62kg about 1kg increase.

End -----

A few details

Distance we travelled in Heidi	2056Km
Cost of rental	\$1073.93
Cost of petrol	\$203.00
Cost of accommodation	not worked out
Virgin Blue	\$448.00
Travel insurance	\$166.00

A very enjoyable Journey to the state which I refer to as my second state. Victoria is my second state because I did 99% of my schooling there, the first few months was in Hobart, Tasmania, my first state, my home state.

End JCED July 2004.

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