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The Great Escape Oz May 2021 Newsletter

G'day to all Rallyitives and those that are interested in joining our trusty group.

THE GREAT ESCAPE OZ CAR RALLY FOR CURE4 CYSTIC FIBROSIS FOUNDATION

SATURDAY 18TH TO SATURDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 2021

Also we have the Riverina Mini Rally, most of this has been put together by Lloyd Ohlin with help from his Shepperton Rotary Friends, a Big Shout Out for Lloydie and friends.

**RIVERINA MINI RALLY SATURDAY 12 TO MONDAY 14TH MAY 2021 STARTING IN
BALRANALD AND FINISHING I CARROTHOOL**

My concern at the moment and speaking with Lloydie is the interest in the event, I have only received 3 entry forms, Lloyd tells me that he knows others are coming but no registration. Track Books need to be printed and I will only print the number of books to the registration received.

There was lots of interest back in March but with only 3 registrations both Lloyd and I will need to think about cancelling the event as it's no fun with 3 cars.

So please if you are coming, please fill in the ENTRY FORM attached and return to me by 24th May 2021 and then we can decide and hopefully start printing Track Books.

Lloyd tells me we need to give the caterers some estimate of numbers so another reason for registration.

If you have not booked accommodation from the info provided over the last 2 months this will go quickly if it has not gone all ready, remember it is a long weekend and people are getting out, there is less traffic in the CBD of Sydney than traffic on bush roads, so be quick or miss out, all the accommodation contact details are in previous Newsletters go to the website: www.thegreatescapeoz.com

Remember most of us haven't seen each other since September 2019 so there is a lot of catching up to do, so get you entry form in and we will see you all in Balranald. It's all in preparation for the Big One in September from Nuriootpa SA to Augathella Qld via Birdsville.

Survey tracking.

It was a dual reason I was out there this month doing the tracking for the September rally and also catch up and thank the people who saved my life in December last year when coming across from Innamincka to Birdsville via the Cordillo Downs Road, truck broke down, the rest is history, I still think myself lucky and I really appreciate every day. Not sure if I was totally prepared for what was in front of me, but it had to happen.

Yes, Sharon came with me as I was on a short lead after December. We went out to complete the final survey for the September Rally in early May covering well over 6000klms as we did a lot of double tracks due to the threat of rain/floods as we experienced in 2016, don't want to relive that again.

I must say this was a very emotional tracking trip for me, which I was not prepared for, as I was going into the areas and catching up with people who I owe a lot. I caught up with Michael Thompson, who was the fuel tanker driver who found me, collapsed in the dry creek, when he got out of his truck and followed my footprints till, he found me. Although, we have spoken by phone a number of times since the ordeal, it was great to shake his hand and give him a hug and talk about things. We had a very wonderful, a little emotional dinner with Michael, Bec his wife, Keith his father and Frank a family friend in the very lovely Brick Hotel in Quilpie. It was just what I needed to share information and to fill in the gaps for me, the last time I remember on the fateful day was around 12.30 to 1 pm on Thursday 4 Dec'20, he found me at 6.30/6.45 pm same day Queensland time, I resumed consciousness at approx. 9 pm in the homestead at Cordillo Downs Cattle Station, so I lost 8.30 hours as I was unconscious and Michael was there for 3.30 hours of that time, along with the wonderful Brooks family at Cordillo.

A difficult thing for me was to find a gift for someone who has saved my life, just think for a minute in what I have just said, and your feelings. But of course the wonderful Sharon can always save the day and the gift was found. So a great night at the Brick Hotel, Quilpie was had by all, with food, wine and in some way relief for me to know more, that will be expanded and further emotion when I catch up with the Brooks family at Cordillo Downs. Michael will be receiving the Guardian Angel Award from the Trucking Industry acknowledging the steps he took to find me.

A number of days later we headed out from Birdsville via that terrible Cordillo Downs Road, (more like a track) to Innamincka, where we caught up with the Brooks family who own and run the Cordillo Downs Station, along with about another 5 or 6 stations in the surrounding the area. Just to give you some perspective of the size of their spread, during our visit I asked Anthony Brooks how many hectares they own in total, he gave it a little though and said around 8 million hectares. Later in the day I checked with google on how many hectares make up Victoria, the answer 23 million hectares, so the Brooks family have property a third the size of Victoria, of course this is all Pastoral Lease property, which they have had going back 3 generations, in South Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory. Some years ago when setting the tracks out for the waterlogged 2016 GE, I met Anthony's father David and mother, David gave me a lot of history and information and I left his company with lots of knowledge and understanding from a very pleasant man, who loves the bush.

Sharon and I had a very pleasant afternoon with Anthony and Janet Brooks on Cordillo Downs Cattle Station, although its big they only have around 7000 head of cattle on that station, as water is not plentiful, and feed is patchy.

Janet and her daughter Neve were the main people keeping me alive from around 7pm to 10.30pm before the helicopter with the paramedic arrived. Janet kept the supply of water up to me after I regained consciousness at about 9 pm, she maintained a working discussion with a doctor on the other end of the phone instructing her what to do. My condition was terrible, Anthony said to me while we spoke that afternoon, and I quote, 'I have seen lots of people dehydrated, but none like you, I did not give you any hope'. So you can imagine how that felt, my emotions kick in and I can say there was a tear or two in my eyes, they were also tears of joy and thanks. So more blanks to fill in from those talks with Anthony and Janet, as daughter Neve was back in Boarding School.

When the chopper arrived, Peter the paramedic went into action, making sure all my vitals were working and his attention was to get my temp back to normal, maintain a slow intake of water, get me on a drip and prepare me for the chopper flight of around 40 minutes to the gas field base at Moomba.

Up until leaving on the chopper Janet and daughter Neve had kept me alive and I am so grateful for their care and comfort they provided during those doubtful hours for me surviving. Again, I was rattling my brain in regard to a gift, again the wonders of Sharon came up with the answer and we passed over a gift to Janet, which she loved.

Michael Thompson, the Brooks family are all special family friends now and I will be indebted to them all forever. God bless them all.

Now back to the track etc for this year, there are some old favourites and some exciting new areas along with new people and yes you will get to meet Michael Thompson and the Brooks family, as we are having lunch with them at Cordillo Downs Cattle Station.

We will get to meet the character who some 12 months reopened the Betoota Pub, he is a Brisbane panel beater and a successful businessman, a barrel of laughs, the Pub was a crumbling wreck, and he has put it back together, big cost, big gamble, he will win.

No more secrets. Just get your entry forms in and be part of all the surprises.

RAFFLE TICKETS

Now Raffle Tickets, what is going on, it's such an easy way to get your fundraising going and great prizes to win. \$2 a ticket 50 tickets to a book, a \$100 to your fundraising total for your car. Take the book to work, take it to your footy club, get the extended family to take a few tickets, who knows they'll love you when they win. The raffle will be drawn at the WELCOME DINNER 18th September 2021 at Nuriootpa (Barossa Valley).

Send me an email with your car number and postal address and I'll send you a book with all the details of what you need to do when you have sold the book, then I'll send you another.

ENTRY FORMS ATTACHED. FILL'M IN AND GET'M BACK TO ME, SO WE CAN LOAD YOUR FUNDRAISING TOTAL.

- **RIVERINA MINI RALLY. SATURDAY 12 TO MONDAY 14TH JUNE 2021.**
- **SEPTEMBER FULL RALLY SATURDAY 18 TO SATURDAY 25 TH SEPTEMBER 2021.**