



MELBOURNE TO POREPUNKAH, VIC.

Porepunkah, at the foot of Mt Buffalo, is just 300kms north east of Melbourne and a world away from the city rat race. We stayed here on our Victorian holiday in January 2005, for the first time; it won't be our last. On the doorstep of the Mt Buffalo National Park and a mere 35kms from the summit, Porepunkah is an excellent base for a visit to this area.

On our visit here we chose to stay at the Porepunkah Bridge Caravan Park and it was the best decision we'd ever made. On the banks of the Ovens



River, this large, spacious park has a lot to offer. There is a track that runs alongside the river for quite a distance and we were told that there are several excellent fishing spots along here. Our campsite, pictured here, was right on the riverbank and the soft sound of the water flowing over

the rocky riverbed was very relaxing. Julie and Mick, the resident owners, regularly host barbecue's at the camp kitchen for park guests.

Porepunkah is a small township with a population of approximately 450 permanent residents and the place to meet many of them is the Porepunkah Hotel Bistro where the food is very good. But beware, the meals are huge; no one leaves there still hungry!



The Ovens River

A short drive north of Porepunkah on the Great Alpine Road are the townships of Myrtleford, Ovens, and Eurobin boasting attractions such as

a lavender farm, an olive grove, wineries, orchards, and berry farms, just to name a few. And 6kms to the south is the town of Bright. The streets of Bright are lined with the most magnificent trees, their dark green foliage forming a canopy over the roads. The Visitor Information Centre is conveniently located in the park on the main road and it was here that we picked up invaluable information on the many restaurants, cafés, and bakeries, gift and souvenir stores, and ski and camping equipment hire outlets that Bright has to offer.

And, of course, there is Mt Buffalo. The road to the summit goes through



The Horn

the Mt Buffalo National Park and there are several attractions along the way. Eurobin Falls, Mt Buffalo Chalet and the Monolith, Lake Catani, Bent's Lookout, and the Cathedral, are just some of the spectacular places to go. And there are all manner of things to do from bushwalking on the many tracks and trails, canoeing, fishing, and swimming at the lake, rock climbing, and skiing. On the top is The Horn and a what a marvellous picnic area it is!

To the south of Bright, nestled in the foothills of Mt Bogong, is the town

of Mt Beauty, a picture-postcard perfect town where the name says it all. There are a number of wineries around Mt Beauty, a museum showing the history of the town at the Alpine Visitor Centre, and excellent fishing in the rivers and lakes. Higher up the mountain is Falls Creek, the largest Alpine resort in Victoria. A fascinating place in the summer and brilliant in the winter, and this papier-maché snowman welcomes all visitors to the village.



Just above Falls Creek Village is Rocky Valley Lake and the Rocky Valley Dam where canoes can often be seen paddling across this large expanse of water. You can drive out along the dam wall, and further up is Pretty

Valley Lake, the highest lake in Australia.

Microlight flights from the Porepunkah Airfield are another way to see this region, from the pine forests that surround the whole area to the rivers and lakes and the mountains; a birds-eye view of the truly magnificent Victorian Alpine region.

For a few days away from the city, whether you spend your time sightseeing or just relaxing by the river, this is a great place and for somewhere to stay you can't go past Porepunkah.

You can read more about our first visit to this wonderful alpine region in our journal, *From The Mountains To The Sea*.

