

## Mulla Villa, Wollombi - 15 July

Meeting at McDonalds Thornleigh around 9:00 am, we set off up Pennant Hills Rd to the M1 and headed north, turning off at Calga to pass through Peats Ridge, Central Mangrove, and Kulnura.

From Bucketty, the road follows the route of the old Great North Road, built by convicts between 1825 and 1836. A number of the beautiful old sandstone culverts are bypassed by the current road but are clearly visible alongside as you drive along. This was a pleasant run apart from the crazy motorcyclists who often overtook us in dangerous situations.



Brian & Deb, Bob and Les were in their Morries, with Stuart & Ann and David & Karen in moderns. We arrived at Mulla Villa, 1 km south of the Wollombi township, to find Malcolm had already arrived in his Morrie ute. A bit later, Martin & Marion arrived with Dad, Phil. It was a chilly morning, with lots of frost still on the ground in the shady areas. We were met by the owner and taken through the dining area and ordered coffees while we waited for the tour of the house.

A helicopter arrived with two visitors while we were having our coffees, landing on a small area adjacent to the house.



Part of the convict-built Great North Road with Les Whale's Morrie



Only just a bit quicker than a Morrie - but less fun and just a little more expensive



Minor Torque Sept-Oct 2018

the impressive open log fire in what was the original servants' quarters.

In due course, we headed back to our cars, bade our farewells and we all headed off – some straight home, others went in to Wollombi to have look at the historic township, before turning homeward.

It was a very pleasant day, and Mulla Villa and Wollombi are highly recommended for a visit if you have never been up that way.



Mulla Villa



Lunch :)



The tour proved to be extremely interesting and was well presented. The house itself dates back to 1840, built in sandstone by convicts for the local magistrate, David Dunlop. Underneath the house are the old convict holding cells, complete with chains fixed into the walls. There was even a secret room accessible only through the floor above.

The house has four ensuite bedrooms furnished in period, which operate as B&Bs. The old Great North Road runs through the property, and part of the old convict built sandstone road is visible very close to the house.

The tour completed, we sat down to a lovely lunch and enjoyed each others' company at the long table in the restaurant, warmed by

Thanks, David, for organising another successful outing.

Les Whale

