

Edinburgh cyclist reaches Melbourne



The Edinburgh Reporter continues to monitor Edinburgh man, Andrew Dickson's charity bike ride across Australia, and the welcome news is that he is making good progress. He has reached Melbourne, and has picked up several donations for his chosen charities, the Craig Gowans' Memorial Fund and Radio Lollipop. As well as meeting many friendly and generous people along the way, he has finally managed to get photographs of some Australian wildlife, after trying in vain to snap an emu and a dingo. Also, not content to only ride 4000 miles, Andrew decided to add another 20 to his overall total.

When we last reported on Andrew he was in Eucia having just completed his first 100-mile day.

After a windy night, Andrew awoke to find the tent covered in dust and a tent peg missing, but at least the wind was blowing in the same direction as he was cycling. After reaching the Nullarbor roadhouse, he rewarded himself with a well-deserved breakfast special followed by a shave and shower. While there, he met Lesley and Kevin Landreth whose son had spent his first three years in the Princess Margaret Hospital in Perth, and they generously gave a donation, as did Barb and Stephen Nicholl from Adelaide.

Just after the road end to the Head of Bight he saw his first dingo, but it wasn't hanging about for a photo. The strange thing is that trucks, cars and camper vans don't bother them but it seems that when a Scotsman on a bike stops, even one who has showered and shaved, they're off.

The following day, Andrew met Mark Crawford, Peter Brown and Graeme Logan who are cycling as a group from Perth to Sydney

on audax bikes. Unlike Andrew, the trio had a car and caravan as a support vehicle which was being driven by Dave May. The direct route is 3000 kilometres, which they are cycling in aid of [Miracle Babies Foundation](#).

Just before Ceduna there is a fruit fly quarantine check point where folks passing by have to hand in fresh fruit, vegetables with big fines for non-compliance. Thankfully, Andrew didn't have to worry as all his food had been consumed.

After leaving Ceduna on Highway 1, Andrew turned onto the B100 which is known as Flinders Highway and follows the coast down to Port Lincoln. Within a couple of miles he had to stop, as a local farmer was moving his flock of Merino sheep to a new field.

Back onto Flinders Highway heading south, Andrew stopped after 30 miles at a place called Murphy's Haystacks. These are huge rocks which have been shaped by erosion. Attached near the top of one of the rocks was a bee hive with long curtain combs: a living organism, made up of living organisms. Due to the very atmospheric nature of the place he decided to sneak a night's camping among the formations, but was up early in case he was caught.

About 10 miles before Elliston he stopped at Mark's bakery which is a little stall with an honesty box. Mark uses a wood-fired Scotch oven which he built himself. While chatting to Mark, other tourists arrived and Nigel and Judy from Tasmania gave a donation. From there it was then on the Elliston, stopping first at the old jetty. The town is right on the Great Australian Bight and has wonderful views of the ocean.

After arriving in Port Lincoln, Andrew went straight to the library as it had started raining heavily. And was made very welcome by Marla, Sandra and the other girls who gave him some extra time and made a donation.

After leaving Port Lincoln travelling north on the B100,

Andrew settled for Tumby Bay and found a nice spot by the foreshore to pitch his tent.

The following day, at Lake Hamilton he came upon an old eating house used by travellers in the eighteen hundreds. It's no longer in use but has recently been renovated by among others, the local Caledonian Society, as a historical building. Whilst there, an 88 year old farmer came along on his quad bike and explained some of the history. He used to do everything on horseback but apparently his legs aren't what they used to be.

At Warrow he saw his first live emus, but like the dingos, they weren't for having their photos taken and 'did a runner'.

A little further on at Coffin Bay, he finally did find an animal who would pose for a photograph, although technically they were not in the wild as the kangaroos were semi-tame living in a caravan park.

✘ After reaching Port Wakefield Andrew made the correct choice of visiting the regular local market which is held at the Salt of the Earth cafe and Gallery Complex (www.facebook.com/saltoftheearthcafe) and was made very welcome by Caterina and Colin ably assisted by Beth and Cynthia. Whilst working his way through the substantial cooked breakfast and coffees he was approached by Don and Heather from Balaklava (SA) who gave a donation. He was then given a donation from the Salt of the Earth and a further from Cynthia.

He then followed Old Port Wakefield Road towards Adelaide and just before Virginia he spoke to David who was working in his front yard. David kindly invited him to stick the tent up at the back of the house, which was a great relief and also met David's wife Kyrmeen, and their little girl Ruby.

He was kindly supplied with a flask of hot water, tea bags, milk and a mug, which was just what he needed, along with

insect repellent wipes.

The following day Andrew took the B101 Princes Highway heading for Robe, but after 10 miles he realised that he had dropped his 'Lion Rampant' flag at the camping spot. Last year a similar thing happened near Chester on the Mississippi, and he just carried on, but this time he decided to return for it, and the pleasant tailwind turned into a challenging headwind, but all's well that ends well, and the flag was recovered.

At Port Campbell campsite, Andrew discovered another Scottish connection, namely Carol-Ann and Roy from Perth. Roy is an Aberdonian who moved over to Australia in the 70s and worked as an engineer in hospitals including Princess Margaret Children's Hospital in Perth who have Radio Lollipop. The couple also have relatives who stay in Linlithgow.



In addition to all those who kindly donated money to the charities concerned, The Craig Gowans' Memorial Fund and Radio Lollipop, Andrew has another couple of supporters who he would like to mention. Andrew said:- "I'd like to extend my appreciation to DJ Mark Martin of Forth 1, who I understand did a big shout out on air about my cycle trip and Falkirk FC who highlighted the trip on the club website."

Anyone wishing to contribute can do so at

virginmoneygiving.com/bikingacrossaustralia

The Edinburgh Reporter will provide regular updates on his journey, but anyone wishing to follow this remarkable man's progress more frequently can do so at <http://bikingacrossaustralia.blogspot.co.uk/>