

# In Search of that Shortcut to Kapunda

By Leigh Johnson

For me, the run to Kapunda started well before Sunday, 23 May. Peter Leppard rang me to ask whether I could take over management of the event as his arm was restricting his ability to drive.

Peter had already organised our destination, Kapunda and done some early work investigating the local features so all that remained was to map out the route and make the final arrangements.

So Peter and I decided that it would be a jointly-organised event and we took off on a Tuesday morning to map out the run. This all started relatively smoothly. We found a nice location for morning tea, albeit small but extremely cheerful and friendly, and then moved on. The roads were just right. A couple of hills but easy driving and pleasant scenery even if things weren't always autumn gold but sometimes a bit more autumn brown.

Somewhere between Tanunda and Nuriootpa things began to go "pear-shaped". We were looking for a road that would take us from Nuriootpa to Kapunda without going through Greenock. I set the GPS to find the most direct route. Which it did.

Unfortunately, what it didn't tell us (or if it did, I failed to notice) that we wouldn't be happy on this road. It took us out of Nuriootpa via a couple of sidestreets which should have got the alarm bells ringing immediately but I persisted and told Peter to "Trust the TomTom".

We were heading in the right direction on a secondary road when all of a sudden it became a thirdly road and then a fourthly road. We could have turned around but I suggested we persist and enjoy the scenery. The route did pretty much take us direct to Kapunda but unfortunately it was all unsealed and at one point just outside Kapunda we came upon a creek but there was no creek crossing. There was no ford to speak of; just a track through the creek. If there had been any water we would have had to turn around and go back.

As we came out of the creek crossing on the outskirts of Kapunda we came upon "Mary McKillop Walk" and a sealed road. Peter said it was a miracle that we'd made it and was already addressing his letter to the Vatican when we finally reached Kapunda but I advised him that no more miracles were required. It's all done and dusted.

He agreed wholeheartedly that it might be a good idea when I suggested that I was considering upgrading the GPS and we never found that direct (sealed) route..... only because there isn't one.

We checked out the Visitor Centre where we were advised that they had a lift in the building that went "up and down". Peter and I both thought that this was a very good idea and would suit our club members on the day.

We checked out the hotels and found one that would be suitable for lunch. We did a drive around the self-guided history drive in reverse (not in reverse gear) which was a bit different and then we

had to leave. I wasn't going to miss out on my 15 minutes of fame. You see, that was the day I was having my photo taken for The Advertiser. I was selling a wood stove in The Shopper and they had rung me that morning to ask whether I would be happy to be the feature article and have my photo taken at 4.30 that afternoon. "You bet", I'd said.

And so to the Sunday run. Magill to OneTree Hill was easy. Nathalie must be commended for her efforts on the day getting coffee and cakes to all of us in a reasonable time. I think the lad helping out could have done a bit more than wash the dishes (that's what you do after we've gone) but I suspect there was only one coffee machine out the back and Nathalie was probably the only one endorsed to drive it.

While we were inside, Mike Quinn was across the road trying to convince a passerby, who said that he had a Riley, to join the club. Mike was unable to convince him.

We made good time from One Tree Hill to Kapunda even though my instructions around Nuriootpa were not as accurate as they might have been. Because Peter and I had run out of time on account of my important photo-shoot I'd done that part of the run using Google. Google worked fine, it's just that I mixed up the street names. Anyway, we all turned off the main street at the right corner and got to Kapunda just in time to head in for lunch.

The view of the Hotel entering from the very new-looking deck and outdoor area at the back gives the impression that money has been spent on the hotel. The dining room is not where it's been spent! But who cares about the decor when the food is fine.

While we were having lunch at one end of the group of tables, Bev and David at the other end were talking with another prospective member who somehow met up with us. I'm not sure of the full story and I'm sure we'll hear but he did join on the day. Robert made a good decision unlike the bloke back at One Tree Hill. Welcome to the club Robert.

By the time lunch was over there was not a lot of time left for anything else and the rain that had been threatening started while we were having lunch. It was already cool and the rain made it cold but what a mixture of pleasant sounds; the unmistakable sound of tyres on a wet, road, gutters gurgling and the thudding of raindrops in downpipes.

Some of us checked out the antique shop in the main street and some checked out the art gallery in the water tank which we too should have done but most headed home. One or our number found a must-have in the antique shop; too big for the boot and possibly too big for the room but you can always extend the house.

Helen and I had only a short way to travel to a night at the Novotel in Rowland Flat via the antique shop in Tanunda; a much easier drive than all the way home. We had a great night and tootled home in the morning .

But I shouldn't have taken the route back through Gawler and should have retraced our route from the day before through Williamstown etc. I've made a mental note on a piece of paper not to do it again.