

Overview of the camp site (while waiting for dixie to boil to wash porridge billy)



With the 80th anniversary of the Frankston Jamboree fast approaching, Flinders Petrie Rover Crew recently held a camp based on 1934-5 Jamboree practices, using almost only period equipment and techniques.

Let's do

By OWEN RYAN

In late June, Flinders Petrie Rover Crew held an "experimental" camp based on the practices of the Frankston Jamboree, crossed with a Patrol camp.

Equipment sourced was as accurate as possible (some being made from scratch) and very little beyond what was recommended in articles published in the Victorian Scout magazine in the lead up to the 1934-35 Jamboree was taken, either for the Crew or personally by Rovers.

Special features of the camp included using a trench fire (dug with permission of the camp management), generally using only kerosene lighting, and food that was to the same menu (with the same quantity per person) as selected Jamboree meals (made to the Jamboree Recipe Book instructions).

The camp was held at the former Merri Plains District Campsite "Birubi", and allowed many practical old skills such as cooking on properly prepared cooking fires, axemanship, and a greater understanding of the resourcefulness needed to "rough it in comfort" with little equipment.

All of this gave a far greater appreciation of why B-P had used camping as a fundamental tool of Scouting - unlike most modern Scout camps where indoor life is simply brought outside with portable facilities such as gas stoves, kitchen sinks, hot water, electric flood

Final Parade. Some Rovers wear khaki uniforms, and salute with Scout staves, carved as a Crew project earlier this year.



The almost lost art of hand slicing a loaf of bread for breakfast toast.

the time warp ...

PHOTOS Rhys Harrop and Owen Ryan

lights and tables.

In contrast our modern features were limited to camp chairs (which were often ignored as being too far from the fire), electric torches and an esky for food safety (and even the esky had a single iceblock for the meat to sit on).

Many insights were gained into the food rations issued at the Jamboree, when compared to modern Scout camping, along with the adequacy of equipment used by Jamboree hike attendees - and testing this was a key purpose of the camp.

The camp was a preliminary step in a planned expedition to re-trace one of the Jamboree hike routes this summer, if we can find sufficient interested participants.

Our thanks go to Scout Heritage Victoria for access to original Jamboree hike food menus, equipment lists and other Frankston Jamboree details, along with other details of camp practice in the 1930s.

Thanks to 15th Essendon for letting us borrow what is probably the last Willow washing tub outside a museum, and to 2nd Ivanhoe for the almost authentically old ridge tents, along with other suitable equipment also supplied by 1st Eaglemont.

- Owen Ryan is Crew Leader, Flinders Petrie Rover Crew, Banyule District Crew.



Washing up while waiting for more water to boil in the tin billy.