Podcast 117 – Riding in Country Victoria – A Trip to Seymour

Learn English while learning about daily life in Australia, with Rob McCormack

Podcast Number 117 – Riding in Country Victoria – A Trip to Seymour

http://traffic.libsyn.com/slowenglish/podcast117.mp3

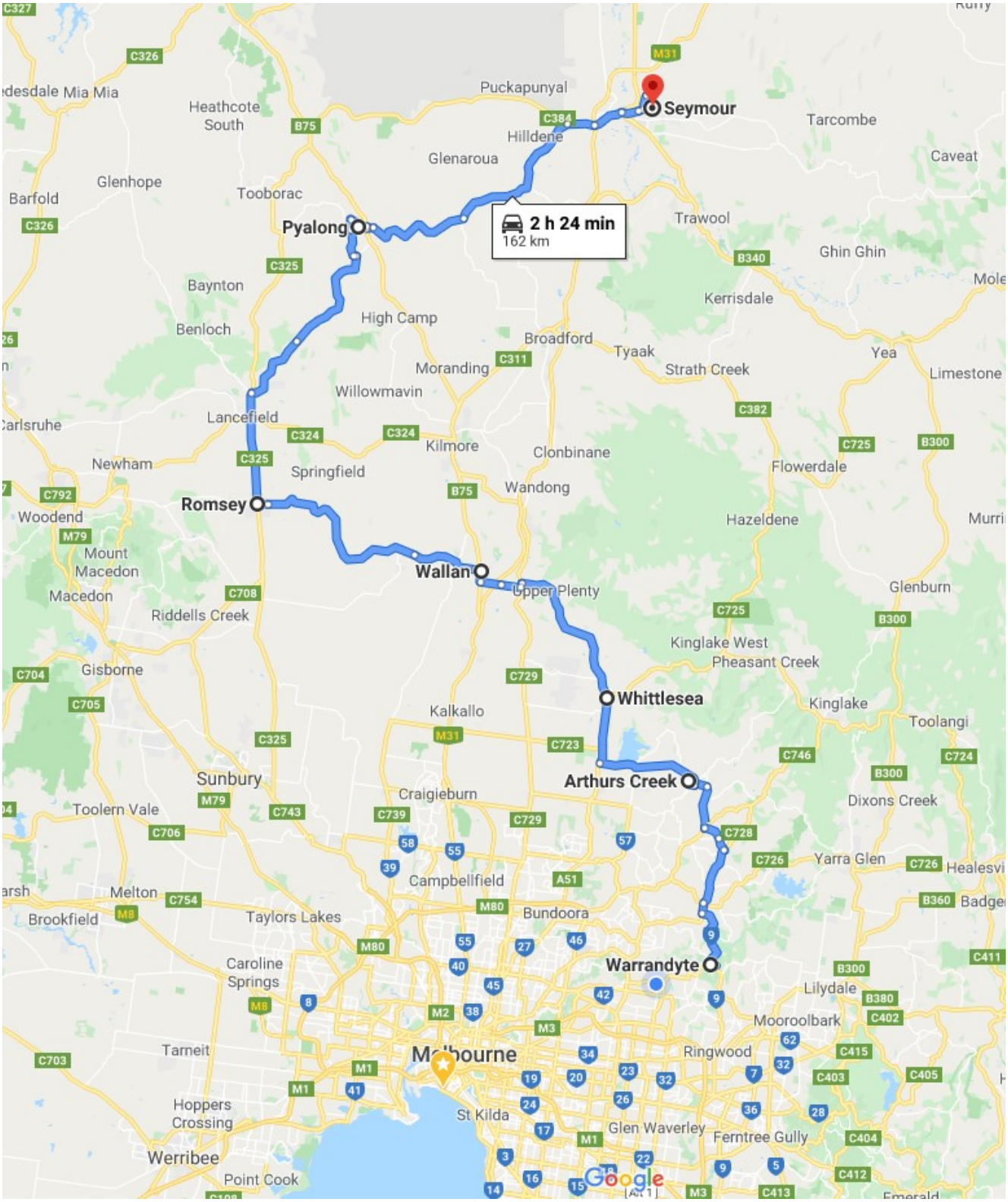
(This podcast is 10 minutes and 8 seconds long.)

Hi,

One of my favourite pastimes is riding my motorcycle (see podcast 10 https://slowenglish.info/?p=236). Riding in the city is not much fun nor particularly safe, as there is too much traffic and it usually crawls along, so of course I prefer to ride into the countryside outside Melbourne. I ride with friends or alone and I am also a member of a club for older motorcyclists like myself. We like to visit the many smaller country towns which lie outside Melbourne, in order to visit the cafes and enjoy each other's company. In this podcast, I would like to tell you about one of my solo rides to a town called Seymour, which is around 80 kilometres north of Melbourne.

When I ride my motorcycle, I generally avoid the freeways. I prefer to take the backroads which are much more interesting and with much less traffic. You get to see the countryside and the beauty of Victoria's rural areas. You also get a longer ride and can ride on roads with many more curves and corners. That's where the joy of motorcycling is, in my opinion. It's all about the corners. Leaning the bike over to go around a

corner is a wonderful feeling. Every corner needs to be taken seriously. If you make a mistake on a motorcycle when going around a corner, it can lead to an accident. At the same time, successfully riding smoothly around a corner, especially at highway speed, is a great feeling. It takes skill and concentration, so if you can do it well, it is not only a lot of fun, it also gives you a feeling of satisfaction and success.



Map of my motorcycle ride to Seymour

On my trip to Seymour, I once again took the backroads. I started my journey in Warrandyte, a small village just outside Melbourne which is not far from where I live. Warrandyte lies next to the Yarra River and has many cafes and places to eat. My wife and I like to visit Warrandyte on the weekends to

enjoy the country atmosphere and a coffee or two, not to mention the occasional cake (or two). It's quite popular amongst Melbourne people for that reason. The village also has a vibrant amateur theatre group which puts on some interesting plays which we have attended and enjoyed.

Once I had crossed over the bridge at Warrandyte, I rode along some twisting roads for around 25 kilometres to reach Arthur's Creek. Arthur's Creek is a very small village and consists of a sports oval, a primary school and a few houses. This primary school is typical of many small country primary schools in Australia. The school has around 80 students from around the area and it provides a great education in an environment close to nature and to the local rural community. In the fields next to the school horses and cattle can be seen grazing.

http://acps.vic.edu.au/

Next I rode another 18 kilometres to Whittlesea which is a great little town I know quite well. This is where my motorcycle club meets twice a week before we head off to visit somewhere nearby on our motorcycles. It too has cafes and a well presented main street with shops and good facilities for its residents.

From Whittlesea, I then rode around 48 kilometres to a town called Wallan and then on to Romsey. Both these towns are reasonably small. Wallan has around 8,500 people and Romsey has around 5,000. The road from Wallan to Romsey goes through some wonderful countryside, with rolling hills and large farms.

Some of the countryside on the road from Wallan to Romsey

I always enjoy this particular road as it has relatively little traffic and there are wonderful views of the surrounding farming land. You often pass a tractor on the road and you must be careful to slow down and give them the room they need. I like to wave to the farmers who are driving them as I pass.

After Romsey, I rode through Lancefield, another great little town which has a great café. Just outside Lancefield I made a right turn onto a backroad which leads past a small village called Pyalong. From there I headed on to my final destination of Seymour. This last stretch of my ride from Romsey to Seymour was 70 kilometres.

The last part of the ride from Lancefield to Seymour is for me the most interesting and enjoyable.

A view of the rocky outcrops on the road from Lancefield to Seymour

The road is always quiet, with very little traffic other than the occasional farming vehicle or other motorcyclist. The countryside is especially interesting, as it has large outcrops of granite rock which are quite striking in appearance. They range in size from under a metre high to several metres. They lie around on the ground as if they have been tossed there by a giant striding across the land. Some are quite jagged while others are rounded as if they have been exposed to the wind, rain and sun for many, many millions of years, which of course they have been. There are some which are quite large, being as big as a bus. These boulders make the scene look a bit like a moonscape. Nonetheless, it's great farming and grazing country and you can see sheep and cattle grazing around the rocky outcrops. It is very picturesque and the bitumen road is in good condition. It's a

joy to ride it.

The road to Seymour is in good condition.

Finally I arrived at Seymour which has a population of around 6,500 people.

The main street of Seymour.

It too is another interesting small town in country Victoria. I have a favourite café which I go to where the food is

excellent and the service from the ladies behind the counter is great. They always smile as they serve the coffee and cakes.

My favourite cafe in Seymour

I never tire of visiting Seymour on my favourite backroads.

If you have a question or a comment to make, please leave it in the comments box at the bottom of this page. Or, you can send me an email at rob@slowenglish.info. I would love to hear from you. Tell me where you live, a little bit about yourself and what you think of my Slow English podcast. I will write back to you, in English of course. If you would like to take a short quiz to see if you have understood this podcast, you will also find it on my website. Goodbye until next time.

Rob

Podcast 117 Quiz - Did you understand the podcast?

You can take the quiz as many times as you like.

Start quiz

Vocabulary

accident = when something goes wrong, like a car or motorcycle crash

amateur = not professional, when no-one gets paid

atmosphere = (here) the feeling you have, how a situation feels

attended = to go to an event

avoid = not to do something

backroads = roads which are away from the main highways

bitumen = roads are made of this

boulders = large rocks

community = all the people who live in your town or area

concentration = when you think only about one thing

consists = is made up of

corners = where a road changes direction

counter = (here) the high desk in a shop

countryside = the land away from the city or town

crawls = (here) goes very slowly

curves = (here) the shape of a road as it goes around a corner

destination = the place where you are going to

education = when you are learning things in a school, college or university

enjoy each other's company = to be with other people because you like them

environment = the natural world, or a part of it, in which we live

exposed = to be outside in the rain, sun and wind

facilities = buildings or equipment which make it easier to do something

giant = (here) an imaginary person who is 10 times taller than a real person

granite = a type of rock

grazing = when farm animals eat grass

head off = to leave

highway speed = the speed you drive on a highway, the speed limit

jagged = with sharp corners

leaning = not upright, at an angle

lie = (here) is located, is found

main street = the centre street in a town, where the main shops are

member = when you are in a club or group

mention = to speak about

moonscape = looks like the surface of the moon

occasional = sometimes

opinion = when someone believes something which they may not be able to prove

outcrops = things which stick out of the ground

oval = (here) a place where sport is played, usually covered by grass and shaped like a circle

pastimes = hobbies or activities which people like to do

prefer = like

quite striking = (here) is interesting to look at

reasonably = not too high and not too low

residents = the people who live in a place

rolling hills = hills which have gentle sides which go up and down

rural = areas away from the city

satisfaction = when you are happy that you have done a good job

solo = by yourself, alone

stretch = (here) a part of a road

striding = walking with big steps

success = when things have been done well

tire = to become tired

tractor = a machine used by a farmer to move heavy things on his farm

traffic = cars, trucks, motorcycles, buses etc which are travelling on a road or highway

twisting = (here) when a road has lots of curves and corners

typical = an example of something you see many times

usually = often

vehicle = car, bus, motorcycle, tractor, truck – anything which can go on a road

vibrant = when something is exciting and interesting

well presented = when something is neat and tidy