

Coolah Tops 2008

Day One

Convoy of cars left Barden Park at 8.30am Saturday morning heading for Coolah Tops National Park. With a quick call over the two way the Setons and Fianders who were sitting on the side of the road joined the convoy. With the cloud coming over very black we were all thinking how interesting the trip could become. Taking the back roads which were all dirt and stopping for our fire wood. (Thankyou Seto and Ernie we all thought you guys were crazy but now are forever grateful) With a stop for morning tea and a quick fix of the Marshalls air conditioning (their rear window broke) we were back on the road. Another quick stop to read up on the aboriginal history and then off to Coolah Tops where we met the Lings, who quickly joined the convoy and we were off again. Finally arriving at our camping spot for lunch; and guess what?? As soon as Roger suggested setting up camp it started to rain and get very cool.

After setting up in the rain and eating lunch we set off exploring the great tracks. First stop was Bracken Hut. Where we all posed for a group photo which took about an hour (go figure). Back in the nice warm cars for more sights. With the night creeping upon us Roger made the executive decision to return

to camp for dinner. Sitting by the camp fire with a full belly a packet of marshmallows and a bottle of wine and of course with great company. Most people chose their nice warm beds over the camp fire; only leaving a few to stay and brave the marshmallow fight (GREAT FUN). With a few late night screams, laughter and drunken talk by a few. The last of the Marshmallowers finally called it a night at around 2.30am. Then there was silence.

Day Two

After a cold night everyone arose about 7am to discover the marshmallow man from the Ghost Busters had visited the camp, as there was

evidence of his presence all over the ground. It was a strange phenomenon it was as though there had been a battle and all that was left was pieces of Mr Marshmallow around the fire – battleground (but what happens on camp stays on camp hey Nicky?) After hearty breakfast and some very informative discussion camp was dismantled and packed away, then all evidence of the night before's marshmallow battle was collected (Thanks to Malcolm for cleaning up the camp site and thanks to Chris as he cleaned up and extinguished the fire). We left camp at 9:40 (I told you the discussion were informative) and headed to Bundella look out, then a brisk walk to the Pinnacles Look out, the views were amazing even the

Wedge Tailed eagles turned up and put on a great show for the group. We then sat down for the one of the most important parts of the journey, morning tea. Then on the road again at 11:00 heading off to look at some water falls, and Malcolm lead a team of eager explorers over to the other side of the waterfall to test the depth of the canyon by our accurate forms of measurement we guessed between 800 - 900 metres to the bottom. Then we all were lucky enough to assist Malcolm and partake in a unified TOYOTA jump on the top for all to photograph (this became a bit of a theme for the day).

11:40 set of to Cox Creek Saw Mill where we discovered the three wise monkeys looking down the well, one wise monkey was photographed in a revealing position and apparently this photo is available for a small fee if required. Rick and Red were trying to get attention and got stuck in the fire box whilst all the kids found the highest and most rusty piece of metal to concur and they succeed bless them all. 12:00 headed to the grass trees, this was truly amazing to see these majestic plants, a great thanks goes to Ernie for providing the entertainment and to John, Rick and Seto for finding some new members for the club they are yet to be named.

In the name of team spirit we tried unsuccessfully to help Malcolm & Seto to find a Cache in the Grass Trees however no one was as game as Mal, with one eye on the GPS and the other on the ground stuck his hand down a hollow log all I can say from the reaction of all the mums I am glad his was not there or he would have been seriously grounded or something. 1pm arrived at Norfolk Falls where we enjoyed lunch together however; Roger seemed to be just too close to the Kangaroos, maybe this was because the other R from R & R was missing? After lunch a small group walked to falls, and an even smaller braver, stronger and faster group consisting of 8 young adults and 2 older type people (AKA the babysitters) marched merrily under the command of Sgt Mal and Corp Rick to view the wondrous waterfall at Bald Hill. After the battalion had marched for 20 minutes we had reached the half way point decisions, decisions to go on or turn around.... We bolted onward arriving in great time to see the raging torrent that was Bald Hill Falls - we thought in our head too embarrassed to say it out loud - that we actually missed the falls by 100 metres and had turn back, the trickle of water was so worth the effort everyone else would be so jealous.

Promptly bolting back to meet Roger's departure time. After a tremendous effort Thomas could not push on any further and Mal dropped back to carry him, then Emily went out in sympathy and sprained her ankle and Rick had to carry her 1.2 kms to catch the troops. Red

was a keen member of the team and kept the rear of the pack moving. They arrived back in time to leave and Thomas was returned to his family and Emily well lets just say Rick found his car and crashed but Emily made a supernatural recovery and was instantly healed in the car park. 3pm set off to Pandora's Pass and what view it was from there, in the distance you could see the approaching storm (which excited some travellers with the hope of mud). We set off into the sunset towards Binnaway, with many worried if Seto would make it, arrived in Binnaway but the Servo was closed and no fuel was purchased for the trip home (Please note just because you have big tank does not mean your car does not need fuel). After a quick pit stop in Binnaway headed back to Dubbo, with many a weary traveller the chatter over the radio was sparse. All parties involved in this trip would like to say once again a big thank you to Roger and Mal for guiding an excellent trip, with many new faces I am sure it made for an interesting trip. Congratulations goes to Team Slug (Fisher Family) for completing the journey slowly but in great style.