



High Range 4WD Club of SA Inc

www.hr4wdclubsa.org.au

"Bushy's" Coonalpyn - Saturday 26 April 2008

Submitted by Helen (Highwater) and Phil (McCracken)

This was a day trip organized by Rob and Barb. We were to meet at Coonalpyn at 10.00am.

The day was cold and wet and the journey to Coonalpyn was picturesque. We left home around 8.00am and stopped at Taillem Bend for morning tea, arriving at Coonalpyn around 10.00am. For this journey, Phil and I were joined by my children, Jim and Grace. Jim is getting better at these trips and understanding that you cannot plug your Nintendo into the trees to re-charge and he is starting to appreciate the camping experience and certainly enjoys the day trips.

Our convoy for this trip was 10 vehicles. We had an array of vehicles, from the high range smaller cars to the larger Landcruisers. By the time everybody gathered, the rain had set in and it was freezing.

I had no idea what we were in for and did not realize that Bushy was a person, so was very surprised to meet this jolly chap who had an absolute wealth of knowledge about the land and the bush. Bushy was waiting for us at a rendezvous point and took us to his property. Along the way he entertained us with information on the surrounding properties and his thoughts and views on anything and everything of interest.

Firstly Bushy took us to a "girlie" track and invited us to try getting the vehicles to the top. Hmmmm..... I think that one vehicle made it over!!! Bad luck Rob!

Then Bushy educated us on some bush etiquette. One of the rules was no vehicles doing circles. Which means, no burnouts. Not as Phil thought, alien rings!!

Next, Bushy thought he had better take us to another track which was graded from easy "girlie" to hard. Well, I think that three or four vehicles made it over the "girlie" tracks and one vehicle made it over the harder hills. After a near collision at the top of the tracks, a hasty meeting was called on the merits of using your radio to signal the all clear. Once everybody calmed down, and a more dignified approach was set up, then maybe a couple more vehicles were able to make the ascent. Tim's tyre bounced off his roof and Mark's tyre tailgate broke loose which looked very funny. Bad luck Rob!! We were by this time eating hastily from our packed lunches, any ideas of sitting down eating a leisurely lunch long gone!!

Ok, Bushy was getting desperate! This time he was joined by his son, David, who became Bushy's driver and we were taken to a sand track which had been made up basically for vehicles like ours. Great! Tim was first, no dramas, next was Phil in the Territory. Easier than it looked. First part with a few false starts,

no worries, then trying to attempt the hill at the end, caused the Territory some problems, so Phil tried to bail out – got bogged. So what is that now Neil – 4 bogs for the Territory and 1 for the Tucson? Shaun was excited. He got to use his brand new winch and extricate the Territory. Yay! After that no vehicle was able to climb the hill, although all vehicles who tried, safely negotiated the track. A visit to church turned out to be quite hazardous with no privacy and vehicles everywhere!! Even taking a photograph had to be done with eyes at the back of ones head and trying to be Indiana Jones, just hurt ones bum, when trying to leap out of the way of vehicles! I don't think Rob even attempted this track!

So next Bushy and his son took us for a drive round the boundary and to a smaller hill which he was determined we would all be able to handle. Yep, all vehicles got over. Well done Rob!!

Then a drive along the boundary and to the mother of all hills. Tim collected Phil as a passenger and they negotiated it fine, you were scared weren't you Phil – and I hear Tim looked a little pale. After that despite several attempts by a few vehicles, nobody else was able to conquer that hill. I know by then that Bushy was resigned to us!!

So we then took a round-a-bout route to the back end of the mother of all hills. Deb managed to get bogged right at the tip of the descent and the Territory (who was behind) towed her out backwards – I am getting quite familiar with that hook that the nice man in Blackwood installed for me! To be honest, I didn't realize that we were about to make a descent down this huge hill and so was quite unprepared for the bonnet of the car to become alarmingly airborne with no vision of where I was and than crash down onto the steep sandy slope before careering madly down the hill, of course to land safely at the bottom. Much yelling I can tell you.

We all then gathered at the camping spot where we exchanged notes on our experiences. We then re-filled our tyres (which we had to let down if we were going to get up any of the hills) and made a time with Bushy on a future camping trip – in September sometime I think.

By this time it was getting late and even colder. Bushy took one group out, whilst the rest of us were still re-filling tyres and Bushy's son led the rest of us out back to the Coonalpyn road. The sunset was spectacular.

It was an interesting day, mainly because we basically had no idea what we were in for. As I said, I had no clue that Bushy was a person, and a salt of the earth person he is. To be honest, when Rob said there was sand driving, I thought we were going to the beach somewhere! The smaller vehicles had better luck climbing some of the hills because of their power and agility. The larger, heavier vehicles lost their grunt and started slipping. Even though everybody knew that speed was the essence in getting to the tops of the hills, even the smaller vehicles encountered difficulties toward the top of the hills, where the sand was chewed up and the slope got steeper. At least everybody had a go and after all that is what the day was about, wasn't it.

We all had a fantastic time. Many thanks to Rob and Barb and of course to our guide, Bushy and his son, David. Get well soon Cuffs, we miss you.

Hopefully everybody gets to the camp experience in September 2008.

Meanwhile, we look forward to the next adventure!!

Cheers

Helen and Phil

Convoy

Rob & Barb (Landcruiser), Helen & Phil and clan (Territory), John and Helen and Neil (Hyundai Tucson), Mark (Forefunner – souped up), Tim (Landcruiser), Saun and Wills (Surf), Ken and Val (Landcruiser), Brenton and Dad (Xtrail), Debbie, Dad and Mel (Subaru), Brian (Mazda Tribute)

Footnote

We were badly shocked upon hearing of the terrible incident which happened to Tim. We are hoping that good news comes out of this. Until we hear otherwise, we would like to dedicate this trip report to Tim and the good times we had on our club trips. Grace and Jim are very upset and are trying to understand the cruelty of this incident. That something so awful should happen to such a lovely young man, is extremely difficult to comprehend and all we can do is think about the good times. Our thoughts are with you Tim and your family. Glad you got your tyre back!!

Photo Gallery



Waiting .. freezing!



In convoy



David (Bushy's son) sense of humour!



Tim



Bushy teaching us bush etiquette



Off we



go!!



and go ...





and go.....





And go....



Bogged



winched out



Mark – souped up monster!!



Mother of all hills.
Only Tim got to the top of this one.



Tim collecting his tyre!