

A Dash to Dingo Dell 13-15 June 2008

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Overlander 4WD Club (OLC) amongst other 4WD clubs had agreed to participate in helping the Landrover Owners Club (LROC) with the regeneration of some tracks on private property at Dingo Dell. Dingo Dell is a small valley located near the Kowmung River on the Kowmung River Trail. This track is part of the iconic Cave to Caves trip between Jenolan and Wombeyan Caves.

Richard arranged to meet Bob at Wombeyan Caves on the Friday afternoon around nightfall and travel into Dingo Dell on the Saturday morning. Clayton and his daughter would also arrive on the Saturday morning to meet us and some of the LROC members on site.

The journey in to Wombeyan Caves was uneventful and luckily the quarry on Wombeyan Caves Road wasn't in operation so no B Doubles were using it. Richard had scouted for firewood all the way down the road from Joadja to Wombeyan Caves but had no luck.

Looking for a good campsite at Wombeyan Caves Richard found a fireplace with some decent sized logs adjacent to one of the amenities blocks and grabbed the site. Bob arrived soon after and had bought a few timber off cuts for the fire, some of which looked suspiciously like old furniture.

Richard started the fire, cheating a little by setting a few fire lighters amongst Bob's off cuts and some damp kindling. A fire was soon blazing away. Camp was set up and dinner cooked accompanied by a few refreshments. Every now and again there was a roar through the trees as a gust of wind howled up the valley accompanied by light shower of rain. We wrapped our overcoats tight around us and huddled closer to the fire. The LROC members told us later there had been light snowfall up around Oberon.

We were up early Saturday morning which was fine and sunny after the fog had cleared. We estimated it would take two hours to complete the 50KM trip to Dingo Dell and this proved pretty close to the money. Following the route set out in Lewis and Savage "Treks close to Sydney" we set off. The journey was picturesque but uneventful. Some sections of the tracks were a bit slippery as there had been recent rain. Stopping off at the entrance to Limburners Track we noted it had a locked gate and sign advising of the road was closed temporarily until further notice.



Following the track notes we took a short cut through a pine plantation finding this section very boggy with a number of fairly deep bog holes. Engaging low range we traversed this section without any drama.

After a steep decent into Dingo Dell we arrived to find two members of LROC already in residence with a cosy fire going. After Introductions between ourselves Matt, Barry & Kerry, her daughter and their two dogs Honey and Pepper we set camp.

Around 9.30am the owner Nigel with his son Dave arrived and outlined the work to be done over the weekend.

Nigel briefed us that some excess materials from the construction of a long drop needed removing. An old crushed water tank needed relocating to be used as fill in a deep erosion mound up the hill. The long drop needed a water tank to be erected to supply the wash basin and two fence lines put up to prevent vehicles taking a short cut across the embankment to the amenities.

Materials had already been brought on site for the work so it was all hands on deck. David and Bob headed off to bring the tractor and post hole digger down to the site. Nigel got to work on finishing some roof work on the long drop whilst Barry manoeuvred his Disco into position to skull drag the tank to it's new location using a drag chain. The tank proved a little obstinate as it was full of dirt and was tangled up in dead tree. Cleaning out the old tank and moving the vehicle to a new drag line proved successful and the tank was taken to its new location.



Next job was to move three fence posts and strainers to their approximate locations where the fence lines were to be anchored. The Disco was again put to use and Clayton also used the Patrol to drag some of the posts to their sites.

The tractor had arrived and was taken to the site for the first post hole. After some discussion and a committee meeting the appropriate location was decided and the hole drilled. The hole was tidied up with the post hole spade and we all had a go as it was hard work. We were glad we didn't have to do the whole lot by hand.



Another two LROC members arrived up to assist. The posts were all sunk and strainers fitted by one crew whilst the other



crew raised the tank stand and used some quickcrete to bed it down. A couple of the group engraved their monikers in the quickcrete for posterity.

After lunch one team lifted the new tank into position and

proceeded with the plumbing while the other group worked on the fence line, setting the star pickets in place, running the fencing wire, anchoring it and straining it tight.

Darkness was descending so it was decided to leave stringing the top strand of barbed wire till the following day as a rough piece of barbed wire snaking around an arm is a nasty and painful experience.



The days work completed we all adjourned to the camp fire for a chat dinner and a few refreshments. Nigel his wife, David and his partner joined us after dinner and a couple of stories from the previous night were recounted.

One of the LROC members had spent the night camped on the hill above the Kowmung River after having battery trouble the night before. He had walked a fair part of the way to Dingo Dell when a ranger picked him up and drove him the rest of the way. He had been driven back to his vehicle to bring it back to Dingo Dell.

In another episode from the previous night a tree being dragged back to camp for the fire had snagged a couple of star pickets on the way down and pulled them out of the ground luckily not breaking the fencing wire. These were replaced during the day's activities.

Sunday dawned overcast and after a leisurely breakfast the balance of the work was completed and the owner of the property showed some of us around recounting the properties past history.

The weekend was thoroughly enjoyable and it was great to meet some of the members of LROC in a combined activity. This type of activity is a prime example of how the four wheel drive movement and local landowners can assist each other in common endeavours to regenerate and protect the environment.