

Cape York Trip - Sat 1 July to Wed 10th August 2006

PART 3 - Lake Tinaroo to Home – Fri 28 July to Wed 10 August

Fri 28th July - Lake Tinaroo to Innot Hot Springs

At Maccas we bid farewell to Steve and Liz who were heading to Cairns and Innisfail to look for work. Hitting the road We were disappointed when we found that the old Herberton township had been closed for three years. It was privately owned and the insurance had become too expensive.

Traveling on to Ravenshoe we visited the information centre and booked a tour of the Undarra Lava Tubes for the following day. We had a look at the wind farm near Ravenshoe and also Millstream and Little Millstream Falls.

We arrived at Innot Hot Springs early afternoon and after setting camp Richard and Paul's boys had a refreshing dip in the Pools which varied from cool to 42 degrees Celsius. There was plenty of wildlife in this area.



It seems that the boys in blue are no different to those in NSW. Here we were in the middle of the sticks, kilometers from nowhere when, to fuel the evening campfire, Paul drove outside the caravan park for a little wood and blow me down tucked in behind the signs inviting weary travelers to enjoy the soothing hot waters was a mobile radar trap doing a roaring business.

Sat 29th July - Innot Hot Springs to Undarra Lava Tubes

After breakfast and another relaxing swim in the hot springs we got away late with Colin leading. We headed for Undarra and after an uneventful trip arrived prior to lunch and set camp. The Undarra Experience as it was called was set up in a range of accommodation styles from converted railway carriages, to sweat box type cabins, to already erected tent style units and well laid out individual campsites complete with its own little fireplace. Bags of wood could be purchased for the princely sum of only 5 bucks. Had time permitted there were plenty of walks to showcase the areas volcanic history.

We relaxed around camp and Richard had a swim in the pool prior to the lava tube tour. A bus took us to the entrance to the tubes which is about 6km from camp. We descended into the lava tubes which are very much like large caves but created by volcanic activity and lava rather than water on limestone.



Well worth a visit if you are up that way.

We returned to camp for a chat before dinner and then went to the communal campfire for the sing along led by Ross the guide before retiring.

30th July - Undarra to Hughenden Sun

The Andersons enjoyed a traditional camp breakfast at the Ringers Camp put on by the Undarra Experience whilst the rest of us cooked our own. We got away about 9am with Richard leading and headed for The Lynd Junction where Paul fueled up.

We continued on the 267km to Hughenden. On the way Colin heard a funny noise coming from his front driver side wheel and got out inspect it but couldn't see anything. He started the vehicle and moved forward and the noise was still there so he removed the wheel but couldn't see anything. He put the wheel back on and the noise had gone.



Richard was lucky when two roos jumped out of the scrub. He just caught the tail of the second one. We stopped off at Porcupine Gorge for lunch and admired the view from the camp ground and the much more stunning view from the lookout on the other side of the gorge.

Continuing on found us mid afternoon at Hughenden where Colin and Robyn looked over the dinosaur exhibit at the information centre while the rest of us fueled up and then booked into the caravan park.

Paul and Richard made use of the BBQ for dinner and then Colin and Robin joined us for a chat. We then retired Richard adjourned to the BBQ where a communal fire was going and crossed debating swords with a German who seemed to have a fixed opinion on everything.

Mon 31st July - Hughenden to Winton

We broke camp early for the 200km to Winton with Paul leading and wanting to book into the caravan park early before making the additional 200km round trip to visit Lark Quarry to see the dinosaur footprints. On the way we came across three herds of cattle in the long paddock. The drover said they had been on the road 6 months coming up from Swan Hill in Victoria where there wasn't any feed.



Arriving about 11am we booked in to the caravan park and headed for the quarry. On the way we skirted a number of thunder storms and found the road fairly damp. We had lunch and were treated to a lecture on the site by a Paleontologist and then viewed the footprints of a large meat eating dinosaur pursuing smaller vegetation eating dinosaurs.

We then returned to camp.

Richard had dinner provided at a reasonable cost by the local hotel around the communal campfire while the others prepared their own dinner. We were then treated to a bush poet who gave us an hour and a half of bush poetry and stories after which we retired

Tues 1st August - Winton to Longreach

We got away early and after an uneventful trip with Colin leading found us in Longreach where we headed for the Stockman's Hall of Fame and spent the rest of the morning and early afternoon browsing the galleries.



The others returned to camp where we had again booked cabins while Richard stayed on for the stockyard show where a drover showed us the tricks of the trade.



Well worth the visit if you are in the area.

We relaxed for the rest of the afternoon had something to eat and adjourned to the communal camp fire where a bush balladeer entertained us and then retired.

Wed 2nd Aug - Longreach to Charlieville

As Colin and Robin needed to be in Hungerford ASAP to meet their friends for a Simpson Crossing we needed to get some miles on the clock so we changed our original plan of Windorah and Quilpie to stay on the blacktop which was quicker.

We got away early again with Richard leading and headed for Barcaldine where we viewed the Tree of Knowledge which someone has poisoned and then traveled on to Blackall where we had a look at the Black Stump (some bugger would you believe burnt the original stump and the locals have replaced it with one of petrified



wood

) and then went to look at the Wool Scourer which had been restored by a group of locals keen to preserve the town's place in the early development of Queensland outback.

Heading back into town Richard stopped outside the pub to wait for the others and there was a tap on the window. He was told

his front wheel was making a racket and when Paul showed up moved forward so he could listen. Paul and Colin confirmed the noise so after investigation of the outside of the wheel which showed nothing it was off with the hub cover. One of the studs had broken off and another one was loose and broke off when tightened.



Luckily there was a motor mechanic across the road who could replace them.

We had lunch and then moved on to Charlieville to set camp while Richard remained behind to have the studs replaced. This was finished about 3.30pm and Richard headed off on the 300km journey to Charlieville.

It was late afternoon and the roos were beginning to become more common along the side of the road so Richard had to slow down. Around dusk one jumped across the road in front and then started trying to outpace the vehicle travelling at about 90kph. It went under the front driver side and rear wheels. There was a "Thump Thump" with the end result being another dead roo on the side of the road. Richard traveled on to Charlieville and got into town on dark and after a number of phone calls to Colin found the caravan park.

Richard had dinner at the pub and then headed back to the caravan park and set up the swag before having a few drinks with the others. We discussed the rest of the trip and this was the last night with Colin and Robyn before they headed off and Paul and Richard decided to head for the coast to warmer weather and some fishing as the weather reports from inland indicated temperatures at night below zero.

Thur 3rd Aug - Charlieville to Chinchilla

We awoke to a cold morning had breakfast, bid the Smiths farewell and headed for Mitchell where we had morning tea. A nice little town and well worth stopping.

We left and headed for Chinchilla through Roma and Wallumbilla where we had lunch. We arrived in Chinchilla late afternoon and set camp. We relaxed prior to a communal dinner and then retired.

Fri 4th Aug Chinchilla to Pottsville

We got away at a reasonable hour and headed for Dalby and Toowoomba and onto Pottsville without any drama arriving late afternoon. We set camp and Mick an old mate of Paul's came round to pay us a visit. He had also booked us into the Coolangatta Golf Club for dinner. This was a smorgasbord with plenty of seafood and was a reasonable price. We had dinner and returned to camp. During the night it bucketed down and Richard got up to batten down the hatches.

Sat 5th Aug - Pottsville

We got up and had breakfast at a reasonable hour and lazed around camp with Richard trying his luck to catch some nippers for bait. The indents in the mud flats indicated that they had all been taken.

Mick showed up mid morning to take us on a cook's tour of the area including the border.

A beautiful part of the world.

We arrived back at camp for a late lunch and Richard tried his luck fishing on the high tide casting from the wall near his tent and caught 3 small whiting but no keepers.

The rain was still bucketing down and the wind was howling as we had a BBQ dinner in the camp kitchen. After a chat we retired.

Sun 6th Aug - Pottsville

Another easy day as the Pottsville markets got underway. Richard was first to suss them out and came away with a ½ kilo of fresh strawberries, ¾ kilo of prawns and a blue swimmer crab.

We all then topped up our bait supplies and headed to the river mouth for some fishing on the low tide. Paul's boys caught a few small bream and a whiting which was a keeper. We then relaxed around camp until the tide came in and while Richard tried fishing from near his tent found only rubbish biting.

Paul's boys tried the river mouth with catching a couple of bream that were just undersize. We had a communal dinner again with the Andersons cooking rissoles and Richard scoffing the seafood he bought at the markets finding it very sweet. Paul after trying it agreeing.

Mon 7th Aug - Pottsville to Nambucca Heads

Packing up and us away to another early start just as a rain squall came in catching us just short of having everything put away. We completed a quick trip into Brunswick Heads and then a detour via Wooli where we had lunch and Minnie Water. Wooli would be a nice area when fine as there is no commercial development and it is like stepping back in time.

We eased into Nambucca Heads and booked into the Nambucca Beach Caravan Park. We had a quick look around Nambucca Heads and returned to the caravan park for dinner and before a chat and retiring.

Tues 8th Aug - Nambucca Heads

As it was a lay day we slept in a bit and on awaking had a stroll along the beach prior to a look around town. The beach had been eroded a fair bit by the strong winds and there was a fair amount of sand off shore from the river which had the appearance of bombora's.

Mid morning found us purchasing some bait to fish in a quiet spot out of the wind. Andrew caught a keeper bream but the rest of us got plenty of bites but were being regularly baited. We moved onto the V wall where the wind was howling

and we had plenty of bites and landed a few but no keepers. Richard took a stroll along the break wall where graffiti is welcome.

Paul and family had dinner at the caravan park whilst Richard headed to the RSL Club for a feed.



Wed 9th Aug - Nambucca Heads



We were up early and headed to the V wall again to try our luck. There was hardly any wind and the tide was just peaking. Richard was first there and it wasn't long before he had a keeper bream. The Andersons showed up soon after and it wasn't long before they were successful with James pulling in a beauty. He had the bragging rights.

We all caught at least one bream with the mornings haul being 9 keepers including 2 good sized fish the other one being Paul's.

The fish went off the bite so we headed to the cleaning tables where Paul showed us his skill with filleting knife.

The pelicans enjoyed the scraps and it wasn't long before there was a good sized flock and Richard got some good shots of a Pelican's beak holding more than its belly can. It was rumored that the only bird Richard had failed to photograph on the trip was the Kr Kr bird found locally at Walcha and other areas where the temperature was at or below 0 degrees.

We headed back to camp for some lunch and later headed to the beach to enjoy the sun. Richard had a swim and we all returned to camp with Paul and family having the fish fillets for dinner while Richard again adjourned to the RSL club.

Wed 10th Aug - Nambucca Heads to Home

We got away to an early start so as to get home at a reasonable hour. After an uneventful trip on some really good sections of new freeway and some ordinary sections of the Pacific Highway we arrived home safe and sound. The 3 days spent winding down and "chilling out" AT Nambucca Heads seemed a fitting and relaxing way to finish a great trip that had seen us cover almost 10500 kms, reach our goal of hitting the TOP in the company of our Triple Diamond traveling companions and return home in awe of this great and fascinating country of ours in safety with the anticipation of more great trips in the future.

Damage reported

Craig – Lost bolt from rear suspension, jammed engine valve and broken cam shaft.

Richard – Inverter failed, holed radiator by fan blade, chipped windscreen, 2 broken wheel studs.

Paul – Bent sidestep, worn idler bearing on the power steering pump fan belt.

Colin and Robyn – dislodged rear diff breather and water in the diff.

Steve and Liz) – No damage

Prelude

Thanks to Craig for organising the trip and the camaraderie of those who came along. Commiserations to those who had to pull out.

Footnote:

Fuel prices	Cheapest	Dearest
Unleaded	\$1.21	\$1.72
Diesel	\$1.23	\$1.74
Total	NK Pajero	Landcruiser TD100
	\$2,300	\$2,000