



OUT AND ABOUT 4X4 CLUB DAY TRIP TO WEDGE ISLAND – 13 September 2015

It was a cold rain-threatening Sunday morning in mid-September 2015. Six vehicles parked-up at the Carramar Village Shopping Centre car park ready for an Out and About 4X4 Club day trip to Wedge Island.

Mike-n-Clare led the convoy with members Alex-n-Maria & son Alex, Chris, Steve, with Jens-n-Anja as Tail End Charlie and visitor John. Mike-n-Clare also had Doug-n-Wynona as passengers.

After a coffee to kick start the day, the convoy headed up Wanneroo road around 8:45am and with a bit of radio chatter and an uneventful trip, arrived at the Bakery in nearly sunny down town Lancelin to stretch the legs, have a chat, a quick purchase and a final comfort stop.

We arrived at Wedge Island around 11:00am and made our way to the beach. The Settlement looked mostly deserted and it appeared the community gardeners were on leave by the healthy size of the weeds (plants?) but the 'international' helicopter landing zone in the middle of town looked ready to receive visitors, though a bit rough for a semi-finals round of AFL football.

Other than a soft patch at the entrance, the beach sand was hard although a bit lumpy and bumpy in places. We headed straight to the actual Wedge Island for morning tea and a chat. We also took the opportunity to air down our tyres, more for comfort than soft sand. The island was accessible if you didn't mind getting your feet wet up to your waist! We decided to come back later as the tide appeared to be receding.



We headed off up the beach to the sand dunes north of the Community for a quick play. Mike led us straight into the dunes by a circuitous route stopping on top of the first stack of hills to explore the possibilities moving forward. The crested windward side of the dunes were very soft and the gullies between deep and treacherous. We decided to head back to the water line and go further north to the larger sand dune area. Everyone got up and back without incident.

The beach narrowed and softened but was easily traversed. Entrance to the next dune section was just as easy and the convoy managed to get over the first set and into the valley before the

adventure began (for some). Mike chose a hill and powered up without trouble and at the top he took a left turn and then appeared to stop. "Nice view" said Mike over the radio and then hesitantly "I appear to be stuck". Steve raced the Jeep to his aid and after a brief summing-up of the situation, and since the shovel and Trax were not being successful, drove around in front of Mike to attempt a snatch recovery. Oh 'gosh' the sand is a bit soft here! So Steve went down too.



Maria's viewpoint is aptly put: (sic) "*Our Great leader sacrificed himself to show followers how to get out of a sandy situation!!!*" Well said Maria. After some shovelling, Max Traxing, and finally some brute blokey (and Clare too) pushing force, Mike was free and able to rescue Steve (Mike: "*Phew nearly had a Jeep recue me; Oh the pain!*"). Steve was snatched out without incident. Visitor John was heard to remark, that Mike did say in the trip invitation that recovery gear might be needed!

After one or maybe two photos and extracting the vehicles the convoy agreed to head back onto the beach and have some lunch, it was about 12:50pm.



Good food, good company, clear skies, great scenery and a gentle but chilly wind. We huddled around the lee of the Prado and finished our lunches. Maria passed out some delicious cookies; chocolate chip?

Then the serious work began. Visitor Doug (we have to blame someone!) wanted to check out the Prado's 3L turbo diesel donk. Up went the bonnet and the blokes gather to the honey pot for some

meaningful discussion. How did Maria put it? (sic) '*Men playing "I show you mine" "you show me yours" (engine)!!!*' So for a comparison Steve popped the hood on the 4L straight six Jeep and the technology differences were obvious. Are Jeeps ever going to have 2 batteries under the hood? The little 2L twin turbo diesel VeeDub Amorok was different again. We finished off with John's 3L turbo diesel Patrol; the last two vehicles were far too clean. Maria got the keys to Alex's Jeep and was doing donuts in the sand behind us. OK at 10kph not much sand was flying.

With the girls getting a bit restless we fired up the convoy for a last fling in the dunes. Mike started off well enough but suddenly hung a right turn and charged at a tall dune and powered on up . . . successfully. Mike's passengers caught unawares were shaken, bumped and stirred right to the top! Steve raced up unaffected as did Chris in the 100s, but Alex in the Jeep did not get all the way up at all and then successfully tried the lower dune beside it. Oh Maria is driving, well done mate. Everyone made it up and over and we headed back down the beach for the real Wedge Island again.

The sand bar was still under water, but not as deep. A seal was just in the water on the sand bar which caused the cameras to come out again and fire-up. We took the opportunity to air up the tyres and to appreciate the family of sea birds at the waterline just in front of us. Some of our group ventured over to the Island briefly.



It was about 3:00pm and following the departure of Alex, Alex and Maria and with goodbyes said Mike-n-Clare with Doug-n-Wynona, Steve and Jens-n-Anja leaving Chris to explore the Island, packed up and headed off too. John had left earlier and took a scenic tour of the Settlement – “how do I get out of this town?”, “Just keep going left” a local told him!

The convoy split again as Mike turned off for Lancelin while Steve and Jens-n-Anja continued on south. Goodbyes were said and we went our own ways. After a short comfort stop in Lancelin, Mike and passengers also headed south arriving back at Carramar Village car park around 4:30pm. Doug-n-Wynona were bid a safe trip home and the trip was officially ended.

Thanks for a memorable day everyone. Keep the windows wound up.

Story outline by Maria; fill-in facts by Mike; photos courtesy of Doug; no editing entered into . . . true!