



OUT AND ABOUT 4x4 CLUB

Trip Report – Windy Harbour January 2 2016

Kerry Gillies

What a fantastic week had by all who stayed at windy Harbour for the first few days of 2016. We met at Donnybrook on Saturday, 2 January at 9 o'clock. The trip began with Terry and Jan, Woody, Mike, Chris, Steve and Kerry. The plan was to leave at 9:30 and head towards Manjimup where we stopped for fuel at \$110.9 per litre. Here we met Maria and Alex and Paul and Terri. We spoke on the radio to Bernie and Julie who had been staying at Fonty's pool, but weren't joining us for Windy Harbour.



It seemed like a long drive but by about 12:30 we had arrived. Then the fun began! We took some time to decide who was parking where and in which direction and on which angle but by about 3:30 Steve and I had set up our camper trailer and annex. Mike had his cute little black wolf tent beside Woodies Jayco Stirling, alongside Terri and Paul's camper trailer. In front of Woody's caravan was Terry and Jans coromal Magnum. Alex and Maria's camper trailer was in front of that and Chris camped in a secluded little nook nearby in his tent. We ate dinner at the nearby camp kitchen using their barbecue, or in our case I cooked our salmon steaks in our Annex and we joined the others to eat. After a couple of hours of fun, we had all retired by about 9:30 p.m.

January 3 2016



Apparently we were woken at 5:30 AM by a kookaburra right next to Mike's tent. We didn't hear it though. After breakfast at about 9 AM Chris and Paul and Terri announced that they would lead a trip to Moore's Hut. We drove out of Windy and along the road a couple of kilometres where we turned off onto a sandy track. We followed the track to Gardner River Road and then turned right onto Chesapeake Road. About 20 km further we turned right onto the Fish River Road and then right again onto Moore's Hut Road. After a short, sandy track we came upon a well built and well-maintained corrugated iron and wood hut. We had our packed lunch at the picnic table and then after that, Chris and Mike went to check the accessibility of the beach.

They came back with a positive report and we all lowered our tyre pressure and headed to the beach. It was a well packed beach and driving was easy. We travelled all the way to the Gardner river where we had to cross. This involved at least one winching and a serious smell of decomposing seaweed.

It was quite a short drive from there back along the beach to Windy Harbour. We had our shared dinner in the camp kitchen followed by some games of Mexican Dominoes, quoits and ping-pong ball darts. Paul and Terri cooked some super date scones and Eccles cakes for dessert.





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January 4 2016

We said farewell to Paul and Terri as they had a wedding to get organised. Even though it was cold Jan, Mike, Maria and I went to the beach for a swim. We all went in but some of us stayed a little longer than others. The afternoon consisted of relaxing and reading and snoozing or all of the above.

In the evening Chris, Woody, Jan, Terri, Steve and I attempted to catch some fish. Not one of us had a single bite so we packed it in. We had dinner and then again played Mexican Dominoes. A relaxing and enjoyable night was had by all with lots of fun and frivolity. We all had a go at modifying the rules and no one cheated to the best of my knowledge.

January 5, 2016, an easy relaxed morning sheltered from the wind in front of the 'Big Van' (Terry's) until 9:30. Departure time. We were all prepared and ready to go four-wheel driving. We left the Windy Harbour-Northcliffe Road at the Summertime Track. We aired down to 15lbs. I drove the bush track and it was a good track with a mixture of soft sand, deep soft corners, narrow roads, overgrowth, flowers, trees, shrubs, rocks, roots, even a very small section of mud. The track ended with a short climb up and over the sand Dunes and onto the beach. We stopped there where Doggerup Creek flowed into the sea from the dunes. The beach was wide and flat and easy driving. We zoomed along until we came to the Meerup River. It was not particularly wide but nonetheless foreboding. The water was brown and clean but the sand was deceptively soft. Mike walked across and was over knee deep at times. The other men stood looking and discussing the merits of crossing where there appeared to be a bit of an island, then they walked back down to the narrowest point. Then they walked up to the island crossing., Then they discussed some more. Anyone who had them attached snatch straps, then finally Mike 'bit the bullet' and crossed, using the island to help him. He made it look easy! Aside from a bit of a bump up on the other side, it was easy going. Chris followed, then Alex, then Steve. It was exhilarating getting across. It was nowhere near as scary as I thought it would be. Terry and Jan flew across. Then Woody, who was Tail-end Charlie floated across easily. After another long stretch of open beach we came to the exit towards Callcup Hill. To leave the beach, it was a steep soft ascent with a left and right fork which proved quite challenging. Several of us had to have a few attempts at it, but finally were all over and we stopped at a clearing for lunch at 1:30 PM an hour after Mike had suggested we have lunch just over this sandhill !!



About a half hour later we were about to tackle Callcup hill, a 192+ metres above sea level sand hill. A long, steep gradient needing a strategic approach. I was ecstatic to drive straight up to the top of the first section. The first slope was long and arduous including a hidden rock formation and right hand turn near the top, all very soft sand. A good spot to lose momentum.



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Alex, unfortunately found himself arrested on the rock formation and in need of a snatch or drag off. Woody drove back down to do this and Steve walk down with a shovel. He also walked back up with the shovel, exhausting! Alex had another couple of tries, as did Chris, but they both decided to try to locate a chicken track. The chicken track proved almost as difficult as the main track. Alex had another mishap with the tree and found that he had done some damage to his exhaust and muffler. Terry and Mike drove down with some wire and made some repairs. Alex was then mobile again.

I had to have three attempts to get up the next section, which included a slope, a corner, a long soft stretch up to a sharp right hand turn, a climb, then a gentle haul up some rubber matted sand to the final peak. Over the top and then down through some trees to a stop. We aired up our tyres while poor Alex then had to change a flat tyre. The rest of the journey was relatively uneventful, not forgetting Mikes running commentary of the wildlife he claimed to see –kangaroos and emus!!

The shower back at camp was amazing! What an awesome day!

January 6, 2016

It was already Wednesday and today was a rest day. We sat around in front of the 'big caravan' and watched Terry change wheels on his ute. He replaced the front to fix a wobble and then he took the split rim off the two back wheels to reseal the valves. He had a bit of an audience or group of willing helpers and Jan made them all a cup of tea in appreciation of their help. Well, Mike stood on a tyre to help break the bead. Woody gave advice, Steve held the compressor hose, Alex wielded the long tyre lever and Woody gave more advice.

At 11.30 we drove into Northcliffe to have lunch. Chris had a burger while the rest of us had seafood and everyone enjoyed their meal. We farewelled Chris and had a bit of a walk around Northcliffe. When we got back to camp we played more Mexican Dominoes and then after a light dinner we had a fairly early night. The wind dropped during the night and we all slept much better.

January 7 2016

We got up early to go for a walk at Mount Chudalup. It is a short drive back towards Northcliffe, then park in the car park and walk the 1 km to the top of a huge granite Boulder. Terry and Jan, Woody, Steve and I set off up the gravel path. The gravel was loose so we had to be careful not to slip. It was a steep path and we all made it to the last 20 m or so, but I was not willing to try the last rockface (almost vertical) scale. The others did, and for their efforts were awarded with stunning views across the south west corner of W.A. The descent was almost as difficult as going up, with the loose gravel quite dangerous. However we all made it safely down and as our award we returned to camp for a cooked breakfast of bacon and egg.





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Mike left to go home with the threat of both roads closed due to fires at Yarloop. We spent the morning reading, painting, writing, dozing, until morning tea time. While we were sitting there the peace was shattered by Steve's shout of 'Snake!' A 2 foot long black snake slithered right through the middle of our camp. It lost itself in the thick, reedy grass right by our tent. Needless to say we were eyes to the ground from then on. In the evening we organised to go up to the lookout to watch the sunset. We also



attempted to contact people to check the status of fires at Waroona and Harvey. We found a protected spot to watch the sunset and share our nibblies. Sublime.

January 8 2016

Today's news that Yarloop had been devastated by a fire was very sobering. Steve, Woody, Jan and Terry took fishing rods to Salmons Beach. Maria and Alex drove to Pemberton and Manjimup. I stayed and did some painting. Steve caught a huge 10 cm fish, but released it and Woody caught a half decent flathead, but he released it too. Terry caught nothing. Jan caught some waves.

During the afternoon we played several games of Mexican Dominoes. Jan had achieved a record of 25 tiles the night before which was then broken by Woody's 32 tile collection!

We finished the evening with intelligent and insightful conversation, regretting the arrival of the end of our holiday.

Callcup Hill

