

## Simpson Desert Trip 3<sup>rd</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> July 08

Participants:

The Organs Alistair, Raeleen, Alex, Ben and Tim

Carl & Colleen Bleazard

Both 80 series Landcruisers



### Day one

Left at 7.45 had coffee in the bakery at Bathurst, lunch at Dubbo & arrived at Byrock at 5.30. Great pub, food looked really good, blue skies and loads of stars. A definite must for the future.

### Day two

Leaving the Mulga Creek Caravan Park at 9.40 we stopped at Bourke for coffee from the bakery and went to see the famous Wharf with stacks of cockatoos at the waters edge. Had lunch at a really nice village called Wanaaring and then set off 2.30 to arrive 5pm at mount wood camp ground (national park) just outside of Tibooburra. With new moon in hot pursuit of the sun created far too many stars, the most I've ever seen. Only thing, no camp fires were aloud, so it was cold, apart from that a perfect spot.

### Day three

10am start to look at the really cool sheep shearing hut, had to fuel at Tibooburra as was told no diesel at Innamincka. The town was getting ready for a festival that night, but we left them to it and drove through N.P. and did an awesome lookout to eventually find the dingo fence by default. 2pm Lunch at fort Grey Camp

ground (not as good as the one we had stayed in) then off to Cameron's Corner on a graded road that went over dunes. Fantastic pub, we all bought stubby holders & tea towel, a definite must for the future.

Camped just outside of CC's corner & had our first fire, played guitar.

#### Day Four

We all watched the sun rise, and then drove over easy dunes up and down.... Looked at Moomba industrial place, don't bother going there. Had lunch at Innamincka, beers, \$2 showers and bought our desert passes then moved on to Walkers Crossing on a fun road where he had fire, cooked spuds and lamb.

#### Day Five

An earlier start of 9.30 having lunch at Birdsville, pub expensive, bakery good. Carl got bogged and needed a snatch, crossed big lake and over big red and camped in dunes.

#### Day Six

9am start, we're getting good at this, salt lakes, tons of dunes good for the core muscles. Somewhere along the track Al's gas protector came off down the French Line track, had lunch at Poeppel Corner a popular place. Knocked down a warm beer to help the stomach recover from the fun driving & then off to the Knowles track amongst some really big bonsai trees where we camped. Had our first damper and lamb roast cooked in camp oven.

#### Day Seven

Left 9.30am looked out at awesome Approdina Attora Knolls view, had lunch somewhere on the WAA line saw funnel webs then followed dingo tracks and camped further on down the road between two high dunes. Had happy hour on top of the west one and watch the sun set. Later had a party with fire, music (Roads) and dancing. Mainly me that was.

#### Day Eight

Watched sun rise on the East Dune and off we went. Al's poly airs kept going down and had to borrow Carl's compressor. Saw Camel tracks and then saw camel. Quick stop at disused airstrip and lost foot ball. Lunch at Purni Bore where you could get natural hot showers. Legged it to Dalhousie springs on the worst rutted road ever. Had a 37degree swim in big lake lovely jubley! It was our last night together.

#### Day Nine

Had mega long swim with lake all to myself then on the road at 11am. Track down to Oodnadatta was not good, got to Pink Road house which was good, but not a place to stay. So camped just off the dry river bed at Edward Creek an hour or so down the track, a lovely spot on our own what felt like in the middle of nowhere.

#### Day Ten

Left at 9.45 to continue following the Old Ghan rail track and stopped at Williams Creek, a lovely place with lots to do, scenic flights, camel rides etc and a lovely pub. Popped down to see Lake Eyre's the biggest in Australia and had a quick lunch. Probably not worth it as we've seen so many salt lakes, but the terrain was unusually beautiful with it's shimmering almost black gravel. Beresford was a really

good ruin that we found, it can be easily missed on the road as you can't see it, and it's just before Coward Springs. It is a little oasis that provides sleepers for fire wood, palm trees and small private areas to camp in, a great spot. We had a swim in their natural spa pool (very small, fits 6 standing up) of 20 degrees and then had a shower heated from a wood burner (donkey) that you had to feed yourself. Fantastic.

#### Day Eleven

Saw a couple of birds that looked like Brolgas, but very colourful, checked out the homestead, and then drove down the road to see the Bubbler and Blanche Cup. That was cool. Stopped off at Curdimurka siding which was in very good condition with railway signs and tracks, lots of information. Stopped at Marree for a beer and stayed at Farina a ruined village. Firewood provided in the form of sleepers (again a never ending supply, don't know where they get them from) & played cards for the first time.

#### Day Twelve

On the road early and had disgusting coffee at Copley Café with a yucky quandon cheese cake. It was sooooooo bad. Shame as the Café looked quite quaint. Had showers at Balcancona for \$2 each and as long as you like then got to Weetola Gorge in the North Flinders ranges for lunch and stayed the night. Carl turned over a stone of white ants where a red caped robin had a feast.

#### Day Thirteen

The showers were so good at Balcancona that Carl had another one, then we left at 8.40 for a drive through the Flinders. Saw a wedge tailed eagle (massive) emus & fluorescent aqua birds. Got puncher just after going through Blinman and Carl couldn't remember how to fix it, so he asked me. As if I knew? He did a marvellous job and we headed to Willow Springs, stupid me thought you could swim there, but it was a name. Fantastic free camping but it was too early so we had lunch and moved on.

Saw loads of kangaroos and were planning to stay at Wilpena Pound. But the campground was far too busy/commercial and not very nice (yuck) so we moved on to Rawsley Park where they had a massive area for bush camping. \$10 for fire wood which we needed as it was so cold. I suggested saving some fire wood for the next day, but I think Carl was fed up of making fires.

#### Day Fourteen

It was -1 that night and the tent was covered in a heavy frost. So we packed the tent down and my fingers were so sore I thought I might lose them. Driving out through Martins Wheel we passed a rustic bush camping sight one to note for the future. Saw 2 big birds of prey, luminous birds, kangaroos, emus etc. got to tar at Yunta and all Carl wanted to do was to get home as quickly as possible as he had had enough. Had a beer and aired up, lunch at Winnimine Creak (just a road side stop) had a beer at Silverton pub then camped where we saw apostle birds & many other verities? There was no fire wood and we really needed one as it was still cold, so we scavenged for wood which kept us occupied for a while to get one going.

#### Day Fifteen

Originally we planned to zigzag our way back to make a holiday of going home and were going to go to Menindee Lakes, but we dropped that and after having

a fab breakfast at Silverton café so we went to White Cliffs. Carl found this hard as it was taking us off course from going home. We popped in to see a national park and skipped lunch. Carl gathered fire wood as he didn't want to have a repeat of the night before. I was grumpy as Carl was fed up. I think he was really missing Al. when we got to White Cliffs we decided to stay in the Underground Motel as we've never done this before and have a bit of luxury. The food was good, but the portions were so small that both Carl and I were still hungry. It was a set three course meal and you only got what you were given it was such a shame. Carl spent time on his computer and I played guitar, both happy again.

#### Day Sixteen

Left at 9am, Drove around White Cliffs and saw all the mining mounds etc, bought some pies from the café for breakfast and headed back for the road home. Saw loads of road kill with large and small birds of prey and quite a lot of everything else and more e.g. flocks, or is it herds of Emus. Had lunch at Cobar in a café called Coffee Passion (I think) and had the best cappuccino ever the food was good too. On road saw so many goats, what does one do with goats? Meat is a pain to cook and very few drink the milk. Found a lovely spot for our last night at Terrangine Reserve. Had loads of birds and a resident possum that entertained us that night. Even though there was fire wood provided, after the hassle we had of collecting our own we were determined to burn it.

#### Day Seventeen

Left for home via Mudgee. The drive was great, but Carl refused me a stop there and so without any delay we were home by 3.30.

Colleen Bleazard