



Bendleby Ranges - June LWE (7th-9th) June 2014



Bendleby Ranges - June Long week-end 2014

We all met at Tarlee at 8.00am for the drive to Bendleby Ranges. Along for the weekend were Trip Leaders Max & Lyn, Quenton, Stephen, Peter & Mandy, John & Astrid, Martin & Martin & tail-end Charlie Dave, Michele & Jessica. We drove to Burra where we stopped for a comfort stop and then headed for Terowie. The sun was just starting to show itself after a foggy start. Just out of Terowie we turned off the highway (yes Q, we weren't headed for Yunta!) to head for Orroroo to stop for our morning tea stop.

We stopped at the shelter at the Big Gum Tree and hot coffees were the order of the day and we tried to stay out of the bitterly cold wind. I thought the forecast was "mainly sunny" this week-end?? From Orroroo was an easy drive along the well maintained gravel road for a stop at Johnburgh. We had a walk around the old Hotel ruins and drove past the old Post Office which has been renovated over the years and is now a "weekender".

Arrived at Bendleby Ranges and we spoke to Jane and organised a 9.30am Sunday departure for Hungry Ranges. There were so many 4WD groups staying, it was necessary to depart at half hourly intervals. We all set up camp at the reserved Base camp which had a large shelter, large fire ring and close to the excellent camp kitchen, flush toilets and hot showers. Lyn tried out a long drop by their camp, but after getting her own back, decided that a walk up to the new amenities was a better idea! After lunch we set off around 2.30pm to the tracks around the Bendleby Ranges side of the property. Here we travelled the tracks including the Kokoda Trail, Link Track and travelled back to camp along the North South Ridge track. The scenery was beautiful and the ranges were all green after recent rains; the sheep looked like they have plenty of feed.

Wood had been provided, so a camp fire was soon started and meals were cooked, some on the camp fire and some back at individual camps. Much talk about the "gate fairies" and it seemed Stephen was voted best gate fairy - his stash of yummy lollies were the favourites! It has also been the first trip that I have been on where fruit was left by the gate fairies; perhaps the doctors are trying to tell us something! Martin brought out his guitar and a pleasant night was spent around the campfire. A few reds, beers, spirits and good company was enjoyed.



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Sunday and the sun was shining and an easy 9.30 am start to tour the Hungry Ranges side of the property. After a stop off at the Office to talk with Jane and Warren and we wrote our details on the whiteboard, we left to explore with Max as the leader. We drove through a very pretty Quartz Gorge, Ridge Top and through Aeroplane Gorge and onto Billy Goat Ridge track. A lot of discussion how a caravan was towed into a remote camp site with many theories being put forward.

There were a lot of groups travelling along the Billy Goat track and one particular section proved troublesome. Max was trying out his new Ranger vehicle and found the rear diff locks to work extremely well. I had trouble on this section, some would say that's quite an understatement.

Sunday night was a colder night, and extra layers were needed to be worn to bed.

Monday we packed up camp after all the canvas dried and we headed off - destination the new bakery at Jamestown! How disappointed were we when we arrived at Jamestown and it was closed for the day! So off across the road to the take-away shop and hamburgers and steak sandwiches were devoured. Next stop was the Driver Reviver at Clare for a cuppa and stretch the legs before we all soon headed off our separate ways home.

Thank You to Max and Lyn for leading the trip and a special thank you to all for your help and support.

[Quenton Earl]