



Mt IVE – Gawler Ranges (3rd – 6th April 2015)

**EASTER 2015
TRIP TO MT IVE IN THE GAWLER RANGES**

GOOD FRIDAY, 3 April

By the light of a beautiful full moon, 5 vehicles gathered at Mallala at 6 am on Good Friday for the trip to Mt Ive. The group was led by Max and Lyn (trip leaders) accompanied by Sandra & Pete, Quenton & Deb, Rob & Pauline (visitors & possible new members) and Tim, Riannah and children Jody, Liam and Peyton (visitors.) (John & Jane, Nick, Kerrie, Kaleb & Alli and Chris and Gail (visitors) made the trip on Thursday with Martin and Martin arriving on Friday morning.)

The weather was clear but cool as we set off at 6 am with very little traffic on the roads which was surprising as we expected it to be busier. We headed for Pt Wakefield Road and continued through Port Wakefield noticing a number of large wind farms on the hills as we passed through, Redhill & Port Pirie to Port Augusta where we stopped at 9.20 am to re-fuel and have morning tea.

The Ghan passed on its way to Adelaide and a helicopter kept us bemused at its antics - the pilot making an attempt to land in the petrol station car park rather than the helipad adjacent to it. This threw up an enormous amount of dust which wasn't appreciated with our morning tea!! Eventually he decided to land in the appropriate place.

At approx 10.10 am we left the petrol station and turned west for Mt Ive. Leaving the bitumen just passed Iron Knob we took a right turn onto a dirt road. We all stopped to reduce tyre pressure then headed off for the last 130 kms to Mt Ive passing through 22 cattle grids on the way & crossing the boundaries of 5 other properties.

On the side of the road at the Siam station stood, to our amazement, a phone box all on its own with no other buildings nearby!!! As it turns out the phone box was a donation box for the Royal Flying Doctors service.

Further along the road we came upon the recent wreck of a Toyota Rav4 vehicle which had come to

grief and ended up hitting a tree. It would need the help of a tow truck to get it out of there!! Finally, we reached Mt Ive at 1.25 pm.

We were met by the "welcoming committee" - John & Jane and Nick, Kerrie & children before proceeding to the campsite where we all set up camp either before or after lunch depending on how we felt. No other activities were planned for the day so we took the opportunity to relax but did all meet up later in the large well built gazebo for happy hour before dispersing to cook our evening meals.

[Sandra Harper]

EASTER SATURDAY, 4th April

The group awoke on Easter Saturday to sunshine and a light breeze, our trip leader had decided we needed a sleep in after the 4am start most of us had the day before and we were grateful. It was going to be a beautiful day so after breakfast the group of eight vehicles headed for the Mt Ive tracks.

The first to be conquered by the 4WD club was the mustering track called Billy Can track which was to encompass sand, rock and a lookout. Unfortunately that first left hand turn proved to be a bit elusive until the keen eyes of the trip leader spotted it and as long as we kept seeing Billy Cans we knew we were on the right track.





Mt IVE – Gawler Ranges (3rd – 6th April 2015)

The first stop was near a gorge where smaller versions of the rhyolites could be seen. A better spot for morning tea we could not have found. Rhyolites are a geological feature found throughout the Gawler Ranges and we were to see many more during our day's adventure.

For the rest of the morning we made our way through creek beds and up rocky banks spotting the odd kangaroo and goat or two. While the track was dusty the surrounding gums and grasses were glorious against the red hills.

Our last stop before lunch was to be the lookout however that did prove hard to find but whilst looking we did see other interesting parts of the property like the shearing shed and the "Dirty Green" golf course that looked like it would trouble the most hardened golfer.

After lunch the group armed with an assortment of food for nibbles by the lake set off for Lake Gairdner stopping off on the way at the 'Organ Pipes' a large example of exposed rhyolites. A short walk took us to them where Peter showed us his musical skills by playing a tune of sorts by hitting a small rock against the upright stone formations.



After leaving the rhyolites we shook our way over the corrugations to the embankment a true example of bush ingenuity and skill. This historic stone wall was built in the late 19th century to catch water as it flowed down the creek and while there was no water there at present the fact that rather new yabby nets were left suggested it had had water in it recently.



Our first look at Lake Gairdner was amazing, a shimmering white flat surface as far as the eye could see set against the brilliant red sand hills. Lake Gairdner, Australia's fourth largest salt lake and is the site of numerous land-speed record attempts when the lake is dry and, as this had occurred a week earlier, you could see where the track had been.

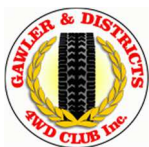
It was an amazing feeling to walk on the lake and the group took some incredible photos as we settled in to wait for the sunset. We watched many young foreign tourist groups arrive and set up their cameras also for the sunset and did wonder at why these groups were attracted to such an out of the way spot as beautiful as it was.

We were told later that a Korean Television star had shot a film commercial at the lake recently advertising energy drinks. The sunset was as spectacular as we had hoped and after we set off back to camp over the corrugations with the biggest moon following us all the way.

The photo opportunities were of course not over as the Lunar eclipse was also occurring tonight and without the cities light pollution the moon against the backdrop of all those stars was spectacular.

The day had been a great one with most of us seeing this part of the Gawler Ranges for the first time.

(A rhyolite is a kind of acid volcanic rock containing at least 66 percent of silica similar to granite but having solidified rapidly from a lava flow)



Mt IVE – Gawler Ranges (3rd – 6th April 2015)



[Deb Earl]

EASTER SUNDAY, 5 April

The clocks had to go back an hour during the night which gave everyone an extra hours sleep but our departure from the camp site was set at 10 am anyway, so a very lazy start to the day.

The Easter Bunny had been very generous in the early hours of the morning and Kaleb and Alli, accompanied by Gail, went around to each campsite with Easter eggs for everyone. So cute.

Today we were going to explore the summit and lookout on Mt Ive itself and the plan was to return to camp for lunch. The morning turned out to be quite cool which felt even worse thanks to a strengthening lazy wind.

The ascent to Mt Ive was via a very slow rocky track but once at the top we enjoyed 360 degree views of the property and surrounding area. We were amazed to discover an old fridge on the summit and there was some conjecture as to what it contained, however, we will never know as the door was rusted shut.



A stone cairn had been erected which most people added to. The summit overlooked the campsite and Lake Gairdner was spotted in the distance. Some people were lucky to get mobile reception and were able contact loved ones.

Many photos were taken before the slow descent took place. We were back at camp by 11.30 am. The plan was to head out again after lunch to finish the Billy Can track which wasn't completed the day before, and find the Mt Scott track. Quenton and Deb decided they were going to explore on foot and climbed a nearby hill and Jane, Kerrie & Sandra decided to stay back at camp.

So, a much depleted group of 6 vehicles headed back out of camp, essentially, backtracking on the return trip from Saturday evening. After a couple of false starts, the elusive "Lookout" was eventually located. The spot at the top provided good views of the station homestead and surrounding out buildings.

We eventually got back into camp around 4pm and did complete Billy Can track. Knowing that Mt Scott would take 2+ hours and with daylight saving finished, we decided on an early happy hour rather than the potential of driving home in the dark.

MONDAY, 6 April

After a very windy night, we were awakened by the sound of rain on our tent. Bummer, that meant that there was a likelihood of it being packed away wet!! Not good news. A strong rather cold wind was blowing when we got up which did help to dry some of the tent but, unfortunately, there was no sun and the heavens were threatening rain again.

5 vehicles were departing today – Martin & Martin, Lyn & Max, Rob & Pauline, Quenton & Deb and Pete & Sandra. The two Martins were well on the road by the time the rest of us departed at 8.45 am – quarter of an hour ahead of time. (Jane & John, Nick, Kerry, Kaleb & Allie and Chris and Gail were staying on until Tuesday.)

The rain had help to settle the dust ... initially ... but we soon found out that not everywhere had benefitted. Deb & Quenton wanted to have a look



Mt IVE – Gawler Ranges (3rd – 6th April 2015)

at Iron Knob so we made that a “morning tea” and “dunny” stop and also took the opportunity to pump up the tyres before driving on the bitumen.



We drove on into Pt Augusta which is where some of us parted company and headed home on our own. The drive wasn't a particularly pleasant one with very strong winds and heavy rain along the way, however, considering it was the last day of the long weekend, the traffic wasn't as bad as anticipated and kept moving at a reasonable speed.

Thank you to Max & Lyn for leading & planning the trip. It was a great weekend with great company so thanks to everyone for making it a relaxing and social weekend.

[Sandra & Pete Harper]





Mt IVE – Gawler Ranges (3rd – 6th April 2015)

