



**Trip Report (Googs Track)**

**Googs Track August 4th - August 13th**

**4<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> August**

Despite dreadful weather predicted for the next two weeks, seven brave people met at Tarlee on 4 August. Loaded up with tents, swags and sand flags, we left on time and headed to Port Augusta in sunshine but windy weather, then west towards Wudinna, stopping to observe the art work on the Kimba silos and the giant galah. Our first camp was at Pildappa Rock. We climbed this fantastic rock formation and watched a beautiful sunset.

My task each day was to check that all members of our party had taken their meds! At Ceduna, we purchased our permits to camp at Googs and the Gawler Ranges National Park. At the entrance to Googs Track we let our tyres down and two other parties approached us from the park....my thoughts were, 'Well we aren't the only crazy people out camping in this terrible weather.'



The track was pleasant, sandy but not difficult. We came to the memorial of Googs and his son and the money tree where people have decorated the tree with coins inserted into the bark.

Soon we were setting up camp overlooking Googs Lake, hoping that we could watch a beautiful sunrise the following morning.



Well, we all got it very wrong, because there were showers overnight and cloudy in the morning and the sun didn't get up where we thought it would!!! But everyone was warm and dry. Brent, Colin and I went for a long walk over several sand ridges then back along the lake shore line. We saw a lot of 'roo and emu tracks, dead harvest beetles on the dry lake but nothing else alive. Even the ants were inside their ant mounds with the holes

blocked. Bob and Pauline walked to the island on the lake. Later we all went for a drive around the lake edge, returning to find there had been a very heavy shower of rain that





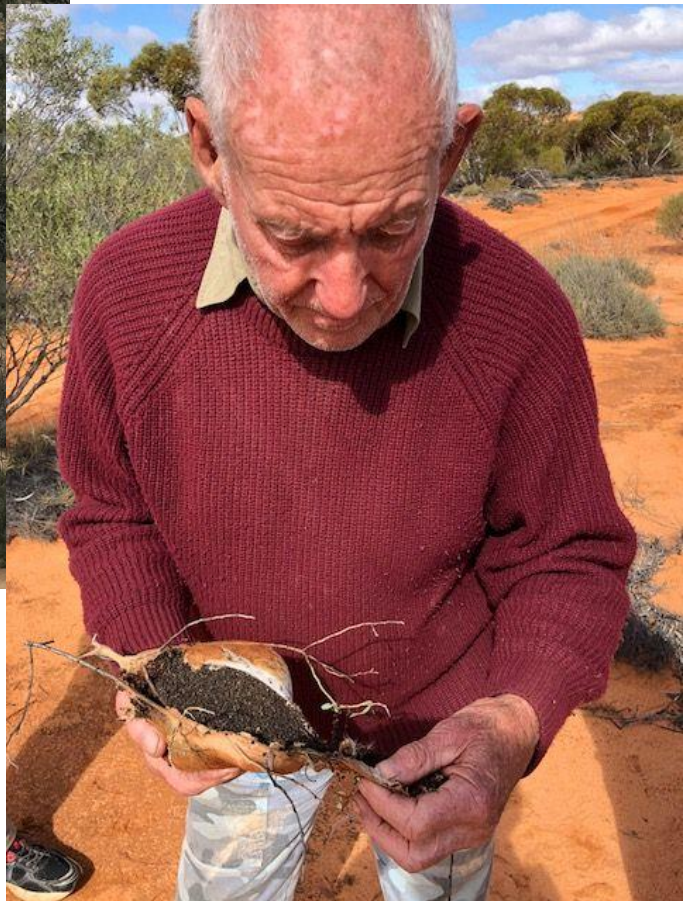
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had wet everything under our shelters and we were very surprised to see that the lake had a sheet of water across it.

The following day a group in front of us were having trouble getting over the sand ridges. "It could be a very loooong day" It turns out they had 40 psi in one of their trailer tyres!!!! I took the opportunity to walk the track until the rest of the group came by to pick me up. Colin found a bag moth casing, and opened it to reveal shedded caterpillar skins and faeces. Soon after this Colin became 'a little bit complacent" and needed a help to get over the sand ridge!!!! He had been looking at wild flowers! The 2nd snatch by Brent did the trick!!!!



The track into the Mt Finke camp was very twisty and turny. Darryll who was leading, thought he was travelling in a circle, thinking he might meet up with the rest of us soon and the top of the ridge was as rough as hessian bag



underpants!!

In the morning, Pauline and I climbed Mt Finke. It was like climbing an irregular staircase. The rock formations are intriguing. We were very fortunate to see the spider flower, *Grevillea Treueriana*, endemic to the area, in flower on the mountain. The guys

collected us from the base and I was very hot and sweaty! I had worn a beanie every day of the trip and some really cold nights, and spilt a cup of coffee over myself. It was really time I had a shower.....I stunk! I think I could join the Skunk Brother gang!!!!

Day 5 was a beautiful sunny day. There were lots of wild flowers and challenging sand ridges. Stopped for lunch and put air back into tyres, but unfortunately discovered it was too soon as we encountered lots of corrugations.





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We came to the end of Googs track and had a group photo, watched the goods train roar past with a toot and headed towards Kingoonya. Here we enjoyed a well needed hot shower and scrubbed up before heading to dinner at the pub.

A few trains and road trains roared through the town overnight but Darryll slept with his deaf ear up and never heard a thing.....his advantage!!!

Ice on the tent, but warm inside, we had brekky and fuelled up, then stopped just out of town to get permits online. This was a great opportunity to do treasure hunting along the roadside! Then we were on our way again leaving this interesting, friendly outback town - Pro Hart's Ferrari, lawn planted near the toilet block, a couple of horses standing around, car mounted on top of a building and a yard decorated with car fan flowers.



Next we headed towards Gawler Ranges NP. A bit greener now, Lake Everard, Koley Hut and dozens of emus, wildflowers, caterpillars, and lunch at Skull tanks. We camped at Lake Gairdner. The following morning Colin, the jokes man, was in good spirits. Darryll ventured out in shorts, thongs and 'T' shirt. We climbed the rocky hill, spotting lots of 'roos and returned via the base of the hill. On our

way again, we stopped at Pondanna ruins built in 1880, where Colin found a cache. Beautiful stone work and 2 deep water tanks.

65 kms yet to Gawler Ranges, we turned right at a wagon, Thurlga HS to Yardea HS. On Stringer Highway, it is very green. We saw sleepy lizards, goats, eagles, wombat holes, a few dead wombats and pillar rock formations. Hundreds of 'roos and emus. Stopped for a look at Pondanna HS and then camped at Mattered. Pauline and I made a stew from everyone's left overs, and we ended the evening with port and a few jokes from Colin.

Pauline lost her hat this morning, Darryll lost his belt and I lost a fork! A good start! Next day Pauline's hat was found, Roy's claw hammer was found, although he didn't know it was





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lost!

We stopped to look at Old Paney HS and found a cache. Looked at a fibreglass lined tank and trough and stone dam. It was a beautiful spot with 3 creeks feeding into one and clear running water.

Then on to see the organ pipes. It was a good walk, with running water, flowers, and tadpoles. Next we stopped at Yandinga Falls, more interesting rock formations and native flowers. On the move again, we came to Kolay Mirica Falls. This was a very special place with interesting rock formations and running water. Kolay Hut and campground is also very appealing set amongst trees near a creek with a nearby walking trail that looked like it may have a rock pool.

After lunch at Old Paney Shearing Shed we travelled to Kimber, Buckleboo and our last night at Iron Knob Caravan Park. At this stage we were a little sad but enjoyed our stay and our cosy group of 5 vehicles, 7 people, our leader Roy, Bob and Pauline, Darryll, Colin, Brent and Keryn.

All discussions were about how well the trip went, despite not a lot of plans (and that was how it was meant to be,) with the threat of bad weather, we were very lucky. Thanks to Colin .....great humour and never ending jokes!!!! He was great and just bounces off people!

Windy most days, showers most days, mud, sand, dust, corrugations, lakes, ruins, running water, wildflowers, roos, emus and rock formations.

Our last day! Well what a morning! I woke early, happy that we had made it through.... No incidents .....I was extremely smelly but happy and relieved. Roy was already packing. He was

never going to be the last ready today. Then Darryll locked his keys in his vehicle. Roy sorted this problem....Darryll was in panic mode when the angle grinder came out! Was Roy seriously going to take the door off!! Cheaper than smashing a window! Keys quickly retrieved, Brent still wanted to smash the window!!



Then where are Bob and Pauline's keys? After unpacking the whole contents of the car they were found on the back floor near the water bottle. Must be time to go home. Colin is out of whisky and chocolate! We are out of Bread and meat and I smell bad!!! We enjoyed the last nights camp. Good fire, wood supplied, pay by donation.

On our way, we were diverted from the main highway after Port Augusta to Spear Creek. Just another adventure. We may need 2 showers to come clean and clothes washed twice too!!! We certainly had a lot of fun. We all said our goodbyes at Melrose and made our way home.



## *Gawler and Districts 4WD Club Incorporated*

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Thank you everyone for a fantastic trip, great company and lots of laughs in the great outdoors!! Thank you Roy for a great job as trip leader.

[Keryn]