

Craig's Capertee Cookup

Weekend 22nd and 23rd March 2014
Craig Upton plus Kasey and Shane
Glen and Kim Coddington plus Monica
Carl Bleazard
Nigel Ward

Conray and Chris Arbon
Leonard and Deborah Khor plus Jonathan, Lachlan,
Kieran, Cameron , Benny and Vivian
Michael and Denise Kruger

NAVI"GATE" AFFAIR

Michael and I were all packed and ready on Friday night so when Saturday arrived we were up early and excited that finally the day dawned and we were off to investigate a new area. Craig had sent a detailed email with clear "instructions", so putting my faith in him and the instructions we set off.... Things were going well up to the point Michael and I realised we were the morning's entertainment for the overnight campers.... All they saw was the Hilux going one way, turning and then going the other way then up the hill then down the hill, then back across the river and along the other road. Put a call out to Craig and no response, we could not find his campsite. Glad that we knew Carl was on his way and thought if we wait at the bottom of the steep downhill (as per instructions) we would meet up with him. Carl was expected at 10am in camp and on time we heard Carl on the radio calling out to Craig, we contacted him and found out we were on the wrong road. Carl found us and dragged us into camp, meanwhile Craig who had finally come on the air was laughing his head off that I got lost and how I was going to blame him and he was going to rub my nose in it. So I happily showed him the email he sent out and here is an extract of the last instructions he wrote is as follows:

*"There will be a Y junction. Take the **left** down the steep hill and you will pass a high powered power tower.*

Follow to the bottom and go over the creek in low range as the bottom is loose gravel.

We will be camped just over to the left near the drop toilet."

Craig ate humble pie when he realised he is still learning his left from his right. Conray and Chris were in the same boat but we were well prepared and Craig rushed to guide them into camp.

DRIVER"GATE" AFFAIR

Kim and Glen have just had their new Colorado modified and were keen to test it out on a rough terrain before they head off to the Cape, so we decided to go for an early afternoon drive to Mount Airly. The Colorado knew they were in safe hands as they were flanked by 3 trusty Toyota's! We had all the recovery kit close to hand, but the Colorado knew they would not be needed and they weren't. Craig was okay in giving directions, he just forgets to use the radio and indicators to let us know where he is going!





What an incredible area though, the views from the various lookouts we stopped at were spectacular. It was a fabulous clear day enabling us to see an incredible distance. One of the viewpoints Craig took us to was the fern forest however it was sad to see that the forest was devastated. Not sure if they are diseased or if someone has poisoned them but luckily there is new growth coming through.

We drove home and met Lenny and family en-route so escorted them into camp. They managed to get their camper van all sorted within seconds of the rain arriving. We all huddled under canvas till the showers disappeared, however I think there was someone watching Michael and having some fun with him as every time he took the chairs out from under cover the rain would come down again.

It gave us a chance to have a very cosy happy hour at Kim and Glen's tent. Eventually the rain left and the sun came out again and the men did what they really wanted to do...get the fire going.

PARENT "GATE" AFFAIR 1

Craig decided that he needed kindling to get the fire going, so got out the BIG axe. There he was chopping away and next thing poor Kasey is bleeding. A piece of wood shot off and struck her on her fingers and her leg. What a brilliant young

lady she is, no tears, no blaming DAD for his bad axemanship, she just got up, went and got herself some ice and put a lot of distance between herself and her father's chopping! Glen practised his first aid and Dad continued chopping!

The guys had a fabulous fire going and we all had the camp ovens ready for the cookup, we were all concerned if Craig had bought and then brought all the groceries for the night and considering his mishaps with driving instructions etc we were greatly and with good reason concerned. Relief on all our faces as we see a proud and smiling Craig bringing over big bags to the table and he calls out to Kasey who is only 10, and he gives her the sharpest knife he can find to pierce holes in the legs of lamb and side of beef to add in cloves of garlic. Loved working with you Kasey, you are a true champ in the kitchen. We had great fun seasoning those chickens too! And then we left the boys to cook the meat, which was entertainment in itself with all the instructions and ideas bandied about and must add that most of the instructions contradicted each other too.



Trip report

bought it on Thursday and did not refrigerate it so now the broccoli was yellow! Well, we are campers and we have strong stomachs and no one said no to it!

Lenny and Carl did the honours of carving up the meat and with the Kim and Glen's excellently cooked yellow broccoli dinner was served and then there was silence as all were eating a delicious meal. Thanks guys.

Cameron has had a traumatic few weeks recuperating from her stint in hospital after a very bad asthma attack and being a true 4wd camp kid she postponed her 5th birthday party to come camping with us. So with a delicious caramel mud cake we all sang happy birthday to her. And we wish you a continued speedy recovery.

Carl is a true champion husband, Saturday was his wedding anniversary and he chose to come camping and Colleen attended a women's conference and then out celebrating with friends. Congratulations

Colleen and Carl, hope you have many more happy years together.

Yep and the next tradition – kids (of all sizes), fire, sticks and marshmallows – what would a campfire be without them!

ENTERTAINMENT“GATE” AFFAIR

We were all relaxing around the fire content in silences, in laughter, in sharing snippets of information and gaining bragging rights with each other and then there is Craig, you know the saying that once seen it can never be unseen – Craig decided to show us how good he (thinks he) is at twerking. Kim fell off her chair laughing so much, Glen's chin fell on the floor. Carl and Nigel just stared and the kids, well they ran away screaming in horror.

PARENT“GATE” AFFAIR 2

Time for getting kids ready for bed and Shane comes to tell Craig that Kasey does not have her toothbrush... Kasey being the dream kid she is organised her younger brothers' weekend packing

