

Headin' out West!

... MHACA's o'night camping trip ...



We made it! Ah, this is the good life ...



Who needs fly-spray when ya got t-towels!



Those flies won't get the better of me!



Eva, Rebecca and Matty enjoyin' the great outdoors

Hmm, that sure smells good! Jo, Gavin and Matty fire up the BBQ



I'm telling ya, we better not forget that fly spray!

16-17 Sept 2005

AFTER SEVERAL weeks of planning, eight of us headed out to Ormiston Gorge on 16 September for an overnight camp. The trailer was packed to the hilt with swags, cooking equipment and enough food to feed an army! Rebecca, Gavin Richter, Melissa and Jo set out in the Sedan, followed by Gavin Foley and Matty in the 4WD. We were later joined by Eva and Clayton in Clayton's ute.

While there had been storms the previous day we were lucky enough to have clear skies and warm weather. And thanks to Waltja's donation of camping equipment - especially the swags! - we had every bit of the creature comforts.

After a pleasant drive through the luscious mountains of the Western McDonnell Ranges we arrived at our destination - where we were warmly greeted by a cheery chap (the caretaker of the Gorge) who showed us to our 'million-star' camp site. It was a treat to have it all to ourselves.

It didn't take us long to set up camp and we soon settled into a delicious lunch. Attempting to do battle with the flies proved to be amusing - with the introduction of t-towels on our heads as a fly deterrent! We then went for a walk around the Gorge which was just spectacular. There was a little bit of water there but no one opted for a swim ... though to our delight we did see a few youngsters enjoying a refreshing dip. But we weren't quite that brave!

We headed back to the camp site in the afternoon. As the weather was cool enough to start a fire pretty early in the evening some of the men (both Gavins and Clayton) went off to gather wood ... whilst the women prepared the evening meal! After a lot of chatting around the fire and a lovely dinner prepared by our 'surprise' chef Matty, we tucked in for the night.

After a dreamy sleep under the stars we were awakened quite early by chatting - those who went to bed early! Must have been pay back!! While a few managed to sleep through the chatter (Rebecca, Melissa and Matty) for the rest of us it was definitely time for a cuppa. But, oh gasp - as the early birders quickly discovered,





Anyone need a t-towel? Won't be long before those flies are up!



This is what it's all about ... the peace and beauty of the outback

we had run out of milk! So Jo and Rebecca headed off to Glen Helen ... back in time for all to enjoy milk in their coffee.

That morning we spent visiting Glen Helen and walking to the Gorge. We found a beautiful peaceful spot where we had the opportunity for some reflection time - and more photos!

As a group we decided to head out to Redbank Gorge and then onto Goss Bluff ... but Mary the Magna had other ideas. Fifteen minutes into the drive we had a blow out! Thanks to the skill of our driver (Melissa) we slowly veered to the side of the road, and thanks to our very skilled bush mechanics (Matty, Clayton and both Gavin's) our tyre was soon fixed. We then decided to change our plans and go to Ellery Creek Bighole for lunch. After another very filling lunch and visit to the water hole we were ready to head home.

The camping trip proved to be a great opportunity for everyone to relax in the most spectacular surrounding of the Western Macs. Talking openly and honestly about some of our experiences of life, work and travel, it was a time of sharing and accepting of others, with a strong group focus. It was an ideal stress-free environment - far away from the hustle and bustle of town ... no distractions, no appointments, just the opportunity to get to know each other on a more personal level.

The camping trip was relaxing, fun and a success all round, and we look forward to another trip in 2006. Favourite suggestions so far include Kings Canyon, Uluru and Kata Juta.

We hope to see you there!

Jo Ruby

Goodbye flies!! We're heading home now ...

Oh no we're not! ...That flat sure is a beauty!

Off in a jiffy! Fellow bush mechanics unite!!



I could have sworn I brought some fly spray!



Footy is grand, but so is the view ... Gavin takes a break to admire the Gorge

