

Lunch was at *Howitt Hut* and it was here that Alan and Vicki discovered a broken bolt on their rear suspension necessitating a slow steady drive back to civilization. For this they chose to retreat via Brocks road to Mansfield, with the rest of the crew heading down *Zeka Spur Track* to *Wonnangatta Valley*. After checking out the homestead area we headed out the southern end of the valley to the *Humphray River Track* where once again multiple river crossings abounded.

Our final challenge for the day was the long steady climb up *Water Spur Track* to the top of *Tea Tree Range*, where a well formed road led us back through the Buckland Valley to Porepunkah and home.

A most enjoyable weekend, with a great crew, visiting some truly wonderful country. No wonder we enjoy our four wheel driving!
Noel and Irene

Butcher Country and Beyond

By Vicky Davis and Jim Bramich

The Davis's were first to arrive at camp at Sheep yard Flat on the Friday afternoon, Rob. H. turned up after the camp fire was going and took it over for the night. Next to arrive was Frank & Henry. Then our trip leader turned up about 10.30, we were already for bed by this time. It felt like we hadn't been in bed long when we heard A turbo diesel & large Rubber tires approaching then saw lights followed by a loud voice come on you lot get up its time to play Stan & Bethne had arrived. Jim said he was coming but we had just about given up on him when we heard him over the CB another 5 mins and we would have been gone. (He would have been there sooner but it was not possible to get the patrol to go any faster)

The sun was shining much to Stans disappointment, the tracks were good, the Son of a Bitch track has changed not a bitch any more but Grimme's track now earns the name, the boys loved it. The Davis's moved a rock Stan gouged a bit out of one rim on a rock. Irene put the first scratch on the new camper too close to a tree and Stan touched the same tree with the back of his Ute. The Davis's stopped for a puncher while fixing it Allan noticed that there was a dent in another rim so that was fixed with the hammer, then it was off to find our camp for the night, Rob Holden and the 3 young boys decided that the river looked too good not to go for a swim and in they went! Camp set up tea cooked on the camp fire (thanks to Frank for the new BBQ for all to use) a chat around the fire then it was time for bed.



When the Davis's got up the tire that had the dented rim was square on the bottom, the decision was made to just pump it up and see what happened Stan did have a spare tube if needed. Stan, Bethne & the Davis's were the first to leave camp via the Butchers track to see if it was passable, it was fine, just straight up (Allan didn't realise Vicki had such an extensive expressive vocabulary) at one stage we couldn't hear the rest of the group on the CB, so to pass on directions for them to follow us on to a right hand track a note was left on a made-up sign post in the middle of the track. They found us just as we were finishing morning tea.



It was now time to play. The boys were very happy the track was very steep and rocky in places but what was steep going up was very steep going down and Stan prayed for rain the whole time "I'm glad they weren't answered" as the adrenalin was really pumping. Lunch stop at Howitt Hut and it was time for Allan to put more air in the tire and on doing a check found one U bolt broken the real axle, so it was decided to part with the rest of the group and go home slowly by the shortest way to the black top. We stopped at Bindaree Flat at 5pm for afternoon tea and were very happy to see the black top at 6.15.

Getting closer to home going past McDonalds when we heard what we thought was Noel on the CB and it was they were just going past from the opp direction at the same time, they were happy to hear us and know we had made it out OK.

After parting with the Davis Clan it was decided that the Wonnangatta valley would be a good idea, so off to Zeka Spur tk where we met up with some other 4WD's so we tucked in and let them past. Zeka was nice and rocky in places and could have been very nice in the wet! Down in the Valley we had a quick look at the grave yard and the old homestead site then headed out via Humphray tk which had some beautiful water crossings then on to water spur, tea tree range and Selwyn ck which was littered with long trees fallen across the track then home via Myrtleford



Howitt Hut



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NOTE: When writing up trip reports please remember to add who participated in the trip