

Southern Explorers Four Wheel Drive Club Trip Report

Goog's Track – 28 April to 1 May 2019

Trip Leader: Bruce A

The official trip commenced on Sunday 28 April with a 650km drive from home bases to Poochera on the Eyre Highway, about 140km shy of Ceduna. Rob and Ann-Marie set off the day before, over-nighting in Port Augusta before uniting with the group on Sunday whilst Ian and myself set off on the prior Wednesday, spending a few days in and around Streaky Bay before meeting the group at the Ceduna Bakery on Monday. The Poochera Pub put on a great roast meal on the Sunday night!

Monday saw the group descending on Ceduna for a few last minute supplies and/or coffee and/or



breakfast before we headed off as a convoy around mid-morning. We hadn't travelled far out of Ceduna when we were all forced to stop to allow a fairly long ore train cross the highway. It was only a short distance later that we left the Eyre Highway and travelled about 25km on a reasonable dirt road towards Kalanbie. At the point that the road narrowed and became sandier, we all stopped and dropped tyre pressures down to around 25psi. With tyres ready to go, we all passed through a gate in the dog fence and entered the Yumbarra Conservation Park. The track was sandy, reasonably

narrow and at least for the initial few kilometres did not pose any problems.

Lunch consisted of pulling over at a bit of a pull off on the road where we all stretched our legs, had lunch and a chat before returning the vehicles for a few more kilometres of sandy road that we could see stretching well into the distance when we went over a taller sand dune (apparently we were to navigate over 320 of them during the course of the drive). I was driving and was lead car, Ian navigating with Wiki Camps maps which was very detailed. Mid afternoon



saw us turning off Goog's Track to the Rock Pools which was a short detour of around 3km there and back. The rock pools were a series of depressions in a granite-like rock, with a number of the depressions holding dark water, one pool with algae/weed on the top. Judy found a stick and tested the depth with some parts of a couple of pools being more than two feet deep. Animals appeared to use the water as we found kangaroo and camel poo around the rock pools and what we think were goanna prints nearby.

Back on Goog's Track we continued through outback terrains, with the sand changing colour from a pale yellow right through to deep orange/ochre. The vegetation also changed every few kilometres with some areas low saltbush, some with relatively new growth of green shrubs, patches of Spinifex, whilst others had taller trees. We did pass a section with some tall "trees" with straight trunks and some foliage towards the top. A call over the radio querying if anyone knew what types of trees

these were brought a response from David (and Julie) that they were “Neara” trees – they were “neara” the road than some of the other trees!



After another hour or so of driving we came upon the Denton Family Memorial and the Money Tree. Again we stopped to read the information and several of us placed or hammered coins into the money tree to carry on the tradition that had commenced a number of years ago – so that Goog and his son Dinger would always have money to buy a beer!

The Goog’s Lake campsite was only 4km away so we had almost reached our overnight destination. It was on this last section of road that we met our first

oncoming vehicle, a large 4WD towing a large off road trailer. Every 15 minutes or so, Ian had put a call out on Channel 18, the “track channel”, to announce our group’s presence, which had been heard by the other car who was watching out for us. The couple did not intend over-nighting at Goog’s Lake, instead moving further up the Track towards Mt Finke.

Goog’s Lake, when we arrived, was impressive. It did have a small amount of water in it but more like a puddle! The campground was good with a long drop toilet and several picnic tables with benches. Each of us selected a suitable spot to erect swags (3), tents (4), and one rooftop tent and then we had happy hour. And the flies! How is it that there are so many flies around when we are trying to get tea? Several of us ended up using the face fly-nets just to give the arms a rest from the Aussie salute. However, once the sun went down and the smoke from the campfire wafted gently over the area, the flies did disappear. I got out the camp oven and tried to bake a batch of scones for supper – didn’t quite get the temperature right and they took over 40 minutes to cook, before I accidentally gave them a light coating of ash. Still, they did taste nice with raspberry jam and a dollop of cream, although a little crunchy.



The next morning saw all of us up at a reasonable hour with time to have a walk down to the lake for those who wanted to. We set off on the Track again around 9:30am for a full day’s driving. The forecast for today was the chance of some showers of up to 0.4mm and we did have a few showers as we drove along, mostly just needing the windscreen wipers on intermittent but a couple of times I had to increase this to on all the time. The day started with a couple of the usual sand dunes before we came across a larger dune with what appeared to be three

separate tracks up and over. I stopped and Ian and I decided to walk the track to see what each was like and what was on the other side. The middle track joined the main track with a right hand turn just before the summit and the other track did not seem well used and was quite soft. Bruce offered to go up first and made it up and over with no problems. I then had a go and managed to get over the dune with no issues. Judy had about three tries before her Prado made it down the other side, but no-one else had any further issues with this dune. There were a couple of others that took more

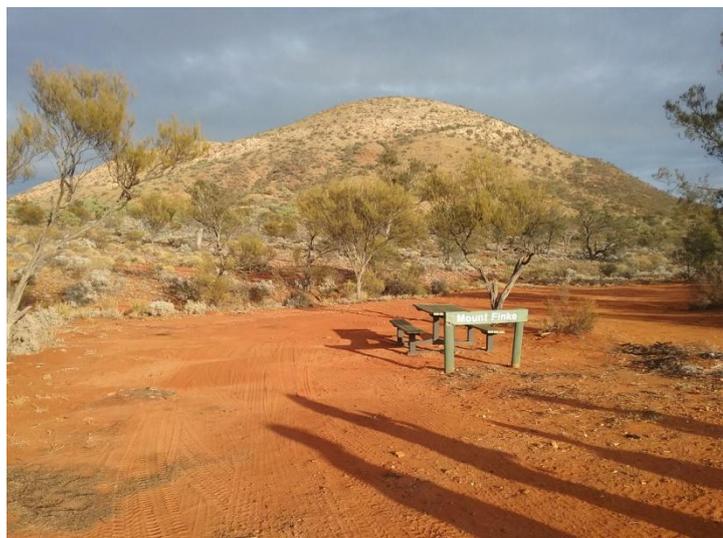


than one attempt to get over one or two of the trickier dunes. The track had plenty of corrugations in places, some particularly deep as we neared the top of some dunes so that the vehicles were rocked violently from side to side. We also noticed quite a few roo and dingo prints on the Track as we drove along.

We had a lunch stop at a pull off alongside the track which unfortunately coincided with a shower so we had to take cover as there was no point getting wet and cold.

After around 60km of track we got our first view of Mt Finke in the distance which made a pleasant change from sand dune after sand dune. We made another short stop at the turnoff to Mt Finke for some afternoon tea and a stretch of the legs after what seemed to me a fairly long day driving. We continued the last 7km to the Mt Finke campground arriving as more rain came. Ian and I delayed pitching our tent until that shower was over although Jim with his Speedy tent managed to get his sorted in about 30 seconds flat! A campfire and dinner followed as well as another few showers, most light. I made scones again (this time relieved of any duty involving the removal of the camp oven lid!) and they turned out ash free and nice. Because of the cooler weather and the rain, we were not bothered by flies for the day but we did get some large moths which, despite the danger of the heat, ended up being drawn to the fire only to die very quickly in the flames.

The following morning there were still some dark skies but also some breaks in the weather. Julie, Rob, Ann-Marie, Justin and I decided to have a walk up Mt Finke before we departed for the day. There didn't appear to be a specific path so we followed some gaps in the Spinifex and made our way to varying degrees upwards. We were not planning on nor did we reach the summit, Julie and I stopping before the others, but we did get some great views over the country we had travelled and also where we were heading for today.





The track wound its way along fairly flat ground initially and shortly after leaving, we came upon another salt lake, skirting the edges before we were back in dune country again. Jim decided to take a “chicken track” at another dune later that morning and needed to be rescued by Les. Apparently it is not a SE4WDC Trip unless Jim gets into trouble and someone has to assist!

Morning tea was at the Yellabinna Regional Reserve, pulled over at the side of the Track. Continuing on, the Track continually changed from sand to a rockier track. Lunch was at

the end of Goog’s Track, just over from the railway line. We had the mandatory group photo, hover lan and Judy decided to see how long we would all stand by our vehicles whilst they made as if to take more photos – and the rest of us were wondering why they were laughing so much! Whilst we were finishing lunch, a freight train came through – some added excitement for the day. There were still some dark clouds around, broken up occasionally by patches of blue sky and it was quite cool.



After lunch we completed the last 200 meters of Goog’s Track and turned onto the Kingoonya road. This was a good dirt road, quite wide, and with tyres still sitting at 25psi, we travelled along at a reasonable speed of 60-70 kph passing through Tarcoola and eventually reaching Kingoonya by late afternoon. We initially stopped at the free camp area, but Bruce carried

on into town, confirming our pub booking for dinner that night and also finding out that for the bargain price of \$10 per car, we could stay at the Caravan Park behind the pub and have a hot shower. Needless to say, we all decided that a hot shower and some protection from the wind was a good option.



The pub was a typical country pub, with tables and chairs under the large veranda – used for happy hour that evening – a small bar just through the door and a couple of bigger rooms out the back for the dining area. The meals were simple (steak, schnitzel, fish – all served with chips and a small buffet salad bar) but very nice. They even had an ice cream freezer for dessert! We enjoyed our meal and then went back to the caravan park and had a camp fire in the area especially set up for the purpose.

The following day, Justin and Les departed for Glendambo and a tarmac road heading for home and thus ended the first part of the trip. The remaining six cars headed towards Mt Ive Station and that is another trip report!

Goog's Track Toll – a team effort

- Two broken water containers (a good job not all water was held in a single containers)
- Diesel lost as the jerry can seal opened twice.
- Gas lost from a gas cylinder as the valve opened and released the gas
- Two ariels shaken from mounts – had to be replaced, nuts tightened and tape applied
- Lockable storage drawers became unlockable
- Half a dozen smashed raw eggs (cardboard carton and other padding no match for the track)
- One smashed coffee mug – ceramic not the best to travel with!
- Plastic transport crates destroyed.

What a drive ☺

Vanessa.