



SEFWDC Trip Report

Binns Track

30 June 2026 to 17 July 2026

Day 1: Home to Cradock

We each made our way to Cradock to commence the trip – Brett as trip leader, Chris, Kevin, Janet, Ian and myself. We had a nice meal at the pub (except for Janet, being gluten free) and as the prediction was for overnight rain, discussions were had about where to head to from Cradock. In an attempt to avoid the rain and therefore road closures the decision was made to have a long drive tomorrow to Coober Pedy.

Day 2: Cradock to Coober Pedy

Today was a long, uneventful day. Janet headed off when she was ready as she thought she would be travelling slower than the rest of us. The rest of us followed about an hour later but didn't catch Janet up until the Bon Bon rest stop. Onward then to Coober Pedy with an overnight at the Oasis Caravan Park.

Day 3: Coober Pedy to William Creek

As the road to William Creek was open and with the hope that other roads would be open soon, we headed off in that direction. Kevin radioed to say he had smashed his rear window, so we all stopped. Luckily while it was crazed it was still intact. Half a roll of black race tape later (with every inch of glass covered), off we went to Lake Cadibarrawirracanna for lunch. Almost there and Janet got bogged so Chris gently snatched her out of the mud. The rest of us took the dry alternate option that Brett and Janet had missed. Quite a bit of water in the lake with wild budgerigars flying around us and some inland shorebirds on the far banks. We overnighted at William Creek in the campground, some had dinner in the pub, and we checked the road closures again and again!

Day 4: William Creek to Arkaringa Station

We waited around until 11am to see if the road would be opened between William Creek and Oodnadatta but no luck. While waiting we added a SEFWDC sticker to the wall in the bar! Back into the vehicles, retracing our travels to Coober Pedy for refuelling before driving on the open road to Mt Barry then taking the left turn to Arkaringa Station for the night. Most went out to the Painted Desert, several kilometers away to watch the changing colours as the sun set. That evening we found out the road to Oodnadatta from William Creek opened at 1:30pm!

Day 5: Arkaringa Station to Marla

We set off when all were ready, driving through / past the Painted Desert and then on to Oodnadatta where we stopped at the Pink Roadhouse for coffee, fuel and a stubby holder for Brett to add to his collection. We then drove the Oodnadatta Track to Marla – quite a few muddy puddles, most with a dryer option, but one or two that just had to be driven through. We certainly understood why the road was still closed to 2 wheel drive vehicles. We stayed on unpowered sites at Marla that evening. It being a Saturday night, a chap called Stonie was putting on a show in support of Prostate Cancer so the majority of us spent the evening in the bar joining the locals and listening to the entertainment. Whilst we donated to the cause, none of us won the meat raffles!

Day 6: Marla to Alice Springs

Today was another uneventful day following the Stuart Highway into Alice Springs. We stopped at Kulgera only to find they do instant coffee, so we continued on to Erldunda for barista coffee, lunch, fuel, etc. We stayed at the Discovery Parks Alice Springs Caravan Park. A very pleasant place to stay with the added bonus of a Strawberries and Ice Cream outlet that we supported that evening. The strawberries, pancake, icecream and cream was very nice!

Day 7: Alice Springs

Today was a rest day so everyone did their own thing. Kevin inquired about getting his back window replaced and managed to arrange that for 8:30am the following day. Janet had some issues with her electrical charging circuit so Ian had a look at that and did some adjusting and monitoring to get it working as it should be. Washing and shopping was also done.

Day 8: Gaps and Gorges

Brett, Chris, Kevin, Ian and I headed off to Emily Gap, Jessie Gap and Corroboree Rock, stopping at each to have a walk around and take photos. Ian tried out his walking poles and navigated the uneven terrain around Corroboree Rock with increased confidence. On to Trephina Gorge for lunch where Kevin walked along the ridge route and had to take his socks and shoes off to wade across the flowing creek to return to the cars. The rest of us ambled down the gorge. Interesting that there was flowing water after all the rains, and lots of vegetation – certainly a nice time to visit. Kevin retrieved his car with its new back window and promptly attached corflute over it to reduce the likelihood of another break. Meanwhile ... Janet remained at the Caravan Park and tried to evict much of the dust that had found its way into her van as well as getting organised to head off again tomorrow. We all walked across to the Alice Springs Brewing Co. and had pizza for dinner – a busy place that brewed its own beer which was enjoyed by some of the group.

Day 9: Alice Springs to Gemtree

We managed to pick up our original itinerary for Binns Track today. There had certainly been rain in the area as there was quite a lot of mud and some significant puddles that had to be negotiated. Quite a bit could be driven around but several spots required driving through! And you too can have a car covered in mud if you slightly overuse momentum to get you through! A check later in the day revealed lots of mud in wheel arches and lots of mud splashes over the vehicles (particularly our once white Hilux). We had lunch on the wayside by a creek, and a quick stop to look at the Arltunga Pub, before arriving at Gemtree for the evening at the caravan park.

Day 10: Gemtree to Taylors Creek Rest Area

Some of us tried the bacon and egg burgers from the caravan park shop for breakfast – very nice. The proprietor of the caravan park, who knows the area, was very helpful by advising us that 30mm rain had fallen on the next section of Binns Track that we were planning to do. Knowing what more than 5mm of rain can do to dirt tracks, we decided to head out on the tarmac to the Stuart Highway to a rest area (Taylors Creek) which was where we could turn off tomorrow and head back on to Binns Track (as this section appeared to have avoided the rain). We stopped at Aileron for lunch – a pleasant roadhouse. On the hill above was a statue of a First Nations man so Brett and I had a walk to take some photos. After lunch we drove to Barrow Creek for a stop (the pub had lost its licence) and then headed on the final part of the highway to our stop for the evening in a pleasant rest area with a long drop toilet. We added to the several vans already pulled up for the night.

Day 11: Taylors Creek Rest Area to Old Policestation Waterhole

Once we were all packed up and ready, we took a right turn off the Highway towards Murray Downs Station to pick up the Binns Track again. A gate stopped us, advising us to phone the Station because of biosecurity issues. No phone numbers worked so we headed on and picked up Binns Track. Chris had been hearing a noise for a few days but couldn't find out what was causing it. Ian sat with Chris for a drive and the problem was discovered to be a broken leaf spring! Given that it was a Friday the decision was made to proceed with caution. We had lunch at a delightful spot, with waterholes in a creek system, watched on by spinifix pigeons. We continued on the rough stony road, that then passed through grasslands, avoiding frisky cows that wanted to play with the cars, through 3 water crossings (each one a little deeper than the last), and on to our destination for the evening at Old Policestation Waterhole. We were the only ones at this delightful spot right next to a permanent waterhole and with the cleanest long drop toilet we have seen. Happy hour was enjoyed!

Day 12: Old Policestation Waterhole to Karlu Karlu (Devil's Marbles)

We had a later start this morning. Kevin enjoyed his walk to the other side of the waterhole before we all headed back off on the Binns Track through the Davenport Ranges National Park – with some lovely views of craggy outcrops, wooded areas, grasslands and varying conditions of the track. We stopped at Epenarra, some fueled up and most of us checked out the store, a bit of a surprise out there in the middle of station country. Binns Track continued to the Stuart Highway where we turned south to Karlu Karlu and the campsites we had all booked for the night. Unfortunately a large Winnebago type vehicle was in our spot with no-one to be seen at that time. However they did come back and Chris had a few choice words with the husband, as did the wife, while Ian offered to show him the booking we had. They removed themselves from our spot expeditiously so we could then set up for the night. We had a walk to the lookout, a short walk of about 15 minutes before returning to our site for dinner. Kevin and others took the opportunity to do one of the several walks around the area.

Day 13: Karlu Karlu to Tennant Creek

With no urgency to leave early, several of us continued our walking around the park before heading off on the Stuart Highway to Tennant Creek, not a long journey. Chris didn't want to take the Triton any further given the broken leaf spring. We booked into the Outback Caravan Park for the night and organised the courtesy bus to take us to dinner at the Memorial Club that evening. Chris phoned the RAA, was put up for the night in a cabin, and was asked to see the mechanic first thing tomorrow (Monday) morning. Most of us had a quiet afternoon washing clothes, washing mud off the trailers, dustproofing, etc. Dinner was pleasant at the Club and we chatted to our courtesy bus driver, Robert, who was helpful telling us about Tennant Creek, and what NT means (not today, not tomorrow, not Tuesday, not Thursday, next truck or next train).

Day 14: Tennant Creek to Daly Waters

Chris headed off to the mechanics early only to find that he was on a day off (show day in Tennant Creek was the previous Friday). Kevin and Ian picked up our new found friend Robert to go out to the local dump to see if there was a Triton like Chris's out there with good leaf springs but no luck. We left Chris in Tennant Creek, comfortable in his cabin and with local sights to see and the rest of us headed north along the Stuart Highway to Daly Waters. We booked into unpowered sites, got settled and went over to the main patio area where we listened to live music (initially an older couple singing various genres and then a younger male guitarist who was later joined by younger female guitarist who paired up

well). Some of us indulged in the beef / barra and salad meal whilst Janet had a lovely looking vegan salad.

Day 15: Daly Waters to Top Springs

True to the Club's name, we explored around the pub, had a look at the Stuart Tree and the WWII airport before getting back on the highway, initially south to refuel at Dunmarra, and then north to the Savannah Highway turn off (back on Binns Track). The 180km of road contained lots of corrugations, kicked up lots of dust, one large mud puddle to add to the previous layers of mud on the cars, plus some rough washouts. All in all we made it to Top Springs about 4pm. We booked into sites (powered for Janet, Brett and ourselves, unpowered for Kevin), all close together and close to the ablution block on lovely grass, with some nice shade. Ian and Brett networked with the locals who came to the pub for dinner about the trip tomorrow and also the conditions on the Tanami Road.

Meanwhile ... Chris spoke to the mechanic who ordered the parts he needs which should arrive from Darwin Thursday morning. He was hopeful that the parts would be fitted Thursday morning and that he would meet up with us on Friday afternoon at Timber Creek.

Day 16: Top Springs to Timber Creek

We departed Top Springs about 9:30am. The gravel road was not as corrugated as yesterday but plenty of dust kicked up so we were spaced out along the road. Very little traffic in either direction. We arrived at the Dashwood Crossing through the Victoria River and had a break, enjoying the beautiful spot, with running water and no crocodiles that we could see. Brett went across first and the water pushed on a loose bashplate, bent it back and it sounded bad as he exited the crossing. The rest of us made it across without issue. Brett tried to put the bashplate back on but couldn't align the holes so it was put on the back of the camper for the remainder of the day. We also fossicked around a previously wrecked Hilux and souvenired a couple of tie down hoops and a tyre. Shortly after we stopped for lunch in the shade along the road for a break. On the go again, we were stopped this time because Brett's camper blew a tyre. Unfortunately the chain was wrapped around something and it took several attempts to lower the spare to the ground. It then had to be unbolted before it could be swapped out. It turned out to be a long day and we eventually arrived in Timber Creek Travellers Rest and secured the last 4 sites (\$50 for powered, \$30 for unpowered). Brett, Ian and I had dinner at the bistro there.

Day 17: Timber Creek

After a long day yesterday, the decision to swap the Binns Track drive to Bullita Outstation and the Humbert River to a rest day was agreed upon by all. That was timely as we woke up to a flat back passenger tyre on the Hilux. Tightening the valve did not solve the issue so the tyre had to be changed. Ian also spent about 4 hours to get the electric trailer brakes working again (but the right indicator stopped!). Brett ran over his bashplate several times to straighten it out before screwing it back on where it belonged. Washing was done, the freshwater crocodiles in the waterhole were spotted as was the bat colony. Ian and I had a very nice lunch at the bistro – very handy for travellers!

Meanwhile ... the parts for Chris's car arrived and were installed. Chris was on the road again shortly after lunch and camped at Newcastle Waters overnight, aiming to meet us tomorrow.

Day 18: Timber Creek

The Binns Track trip finished this morning. To read about our ongoing adventures, please read the "Beyond Binns Track" trip report.

Vanessa