

EMU CREEK BUSH RETREAT

6TH to 9TH JUNE 2014

Trip Leader – Andrew Ronnfeldt

Friday:

You know you get to that point in the week that you can't wait for the weekend to come because work is just constantly on your mind and of course 4WDing is just the better of the two. I was lucky enough to get out of work by 11.30AM! I know! How good is that for a FRIDAY! I was on the road by 12 and down to meet Chuga and Grizzly just south of the Gateway for a 1.30pm departure and off we went for the weekend away at Emu Creek Bush Retreat. A quick stop for fuel in Beaudesert and it landed us at Emu Creek around 5pm. We met with Andrew & Buffy, Greg and Morgan, Lance, Karen and Laura who had already set up camp. By the time we had set up happy hour was missed but we made up for it with chats around the camp fire into the late hours of the evening. Grizzly had bought a heap of pine and the others had numerous amounts of wood to burn also so there was defiantly no shortage.

Saturday:

A cool night soon turned into a beautiful day to come. Gary arrived in his Patrol with new tyres and a lift ready for a challenging weekend of 4x4 adventure. The group set off for our first drive of the weekend, out of the camp ground and through the creek itself following the track through the edge of the creek and back through it a couple of times here and there. We came across our first tree over the track and realised that Grizzly's chainsaw was back at camp. The decision was made to go and get it as if this was our first tree over the track in about a period of 5 minutes, there may be more to come. Lance got the axe out and we all had a go at chopping some branches away and chucking it to the edge of the track, of course the chainsaw arrived when all the hard work was done, it's always the way!

We continued along the creek bed over many slippery rocks that shot the cars in any direction at a moment's notice, as we exited the creek bed and headed up the hill we soon found out that Lance was stuck on one big rock and when I say big I mean big..... He had managed to get it wedged between the sway bar and his rear wheel. After about 10 minutes of trying to remove this massive rock he decided the only way it was going to come out was to take the wheel off and remove the large rock by hand, no way was chipping it out going to work. Once the rock had been cleared and specially moved to the side of the track so no further drama could occur. We continued up the hill onto Track 5 to which Andrew had told us all morning that it was going to be a fun time to get all vehicles up this part of the track, knowing it well from the last time he was at the park.

We got up to the particular spot Andrew had been speaking about after negotiating some difficult ruts, rocks and holes and this is when the hard work started. I got out of the car to evaluate the situation and all I can hear is Andrew and Greg cracking up laughing as Andrew was ploughing into the dirt and going nowhere bottoming out on this hump in the middle of the track. I soon found out that what Andrew was laughing at was the fact that he was talking to Lance earlier about his 31's and clearance over some of the obstacles and the fact that if Andrew wasn't clearing this hump with his 33's how was Lance going to clear it with his 31's and not to mention the rest of the vehicles as well.

The team got to work to start track building as this was the only way we were going to get one car up let alone all six of us. After what seemed like 200 rocks were placed in the left and right hand wheel ruts there seemed to be enough height to give it another go. Andrew gave it the berries and inched his way up the track. It basically meant that every time Andrew stopped he needed to reverse back a foot and then chuck some more rocks in the holes to build it up even higher and have another go, it really was the life version of two steps forward, one step back. Andrew was up after about 20 minutes and next was Lance who also needed a bit of track building and some additional rocks. Lance crept up with not much trouble at all until the top of the track where Andrew snatched him out. Then came Gary who hurled one of the large rocks in the rut up past the side step and side bank rolling down towards me in the car. A special mention to Glen who managed to catch it on the way down, avoiding collision. Lance then snatched Gary up the same section that became the problem for him and then I was next in line. Apparently doing the same thing as Gary and chucking rocks all over the place. Gary then snatched me up the same jump up. Now Grizzly and Glen were next and by this stage there were that many rocks in the track ruts that it was like a highway and they both managed to get up the track with no snatching required. We jumped around the corner to the next obstacle and I must admit this particular section of track was quiet tricky as you had to drive between two large rocks that you had to climb both at the same time also with a wheel on each. One bounce the wrong way could have turned things nasty as Grizzly saw when he bumped the bumper bar and tail light again. Glen also didn't seem to have enough weight on the back and quickly winched out to make things easier and clear the end of the track. We headed back to camp for lunch after this and then had a quiet drive in the afternoon on some of the easier tracks. Shower time on the way back to the campground for happy hour to where I luckily found no water in the first shower and cold water in the second one. Everyone else had lovely warm showers but that's a story for another day.

Sunday:

Sunday I batted for the other team and jumped in a Patrol. Oh boy what a thrill! We headed off out of camp and went up the track we saw the previous afternoon on our way down the hill from Track 5 saying "short cut to camp". Andrew opted out at that particular time and advised that is an interesting drive that we should leave until tomorrow as it may take us a little while and it's not really a short cut. Now I don't know about a short cut, because it proved to be quiet an interesting drive and not really a short cut at all. After entering the track a couple of minutes went by and Grizzly and I noticed that Lance had stopped. Grizzly enquired over the radio if Lance was okay, once again Lance had found another rock out of place that was pushing him into a rut on the left hand side. After a bit of minor track building and numerous attempts Lance managed to clear the rock that was obstructing his

driving, of course a few jokes come out again as we all knew what happened the day before. Lance you need 33's I think were the words that were flying around again and numerous comments to Lance that Karen should drive instead left Lance in the driver's seat for a little while longer. Further on up the track we came to about 3 fallen trees that stopped us briefly while they were cleared off the track. We then came around the bend to numerous wash outs and ruts for a few hundred metres which everyone got out and picked the best line to suit their vehicle. After negotiating all cars through with some helpful guidance from Greg we continued up the track to a rock ledge and jump up that Andrew had previously warned us about. After all no vehicles had any hassles and got up the rock ledge and out of the track with no damage, after a bit of road building had taken place prior to the attempt. We got to the top of the track and back to camp for lunch.

After lunch we headed out for our afternoon drive this time with Karen in the driver's seat of the cruiser and might I just say that Karen did not have any troubles at all and her driving was spot on. Secretly I think Lance was relieved also that there were no further rock issues for any of the Walters family. Andrew took us down to an area at the front of the park that was previously used as a motor bike circuit and after a few laps around the track and over the jumps we stopped to grab some firewood for the evening to come.

As usual 4pm came and it was time to head back for happy hour but not before another group showers at the shower block on the way back to camp. Apparently what happens at Emu Creek stays at Emu Creek. Once again another late night around the fire and I think nearly all of us had a brief snooze at some stage before calling it a night.

Monday was a fairly quiet morning with a quick morning fire and a short wait until all of the campsites had dried out. The group left the campsite around 11.30am and set off for the trip back home, a quick stop for a late lunch at Subway in Beaudesert and I arrived home mid-afternoon. I must thank Andrew for running a great trip over the weekend and I look forward to the next trip back to Emu Creek. It may be a far drive but due to the size of the park there is plenty to explore and well worth the time.

See you again on the next adventure!

Matt Zander "Big Red"



