

## Fraser Island clean up. Or the Powers do Fraser

Those attending: Barry (70 series), Mike & Diana (Pajero), Vic (Navara & Camper), Vince (Patrol), Charles & Anne (Defender), Danny & Heidi / Rhiannon / Caragh & James (Disco), Sean (Courier Ute), Mel (Prado), Christian (60 series), Andrew (80 series), Rosey & Shaz (FJ) and Dave (Patrol). The reason for the title will become apparent.

*Friday*--- Several people gathered at the BP & we proceeded in convoy north, lead by Danny. We had an uneventful trip to Rainbow Beach where we topped up the fuel tanks, then on to Inskip to air down. The ferry was waiting & we all fitted on OK. Over to the island, off the barge & checked out the beach. It was low tide as planned & the beach was in great condition hard & mostly flat, so we ran the beach all the way to Eli Creek about ½ way up the East coast. From Eli we turned around & drove south looking for a camp area. We found one about 3k south of Eli & set up camp. After camp was erected it was time to relax, start a fire & happy hour. During the remainder of the afternoon & night other people who had left later turned up & set up.

*Saturday*--- It was decreed we will visit Sandy Cape, so we set off north across Eli Creek. Then about 1k north of Eli, Sean's Courier ground to a halt. (Super Danny1) determined the front diff was cactus. Because the Ute has free wheel hubs it could be driven in 2wd, but that was no good for Sandy Cape so it was left above high tide to be picked up on our return. Beach driving north to the music of Wagner is just the best experience. Passed the Maheno, called in to Cathedral Beach for coffee & in Sharon's case breakfast, then Indian Head and Ngkala Rocks all with no problems. Then motored north with the FJ in the lead. As we approached the most northerly tip of the island our illustrious president said it would be an awesome photo if we all parked on the tip. (This is not such a good thing for Christian as both he and his 60 are afraid of salt water). So we all lined up on a quite narrow strip of almost dry sand for the picture. This involved turning & backing up towards the Pacific Ocean, as I turned the front wheels sank in quick sand, I snatched reverse & I'm still stuck. Now low range & I am out, mental note: "don't go that way".

After the photo opportunity we all drove back the way we came, except Charles. The Defender is down to the chassis in quick sand with Max Tracks in front of all wheels, a harness & 2 snatch straps connected to (Super Danny 2). Disco Danny took off, but instead of the Defender coming free Danny's Disco is flying backwards at the end of the snatch strap. This was repeated 3 more times with ever increasing speed. On the final attempt the Defender came free with a strong smell of burning clutch. Now the straps have crushed the separating wood & cannot be separated & they are now stuffed anyway. Danny's 100 inch Disco is probably now a 101 inch Disco.

After the beach rescue we round the top of the island & park on the beach for a walk (climb) to the light house. The tide is coming in so we have to get going, back the way we came.

At the Ngkala rocks the Defender fails to precede. (Super Danny 3) finds the rear R/H brake caliper has broken in two parts & brake fluid is leaking out. Danny removes the broken bits & pinches off the brake line with vice grips. The Defender is mobile again & we continue to the Champagne Pools. After the pools we run down the beach to the stranded Courier, but Sean has lost the keys so it can't be started & the steering is locked. Could be worse, the wheels are locked straight ahead. Rosie then drags the reluctant Ford down the beach through Eli to the camp site with his FJ, by now it's dark. Although the Ford is now only 2wd it is needed for the cleanup & to transport all the Powers gear off the island. (Super Danny 4) disassembles the steering column thus removing the lock mechanism & enabling the ignition switch to be turned with a screw driver. Courier is now usable. More fire & happy hour.

*Sunday*--- Its cleanup day. We have from Eli south to Guluri to clean. Heidi organizes us into groups & off we go. Lots of bags of rubbish are put on the beach & Sean in the Ute with Christian, drive up & down picking them up. After the cleanup a sausage sizzle has been put on by the Yidney Rocks people for lunch. After a suitable amount of sausage we drive up to Eli for a dip in the water. Vince knows where there is a whale skeleton, so some follow him to have a look. My Patrol won't start it just goes "clunk" & the dash lights go out when the key is turned. I push the button which is supposed to operate the battery isolator solenoid & join the aux & main batteries. "Clunk", "clunk", "clunk". I get on the UHF for Super Danny but no reply, so I have a twist at all the battery connections. None seem loose, but it works & the truck starts. I have no idea where anyone else is so I go back to camp. I later find out that (Super Danny 5) had enabled someone to get into their Prado by swapping key batteries from Mel's Prado. Back at camp we had happy hour & discussed the transport arrangements for the evening as we were going to Eurong for a BBQ, that has been put on by the resort & NPWS. I was in the Powers Disco with Caragh driving.

We dressed suitably for the occasion & set off south. Not far down the beach we came across a broken down V8 Disco. (Super Danny 6) to the rescue he quickly determined it had no spark & was probably a faulty or wet sensor. The tide was rising so Christian in the 60 towed & Danny steered the crippled Disco to Happy Valley & parked it on the beach above high tide. Soon we were at the BBQ at Eurong. Plenty of food but because we were now a bit late it's difficult to find somewhere to eat it.

After the food there were the usual thank you's "strangest thing found" contest, prizes & raffle (Rosey won a

prize). The strangest thing winner was for a phosphorous flare that the Navy blow up. Our contribution was 7 live fish living in a beached jerry can. Caragh now had to drive us 20ks north up a dark beach at close to high tide, covered in water, while dodging rocks, debris & other vehicles. She did all that with ease (Super Caragh).

*Monday*--- Starting early & guided by our Fraser expert Vince we took the inland tracks to see the big sand blow, Lake Wabby & Lake McKenzie for a paddle or swim. Returning to the beach we headed for camp & pack up. At 14:00 we headed south in convoy, the loaded up Ute driven by Sean in 2wd & 10psi in the tyres. It was low tide & the beach was good, as we rounded hook point there was a lot of soft sand, some so soft I had to pull 4wd. I look in the mirror expecting the Ute to be in trouble but no, it is Power-ing (pardon the pun) through. The barge was waiting & we were soon airing up at Inskip. I had enough fuel in the tanks to get me home so I shot through arriving home at 18:30. So 4.5 hours from ½ way up Fraser to Redlands. Wife says "I thought you would be home earlier!"

This has been a very enjoyable trip. I had not been to Fraser for many years, so I was happy to see it all again. I would like to thank Super Heidi for all the effort in organizing & running a fairly complex trip, not to mention keeping this wayward bunch on schedule.

P.S--- 20 years ago the authorities were telling us how harmless Dingoes are, now they are saying the opposite. I have always known as my son witnessed a savage dingo attack back then.

**Dave Smith**

