

Stalked by a Nissan Patrol.

A peaceful and cool morning is awaiting the ten keen club members, anxious to take part in a planned trip to unexplored territory. Scheduled time is 6:30am Saturday morning June the 25th at Caravonica. Me, I haven't been given a name yet, but I will introduce myself as Trusty Triton.

My driver Vince and navigator Lucy, they are trip the leaders, arrive at marshalling area at 6:20 am. Two strong headlights glared at my rear end, checking out to see who they were, it was a very friendly Pajero, my Mitsubishi cousin, driven by Keith, navigated by and Maryanne, it was 6:25am. They are keen. Good morning is exchanged in their human jargon.

I overheard the Pajero owners say, where is everyone, meeting time is 6:30, we came early so as we do not have to right the trip report! (Funnee)

It wasn't a very long wait, two beefy looking 100 series Toyota and a Toyota middie, came on the scene. The 100 series owners are Sam and Daphne Zappala, Nick and Val Gonano, the middie, Mick Clements and Sally Birchall. The Toyo's looked menacing near the streamlined Missussbitchi's.

Me Trusty, greeted them like old lost friends, mind you I hadn't met them yet, I am new on the scene, me thinks we will get on real well. Good morning all, I heard my driver say. Good morning Vince and Lucy, how is the new Triton going, a chill ran through my tailshaft, they must like me, they are asking how I am.

Trip leader Vince, walked around with a book, Trusty here could see that the drivers were writing in it. My clock is showing 6:55, I am anxious to be on the move, and right on seven, the oil burners and the petrol guzzler came to life, I wasn't being mean to the middie, I had to let you know it runs on petrol! Sam and Daphne are delegated to Tail End Charlie (T.E.C)

The morning is a bit chilly, we are moving up and over the range, pit stop Mareeba came over my radio, creambun stop for me, I heard a Toyota driver say, I'll have two pies please, my navigator calls back on the two way. What about me, Trusty. Oh nuts, I am a diesel burner, I have a tank full. All vehicles met at the end of town, and were now ready for the long but great drive to Cooktown. That's right I overheard in the mortals talk, about what time Cooktown arrival will be, Yep 11:30am, said my driver.

Nick calls on the radio, where are we going to meet Scrub Turkey (Warren Packham is a club member, who hides around the Cooktown area). (He does work!) Oh no, not another Toyota, (this one is a Troopie), I heard Vince says, the Annan River bridge, Lucy said, it is great to see you Warren. Good to have another vehicle driving around with us. The Mitsie's are on the ready to help our attending friends, the Toyotas.

A good few Kgee's past Palmer River Road house, we drive up to a Lookout. Two other 4x4's were tailing us or shadowing out convoy. Low and behold, you would not believe it, one vehicle was a Pissy Nissan, and you guessed it right, the other was a Toyota 4x4, one ton Ute. My navigator said that she thought that the two vehicles were part of our convoy, one was a ring in, and the other was none other than our new club president, Dave Graham and his two young passengers going to Laura for away from home weekend. Dave was at that time sporting a Maroon Jersey, and hinted that the blues would win the state of origin. Me Trusty, (not much into Rugby League,) felt that Dave had a blue streak in the Maroon Jersey. (as we found out when we went to see Dave at Laura Horse show, he sported a vivid blue shirt.

He shadowed our convoy for many Kilometers, kept radio silence and listened in on our working channel. Nah? We did not talk about him, but Trusty here heard that he will be severely fined for not talking to us. He was exercising his right, as the president to keep an eye on our team. The Mitsie's and the Toyo's are all well behaved, plus the drivers and navigators. Eleven thirty am, in Cooktown. Vince got in touch with the local area Ranger. He gave a few directions and we headed off. Arriving at the rangers home, about 5 dogs greeted us, the mutts were so well behaved, that they seemed to be happy to see us.

The kettle on, tea was offered around, but time was fast running out. We had to find a spot to camp for the night. Maps were taken out, areas identified, certain areas have liquor restrictions, and good advice given by Sam the Ranger.

The convoy wanted to go to a beach on the coast, it would have been 2 -3 hours to get there, and would be late for putting up camp. Very heavy sand driving would be encountered. Warren stated that it would be wet and very windy, so the Ranger said that Lake (Muddy) Emma, would be our next choice, short of going to Laura and camp there. Were we on a reekie trip, not a social trip, but we managed to do both.

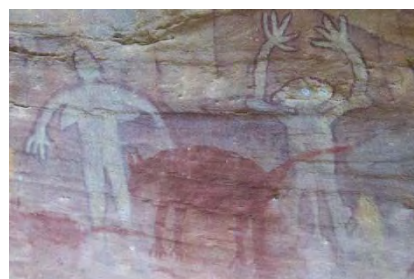


Me Trusty got me wheels wet, gee the water is cold (yes it was water, ain't been in water before, I am new to this being driven around,) it was fun. They people of the club pulled up just past Isabella falls for Lunch, where Me Trusty, got me wheels wet, Vince gave me the chance to wash some dust off.



Orange-Naped Snake
 Open forest. FNQ Cooktown to Ayr.
 Inoffensive, reluctant biter.
 Venom weakly toxic. Preys on skinks.
 (Opps I was wrong)..ed.

At Lake Emma I saw different camping grounds, The Terrace sites and the Muddy oops, Water Front sites, (when there is water in the lake) Payment via an honour system is at the entrance to the Lake area. Happy hour was soon held at The Water front sites area, after tea some returned to the Water Front as Nick was cooking with his Bush Crock pot (camp oven. Nick made a mean and tasty damper, the few who braved the elements tasted the damper, but all were getting weary, the sand man was busily, inviting all to the land of Nod. Warren (alias Scrub Turkey let us and went back to Cooktown. Thanks for helping us out Warren!. Leaving Lake Emma at 10:00am, the convoy headed to Laura, via the Historical Homestead, where many photos were taken.



Finding Dave at Laura wasn't difficult, we were to look for a "MAROON JERSEY", but instead we found the Cairns 4wd Club President Inc. wearing a "BLUE JERSEY"