

Ocean Roads' Kimberley Dreaming

Part Two of Three Instalments, produced by Clint & Tracey Earnshaw



Standing L-R: Mike Hoek, Ben Williams, Peter Barnes, Darryl Helms, Chantelle and Brittney Helms.
Kneeling L-R: Sean Clarke, Daiman Clarke, Ryan Barnes, Cody Earnshaw, Jed Helms, Cayson Earnshaw, Clint Earnshaw (behind kids), Jed Hoek and Sanjay Williams

This is a story of an adventure by three families through one of the most remote, and certainly one of the oldest, and most rugged parts of the planet earth. Three families, three trailerboats, thousands of miles on the road, hundreds of miles at sea, for what can surely be described as the adventure of a lifetime. Join us now, and in the months of November and December, as we explore the waters from west around to the south, from Wyndham WA in the north, to Broome WA in the nor' east. The story is recounted by the team leader, Clint Earnshaw, with pics from just about everyone.

Before we pick up the Kimberley Logbook from where we left it last month, it is worth taking a little time out to consider some of the vital safety equipment, spares and medical back-ups we carried for the 3-boat expedition.

All three boats carried a satellite phone, so we had guaranteed coverage or medical assistance wherever we were. We all had 27 MHz radios and VHF radios. Most places up there you will be able to get hold of someone on VHF.

The regular Coastguard planes and the various government authorities in the Top End of WA, all monitor VHF Channel 16.

We all had a course of antibiotics each, in case any cuts, scratches or bites became infected. In the Top End's tropical heat and humidity, cuts can be a very real infection problem as can a bad case of sand fly bites, which can lead to septicemia.

We also had Oxyviva apparatus, resuscitation equipment and carried various ancillary equipment in the medical kit including a neck brace, splints, bandages, etc.

It was good to have someone like Peter Barnes, a trained ambulance officer, among the crews, as his experience would prove invaluable. With so many people involved across

three boats, in such a remote area, spread over 4-6 weeks, some sickness or localized accidents, (even of the toothache, diarrhea, migraines, scrapes and bruises kind) were inevitable.

All boats had all the mandatory safety gear – lifejackets, flares, EPIRBs, etc. and it was all checked carefully to ensure they were current and fully operational.

We also carried a reasonable tool set, which included a hacksaw, cordless drill, riveting gear, and a variety of common work bench tools I've tended to use in the field over the years.

In case one of the boats got holed on a rock, we had some assorted sizes of 3mm aluminium sheet, Sikaflex and tec screws – our theory being that if we could get a boat onto a beach and wait for the tide, we could patch a hole good enough to keep the trip alive.

Every boat had a heavy tow rope ready for use quickly in case of motor failure near whirlpools or rapids.

Glad we didn't need to use any of it, but good to have it all the same.

Saturday 5th April 2008

Left Parry Harbour at 7.45am. We're heading to the Mitchell River today. Trolled past the Tancred Banks on the way where there were thousands of birds working - caught 4 nice tuna for tea, about 6-7kg each.



The three boats drawn up on the bach at Sandy Island, west of Cape Londonberry, This is the point where the team turns 'around the corner' and starts heading south 'down' the coast, heading for Broome, WA.