

Fishing Vrilya Point (FNQ) and The Doughboy River

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This is more than a good fishing yarn - and one written with a wry sense of humour you'll enjoy - but it is also a great story about the cliched 'father and son' thing that actually works . . and goes a long way to explaining why this father and son went practically to the end of Australia to spend a couple of weeks together. We're pretty sure neither will forget it

It's been a number of years now since my eldest Man-Cub, Daniel, started the early grumblings regarding a trip to Cape York. This is a trip that I too was keen to experience, so we agreed that we would head north before he finished high school.

The June school holidays were identified as our time frame for this father-son bonding experience, and the ball was now rolling.

The first course of action was to pour over maps of the Cape, and check sites on the internet. We finally decided on a place on the western side, north of Weipa, called Vrilya Point.

As it turns out, this is a very remote area which requires the happy camper to take all provisions including water, although as we found out, water can be found a few kilometres back

up the track. Only problem is people tend to swim here and suds themselves up, so the quality depends on the time of day at which you decant the stuff.

We had five months to prepare for this trip, so with this amount of time up our sleeves, we decided to leave everything to the last minute because that is what we do. Don't ask me to explain, as I think it's a gene pool thing.

Two weeks out from departure day, our 4.35 metre tinny was starting to take on the dimensions of a poorly packed caravan as all our gear was hurled in. From jerry cans and marquees to the fishing gear, it was all crammed in.

The Holden rims fitted to the trailer were starting to look decidedly small. I wondered why they call them old Holden rims.

Doctor Who's Tardis had

nothing on this little Savage.

I wanted to name the boat after the good doctor's time machine, but was beaten to the punch in the naming rights as the boys had already named it "Ramsay's Kitchen".

I mistakenly thought this naming was in honour of my doubtful ability to prepare the perfect meal, but apparently it's not. It has something to do with all the alleged swearing I do, when fish and I part company.

Finally our departure date had arrived, which saw Dad and the Man Cub idle out of Yeppoon, on the Central Queensland coast, at the un-Godly hour of 2:30 am. Wouldn't you know it, we had a pea souper of a fog for the first 150 kays. This had our speed down to 40 kph at some stages.

Our first stop was Proserpine for a pie and a cuppa. Daniel took over the

driving at this point and drove for the rest of the day.

We made Atherton at 4:30pm which was our stop for the night. We bought all our boat fuel and extra diesel here and squeezed a bit more air into the trailer tyres which still looked flat even with 50 psi in them. (*"It's alright son, they're meant to look like that . ."*)

Day Two saw us on the road at 4:30 am. Daniel slept for the first 200 km as I piloted this load.

As we hit the dirt at Lakeland downs, Daniel showed concern about the trailer's durability, at which point I comforted him with my knowledge gained from 30 years of driving, assuring him that the trailer was more than capable of handling the conditions.

As we passed Cohen, the left hand guard parted company with the trailer. Nothing we could do but tighten the u-bolts holding the axle on as they were vibrating loose. (*"No, son, the trailer is not about to implode . ."*)

Five pm heralded our triumphant arrival at Bramwell Junction. This is the last stop before our destination and has a basic camping ground and hot showers for the paltry sum of \$9 each. It also has fuel and takeaway food.

This place was in the transition phase to new owners at this time. I must say at this point that the new proprietors couldn't do enough for us and certainly made us feel welcome. Lovely people, they are a

Pictures from the Vrilya Point album - these will be etched in their memories forever, as one of the most rugged, yet attainable - and seriously fishy - spots in Oz. It's just a shame it is so darn far away !

