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Issue 36, July 2015
\$9.95 inc GST
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ISSN 2200-4513



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THE TWIN TOWNS, NSW

Welcome to Forster-Tuncurry: Great Lakes, great fishing, great camping.

WORDS BY PAT WILLIAMS

The New South Wales mid-north coast has a lot to offer visitors. The twin towns of Forster-Tuncurry are a hub of the region, are located just 300km north of Sydney, and can be reached in around three and a half hours drive from the capital.

The twin towns are situated at either side of the point where the colossal Wallis Lake pours into the ocean. This vibrant, healthy waterway is fed by the Coolongolook, Wallingat and Wallamba rivers, and provides the scenic backdrop of the region, the water views for the foreshore restaurants of both towns, and the reason why many visitors return again and again.

There is a glut of accommodation options available in the caravan parks and national parks campgrounds of the Forster-Tuncurry region, and it's a great place to base yourself to explore more of this stunning swathe of coastline and hinterland. There are some spectacular beach drives available to the north and south of town, as well as several renowned surf beaches and some of the best fishing anywhere in the state.

Forster-Tuncurry is just far enough away from Sydney that the crowds start to thin out, although if you visit during January or other school holidays you'll have to plan your accommodation in advance, as it's also a holiday hotspot for visitors from all over the state.

STUFF TO DO

4WDING is very popular in the Forster-Tuncurry area, and there are certainly no shortage of places to head offroad.

Most of the 4WDing in the area consists of long beach runs, and remember that a valid beach driving permit is required to access any of the beaches in the area.

There are plenty of places where these are available, including; Greater Taree City Council offices in Taree and Wingham, the Manning Valley Visitors Information Centre in Taree, Ritchies Bait & Tackle at Harrington, Bohnock Bait & Tackle, Weeroona Caravan Park in Manning Point, Hallidays Point General Store, Dunbogan Boatshed, Sandbar Caravan Park, the Hawks Nest Newsagency, Great Lakes Council offices at Forster, Stroud and Tea Gardens and the Great Lakes Visitors Information Centre at both Forster and Tea Gardens.

TUNCURRY beach is an enjoyable long beach drive and runs for around 11km from the breakwall at the southern end of the beach, all the way north to Black Head. Access is from the end of Beach Street in Tuncurry, or via Hallidays Point Bowling Club.

MCBRIDES BEACH is a smaller beach that is only accessible via 4WD vehicle. It's located on the southern outskirts of Forster and is accessed via the Cape Hawke Road. It's on the edge of the Booti Booti National Park, and access to the beach is via a short, but steep track. **FISHING** is one of the area's biggest drawcards, and plenty of visitors return again and again just for the many varied angling opportunities that are available in and around town.

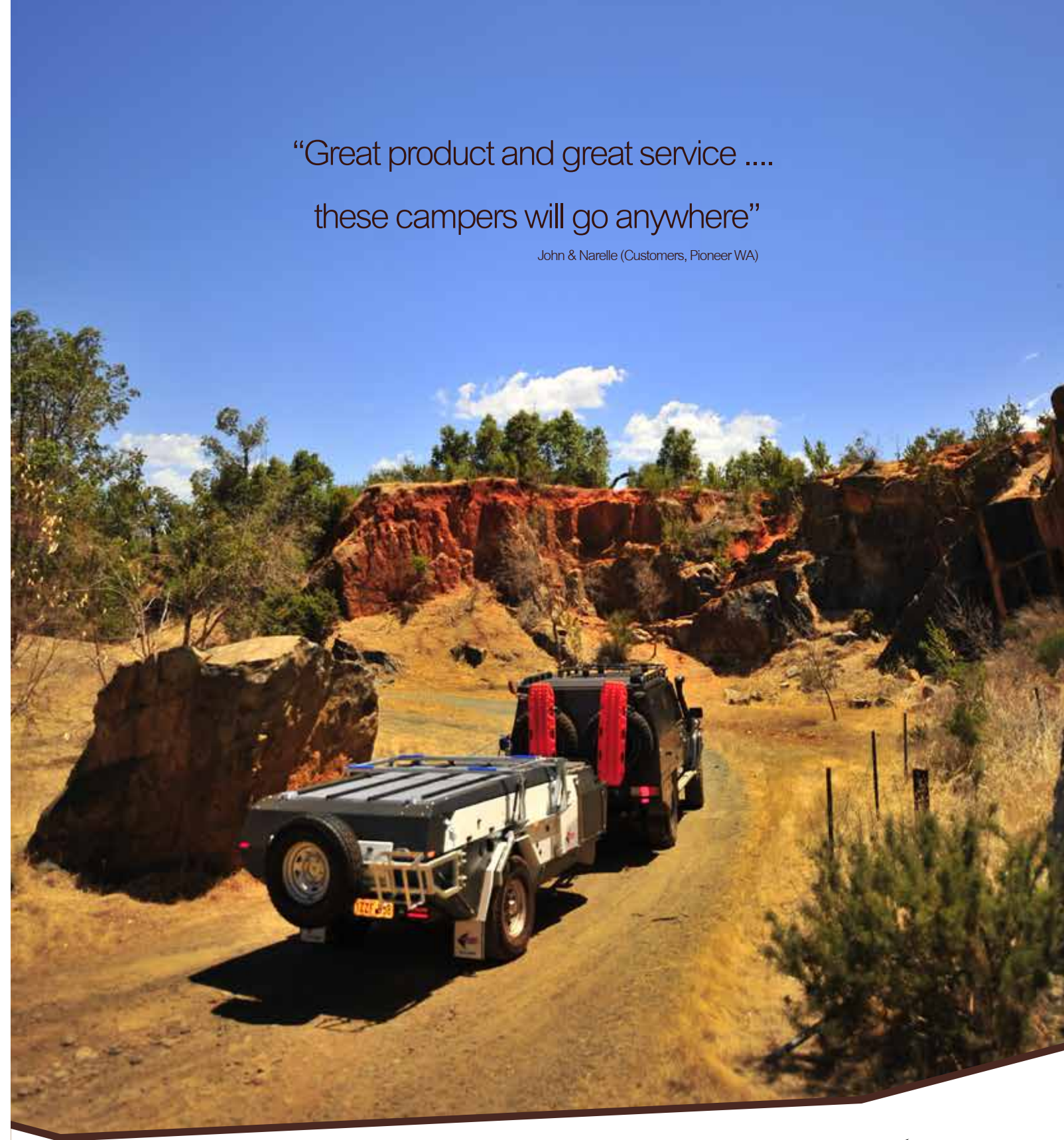
Wallis Lake is a great spot to take the family fishing, there are many good spots to cast a line from the shore, and

it's *the* place to fish from a trailer boat, rooftoper or canoe. The lake fishes very well for whiting and flathead in spring and summer, while in the cooler months bream and tailor become more common targets. Large jewfish are caught from time to time in the lake's deeper holes, when targeting these top order predators remember to fish tide changes and to use fresh, locally caught bait like poddy mullet, tailor and beachworms.

The rocky headlands in the area are also home to some great ledges to spin and livebait for pelagic species which visit the area seasonally. Longtail and mackerel tuna, kingfish and cobia are all popular targets during summer and autumn. Spinning large metal lures and fishing live garfish under floats are the most popular methods of targeting these gamefish from the shore.

"Great product and great service
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John & Narelle (Customers, Pioneer WA)



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THE HIGH LIFE

Pioneer's luxury Longreach camper, a major part of the Ultimate Escape Prize.

WORDS & PICS BY CARLISLE ROGERS

After building up and giving away the Ultimate 4WD last year, the pressure was on to up the ante, to come up with a prize package that would set someone up to go do the big lap without lacking any tools for the job, except a few dozen tanks of diesel.

When the opportunity to get my hands on a Pioneer Longreach camper trailer arose, I knew the timing was perfect, and that this could, indeed, be the Ultimate Escape. Fresh off the factory floor, I put the Longreach through its paces to get a handle on one of the finest camper trailers currently being manufactured in Australia.

Over the last decade or so, within the touring fraternity, the growing sense that camping need not entail a litany of adversity has become a groundswell.

Wrestling with tent poles and inflatable mattresses loses its charm slowly, or breathtakingly quickly during a downpour. The unbearable lightness of travelling with the bare necessities becomes its own anchor, weighing you down, limiting how long you can stay in beautiful places, limiting how long your back can put up with that rock under

the mattress you can never find.

Pioneer's Longreach, the entry into the marque's Luxury Range, embodies the spirit of *glamping*, with a style and grace that seem ahead of its time. Here, function and form enact a dance, achieving an immaculate balance between pure design and functionality, between clean lines and useable storage.

Outside of defense contractors, there is one aspect of manufacturing in this country that holds up well against any other manufacturing culture on the globe,

and that's camper trailers. Uniquely Australian to begin with, the amount of pure thought, design, testing and development that has come out of the Australian camper trailer industry is staggering.

In contrast to the cheap, disposable imported trailers flooding the market, brands like Pioneer have retained a sense of dignity, designing robust, reliable and well-thought-out solutions to the camping conundrum.

GETTING THERE

There's no point in building a luxury camper if you can't take it wherever your 4WD can go in the country. After all, if we wanted to only stay in caravan parks and travel on paved roads, we'd be pulling a caravan.

The Longreach is built on a hot-dipped galvanized chassis, which effectively nullifies corrosion long term.

The independent trailing arm suspension is rated to two ton and means your

trailer probably has better handling than a lot of 4WDs, bolstered by the RidePro 4WD twin tube shockies. The Trigg hitch provides full 360 offroad articulation and only adds a manageable 120kg to the towball on your 4WD.

A full electric drum brake system is standard, on steel rims running GT Adventuro II AT tyres. There are several options for spare wheels, including under body storage or a swing-away carrier.

For our prize camper we opted for a gas-strut boat rack and swing away out-board mount, both options but necessary to complete the package!

The Longreach is designed with real durability and performance in mind. The approach and departure angles are well-thought-out and useable. It may look futuristic, but it holds onto the same toughness as the ubiquitous box trailer of yore.



Top: As hardy as anywhere you want to take it.

Above sequence: Yes, it is that easy.

Left: Inside this handsome and uncomplicated exterior lies the beating heart of a luxurious trackside home.

THE SETUP

You buy a hard floor camper, primarily, for its ease of use. The Longreach is a rear-fold camper trailer, which means the top becomes the floor of the camper when

it's opened up. A winch is supplied to make the process of opening and closing the camper embarrassingly easy. You can forgo the winch if you want to im-

press the neighbours with your dexterity, but, particularly with packing the canvas back into the camper before travelling, it turns this into a slow, controlled affair.

With the Dynaproofed canvas tent (14.9oz roof, 10.9oz walls) opened up, the footprint under canvas is 1.7 x 2.2m. The windows are midge-proof, unlike a lot of cheaper products on the market now.

A full awning and annexe can be added to the tent as well when you're sticking around for a while, providing shade and protection from rain.

Inside, a full size innerspring queen-size mattress sits on slats for better circulation, with twin LED reading lights. All of the electronics are easy to access, and at the foot of the bed you'll find 240V, 12V and USB charging outlets. 505L of storage is accessible under the bed via gas struts.

Sticking with a dedication to quality, a REDARC BMS is installed standard to run 240V charging of the 110Ah deep cycle battery, along with solar and Anderson inputs. The REDARC control panel is mounted next to the kitchen, along with individual switches for all of the power and lighting onboard.

Above left: The Longreach in full flight.*

Far left two: The modern necessities are taken care of with slick and discreet design.

Left: A Queen innerspring with powerpoints close by.

THE LIVING

One of the chief reasons I've relied on camper trailers in the past was the simple efficiency of a proper kitchen. While cooking on the tailgate has a certain bohemian charm, nothing beats being able to cook a proper breakfast on the side of the road in minutes...without digging out all of the various implements of degustation every time.

Coming with a two-burner Smev stove standard, you can option up to the three-burner. A large touch-sensitive LED floodlight provides illumination and water is provided via the 90L onboard storage

and a 12V pump. What about hot water? The Longreach utilises the Truma gas hot water system...efficient and reliable.

A slide-out stainless steel bench means there's room for prepping food too, not just a pretty stove.

Next to the kitchen is the front storage box, designed to house a fridge slide and any other large bits of gear (such as generators) that you don't want to carry inside the camper. The commitment to quality is retained here, with a particulate filter over the vents to maintain airflow without sacrificing dust ingress. 12V and

240V outlets are located in the box as well to accommodate different powering options on the road for your fridge.

Just ahead of the fridge box is a second toolbox housing tent pole storage, plus a separate lockable compartment for three jerry cans. There is also storage for two 9L gas bottles and 50kg of firewood. And the whole assembly is undercoated to provide stone protection for the rest of the camper, with a geometry to protect the vehicle's rear window at the same time.

THE END GAME

The Longreach is well-named. It will extend your reach into the outback, into the horizon. It will allow you to travel as far and as deep as you dare into the wilderness without necessarily leaving behind what makes us human. And it will allow you to travel through any adversity without worrying if it's the camper that's going to let you down, rather than weather or bad fuel or any of the other things that never go away.

I, for one, am proud to be able to give away something of this quality and integrity. And if I didn't have to give it away, I'd be up the beach right now in it!

{*Pics in the review are for illustrative purposes only and when our custom built number comes through we'll give you another look at the final prize package. The main differences, because of the huge size of the Ultimate Escape prize, is we're going the two-burner kitchen instead of three, and it will come with a slightly more compact 550 fridge box.}

LONGREACH SPECIFICATIONS

>> Body Length:	2900mm
>> Body Width:	1850mm
>> Overall Length:	4950mm
>> Travel Height:	1435mm
>> Internal Living with awning:	4.5 x 1.7m
>> Bed Size:	Queen
>> Tare Weight:	980 kg
>> Suspension rating:	2000kg
>> Towball Weight:	120 kg
>> Rim Size:	16 x 7 inches
>> Tyre Size:	265 / 75 / R16
>> Price	\$39,935

NOT ONLY COULD YOU WIN THIS PIONEER CAMPER,
YOU COULD SET YOURSELF UP FOR LIFE
WITH THE 'ULTIMATE ESCAPE' PRIZE WORTH OVER \$150,000

You better believe it, Pioneer's incredible Longreach camper is a major part of what we reckon is the greatest prize in the history of 4WD and adventure magazines.



Isn't it about time you caught a break?
Isn't it time you took a break?

Isn't time you drove off with a Pioneer camper, towed by a LandCruiser 100 Series, all loaded up with a Quintrex tinie and the absolute finest touring and camping gear in the country?

This prize has your name written all over it – it's your chance to kiss the mundane existence goodbye without knowing when or if you're ever going to come back.

According to publisher Carlisle Rog-

ers: "The whole mag and TV show is built on the passion of our readers. They're responsible for our success and it's our way of saying thanks.

"Because of this, our subscribers automatically receive 100 entries into the prize!"

Watch this space over the next eight months as we build this incredible package, with Adam Adler from ADM Motors overseeing the mechanical side of the build.

Adam's one of the most knowledge-

able and respected 4WD mechanics in the land and it's an honour to again have him as foreman of the build, incorporating all the prizes into one incredible touring package. Check the list on the page here for some of the details of what will be going into the finished product.

Set yourself up for life – for a life of living the dream. Head to page 88 for the lowdown on how you can enter. The only thing we know about the final outcome of the prize is that one of our readers is going to win it. Good luck. **4WD**

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PRIZE WORTH OVER
\$150,000!

YOU
COULD
WIN IT
ALL!



PIONEER
LONGREACH
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**100 SERIES
LANDCRUISER**



QUINTREX
350 EXPLORER
CAR TOPPER



ALL THESE EXTRAS!



Go to www.4wdtouring.com.au to subscribe now!

Competition commences 6th March, 2015, and closes 30th January 2016. For full terms and conditions visit 4wdtouring.com.au. Winner will be drawn on 10th February 2016. Competition authorised under permit numbers: NSW Permit Number LTPS/15/01595, Vic Permit Number 15/460, SA Permit Number T15/365, ACT Permit Number 15/05029.