



TRAILS & TALES

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GEAR GRINDERS 4WD CLUB, INC.

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SALINE VALLEY *By: Bill "Maddog" Maddux*

Randy and Karen Schortzmann, Scott Wood, who came up from San Diego Friday night, and I left the theater parking lot almost on time. We connected with Gary Luckeroth at Pearsonville and proceeded to Big Pine to fill up with gas. We went in the Saline Valley north entrance. This road was in good condition, not too many washboard sections.

At Marble Canyon we kept going east and after inspecting the green cabin, which is in great shape, then we backtracked a little and took a right toward Jackass Flats. We wandered around some and finally ended up at the Micadon cabin. Gary and Warner had located this cabin last spring. The cabin needs a lot of help.

Based on the weather reports of rain and snow in the mountains and the fact we had some very dark clouds over us, we decided to head to Saline Valley. We did not want to be in Marble Canyon if there was a major cloudburst.

The north pass road on down to the hot springs turnoff was in good condition. We arrived at the Warm Springs around 3:30 and found both the Sunrise Pool and the Conversation pool full, of water. We continued up to the Palm Spring and proceeded to set up camp. And, it so happened that a group of nine people next to us were also from Ridgecrest. Two guys told us that they had gone way back in the Snowflake using the flashes from their digital cameras since they forgot their flashlights. We had a very pleasant evening around the campfire.



Karen in the "Marble Bath" somewhere along the Eureka/Saline Corridor.

Sunday morning we went south on the main road and it had a moderate amount of washboard. We drove up the switchbacks and got as close as I thought we could drive to the mine. Turned out we could have driven further. The mine was only 1/4 a mile away, straight as a crow flies. Probably a half-mile with steep up and down grades by road. We went in the mine and it does not go in very far. Total bust, but now we know what is there.

Then we went to the lower Beveridge Canyon cabin. It is in good condition but does not have running water. Need to get a work party there and find where the rocks are that are blocking the flow of water. While at the cabin, we noticed that Scott's front stabilizer bar had pulled the balls out of the sockets. Got back to camp around 1:30 for a late lunch. Enjoyed a very relaxing afternoon with pleasant weather conditions. Gary and Scott tried to reattach the stabilizer but to no avail. Another very pleasant evening. In so far as a lot of people had gone home, it was also very quite.

Monday morning we left camp a few minutes after 8:00. One and a half hours later we were at the Marble Bath. The road is in great condition. The road on to the narrows is likewise in good condition. It only took 45 minutes to get from Steel Pass thru the narrows. Twenty minutes later we were at the Eureka dunes out house. The road out to the Big Pine/Death Valley road and the Big Pine/Death Valley road was very smooth for a dirt/gravel



Looking across Saline Valley.

road. Delighted with our rapid escape from Saline Valley we decided to drive on into Big Pine and eat lunch at the Country Cafe.

At some time during the trip I mentioned the cabins at the mouth of Portuguese Canyon. So on the way home we took a detour and inspected the cabins, vineyard and found a walnut tree with a few walnuts. For being neglected for many years, it is surprising that the grapes and the fruit trees are still alive. On the way back to highway 395 I made another detour and we stopped at the remains of old Southern Pacific railroad station of Sykes. We probably spent 45 minutes there looking at items of interest among the remains. Once again we hit the highway and hopefully every one got home safe.

SEPTEMBER MEETING HILITES

VP Warner Fellows called the meeting to order in George's absence. The usual reports by club officers and committee people were given.

Several motions were made, with one failing and the other two passing: we voted to NOT adopt the Monache Jeep Trail, but voted to renew our Blue Ribbon Coalition member -ship and to send our names in to 4WD Hardware to qualify for a 10% discount and the club receive 3% back.

The Sequoia National Forest was to hold a meeting in R/C on Sep 13 regarding the road inventory.

Upcoming trips: Jim was leading a trip on Sunday, Oct. 1 into the Panamints and the Saline Valley Corridor would be run on Oct 8, 9, & 10 led by Bill Maddux.

GEAR GRINDERS WEB SITE: <http://www.geargrinders.org/>

DON'T FORGET to check out the club forum under our
Members Only page and to add your 2-cents worth.

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PROMOTING PUBLIC LANDS FOR RESPONSIBLE MULTIPLE USE