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A WEBSITE SERVING AS AN ARCHIVE OF MY
DIFFERENT ADVENTURES ON PLANET EARTH...



BY DAVE CRANKSTON

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Chopping an ear off isn't going to impress girls

I was about 18 or 19, not technically the right age for 'schoolies' celebrations, but close enough, for me.

I was with a group of mates in Mooloolaba QLD, walking up a hill, to get somewhere in our half drunk state.. there were 2 or 3 girls with us, things were going well, but I needed an edge over the other guys... what could I do... I know..

So in my head, the plan was to run ahead and jump/push myself up onto the top of one the brick pillars of one of the houses fence. I was going to leap/spin, and land perfectly in a 'sitting on a chair' type position and pronounce "TaaDaa!!"

What actually happened hurt. Unbeknownst to me, behind the fence about a foot away, was a low garden bed made of bricks also, about 4 bricks high. Also unbeknownst to me, I had very little jumping/spinning/landing how I was meant to skill.... I got to the sitting position in one go, but had judged the landing wrong, sitting too far back... I fell backwards with my head screaming towards the edge of the garden bed... I had just enough time to turn my head so I only chopped my ear off not my whole face!! It didn't fall off completely, it was dangling kinda, the top half of my ear.

Schoolies night then turned into a freaked out driving mission to find a doctor/hospital only to end up at Caboolture hospital at 3am, to get a bandage put on and told there are no doctors on tonight that can fix it, "we'll make an appointment for you at Brisbane hospital for tomorrow". What was that? I can't hear you.

In QLD, Australia

How to make a driveway and plough a field with an ex

Ok, so I've bought a patch of scrub an hour west of Brisbane, 3 acres, as much as I wanted 100 or more, 3 would have to do for now.

I decided I wanted to do as much as I could from things I already had, or could make, or trade for, kinda like what it would of been like for the pioneers back in the day, building something in the middle of nothing. It was fun.

Problem was, it was pretty overgrown, and really hard dirt, and I needed some sort of driveway and half an acre ploughed up to grow veggies... I didn't have a tractor.. you can't just build a tractor.. I did however have a wooden shipping pallet, some rope, a few star pickets and a now ex girlfriend.

Its easy, just poke the star pickets through the gaps in the pallet, wire them so they don't move, tie the pallet to the back of your 4wd, then get your now ex to sit on the pallet, and drag her up and back, and her weight pushes the star pickets into the ground to plough it up!!

Then to make a driveway, just take the star pickets out, it will clear all the grass and small trees etc, you can go a bit faster without the star pickets digging in, so make sure to tell her to hold on if your going to try this. I told her to wave out if I was going to fast, but she kept her hands on the pallet the whole time so I managed to get a good bit of steam up, it was such a nice driveway, loved that driveway.

In QLD, Australia

Don't worry mate, I'll sort it out

Have you ever had a mate damage a tool or a car or something of yours accidentally?

The norm is to either get a new 'whatever' or help you fix it...isn't it?

Not my mate lol. As he was reversing out of my property one day, just after I'd put the letterbox in, which was momentous for me, I had bought a bare patch of scrub and moved onto it in my tent with my dogs and my axe.. In the hope of getting a taste of what it was like for the guys in the pioneer days having to build something from nothing, so to me, a real letterbox, was awesome!!

Anywho.... after repeated warnings to "be careful of the letterbox" .."don't hit the letterbox"... oh fuck he's getting close..." lookout man, the letterbox !!"

Me running up to him waving my arms trying to tell him he's going to hit the letterbox... was interpreted as " wow, Dave thinks I'm doing such a good job at reversing he's jumping and waving and cheering" I was about 100m away when I seen him enroute to the letterbox, so it took a bit to get his attention I guess..

Sccraaaaaape.. good one fuckwit... now my letterbox is all bent over at 45 degrees, the box is ok, but the post is stuffed...

As he drives away, he says, "its ok man, I'll sort it out."

He sends me a facebook message a day later... "Sorry about your letterbox man, here, I wrote you a poem"

WTF AM I GOING TO DO WITH A POEM!!!! Serenade my bent post back straight again.. idiot.. he's now my best mate

In QLD, Australia

The water didn't wash everything away (Part 4/4)

The pile is slowly getting smaller then someone says, "hey there's a car under here" .. we all just stop, and look at each other as if to say, who's going to check it? The young guy, maybe 20yo was close and climbs up to look in through the smashed windscreen with the tree branch through it, no sign of anyone, thank god, we are all relieved. We keep pulling tin away til we can get to the car a bit better. The young guy reaches in and pulls the keys from the ignition and holds them up in the air saying "found the keys, lets see if it will start" in a joking way, i don't think he realised what the keys being in the ignition could mean... I hope he never does to be honest. The SES are due later today and Steve plans on telling them about the car then.

I walk up to a big twisted pile of sheet metal that's wrapped around a tree and start pulling stuff up from the banks, it was about my second or third trip down that I realised that pile of twisted sheet metal was actually a large truck.... barely recognizable...

We find a horse that didn't make it. It isn't one of the one's Steve is missing... we move to a different area.

Two guys walk over the paddock, they seemed like locals, walking slowly, exhausted mentally and physically, but still kicking. They yell out to Steve and he smiles, I guess he does know them. They say g'day, and Steve says "like what I've done with the place? " we laugh again.

Every time it rains, it all comes back.

In QLD, Australia

The water didn't wash everything away (Part 3/4)

..he points to a pile of screwed up roofing iron next to a tree on the edge of the creek over the far side of his paddock and tells me that's his shed.. then points about 100m away to where it used to be. This isn't a little shed, it was a decent sized farm shed. We get close to the shed and I spot the slab it was on to the right, it seemed closer than where he pointed just before, we soon discover that the entire slab had been lifted out of its footings and swept towards the creek.

Before we start, Steve tells us that his neighbour's house got swept away, with his neighbour still inside. It's just too hard to imagine it when you are standing in the paddock that was previously underwater with houses floating across it. We look in the creek and find a fair few cars, all with police tape meaning they have been checked, except for one we can see upside down just above the water flowing through the creek, for our peace of mind we convince ourselves that the tape must have fallen off that car.

We walk back up the creek bank to the pile of metal twisted amongst fence posts and snapped gum trees to start trying to salvage what we can from the pile. Things started to seem a bit more normal for a bit, I ask Steve if he has a shifter to undo the roofing screws from the smashed trusses... he starts to scratch his head and wonder around the edge of the creek..." I've got one here somewhere ..." we laugh, and I continue to undo them with the rusty pliers.

(cont part 4)

In QLD, Australia

The water didn't wash everything away (Part 2/4)

(cont from part 1)

I drive towards Postmans Ridge, and follow the creek line with my eyes as I drive, scanning for low lying houses.. I see one next to a big S bend section of the creek that only has a small truck and a ute parked inside, further up the road I could see 20 or 30 cars parked along the road. I stop at that first house, working on the theory that the majority of people will follow other people, and hence all end up at the properties further up and this one will miss out a bit, my car was now added to there yard, I hoped this may at least contribute slightly to others stopping here as well maybe?

A big guy in a high vis shirt, board shorts and no shoes, covered in mud, walks up to my car to greet me, his name is Lance, it's not his property, it's his mate's Steve's place. I ask Lance if they want another person and he says they could use a hand pulling Steve's shed out of the creek, I grab my gloves (thank god I remembered my gloves. :)) and join them under a tree where they are finishing a drink break.

We head down a steep muddy road that your feet sink a foot deep into, and across the creek that caused the damage, water still flowing fairly fast but only about 10cm deep where we crossed. Up the other side and across what would have been about a 10 acre paddock, just flat ground, where apparently a horse arena and cattle yards used to be...

(cont in part 3)

In QLD, Australia

The water didn't wash everything away (Part 1/4)

January 2011 Floods at Murphys Creek/Postmans Ridge QLD.

I left this morning to head down the Toowoomba range to find somewhere that needed volunteers for the clean up.

I saw the turnoff to Murphy's Creek and put my indicator on as if i was turning an ordinary everyday corner.... drove up the road, up and down over little hills, looking left to right as i get to each low point to look for the debris line in the trees... far above my car, thinking it was just bad because it was a low point etc. then i come over another small hill and down again...but the land flattens out now.... and the debris line is still the same.

I drive a bit further up the road til i get to Murphy's Creek pub, where I find out from a guy on the side of the road helping to direct traffic in T-shirt and shorts that they are co-ordinating the volunteers. Cars, Energex trucks, SES and rural fire brigade trucks all over the place. I park go inside and get told I can wait here with the others to help in town, or head to Postmans Ridge where they still need heaps of people, I sign my name and head back to the car.

At this point I hadn't seen anything massively bad, a lot of stuff on fences, a water tank on the train tracks, but no demolished houses or anything. Things seemed like they must have already got most of the clean up done, or I was in the wrong area almost?

(continued part 2)

In QLD, Australia

Trust your dad

I was about 10 I think, My mum had just married my new step dad. Things were great, we were going on a family holiday to the Sunshine Coast.

He was in the Army, fixing electronic things, this guy must be pretty smart.

On the way to the coast, beside the highway there are kilometres of pine tree plantations. We start talking about how funny it looks with them all so skinny and straight and neat, when it happened.

"You know David, see that paddock of trees there? That whole paddock only makes one box of matches",'Yeah right, as if, ha...'. "No I'm serious, because of all the knots and slight bends in the trunks, by the time they whittle them down on a big machine, they only get enough wood for one straight square matchstick per tree" ...'oh.., k...fair enough'.

I'll remember that fact and impress all my friends at school... I can't wait.

School wasn't fun that year...

And I'm still not sure if when he said that they use seaweed to make ice-cream is true, but until I find out otherwise, I'll argue with you that it is, because my dad said it is.

In Queensland

About Author

Dave Crankston

People say things like " I wish i had an interesting life like you"... no you don't. weird shit, lucky shit, shit, happens to me, that seems cool sometimes, but its not all fun. Im my own normal.

Why is the website called bytestories.com?

This is a place for "byte-sized" stories and there is a 1500 character (about 250 words) limit for two main reasons. Firstly, we want you to know that "War and Peace" isn't required to leave your mark. Secondly, it takes about 2 minutes to read each story meaning you can head here whenever you want a quick (and entertaining) read.

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