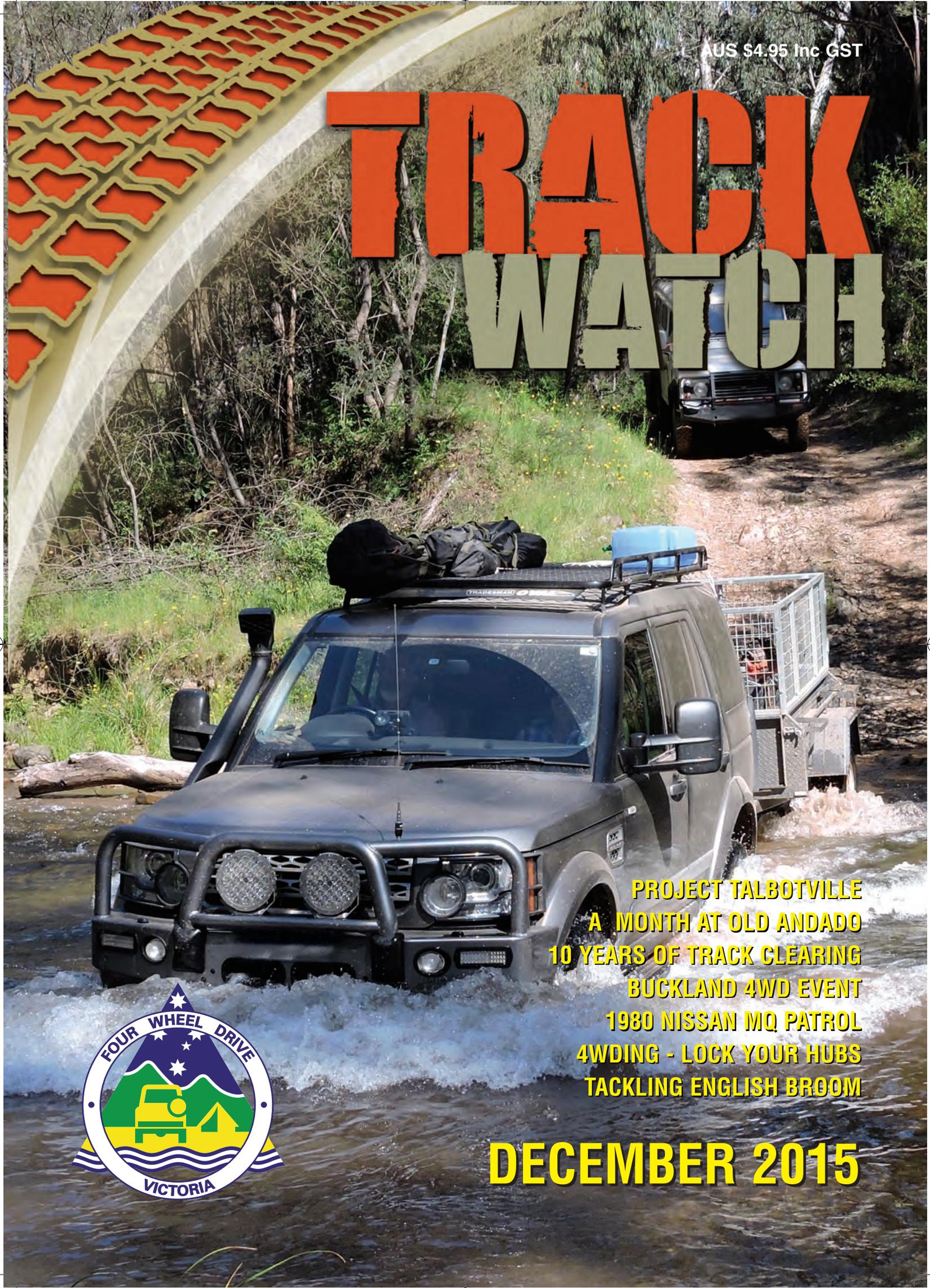


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# TRACK WATCH



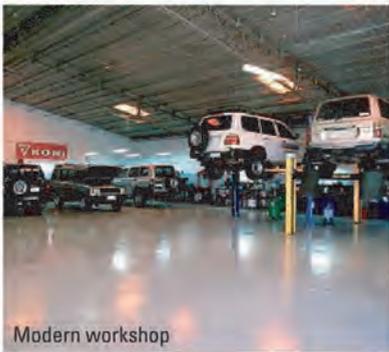
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10 YEARS OF TRACK CLEARING  
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1980 NISSAN MQ PATROL  
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# From the President



As the year comes to an end the Association office is still quite busy. A major event being coordinated by our new project officer, Kate Waller, is the Clean UpThe Bush Rubbish Search weekend, in the Nerrina State Forest. While Kate is providing the office contact for the weekend's volunteers the actual event is being run by the Werribee Club. The Association appreciates the work involved in this program and the Werribee Club should be applauded for volunteering to run the latest of these clean up events. We are looking forward to the weekend being a huge success.

The busy time for the office staff started in early November with the finalising of the yearly reports and preparation of the office to welcome the attendees for the Association's AGM. Despite a low initial response from the clubs, we had a flourish of late acceptances just prior to the AGM. Another very good attendance was achieved with around fifty clubs being represented. After the meeting formalities were completed, in less than an hour, those in attendance then enjoyed supper and a chat with their fellow delegates and club officials.

The clubs have also been busy recently with their volunteer work. Track clearing work was completed to ensure that they were ready for their re-opening, after the winter seasonal closures. There have also been some great efforts. A great article on an initiative to deliver improved facilities, in one of our more iconic high country locations, can be found elsewhere in this magazine. This article demonstrates how the land

managers and our club members are working to deliver tangible benefits to those who visit these locations.

From the start of 2016 the Association's Education and Training Unit will be guided by the Association's restructured Registered Training Organisation, led by Garry Doyle, with the specific intention of raising the qualifications of the Association's public instructors in order for them to deliver the RTO's new competency based curriculum. We are looking forward to this new structure becoming a key contributor to the Association in 2016 and beyond.

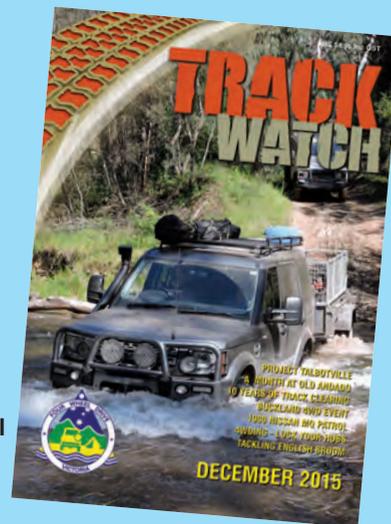
Another exciting initiative for 2016 is the Canning Stock Route permit rebate for Association members, for permits purchased through the National Council's website. More details will be distributed shortly. Also in the final planning stages is a member benefits program that looks to provide our members with significant discounts and benefits each year.

While 2015 has been a great year for the Association, 2016 looks like it will be even bigger and better. On behalf of the Association I would like to wish all members and supporters a great Christmas and a happy New Year.

**Damian Stock**  
 President, 4WD Victoria

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'Project Talbotville'  
 - photo by Greg Rose



## Editorial

Welcome to the December edition of Trackwatch. Seasons greetings and a very merry and safe Christmas from all at Four Wheel Drive Victoria.

Last month's Towing Guide created plenty of interest, with one of the most interesting points being how little you can actually carry on most utes when towing the maximum weight nominated by the manufacturer.

Buyers need to be aware that towing claims are just that: claims. As recently reported in the motoring press there is no government standard, only what the manufacturer is prepared to back. For some models testing has found that some towing capacity claims of certain models are somewhat optimistic!

To better get a handle on the capability of each vehicle, it is best to refer to towing capacity, weight of the vehicle and the gross combination mass (GCM). To work out what can be carried in the vehicle, take the GCM, subtract the vehicle mass and the towing capacity, and the balance is what you can carry.

Apply this to a current vehicle, such as the Toyota HiLux and you will be surprised with its carrying capacity. Its GCM is 5650kg, and when the 2075kg kerb weight and 3200kg tow capacity is subtracted, this leaves a payload of just 375kg.

Interestingly, if the towing capacity is reduced to 3000kg, the carrying capacity increases to 575kg.

Obviously buy a smaller caravan or boat if you want to load up the towing vehicle.

On a different note, in this issue - once again - we have some stories on fantastic community works being carried out by Clubs. These projects assist our land management authorities, and provide a great outlet for clubs to expand the type of activities they are involved. On top of that, all helpers can be proud to be assisting and preserving the asset that we enjoy - the bush and public lands.

I look forward to receiving even more great articles documenting the extraordinary projects being initiated and carried out by 4WD Clubs in 2016.

Have a great festive and holiday season - stay safe and if four wheel driving, be fire aware.

All the best.

**Brian Tanner**  
Editor



## News

### Ballarat District 4WD club

### *Try 4WD Weekend, March 19th and 20th 2016*



Previously the Ballarat District 4WD club, had held an annual camp out weekend for a number of years. As this was losing popularity, last year a radical approach was taken to change the direction of the weekend.

Under the guidance of long serving member, Russell Lees, a committee was formed. The focus changed from a static information display to showing the public how to use their own vehicles on the training track as well as on guided, supervised bush drives.

The 2015 Try 4WD weekend held in March was successful with record numbers coming to our training track at Smythesdale and participating in the bush drives. Following this success, we have again formed a committee, this year with myself as coordinator. I am a relative newcomer to 4WD, joining the club 3 years ago.

On March 19th and 20th, 2016 we are planning a similar event, with some

changes. We will still have our track open with trainers assessing drivers and recommending bush trips depending on their ability. Also there will be cooking demonstrations in camp ovens, tyre plug demo, bush welding etc. (fire conditions depending).

Everyone is welcome to come out to our track, off Whites Rd Smythesdale (*follow the signs*), to learn about their 4WD no matter type, size or make. If you don't have a 4WD as yet but would like a taste, come on out and drive around the track with our experienced club members and pick our brains.

We will have a sausage sizzle from 11 till 1 each day, with Gluten free/ Fructose friendly options also available as well as soft drinks, tea and coffee.

**Mark Middleton**

Try 4WD Weekend Coordinator.  
0428538877

### **Try 4 Wheel Driving Weekend at Smythesdale**

**Saturday & Sunday 9am to 4pm  
19th and 20th March 2016**

**Free Entry - Everyone is Welcome**  
Whether you own a 4WD vehicle or not!

- Club Static Display - Bush Camping
- On-site 4WD Training Track
- 4WD tours in the local forest area

*Start from 11am (Conditions apply to participation on drives) weather permitting*

- Other demonstrations by members

#### **For more information contact:**

[www.ballarat4wdclub.org.au](http://www.ballarat4wdclub.org.au)

Club Phone on - 0439 014 366

Or Mark - 0428 538 877 or Peter - 0417 263 108

***Free Camp overnight on site with our Club Members is possible  
but Bookings are essential for Camping***

***Directions From Ballarat:*** Drive out along The Glenelg Highway to Smythesdale (20kms) At the Caltex Service Station turn right off the highway into Whites Road. Take the first left onto the dirt road and follow it approx. 150 metres to the Club Training Track gate area on your left hand side. Parking is available near gate



# Ten years of track clearing



**Members of the Land Rover Owners Club of Victoria, the Pajero 4WD Club of Victoria, local people, and Parks Victoria staff gather together at Tubbut in far eastern Victoria.**

Parks Victoria and 4WD Victoria recently celebrated a ten year partnership of working together to maintain the road and track network in the national parks and reserves of East Gippsland.

Seventeen members from the Melbourne-based Land Rover Owners Club of Victoria and Pajero 4WD Club attended this year's event. The group met at the Goongerah campground for an introduction and safety briefing before dividing into three teams and making their way through the remote and rugged terrain of the Snowy River National Park.

The teams of highly-skilled drivers and well-prepared vehicles assisted local Parks Victoria rangers to clear fallen trees and undertake risk assessments of approximately 120km of tracks. Parks Victoria's Bendoc Ranger Team Leader, Gary Bellesini said the event was of great assistance in making sure that our National Parks were open and accessible to the public when the seasonal road closures re-opened for the Melbourne Cup long weekend.

Parks Victoria's Local Area Chief Ranger, Dave Burton said the partnership with 4WD Victoria has been ongoing for ten years and it is a great

example of how we can work together in a safe and healthy environment in a way which connects people with the special places of East Gippsland. "This year we wanted to extend the hospitality of the East Gippsland communities, and were delighted that the Tubbut community came on board to host a traditional country breakfast for the weary group before making the long journey back to Melbourne," Mr Burton said.

## Great Tracks Cleanup

The Great Tracks Cleanup crew were at it again in May and July undertaking their convoy of outback tracks to rid them of rubbish and maintain them for the enjoyment of travellers and residents alike.

The procession of trucks and trailers removed a total of 80 tonnes from the Strez to Moomba and back and from Leigh Creek to Oodnadatta and back via the Stuart Highway. Amongst the rubbish was nearly 500 tyres - that's a

lot of blow-outs and a reminder to be careful travelling on the regions unsealed roads!  
[www.greattracks.com.au](http://www.greattracks.com.au)





# Victorian 4WD SHOW

Sunday 21st February 2016 - 9am to 4.30pm

**Australia's BIGGEST outdoor 4WD event**

'Wandin Park' 305 Victoria Road, Wandin North (just east of Lilydale) Melways: 119, G7



**The show for families interested in four wheel driving, camping, touring, and the great outdoors.**

There is something for everyone, regardless of what make of vehicle they drive

Entry is just \$15 per person - children under 16 free.

Not many events with this much value and this exciting are this affordable to get into these days.

**Over 120 exhibitors in attendance including quite a few new ones.**

**Exhibitors include suppliers of the many after-market 4WD accessories, camping equipment, camper trailers, caravans, roof-top tents, radios, maps, mapping software, vehicle modifications, tyres, new vehicles, vehicle servicing, etc.**

Additional to the exhibitors other features of the Show include -

- \* taking a free ride in a variety of standard or modified 4WD vehicles on the 2km 4WD Adventure Circuit
- \* continuous live demonstrations of 4WD vehicle recovery techniques
  - \* ARB's Travel & Traction suspension test bed demonstration
- \* the latest 4WD vehicles, older restored vehicles including ex-Military
- \* many of the Victorian 4WD clubs including their peak body '4WD Victoria'
- \* taking a breathtaking helicopter joy flight over the site and local area
- \* a good range of food and drink outlets providing affordable basic food lines
  - \* Bouncing Castle, the Kiddie Train, and face painting for the kids

*Event Coordinator: Ken West - Phone: 0402 317380 OR (03) 9786 0728 a/h*

*Email: [coordinator@victorian4wdshow.com.au](mailto:coordinator@victorian4wdshow.com.au) - Website: [www.victorian4wdshow.com.au](http://www.victorian4wdshow.com.au)*



Article and photos by Kellie Dean

# Bendigo beat Boneseed!

Late last year, the Bendigo Four Wheel Drive Club was successful in receiving a \$2,000 grant from the Victorian State Government for the removal of Boneseed around central Victoria. The grant was part of a statewide community grants program addressing pest weeds and animals, revegetating the environment, cleaning up waterways, increasing biodiversity values and engaging the community.

The Bendigo Four Wheel Drive Club felt they could contribute to the environment around Bendigo by working with land managers to identify and remove Boneseed in high priority areas.

Boneseed (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera* ssp. *Rotundata*) is listed as a Weed of National Significance and is regarded as one of the worst weeds in Australia. It can invade native vegetation and has the ability to regenerate quickly, recover quickly from fire and threaten native plants including the brittle greenhood orchid (*Pterostylis truncate*). The weed is prevalent in much of bushland around central Victoria and in many areas the Bendigo Four Wheel Drive Club enjoy spending time in.

Over the past 12 months, members of the club have met with Parks Victoria to locate areas of immediate concern. Rangers identified the Waanyarra Nature Conservation Reserve requiring immediate attention which is located within the township of Tarnagulla, approximately halfway between Bendigo and St Arnaud.

On Sunday 29th November, 2015, twenty members and visitors of the club

gathered in Tarnagulla, with buckets and gloves at the ready. Whilst morning tea was consumed, a safety briefing was held prior to the work as there were numerous hazards including mine shafts from the extensive historic mining activities in the area. An area of 50 hectares was walked in a line search manner with all Boneseed removed, bagged and later disposed of. A total of seven bags, a box of weeds and rubbish as well as a chair were collected on the day. Two further areas of rubbish were photographed and will be logged with land managers as part of the project reporting.



Members of the club were treated to a BBQ lunch and although there was a brief shower of rain, it didn't dampen the enthusiasm of the members. It was fantastic to see the members chatting whilst undertaking the weed removal and spending time surrounded by nature.

Liaison Officer and Project Coordinator for the grant, Frank Fenwick, said that 'members really supported the project by attending the day, and it was a great opportunity to work with the local rangers and show that the club is interested in looking after the environment. We hope that we can work with Parks Victoria in similar projects in the future'.

Parks Victoria Ranger, Sam Falkingham said that 'Parks Victoria is fortunate to have in the community people who are willing to assist Rangers in managing our parks estate on a volunteer basis for the benefit of all Victorians. Controlling weeds is essential in keeping the ecological balance in favour of our native species both plant and animal. Local Parks Victoria Rangers are very happy to support the Bendigo Four Wheel Drive Club's efforts to continue this vital work into the future'.

Through discussions with Parks Victoria, the club may be able to assist in other partnership activities, such as camp host next year to combat some of the unruly behaviour in certain areas. It was a very successful day and something that the club is interested in participating in again.

**Kellie Dean**

## ENGLISH BROOM

### *The Midweek 4WD Club assist in the biological control of English Broom in the Alpine National Park*

We volunteers had all been reading up on the need to control English Broom. English Broom is a perennial shrub of the pea family, which can form dense thickets and exclude desirable native species. It has invaded approximately 150,000ha of Victoria and is yet to reach maximum habitat potential. Biological control can reduce the vigor and spread of target species with minimal labour inputs. It had been a long drive up from Melbourne but we eventually arrived at the camping area adjacent to Hinnomunjie Bridge on the Mitta Mitta River all eager to do our bit. In bygone days ABC Radio used to mention Hinnomunjie Bridge in the Daily Rainfall and River Heights Report. The old bridge is historically significant as it is one of the few remaining examples in Victoria of a surviving timber truss bridge.



*Painting the stumps with glysophate*

The various members of the group were introduced to each other by Keith Primrose the Project Coordinator - Alps Intensive Management – Parks Victoria, who outlined the timetable for the week-

end. The group consisted of volunteers from Midweek 4WD Club, Landcare, various bushwalking groups and other interested parties.



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**Hinnomunjie campsite**

On Saturday Keith started the day by outlining the problem. English Broom had been introduced around the 1800's which is a long establishment period thus it is wide spread with intractable infestations.

**Why is it a threat?**

- Invades high quality native vegetation
- Displaces native vegetation
- Prevents tree regeneration (Australia)
- Reduces habitat availability – fauna
- Allelopathic (i.e., can be invasive and can limit the ability of other plants to grow and prosper)
- Increases fuel biomass
- Changes soil nutrition
- Reduces accessibility

**Our campsite near Hinnomunjie Bridge**

Keith introduced a scientist involved with the program who allayed our fears of introducing a new biological agent to the Australian Bush. He pointed out that it now takes up to five years of testing to gain permission to introduce any new agents to Australia. He also advised us that similar programs are already in place in the USA and New Zealand. The two biocontrol agents that have been chosen for Australia are the seed feeding beetle and gall mites, which can weaken the health and reproductive capacity of broom plants. After Keith ran us through the necessary safety guidelines, we broke up into small groups of 4 or so. We all proceeded up Kelly's Road to a nursery

site already infested with the seed feeding beetles and gall mites. We all had a wonderful time shaking bushes to dislodge the tiny beetles and catch them on large trays. They were then sucked up using Pooters (bug collecting apparatus) taking great care not to suck on the wrong end thus ingesting the beetles.

We also trimmed a large amount of broom already infected with gall mites and placed both these agents in Eskies to keep them cool while they were transported to the various release sites.

Keith had been in Omeo for a couple of days assessing the proposed collection and release sites. Unfortunately, with wet weather he was unable to access some of the key release sites due to road conditions and high water levels in rivers and creeks. Nevertheless each group, which included at least one Parks member, headed off to their designated site.

All the groups but one was able to reach their site and release their agents. The one group, who had the longest distance to travel, managed to reach their site at the end of the Fraser Tablelands Track to find it devoid of broom. After all the sucking and cutting it was resolved to speak to Keith and find another site to release the agents.

After lunch various groups undertook various tasks. Many worked on a site of high value cutting down broom and painting the stumps with glysohate.

The group which had yet to release their agents joined Keith on a trip to the Big River to do so. This group which included most of the Midweek volunteers, journeyed up the Knocker Track, avoided the logging trucks which are operating up there and reached the Omeo Highway and the Big River. After completing their task they returned to camp via the Omeo Highway with the satisfaction of a "Job Well Done".

On Saturday evening Parks staff treated the volunteers to a barbeque dinner. They also provided the makings for a continental breakfast on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

Sunday morning Keith held a debriefing at which he expressed his satisfaction with what had been achieved and sought input regarding possible changes for next season. There were some suggestions made and Keith offered to take on board where possible. After this meeting the group broke up and started their various journeys home.

The Midweek 4WD Club had christened this excursion as the Bug Taxi Drivers Trip. This is an annual seasonal chore for Parks Victoria staff and volunteers, and there is a good chance that Midweek members will roll-up again next year.

**Rob James**  
Midweek 4WD Club



*Using the 'pooter'*



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## News

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) undertakes seasonal road closures to help protect track surfaces, water quality, the environment and to ensure driver safety.

Generally roads are reopened in late Spring but in some instances, for a range of reasons, roads will remain closed.

DELWP Forest Manager for Tambo District, Kath Smith said: "This year a section of the popular 4WD route through Haunted Stream Track, in State Forest south of Swifts Creek, will not be re-opened to the public."

"Sections of the track have deteriorated to a point where both public safety and the environment are at risk. We've assessed that risk and determined that it's too high to allow the track to remain open."

"Public safety and environmental considerations like impacts on water

## HAUNTED STREAM TRACK CLOSURE

quality and vegetation are our priority, so we are closing this track until we finish work to repair it."

"We want to preserve the unique environment of the Haunted Stream Track as an iconic touring route, so we will re-open the track in sections as soon as work is completed and the standards for public safety and environmental risk are acceptable."

Wayne Hevey from Four Wheel Drive Victoria agrees that the closure is required.

"It's unfortunate that this iconic four wheel drive track has to remain closed indefinitely due to inappropriate use by some drivers," Mr Hevey said.

"Four Wheel Drive Victoria encourages drivers to tread lightly, to respect weather and road conditions and avoid driving in conditions that will damage the roads and lead to closures such as

this. We support DELWP's decision to temporarily close this road, and will support them in their endeavours to get the road repaired and re-opened as soon as possible."

The closure on the Haunted Stream Track will be from the gate just past the Stirling Track turn off to the remainder of the seasonally closed area. Access is still available to the Stirling township.

Stirling Track, Haunted Stream Track from the Great Alpine Road to Stirling Track, and Five Mile Spur Track will all be open.

DELWP maintains an extensive road network and there are other scenic 4WD routes available.

Other DELWP-managed four wheel drive tracks will still be open for public use in and around the area. Visit [www.delwp.vic.gov.au](http://www.delwp.vic.gov.au) for further information.



## Products

### Piranha's all new 2015 Product & Price Guide

Piranha Off Road Products has always lead the way in product guides that contain more information than just what they sell.

Piranha's MD, Alan Johnson stated that, "Understanding what a product does and how it works in your vehicle is the best way to make an informed choice. These informed choices will enable the user to travel safely and with comfort, strong in the knowledge that they have purchased and fitted the best product for the job!"

The new 2015 Product Guide features over 40 full colour pages of information and stories that showcase the huge range of products Piranha have on offer.

This is a great educational guide that is ideal for clubs, tradies and people who like to know how things work while touring.

Many of the products featured are designed, manufactured and rigorously tested here in Australia, which is a point that Piranha are proud to shout out to the Aussie and world market.

The new full-colour Price Guide is over 75 pages with detailed recommended retail pricing on absolutely everything Piranha offer to the market. One of the best things about this guide is it highlights the fact that some prices have dropped due to streamlined manufacturing processes and Piranha are passing on the savings.

This is an ideal book to help touring owners work to their budget and allow a big picture on what can be done to make 4wding, caravanning and camping fun.

To obtain a hard copy of Piranha's amazing 2015 Product Guide contact Piranha Off Road Products on 03 9762 1200. For all the latest information and pricing at your fingertips the website [www.piranhaoffroad.com.au](http://www.piranhaoffroad.com.au) is definitely the best way to go. The new Facebook page is also worth visiting for tourists.



### Victorian 4WD SHOW

#### 2016 Victorian 4WD Show

**Sunday 21st February**  
**9am - 4.30pm**

- Australia's BIGGEST outdoor 4WD event
- 'Wandin Park' Victorian Road, Wandin
- Over 120 commercial exhibitors plus 4WD Clubs in attendance
- Entry just \$15 per person - children under 16 free
- Plenty of food outlets, free parking, kids entertainment

**More details at**  
**[www.victorian4wdshow.com.au](http://www.victorian4wdshow.com.au)**

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Download application forms at [www.cruiserkhana.com.au](http://www.cruiserkhana.com.au) for entry information and enquiries.

**Entry Fees:** Weekend (includes camping and Saturday night 2-hour drive) • Competitors: \$120 • Navigators: \$80 • Non-competitors: \$40 • Children under 15: \$20 • Children under 5: Free

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• Hot and cold food and drinks available all weekend

• Event held at Club property at Yank (2 hrs north of Melbourne)

**Enquiries:** [enquiries@cruiserkhana.com.au](mailto:enquiries@cruiserkhana.com.au)

**Major prizes:** More than \$10,000 worth of prizes will be distributed across all categories, including individual and team awards.

**4x4 Club Teams Challenge:** Four wheel drive clubs are invited to field a team to compete for the CruiserKhana Perpetual Trophy. Teams consist of three vehicles from the same club.

**Entries close 14th February, 2016**

**Early bird prices:** Save 10% for entries received before 31st December 2015

**15th - 17th April 2016**  
**[www.cruiserkhana.com.au](http://www.cruiserkhana.com.au)**

ARAB All Australia

# 'Our month at Old Andado'

*For one month earlier this year John and Liz Mills from the Toyota Land Cruiser Club of Victoria were caretakers of the iconic old Andado Station on the edge of the Simpson Desert*

"I would really like to spend more time here". This was my request to husband John as we departed across the dune overlooking Old Andado on our return to Melbourne in 2014. The decision was made to apply for the role of volunteer Caretakers at this Heritage listed property on the edge of the Simpson Desert, 330 kilometres south of Alice Springs in the Northern Territory.

John and I had camped there twice before and fell in love with the unique property, which was originally part of the Andado cattle station.

The surrounding land had been settled in the 1800s. An original mud brick building was replaced by the iron and timber structure now in existence. Mac Clark, Molly and their three boys went to live at Andado in 1955 as managers, with the prospect of eventually owning the station. A few years later, a new home was built 18kms away leaving the old home to the elements of wind and sand.

A number of tragedies occurred in the 70s and 80s. Mac had a heart attack and died, the eldest son, Graham, was killed crossing the railway line at Pimba and Kevin, the middle son, was in a nasty accident but thankfully survived. Then brucellosis struck and Molly was advised that all of approximately 5000 cattle were to be destroyed, leaving her

no income; therefore the property had to be sold. In 1987 she applied to the government in Darwin to secure a Crown lease to keep 45 square kilometres of land with the original homestead on it and to run a tourism enterprise. The house was saved from the sand and repaired. This is now what is known as Old Andado.

**"I would really like to spend more time here"**

Molly was instrumental in the opening of the Pioneer Women's Hall of Fame in Alice

Springs as she felt that women weren't represented anywhere nearly enough in the opening up of the Outback.

Mac has been remembered by the naming of the reserve called The Mac Clarke Park, approximately

35kms north of Old Andado. The Acacia Peuce tree or 'Waddy' tree is protected in this reserve, there being only three areas in Australia, and indeed the world, where this long living wattle remains.

Our duty as Caretakers was to welcome visitors and tell them the history of the property and the Clark family. I was to make scones each day on the old wood burning stove and



keep the kettles boiling to entertain anyone wanting to enjoy the traditional hospitality around the table in Molly's kitchen. The vegetable garden was a project I particularly wanted to embark on, and during our stay I planted a number of seeds in the new Wicking beds, which frustratingly didn't appear. Eventually seedlings were planted, which hopefully will mature for future Caretakers. I was allowed to forage for discarded items around the property to



**Another batch of scones**



*Old Andado nestles in the red sand dunes*



*Old Andado*

make trellises for the climbing vegetables and other items to give an old world feel to the garden.

John was worried that he wouldn't have enough to keep him occupied. Oh boy, was he mistaken!! He spent hours screwing down the homestead roof and repairing gates around the property. Matching timber needed to be found and cut to shore up the inside roof structure. This timber was also to repair the thatched Meat House roof. The Saddle House required propping up as it sits at a very peculiar angle. A new soak-away was made from the camp kitchen tap and a rock cairn constructed over the pit. This was all over and above the daily duties of cleaning toilets and showers, unblocking septic tanks, tidying the campground, collecting wood for the wood stove and the 'donkey' to heat water for the showers. Finding timber entailed a round trip of 20kms each time. The generator required maintenance and switching on

each evening to illuminate the house and grounds, plus the pump for the bore needed to be switched on most evenings to pump water to the overhead tank.

We celebrated our 47th Wedding Anniversary here. John always takes

me to the most interesting places for this annual event!!! We took a day off and travelled the 212 km round trip to Mt Dare, hoping for a steak lunch as a treat. Sadly there were only pies, pasties or sandwiches on offer. Oh well, made a lovely scenic drive to boost the batteries.

We welcomed 622 visitors, 343 of them camped for a night or more, 488 scones were made and consumed. There were so many lovely people passing through, some were to bring Molly's organ to life and enjoy the atmosphere of her lounge. Others stayed longer than they had anticipated just to 'chill' amongst the wonderful scenery. Well known racing drivers stopped by on their way to the Finke Races, and film crews began their journey across the Madigan Line from here as this was where Cecil Madigan had restocked with water from the well in 1939 before his crossing of the Simpson Desert. (We think this well would be worth renovating with perhaps an application for a Heritage grant, as part of the historical story of Madigan's epic journey.



*Old meat house*



This Heritage listed property must be unique in Australia as it is open all year round for visitors to learn more about the way pioneers of the Outback lived.

Molly left in 2006 in her 80s leaving everything behind, clothes, cutlery, furniture etc for all visitors to enjoy. She spent her last years living in Alice Springs with the occasional visit to her old home. She died in 2012 at the age of 89. Her final return was allowed having been granted permission to be buried on the property overlooking her beloved sand dunes.

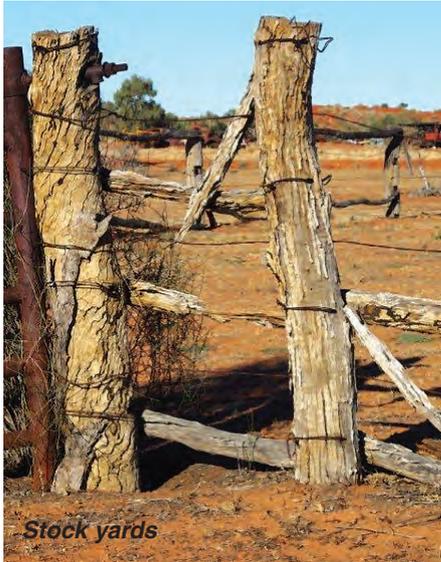


The old saddlery

John and I left with heavy hearts as we would miss waking to sun drenched red sand dunes and the sound of hundreds of Zebra Finches and Doves. We have left a little of ourselves behind and hope to return one day to camp or take on the role of Caretakers once more.

**John and Liz Mills**

Toyota Land Cruiser Club of Victoria



Stock yards



John and Liz Mills

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# 9739 5000

# PROJECT TALBOTVILLE

A joint operation between the Land Rover Owners' Club of Gippsland and Parks Victoria



The Land Rover Owners' Club of Gippsland has recently had several members working with Parks Victoria personnel at the popular four wheel drive and camping destination of Talbotville.

Historic Talbotville is north of Dargo and has excellent campsites beside the Crooked River.

The Land Rover Owners' Club of Gippsland has a very close relationship with Parks Victoria staff from the Heyfield and Dargo offices, and regularly conducts joint operations in the southern Alpine National Park. In the past members have worked on projects at Wonnangatta Valley, along the Wellington River, Kelly Lane, Moroka Hut, Howitt Hut and the Horseyards – Moroka River area.

Clubs and Regional Representatives who have close relationships with land managers will know these alliances are built up over time and develop into mutual respect, trust and friendship. Communication between clubs, Four Wheel Drive Victoria and local land managers is the key to the success of the relationships. In order to gain and keep the trust and respect, clubs and individual members need to operate as professionally and safely in joint working activities as the PV or DELWP staff.

The recent work at Talbotville was the most challenging the Land Rover Owners' Club of Gippsland has undertaken, in terms of logistics and planning. Parks Victoria staff from Dargo, Vicki Jones and Cliff Ireland, were keen to revitalize the camping infrastructure at Talbotville. Some of the picnic tables needed removing and replacing, more formal fire pits needed to be constructed and the area was in need of a general tidy up prior to the summer camping season.

After several meetings at Dargo and

many emails plus support from Mike Dower, Area Chief Ranger Foothills and Southern Alps, Cliff Ireland, Vicki Jones and Greg Rose (FWDV Regional Representative Southern Alpine National Park) conducted a site inspection in September to assess the work needed. In October Greg and Lois Rose, Vicki and Cliff returned to Talbotville and constructed one trial fire pit. Sand, aggregate, cement, cement mixer, reinforcing mesh, tools, water; everything was transported in on a heavily laden trailer and two Parks Victoria Toyotas. The trial



## PROJECT TALBOTVILLE

cement fire ring work became the template from which equipment requirements, material quantities and construction times were calculated. Based on the trial, Vicki Jones made up material and equipment checklists; it's a long way from Talbotville to Dargo if you have forgotten the buckets. Cliff Ireland constructed several picnic table and seat sets, which were dismantled ready for transport. Parks Victoria staff from Dargo and Heyfield undertook several trips into Talbotville, winding their way up the High Plains Road then down McMillan Road, with tandem trailer loads of sand and gravel mix. These were shoveled out at the sites that had been selected for the new fire rings.

On November 15th four members of the Land Rover Owners' Club of Gippsland met Vicki Jones, Parks Victoria Dargo and Dannica Shaw Parks Victoria Team Leader Heyfield, at the Dargo work centre, and spent three hours loading three trailers and two Land Cruisers with everything from camp ovens to cement mixers.

The club members and Parks Victoria staff involved had a pleasant Sunday night dinner at the Dargo Hotel in



readiness for the next three days of "hard labour". Nine o'clock Monday 16th saw eleven club members meet at the Dargo work centre. Vicki Jones had previously prepared extensive Job Safety Analysis documents for every activity that would be undertaken, including remote area four wheel driving. Club members had these documents well in advance so they

could have the required personal protection clothing, eyewear, gloves, steel capped boots, etc., all the things that kept everyone injury free. Volunteer forms were signed and emergency medical information forms (available on the FWDV website) were collected. Vehicles with trailers travelled to Talbotville via the High Plains Road and McMillan Road while the others followed Vicki Jones along the Crooked River Road to Talbotville. Camp was hastily set up while two more Parks Victoria staff from Sale arrived with the larger tandem trailer of sand and gravel mix and all the metal rings for the concrete formwork. By five o'clock all of the fire ring holes had been dug, some old table sets dug out and long grass cleared from the work areas. Aquatic life in the Crooked River at Talbotville may never recover from the site of some of the club members frolicking in the water to cool off. The LROCG provided the Monday night banquet of pre-dinner cheeses, crackers, nuts and nibbles, salads, a huge variety of bar-b-que meats, breads, sauces, mustards, desserts and chocolates. Nobody was going to be hungry.



## PROJECT TALBOTVILLE



On Tuesday the work started early before the heat of the day took hold. Hats, frequent applications of sun-screen and plenty of stops to drink water were required. By the end of the day the four PV staff and eleven LROCG folk had completed all four fire rings, all the table sets had been re-assembled and cemented into place, new signage had been erected on areas away from Talbotville, a large quantity of dangerous metal rubbish (rusted tin, tangled wire, etc) had been collected, long grass around all the camping areas had been dealt with, the invasive thistles had been cut, the new tables and benches had been given a final coat of preserving oil, old informal fire places had been removed, old fire scars were covered with soil to promote

grass growth and all the equipment was packed up on the trailers. A brilliant result in very warm weather that had the workers finishing off the concreting cursing the temperature.

More cooling off in the river frightened off the last of the wildlife.

Tuesday night's dinner was prepared by the multi talented Vicki Jones who fed the workers with a choice of Thai green curry or lamb stew; everyone had both main courses.

Wednesday was forecast as a 30-degree-plus day so camp was broken early and the group, with the exception of one PV vehicle and tandem trailer, left Talbotville via the twenty-three crossings of the Crooked River Track and the climb up Bulltown Spur to McMillan Road, then a tour through the historic Grant town site and back to Dargo in time for a delicious hamburger lunch at the Dargo Store.

There had been no injuries, no breakdowns, a few sore muscles and a great sense of achievement and camaraderie between a small four wheel drive club and local land managers.

The Land Rover Owners' Club of Gippsland provided two hundred and

fifty-eight hours of volunteer labour from planning to completion of the project. Talbotville will be a much more inviting place for the hundreds of people who will visit it over the summer.

The whole exercise was an excellent example of the close working relationship that exists between Four Wheel Drive Victoria, affiliated clubs and Parks Victoria. The work conducted will benefit all users of the area.

There were a few small convoys of interstate four wheel drive tourists who stopped to ask what was going on at Talbotville. They were all amazed that four wheel drivers and land managers could work together so well.

There is still work to be undertaken at Talbotville and initial pre planning discussions are already under way.

If your club does not have an ongoing relationship with land managers, contact Wayne Hevey at the Four Wheel Drive Victoria office for some guidance and advice.

**Greg Rose.**

President, Land Rover Owners' Club of Gippsland.

FWDV Regional Representative, Southern Alpine National Park.





Plenty of action at "Project Talbotville"



Vicki Jones, Parks Victoria (right) & Greg Rose finish off the trail fire ring

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# Lock your hubs

Report & images  
by Simon Mustey

## EMERGENCY

# STOPS ON STEEP HILLS IN AN AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION VEHICLE

What's a steep hill? We're all familiar with a shopping centre car park ramp, whether it's Chadstone or Highpoint, that's not a steep hill, you don't use any special driving techniques going to Coles, so why would you when driving up the same gradient in the bush? When you stand at the base of the hill and your neck cracks as you look up toward the top and you can feel the need for an involuntary "nature break" coming on, that's a steep hill!

So let's look at a failed climb driving uphill in an automatic transmission equipped vehicle.

### Here's the procedure

#### Stopping

1. Footbrake applied progressively with left foot
2. Then held hard on
3. Apply park brake firmly, leave gear as is

#### When Stopped

1. Check direction of wheels
2. Select reverse, keeping foot on brake
3. Check clear behind

#### Restart

1. Release park brake (maintain foot-brake)
2. Release footbrake pressure till about to move



3. Increase revs till vehicle moves slowly.
- Let's not forget when driving in adverse terrain, place your hands on the steering wheel at quarter to three with your thumbs out, at least one hand should be on the wheel at all times.

Automatic transmission equipped vehicles on hills are easier than manuals, though you do have to multi-task, brake and accelerate simultaneously (so it's easier for the ladies as us blokes can't multi-task....)

If your anything like me, when you get stuck on a hill, the last thing you think about is using your left foot to hit the brake. Don't worry because I've got a contingency plan to work around it for you. The process is heading up a steep hill and you need to stop; simply put your foot on the brake (preferably your left foot) then apply the park brake firmly. Leave in gear as is and don't turn the engine off.

While stopped check the direction of your front wheels. Again I can't stress how important this step is, you need to know where they're pointing. If you can't see, call someone over the radio or get your passenger out to help. Especially when stuck in slippery terrain such as snow or mud, it's not unusual to have no idea where your wheels are pointing. Now's the time to select reverse gear, it's also the opportune time to swap feet from right to left if you braked with your right foot in step 1 of stopping. Just shuffle your right foot off the brake pedal while shuffling your left foot on.

The final step while stopped is to check and clear behind. We all go 4wding with mates as we should and those mates will revel in the fact that they can take your photo while stuck and message that photo to your loved ones at home before you can even select reverse!

Now it's time to start to head back down the hill. Firstly release the park brake. Secondly you'll need to decrease the pedal pressure of your left foot on the brake, until your car makes a groan or a shudder but still remains stationary on the hill. You'll now need to lock your left ankle in that position right to the bottom of the hill. Now you increase the revs until the car starts to move. You're aiming for a slow walking pace. You'll need to hear the engine working while you're driving backward. Remember the



shopping centre car park ramp I spoke about earlier? You'll need to hear the engine working, just as you would if you were driving up the shopping centre car park ramp. Continue driving the car right to the bottom of the hill. If you need to stop while heading backward down the steep slope, simply take your foot of the accelerator and you will come to a gently progressive stop without inducing a skid.

What's the idea behind this new fang dangled "driving through the brakes" technique you ask? Driving through the brakes forces drive to each wheel. Your centre differential will of course be locked (or equivalent in some cars) so the drive is sent 50:50 to both the front and rear differentials.

With an open (conventional) differential the torque is split 50:50 across both wheels at all times, minus some small frictional losses. So by providing an even amount of braking to each wheel on the axle, hence an even amount of resistance to each side of the differential and consequently torque. You are able to virtually eliminate the chance of one wheel spinning while the other remains stationary on the same axle.

You'll also be able to go a lot slower, which is an advantage in rocky country, as you'll minimise how much your suspension compresses and maximise your clearance. It's additionally a great technique for lowering yourself down a rock step.



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What goes up must come down, downhill in an automatic transmission equipped vehicle.

Driving an auto downhill (driving through the brakes)

**Stopping**

1. Take foot off accelerator
2. Vehicle will stop if it is being correctly driven through the brakes
3. Apply park brake firmly

**When Stopped**

1. Left foot on brake to hold vehicle
2. Put transmission in first gear
3. Check clear ahead & direction of wheels

**Restart**

1. Release park brake.
2. Release footbrake pressure till about to move
3. Increase revs till vehicle moves slowly.

The above technique assumes you are driving downhill using the driving through the brakes technique. You're left foot braking and simultaneously accelerating heading down a steep hill. All you need to do is progressively remove your right foot from the accelerator and if the car is being correctly driven through the brakes will come to an even progressive stop without inducing a slide. Don't forget to engage the park brake.

Now you are stopped, you can increase the brake pedal pressure. If you're not already in first, this is the time to shift into low gear. Just as before you'll need to know where your wheels are pointing and clear the photographers from your path ahead.

Once the obstruction has been moved you're ready to progress down the hill. Disengage the park brake, then just as before, release the brake pedal pressure until the car is about ready to move, you'll need to listen for the groan or shudder your particular car makes. Start accelerating using the right foot and again you're shooting for a slow walking pace. Listen for the engine working, like your accelerating up the shopping centre car park ramp. Continue driving through the brakes until you're through the steep section.

**Parking on a hill**

1. Apply both footbrake and park brake
2. Move gear select to "N" Neutral
3. Cautiously release footbrake
4. The vehicle may move slightly as it comes to rest on the park brake.
5. Move gear select to "P" PARK
6. Engine off
7. Chock wheels

Sometimes you'll need to park on a slope and this requires some special

procedures in an automatic transmission equipped vehicle

You'll need to apply both the footbrake and park brake. Once you've secured the vehicle, move the gear selector to the neutral "N" position. Now cautiously release the foot brake. At this point the vehicle will be resting on the park brake. At this point you can shift the gear selector to the park position. Turn the engine off and get one of your passengers to chock the wheels.

The above procedure is a great habit to get into even when you're parking down the local shops, that way when you're off road you're able to park the vehicle correctly without thinking about it.

The reason you don't just pop the transmission into park on a steep hill is the way in which the transmission's park brake works. There is a component inside your transmission called a parking pawl that when engaged under tension, (as would happen if you come to rest on the park brake on a steep hill) locks up, and will refuse to come out of park without winching or pulling the whole car to remove the tension off the pawl arrangement.

*In the next instalment we'll look at the vehicle recovery.*

**Simon Mustey**



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# Buckland & Beyond

12<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2016

## High Country Treats

The Inaugural Buckland and Beyond Event has been designed to give four-wheel drivers a true High Country experience. Based in the Upper Buckland Valley, North East Victoria this region is part of the Alpine Shire and is close to not only many wonderful towns, but also provides access to the best the High Country has to offer. Participants will be in for a real treat, learning about this great region of our state that is full of history from the early explorers and gold miners.

## Camping, touring, food and wine

This will be a camp only event where participants will camp in their own tents, caravans or camper trailers. They will participate in a range of exciting events designed to give them an experience that many would never have had previously. The events include escorted tours to different parts of the region for predominantly four wheel drive vehicles. This includes tours to local wineries, gourmet food venues and the regions historic sites. The event also includes detailed training in a range of subjects as well as demonstrations and exhibitions. These activities will showcase the best the North East has to offer in an educational way to live our mantra of driving in a sustainable environment.



## A FWD Victoria Multi-Club Event

The event is being organised as a Multi-Club event under the auspices of Four Wheel Drive Victoria (FWDV) and will attract not only Victorian Club members but also visitors from other states. The event is being run as a not-for-profit event.





There'll be plenty to see and do from scenic tracks to river crossings to historic sites and some wonderful stories and friendships.

## Contact Details

Website: [www.bucklandandbeyond.com](http://www.bucklandandbeyond.com)

Garry Doyle: 0459 461 759  
(garry@hpsolutions.net.au)

Steve Belli:

Irene Ham:

Paul O'Riley:

The Buckland Valley is located in a picturesque valley over the range from Bright in Victoria's North East. Access to the valley is via Porepunkah on the Great Alpine Road. Beveridge's Station camping area is approximately 40 kilometres from the roundabout at Porepunkah and is mainly good gravel. You'll be able to bring your camper, caravan or tent. Depending on weather fires are allowed and we will have toilets and showers.

## The Site at Beveridge Station

The camping area along with the administration will be set up at Beveridge's Station in the Upper Buckland Valley. This area is controlled by Parks Victoria.

There will be supplied amenities to meet the environmental requirements and campsites would be located the required distances from the river.

A central campfire area would be established in approved fire pits and individual fires would not be allowed. Sites would be marked out for camping. Sites would allow for safe passage of vehicles and pedestrians throughout the event. A first aid tent would be established and administration would also be manned 24/7 whilst the event is being conducted.

The area has no mobile telephone reception. The organisers will have a number of satellite phones for emergency use. Medical and other emergency service providers in Bright will be alerted that the event is taking place.

## Communication

Participants will initially obtain information from the website, magazine articles, word of mouth or through the Facebook page. All four-wheel-drive Victoria members will be sent direct mail and email information regarding the event.

Participants will be encouraged to visit the website frequently for updates. We will also post updates via email regularly to participants.

A newsletter will be provided on a regular basis. The newsletter is our way of recognising our various sponsors. This will be distributed via email.

## Events

The Buckland & Beyond event consists of the following activities:

- Trips of different durations
- Training in a variety of topics, all 4WD related and some will be accredited
- Demonstrations and explanations of product or techniques specific to 4WD driving (eg. Recovery, lighting, dual battery setups and so on).
- Clubs will also have a dedicated club section and club day to promote their clubs
- Entertainment including bush bands, presentations, films
- A catered dinner on the final night

# Buckland & Beyond

12<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> March 2016



Organised by Four Wheel Drive Victoria and supported by its affiliated 4WD clubs, this inaugural event will be one not to be missed.

From a comfortable campground in the Buckland Valley near Bright experienced trip leaders will introduce you to the 4WD paradise that is the Victorian High Country.

Listen to historians tell amazing stories of the early gold rush and visit a range of iconic locations such as Dargo, Blue Rag, Haunted Stream, Wonnangatta, the King and Howqua Valleys to name just a few.

With a number of different trips on offer, from one day to three day duration, there will be something to suit everyone's ability and vehicle (any standard 4WD will be able to participate on most trips).

If you know anyone who is thinking of joining a 4WD club or perhaps just wants to know more about their 4WD's capabilities, invite them along as a temporary member allowing them to participate while they receive the protection of FWDV's members' liability insurance.

A modest entry fee is yet to be announced.



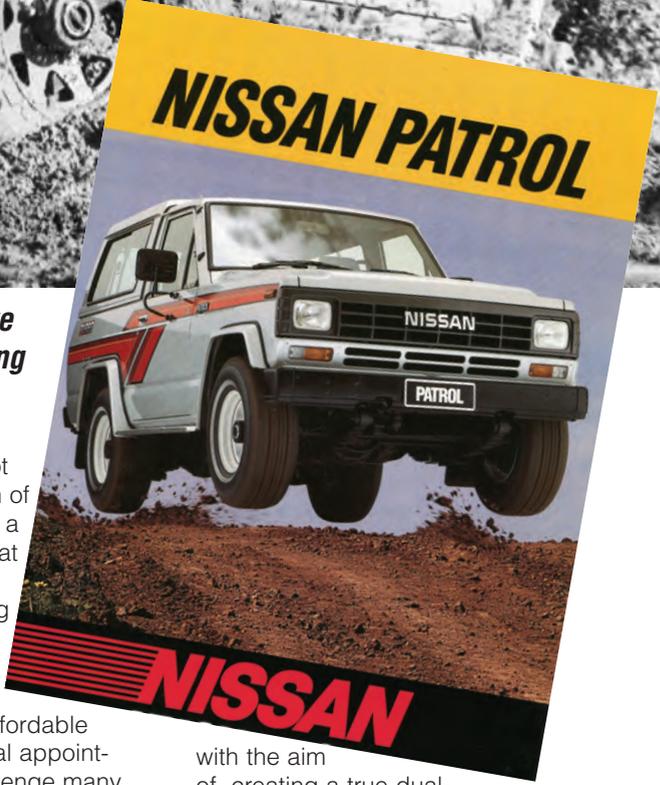
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Email [garry@hpsolutions.net.au](mailto:garry@hpsolutions.net.au) to receive full details of the Buckland & Beyond program when it is finalised shortly.



> 4WD History

# NISSAN'S 'GAME CHANGER!'



***In May 1980 Nissan became the Australian four wheel drive leader. For the first time Nissan trumped Toyota, introducing the revolutionary MQ Patrol. It was truly a game changer!***

The new Nissan MQ short wheelbase Patrol was released in Melbourne in May 1980 and it was the first example of the future direction that modern 4WDs would take. More exciting was the fact that for the first time it was Nissan, and not Toyota that was showing the way! Nissan 4WDs had been available in Australia since the early 1960s, and their G60 Patrol in long and short wheelbase formats had remained their flagship for nearly 20 years. It was spartan, and while a tough, heavy-duty 4WD, it was not a vehicle that would set the recreational market alive. Their main competition came from Land Rover and Toyota, and it had been Toyota since the early seventies that continually set the pace, with ongoing updates and introduction of new features in their proven LandCruiser range.

The Nissan Patrol was powered by a gutsy 4-litre petrol engine through a three speed manual transmission with no synchromesh on first. In comparison Toyota in their FJ series had introduced a smooth, four speed fully synchromeshed gearbox as early as 1973.

The new MG Patrol was not merely a face lifted version of what had gone before, but a completely new vehicle, that introduced standards of comfort and modern styling that were only associated with the Range Rover. This however was no Range Rover, with the Patrol an affordable 4WD, with a level of internal appointments and comfort to challenge many existing 2WD vehicles.

The significance of the MQ Patrol cannot be overstated, both in determining the future direction for Nissan, but in radically re-shaping the future of the 4WD market. No longer were 4WDs to be considered primarily as work vehicles offering basic appointments and lack of creature comforts. Nissan showed that a tough mainstream 4WD did not have to acquaint with a rugged no-comfort interior. The MQ Patrol turned the 4WD market upside down.

For the first time a manufacturer had designed a 4WD from the ground up

with the aim of creating a true dual-purpose vehicle combining rugged off road performance with passenger car comfort and style.

The all new Datsun 4WD Patrol was unlike any Nissan before, and was the result of many months of consultation and research in determining the needs and wants of the Australian 4WD market. The MQ Patrol was the first truly all purpose recreational/commercial 4WD that incorporated function with efficiency, modern styling, passenger comfort and efficient low pollution engines.

The MQ Patrol was released at the Monegeetta army proving ground

north from Melbourne and its impact sent shock waves throughout the market. Nissan rewrote the benchmark for traditional 4WDs and it was a case of other manufacturers now having to equal the offerings delivered in the Patrol. For Toyota, it was to be a long two years before they could release a similarly appointed 4WD.

**Models**

At release the MQ Patrol was available in only three configurations: a three-seater hardtop, cab/chassis and traytop. They were powered by the proven 70kW SD33 six-cylinder Nissan diesel engine or four-litre petrol with four speed synchromesh transmission. This was upgraded to a five-speed box in 1984.

The Patrol had two reclining front bucket seats and a single folding side seat behind, while the four seater version



*The first 2 official images of the MQ Patrol, released by Nissan Australia*

came with two front buckets and a rear bench seat that folded flat for extra floor space.

No longer was the dash a metal affair with few instruments, but was fully integrated from door to door. It contained comprehensive instrumentation, push button radio, air vents, grab handle for passenger and locking glovebox.

A rectangular binnacle in front of the driver contained gauges for oil pressure, voltmeter, fuel and water temperature, and speedometer. A modern steering wheel and column stalks controlled lights, turning indicators and intermittent wipers.

Ventilation was good and the layout of the dash was clean and functional. Sound-proofing was exceptional for a 4WD and once mobile, apart from the higher seating position and extra column shift, the interior was similar to a well-appointed sedan!

Steering and road holding were excellent, with a suspension consisting of progressive rate paired leaves at the rear and three leaves in the front, delivering a softer ride. Power assisted front disc and rear drum brakes were effective, and the Patrol featured an internally expanding hand brake.



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The cab was double sealed against dust and insulated against engine noise, as well as having undergone extensive anti-rust treatment. The hardtop consisted of a reinforced fiberglass style screw-on, with full-width glass tailgate providing great rear visibility. The front windscreen was contoured with visibility and the aerodynamics of the Patrol clearly improved. There was a viscous clutch fan and a long breather hose for deep water crossings as encountered in Australian driving conditions. Similarly a large pre-cleaner aided the operation of a paper air cleaner.

The Patrol was designed as a comfortable touring vehicle, yet set up to tackle the rough as comfortably as possible. The suspension setup was never ideal, but around town was fine. A large skid plate provided underbody protection, and ground clearance was a formidable 225 mm. Both diffs were offset to the drivers side. The spare wheel was located under the vehicle at the rear, and obviously was difficult to access in some situations. The Patrol had a tight turning circle of only 5.5 m (6.7 LWB), and a steering damper was fitted to reduce kickback.

The diesel version was released first in Australia, but was soon followed by a petrol model. Similarly, the demand for a station wagon version was strong, but the MQ was not released in this format for some time.

Pricing for the initial diesel models (1980) were as follows: three seater hardtop \$10,386; four seater hardtop \$10,536; LWB cab/chassis \$10,565; and LWB utility \$11,048. The diesel Patrol used a 24 volt electrical system, which ensured prompt starting on the coldest of mornings.

In addition to the standard high level of appointments, Nissan offered two option Packs - hardtop Pack A, which included air-conditioning, two-tone paint, side strips, clock, trip meter, soft-feel steering wheel and free wheeling hubs. All for an additional \$930. Cab chassis Pack B offered air-conditioning and free wheeling hubs for \$830.

### Modern styling

The MQ perpetuated Nissan's chunky, square appearance, but with clean modern lines, the SWB Patrol was an attractive vehicle. The initial release consisted only of two door models with



detachable reinforced fibreglass hardtop, with pillarless lift-up rear window supported by twin gas struts. The hardtop featured side sliding windows.

Head on the Patrol had a distinctive black grille with egg-crate grille flanked by circular lights contained in rectangular mouldings. Directional indicators were enclosed in the body beneath the headlights, and side indicators were mounted high up on front side panels. The side panels featured two recessed full body lines breaking up the expanse of otherwise smooth panel.

Large truck-like mirrors were door-mounted and provided excellent rear vision. Once in the bush they would conveniently fold against the body when coming in contact with branches or the like. Front and rear bumpers were constructed of heavy gauge steel and incorporated tow hooks.

Standard equipment were Dunlop 750-R16 8-ply steel radials on 16 inch split rims. The centre of the wheels had a 'hub cap' which added to the appearance, and afforded some protection to the wheel studs from possible damage.

### Range additions

The short wheelbase Patrol range was supplemented in 1981 with the eagerly awaited long wheelbase station wagon. Nissan introduced the station wagon in two models; a commercial base wagon and upmarket recreational model which was equipped as the first seven seat 4WD diesel wagon in Australia.

An automatic MQ Patrol became available in the deluxe specification in 1982. The auto was applied to the petrol model, with the transmission being a Jatco with gear ratios of 2.458, 1.458, 1.000 and rev 2.182.

In late 1982 Nissan approved a turbo kit for the diesel Patrol, manufactured by Turbocharger Sales Pty Ltd of WA. It was available fitted for \$1,750 from selected Nissan dealers.

The highlight of the 8-model 1984 MQ Patrol range was the introduction of a factory turbo diesel. The new turbo-charged models were distinguished by new rectangular headlights. To match the improved performance Nissan fitted a five-speed overdrive transmission and a lower final drive.

**Brian Tanner**



**SPECIFICATIONS**  
**1980 Datsun MQ 4WD Patrol**

**ENGINE**  
Type: SD33 water-cooled six-cyl diesel  
Bore & Stroke: 83 x 100mm  
Displacement: 3246cc  
Compression ratio: 20.8:1

**TRANSMISSION**  
Type: Manual four speed all synchro floor shift, singletransfer/4WD lever  
Gear Ratios:  
1st 3.519  
2nd 2.157  
3rd 1.449  
4th 1.000  
Rev: 4.181  
Low range: 2.2:1  
High Range: 1:1  
Diff ratio: 4.6:1  
Clutch: 240mm sdp, hydraulically operated

**SUSPENSION**  
Front: Triple lead springs, tele-shocks, stabiliser bar  
Rear: Split leaf springs system, triple main leaves with two independent helpers.

**STEERING**  
Type: recirculating ball  
Turning circle: 10.93m  
Turn lock-to-lock: 5.5

**GENERAL**  
Frame: Pressed steel, closed section fully welded  
Power Train: 2 joint propeller shaft  
Length x Width x Height: 4070 x 1690 x 1880 mm  
Kerb Mass: 1665 kg  
Payload: 750 kg plus three passengers  
Wheelbase: 2350mm  
Ground clearance: 240mm under rear diff  
Track (Front/rear): 1405mm  
Top speed: 120 kph.  
Base Price: \$10,386

**For all your parts for the MQ Patrol (and other model Patrols) visit Patrolapart. (See advert on back cover)**



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# The Madigan Line – Crossing the Northern Simpson

## DVD Review by Prue Hasler

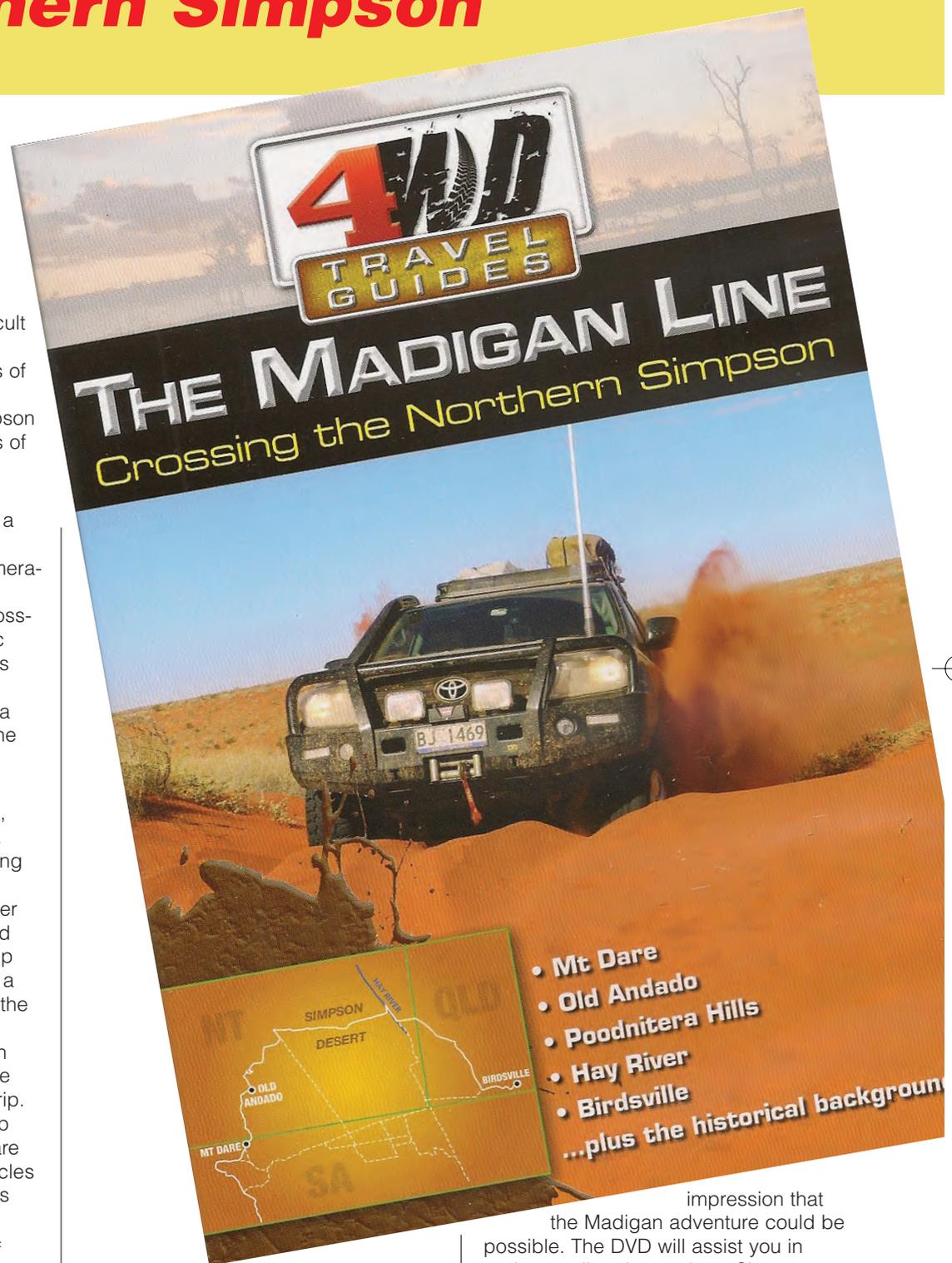
Distributed by 4WD Travel Guides and produced by Lifestyle Video Productions, 2015

One of the more remote and difficult 4WD trips in Australia is The Madigan Line. Following the camps of the 1939 Cecil Madigan camel expedition across the northern Simpson Desert, this trip challenges the limits of vehicles, pre trip preparation and driving and navigational abilities.

Featuring a group of 11 vehicles on a Vic Widman, Great Divide Tour and filmed by the experienced 4WD cameraman John Morton, this DVD gives a great account of a Madigan Line crossing. To place the route in an historic perspective, some interesting photos and commentary on the original expedition are included. Of note is a live broadcast to ABC listeners by the expeditioners on a Traeger Radio.

The DVD gives us an opportunity to appreciate the travelling experience, scenery and tracks on the Madigan. Commencing at Mt Dare and featuring Old Andado, the various Madigan camps, the blazed tree, the Hay River region, sand dunes, desert and sand dune conditions at the time of the trip and ending at Birdsville. Whilst it is a commercial trip, the experiences of the participants and how their vehicles cope with the conditions give you an insight into how you and your vehicle would manage on a Madigan Line trip. The tracks in the red sand and steep dunes, blown over during summer are freshly made by the passing of vehicles each season. The desert travelled is remote, wild and beautiful.

Having seen a Range Rover Club of Victoria video of their Madigan trips when they used a sextant to navigate in 1986 and in 1987 a GPS that gave a reading each morning, the current experience is far easier with constant GPS navigation, modern day vehicles and with more vehicle crossings, greater definition of tracks. However the vehicle and communication preparations, emergency planning, attention to



navigation requirements, driving style, tyre choice and management are still critical for a safe desert crossing.

The Madigan Line is a trip some of us would like to do one day and there are many stories about the difficulties and preparations required. Whilst not all the track conditions you may face can be covered in one trip, you are left with the

impression that the Madigan adventure could be possible. The DVD will assist you in understanding the northern Simpson Desert and some of the European history, whether you are considering a trip or just want to learn about this fascinating area.

Also of interest is the fascinating book of the original expedition by Cecil Madigan, "Crossing the Dead Heart".

> | Insurance

# “...you are the weakest link”

**Rumour has it ... STOP RIGHT THERE!**

**Let's deal in facts.**

A good lie always carries an element of truth. Over the last year or so, the talk about rated D Shackles and reported penalties for not using rated D or Bow shackles when towing has done the rounds, more than once.

For the record, there is no new law, the Australian Standard, AS 2741 was released in 2002 (yes, 13 years ago) and even then the Standard does not specifically cover the use of rated shackles in an application such as attaching a trailer or camper trailer to a tow bar. This standard covers the use of shackles for lifting purposes.

My clear understanding is that there is currently no regulation requiring shackles used on trailer safety chains to comply with the Australian Standard. However, some State authorities do provide guidelines or advise for selecting suitable shackles, not to mention, it makes sense to have some peace of mind in the event of a breakaway.

Australia-wide, safety chains are required as part of the towing mechanism on your trailer.

They connect the trailer's A-frame, or drawbar, to the main tow-bar framework of the towing vehicle using D or bow shackles. As a safety device, the chains, and consequently the shackles, must be strong enough to keep the trailer connected to the towing vehicle and prevent the drawbar from touching the ground if the coupling should break or become disconnected from the tow hitch. (Tip: If you cross the chains they create a cradle, to hold up the draw bar of the trailer in the event of a problem with the coupling)

Although there do not appear to be any specific requirements for shackles, it is recommended that shackles should have the following characteristics:

- The shackle grade is “S” or “6”.
- The working load limit is 1000kg.
- The shackle diameter is 10mm.
- Either a bow or D shackle may be used.

Obviously you need to consider the size and weight of your particular trailer and although there aren't any specific requirements for the use of a rated D shackle when towing your trailer, boat or caravan, it's still advisable to adhere to any guidelines in your State. After all,

you want to make sure the components are up to the task.

And while we are talking about rumours; rumour has it that some people are not aware that all vehicles are factory fitted with “tie down” points; not surprisingly they are designed to tie the vehicle down during transport or shipping. They should not be used for towing or recovery.

You may purchase a rated recovery point but where the “hook” is bolted to your vehicle is very important if you are going to use it in a recovery. Often the use of two recovery points and a properly rated equalisation strap in order to spread the load is advised but again, the angle of the recovery can place excessive stress on either vehicle. Many vehicles have been damaged unnecessarily due to a lack of knowledge. It is worth doing your homework when it comes to understanding where to, and where not to attach a snatch strap. Your recovery points are often the weakest link ...

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Part proceeds will go directly to Legacy to help support the families of returned service men and women.

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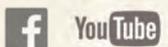
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The screenshot shows the Patrolapart website interface. At the top, the logo 'Patrolapart' is displayed with the tagline '4 x 4 ACCESSORIES, PARTS, SERVICE, SALES'. To the right, it says 'The Ultimate Online parts shop for Patrols' with logos for Visa and Mastercard. A navigation bar includes links for Home, About Us, Our Speciality, Upcoming Events, Blog, FAQ, Cars for Sale, Cars for Dismantling, and Contact Us.

A 'Quick Search' sidebar on the left allows users to filter by engine type, year, and category. The main banner features a 'PATROL DISMANTLING SPECIALIST' advertisement with an image of a car in a snowy environment. Below the banner are logos for various suppliers: Ferans, Bendix, VRS, Load, CBC, and RIDERBO RFX.

The 'Products' section is divided into 'Featured' and 'Latest' items. The featured product is a 'Nissan Patrol GQ & Maverick Genuine Body Mount Set' with a price of \$391.23. The latest product is an 'LED Driving Light' for \$250.00. On the right side, there are buttons for 'Member Login', 'NISSAN PATROL', 'WATCH VIDEO', and 'FAN PAGE'. A 'Subscribe Newsletter' form is located at the bottom left.