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TRACK WATCH

NERRINA BUSH CLEAN UP

HIGH COUNTRY SAFETY

BUCKLAND & BEYOND

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES MEETING

HISTORIC SITES RESTORATION

OLD EYRE HIGHWAY CROSSING

A DAY WITH VICFORESTS

FWDV PROFICIENCY COURSE

COPPER IN THE FLINDERS RANGES

EASTER AT WONNANGATTA



JUNE 2016



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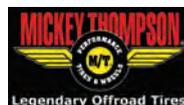
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FOUR WHEEL DRIVE VICTORIA

The peak representative body for all Victorian four wheel drivers since 1975

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From the President



Welcome to the June Trackwatch. While I have been overseas, on a long overdue vacation, it has been business as usual at the Association. The Board and the office have been extremely busy on a number of activities and there have even been changes at the Board level. I would like to welcome Chris Whiteside to the Board, as an ordinary member, and Brian Lewis as the Association's new Treasurer. We appreciate Chris and Brian joining the Board to fill the vacancies created by the departure of John Farlow and Ian Ross.

Our next general meeting, at the end of the month, will be held away from our Greythorn office. This is due to our move from the RSL building that has been the home of Four Wheel Drive Victoria for as long as I can remember. After an extensive search, Wayne and Karl have secured a new office for the Association, in Thornton Crescent, Mitcham. While the new office will be excellent from a number of perspectives, the one downside is that it is not large enough for our general meetings. As a result we will need to find other locations for our bigger meetings in the future.

There will be a number of important items on the general meeting agenda so please come along, especially if you are a delegate for your club or just interested in hearing what the Association is up to. Apart from our normal updates we will have a guest presenter from Vic Forests, Liz Langford, and we will also review the new Association web site.

There will also be an update on the new National Council funded member rewards program.

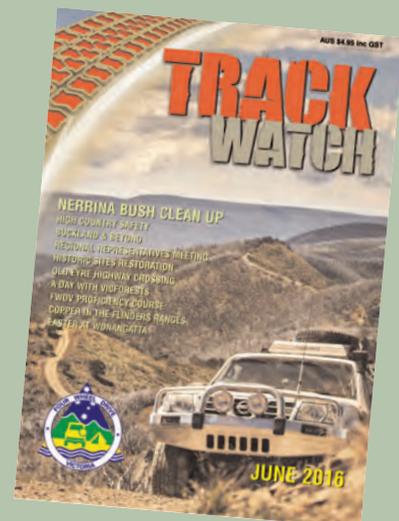
By the time this magazine hits the streets Wayne and I, together with other Board and Association members will have met with the new Environment Minister, Lily D'Ambrosio, to officially launch the new handbook and to announce a new funding arrangement for the Association. Both the new handbook, and the funding change have been in development for a long time so this meeting will be the culmination of significant effort by a number of Association members. There will be more about this at the general meeting and in the coming weeks.

In the last few weeks Association members have been busy conducting two clean up events, in the Nerrina and Wombat State Forests, to the north west of Melbourne. As usual, these events were well patronised by volunteers from both Association clubs and the public with tonnes of rubbish being identified and then removed from these two locations. I would personally like to thank all members, and members of the general public, who participated in these events.

Damian Stock
President, 4WD Victoria

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Summit of Blue Rag
- photo courtesy of D van Zanton



Editorial

Welcome to the June/September edition of Trackwatch.

Late autumn and early winter are really special times for four wheel drivers. Just because the temperature is falling doesn't mean the pace is slackening - there are still many four wheel drive adventures available to challenge and entertain. While track closures are about to be introduced, there are still many areas - albeit with reduced access - that remain open for recreational touring.

For those that like it cold, i.e. snow driving, there are a number of options. This season the need for mandatory carrying of chains on the Mt Skene Track has been dropped, although it is still highly recommended. If in doubt as to where you can travel, give the FWDV office a call and they will be able to assist.

This issue, many thanks to those who have contributed articles that provide a great insight into some of the activities that four wheel drive clubs participate. From reports of working with local Parks authorities, Regional Reps meeting, the latest Bush Clean Up Project, trips far and wide, survival tips, and the Buckland and Beyond weekend, we have it all!

Special thanks to Prue Hasler for the extensive report on the proceedings at the Regional reps meeting in Bendigo. As you read this report you can appreciate the extent of co-operation and breath of projects that exist between our Clubs and Park authorities.

Yours in four wheeling

Brian Tanner
Editor

VALE

Mick Jaeger, LROCV

Mick was a long standing and highly respected member of the Land Rover Owners Club of Victoria. He was a joint founding member of the Club and was a talented automotive engineer. He assisted many members with mechanical problems and advice over many years. Mick passed away aged 93. He will be long remembered and missed. RIP.

Office on the move..

Time's up for the Association, with the lease on our longtime premises at the RSL expiring in June. The new office is now located in Thornton Crescent, Mitcham.

News

Mt Skene access permits



Four Wheel Drive Victoria is finalising negotiations with Mansfield Shire Council for permit access by affiliated club members to the seasonally closed road over Mt Skene.

This special permit has enabled club members to access this popular track - so much so - that the track has become congested and over used in recent years. For this season numbers will be reduced to ensure a safer and more enjoyable experience for club members.

Permit applications can be downloaded from the FWDV website and must be received by FWDV no later than 14 days prior to the proposed trip.

Camp Host

One of the best opportunities to interact with non-4WD Club members (plus have a great weekend) is to participate in a Camp Host weekend.

Macallister, Midweek, Kyneton, Yarra Valley, Range Rover, LROCV, Nissan and Yarraman 4x4 Clubs have already participated in the program this year. If your Club would like to run a Camp Host please contact the FWDV Office for further information.

Mt Disappointment State Forest road closure caused by vehicle damage

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) has closed Board Road, on the eastern edge of the Mt Disappointment State Forest, due to damage caused by off-road vehicles.

The closure will occur between Mt Disappointment and Cottrell roads from June 14 to October 28, 2016. Blairs Hut picnic area and the Summit Walk will remain accessible during the period of the closure.

Straddling the Great Dividing Range about an hours drive north of Melbourne, the Mount Disappointment State Forest is one of Melbourne's most accessible forest areas for recreation.

For those wanting to plan their trip, go to the Public Access Map site in the visiting parks and forests section at <http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/forestry-and-land-use/visiting-parks-and-forests/visiting-state-forests/public-access-map>

For maps of the early closures in parks check the "safety/closures and conditions" section at www.parks.vic.gov.au or contact your local DELWP on 136 186.

Clean Up the Bush project recognised

We are not the only ones to recognise the eyesore and danger that rubbish dumping of public lands can cause. It was therefore very pleasing to see the front cover of regional newspaper, 'The Ballarat Courier' recognise firstly the problem and secondly the great job Association volunteers did in cleaning up a significant area in the Nerrina Heritage Park.

A great job done by all involved, and excellent positive publicity for your actions.



Front page Ballarat Courier April 4th, 2016



Cleaning up Victoria's Backyard

A large-scale rubbish recovery weekend marks the next stage of the Clean up the Bush program, which tackles illegally dumped rubbish in Nerrina Heritage Park.

Following a successful reconnaissance trip late last year, a team of enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers will be spending their Saturday and Sunday helping remove the tonnes of illegally dumped rubbish that have been affecting Nerrina Heritage Park and surrounds.

With a friendly inter-club atmosphere to the event, our members will be making a big difference to the forests we all love to experience while enjoying a great drive.

Thanks to the generous support of the Ballarat Light Car Club by donating use of their club rooms, along with the invaluable contributions by local businesses, this really is a program for Ballarat, by Ballarat.

Forest Fire Management Regional Manager, Amanda Carabott, said: "Because we now know where to find the rubbish [after the reconnaissance trip last year], the actual work during April's clean up will be quicker and easier."

"The event also gives us a chance to increase public awareness about the impact of illegally dumped rubbish on the forest." Ms Carabott said.

DELWP, Parks Victoria and Four Wheel Drive Victoria have a formal working partnership across the State to try to change the attitude towards dumping rubbish on public land, and will be conducting another Clean up the Bush in the Wombat State Forest in May-June.

People who are interested in getting involved in this event can also contact Four Wheel Drive Victoria.

Thank you to our generous sponsors: SUEZ Recycling & Recovery, Mega Meats, Coles Bakery Hill, Beechworth Bakery, Hip Pocket, Bunnings Ballarat & ARB 4x4 Accessories.

Kate Waller



Installing signs



In brief

The Clean up at Nerrina saw the removal of:

- 120 cubic metres of rubbish
- 6 car bodies
- 120 tyres



Before



After



Burnt out car body



Door prize winners



Many thanks to our Bush Clean Up Partners





News



TLCCV HELP RESTORE & MAINTAIN SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC SITES

Members from the Toyota Land Cruiser Club of Victoria recently conducted another of their ongoing clean-up and restoration weekends of historic sites in the Jericho region.

We met up with the rest of the team at Matlock on Saturday morning and headed off down the Jericho Track, where DELWP has done heaps of track maintenance. The blackberries, which had been smack up against the car doors as you drove by were gone, and the track had been widened in places, making it all very pleasant to drive down.

We began the clean-up of our historical sites starting with the Jericho Oak Tree. I was relieved to see that the Chinese Memorial had not been desecrated and only needed a good wash to look good as new again. Rebecca and Slawko

did a great job of getting rid of a fire ring and charcoal, and disguising it with fresh soil and grass cuttings.

Hopefully it will deter other idiots from lighting fires under the beautiful 100 year old oak tree.

Once the oak tree area had been groomed, we split up into 3 groups and got stuck into Chinaman's Point, Jericho Diversion Tunnel and the general signage in and around Jericho township, and the Father and Son grave plus the new Bennett's house site, finally meeting up and converging on the Jericho Cemetery for lunch.

My heart sank when I saw the cemetery with the bracken thigh high and all those thistles...! Uggh! DELWP had bulldozed around the outside of the cemetery, which was great, one less job for us. After lunch with all 12 of us knuckling down and doing our bit, we knocked it over in record time. Well done everyone!

A great job by Dulcie Watts and her team of TLCCV members.

Sites that the Club is restoring and maintaining include William Creighton's grave site, the former Bald Hill Settlement, Jericho Oak tree and Jericho Cemetery.

G Wagons roll

Heyfield's Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) depot has just taken delivery of four modern 4WD Ultra-Light tankers, or 'G Wagons' that will boost the capacity of Forest Fire Management staff to protect local communities from bushfires.

The vehicles are part of the first 35 to be delivered to Gippsland in a state-wide rollout of more than 300 vehicles. These first four will be used to train our 4WD instructors who will be responsible for training others in their use, capacity and capability.

Forest Fire Management Macalister District Manager, Graeme Taylor said, "The Ultra-Light tanker has several additional features specifically designed for DELWP's forest firefighting and planned burning needs."

"These tankers have a 630-litre water carrying capacity, much bigger than the 400-litre capacity of older vehicles."

"These tankers also have a Falling Object Protection Structure above the cabin to help protect our crews from falling trees and branches."

These 35 vehicles will go to Erica (9), Heyfield (9), Dargo (3), Swifts Creek (9) and Bendoc (5).



TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURES

Some roads and tracks in Victoria's forests and parks are now temporarily closed for winter and spring.

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and Parks Victoria run the seasonal road closure program to ensure driver safety as well as protect forest and park roads from damage during the cooler months. DELWP State Roads and Bridges Planner, Craig Lang said: "These closures are necessary in some parts of the state because the roads and tracks in our parks and forests have the potential to become wet," Mr Lang said. "The closures are important because our forest roads and tracks become much more difficult for drivers to use safely over this period. "Some forest tracks would suffer significant damage if they were left open all year round so we assess them each year, and then after consultation with stakeholders including Four Wheel Drive Victoria, close any that require it."

"By protecting park roads and tracks, we can reduce erosion and cut the amount of silt which is washed into rivers, creeks and reservoirs."

"Four wheel driving is a good way to get away from it all and connect with Victoria's parks and forests. To ensure visitors have a safe and enjoyable time, while still protecting the environment, we want to ensure everyone accesses the best available information before they leave.

"Most of the roads and tracks are reopened in time for the Melbourne Cup weekend.

"As always, we want anyone driving in our parks and forests to stay on the formed roads, take their rubbish home and take particular care with campfires, so that everyone can enjoy Victoria's magnificent parks and forests."

For those wanting to plan their trip, go to the Public Access Map site in the visiting parks and forests section at <http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/forestry-and-land-use/visiting-parks-and-forests/visiting-state-forests/public-access-map>. For maps of the closures in parks, check the "safety/closures and conditions" section at www.parks.vic.gov.au

LIVING THE DREAM



GRAB YOUR TICKETS FROM
4x4show.com.au

Join us at Melbourne's biggest 4x4, outdoors, fishing & boating expo. Get up close and personal with your favourite 4WDing experts; Roothy, Jase Andrews (All 4 Adventure), Rick & Jamie (The Offroad Adventure Show), Shaun & Graham (4WD Action), Paul Worsteling (IFISH) and many more.

Enter in the promo code:
TRACK for \$3 off adult tickets

There'll be live entertainment for the whole family on the Action Arena including free style motocross, 4x4 time trials and monster trucks. Test drive the latest 4WDs and accessories on the purpose built Proving Ground. With thousands of brands on sale across the whole show you'll be sure to find a bargain.



SHAUNO & GRAHAM



NATIONAL 4x4 & FISHING BOATING EXPO OUTDOORS SHOW

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OPENING TIMES: FRI 9AM - 6PM | SAT 9AM - 6PM | SUN 9AM - 5PM





Club Spotlight

EASTER 2016 AT WONNANGATTA



It was around two years ago that Mr. Michael Dower (Area Chief Ranger - Parks Victoria) originally discussed his idea of getting multi agency stakeholders involved at a base camp in the Wonnangatta over the Easter period. The Wonnangatta Valley unfortunately has had a recent history of unruly behaviour by some of the visitors during that long weekend, which resulted in damage to tracks and property and upset other campers, some with families.

Plans were put on hold for Easter, 2015 but Mike Dower (PV), Wayne Hevey (FWDV), Greg Rose (LROCG) and myself (Nissan Four Wheel Drive Club of Vic. Inc.) had a meeting at the PV Melbourne city office in October, 2015 to discuss the objectives of this idea, and another meeting was organised with the majority of stakeholders at the PV office in Heyfield around mid-February, 2016 to provide updates and discuss with the involved parties. My own involvement on this project stems from being a FWDV Regional Rep. and volunteering with Mike (Dower) and PV on regular track clearing exercises. Greg Rose also represents FWDV and has worked with Mike on this project. The Macalister 4WD Club historically have a presence with the FWDV Camp Host in Wonnangatta over the Easter period. However, it was unfortunate that both

Mike and Greg were not well in the days prior to the Easter event, and regrettably were unable to make it over the weekend. Sarah Noonan (PV Ranger Team Leader, Foothills and Southern Alps) had been working on this project with

Mike and did a great job taking over and organising the event. The intention was that Parks Victoria, Victoria Police, personnel from 4WD clubs representing Four Wheel Drive Victoria etc. would set up an information centre at a highly visible location over the Easter period. The focus would be to provide a clear message to any faction who may tend to go overboard with irresponsible actions, and hopefully influence good behaviour. Consequently those travellers, families etc. who go to Wonnangatta to enjoy the surrounding area would not be disappointed and/or deterred by anti-social behaviour.

The other objective was to use the opportunity to promote what these amazing places have to offer and be a central hub for people seeking visitor information or a central safety point. The "Friends of Wonnangatta" set up a display of historic photographs and gave

information to the campers and travellers passing through the valley. Wallace Mortimer, the author of many books written about Wonnangatta's history, mysteries and stories was camping with us under the Elms and

gave a talk to visitors about some of the history. "Wally" is around 90 years "young", has been travelling into Wonnangatta for many years and is a wealth of information regarding the valley, surrounding region, the people who lived there, and the murders, etc.

Wonnangatta is well regarded now as one of Australia's premier four wheel drive destinations. Parks Victoria are responsible for promoting this but also protecting it, and it is a possibility that this presence by the relevant stakeholders could be the start of an annual event.



John Tomlinson
FWDV Regional Rep.



Those involved were:-
Parks Victoria
Victoria Police
Friends of Wonnangatta
Nissan Four Wheel Drive Club of Victoria Inc.
McAllister 4WD Club
Game Management Authority



TRAINING COURSES 2016

BOOK ONLINE

Open to all club members, the general public and corporate organisations.
Browse courses online at website www.fwdvictoria.org.au and call the office to book on (03) 9857 5209

PROFICIENCY COURSES

- Friday 3rd June - PC160604 - Nth Balwyn
- Saturday 4th June - PC160604 - Practical Werribee
- Tuesday 12th July - PC160716 - Theory
- Saturday 16th July - PC160716 - Practical Werribee
- Tuesday 16th August - PC160820 - Theory
- Saturday 20th August - PC160820 - Werribee
- Tuesday 13th September - PC160917 - Theory
- Saturday 17th September - PC160917 - Practical
- Tuesday 4th October - PC161008 - Theory
- Saturday 8th October - PC161008 - Practical
- Friday 4th November - PC161105 - Theory
- Saturday 5th November - PC161105 - Practical

TRACK CLASSIFICATION COURSE

- Saturday 7th May - TBA
- Saturday 10th September - TBA

ADVANCED 4X4 COURSE

- Friday 11th November - AD161112 - Practical
- Saturday 12th November - AD161112 - Practical
- Sunday 13th November - AD161112 - Practical

4WD WINCH RECOVERY COURSE

- Sunday 10th July - WR160710 - Practical

FIRST AID COURSE

- Saturday 2nd July - FA160702 - TBA

WINTER DRIVING COURSE

- Friday 12th August - WD160812 - Mt Skene District
- Saturday 13th August - WD160812 - Mt Skene
- Sunday 14th August - WD160812 - Mt Skene District

CHAINSAW COURSES

- Friday 5th August - CS160805 - TBA
- Saturday 6th August - CS160805 - TBA
- Sunday 7th August - CS160805 - TBA
- Thursday 13th October - CS161013 - TBA
- Saturday 15th October - CS161013 - TBA
- Sunday 16th October - CS161013 - TBA

OZIEXPLOER COURSE

- Friday 26th August - OZ160826 - Nth Balwyn
- Friday 25th November - OZ161125 - TBA

GPS COURSE

- Friday 22nd June - GPS160722 - TBA
- Friday 11th November - GPS161111 - Nth Balwyn

MAP READING

- Friday 17th June - MR160702 - Nth Balwyn
- Friday 21st October - MR161021 - TBA

FOR ALL BOOKINGS & ENQUIRIES
PHONE (03) 9857 5209
or email:
training@fwdvictoria.org.au



Training Course Refund Policy

Situations occur where for various reasons courses are cancelled by Four Wheel Drive Victoria (FWDV) or students need to cancel. Below describes the refund policy that is applicable.

Fee refunds: If students are unable to attend the course that they are registered for, the following refund fees below apply:

• 30 days prior - less 10% of course cost; • 29 days - 15 days - less 25% of course cost; • 14 days to 8 days - less 50% of course cost; • 7 days prior - no refund allowed

Refund applications must be made in writing to FWDV.

FWDV agree that they will allow for one transfer in a 12 month period to another course date without penalty, with a minimum of 8 days notice, (see below).

Transfer to other courses: Students can transfer to any other course up to 8 working days prior to commencement at no cost. Students transferring to another course 7 working days or less prior to commencement will be required to pay a transfer fee of \$50

Course Cancellations: FWDV will make a full refund of all fees paid should a course be discontinued. FWDV reserves the right to cancel a course if a minimum number of participants are not achieved or for Occupational Health and Safety reasons. Should the students desire to take an alternative course with FWDV, fees will be fully transferrable to that course, for one transfer in a 12 month period. In the event of a course for which the student was enrolled being unavailable or no acceptable alternative course is available, fees are fully refundable.



| 4WD Training

Tackling the Proficiency Course

'Have you ever thought about trying one of Four Wheel Drive Victoria's many courses?'



Have you ever thought about trying one of Four Wheel Drive Victoria's many courses?

Kate and Karl from the FWDV Office tackled the Proficiency Course, one of FWDV's most popular courses, to discover what four wheel drive training was all about.

The proficiency course is an introduction to four wheel driving, covering everything from tips under the hood to driving safely over adverse terrain. It is a great course for beginners and experienced drivers alike, because you learn that 'you and your vehicle' are capable of much more than you initially think.

Read on to hear more about their experience.

Starting with an information/theory night, we got our minds thinking about everything from how the car works to how different conditions can affect the vehicle and – more importantly – the way you drive. As relatively inexperienced drivers, we were relieved to see that we weren't alone. We were part of a very diverse group with a huge range of experience levels.

On the practical day, with some nervous anticipation, we pulled into the training grounds at Werribee. We were amazed by how extensive they were – the different challenges were spread over the rolling hills of the beautiful Werribee Gorge. With a buzz of excitement, the group met for a quick briefing. It wasn't long before we had the vehicles out with their bonnets up. The instructors spoke about the specifications of each vehicle and highlighted useful tips and modifications to consider. We were stunned to learn that a spare tyre could act as a buoyancy device and carry you down a river!

Safety was the name of the game during a snatch strap demonstration, after which we broke off into groups to tackle

the driving challenges. We had instructors sitting in the passenger seat talking us through each activity. With their calm and clear guidance, we tackled everything from offsets, to sand and mud, to performing reverse recoveries on steep slopes, to climbing logs and river crossings. They tailored their advice to cater to each person's driving style and level of experience, and were able to draw on a wealth of previous experience to help us through.

There were times when we looked at an obstacle and thought, "I don't think we can make it through that." But there we were, doing it, and doing it safely. It was a real confidence booster.

By the end of the day, even the most inexperienced drivers were comfortable tackling challenges without the instructors in the car, while the experi-

enced drivers were loving the chance to push themselves and their vehicles to the limit.

We would definitely come back and do it again.

Please contact the office on (03) 9857 5209 or email office@fwdvictoria.org.au if you would like to learn more or book in for one of our many courses.



4WD Victoria Regional Representatives Me

Saturday Drive

Hosted by the Bendigo 4WD Club and led by Frank & Heather Fenwick.

Gold Rush Guide: David Bannear

Meeting at the Castlemaine Botanic Gardens for 10am saw many of us enjoy delicious coffees and morning tea at the impressive Viennese Das Kaffeehouse opposite (recommended). Around 18 vehicles from local and Victorian 4WD Clubs set out for a day of history in the gold diggings.

We travelled past the Great Anticline (interesting geological feature) to the large Burke & Wills monument and view over the town. Burke was stationed at Castlemaine from 1858 to 1860 and this was the first monument to Burke & Wills erected.

The day was centred on the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park, on the National Heritage List and the largest non-indigenous protected cultural landscape in Australia. We were lucky to have David Bannear guiding us for the first part of the day, an archaeologist and Honorary Research Fellow at Federation University. David has researched and surveyed all the historic goldfields opened during the Victorian gold rush, and has recorded most of the known historic gold sites, many of which are now on the Heritage Inventory or the Victorian Heritage Register.

We followed the Quartz Hill Track where we passed an old gold mine in a quartz hill and then on to the remains of the 70ft Garfield Waterwheel. David shared the history of the structure while two boys in the group climbed to the top. Don Harris related his family involvement in the high up plaque on the water wheel structure. In the early days it had been made in bronze by Don's great grandfather, but was now a steel copy.

Our next stop was the Eureka Reef Heritage Walk where David shared his extensive knowledge of the Mt Alexander gold rush, the Jaara aboriginal wells, large trenches up the hill where all the gold had been dug out, a tramway, remains of the mine manager's house and the foundations of a battery. This area contains some of the earliest quartz mining relics in Victoria. More to visit next time.

Travelling through more box iron-bark forest with coppiced trees all regrown after the gold rush days, we passed the Dingo Farm and had a brief stop to inspect the tall remains of the Duke of Cornwall engine house. Fryerstown containing substantial gold period buildings was fascinating and then on to historic Vaughan Mineral Springs on the

Loddon River for a picnic lunch in the sun. Following Porcupine Ridge we stopped at a former slate mine. Substantial River Red Gums were present on the river flats here at the start of the Loddon River.

Taking a small detour in Guildford, we drove around the third largest river red gum tree in Victoria and thought to be around 500 years old. Driving back through Campbell's Creek we thanked Frank and Heather and dispersed to our various accommodations. (Thanks to Don Harris for his hospitality)

Dinner that night was at the National Hotel in Bendigo where over 30 people from different clubs and land managers shared 4WD stories and club news.

Sunday meeting

Meeting at the Bendigo DELWP and Parks Victoria Office - 11am to 3pm

Thirty-eight people in attendance with representatives from 16 4WD Clubs around Victoria plus Parks Victoria and DELWP representatives.

Gail Wright of Parks Victoria welcomed everyone and gave the Welcome to Country. Gail is responsible for 4WD community engagement, works out of Orbost and has been involved with 4WD Victoria engagement for many years. Richard Wadsworth from DELWP, responsible for tourism and community engagement, also a long term attendee at 4WD Victoria and Regional Reps meetings, was also present.

The first section of the meeting gave the Regional Representatives from various clubs an opportunity to share their stories about engagement with land managers. The focus was strongly on the land managers welcoming assistance from four wheel drive club members, perhaps more than any other Regional Reps meeting.

Wayne Hevey from 4WD Victoria introduced John Hasler who gave a presentation on the track closures in the Snowy River National Park (Deddick and Bowen Trails). Insurance money had paid for the extensive repairs to the northern section of the Deddick Trail. John indicated the closure of Armstrong's Track was being discussed with Parks Victoria as the ascent was dangerous. Interest was shown in introducing a one way track system.

Club member Colin Oates talked about a number of local and city based clubs working together on an area and gave the Toolangi area as an example. They had already had a successful meeting with the ParksVic Area Chief Ranger and DELWP. The Camp Host program,

'Dob in a Hoon' and fire and fire safety promotions were on the agenda for club assistance in this popular four wheel drive destination.

Ray (ParksVic) from the Bunyip State Park spoke about the many management challenges they face. Alan from the Just Mates 4WD Club provided input into the discussion and highlighted that his club is in discussions every three to six weeks on track and clean-up issues with assistance often provided. The club would also be contacted whenever a member of the public required recovery. We heard about Facebook groups, 30 to 40 vehicles at a time, who would be 'bashing the bush' around 2am and 3am over the weekend. Gates would be broken, locks would be broken and replaced with their own locks or locks broken and made to look as if the gates were locked.

Gary from the Bellarine 4WD Club spoke about the very successful group of four clubs (Ballarat, Geelong, Warrnambool and Bellarine) who for the last 13 years have been meeting regularly with Parks Victoria at Colac about issues and assistance required in management of the Otways National Park. They now meet every two months, the clubs perform track clearing when ever required and are contacted whenever a vehicle from the public needs to be recovered. The fires over Christmas caused many tracks to be closed and some tracks are still closed. A reminder that Seasonal Closures in the Otways are one week prior to the usual long weekend closures. Wayne suggested that club members contact local clubs if they require track information when planning trips.

Compliance and safety issues have become a frequent topic at these meetings and Richard Wadsworth (DELWP) advised that he was working on a state-wide compliance model. DELWP and the Minister for the Environment had asked 4WD Victoria for input into the advisability of allowing Polaris type vehicles Recreational Registration. This would allow them access to four wheel drive tracks in the bush. Currently the Portland Dune Buggy Club doesn't allow these vehicles on the Portland sand dunes. There was lengthy discussion on this topic with the recommendation that they should not be allowed in the bush due to the possibility of damage to the environment and safety issues.

Frank Fenwick (Bendigo 4WD Club) discussed the communications they have with their various land manager offices. Items included the Camp Host

Meeting - Bendigo 14th - 15th May 2016

program, obtaining a grant to carry out removal of the Boneseed weed and the issue of hooners using social media to invite irresponsible people on bush trips. There was a lot of discussion on the topic of social media and hoon behaviour in the bush. The Bendigo 4WD Club has a trailer they use for community works and promotional displays.

Kate Waller (4WD Victoria) spoke about the success of the Clean Up the Bush Program and how other community groups and sponsors are becoming involved. Her presentation was headed 'because dumping rubbish is trashy'. The next event is on the 4th and 5th of June in the Wombat State Park. Fifty club people are already confirmed. Richard Wadsworth said that this program is a valuable contribution by four wheel drive clubs and there is funding for the next three years. Camping, breakfast and dinner is provided.

Wayne Hevey advised that the 'Discovering 4WD Handbook' will be launched by the Minister for the Environment at Eastern Beach on 19th June followed by a BBQ. The 4WD Ministerial Advisory Committee has funding for the next three years.

Gail Wright spoke about Volunteers Working Safely and that volunteer policies are currently being reviewed. A draft safety induction plan for chainsaws is being developed. A club volunteer would receive this induction once only with competencies being recorded. Club members would be able to use their own equipment in this system. We were advised that Chainsaw Training conducted by 4WD Victoria had no end date. Some clubs applied for grants to assist with the cost of member training. A fatigue management plan was also being discussed with the hours of travel also factored in to the hours of work to ensure that volunteers were able to work and travel safely.

Bart Smith, Parks Victoria Area Chief Ranger working out of Mansfield, talked about the importance of partnerships and mentioned the work of the Wangaratta 4WD Club and others in repairing and maintaining the Lake Cobbler Hut and the Top Crossing Huts. Clubs are welcome to assist with Camp Host in popular areas.

Andrew, Parks Victoria at Lake Eildon talked about the Idlers 4WD Club assisting with works and encouraged clubs to be involved with the Lake Eildon Camp Host program. Tam (Parks Victoria in the Grampians) also spoke about the importance of the Camp Host program in the Grampians and track clearing.

The extensive fires have made changes to the park and the Management Plan would be reviewed soon.

Ben from the Loddon Mallee area spoke about reviewing road closures in the Pyrenees and that work was being carried out on a Bendigo 4WD Route. Strategic roads funding and works should be in place by the end of June.

Richard Wadsworth advised that DELWP were looking for feedback on the volunteer experience and how they manage volunteers. A conversation would be started with Parks Vic and DELWP and information should be provided to Gail and Richard via 4WD Victoria.

As it was 'Volunteer Week' Gail Wright asked that Thanks be passed on to all the club volunteers.

Ian Foletta, the Senior Planning Officer - National Park Management - Visitor Engagement and Conservation Division, who works out of Alexandra, spoke about Parks Victoria Management Plans. The Community House community discussions had just been completed for the River Red Gum Plan with the next steps being the release of the Draft Management Plan with comments requested for 60 days, submissions reviewed, Board and Ministerial approval obtained and the Plan would then be released.

The plan for the Greater Alpine National Parks will be released later this year. This large area includes Mt Buffalo, Snowy River, Errinundra, Howqua and Grant. No major changes are planned for four wheel drive access and Seasonal Closures. Cyclists have requested access to select MVO tracks. A new initiative is for 10 designated camping sites throughout the Park for camping Without Guns. Wayne Hevey confirmed that 4WD Victoria would be making submissions to land managers on draft management plans when required. Clubs are encouraged to provide submissions to 4WD Victoria for inclusion in Association submissions. Plans last for 15 years with reviews each five years and when necessary. Further information is available on the planning process and draft plans from www.parkweb.vic.gov.au.

It was mentioned that there may be another Bioscan in East Gippsland. John Hasler asked about the recent DELWP media release that indicated that BYO metal fireplaces were not allowed in forests and parks. As this is part of the Forests Act a submission and other processes would be required to change the Act. It was confirmed that dead firewood on the ground can be collected in a park for use in that park

for cooking only. Timber is not to be cut down.

A successful unannounced multi agency compliance and multi club Camp Host operation occurred in Wonnangatta over the ANZAC weekend with the result that no illegal or unsocial behaviour was detected. Access to High Country Huts was raised with many reports of groups taking over huts. It was advised that some huts have licensed users and lockable sections. (Be up to date with hut etiquette)

Richard Wadsworth discussed the six DELWP introductory 4WD treks that were being developed with club assistance. These include Beenak, Marysville, Upper Goulburn, Avon Crossing, Mt Sugarloaf and Tallarook. These will be available via Avanza pdf Maps, downloadable to your smart phone and accessible in the bush. The local 4WD clubs will be promoted.

4WD Victoria has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Mansfield Shire Council in relation to the club Mt Skene Permit System, which is in place again this year. Please be considerate of other users when on the tracks. Wayne has been receiving many complaints each Monday morning about club member behaviour on Mt Skene. A reminder that requests must be in to 4WD Victoria at least 14 days prior to the trips and all completed at least three days prior to the trip otherwise the Police will not allow the Permit. There is a limit of 80 vehicles per day with a three vehicle minimum and 10 vehicle maximum required.

Prue Hasler (Joint Regional Representative for Far East Gippsland with John Hasler)

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Crossing the Old Eyre Highway

The old Eyre Highway stretches for 200 kilometres from the Nullarbor Roadhouse and ends at Border Village Roadhouse

by Shez Tedford

My husband Warren and I have just returned from an amazing driving trip to WA. While driving to WA isn't unusual, you really do not have to stay on the Eyre highway for the entire trip. We decided to drive the old Eyre highway for something different and it was a drive we had always wanted to do. The old Eyre highway stretches for 200 kms from the

Nullarbor Road House and ends at Border Village Roadhouse. It is a lonely stretch of road, and although it is not recommended that you take caravans on this road we did tow an off road camper with no troubles at all. As we began this adventure, I decided to document the trip with interesting sights and also directions to the historic Koonalda

Station, which was the main reason for doing this trip.
 Start: The Nullarbor Roadhouse
 Finish: Border Village Roadhouse
 This road is suitable for 4x4, camper trailers, bikes and 2WD (if dry)
 Distance: 203.34 kms
 You will need a minimum of one day to do this trip. (We stayed overnight)

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Vandalism

in the bush

The current increase in vandalism of public assets, theft of buildings and fittings and leaving of campfires unattended illustrates that some bush users have a blatant disregard for people and property and the great asset that we all have.

We, as a group, can help public land managers, by reporting any suspicious activity we see. Dob In A Hoon forms are available for download on the 4WD Victoria website, and DEPI can be contacted on 136 186, or Parks Victoria on 13 19 63 to report incidents on public land.

With our help the current generation and those that follow can have a positive visitor experience in our parks and reserves.



Average driving speed on the old highway is 40/50 km/hr.

As it is in a desert, it is not recommended to drive between December and February.

There is no fuel on the old highway so fuel up at Nullarbor Roadhouse, but beware the fuel is expensive. It will be wise to carry extra fuel with you. As well, you will need to be self-sufficient and carry the usual water, extra food, tyre repair tools. You will also need to be aware of the quarantine if heading into Western Australia.

To start this drive head west from the Nullarbor Road house for 5 mins (2.16 km) and turn right onto the old Eyre highway. This is where the adventure begins.

It is a dusty dirt road, and you will not come across a lot of traffic (if any).

Along the way you will find old water tanks that were used for the travellers, farmers and stock. Most are now just ruins but they still tell a story. The highway is littered with old car wrecks, and numerous sink holes and old quarries. We encountered dingoes, camels, wedge tailed eagles and emus.

The turn-off to Koonalda station/shearing shed/yards and Koonalda cave is 73.33 km from the start and will take approx. 4 mins to reach from the junction. It is well worth going in to see the historic station and spectacular cave. Once you arrive at the station it is a further 6.98 km in a northerly direction to the cave and should take around 12 mins

The Koonalda station is steeped in history. It is now under the control of the Nullarbor State Park. You can camp here and it is a great experience. It is so peaceful and the sky at night is spectacular as are the sunset and sunrise.



Refuelling



The homestead

The Koonalda shearing shed



Koonalda shearing shed

Take the time to wander through the homestead, shearing shed, the original petrol station and the car graveyard.

The cave is a natural wonder and needs to be seen to appreciate the geology. Although fenced off for safety reasons, you can still get a good look into and around the cave. The cave once provided the water for the station and there is still equipment in the base of the cave.

Leaving the homestead, head back to the junction and continue west along the dirt highway to Border Village roadhouse. There are older tank ruins and



car wrecks to see. If you don't want to continue all the way to the end (Border Village), you can continue straight and come out on the new Eyre highway SA side of Border Village.



Car graveyard



The original petrol station



Cover story

Buckland and Beyond

Inaugural FWDV sponsored event a great success

by Robert Norman

Over several days in March, Buckland and Beyond, a not-for-profit event sponsored by Four Wheel Drive Victoria and supported by affiliated 4X4 clubs, offered guided tag-along tours to a range of High Country destinations. Operating from a base in the Buckland Valley near Bright in north-east Victoria, the occasion provided not only a venue for an enjoyable get-together of local 4X4 club members but

also sought to introduce both interstate 4X4 drivers and members of the public to the High Country's tracks and scenic attractions.

The event almost didn't happen. While it was proposed last year, the organising committee wrestled with how to make the concept a reality without any funding being available (no money had been allocated in FWDV's budget as Buckland and Beyond wasn't on the

table when the current year's expenditure was finalised). With time running out the Wangaratta 4WD Club together with the Albury Wodonga 4WD Club and assisted by FWDV took over the organisation and ran the event in March.

Most of those attending this year's inaugural outing belonged to 4X4 clubs. While it might seem unusual that club members would be willing to pay even a nominal fee to do something they can



WHERE

Buckland and Beyond was based at Beveridge Station campground in the Buckland Valley 45km south of Bright which in turn is 300km north of Melbourne or 650km south-west of Sydney.

WHEN

This event is planned to be held each March.

STAYING THERE

Participants are required to make their own camping arrangements. Tents, camper trailers and off-road vans are all welcome. Toilet facilities are provided. Pets are not permitted

SUPPLIES

The registration fee of \$60 per person

(\$5 for children under 15) included a BBQ dinner on the first day of the event. Lunch at Payne's Hut was \$50 per person. Otherwise participants needed to be self-sufficient in respect of their own food and water. Bright is the nearest town where food and fuel can be purchased.

CONTACTS

Buckland and Beyond
 Web: www.bucklandandbeyond.com
 (you can also find them on Facebook)
 Email: info@bucklandandbeyond.com
 Phone: 0457 641 282
 Four Wheel Drive Victoria
 Web: www.fwdvictoria.org.au
 Phone: (03) 9857 5209

otherwise do for nothing with their clubs, Buckland and Beyond offered some special benefits. For instance, club trips don't normally provide a sumptuous meal while you sip a cool ale or three around a camp fire that someone else has cut and carted the wood for. Nor do they normally take you on tracks not open to the public or bring along local historians to explain the legends and history of the places you visit. Buckland and Beyond's range of guided trips each day (unlike club trips) were also open to the public, providing an opportunity for participants to bring along 4X4-owning friends who didn't belong to a club.

The Victorian High Country is a truly remarkable place, right on Melbourne's back door, that offers unique scenery

and 4X4 tracks to suit everyone's comfort zone. However, things don't always go according to plan - something Buckland and Beyond's overnight trip into the beautiful Wonnangatta Valley demonstrated. All tracks in and out of the Wonnangatta are steep and the last thing you want to hear halfway up one of those climbs is a radio message from someone in your group who is in trouble. In this case the trouble was a lack of drive accompanied by a sound like marbles in a washing machine emanating from the drive train. Now, towing a dead 4x4 up a steep grade like Water Spur Track to a point where it can be recovered is challenging enough but in this instance the beast in question was a 4500 kg Iveco Scrubmaster. Fortunately, two 4x4's

joined together had enough grunt to do the job - albeit at some probable reduction in the life expectancy of their clutch plates. The almost new Scrubmaster's issue was terminal and it ultimately had to be trucked away (apparently due to the failure of a \$2 circlip on a shaft in the transfer case). Buckland and Beyond's experienced trip leaders quickly and safely secured the vehicle whereas, on your own in such a remote location, even with access to a satellite phone, a call to Roadside Assistance would be unlikely to see them running to your rescue anytime soon.

Apart from the Scrubmaster's demise and a large fallen tree (yet another plus of a guided trip is that someone else gets the job of chainsawing it up!) the drive from the Buckland Valley into the



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Photo courtesy of D van Zanton*



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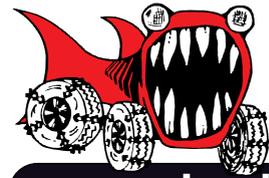
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Wonnangatta was a delight, offering a range of track conditions from easy to challenging. Following high ridge lines near Mt Selwyn through dense stands of tall mountain ash, the occasional clearing permitted panoramic views of forest clad ranges as far as the eye could see. Our route then took us across Riley Creek to Wonnangatta Track and a somewhat rough and rocky 300 metre descent to the valley floor. After a very dry summer the tracks were dusty and there was little water in the river crossings, but with the deciduous trees near the old station ruins just starting to assume their autumnal colours the vista across this lush valley was spectacular. Looking at the heavily grassed valley floor surrounded by almost impenetrable mountain ranges, it is easy to see why Wonnangatta was such a successful cattle property in its day. Surprisingly, being the last day of a long weekend, the valley was all but deserted ensuring the Buckland and Beyond group were spoiled for a choice of campsite. Ultimately, a secluded grassy bend in the all but dry Wonnangatta River near Wombat Gap provided an ideal place to overnight. The perfect end to an enjoyable day had to be one of the best outdoor experiences going - sharing stories around a campfire beneath a night sky ablaze with stars.



Buckland Valley campsite



Mt Selwyn Track



Other offerings of Buckland and Beyond included a day trip to the Mount Wills Historical Area by way of Mt Battery Track from Dinner Plain. While parts of this track are now privately owned and closed to the public, special permission for access was obtained by the organisers. The visit to Mount Wills included a guided tour of a restored engine used to drive machinery at one of the old mines. Now the only remaining engine of its type in Australia, this nearly 100 year old relic has been lovingly restored over many thousands of hours, and is about to be started for the first time in 60 years. Its restoration is made all the more remarkable by the realisation it has survived the building which housed it collapsing during a bushfire and having many of its parts souvenired by passersby. However, the undeniable highlight of the day was a leisurely lunch at nearby Payne's Hut. No bush BBQ, this meal was taken in a swank dining room overlooking a lush and leafy garden. The meal laid out by the proprietors, Greg and Tess Payne, without a lie, would not have been out of place in a top city restaurant.

Lake Cobbler and Blue Rag were among other guided trip destinations.

The latter is a must do destination with its 360° views and access track along a narrow ridgeline with precipitous drops off either side.

For those who want to try something different from the usual club trip, exploring tracks they might otherwise not be prepared to tackle on their own, Buckland and Beyond provides an opportunity to do so in the company and security of other like-minded people. Clubs can be a bit cliquy and one of the big plusses of an event like this is that you get to mix with members of other 4X4 clubs and make a whole

range of new acquaintances.

Buckland and Beyond 2016 was an exceptional experience and the organisers are planning an even bigger and better program in 2017 – so make sure you keep an eye out for it.



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HIGH COUNTRY SURVIVAL



Mike Dower

Travelling safely in the High Country

By Mike Dower, Parks Victoria Area Chief Ranger Foothills and Southern Alps and Greg Rose, 4WDV Regional Representative, Southern Alpine National Park, President Land Rover Owners' Club of Gippsland.



The Southern Alps of Victoria include some of the best four wheel drive touring destinations in Australia. Iconic places like the Wonnangatta Valley, Blue Rag Range, Billy Goat Bluff Track, the old township site of Mayford on the Dargo River and the historic gold mine areas of Crooked River.

Many of the destinations are easily accessible on good two wheel drive roads and others are reached after challenging drives on steep tracks and deep river crossings. The majority of the area is considered remote due to the distances from the nearest towns, Licola, Dargo, Briagolong, etc. and the difficulty of communication with the outside world in the mountainous country.

Travelling in the area requires some careful planning to ensure the safety of the touring four wheel driver. Track conditions can change rapidly depending on the weather. A red clay descent that is easy in dry weather can become a white-knuckle drive after rain. River levels can rise quickly and even in summer temperatures can drop below freezing. Winds can cause trees to fall potentially blocking roads and tracks.

Follow these guidelines if you are travelling in the High Country.

- Make sure your vehicle is mechanically sound.
- Ensure that your tyres, including the spare, are suitable for difficult terrain.
- Carry recovery gear; shovel, tow strap, snatch strap, rated shackles, Maxtraxs or similar, a winch is a very useful item.
- Have good rated recovery points front and rear on your vehicle.
- Use an on board or portable 12-volt compressor to reinflate tyres after "airing down" to get better traction.
- Carry a good quality plug kit for in the field tyre repairs.
- Take adequate water, food, fuel, basic spares, tool kit, fire extinguisher and a comprehensive first aid kit.
- Have "four seasons" clothing for everyone in the group.
- Carry an axe or chainsaw as fallen trees regularly block tracks.
- Drive on tracks that are within your skill level.

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HIGH COUNTRY SURVIVAL

- Do a four wheel drive training course that will give you the knowledge of how to safely use the recovery equipment and the correct driving techniques for various surfaces and situations.
- Plan ahead, carry detailed up to date maps of the area and a compass or GPS to plot your position. Electronic navigation devices loaded with appropriate maps are excellent but back them up with paper maps.
- Have a Personal Locator Beacon as part of your safety gear.
- Check weather forecasts.
- Use parkweb.vic.gov.au for the latest information on changed conditions.

- Avoid travelling in times of severe weather conditions.
- Let a responsible person know your intended route.
- Stay on vehicle tracks.
- Do not drive on "seasonally closed" tracks.
- Carry rubbish out with you.
- Adopt minimal impact camping practices and have camping gear suitable for changeable weather.
- Extinguish campfires with water, do not bury them.
- Have communication methods, other than a mobile phone, e.g. sat phone or

PLB, and a list of emergency contact numbers.

Before the trip, do some research on the area; there are plenty of guides books, history books and online sites about the High Country. Take your time on a trip; enjoy the surroundings – the flora and fauna, history and natural beauty.

For further information on the Alpine National Park use parkweb.vic.gov.au

To contact Mike Dower call Parks Victoria Heyfield, 51 39 7777.



‘Travelling in the area requires some careful planning to ensure the safety of the touring four wheel driver. Track conditions can change rapidly depending on the weather’



Photos by Greg Rose



Plan ahead, carry detailed up to date maps of the area and a compass or GPS to plot your position. Electronic navigation devices loaded with appropriate maps are excellent but back them up with paper maps.



Convoy at Powelltown

Sixteen members and three visitors assembled in convoy opposite the DELWP Offices at Powelltown on Thursday 7th April. Most spoke of having experienced a "dream run" from their respective home areas across Melbourne and outer areas. It must have had something to do with school holidays.

Despite the heavy rain of the previous day, the sky was clear and bright. It presented a great backdrop to the deep and glorious autumnal colours of the various stands of deciduous trees between Yarra Junction and Powelltown.

Our hosts for the day were Kim Burden (aka Barney) and Liz Langford from VicForests. Barney is the Acting Chief

Forester, West Gippsland and Liz is the Regional Engagement Manager for the Central Highlands. The aim of the day was for these very knowledgeable and very passionate advocates to give us an overview of VicForests. To do so, they would take us to various places in the Yarra State Forest to look at a recently cleared logging coupe, then to visit various coupes showing different stages of re-forestation, and finally to an active logging coupe.

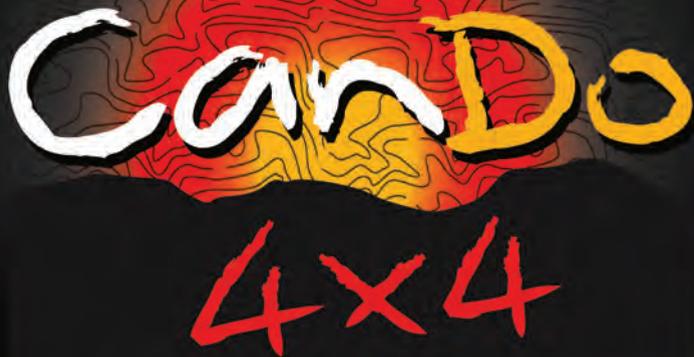
Before we left Powelltown we were given a safety briefing and issued with hard hats. We all wore the club's own safety vests.

First stop was to a coupe a couple of kilometres along Limber Lost Road. As

we rounded a corner, the vista of tall trees gave way to a steep, almost denuded, blackened hillside with just an occasional old forest giant left standing. Smoke drifted upwards from numerous small fires.

Here, we were given so much information, it was frankly, hard to absorb.

We were advised that at present, only about 2400 hectares of forest are logged each year and that it represents only 0.1% of the Victorian Forests. We were given to understand that by the time you take National Parks and other reserved areas into consideration, along with unsuitable tree species, only about 4% of the entire forested area is available for hardwood logging.



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Finally, we arrived at a logging coupe in which operations will re-commence next week. The steeper sections of the coupe had been logged some months ago, when conditions were drier and the slopes less dangerous. Now, nearing the coming winter, and end of this season's logging period, the contractor is to move back on site, to tackle the flatter slopes and log the rest of the mountain ash in the coupe. We saw the log sorting area and the log ramp. We noted how the area had been corduroyed to cope with the heavy machinery moving about, and avoiding the threat of compacting the soil (making it too hard to accommodate the seed that would be aerially sown during the re-forestation process).

After thanking our hosts and making our farewells, everybody headed for home after a most interesting day in the bush. The circumstances that had led to us having this day out had an interesting genesis. I have to say my first experiences with VicForests had left a bit to be desired.

I first became aware of the organization in early 2014 when doing a trip reconnaissance in the Mount Disappointment State Forest with Ron Crane. Having lumbered up a steep and rocky track for a couple of kilometres, we were suddenly confronted with a Timber Harvesting Safety Zone sign, which

seemed to imply that we could not proceed along the track. I admit to feeling somewhat annoyed, but we retreated to the nearest major road and made a detour.

Things came to a head following a Club day trip from Warburton to Toolangi via Narbethong, on 18th September when we travelled 10.6 kilometres off a main road on the Siberia Track Extension before finding the same sort of warning sign. There was no evidence of any actual logging operations taking place, and being annoyed at no warning being given closer to the turn off from the main road, I determined the convoy would proceed through the area.

I also decided to follow up with VicForests about these signs and ultimately met with Tim Sanders (the then) VicForest's Chief Forester for Central Highlands Region and Liz Langford, Regional Engagement Manager for Central Highlands.

It transpired that despite finding such warnings in the bush, when the logging contractors are not on site, we should be able to proceed unhindered. When the contractor is on site, we may or may not find a physical barrier in place, but we should find signage indicating a UHF channel to use to contact the contractor. Having

made contact, unless actual logging operations were currently occurring within 150 metres of the track, we should be given permission (and physical access) to proceed through the zone. On reaching the other end, we would be expected to notify the contractor that we had cleared the area.

I was told if that was not the case in practise, providing I had mobile telephone coverage, I should immediately lodge a complaint with VicForests at their Woori Yallock HQ to get the issue sorted on the spot.

That meeting last October with Tim Sanders and Liz Langford culminated in VicForest taking us out into the Yarra State Forest on 7th April, 2016.

In case anybody is interested, the following are extracts copied directly from VicForests website: <http://www.vicforests.com.au/>

Geoff Kenafacke



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> | Travel

Copper in the Flinders

by Garry Doyle

Photos Garry Doyle and Geoff Boulton

The plan was to survey a trip we are taking a group of people on in late September. We had nine days to do what we had planned, and that involved mapping and creating trip notes for six trips out and about from Arkaroola in the northern Flinders Ranges. Our trip was a great success with all distances being confirmed. However, the one thing you should always do when you go to areas like Arkaroola, is talk to the locals. And talk we did; and our plans changed. Tracks we wanted to use were closed; alternatives were suggested and different locations chosen. We even uncovered an event that would prove a big surprise for everyone - the annual Blinman Camp Oven cook-off is to be held on the weekend we will be there. What a surprise and a great event to attend.

The big difference that caught our attention on this trip to the Flinders was the extent of the mine ruins throughout the Flinders Ranges, especially in the north, both inside and outside the Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary. Our journey will take you to four of those mine sites.

The amazing thing about this area is the condition of the mine buildings and the relics you see everywhere. Two of the mines visited aren't listed on the main maps used to navigate the area. One of them is quite a distance from any main track, so it's no wonder they are in great condition, even if they are over 150 years old.

We stayed at Arkaroola for the majority of our time in the Flinders, and this is the perfect stepping off point for trips to these mines. Mining has now been banned by the government in this Sanctuary, however back in earlier

times, Arkaroola and its surrounding areas were mined for all types of minerals. At one stage it is believed there were around 75 mines in this area. Copper was what brought early miners here and it was the harshness of the area and the drought conditions that meant the mining wasn't as fruitful as investors were told. Also many of the mines when operating, found that the ore just wasn't as productive as they first thought.

Our journey takes us from Arkaroola on one of the prettiest drives in the area. This area changes during the day with the early morning sun highlighting some cliffs and rock outcrops and then as the sun shifts to the evening, yet other rocks and gorges are highlighted. These two times of the day are certainly the best if you are looking to take some wonderful photographs. Travelling through the camping area along the creek you soon come to the first of many highlights, the Bolla Bollana waterhole on your right. The best map we found for our trip was the HEMA Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges NP map, which shows the best detail for the area.

The Bolla Bollana waterhole and smelter are only a little over 6.5 kilometres from the office in Arkaroola. The waterhole is first and is signposted. You take a short detour to the car park and then a short walk to view the waterhole. The walls of the creek are filled with lichen-covered rocks, however to see this in all its glory, it's necessary to wait until the afternoon sun. The morning shadows make it look quite dull and uninteresting.

Back on the main track and just under a kilometre further is the turn-off to the left and the Bolla Bollana Smelter and what's left of the works. The first thing

you notice is the round house. This building has an interesting history and is the only intact building at this site. It is also Heritage listed. This building shows some amazing brick work, as the dome is fully self-supporting. It was thought to have been designed as a kiln or something similar.

In this area a lot of the bricks used in buildings were going to be made on site so a kiln was essential. The strange thing is the round house looks like it's never been used as a furnace. The bricks lying around the site are poor quality so it is presumed the kiln couldn't get up to the desired temperatures. Walking around the rest of the site shows some of the history. The flues on the furnace have now collapsed but it was going to be a sizeable operation. History goes that this smelting works was built in the early 1870's. The site was chosen because of its proximity to water in the Bolla Bollana Springs and also the plentiful supplies of firewood, clays and stone for building. The company that established the smelter was predominantly Victorian owned (Ballarat actually) and was called the South Australian and Victorian Copper and Bismuth Mining and Smelting works.



The copper ore would come from mines around the area as it was calculated that carting the finished product was cheaper than carting the raw materials too far off smelting works.

What happened apparently was money from the company was diverted to build the smelting works, the construction of which was running behind time. When they were completed, there was little capital left for obtaining the necessary raw materials to smelt. The company was wound up in 1874. New companies started up several times after that, but it became prohibitive and finally closed early in the twentieth century. What's left now are the remains of those efforts so many years ago.

The setting for the Bolla Bollana is quite pretty with the Illinawortina Creek nearby (dry most of the year) and plenty of very healthy eucalypts giving good shade. The site is a great place to have a break and is very close to Arkaroola. If you want to read more there are several good documents readily available on the Internet. There is also a research paper produced in 1988 by David Bannear. This paper, which is titled The Interpretation of Structural Remains at Bolla Bollana Copper Smelting Works,

South Australia, is an academically written paper but is easy to read and understand. The second reference is from the South Australian Government and is titled Discover South Australia's Mining Heritage Trails. This is a very useful document describing all the heritage mines in this area and the rest of the state.

Returning back to the main track, you turn left to head further away from Arkaroola. The track, although in good condition, is often slow as the main way of traversing this country is by using the creek beds. These can get quite rough as you negotiate the bigger river rocks so care should be taken. There is plenty to see along the track but at around 2 kilometres from the turn-off, if you are feeling energetic, you can walk to the Nooldoonooldoona Water Hole. About 3 kilometres further along the track and you'll see a faint track off to the right. This track is unfortunately a dead end now but it is worth a look at the gorge on the Wild Dog Creek. The terrain is picturesque and the rock walls show geology that is millions of years old. This track once went on and ended up near the Yudnamutana Mine, but the creek bed obviously suffered some major damage in a flood many years



ago and is now impassable. Be careful though as there's not many turning around points and the ground on the edges of the track can become quite soft.



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You can obtain information on this site from Arkaroola.

The next major site you visit along the track is the Wheal Turner mining site. Unlike the Bolla Bollana Smelter site, this site isn't marked on many maps. It's easy to find as it's on the track itself. It is in fact quite underwhelming when you consider what actually occurred here. What's visible is only a small section of the operation. You must go walking to see much more of it. We didn't have time this trip, but if you walk over the top of the hill you can see a dam wall that was built to hold water for the mine. An article in The South Australian Register on December 7th, 1891 sums up the extent of this operation.

"The Wheal Turner leases comprise nine mineral sections, and there are good ore-bearing lodes on them, sufficient to keep four or five large Companies going ... But to be convinced that the ore exists in these hills it is of no use for a man to stand at the bottom and look up at the outcrops at the top. Hard climbing must be done, and the rocks broken to find the wealth that they contain. It is often surprising, even, to those accustomed to the mineral deposits of the North, to see the quantity and quality of ore that is disclosed to view when the outer crust is broken away. This is very much the case at Wheal Turner a careless observer might even climb the hill and walk over the lodes without seeing anything particular, but careful examination shows a wonderful deposit of copper in several rich and productive lodes."

The South Australian Register, December 7th, 1891

What is visible when you stop and park are relics of buildings in which you'll see lots of material from the operation itself. You can see where the machinery was bolted down and unfortunately there's not much of this left. You can see metal



remains from the boilers and there are crucibles lying on the ground just off the edge of the road showing what was done here. It is remarkable that this site isn't mentioned on the maps and only appears to be sign posted once you leave Arkaroola. The mine wasn't without troubles though and a search of the Government website Trove reveals many newspaper articles from the time about the Wheal Turner mine. It seems that shareholders were disappointed with profits in an 1892 letter to the Editor: *We have been repeatedly told that we have a wonderful property in the Wheal Turner; something that will put the Barrier mines in the shade. Every half yearly report has been if possible more glowing than the last. The shareholders have waited very patiently, but I am afraid their patience is nearly at an end; so much so that some of the largest shareholders are just upon throwing up their interest in the concern, stating that it is fraud. I fancy there will be some awkward questions asked at next half-yearly meeting unless the directors show a little more life in the interim than they have in the past. We had a report a few days ago that they were crushing 25 tons per day, which should bring something like £150 per day in to the company, putting the profit down at £6 per ton. It was stated that they could make that much profit per ton when the ore was all handpicked ... considering that copper is advanced in price nearly £10 per ton. The calls still go on, and*



the shareholders seem as far off as ever from getting a return for the capital they have invested, and which has lain idle so long I shall not say all that the shareholders are saying; it might hurl the feelings of the gentlemen constituting the board, for I believe the chairman at any rate is a conscientious gentleman.

In 1894 it became serious when the owners requested government money to continue staving:

"... had been done to a depth of about 250ft., but both the copper and gold they met with had been found to be too diffused to be payable. Experts had reported..."

Like many of the mines in the area, water was their biggest problem, or rather a lack of it, and they started to struggle as the ore wasn't producing the believed mineral levels.

You should do some research on this mine before you visit so you can spend a while exploring the surrounding hillsides finding relics and remnants of this early mining.

The two mines we've seen so far are an easy day drive from Arkaroola leaving plenty of time to sightsee. The tracks are in good condition and easily traversed. If you want amazing mine sites and relics, then you must be prepared to travel a little further, and unfortunately that means the tracks also get a little worse for wear. They don't appear as used and so don't get the same level of maintenance, but to persist will provide you with a great reward.

Part 2 of this very interesting report and trip recy will continue next issue. Ed

TRACKWATCH CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions to Trackwatch are welcomed. They should relate to a club activity, interesting destination, historic event, etc.

1. Type your story in Word with appropriate paragraphs and headings. No fancy fonts, colours, borders or imbedded photos.
2. Photos need to be of good quality and high resolution. Do not resize, crop or embed as part of the story. Send images as separate jpeg files. Ed



> Insurance

FIRST AID TRAINING... be prepared

If an accident happened and someone was injured on your next trip, or even on your way to your next club day, would you know what to do? Perhaps just as importantly, would you know what not to do?

If your answer is "no" or "it depends" even "I think so", then you need to get some first aid training. As a member of an adventure based organisation, we should all consider a formal First Aid Qualification as part of our overall duty of care.

First aid training courses are designed to equip people with the tools they need in an emergency situation until trained medical responders arrive on the scene.

First aid training courses only take a few hours to complete. Think about it. By taking a few hours out of your week you could acquire the skills necessary to help someone in an emergency. First aid training courses can be found to accommodate anyone; your club could research the various types of training available and find out which one will suit you best.

I personally believe everyone should

take the time to learn first aid. Take the whole family along. First aid training can be taught to anyone who is over the age of ten. Training in first aid can help you help someone else whether they have a minor incident or a life threatening condition.

I recall with some emotion, a presentation to a small remote community, they had just completed a year-long program (Certificate III in Outdoor Recreation) and in order to finalise their qualification they had to complete a first aid course. "Uncle Bob" was 6'10, a big strong man and well into his fifties; as he stood in front of the small crowd and proudly received his Certificate, tears welled in his eyes as he thanked all those that had helped him throughout the program. In particular he mentioned that he had wished he had done his first aid training before today as he recalled how on two occasions he had not been able to help his mates when they needed him the most. If he had done his first aid training, "they may well still be alive and with us today". Sobering stuff!

First aid is exactly that, it is the first response when an accident occurs and

can make all the difference until professional help arrives. What are a few hours out of your day if it may help save someone's life?

Why is it always someone else's responsibility? Do your part and sign up for first aid training right away. You never know when an accident may happen. It is never too soon to be prepared.

(Editor's note: 4WDVIC requires HLTAID003 Provide first aid; for all Trip Leaders)

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