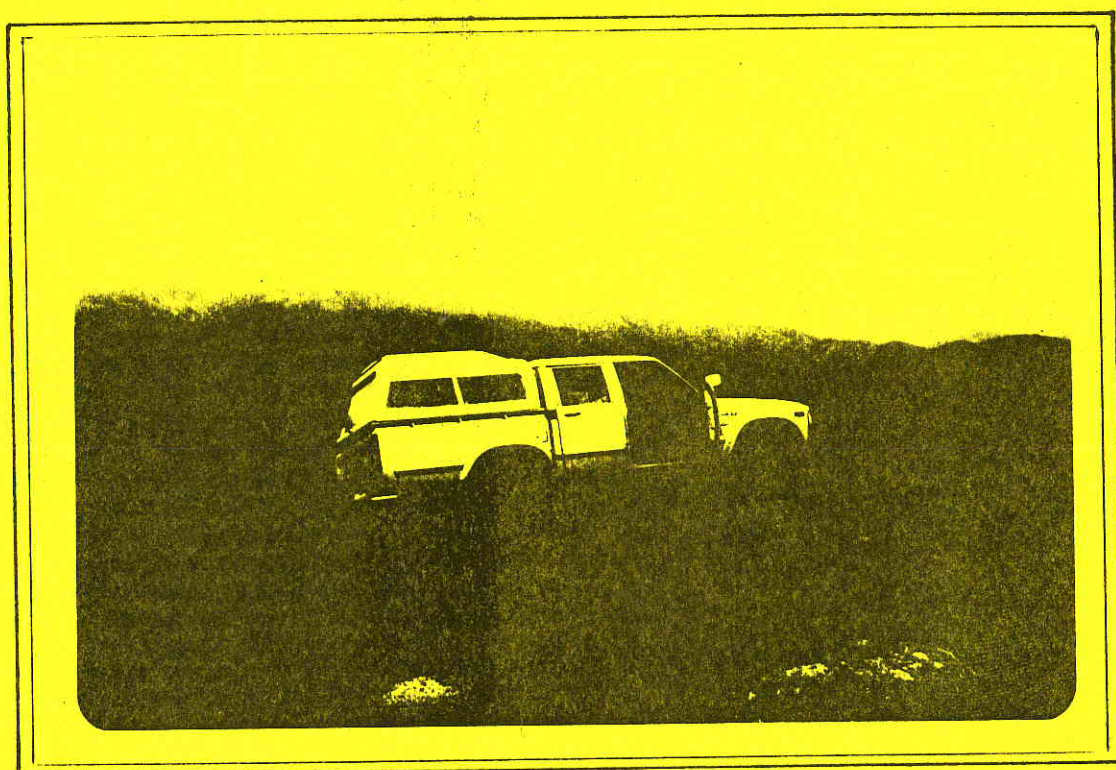
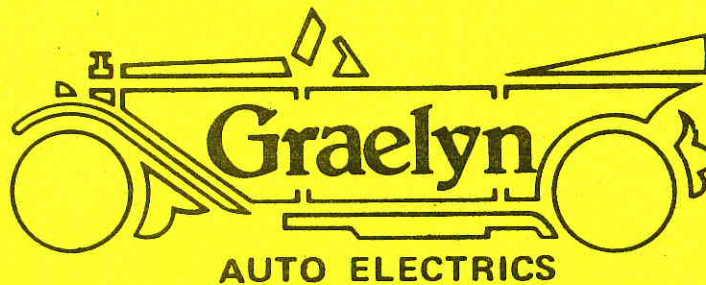


FREE WHEELING



February 84

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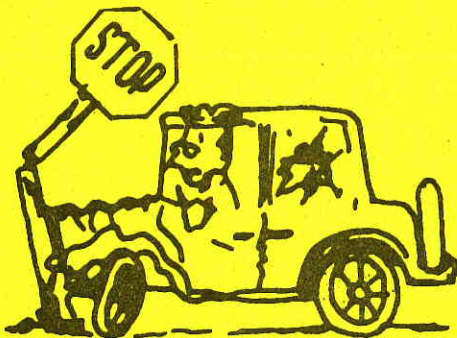


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VICTORIAN FOUR WHEEL DRIVE CLUB



COMMITTEE 1983/84

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ASSOCIATION DELEGATES:			TERRY HINKS 798 3798		GERRY LAVERY 232 3423

TRIP CLASSIFICATIONS:

'A' Grade: Extensive use of 4.WD: Tracks may be difficult to negotiate - chains should be carried along with towing slings and anchor points: good winter tread pattern tyres are a must. Trip leader has the right to refuse a vehicle if above points are not met. Types of conditions likely to be met include: steep climbs and descents on all surfaces - rocky, muddy etc., mud & snow, deep river crossings and overgrown tracks.

Max. six vehicles.

'B' Grade: Virtually same conditions as 'A' Grade but track condition is more favourable: Good tyres are a must as well as necessary recovery gear.

Max. 10 Vehicles.

'C' Grade: Very limited use of 4 WD. These trips include car rallys etc. Type of tyres does not matter and recovery gear not essential.

No maximum number of vehicles.

In all above cases vehicles should be in sound mechanical condition and carry the basic spare part requirements as listed in previous Newsletters.

The Committee would like to express the fact that if in the opinion of the trip leader a vehicle is not suitable for a trip, then that vehicle may be refused permission to partake.

Newsletter items to

Ray West by General Meetings.

Radio Officer

Geoff Mann 233 2229 10 Fernhill St., Glen Waverley.

Club has one radio for hire at \$1.00 per day, or free if you are leading a trip.

All enquiries must go through the officer regarding purchases, licenses etc. ---

FEBRUARY 1984 PRESIDENTS REPORT

Hi Members,

As I mentioned last month there would be a Xmas trip report following, I regret to say it's still following, I promise it will appear next month.

As seems to be happening to me lately, I forgot to enter into the Club Calender another trip for six days or less to the Avon river area at Easter lead by Ric Goon. He suggests it will be "B" grade to hard "B".

Last month you may recall me saying that Elo Olsen had a mishap on the way home from the Xmas trip, Elo has since written a letter to the club and he would like it to be put into the newsletter it appears this month. I would like to thank Elo for his letter and kind words, and hope you are back on your feet again real soon and back on another trip.

At this point of time no one has come up with a trip over the Queens Birthday long weekend, so if you would like to think about it, let us know at the February meeting.

As most of you may know by now the Club is holding it's 10th Anniversary Celebration on Saturday night July 21st, 1984. It looks like being the Phoenix Restaurant, Cockatoo. We will be picked up and dropped off at the Library. Invitations will be sent out soon and the closing date will be March 13th, so if you can remember that date.

For the people who wish to go to Fraser Island and can't go on the trip advertised for September 1st, please let me know next meeting and I will try to look after you, that is if you trust me to lead a trip to Fraser.

Well done to the person or persons responsible for Its and Bits, to see the funny side of these often one liners, you have to be on a trip. Don't forget if anyone has anything they want printed in the magazine could it please be given to Ray West on Meeting night at the latest, as Debbie does the typing and it has to be ready by the next Monday night for the printer.

See you at the February 28th Meeting.

P.S. At the February meeting could we have as many people present as possible as we have a guest speaker, Mr John Donn. He is a barrister and solicitor. He will be speaking on the benefits of our club becoming a Company and the costs involved . So please think about it, as it will affect us all.

PETER ROWE.

ITS AND BITS

Wendy and Geoff Dowell were reported to have had a 'coming together' with a vehicle around a blind corner on the road home from their Christmas holidays. After a hurt vehicle had minor repairs done at Orbost, a safe trip was had the rest of the way home. Mum, Dad, Michael and Duke were all safe and well.

On a recent week end trip it was reported that Peter Rowe must have forgotten that he belonged to a FOUR wheel drive club and was seen to have used only two wheels on a certain steep grade.

From rumours heard could 'Lady' become second fiddle in the Rowe camp.

Not meaning for one minute to pick on our beloved President, but who was late arriving at Coldstream last Saturday morning to head off to Pineapple Flat?

Peter's watch must have really taken a turn for the worst as he was seen off two (2) nights in a row before midnight on the Pineapple Flat trip.

Ralf took his wife's Jackaroo on the Pineapple Flat trip and while out on a wood collection detail a stump jumped up and put a nice dint in it and then when he went up the Rose Creek Track he found that the Jackaroo had a mind of its own as to direction. Which 4 W.D. vehicle will he take next trip?

Dave Hocking who is still trying to convince Val and Kim that 4 W.D. is the ultimate in passing leisure time, was reported to have terrorised these two nervous passengers as he put his vehicle sideways on the Black Landing Track.

It is amazing how hunger takes over from all manners learnt on how to share - even if it is a barbecue plate - but then I guess he has 6'4" to feed. (Is our Pres. being picked on this month? Just think Peter, some you win - some you lose.)

Even though the whole Lyster Family went to Pineapple Flat I here that Veronica still felt like a 'loose' woman.

Johnny Hughan obeyed perfectly all rules related to tethering your dog up when wandering off to do some sightseeing, I mean it would be a shame to come back and find that your faithful canine companion had wandered off never to be found. The only thing that is left to ponder is how is the tree getting on that has a collar and lead attached to it?

CONTINUED/..

To all my new friends.

Before I joined the VFWDC, I was in doubt which Club to join, but I decided to go to a meeting just to get a feeling of the atmosphere in the club. After a little while at the meeting I made up my mind to join, and straight away signed up for the Christmas trip.

My son and I went on that trip and we had the time of our lives, especially New Years Eve. Unfortunately we had a mishap on the way home, after it happened and we were waiting for transport to the hospital, I was sitting in a chair and a couple of times I had tears in my eyes, not because it was hurting like hell, but because of what was going on around Brian and me. You all did everything you could possibly do for us, and we are very grateful to all of you.

I smashed up my car and myself, but I'll never regret that I joined the Club because now I've got a hell of a bunch of friends, and that means so much more to me.

Again thanks to everybody.

ELO.

PINEAPPLE FLAT TRIP REPORT

28, 29, 30th January

Role Call

- Friday - Alan and Mary Wade, Ralf and Derich Kanngieser, Ray, Debbie, and Jodie West, Vin Handley.
- Saturday - Peter Rowe, Peter Handley, Don and Thelma Montigue, John and Joanne Hughan, Dave, Val and Kim Hocking, Tom Brachna and Peter Pink, John and Margaret Smith, Ray Brown and Ray W.

We arrived at Coldstream at 6-50 am.; Saturday morning, no one there. We thought we were late, but by 7-30 all were there with the notable exception of a certain person whose name we shan't mention, but whose initials are Peter Rowe. At this point Peter told us that aside from the five trucks present, eight other trucks had left on Friday night. So all ashore that are going ashore and off we go.

First stop Bonnie Doon for morning tea, second Mansfield, morning tea and fill up, so two morning teas later we are off again, on the last leg.

We passed through Merrijig enroute to Mirimbah where every one wanted to know what the two rather large posters of a guy on a horse were all about. (probably something to do with the man from Snow River). There was some writing but no one could read it, so we thought we could check it out on the way back. Mirimbah is also the place where we turn off the bitumen. Ah! at last some lovely dirt road, not that we hadn't had a good run up, traffic had been quite light.

Our first check point was the Telephone Box Junction on Circuit Road, from there on to Black Landing Track and hence to Pineapple Flat. All we really needed to do was follow the Subaru Club signs all the way. Ho! what would we have done without them.

We arrived at Pineapple Flat at approx., 11-30 to find that good camp sights had been saved for us (at great personal risk to life and limbs), by those club members who had arrived on Friday.

After camp being established I lost track of what most of the others were doing because I was busy lightening some tinned goods, I had bought along for just such an occasion, I presume (because I can't remember) that they were doing the same. A good afternoon and evening was had by all.

Up early the next morning, Sunday, we were off for Mt Clear, with the exception of Tom Brachna and Peter Pink, Ray Brown and Ray W, John and Margaret Smith, who were returning homeward that afternoon. Off along King Basin road past King Hut, from there to Clear Hills Track. On this section I was unfortunate enough to get stuck, up to this point the track had been reasonably uneventful, but when I dropped by back wheel into a decent old rut halfway up the first steep section for the day I thought things might be becoming eventful. This event unknown to myself carries a reward. The reward being :- First stuck receives the dubious honor of writing the trip report. Which by the way I hope will bore you to tears hence I won't be asked again.

After removing my vehicle from across the track with the aid of a couple of decent sized rocks we were on the move again to Mt Clear. The scenery up there was really something, out came the cameras. After absorbing some of that breathtaking scenery, including the hut used for the film The Man from Snowy River, and downing a cuppa, we turned back down the mount again to Circuit Road and on to Wanangatta Road, then up the Stair Case to the car park just below the peak of Mt Speculation.

Vin, Peter H, Ross and J and Myself decided to climb to the top for some more of the breathtaking stuff. What a nice before lunch stroll, but well worth the effort. To use J's words they don't know what they are missing. We could even see the hut back on Mt Clear. It was really something.

When we returned to the car park a barby lunch was ready. After a relaxing break and a walk into the scrub, Whoops sorry Deb! We were on our way again, this time back down The Staircase and on to Little Cobbler Road hence to Lake Cobbler, but at this point we had a round table summit and the crew seperated, Ralf and Derich and Ray, Deb and Jodie West decided to return to camp along the Rose Creek Track and the remainder opted for Lake Cobbler.

The water falls on the way in were spectacular so click, click, click, thanks for the film Alan. The Lake itself was very pretty but difficult to get the greater part in a snap. (According to Peter Rowe a good shot can be acquired from atop the short but steep drop as you come in). There were three or four horses grazing beside the lake, apparently they had been ridden in from Merrijig, it took eight hours, I bet they slept on their stomachs that night.

On the way out we waved to some bush walkers who were setting up camp. By their responses I think they may have been greenies. We were now in the home stretch or so we thought bu it started to rain didn't it, not long after which Peter Rowe heard from Ray West that he and Ralf were confronted with a woop-se-doo course. Ralf had managed to complete the whole word in fine style. At this stage they were considering propping for the night.

At this point Peter decided more info was needed so we headed for a farm house, on arrival Peter braved the elements at great risk to his dryness, but for the good of all. Information was obtained as the the least slippery, hence the safest route back to camp, considering the number of vehicles we had to get over the tracks.

Everything went well until we turned off the Little Cobbler Road onto King Basin Road which wasn't really steep but quite slippery, except for John and Joanne in their Jackaroo, the slippery conditions didn't seem to affect them anywhere near as much. As for myself if I hadn't given up and stopped to let some air out of my tyres I might still be there. After the first part, woop-se-doo was the order of the day, wasn't it Mary. Next up was the makeshift bridge which was earlier on in day light, Val and Kim walked across. I always think panic is not so bad when offset by tiredness and hunger, especially when observed from the comfort of the cabin.

We arrived back at camp to find Ralf, Ray and company had managed to get through within a short time. Most of us fed and retired and the few stayers were rained out.

Monday we got off to an early start, as we wanted to get out before the track got too badly cut up, due to the rain over night, so unwillingly into the dreaded task of packing up. On the road by 9-30 out along the

Blacks Landing Track, which wasn't too bad aside from a couple of woop-se-doos. Once on the the bitumen we made good time. Morning tea at Mansfield at which time we met Andy, John and Co., planning the trip for the following Sunday. After recharging the old bod we made a mile or a kilometer depending on whether you are right or left handed, from this point Ray West and Co., Ralf and Co., Vin and Peter Handley and John and Joanne decided to head straight home.

The remainder Peter Rowe, Alan and Mary, Don and Thelma and the Hocking family gravitated to the wayside watering hole the Glenburn Hotel, after an enjoyable lunch we again joined the mad scramble. We peeled off at our respective points, bidding each other fair well after an enjoyable weekend.

DAVE, VAL AND KIM HOCKING.

P.S. Hopefully it won't rain next time we're on the track with Justin because apparently the sound of running water affects him in a rather strange way.

IPS AND BITS CONTINUED.

Was Monti seen to have had a stormy Saturday night and a very hazy awakening Sunday morning?

Did Thelma think she was a victim of a game of cowboys and indians on Sunday morning when she was seen to be 'held up' and 'double crossed' or at least her legs, on arrival at the loo tent.

It has yet to be determined whether it is a family failing or not, but it was reported that a Yellow Hi Lux driven by a Handley was caught in a lovely big muddy hole with a very embarrassed driver coming up with the excuse that one Hub had not locked in properly - any excuse is (better - sorry) better than none at all.

MONTH	TRIP DATE AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS	TRIP LOCATION	DEPARTURE TIME AND LOCATION	TRIP LEADER/S	CLASS	SOCIAL FUNCTION
JANUARY 1984	Australia Day Weekend Sat. 28th Jan.	Pineapple Flat	7.AM. Coldstream	PETER ROWE	B	
FEBRUARY	5th Feb Day Trip 11th & 12th Feb 25th & 26th Feb	Location to be decided Reeves Beach (Woodside) Cranbourne Hotel Bindaree area 9am Mansfield Toilet Block		Andy Williams Tom Brachma Geoff Mann	B B-C-S A	Fishing, some sand driving.
MARCH	10th & 11th March 10th & 11th March LABOUR DAY WEEKEND 10th & 11th & 12th Mar 24th & 25th March	Rutherglen wine area Fri 9th (Big Flag Wandong Nat 4WD Jamboree & Country Music Festival Narbethong "Bog Hole" Water ski w/end Mildon Delatite Arm		Hume Hwy 7.00 pm Campbellfield) D. Montague Terry Hincks	C-S S B-S C-S	Wine Tasting Social Driving Part of "Moomba" Celebrations Trips & "Bog Hole" Contest Water Ski-ing, small trips?
APRIL	7th & 8th April Good Friday-Easter 20th to 25th April Good Friday-Easter 20th to 25th April	Gippsland 4WD "Go Down" Macalister River area Avon River Area	Labetouce		A-B-S A-B A-B	Trips "Bog Hole" Contest
May	5th & 6th May 12th & 13th May 27th May	Navigation Trial Wombour State Gembrook area JAARA JUNCTION AREA. BARMAN STATE FOREST.		Rick Goon David Heard PETER ROWE	B-C B-C B-C	
JUNE	Queens Birthday 11th					
JULY	21st July	Our 10th Anniversary			S	Golden Sands or Phoenix
August September	1st September 3 Weeks	Fraser Island			A-B-C-S	Annual Interstate Trip

TRACKWATCH

NEWS & VIEWS OF THE VICTORIA ASSOCIATION OF FOUR WHEEL DRIVE CLUBS

The Alps: Now for the REAL decisions

NOW THAT THE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ALPS HAVE BEEN RELEASED, THE LOBBYING AND SUBMISSIONS CONTINUE IN AN ATTEMPT TO SWAY THE GOVERNMENT'S OPINION AWAY FROM THE LCC RECOMMENDATIONS.

The Final Recommendations for the Alpine Study Area were released by the Land Conservation Council in November. As expected the Council's recommendations mirrored Labor govt policy directives for an extensive alpine park.

The government has firm ideas and aspirations for the alps and the exercise of calling for submissions and public comment could be labelled as 'window-dressing', as the final decisions were 'virtually known' before the release of the Final Recommendations. It can be argued that 'now the war is over, the real fight will begin!', and the real decisions will be made.

While the fact that there would be more national parks in the alps was known (Labor policy), it has been interesting in retrospect to look at the job which the LCC has done in preparing the Final Recommendations. Accepting that the study was going over old ground (LCC studied the Alpine Area during 1978-79) and was hand-strung by having some of the conclusions of their study stated as objectives prior to their study the LCC has done an admirable job in catering for the majority of activities within the framework of a large alpine park.

While anti-park submissions to the LCC were not going to meet with success, submissions played an important role in highlighting our concern for continued access to the area; brought to their attention, past NPS management practices of "if in doubt, lock them out" philosophies, and alerted them to the genuine need that FWD touring has for access to a continuous track network and for the opportunity for dispersed camping.

During the several months of preparation of the Association submission, we were invited to meet with Mr Dimmick, Chairman LCC to discuss our recreational needs in the alpine area, and their concern at the number of submissions received from individual FWD owners (largely due to Association initiatives in lobbying all FWD Club members).

Strangely enough our meeting was relatively brief as the views of the LCC were significantly perceptive enough to realise that their thoughts were similar to those of the Association. They supported and recognised the need for both access to track networks and for dispersed camping. These points we asked to be stressed in the Final Recommendations - and they have been.

Similarly, ours and other user groups (including a bushwalking body which approached the Association for assistance) concern with NPS management policy has resulted in the LCC taking some positive initiatives in influencing the type of activities which should be provided for in new alpine parks. Likewise our submissions had significant impact to cause the NPS to ask for a meeting to discuss our fears concerning their management policies. From this beginning has flowed a number of positive NPS/VAFWDC initiatives which have improved attitudes and perceptions of each bodies requirements and desires. Similarly their has resulted a greater consultation between the Service and the Association concerning user policy.

The results of the alpine recommendations have been studied by user groups and in any massive change of public land use classification, there has to be winners and losers. More often than not in the past users of FWDs for recreational touring have been ignored and since the 1970s it is probably true to say that we have lost access to several hundred kms of track network. An amount I'm certain which would have been much larger, but for the persistence and approach undertaken by the Association.

The winners and the losers in the latest alpine recommendations are a curious mixture. The most obvious losers are the cattlemen as the LCC recommend the phasing out of their traditional leases in the high country. Similarly the sawmillers face greater restriction and in some areas exclusion. Again the four-wheel-driver must accept further restriction, but overall the recommendations preserve the opportunity for four wheeling and camping in the alps. Our task is now to ensure that when these recommendations are legislated that no bastardy occurs to the paragraphs relating to our recreation.

Linked access throughout the alps on a network of primary and secondary tracks is essential for four wheelers to appreciate this scenic area in a 4WD environment. The Recommendations make provision for two pre-requisites of our recreation. Use of track networks suitable for 4WD vehicles only, and the opportunity for dispersed camping in a less restricted environment. Points which the NPS through our discussions now recognise and are working to incorporate in management plans.

While the response to our concerns have been as adequate as could be expected, the recommendations all include wilderness areas, bush walking areas and a multitude of other user and conservation provisions. The LCC has recognised the need for balance in the alps - a balance which is an absolute necessity for the co-existence of all traditional users. A balance and recommendation which now awaits endorsement from the govt.

In contrast to the necessity of acceptance of compromise, we also have on the other hand another group which won't accept the umpire's decision! The CCV have claimed that they will continue lobbying - "similar to that of spoilt children" - until "they" get what "they" want in the alps. Namely an alpine national park which excludes the majority of recreations, sawmillers' and cattlemen. Their argument is simplistic. What they want must be right!!

Not what is practical. Regardless of loss of jobs and livelihood for local timber & cattlemen, regardless of resources to the State, but what they selfishly

TRACKWATCH

NO 52

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decree must occur. There exists a "Franklin Rv hangover" in which conservationists' tend to think they have a divine right to influence all questions of land use. Unfortunately this aura has taken them into the realms of fantasy. Nevertheless, it must be recognised that these extremist groups have access to substantial funds and are skilled at playing the emotive cords of politicians. We can expect extensive lobbying against the Final Recommendations to continue from this area.

Of the genuinely disadvantaged the Cattlemen, through the Mountain Cattlemens' Association have been, the first to tackle the recommendations head on.

In December the Mountain Cattlemens Association invited the Minister for Planning and Environment, Evan Walker and the Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands, Rod MacKenzie on a tour of the high plains, essentially to put forward their opposition to the LCC recommendations. The recommendations sited damage to the high plains as caused by cattle as one of the reasons why they should be excluded in the future. The Cattlemen set out through a selective tour of the area to show this isn't so, but rather to highlight alpine damage purported to be caused by forestry activities and 4WD vehicles. On TV and in the press Walker stated that, "I am very concerned about the problems caused by recreation vehicles and logging".

His statements did little to ensure confidence in the future of the Final Recommendations, and served the Cattlemen and conservationists' well by diverting attention to other user groups. The Association has contacted the two Ministers concerned and spoken with the press and ministerial advisers who were on the tour.

From these sources emerged a picture of some wheel ruts being

located on the high plains, most likely caused by the 4WD touring companies which have access, while others are denied access over winter, or to local cowboys!

We await a reply from the Minister to discuss the matter and if necessary to conduct our own FWD tour for his benefit into the alps.

While the recommendations are made, the attack and counter-attack continues as we await the final decision to be legislated.

Comment on this weekend can be found elsewhere in Trackwatch.

Brian Tanner

LET'S GO NATIONAL

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF FOUR
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14 & 15th APRIL, 1984

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VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF FOUR WHEEL DRIVE CLUBS
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MINISTERS SADDLE UP FOR 'ALPINE DAMAGE' TOUR

MOUNTAIN cattlemen may have reached a turning point in their long-running battle to keep cattle in the alps.

They have finally got the message across that the real conflict in the high country is not between cattle and nature, but between cattle and a politically influential group of conservationists who simply don't like the sight of cattle in the alps.

"I have never seen the cattlemen's case put so clearly and so well," the Minister for Planning and Environment, Evan Walker, told cattlemen on a recent tour of the high country.

He had accepted an invitation to meet cattlemen on their home ground, along with Lands, Forests and Conservation Minister, Rod Mackenzie, several Labor backbenchers with interests in conservation, and members of the Opposition.

Mr Walker was quick to add that he was not about to preempt the Government's decision on the latest Land Conservation Council report which recommends further large areas of the alps to be included in a national park and that the Howitt High Plain be added to areas where grazing is excluded.

"I think you've put an excellent case and when Rod (Mackenzie) and I talk in the next month or two to determine the

Report: JOHN PARRY

matter your position will be well received," he said.

Mr Mackenzie was equally guarded: "You've shown us some things over the last few days of which we were not aware.

"I can assure you that before the final decision is made that we will wish to have some further consultation with you. But I hope we will be able to work out a plan that will cater for not only your interests, but those of conservationists, tourists and all Australians who love the area," said Mr Mackenzie.

Focal point of the tour was the Howitt High Plain, a favored grazing area and, with easy access, a haven for bushwalkers.

The LCC recommended that grazing be phased out of the Howitt area because of alleged damage to water supplies and the alpine walking track.

Cattlemen demanded to be shown the damage.

"I know of no area where there has been damage to walking tracks and would very much like to have it pointed out," said Bob Gilder, who runs cattle on the high plain.

"I have asked the chairman of the LCC, Mr Dimmick, but he said he really didn't know."

Mr Gilder said most bushwalkers camped at Howitt Hut where there was a spring inside the horse paddock fenced off from cattle.

"They think it is the only water supply on the high plain. Howitt is in fact a beautiful water top with creeks all over it."

"The water in the creeks has a hazy-blue color, not because of the cattle but because it passes through volcanic soil. It is the normal color of the water and has nothing to do with the cattle," said Mr Gilder.

National Party spokesman on Lands, David Evans said cattlemen were calling on the LCC to prove its case and show where the damage was.

"Somebody has said to the LCC, and it has come out in the report, that damage has been done. That person or persons needs to come here and show it," Mr Evans said.

"If the Government has got a policy of phasing out cattle grazing then any decision it makes will be bolstered by re-

'High' for cattlemen in grazing battle

commendations of the LCC.

"If these recommendations are not well-founded, and they are certainly under challenge in this case, then part of the Government's support for the case evaporates."

Mountain District Cattlemen's Association liaison officer, Graeme Stoney, pointed out that the Howitt Plain was one of the best grazing areas in the alps.

"If they can make the claim that there is conflict stick here, then the implications for the rest of the alps are plain," he said.

In response, Mr Walker said the LCC did not have to prove its case to the degree that the Government did or did not accept that grazing should be in a national park.

"A Government of whatever flavor has the right to say that it believes that a national park should have a certain quality and it may not include grazing," Mr Walker said.

"We ought to get to the essence of what a park ought to be and what access to public lands cattlemen should have. That's the question."

...so long as the question wasn't decided on damage to rangeland, said the Soil Conservation Authority's alpine officer, Rob Patrick.

Improved

"The SCA doesn't consider Howitt Plain to be of great risk," he said. "Condition of the range here has in most cases stabilised and improved."

Howitt Plain has what is known as "cold air drainage" type vegetation — open grasslands in the drainage lines bordered by stands of snow gum.

Post graduate student at Melbourne University, Harm van Rees, who has studied the behavior and diet of cattle on Bogong, agreed on the condition of the Howitt Plain.

"From a grazing point of view, I don't think there is any major damage being done and I don't think the vegetation type would change without grazing," he said.

President of the MDCAV, Jim Commins, said cattlemen were worried by the LCC final recommendations and questioned whether they represented the viewpoint of the majority of people.

"We understand that most of the submissions were against the extension of national parks," Mr Commins said.

"It appears the LCC has not followed the due democratic process, but has carried out what it intended to do or was instructed to do."

The report recommends grazing be allowed to continue in the proposed alpine park system which would cover most of the alps.

"However as it is stated Government policy to phase out grazing in national parks, mountain cattlemen are very wary of the final outcome," Mr Commins said.

"We recognise that some national parks are necessary and desirable in Victoria's alpine region, but we oppose the creation of a massive alpine park which we believe is undesirable."

"Mountain cattlemen subscribe to the multi-use concept with some special places in the alps designated as national parks, as was decided in the initial LCC report in 1979."

"We believe the greatest benefit for the greatest number of people would be achieved by this approach."

Cattlemen's high hopes—

THE Mountain Cattlemen's Association may well have won the first round of its battle with the State Government over a recommendation to phase out cattle grazing in alpine areas.

After two days' trekking over some of Australia's most picturesque country, the Planning and Environment Minister, Mr Walker, told them: "I have never seen the cattlemen's view put so clearly and so well.

"I am very concerned about the problems caused by recreation vehicles and logging.

"If I can give you a word of good cheer, I think you have provided

By **TERRY VINE**

an excellent case and when we determine the matter in a month or two, your view will be well received."

Mr Walker, the Conservation, Forests and Lands Minister, Mr Mackenzie and several backbenchers had been on what the cattlemen called a "pollies' safari."

The cattlemen were anxious to disprove a claim that cattle were causing irreparable damage in the high plains country.

Cattlemen's spokesman Mr Graeme Stoney told the politicians: "Grazing is different to log-

ging and mining. We work with nature, not against her."

The alpine graziers are fighting a Land Conservation Council recommendation to the State Government that all the alpine country be turned into a national park and that grazing be phased out.

Mr Mackenzie told the cattlemen: "We hope to work out a satisfactory plan to cater for all Australians who love this area."

Former Liberal Minister Mr Vasey Houghton said: "Good management is the key. There is no reason why the area can't be shared.

"The mountain men are very responsible people."

● High plains summit, Middle Pages.

HIGH PLAINS SUMMIT

Report: **TERRY VINE** Pictures: **RON WELLS**

OLD Jack Lovick summed it up nicely.

"Once we hit the horses and get under way, everything will fall right into place," he said.

He was speaking at the beginning of what he called the "pollies' safari".

And he was talking about the six hours ahead for several of this State's politicians, their various advisers, opponents and a small section of the media who were about to embark on a very special kind of great adventure.

Jack Lovick is a mountain cattleman. He has lived in and loved the alpine grazing country since the 20s. He is 65 and walks with a marked limp, the result of a car accident.

But he still rides where man and horse can go and does it with a derring-do that leaves men many years his junior breathless.

The mountain men are angry. A Land Conservation Council recommendation to the State Government wants to turn all their grazing land into a national park. Once a park, no more grazing.

The argument was that cattle were causing irreparable damage to the mountains.

So the cattlemen took the bull by the horns, so to speak, and invited two Crown Ministers to meet them

on their home ground to discuss the whole thing.

Evan Walker, Minister for Planning and Environment, and Rod Mackenzie, Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands, accepted. So did several backbenchers, including former Liberal Minister Vasey Houghton.

Also there were several experts and greenies.

Whether they realised it or not, they were accepting the mountain men on their own terms. And those included six hours in the saddle, riding the ridges and slopes that made the Man from Snowy River famous, including a ride down the spur used in the movie.

And what a place for a forum!

This is a part of the world where God paints the scenery, and the cattlemen know it. Proudly they displayed their world and their lifestyle, answering all questions, refuting all criticism, bending over backwards to be honest.

"I hope you have come here with a completely open mind," said old Jack. "We're not silly enough to say there has been no damage. We will show you areas that have been damaged, show you how we have rectified the problem, and show you how it has healed over."

And he did. Like The Man, he let the ponies have their heads, and anyone who didn't keep up had

his/her mount sooled along right smartly. He would stop on the brink of magnificent escarpments, and point out Buffalo and Buller, their tops still hidden in cloud, and various other peaks — many named after members of the mountain cattlemen's families.

He showed them ponds which 20 years ago the cattle had ruined and which were now back to life because the mountain men had built dams below them and the cattle preferred the clean waters of the dams.

He showed them areas where his colleagues had re-seeded the earth, and the earth had responded, and he compared that with the mess left by the loggers — acres of ugly scarring and rotting trees over the mountainous faces.



He also showed cattle paths and explained that when the forestry people came, they followed the cattle paths, shaved the surface off them with a grader and brought in their four-wheel-drive vehicles and the damage this had done.

At this stage, Evan Walker asked them whether they drove four-wheel-drive vehicles, which of course they do.

"Yes," said Jim Commins from the Gippsland side of the Great

Divide. "But we were getting along without them quite well until the forestry people came."

And he added: "If people are lost in the mountains and come across a cattle path, they can always get out of trouble. But follow a wombat path and you'll finish down the hole."

Not once did the cattlemen say a critical word of mining, logging or the tourists. But actions always do speak louder than words, and at the end of it, Evan Walker was moved to say: "I am very concerned about the problems caused by the use of recreational vehicles and forestry."

It was music to their ears.

There was nothing ritzy about this lobby, but nor did the mountain men forget that they were hosts.

From a cattlemen's refuge of galvanised iron and timber, 1700 metres above sea level, they served from an open fire a three course dinner — soup, choice of roast beef, roast lamb, or barbecued steak and vegetables, a selection of three desserts, tea, coffee and drinks.

And then bedded everyone down in tents and sleeping bags.

The cattlemen slept on their case. And everyone else just slept. It's amazing how well one sleeps up there, after six hours in the saddle of a beast with a touch of Timor pony.



VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF FOUR WHEEL DRIVE CLUBS
DON'T BUGGER THE BUSH
BE ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS

PRESERVE OUR ENVIRONMENT
BY EDUCATION NOT RESTRICTION



How successful was the alpine campaign?

The Alpine area is recognised as a major four-wheel-drive touring resource offering variety of opportunity, scenic vistas, remote wilderness experiences, dispersed camping and freedom of spirit, and a feeling of well-being amongst four wheelers who have enjoyed its rugged challenges and beauty.

The Alpine area has been a traditional FWD destination for many years and the threat of exclusion was not a chance that the VAFWDC could afford to take.

As such at the June General Meeting 1983, a course of action was presented, a campaign outlined and a summary of expenditure noted. In terms of our budget the four-figure sum was extensive. Compared with those of conservation groups it was barely a drop in the ocean!

Nevertheless, many voluntary hours were contributed, printing deadlines met and our submission continued to take shape. On a night in June representatives from clubs' across the State came together and handled their respective club mailing lists, and packed the alpine information kits. From this point on in many respects the fight was then outside Association control depending on the genuine concern and lack of apathy of club members. Logistically, our mailing campaign did not receive the support from members (as shown by the 10% of submissions from FWD sources received by the LCC) as might have been expected. However those that made submissions had considerable impact.

Following implementation of the campaign there followed a flurry of concern from government sources which has since improved our image

and cemented lines of communication and understanding.

The Chairman of the LCC requested a meeting to discuss our FWD touring needs. The NPS requested a similar meeting.

From these meetings flowed firstly the emphasis given to our recreation in the final recommendations, and secondly the new era of communication and co-operation with the NPS.

From our initial meeting with Ross May of the NPS came the idea of inviting the NPS to one of our meetings. The attendance of the three officers to our meeting gave members an opportunity to query policy, discuss "why" some decisions are/were made, and to learn of problems from the land managers viewpoint.

Since this meeting the Association has contributed to the management plan for the Bogong NP and has received and accepted an invitation from Mr D.S.Saunders, Director National Parks to form a joint NPS/VAFWDC Working Party on Tracks. By all standards this step gives recognition to Association arguments, credibility, and by a joint approach gives members the opportunity to channel their concerns about any tracks through the Association to the Working Party.

NPS/VAFWDC relations have certainly expanded since we commenced the alpine campaign to which the initial response can be attributed. Similarly, the Minister for Conservation, Forests & Lands has not been slow in recognising the potential contribution of the Association and has sought representation on A Working Party of his.

In summary the money we invested in the alpine campaign has been well spent with beneficial results.

Field Day success

LAND ROVER OWNERS CLUB ANNUAL MOTOR SHOW AND FIELD DAY

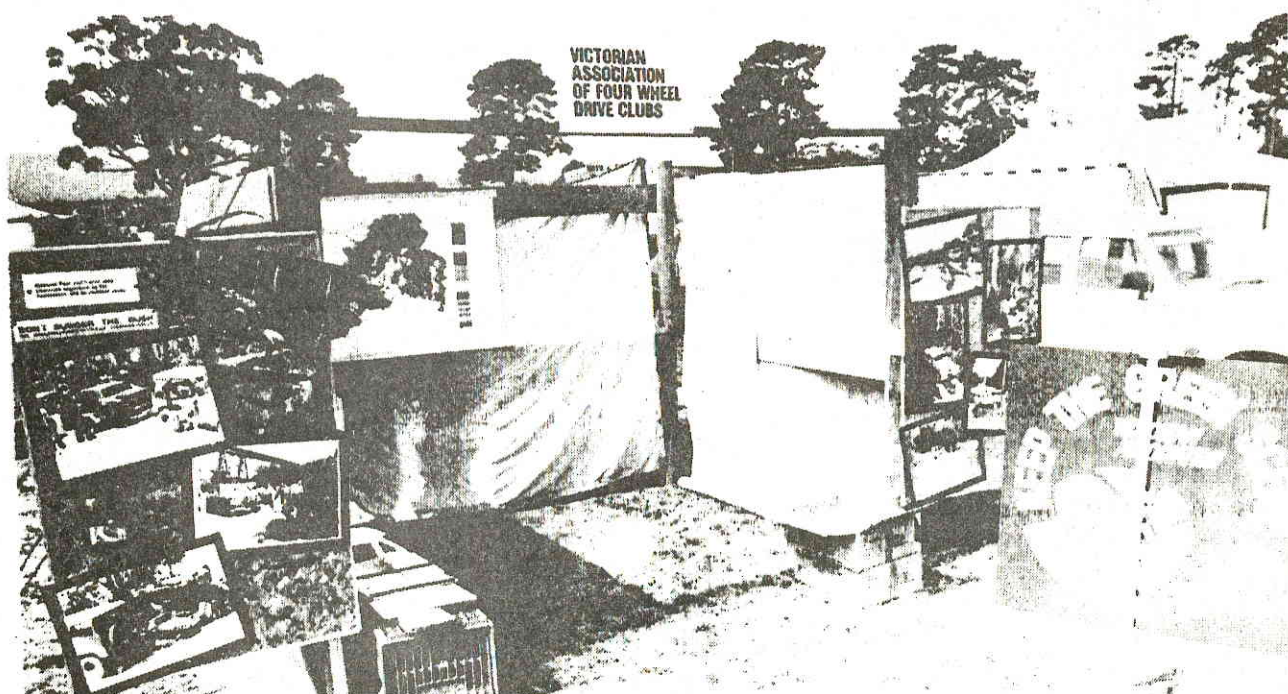
On the 20th November, 1983 the Land Rover Owners Club hosted their annual Motor Show and Field Day, at Whittlesea.

As depicted below the day was a great success with a crowd of approximately 4000 attending.

Many Clubs had displays attracting new members interested in specific vehicle make clubs or general 'all sorts' clubs. Many had colourful exhibitions highlighting club activities.

The Association had a display which received many enquiries, especially about maps and road closures.

There were numerous product displays and the LROC had several demonstrations during the day. The Field Day is the only practical major FWD show in Victoria which gives demonstrations of gear which potential members may be interested, along with expert advice. For 'unclubbed' FWD owners the show is an excellent introduction to the FWD scene.



FWD Show

1984 OFF ROAD, FOUR & TWO WHEEL
DRIVE RECREATION SHOW.

The Off Road Recreation Show is
on at the Exhibition Buildings
next month, February, 8 -12th.

The Association will have an
extensive display, so out of
town and local four wheelers drop
in and say hello.

The Show will feature new FWDs,
all-terrain transport, camping
equipment, and the Old Man Emu
specialty driving team.

The Association will be launching
and selling its new T shirts
which are sure to go fast, so
gets yours quickly!
(Pictured below.



UPDATE ON THE ALPINE BATTLE

An excellent article by Joan Green
is in the new '4x4 Australia' now
on the news stands.

TO USERS OF RECREATIONAL VEHICLES:

As a user of a recreational vehicle you gain considerable pleasure
from driving the vehicle, whether as an end in itself or in association
with other forms of recreation.

However, if used inconsiderately, your vehicle can also annoy others
and damage our natural environment. It takes only a few
inconsiderate people to damage the reputation of recreational
vehicle users as a whole. If you support the following code of
ethics when you drive, and encourage all your friends to do likewise,
you will be supporting the responsible, safe and proper use of
recreational vehicles.

CODE OF ETHICS

- (1) Observe all the laws and regulations relating to recreational
vehicles. Remember these laws vary among States.
- (2) Recognize the right of others to solitude and peace. Avoid
competitive activities close to settlements and recreation
areas.
- (3) Keep to constructed vehicle tracks. Drive off roads only in
areas specially set aside for the purpose or if you have special
permission to do so.
- (4) Observe all restrictions on the use of public land. In national
parks and other conservation areas use your vehicle only as
conventional transport.
- (5) Obtain the landowner's permission to drive on private land.
Respect property and livestock. Leave gates as found.
- (6) Alpine areas, swamps and vegetated sand dunes are easily
damaged. Strictly avoid these areas.
- (7) Respect our wildlife. Stop and look, but never chase animals.
Remember some animals are easily disturbed and disturbance
can affect their survival.
- (8) Keep the environment clean; carry your rubbish home. If
others have left a mess, consider cleaning it up.
- (9) Observe all fire restrictions. Extinguish your fire before
leaving.
- (10) Ensure your vehicle is mechanically sound, has an efficient
muffler, and the exhaust does not emit sparks which could
cause a fire.
- (11) Ensure you have adequate water, food, fuel and spares for
any trip. In remote areas travel with at least one other
vehicle to reduce the risk in case of trouble.
- (12) If your vehicle is used primarily for recreation, join an
appropriate and responsible club.
- (13) If you and your vehicle are equipped and able, help the
authorities in emergencies such as bushfires or search and
rescue.

THIS CODE HAS VALUE ONLY IF YOU OBSERVE IT AND
ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO DO SO.

*This code of ethics has been prepared by the Commonwealth
Department of Environment, Housing and Community
Development, in consultation with recreation vehicle clubs and
relevant State and Commonwealth authorities.*

LAND USE FORMS

We still require these forms to be
filled in by Clubs when going on
trips, and then return them to the
Association. The information so far
gathered has been useful in compiling
our Alpine Submission.

Similarly track-closure forms should
also continue to be used and returned
as soon as possible.



Victoria Association of
Four Wheel Drive Clubs

BUSH.B.Q.

THE BARBEQUE OF THE OUTBACK



simple
highly efficient

strong

compact

open fire cooking

versatile

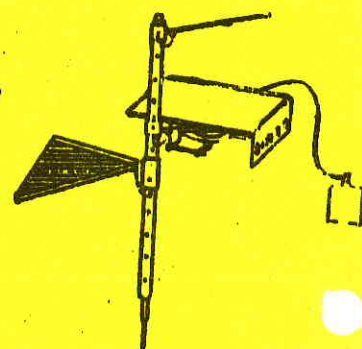
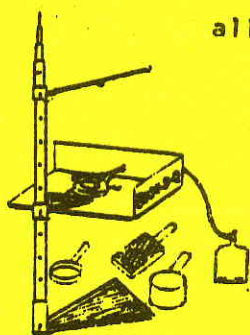
gas conversion

realistically priced

mesh griller

fully engineered
all steel construction

indoor/outdoor



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