

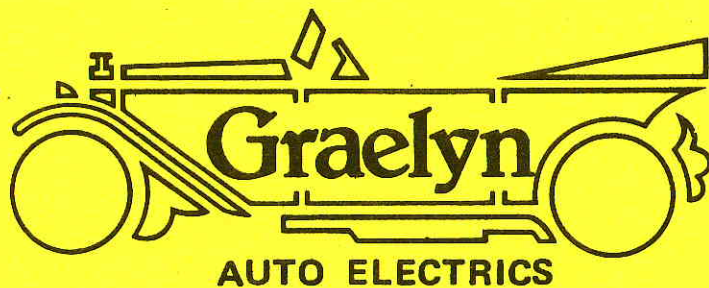


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MARCH '84

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VICTORIAN FOUR WHEEL DRIVE CLUB



COMMITTEE 1983/84

PRES	PETER ROWE 6 Bickford Pl ., HALLAM 703 2346	VICE PRES	RAY WEST 44 Kays Ave., HALLAM 703 2357	SEC	TOM BRACHNA 11 Sunnyvale Crt., HAMPTON PARK 799 1998
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ASSOCIATION DELEGATES:			TERRY HINCKS 798 3798		GERRY LAVERY (053) 67-2999.

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 rallies 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. ---

MEETINGS LAST TUESDAY
OF THE MONTH AT DANDENONG

CORRESPONDENCE
P.O. BOX 778,
DANDENONG

MARCH 1984 PRESIDENTS REPORT



Hi Members,

I hope the members who were present at the last meeting are more aware of the benefits of the Club becoming Incorporated. Not being able to understand the legal jargon fully, it appears fairly straight forward but could take a bit of time. For the members who were not at the meeting a motion was passed for the Club to start proceedings. On behalf of the Club I would like to thank Mr Donn for coming to the meeting and giving us his time, his talk should be a big help to us.

There will now be a Queens Birthday trip, it will be to the Barmah State Forest, going up via Echuca, returning via Shepparton, more details later.

Congratulations to Kim and Trevor West who now are the proud parents of a baby girl, Tanya.

Brian Tuck is leading a day trip on Sunday 27th May around the Yarra Junction area, leaving from the Little Yarra Bridge about 2 or 3 km the Warburton side of Yarra Junction at 8.30 am. It will be a "B-C" grade trip.

Next meeting we will be having a fine for people not wearing a name tag, as I have said before it makes it easier for new and older members to know whom your speaking to. It doesn't take much to sticky tape your name to your chest or forehead.

As I mentioned at the last meeting, there will be no April meeting as it falls on Easter Tuesday, most people will be away on trips etc. We will now be having the General meeting on Tuesday, May 1st at the usual place and time. If you can mark the new date on your calender you won't forget. The Newsletter will hopefully be to you before Easter.

Talking of Newsletter we now have a new printer. On behalf of the Club I would like to thank Mr Don Puddy for doing our Newsletter over the last 8 months or so and I would also like to thank Terry Hincks for everything he has done towards the Newsletter.

It has been mentioned before but if anyone has got any clear colour or black & white prints they would like to see on the front cover, could you give them to Ray West on the meeting night with your name and a discription of the photo on the back.

Next meeting we hope to have Mr Jeff Mc Narmara to give us a talk and demo on an electric locking diff.

Dont forget the people going on the Water Ski weekend. Meeting at Mansfield 9.00 p.m., Friday night, March 23rd.

See you at the March 27th meeting.

PETER ROWE

P.S.

If anyone can't go on a trip don't forget to ring Trip Leader, if you don't know his number, ring one of the Committee. We don't want another disaster like what happened last month.



CLUB DAY TRIP - BIG RIVER 5.2.84

ROLL CALL - Andy Williams, Jack Craven and Friend, Pat Casey and Family, Trevor Nelson and son Mark.

Four vehicles in all.

Well, here I am again writing the trip report. As you know, those first in trouble have to write the trip report. We arrived at Warburton and departed there at 9.20am on a pleasant Sunday outing to Big River. We proceeded to the Cumberland Junction and on to Big River State Forest where we met Pat, who was camping overnight at Big Bend Creek, then we were off along the Big River Road towards Enochs Point where we had a lunch break beside Big River. Strange, but to get to Big River we had to walk through campers, it reminded me of 'Rosebud.'

Andy decided to head up to Mt. Terrible by Donalds Track but we missed it and went up Danes Spur track and onto the top where we had a brief stop on top of Mt. Terrible - the views were breathtaking.

Down to Lake Eildon, Mansfield and beyond, then down the Terrible Track and home. This is where I came unstuck. I was in 1st 4 WD low and became impatient on what I thought was average grade. I dropped into 2nd 4 WD low and began to roll too fast and hit a rock - over I went, not doing more than 10 kmp, but the momentum must have upset the balance. Pat at the rear thought this was strange, as Toyotas don't look like that and radioed ahead that I had tipped over. Strange I had no time to be upset, we just went over in a second, no time for fear but later for remorse.

Well, everyone moved in and we had it back on its wheels looking a little worse for wear. I began a check on the vehicle, oil had drained out through the breathers, I carry spare oil so put back what had drained out. Everything looked OK! It was decided to get back to a main road just in case! We came upon Hope Track which I have heard was a little steep but to my surprise it was a four lane highway, it had just been graded - thank goodness.

My nerves cracked every bump, I felt like I was going over again, Mark felt the same way. Back to Big Bend Creek for a breather and goodbye to everyone, where we proceeded for home. I have checked the Toyota and found I was lucky she did not go on her roof and have little panel damage, Just my Pride.

Trevor Nelson

REEVES BEACH TRIP



Roll Call:- Peter, Don & Thelma, Pete & Debbie, Bruno, Ralf & Derek,
Dave, Mark & Laszlo, Alan & Mary, Tom & Rick.

The trip began one warm misty morning in the heart of the outback, "Cranbourne Pub" at an ungodly hour of 8 a.m.

The procession set off at 8.30 a.m., with yours truly leading the way. The trip was slow due to a number of those 18 wheel monsters barring the way, but eventually we made our way to Yarram, where a fuel stop, munchies stop and tinnie stop was made for those who needed it.

Peter, Debbie, Bruno, Rick and myself braved our way to the Woodside Pub where we waited for the remainder of the convoy to appear. We had only time for a few refreshments before they arrived and then after a head count we were off again.

Deeper and deeper into the wilderness we ventured, through bottomless swamp country, across endless sand ridges, until finally thanks to the dauntless courage of the leader everybody made it through to the land that time forgot.

A camping spot was found amongst the metre high sword grass where many of the tents were erected in elevated positions, due to the denseness of the scrub.

After all that adventure everybody sat down and relaxed for most of the day and night, in the stifling heat known only to that particular region. Some went fishing down on the salt pan beach and returned at dusk.

After tea Ralf prepared a batch of his world famous apple pancakes, which were devoured by all those ravenous souls present. Copious quantities of refreshments were consumed before anybody would retire.

Then, as the moon rose higher in the sky, there was a blood curdling yell that could only have come from a species known as Don, so everybody went to bed.

Some rose early the next morning and tried a further hand at fishing but to no avail. As the others rose it was obvious by the colour and look in their eye's that they had slept in fear of being attacked by the "Don Syndrome".

After forcing down some morning - lunch, to our disappointment "Cyclone Reeve" swept across the arid wilderness annoying everybody in its path. Due to this quirk of nature we all packed up after lunch and fought our way back through the endless sand ridges and the bottomless swamp country and ventured out a bit further to inspect the "Omega Navigational Tower".

After this we all made our own way home in smaller groups.

All in all, it was a very quiet and relaxing weekend, except for a few bug bites, and thanks to all those who attended and I hope you enjoyed yourselves.

Yours faithfully
the dauntless trip leader.

TOM

1. The Licence - The club has been assigned a frequency in the V.H.F. Land and Harbour Mobile Radio Telephone Services and licenced under the conditions of a Government publication R.B.I. which is available free from the Postal and Telecommunications Department, 5th floor, 14 Queens Road, Melbourne. 3004. The Club does not have a base station as in the normal situation but operates mobile to mobile only. The club assigns mobile numbers to members after they apply to join the network. A licence number is then assigned to the club for each individual mobile. Therefore, the club does not have one licence for all the mobiles, but one licence for each mobile. The club then issues that licence to a member permanently and it cannot be transferred to another person. Because of the cost of licence fees must be paid with the membership dues in July, as the club cannot be expected to pay in advance. If these are not paid, that licence which is not paid and that licence only is cancelled, no other licence will be affected. A member cannot obtain a new licence until all past fees are paid. The club may be responsible for any unpaid fees. Do the right thing, pay up, or officially cancel and keep off the air.

2. Joining the Network- To join the network you will need a 2-way radio capable of operating in the VHF Highband service. Application has to be directed to the committee for approval. This can be done verbally or in writing to any members listed in the front of the club magazine. The application is then discussed at the next committee meeting. When approval is granted to join the network P & T application Form RB10 supplied by the radio officer is filled out. Details of type of radio, serial number of radio, and registration number of vehicle in which the radio is to be used is needed. Advice is then given of frequency and how to get the radio tuned to that frequency. Note. The club nominee or radio officer controls all the paperwork and correspondence between the Postal and Telecommunications Department and the Club. This ensures that no outsider can join the club frequency without approval of the club.

3. Guide for Operations- Although there are no set guidelines strictly laid down commonsense and politeness should always be employed. A few commonsense guidelines as follows should be remembered.

- a. Do not transmit unnecessarily
- b. Keep messages brief and clear
- c. To avoid interfering with other stations on the channel listen before you transmit.
- d. If the transmission is to be a long one break about every minute to give other stations a go. One minute does not sound long but try and talk continuously for one minute, it takes a long breath.
- e. Announce the club call sign VH3HTQ at least once every transmission.
- f. Do not be afraid to use over, out and wait. Use wait if you have to look something up i.e. a map grid reference. This will indicate to other mobiles that a long break in an unfinished conversation is taking place. They might be able to get their message in in time.

A passage of events may go as such!

VH3HTQ Mobile 5 to Mobile 6 over
 Mobile 6 over
 5 to 6 what is your position over
 Mobile 6 to 5 wait
 Mobile 10 to Mobile 11 you can come down the hill now, over
 11 -10 roger out
 Mobile 6 to Mobile 5 my position is 10 km outside Walhalla, over
 5 - 6 stay there I will be there in 10 minutes, over
 VH3HTQ Mobile 6 to Mobile 5 roger out.

This is only intended as an example of correct procedure.

HINTS & TIPS



Breaking the bead on tyre rims.

Often difficulty is found in the removal of a tyre from the rim, especially after it has been on for some time.

Two methods meeting with considerable success are:-

- I. Lay the flat tyre (with valve core removed) so that the tyre of the vehicle will pass over the flat tyre very close to the rim. Drive vehicle onto tyre, when centrally on the flat tyre, if bead does not release assist by forcing tyre lever near point of pressure, continue this method by rotating tyre to different position and also inverting tyre to opposite side until bead releases.
2. Place flat tyre (with valve core removed) under strong part of vehicle:- Bull bar, bumper bar, chassis rail. Place jack on tyre with base close to rim. Wind up jack to contact above mentioned pressure points. Jack to maximum point or until bead breaks. Repeat at different locations until bead breaks on both sides.

With split rims it is not possible to remove the locking rim until the bead has been released by one of the above methods, or use of proper bead breaking equipment. A "L" shaped tyre lever is one of the best and cheapest forms of tyre removal equipment.

TECHNICAL HINTS

by

DON MONTAGUE

To all those proud sooty owners and envious others who might have some doubts about the make up and operation of the diesel engine I offer these few simple thoughts.

The Diesel Engine basically is no different to the petrol engine in construction except that it is made of much heavier and stronger materials to allow for the higher operating loads. Because of these heavier masses a governor is fitted to protect the engine from throwing itself to pieces. (To tamper with the speed settings could be disastrous). It has a fuel pump and injectors (which may be a bit frightening to the layman) instead of a carburettor and spark plugs. These parts are built like a swiss watch, run like a swiss watch and can be expected to give as little trouble as a swiss watch as long as the one poisonous ingredient is kept out of them "WATER". One drop in the wrong place in a distributor type pump can be sufficient to seize up the drive rotor totally wrecking the pump.

So with all those dollars you are going to save on cheaper running, invest a little on extra water traps and fuel filters. Remember: Buy clean fuel and keep it clean. Also, the air comes free, but not clean. The least you can do for it is filter it, for wear is only the result of the admission of abrasive impurities at the two entrances. Fuel and Air.

" W H E E L C H A I N S "

At the moment one of the Government bodies sympathetic towards 4 wheel driving is the Forest Commission. However, the Commission is concerned at the damage being done to their tracks during the winter months by the uneducated use of wheel chains, accelerating natural erosion and causing unnecessary track damage. In order not to alienate our ally, we have compiled a short list of suggested "DOs and DON'Ts".

1. If faced with a steep track that you feel wheel chains must be fitted to successfully negotiate, seriously consider an alternate route even if this may mean turning back or choosing a new objective.
2. If wheel chains are fitted, use a lower gear than normal in an effort to keep wheel spin to a minimum.
3. If the vehicle loses momentum and you are unable to obtain traction STOP immediately. Winch yourself through or reverse and take another line of approach.
4. When travelling in a large party consider having one vehicle assailing the obstacle and either winching or towing the remaining vehicles past the obstacle and thus eliminating the need for fitting chains to the majority.

These precautions may be thought by some to be extreme, but considering that:-

- a) The best four wheel drive tracks are usually Forest Commission access tracks, designed to carry a minimum number of vehicles in summer months and negligible traffic in winter.
- b) taking into account the ever increasing number of recreational four wheel drives using these tracks and
- c) The proportionately small amount of money made available for their maintenances.

Common sense must tell you to take extreme care when using these tracks.

We would like to recommend that vehicles carry chains at all times, especially when on their own or with only one or two other vehicles, as you can never be sure of the Victorian weather and a sudden downpour can turn the track into a slippery dip, as Ray and Ralf can testify.

+

TECHNICAL HINTS

If you are doubtful of the proper functioning of the ignition system of the engine, the following simple test procedure will check its effective operation.

Remove the distributor cap and rotate the engine until the rotor is midway between two lobes and the heel of the points. Ignition switched on, check the supply of current to the points by placing a light bulb in series with the supply to the positive side of the coil. Remove the high tension lead from the centre castle of the distributor cap and hold it one quarter of an inch from a metal part of the engine. With an insulator (match or wooden twig) push the points open slightly. A spark should occur at the high tension lead to the engine, if no spark or only a spark when the distance is closed up to $1/8"$ or $1/16"$ then a defective coil or condenser is probable.



THE VALUE OF A SMILE

A smile costs nothing, but it creates much.

It enriches those who receive without impoverishing those who give it.

It happens in a flash and the memory of it sometimes lasts forever.

None are so rich that they can get along without it, and none are so poor but are richer for a smile.

It creates happiness in the home, fosters goodwill in business, and is the counter-sign of friends.

It is rest to the weary, daylight to the discouraged, sunshine to the sad and nature's best antidote for trouble.

It cannot be bought, begged, borrowed or stolen, for it is something that is no earthly good to anybody until it is given away.

If it ever happens that some people should be too tired to give you a smile, why not leave one of yours?

For nobody needs a smile so much as those who have none left to give.

- Author unknown (by your editor)

MONTH	TRIP DATE AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS	TRIP LOCATION	DEPARTURE TIME AND LOCATION	TRIP LEADERS	CLASS	SOCIAL FUNCTION
MARCH	10th & 11th	Rutherglen Wine Area.	Fri 9th (Big flag, Hume Highway, Campbellfield. at 7.00 pm.	D. Montague	C-S	Wine tasting, Social, Driving.
	10th & 11th	Wandong Nat., 4WD Jamboree & Country Music Festival			S	Part of "Moomba" Celebration.
	10th, 11th & 12th	Narbethong "Bog Hole"	Narbethong		B-S	Trips & "Bog Hole" Contest.
	24th & 25th	Water Ski W/end Eildon "The Pines" Delatite Arm.	Mansfield Toilet Block Fri 9.00 pm	Terry Hincks	C-S	Water Ski-ing, small trips.
APRIL	7th & 8th	Gippsland 4WD "Go Down"	Labetouce		A-B-S	Trips & "Bog Hole" Contest.
	Good Friday-Easter 20th to 25th	Macalister River Area		Ray West	A-B	
	20th to 25th	Avon River Area		Rick Goon	A-B	
	12 & 13th	Navigation Trial	WOMBAT STATE FOREST. ? area	David Heard	B-C	
MAY	27th	Yarra Junction Area	Little Yarra Bridge past Yarra Junction 8.30 am.	Brian Tuck	B-C	
	Queens Birthday 11th	Barmah Forest North Victoria/N.S.W.		Peter Rowe	B	
JUNE	21st	Our 10th Anniversary			S	Phoenix Restaurant, I Jeanne Street, Cockatoo.
AUGUST	18th 2-3 weeks	Frazer Island		Peter Rowe	A.B.C.S.	Annual Interstate Trip Group 1.
SEPTEMBER	1st 4 weeks	Frazer Island		Don Montague	A.B.C.S.	Annual Interstate Trip Group 2.

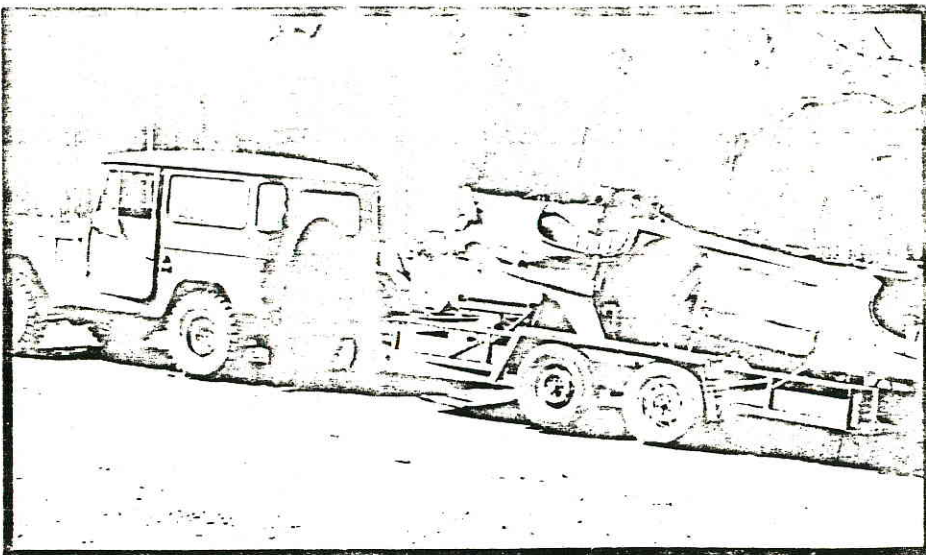
When a Planning and Environment Minister is reported as having uttered, in public, the words "I am very concerned about the problems caused by recreation vehicles and logging", it is naturally a cause for some anxiety in the ranks of 4WD enthusiasts. It is also a signal for tactful but prompt action by the image-conscious Victorian Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs. In all the years it has spent earning itself a reputation of environmental awareness, the Association has received more than its share of hard knocks, but nowadays the knocks seldom come from governmental sources.

On this particular occasion, reported in the Sun newspaper on December 10, the Minister's off-the-cuff remark was recorded 1700 metres above sea level in a rough shelter used by the cattlemen of the high plains. He had just spent two days in the saddle, riding the mountainous country of the Great Divide as a guest of the alpine graziers, and might be forgiven for expressing what was possibly a personal opinion. Luckily, his view does not reflect the policy of the Land Conservation Council towards the use of 4WD vehicles for recreation purposes in National Parks.

The LCC recently released its final recommendations for public use of Victoria's Alpine region, following a lengthy study of the areas to be incorporated in the proposed Alpine National Park — a huge strip of land that will extend south-west from Kosciusko to the Howqua River and the township of Licola, taking in existing National Parks on the way.

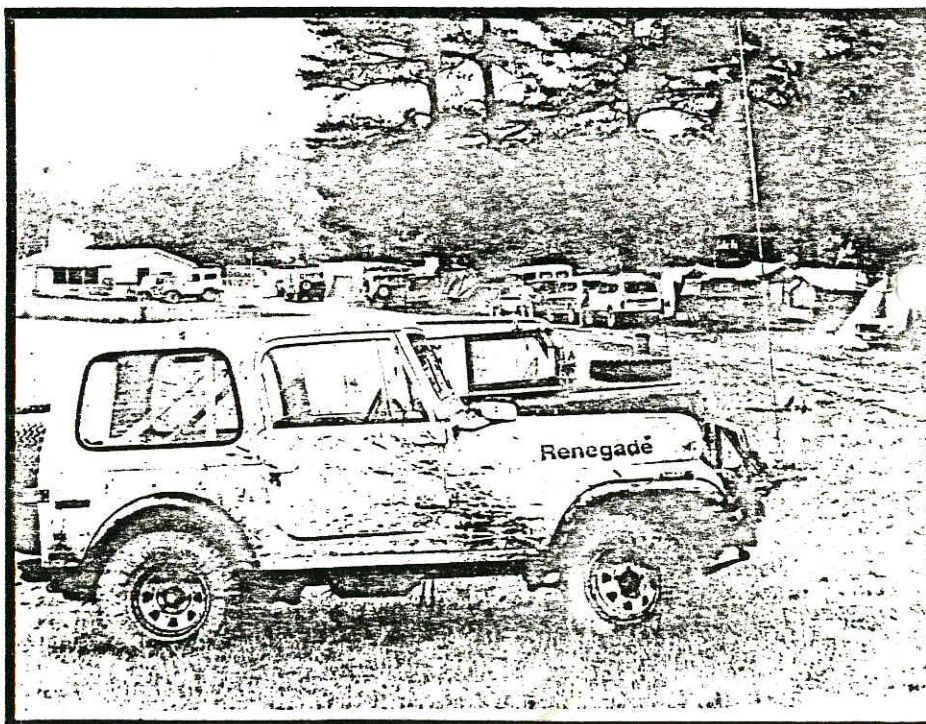
The mountain cattlemen are just one of the interested groups that have been anxiously awaiting the outcome of the Alpine study. When the establishment of a large alpine park was first proposed there was widespread community concern for the fate of most of the forms of recreation that draw people to the area. Whilst the more extreme "greenies" saw an opportunity to virtually close a large part of Victoria to anyone other than bushwalkers and naturalists, the rest of the public feared that they may no longer be allowed to enjoy their favorite pursuits of camping, canoeing, fishing and fossicking, hunting and horse riding in the mountain scenery of the Great Dividing Range. Among those most concerned were the owners of 4WD vehicles, who delight in exploring the alpine terrain in company with their families and friends.

Happily, the fears of most of these groups appear to have been unfounded. The proposed National Park, whilst covering an area of approximately 598,000 hectares, 275,000 hectares of which will be newly acquired, is not nearly as vast as was first anticipated. The LCC's recommendations include special provisions for a wide range of recreations. In fact, the only people who are far from satisfied with the new arrangement are the cattlemen, who stand to lose further tracts of their already dwindling grazing lands if the recommendations are followed.



AN ALPINE PARK TODAY.. TOMORROW THE WORLD

BY JOAN GREEN



Above: Part of the 'Forest Frolics' camping area in the Otways. Scenes like this would be abolished if the 'greenies' had their way.

Top: Another car body comes out of the bush. Clean-up days are now a regular feature on Club calendars.

To return to Minister Evan Walker in the mountain hut — his unusual two day excursion had been organised by the Mountain Cattlemen's Association as part of their last ditch stand against the proposal to phase out their traditional leases on grazing land by 1991. The cattlemen can hardly be blamed for making a final effort to sway the men at the top, and it seems that they received a sympathetic hearing not only from Minister Walker but also from the Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands, Rod Mackenzie, who accompanied him on the trip to the disputed Howitt Plains region.

Apart from the grazing of cattle in this area, which conflicts with the recreational needs of bushwalkers, campers and other visitors, there will be few restrictions placed upon the use of the new National Park by the public. In its report the Land Conservation Council says: "With sensitive and responsive

hazard, should continue, after consultation between the managing authorities and user groups."

These welcomed recommendations apply to all of the areas proposed for addition to the existing alpine park system. New areas include Rose River, Howqua River and Macalister River, Tali Karng and Trapyard Hill, Horseyard Hill, The Pinnacles and Castle Hill, Wombat Spur, Barry Mountains, Dargo River, Mount Higginbotham, East and West Kiewa, Rocky Valley and Pretty Valley, Anglers Rest, Dartmouth, Buenba, Mount Barlow, Pinnibar, Elkins Creek, Davies Plain, Little River and Seldom Seen. Broadly, the report also makes provision for the needs of all kinds of park users such as campers (including youth camps), deer stalkers, skiers of both the downhill and cross-country persuasion, bushwalkers and bee keepers, and many others.

Australian conservationists have the sweet taste of victory still on their lips with the Franklin River issue and other well-won fights under their belts.

However, their efforts to stop all four wheel driving in Victoria's Alpine regions have come up against a formidable force — Victoria's thousands of 4WD club members. Joan Green reports on the most controversial issue facing four wheel drivers ever and finds all is not lost in the Alpine region for off-roaders.

Photos by Brian Tanner

planning and management, the Council believes the park should be able to cater for a broad spectrum of public recreation activities without prejudicing its other major functions — namely, long-term conservation and protection of the area's special natural features."

Under the heading "Motorised Recreation" the report makes this comforting statement:

"The Council believes that the alpine park system should offer a wide range of recreational uses. There is a place not only for photography, bird watching, nature study etc., but also for activities such as scenic driving, and for touring using the tracks through steep terrain and into isolated areas as well as the system of formed roads.

"Because of its extensive network of roads, the region has particular value for motorised recreation. The Council considers that a park system should continue to contain a series of linked roads, mainly of 4WD standard, available for use by licensed vehicles in order that extended touring through the Alps is possible. However, as well as this system of linked roads, other customary tracks should be maintained for community use.

The Council points out, however, that the existing system of seasonal road closures,

That the LCC has given such careful consideration to the requirements of 4WD tourists is not simply a matter of luck. "The Council was swamped with submissions from four wheel drive clubs," said Victorian Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs President, Brian Tanner recently. "In the end they called us in and we worked out our recommendation which has been included word for word in the final report. From our point of view everything is satisfactory. Now it's up to the Government."

If and when the recommendation is accepted and the new National Park is officially declared (possibly in mid-1984), one more obstacle will have been successfully negotiated by the Association in its battle to ensure the survival of 4WD touring as a valid form of recreation. The 4WD Club Associations in Victoria and other States have developed a most effective machinery for putting their case to land management authorities and government departments. The Associations are quick to advise their member clubs of any government proposal which may affect their access to their traditional recreation areas, and the clubs can largely be relied upon to send in their own submissions to the government.

State Governments are at last recognising that the use of 4WD vehicle for touring is an extremely important form of recreation

and that 4WD club members are responsible people who do not damage public land. This much progress, in the face of strong opposition from some areas of the conservation movement which would like to see National Parks closed to all vehicles, is an impressive achievement during only a few years since the Associations were formed.

In the mid 70s, although 4WD clubs were springing up everywhere, it looked as though 4WD touring might prove to be a short lived form of recreation. The conservationists, with little opposition, were having it all their own way. More and more National parks with ultra-restrictive management policies were being proclaimed or considered, more tracks closed, punitive permit and tax systems introduced, all with the aim of discouraging those who sought to venture off the bitumen in a 4WD vehicle. Despite the efforts of the clubs to encourage the responsible use of these vehicles, the image of the four-wheel driver as a destructive basher of the bush was firmly implanted in the minds of the public.

It became obvious that the clubs needed a united voice and a body to co-ordinate their activities if they were to mount a successful counter attack — and mount one they did, starting with the establishment of the Victorian Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs in 1975 followed by the Four Wheel Drive Clubs Association of New South Wales and ACT, and the Queensland Association in 1976.

Today every State in Australia, including the Northern Territory, has its own Association representing its combined 4WD clubs. In the battle to gain recognition and acceptance, as well as fair treatment for the clubs and their members, each organisation plays an important role. Until recent times however, the eastern seaboard with its wealth of scenic forest and mountain areas and a large population of environmentally conscious citizens (many of whom display more zeal than commensense), has been the scene of most of the action.

The fight has been waged on not just one, but three fronts. Direct representation to Government has been effective, but equally effective has been the program of education carried out by the clubs to develop conservation awareness within their own ranks. Finally, careful attention to the image of the club movement generally has succeeded in turning 4WD operators from baddies to good guys in the eyes of the public.

People who join 4WD clubs do so usually because they love the bush, the mountains and the deserts of Australia and want to get out there, take their families and share the experience with their friends. On the whole they are a different breed from owners who see the vehicle as a recreation form in itself.

Through the clubs, members learn to handle a 4WD not only with safety but also with due regard for the terrain through which they are travelling, and through the clubs they are informed about when and where it is permitted or advisable to travel.

ALL ALPINE PARK TODAY.. TOMORROW THE WORLD

according to the season, through areas vulnerable to erosion. They are governed by a code of ethics which requires them to respect wildlife, private property and the peace and solitude of others. By adopting a co-operative approach they have won over, or at least softened the attitude of land management authorities in most areas.

The most dramatic reversal of public opinion, however, has been brought about through the clubs' major repair and clean-up programs in National and State parks. The Victorian Association provides a classic example of how successful this kind of operation can be. In 1982 the Association organised the first of its combined efforts, which it called "Project National Parks", during which 22 of the clubs went into parks all over the State to carry out clean-up, repair and development tasks suggested by the National Parks Service. They hauled away car bodies and other rubbish from the bush, repaired roads, cleaned out drains and culverts and cleared away boneseed and ivy. As well as pleasing the National Parks authorities, the exercise received excellent publicity.

Encouraged by this success, the Association mounted a similar project in 1983 for the Forest Commission. "Operation Forest Parks", following soon after the devastating bush fires of "Ash Wednesday" involved work in burnt-out areas, clearing away charred and fallen trees from the forest tracks. In parts untouched by the fires, clubs again cleared scrub and noxious weeds, constructed walking tracks and winched out dozens of dumped cars. The media was loud

in its praise and voluntary projects of this kind were established as a regular feature on club calendars.

The 4WD clubs actively seek new members, especially among the ranks of new 4WD vehicle buyers. A real threat to the clubs image and therefore to the entire 4WD movement, is the uninitiated driver who may easily antagonise authorities or the public through his ignorance. Also, although the club movement now represents many thousands of Australian voters, it still helps to have the weight of great numbers.

These are just some of the ways in which the Victorian Association has achieved its present status, and the very gratifying result of its submissions to the Land Conservation Council for use of the new National Park. Such a result would have been too much to hope for a few years ago. It reflects the authorities' new attitude to the needs and the maturity of 4WD owners as well as other users of the State's public land. Incredibly though, there are still groups who oppose the admission of any 4WD vehicles to National Parks. There have been no restrictions so far upon club activities in the Otways, which were proclaimed as a National Park in 1982, but a hard core Melbourne-based "greenie" group calling itself "Otways Action" is making a concerted effort to have access denied to 4WD vehicles.

This particular group may not be aware that it has taken on a formidable opponent. The Otways are the traditional recreation area of the Geelong 4WD Club which is one of the most conservation conscious and public-spirited of all of the Victorian Clubs. It is also the "home club" of Victorian Association President Brian Tanner, who has been one of the most determined exponents of club unity since the early days of the movement. The Otways are the venue for the popular "Forest Frolics" inter-club

get together which is hosted each year by the Geelong Club.

With the Victorian Association's latest coup, and now that the New South Wales ACT Association has five of its representatives on the State's National Parks Advisory Committee, and the Queensland Association is scoring points in its negotiations with Government regarding the future of its favorite beaches and islands, all would seem to be looking rosy on the 4WD scene.

This, however, is not necessarily so. The club movement in Tasmania is in a depressed condition because of the unyielding attitude of conservation extremists. The Northern Territory Association is battling against Aboriginal Land Rights claims. The other States could soon find themselves facing similar assaults. It may be time now for the formation of a National 4WD body which can combine the expertise of each State and raise a united voice in the interests of 4WD users. Such a voice would be heard not only in Australia but overseas, where organisations such as the United Four Wheel Drive Associations of North America have much to share with the rest of the world.

Getting a National organisation off the ground has been Brian Tanner's dream for a long time. The topic was raised at a National Conference organised by the various State Associations in 1982, but the proposal was shelved because the Associations felt that there was insufficient heed for a National body at that stage.

Another National Conference is to be held on 14 and 15 April 1984, and will include on its agenda the presentation of a paper on the forming of a National organisation. With the changes that have taken place on the political scene since 1982, and the increasing maturity of the State Associations, it is possible that this may be the year in which the movement really gets its act together.

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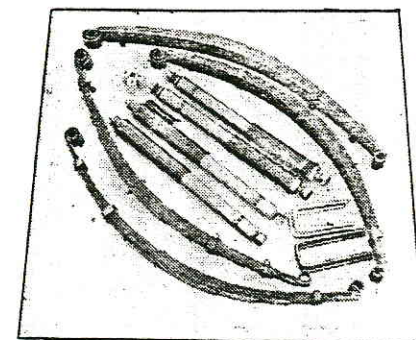
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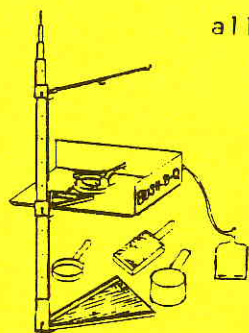
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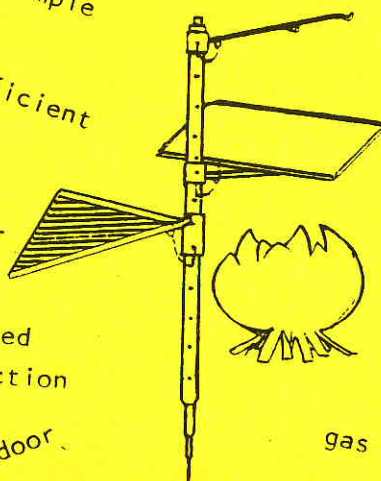
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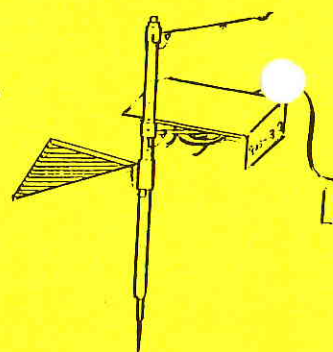


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