



MAY 2010

Free Wheeling

Official Newsletter of the Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club

Registration No A0002184F



Licola High Country Trip 17 Apr 10



The Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club Inc is an affiliated club of
the Victoria Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs Inc (VAFWDC)
www.vafwdc.org.au

Notice Board



VFWDC GENERAL MEETING VENUE

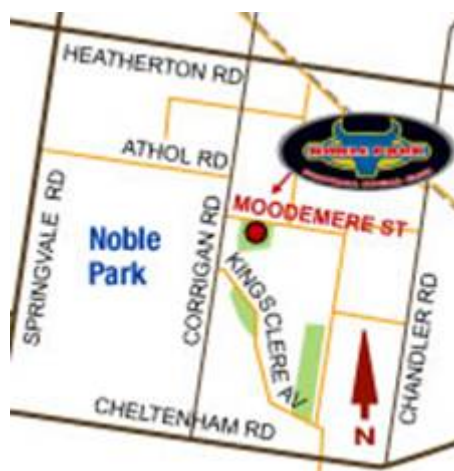
The club meets at the Bowling Club Rooms, Noble Park Football Club, 46-56 Moodemere St., Noble Park on the 1st Wednesday of every month at 8.00pm (No meeting January). Members and Guests are welcome to dine at the Bistro before attending the meeting.

First **WEDNESDAY** of each month 8.00PM Start

Venue:

Bowling Club Rooms (Next to Car Park)

Noble Park Football Club
46-56 Moodemere Street
Noble Park
Melways ref: 89 D4



FREE WHEELING

Hello and welcome to the May newsletter. We have a bumper edition this month with some good trip reports and quite a few photos. With winter coming up soon, please look at what you want to do before Queens Birthday as it is coming up soon.

Well, I'll let the trip reports do the talking!

Cheers,

Shane Michelin



COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT 2009-2010

President	Ashley Martin	president@vfwdc.com 0438 600 904
Vice President	Mark Kochan	vicepres@vfwdc.com 0412 544 668
Treasurer	Phil Griffith	treasurer@vfwdc.com 0419 865 472
Secretary	Paul Ryan	secretary@vfwdc.com 0438 121 148

GENERAL COMMITTEE

Assistant Secretary	Bruce Cremonesi	assist@vfwdc.com
Trip Co-ordinator	Daniel Robinson	trips@vfwdc.com
Newsletter Editor	Shane Michelon	editor@vfwdc.com
Association Delegate	John Partridge	
Training Officers	Ashley Martin	John Partridge
	Michael Rodger	Mark Kochan
New Member Contact	George Pledger	
Web Manager	Paul Ryan	web@vfwdc.com

Club Details

Registered Name	Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club Inc
Registration No	A002184F
Correspondence	PO Box 778 Dandenong Vic 3174
Email	secretary@vfwdc.com
Website	www.vfwdc.com
Meetings	Held 8pm, first Wednesday of each month, excluding January (no meeting).
Location	Noble Park Football Club (Bowling club near car park) 46-56 Moodemere Street Noble Park Melways ref: 89 D4
Newsletter	All articles and photographs to be submitted prior to 20 th of each month to editor@vfwdc.com
Front Cover	
	The Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club is an affiliated club of the Victoria Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs Inc (VAFWDC)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of *Free Wheeling*.

As mentioned at the last General Meeting, the 2010 Victoria Volunteer Grants are now open. We have submitted an application for \$5000 which will cover a range of equipment and training. Equipment will include full PPE for chainsaw usage, chainsaw, and a first aid kit. The remaining money will be used for chainsaw training and possible first aid courses. We are not guaranteed this grant so will have to wait and see what eventuates.

The purpose of applying for the grant is to mainly assist DSE at Parkers Corner. As you may be aware, we have worked closely with Noel Lees over the years planting trees at Merringtons camp ground, erecting camping code of ethics signs at Merringtons and O'Tooles, and more recently grave marking around the Aberfeldy area. Having the above equipment, and accredited trained members, will enable the Club to continue this great working relationship that benefits not only us but the greater community. Let's hope we receive this grant.

It's coming up to that time of the year when we think about members contribution to running the Club. While it may seem some way off, the AGM is drawing nearer and we need fresh members to play a role. There are no major outstanding issues; the Club is in a very good position financially and in relation to membership numbers, so there will be no problem areas at the handover. As usual, all committee positions will be open and I will be standing down from the President's role due to new house commitments. I have contributed in various committee roles over the past 10 years and it is time to for others to lead the Club and continue its many years of history. Please think about volunteering, it's very rewarding.

Don't forget we have more guest speakers lined up for the coming months.

MAY: Eddi Lacanau from Opposite Lock Holdings Pty Ltd. Eddi will run through the many 4WD products available from OP.

JUNE: High Country Huts Association

And Bruce is trying to finalise the Police Air Wing for September

See you on the next trip - or at the next meeting.

Ashley Martin
President

Minutes of General Meeting – 7 April 2010

General Meeting April 2010

Accepted : Shane Michelon
Seconded : Mark Kochan

The meeting was held at the Bowling Club Rooms, Noble Park Football Club and was opened at 8.00pm by President Ashley Martin.

Present: There were 20 members present as per the attendance book

Apologies: Maxine Ryan, Lesley Peters, John Wimetal, Ken Beard, Karen Griffith, Aline Van Buiten, Jim O'Brien

Visitors: Nil

Minutes of EAGM:

The meeting opened at 8.05pm.

The Extraordinary Annual General Meeting was chaired by President, Ashley Martin. The purpose of the meeting was to present the financial statement which was not available at the previous AGM.

Treasurer, Phil Griffith presented the financial statement for the year 2008 – 2009.

It should be noted that although the club posted a financial loss for the reporting period, the figures include an overpayment to Four Wheel Drive Victoria of Association fees, which has since been reimbursed and which will be included in the statement for the 2009 – 2010 financial year.

In order to assist future treasurers the Club has this year introduced:

- an expense claims form to enable the club to track payments to members for out of pocket expenses
- Cashflow Manager software, to ease the process of reporting the club's financial affairs to the auditor.

Accepted: Tim Axtell
Seconded: Anthony Van Buiten

The EAGM closed at 8.15pm.

Minutes of previous General Meeting

Matters arising: Nil

Correspondence in

Overland Cruising – Feb / March 2010
CCJC Newlsetter – Feb / March 2010
Variety Club QLD 2010 News
VKS 737 Network News
Gippsland Offroad Flyer
Westprint Maps & Books Catalogue
Post Office Box Invoice
Four Wheel Drive Victoria Raffle Tickets
Letter from Graham Code asking for assistance to maintain the Aberfeldy Repeater

Correspondence out

Newsletter – it was suggested that we should distribute to other clubs electronically. This will be discussed at the next committee meeting.

Notice of EAGM

Treasurers report

Term Deposit	5064.86
Cash	3055.66
Petty Cash	150.00
Money In	182.00
Moneys Out	0
Balance	8452.52

Accepted: Bruce Cremonesi
2nd: Shane Michelon

Trip reports

Knockwood – Dan gave the report for the Knockwood trip held on the Labour Day weekend. 6 Vehicles managed to attend and had pretty good weather when they turned up on Saturday, which also meant they had good views when they drove to Mt Terrible. However it started to rain on Saturday night and as a result the trip became more nautical than 4WD. The group stuck to the rockier tracks in the area and actually managed to get up above the rain for a while however it was still a damp pack up and journey home on Monday.

Noojee day trip – Anthony gave the trip report for the

Noojee day trip - Anthony gave the trip report for the Noojee day trip. The group tried a few tracks in the Noojee / Powelltown / Warburton area and found a couple that were a good climb and provided a challenge to some of the newer members. New Turkey Spur was a bit too rutted to attempt and there was an overgrown track that added one or two pinstripes to Anthony's new car. The group stopped at the Ada tree for lunch and on the whole had a very good day.

Easter Weekend on the Murray - Ashley gave the trip report for the Easter trip to the Murrumbidgee which apparently consisted of sitting around a doing not much at all which suited most of the participants to a tee. The river was up slightly from previous years although there had been reports of algae in the area.

Easter Weekend Southport / Robe - Bruce gave a great report about the trip to Robe which seemed to consist of snatching bogged Toyotas (club members) and dealing with ungrateful Disco owners (non club member). By all accounts the group had a great time although Ken's fire building skills were called into question (by Bruce, naturally). A big thanks to the Wattle Ranges 4WD Club who provide the mud maps of the area and have done a fantastic job of updating them.

Trip coordinators report

The various trip leaders gave a brief overview of the following upcoming trips.

Type	When	Where	Trip Leader
Week-end	April	Licola High Country	Shane Michelin
Day Trip	TBD	Marysville	Bruce Cremonesi
Long (Trip Full)	June	Madigan Line - Simpson Desert	Ken Beard

Shane is running a trip into Butcher Country in late April. This should be medium level but may become hard if wet. Shane intends to camp on Tamboritha Road on the Friday night and start the trip Saturday morning.

The Day Trip around the Marysville area will take in Stevenson Falls and the Falls on Lady Talbot Drive.

The Madigan line trip is full.

We need trips for Anzac Day and Queen's Birthday weekend so if anyone is interested in running a trip can they please let Dan know.

David Bruinsma suggested a camper trailer trip to help those with trailers familiarize themselves with towing off road. Bruce suggested that the High Country Huts trip that he has previously run could be a good candidate for this.

John McNeill has had a request from Arthur Bartlett at Kids Ranch in Tynong North for club members to assist with working bees on the ranch. The club will contact Arthur and look at organizing a day to have a look round and see what we can assist with. This will probably be on a Saturday or Sunday TBD.

Event Coordinators Report

Nil

Association Report

Nil.

General business

Community Grants scheme - the club has been invited to apply for a grant under the community grants scheme. We have made a submission with the aid of Hari Maragos from FWD Vic and will keep the club posted on progress.

Aberfeldy Repeater Tower - Graham Code from Aberfeldy has forwarded a request for assistance in maintaining the Aberfeldy Repeater Tower. The tower recently ceased to function and although it is now working again there is a considerable amount of work that needs to be performed to keep it up and running for future generations. The locals need both financial and manual assistance and the club will consider ways we can help as this is an area we visit frequently.

Other Business

Nil.

Raffle No raffle this month.

Meeting Closed: 9.35pm

Next Meeting: Wednesday 5th of May at the Bowling Club Rooms, Noble Park Football Club.

EVERYTHING 4WD

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Recovery Gear
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Dual Battery Trays
Batteries
Snorkels

Roof Racks
Rooftop Tents
Awnings
Rear Protection Step Towbars
Ute Liners
Ute Canopies
Air Jacks
High Lift Jacks
Compressors
Fridges
Spare Parts

New retail store opening soon at:

86 Camms Road
Cranbourne

Contact:

John Partridge
p: 0428 331 211
e: everything4wd@hotmail.com
w: <http://stores.shop.ebay.com.au/everything4wd>

Discounts available for all 4WD club members



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CLUB CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

2010				
May	Wednesday 5 th	General Meeting	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904
June	Wednesday 2 nd	General Meeting	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904
	11–14	Trip—Wonnangatta River Dargo/ Collins Hut	Anthony Van Buiten	9764 3381
	11–14	Mansfield State Forest Alpine Park	David Bruinsma	a/h 9702 0288
	29 th	Trip—North Simpson Desert - Madigan Line	Ken Beard & Jane Spence	5971 4683
July	Wednesday 7 th	General Meeting	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904

23rd March, 2010

To Aberfeldy/Toombon & 4WD users,

You may have been aware that the Channel 3 repeater at Aberfeldy was recently not working for a period of three weeks. The repeater has operated with little trouble for almost 20 years but has deteriorated through fair wear and tear during this time. John Patterson and Mark French originally built up the system and did wonderful work maintaining it, but they now are not involved in this area.

At the recent breakdown, Lynda & I were fortunate enough to locate two generous radio technicians from BAE systems, who brought the system back into operation. We paid them \$100 for travelling expenses - two trips to and from Traralgon, and about six hours work in repairs. Very kind help on their part, I'm sure you will agree.

However, we need to repair the wear and tear on the radio and to this end we need to purchase and install the two external aerials and brackets. These will cost \$100 each plus a few extra dollars for travel and installation - I

expect a total of \$300 in total.

Then, a new repeater is being built up at cost by these BAE technicians and it will cost \$700.00, including installation. Finally, in winter the two large batteries may need replacement and then the unit will be operating again at its best.

I propose opening a bank account in the name of "Aberfeldy & Environs Local Neighbourhood Radio Repeater Group" with two signatures required for cheques to be paid to our technicians. Perhaps we can register three or four persons from different families to sign the cheques.

As the last member of the original group and its former secretary, I will continue in this role but not as Treasurer. The previous group was John Patterson (chair), Bill Ashworth (Dec.) - Treasurer, Rex Murfett & Grahame Code - Secretary.

I would appreciate it if you can circulate this letter among persons you know who may use this valuable community service and ask for donations. We need to set a target of \$1,500.00 to keep the unit running in top order for the next four or five years. Can you help?

UPCOMING TRIPS

DESTINATION	Wonnangatta River Dargo/Collins Hut	DESTINATION	Mansfield State Forest Alpine Park
LEADER/ CONTACT NO.	NAME: Anthony Van Buiten TEL: 9764 3381 MOB: 0413 784 074	LEADER/ CONTACT NO.	David Bruinsma a/h 9702 0288 0417 747 860
DATE	June 11-14 Queens Birthday Weekend	DATE	Queens Birthday Long Weekend Frid 11th June to Mon 14th June
MEETING PLACE / TIME	7:00pm Longwarry BP Service Station	MEETING PLACE / TIME	Lilydale McDonalds, Friday 11th, say 7.0pm to feed little Kids and the big Kids too. (OR) Saturday 12th Sheeppark Flat camping area by 9.30am
GRADE	WET: Medium DRY: Easy-Medium	GRADE	WET: Easy DRY: Easy
TRIP ACTIVITY DETAILS	Its been a few years since a few of us has visited Collins Hut, so I thought this long weekend would be a good chance to do so. There will be a day trip or two, exploring the nearby tracks or the option to relax around camp. The entrance onto scrubby creek track has been steep in the past but nothing too bad. Still able to take camper trailers in and out.	TRIP ACTIV- ITY DETAILS	I am aiming for a good, casual, fun, easy weekend for my first trip with this club. As we have 3 days, there is no need for vast distances to be covered each day, especially with setting up and packing up camping equipment. This trip is aimed as a beginners trip WITH TRAILERS going off-road. Also suitable for people who are looking to purchase off-road trailers to watch what you need to do safely when 4wd- ing when burdened with a trailer. Chance of seeing some snow. There are some creek crossings, which may be a trickle of water or a bit higher ???
VEHICLE LIMITS	2— 8	VEHICLE LIM- ITS	2— 6
APPROX KMS	300km	APPROX KMS	Lilydale to Mansfield, approx 150kms Mansfield to first overnight stop, will be approx 30 to 35kms (Sheeppark Flat area), only the later 1/3 will be off- road.
LAST AVAILABLE FUEL	PETROL: Dargo DIESEL: Dargo	FUEL	Mansfield
DISTANCE BE- TWEEN SUPPLIES	Supplies available from Dargo, or we drive past the Wonnangatta Caravan Park on the way in where people of- ten stop for ice.	DISTANCE BETWEEN SUPPLIES	It is expected to be approx 230km Round trip to/from Mansfield
EQUIPMENT RE- QUIRED	Recovery Gear Warm Clothes. This is the high coun- try, expect anything	EQUIPMENT REQUIRED	All Recovery Gear Food Water Camping Equipment (ie trailers) etc for 3 nights and 3 days Bring your Cameras, there should be plenty of scenery and huts to see.
MAPS REQUIRED	Rooftop's Dargo- Wonnangatta Ad- venture Map covers the area if you would like to bring your own map.	MAPS RE- QUIRED	Rooftop's "Bush Huts Around Mansfield"
RADIO CHANNEL CB / UHF	12	RADIO CHAN- NEL	12



Beachport - Carpenters Rocks Beachport - Robe 2010

Starters.

TL: Bruce, his daughter Rebecca Cremonesi - GU Patrol - The Awesome

TEC: Danny, Mishy, Lachy, and Maddy Robinson - GU Patrol - The Turncoat

Tim, Alison and Mat Baker - GU Patrol

Gary Smith - GU Patrol

Johan, Mrs Johan, 2 little Johan's Liebenburg - GQ Patrol
Steve, Nicole, 2 little Nicole Pitcher- Custom 3wd 100 Series

Kandee and Cameron Cremonesi - Mazda 3 Sport/racing.
Ken, Jane, 2 not so little Ken Beards - Some Toyota thing - The Evil Hunter

Luke, Mrs Luke, 2 little Luke's - Ford Exploder - The Hunted

Day 1: Getting there!

With all the planning done for us by our fantastic TL all we had to do was drive to Beachport - it couldn't be easier! 3 of the first group met up at Rollarama and stood there freezing for 20 mins while waiting for the bloke who lived about a sneeze from there who was last to arrive! At least he bribed the TL with Coffee or he'd be doing the trip report!

With the early start we managed to beat Peak hour out of town! Quick stop at McD's for some pretend food on far side of the Westgate and away we set to Hamilton. After a fairly uneventful drive to Hamilton we stopped there to rest, for coffee, for a wee, and let the group bunch up again.

From Hamilton to Mt Gambier, it was sort of also uneventful except for Bruce getting pulled over by the bacon - even though he saw them parked up on the main street in Casterton secret squirrel style and they still wanted to have a word to him! It took Sgt Donger 10mins to catch up to him! (*It was a Pajero after all!*) It started as a simple breathalyser (10am?!) until the cop overheard Tim blabbing on UHF about Bruce's lack of front number plate (*9 yrs without one!*) Anyway Sgt Donger was happy to let that pass, but wanted it fitted in Mt Gambier. So while having lunch and a look round the stinkhole in Gambier, Bruce reluctantly fitted it. We had a look around the hole, and the brave clambered down for a look see and some photos to find plenty of Bee hives in the cracks in the walls! Mayday! While the kids found

their way up onto the old wagon for a photo and yelling session!



From here it was straight to camp to setup, rest, and set about a campfire - which resembled sitting around a burning match (*well not up to Bruce's fire standard!*) How small? We had to move our chairs into the fire pit to feel any form of warmth. What made it worse was the awesome conversation - who had the most awesome \$1000 coffee machine. What ever happened to a jar of Moccona for \$3?

On the way into town, we dropped into the Visitors center to pickup some Tourist packs with maps etc. Luckily our superb TL scored all that was left in the after hours box for our group.



After dinner and ale, most aired down their tyres and fitted their sand flags. Tim won the most original - Fishing rod with a pair of Red undies hanging off it!

After a few drinks, few stories of conquests past, present and future, few screams at kids, few cries at the tiny "FIRE", most had an early night for the early morning start to Carpenters Rocks.



Day 2: Beachport to Carpenters Rocks.

With the kids full of excitement they all woke up at stupid o'clock, much to the dismay of parents who were nice and warm! Brekkie was cooked and consumed, much coffee was swilled, bog runs were had, nurses were heard thru the campground, and the day had begun.

The weather was looking mighty fine for the day so food and drinks packed, a quick chat from the TL we headed out for the day and to the beach! Thankfully the TL had arranged for the tides to be just about low as we took off, so we could do some beach work!

The maps we had from the tourist center are excellent! Anybody could follow them, thanks to the great work with the Wattle Ranges Club.



Heading out of town, we went past the boat ramp which is usually the first entry point to the beach but this time it had a Road Closed sign on it, as did the second entry point. Not a good sign for the day? We continued onwards until Bruce saw another hole in the bush and shot up the old dirt track which lead onto the beach at last! The sand on this first section was hard packed - perfect for the novices we had with us to gain some confidence. Quick stop 2klms down the beach so we could take a few pictures, and check pressures, quick chat to make sure all were happy with how things were going, we headed onwards again to Southend rocks. Quick stop for photo and chat at the wall and in through town to the Boozy Gully Lookout - Great name eh! There's some stunning coastline to be seen along this section. This photo was

taken from the lookout.

From here we doubled back to the next section of beach, which would be the start of some real fun in the sun!



On the beach at McIntyre Beach along the sand once again. Heading along past Midden site, we come to Geltwood Beach. On this section on the maps, it comes with a warning, *"extremely soft sand most of the year"*. Bruce asked all if they want to give it a go or not, since we had a couple of novices. Unanimously the reply was "LET'S KEEP GOING" ... So we did. Yes, you know what's coming don't you?

Sailing along quite nicely out front were Bruce and Tim and along this section of beach there were only 2-3 'exits' which you can bail on the beach and head into the dunes. The front pair were sitting on a nice high range 2wd 3rd gear cruise down the beach, and those back further were stuck behind someone in low 1st with the hand throttle on 1400rpm which was causing problems for those further back as they were sinking! The sand became really soft and Bruce called back stating that it maybe an idea for those behind to take the inland tracks.



Well since this is a fun report, no names will be mentioned, but the bloke in the white 3wd Cruiser with purple stripes who is married to Nicole and has 2 kids, tried to do a u turn on a narrow part of the beach, but went the wrong way - he turned down to the water and then tried going up the beach but dropped like a bride's nighty. This held up the hunter, hunted, behind him and the traitor at the rear. Bruce and Tim made it right through to the end, and pulled off the beach there in the dunes and waited playing footy, taking photos, eating lunch, washing their cars, digging holes, filling in holes, sleeping, some

sun baking, working out the issues with the world, and several jaunts into the bushes for a relief break - well they had close to 2 hours to burn!

Now the problem starts - Steve is hideously bogged up to the roof rack, things were looking grim. Add to that the fact he was facing the fence in front of him, and the encroaching surf behind him - with the tide coming up. So Ken couldn't get in front or behind him to snatch properly.

Shovel time. Nicole was already out digging out the side of the tyres at a wild pace!



They dug out the sides of the tyres a little more, after several attempts to recover him, more digging, less air in tyre time. After several more attempts, they had moved the front of Steve's car round a tad. It was quite amusing to hear from few klms away on the UHF. Then being a true club player, Ken feeling sorry for Steve, decided to get bogged as well. I mean, its only fair. Now they could really go for teamwork, digging, pushing, flattening the sand, making noises on the radio, and entertaining their fellow club members.

Finally, after some sweating, and swearing, they had both cars out, and were on their way. Now to figure out how far back they were to meet up with Bruce and Tim. After a few discussions, Ken who was now in front realised that we were to meet up at #27 on the map.

After 30mins, we were finally all together again, and stopped there for lunch. It was decided that the beach was barred for the rest of the day!



We left 27 to head to Carpenters Rocks. From here on, there were strange calls from Ken (the hunter), "Get stuck there did you Luke (the hunted)?" and things like "You'll have to get out of bed earlier to catch me out

than that"... I don't know the full story, but the stage was set for a weekend of trying to bog each other! Day 2 honours went to the Hunted... But would it stay that way?



We headed past Little Rock, Whale Rock, and up a large sand hill that overlooks the wind farms at Lake Bonney. Very striking sight 50 odd wind-farm thing-a-majiggy

<Sarcasm> But the noise - you couldn't hear a chainsaw going through RHS for the noise; it was deafening </sarcasm>. If you have never been to one of these wind farms they are very quiet.

From here it was back down the dune, to the main track, it was discovered that Steve's Cruiser was only driving 1 front wheel. It could have explained the bogging on the beach. It could also explain his issues with pulling to the left over the last 8mths. The result was found on returning to camp. So we kept on past Channel Rocks and #2 Rocks, to the Canunda NP boundary. This section here we started to run into more tourers coming the other way. And as we got to the end of the tracks there was a group of wrinklies coming out into the dunes, in things like VW Transporters, Ford Transit vans, Kombi's, Landrovers, and other weird things. God knows where they were headed, but we managed to pass them with ease.



As we exited the southern edge of Lake Bonney, we turned right to go up to the lighthouse for a look see, and a view back down the beach. Thankfully for the ladies of the tour, the lighthouse had a dunny there. Few photos were had of the lighthouse, the view down the beach, of the dog on the sand, of the crab on the rock, and then it was into town for an ice cream and inflate tyres.

From here it was a nice quick drive home on the tar through the pine trees. I can say that Nicole drives a tad quicker than Steve! She isn't big, but her boot is very

heavy!

Now back at camp, it was time for dinner, drinks, stories, lies, fibs, non truths, and as more drinkies were had, the manure thickened as there were the required amount of screams at kids... We sat around another "fire" L Something will be done about this tomorrow night comes the call from Bruce.



At the same time, we needed to look at what was wrong with Steve's 3wd Cruiser. Others liked the idea of 3wd. Out with the tools, and mat, and drinks, and hand cleaner. It was discovered that 2 tabs within the hub had been bent to god, thus making the hub fubar. Dan managed to bodge it up so that it was locked so Steve could wheel - but we did have a free day tomorrow. So Steve planned to ring around SA and find one. Yea well that didn't happen, none of the yota dealers felt it required to be open on Saturday, one last hope was a wrecker, and as far as I know, Steve is still waiting for the bloke to call him back.

Day 3. - Rest Day.

Today was designed to allow those who arrived the day before, to go for a run to Carpenters, sleep, or what ever they wanted! Johan went fishing, the rest went searching for the mysterious famous hidden huge sand dune of Atlantis.



Our Group: We went for a drive to visit the "Dinosaur" caves. The caves themselves were brilliant, very well lit, the guide was excellent and good value, and I'd do the other caves next time. The Dinosaur gig was a bit of a

downer, there's more bones in a Big Mac than the cave we went into. There was 1 bone. Tad disappointing!

But the hangers were really nice. The caves were warmer than expected.

Dan's group:

We headed off back down the beach toward South End to look for some Sand dunes to play in. The beach was firmer today for the drive, but the wind was howling today.

1/2 way to South End we came across a dead washed up Stingray. Wow, something you don't see everyday!

We continued through South End & into the park, instead of getting back onto the beach we followed the inland tracks. After morning tea we found a very large empty dune area for people to play on.

The kids were setup for a tow behind one of the cars on a tarp, all loved the drag around the soft sand.

After the playing had stopped we headed back toward south end. Once at south end instead of airing up to get back to Beachport on the main road we took the option to run back up the beach. The run back up the beach was just as easy as the first run. We arrived back in Beachport just in time for lunch & a relaxing afternoon.

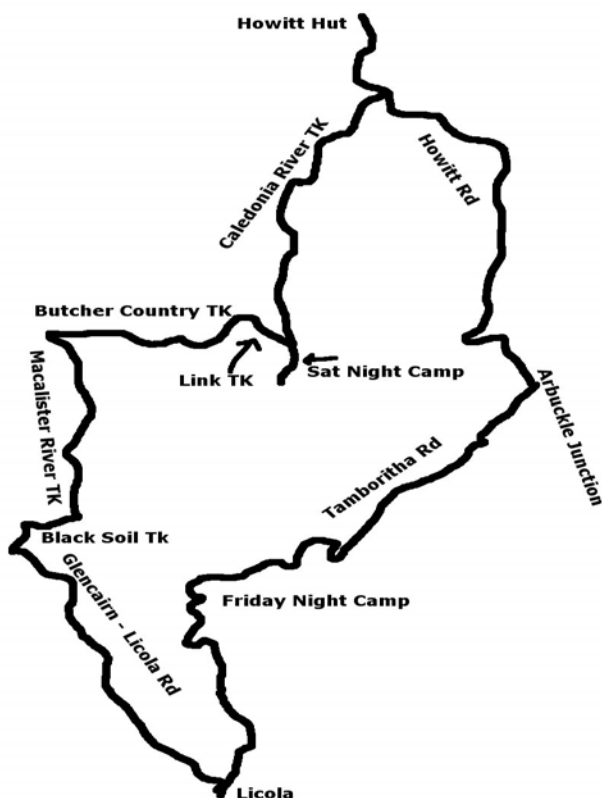


Licola—High Country 16—18 Apr

TL: Shane Michelon

Participants:
David Jackson
Gary Johnston
Robert

Due to my memory being complete rubbish, this report may have omissions or errors. However, I will try to tell the story as well as I can remember.



We decided to meet up at the Langwarren BP on the way to Moe. After misjudging the time, we got there about 30 minutes late. David was there waiting, but Robert hadn't arrived. During the trip, I was informed that the place we were at was not Langwarren but Longworried. Since Robert didn't have a mobile, I couldn't call him to check the location. After a while he called me and advised he was waiting at the Langwarren servo which was not where we were! After we sorted it all out, he headed our way and we all met up quite late.

We had a long but uneventful drive to Licola and headed up Tamboritha Rd a little way to camp for the night. It didn't take long to get the swags set up and notice that Rob was in the process of setting up a decent tent which took a bit of time. Since we'd all had dinner on the way up and we couldn't be bothered lighting a fire we sat around for a few minutes until it was decided we needed a fire after all.



We sat around for a while discussing the ridiculous things that a camping trip brings out and then after a small commotion behind Roberts car, he emerged with a significant gash above his eye. Out came first aid kits from all sides along with many willing doctors and nurses. Fortunately we were spared the Stallone 'First Blood' scene and got by with some bandaids and wipes.



The next morning Robert advised that he could not continue with the trip and so we packed up and left heading back to Licola to meet up with Gary. After a fuel up and quick map check, we set off along the river up towards Black Soil Rd. The day was quite uneventful except for some quite steep terrain, but given the dry conditions, well setup vehicles, and experienced drivers, we had no issues with the many river crossings and steep stepped climbs.

After a steep but straightforward descent into Caledonia River, we found a great camping spot next to the river. Although very load, it was a great sport to camp. Because of the lack of problems, we got to the camp site at about 3pm which made for a relaxing afternoon. Well, it would have been relaxing if it wasn't for the toilet tent I decided to setup. It wasn't until the tent was torn and I was in a lather that I realised the tent was inside out! Once this was corrected it was easy going. After that it was far too much hassle to bother with the vehicle shower.

After a quiet dinner, which tasted great after sufficient libation, everyone headed off to bed at a shameful 9pm!

An easy start the next day and we headed off north up the Caledonia valley through many more crossings. The exit from the Valley seems a bit steep and broken up but posed no real dramas. Again we found ourselves at Howitt hut quite early. After a short break we headed back toward Arbuckle junction and then down Tamboritha rd and had a BBQ at Licola under a beautiful clear sky. After a goodbye and pressure up, we headed back out toward Heyfield—Moe and home.



Thanks to all participants, it was a great trip with no real issues through some beautiful country.

Shane Michelon.

Mildura Easter 2010

Who came:

Bob & Kathleen McKerrow GQ Patrol
 Peter & Janine Frankland & Molly Mitsubishi
 Anthony & Alene van Buyten & the kids Toyota Lux
 Ashley & Lesley Martin GU Patrol
 John Patridge & Borrowed GU Patrol
 Derek & Jan Hymas Discovery
 Tim & Donna Axtel & Travis & Charlotte 60 Series
 Simon & Laura Dore & Blake & Damon (Bob & Kathleens kids) Ford Falcon

The mission was for people to head north on the Calder Highway, pass through Ouyen, 60 kilometres north of Ouyen, turn right and follow the red arrows to arrive at the designated camping spot. A camping that is becoming steeped in history, in awe, in peace, quiet and relaxation.

The Mighty Murray River.

Some of us left on Thursday morning, read myself and Kathleen. We meet up with Pete and Janine and their dependant Molly at the BP roadhouse on the Calder. We eventually passed Anthony and the rest of the family just before the turnoff on Booroondara Road. Fortunately they actually (well nearly) knew the road in to the exclusive camping area. This allowed for the careful placing of the arrows.

Most had arrived before sundown although there was one arrival just after midnight and a couple more on the Friday. In all 8 camp sites, 6 kids, 1 furry critter, and the stage was set to follow the plan of relax, relax, swim, eat, relax, drink and relax.

Friday was just that, Relax, have a few drinks and relax. Saturday dawned late - 8.15 over the trees and after, or was that during breakfast, some decided that a drive to the Hattah Lakes was a good idea. Some, read me, decided on a trip to Mildura but a few decided on the Hattah Lakes trip.

Trip to Hattah Lakes

Easter Sunday, 2010

Anthony & Aline, Riley & Connor
 Tim & Donna, Travis & Charlotte
 John & Tina & Steph
 Derek & Janet

Anthony had planned a drive to Hattah Lakes. I asked him how he was going to get there and as he hadn't given the route much thought, I suggested a drive that would take us up to another river bend and sandbar (Ki Bend), then along Chalka Creek and down to Lake Hattah with a return trip along Mournpall and Raak Tracks.

He said that sounded like a very good idea and appointed me as leader for 'his' day trip. I didn't put up much of an argument - the idea of no dust for the day seemed good to me!

We set off about 11.00am and drove south down River Track where we turned left to Ki Bend. At the river, we turned upstream and followed the track down to Messengers Crossing. We drove along beside a large sandbar where Jan and I have camped in our caravan - if you can describe staying in a caravan as camping, that is.

We hadn't been there for about three years and it looked as if a flood must have gone through. It all looked quite different and we couldn't even find the spot on the riverbank where we usually camped.

We passed the Messengers homestead which was for sale at \$495,000. It was for sale three years ago as well, so perhaps they are asking too much. That, at least, was the opinion of many in the group.

Messengers Crossing is where River Track crosses Chalka Creek just as it flows out of the Murray. Chalka Creek is

an anabranch - a branch of a river that flows back into the main river - and it rejoins the Murray further north near the Wonga Wills Gate on River Track where you enter the Hattah-Kulkyne National Park.

On its way, Chalka Creek flows through the Hattah Lakes system from Lake Hattah in the south to Lake Bitterang in the north and is the way that all the lakes progressively become filled with water.

John helped us solve something that has been puzzling me for some time. When we last visited Messengers Crossing, we noted that the entry to Chalka Creek was permanently dammed, so how does the water flow into the system? Adding to the puzzle is the fact that the outflow to the Murray - at the other end of the anabranch near the Wonga Wills Gate - is also dammed.

John suggested the water may be pumped from the Murray into Chalka Creek and after visiting the Visitors Centre we were able to confirm that the water is indeed pumped and the dams are to keep the water in the creek and lakes system from running back into the Murray. There is a program of pumping and a series of regulators along the creek designed to imitate the natural, periodical water inflows and keep the lakes system alive.

We followed Chalk Creek Track and stopped to have a look at one of the billabongs that were still filled with water. We turned south at Stockyard Track and then right at the Hattah- Robinvale Road making our way to Lake Hattah via the Old Calder Highway.

We stopped at the Visitors Centre, where we watched a short but informative video about the lakes and the lake system and then had lunch at the picnic area beside Lake Hattah. Afterwards, we went on the nature drive around Lakes Hattah, Bulla and Arawak. There are about 20 points of interest on the way - some natural, some man-made - and each is described in the notes you can get at the Visitors Centre.

It was time to make our way back to camp and the drive back along the well-graded Mournpall Track was much quicker than our journey out. We turned right on to Raak Track and followed this until we again reached the banks of the northern end of Chalka Creek, now much less defined as the flow of water very rarely reaches this far north.

We finally crossed Chalka Creek again just after turning south on to River Track at the end of Raak Track. The creek looks to be no more than a small gully here and it's hard to see just how important it is to the whole area in terms of maintaining the local fauna and flora.

We arrived back in camp at around 3.30 (I think) just in time for Happy Hour.

Derek Hymas

CUJO

One of the persons on our trip, names not mentioned to prevent embarrassment, decided on a mountain bike ride along the main road alongside the river, coincidentally called River Road. It was here that a potential horrendous incident nearly occurred. While riding back to the camp, Ashley, sorry, no names, the person encountered upon the 21st century version of the River Troll. This humungous beast proceeded to pursue the un-named person for several kilometres along River Road until the the superior fitness and vigour of youth put paid to the pursuit of what was described back at camp as a HUGE dog. Biggerer, strongerer, fasterer, angrier, snarling, growling, snapping and looking decidedly hungry. Ahh, youth - and adrenalin. It did appear however, from those who also saw this dog, although through the safety of a vehicle, that this animal called have been named FLUFFY. Onya Ashley.

Sunday was spent relaxing, a few drinks, eating and relaxing.

Monday. Ditto

In the early hours of Tuesday morning, around 3am, the pitter patter of raindrops was heard on the tent. Oh joy, packing up wet. Most were up by 7.30am, daylight saving had finished on the Sunday morning. It appeared that everyone had packed up really quickly and we had all left by 9am. The weather report from the Mildura region around midday was very heavy rain around the Mildura region and south. We may have dodged a soaking.

All in all, a great trip. Great company, good happy hours, swimming was best on the Monday but that was the worst day for insects, moths, midgies and locusts. The fires were brilliant, river redgum coals are just the best for camp cooking.

Looking forward to 2011. Remember next year Easter is at the end of April, Easter Monday being Anzac day. Days will be cooler, Tuesday is a public holiday and therefore a 3 day working week. Looks like an extended stay.

A word. It had obviously rained quite heavily a couple of months before Easter which absolutely soaked the area. One vehicle, and obviously only 1 as there were only 1 set of tracks in and 1 out, had driven from where the bitumen starts on River Road all the way into near our camping area and created massive ruts, some over 200mm deep, all the way in and back again. As a 4WD club and as members of the Victorian Association, we are bound by the tenant of "Tread Lightly". While it may have been fun, boy, did it look like fun, it can really stuff the track for future users. We need to think before we proceed especially when a large amount of damage could be caused.

Bob McKerrow