



# FREE WHEELING

February 2024



VFWDC  
Magazine

Official Newsletter of the  
Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club  
Inc Registration No: A0002184F



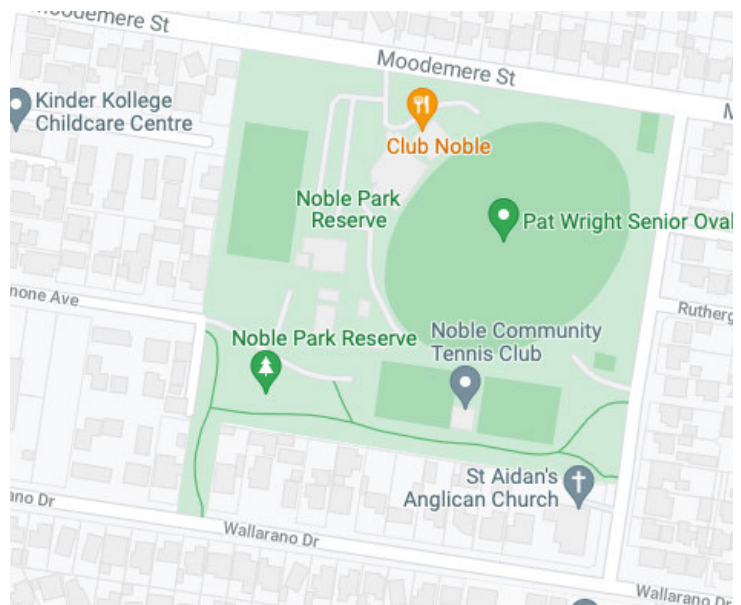
### VFWDC Meeting Details & Venue

The club meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 8.00pm with the following exceptions:

No meeting at Club Noble in January.

#### Club Noble Addresss

Upstairs Blue and Gold Room Club  
Noble  
46-56 Moodemere Street Noble Park  
3174  
Melways ref: 89 D4



**This month's meeting will be held on Wednesday 7th February at 8.00pm.**

## Club Committee

### 2023 - 2024

President	Neville Van Leeuwen	<a href="mailto:president@vfwdc.com">president@vfwdc.com</a>
Vice President	Steve Miller	<a href="mailto:vicepres@vfwdc.com">vicepres@vfwdc.com</a>
Secretary	Daisy Quinn	<a href="mailto:secretary@vfwdc.com">secretary@vfwdc.com</a>
Treasurer	Ly Ho	<a href="mailto:treasurer@vfwdc.com">treasurer@vfwdc.com</a>

### General Committee

Trip Coordinator	Bruce Dunlop	<a href="mailto:trips@vfwdc.com">trips@vfwdc.com</a>
Magazine Editor	Luke David	<a href="mailto:editor@vfwdc.com">editor@vfwdc.com</a>
Association Delegate	Matt Marino	<a href="mailto:delegate@vfwdc.com">delegate@vfwdc.com</a>

### Support Positions to Committee

Web Manager	Ben Whitworth	<a href="mailto:web@vfwdc.com">web@vfwdc.com</a>
Training Officer	Phil Griffith	
Merchandise	Daisy Quinn	<a href="mailto:merchandise@vfwdc.com">merchandise@vfwdc.com</a>

### Club Details

Registered Name	Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club
Registration Number	A002184F
Correspondence Address	PO Box 778, Dandenong, VIC 3174
Email	<a href="mailto:secretary@vfwdc.com">secretary@vfwdc.com</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.vfwdc.com">www.vfwdc.com</a>

The Victorian Four Wheel Club is an affiliated club of [Four Wheel Drive Victoria](#)

Hi All,

I hope you all have had a great break over Christmas and New Year and are ready for another great year ahead.

There has been a fair bit of organisation going on in the background getting ready for this

year's 50 th (WooHoo). We have some dates for upcoming events just about locked in and will

hopefully be able announce these at the Feb general meeting.

We also are working on our usual yearly activities, we have driver training locked in for

March, this is filling fast so get your name down if you haven't done this course yet.

We are working on organising some great trips as well for this year as well as some informative and educational guest speakers. This includes Dion from Weigh Station coming

to our April meeting to do a presentation on all things weights. We will have the option of

doing a "weigh day" after this and receive a comprehensive report on weights of our vehicles

and trailers.

If you have any suggestions for Trips or Guest Speakers, please bring them to the next

meeting so we can try and add them to the year's agenda.

I look forward to hearing from all of you on what you have been up to hearing about your adventures.

Neville Van Leeuwen  
VFWDC President



# Club Calendar

## February

Wednesday 7th	Club Meeting	8:00pm Club Noble
Friday 16th	Hut2Huts Aid Station - Mount Speculation	Organised by Ly (see Upcoming Trips)
Wednesday 21st	Committee Meeting (Virtual)	8:00pm

## March

Wednesday 6th	Club Meeting	8:00pm Club Noble
Tuesday 12th	Proficiency Training	(See Upcoming Trips)
Wednesday 20th	Committee Meeting (Virtual)	8:00pm

## Other Dates

25th April 2024	Big Desert Wanderings Part 2	Organised by Sally, Tristan and Steve Card (see Upcoming Trips)
3rd May 2024	Millers Hut / Lake Tali Karng	Organised by Steve Pitcher (see Upcoming Trips)
8th June 2024	Bruce's Big Trip	Organised by Bruce D (see Upcoming Trips)

# Meeting Minutes



## General Meeting Minutes

**Date:** 06.12.2023

**Time:** 8.03 pm

**Next Meeting:** Wed 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024

**Location:** Club

Open Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome –</li> <li>Apologies: Matt, Jason, Jacqui &amp; Bruce D</li> <li>Unfortunately our guest speaker Stephanie Pond pulled out</li> </ul>	Neville
Minutes from previous month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minutes from Last Meeting</li> <li>Matters arising for previous minutes? Nil</li> <li>Accept: Sally</li> <li>Second: Stuart</li> </ul>	Neville
Guests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Guest Sushan (Sushi)</li> </ul>	Neville
Correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Correspondence in                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perspective member emailed regarding Club Plates – unfortunately this is not something we offer</li> </ul> </li> <li>Banking information</li> <li>Email regarding shipping/relocating cars</li> <li>Correspondence out                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nil</li> </ul> </li> <li>4wheel drive Victoria member stickers</li> </ul>	Ly
Treasurer Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly Treasurers Report for June.</li> <li>Accept: David B</li> <li>Second: Ken</li> </ul>	Ly
Association News	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neville attended 4wheel drive Victoria meeting via zoom                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There were 3 general positions, and 4 people for the positions</li> </ul> </li> <li>The yearly report has been mailed out</li> <li>Re fees – raising them annually however not more than the December CPI – to the nearest dollar or the choice not to raise at all</li> <li>There are issues with building on the Toolangi property – dealing with red tape</li> </ul>	Neville
Upcoming Trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ken – January from 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Swifts creek, native dog flat, Suggan buggan, Buchan caves – 6 to 8 cars</li> <li>Ly – Feb 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> Volunteering at the Mt Speculations first aid station</li> <li>Daisy – 24<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> December Jacksons Crossing – max 6 cars</li> <li>David B – 25<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> Jan Murray river for Australia Day weekend. Camp, cool off and relax Watch the riverboats all day. This will be due north of Shepparton, information to be given closer to the date. 2wd and all wheel drive are fine to come along. Trip contact will be emailed out.</li> <li>Neville has half an idea for a trip for Australia day weekend. But will provide more details at a later date</li> <li>Bruce D's Trip June 2024 up to Darwin to the Tip and back down again</li> </ul>	Neville
Trip Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wonnangatta – Sally Licola to Bryces gorge, walked to Pieman falls which were fantastic. Went to Howatts hut, Zeke Spur into Wonnangatta. Where Lynton and Steve caught Brown trout for dinner. Over to Lake Cobbler, through Bonnydoon and Mansfield.</li> <li>Christmas at Ian and Audreys on 18<sup>th</sup> November Ly did a great spit and skewers with lots of taste testing throughout the day There were enough desserts for at least 60 people ! And fantastic bacon and egg rolls for breakfast</li> <li>Stringybark – Maree Was great, no one around, found lots of wood at other sites. It was Alecs first 4wd trip and he was thrown in the deep end, but did really well the went up to Top crossing hut, ended up on a dead end road and had to turn around and do it all over again.</li> </ul>	All
Merchandise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will look at doing a new order in the New Year</li> </ul>	Daisy



## General Meeting Minutes

Magazine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please provide any feedback on the new club logo Feedback received is maybe do the 4wd gear hub, and remove the VFWD from the middle</li> <li>We will be launching the new logo for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year</li> </ul>	Luke
General Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please ensure you book in for dinner to enable to club to have enough tables set up</li> <li>Certificates – Neville handed out to Dennis from March (just in time to re certify!!)</li> </ul>	All
Guest Speakers –	Stephanie Pond unfortunately was not able to attend this meeting	Stephanie Pond
Meeting Close	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raffle prizes had a new rear awning, a marginally used air sofa, and some sunglasses, keyring stubby holder sets. 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary shirt, stubby holder and club stickers</li> </ul> <p>Meeting close 9.22pm</p>	Neville

Bringing Four Wheel Drivers Together



Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club Inc  
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## Treasurer's Report November 2023

<u>Cheque A/C</u> Opening Balance as at 01/11/2023	\$4,553.76
Add: Membership fees	\$85.00
Less: Xmas Catering	-\$267.92
Nov Offsite meeting catering	-\$189.00
Closing Balance as at 30/11/2023	\$4,181.84
<u>Term Deposit</u> Opening Balance as at 01/11/2023	\$12,022.72
Closing Balance as at 30/11/2023	\$12,022.72
<u>Petty Cash</u> Opening Balance as at 01/11/2023	\$38.30
Closing Balance as at 30/11/2023	\$38.30
<b>Consolidated Closing Cash Position</b>	<b><u>\$16,242.86</u></b>

Bringing Four Wheel Drivers Together



Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club Inc  
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## Treasurer's Report December 2023

<u>Cheque A/C</u>	Opening Balance as at 01/12/2023	\$4,181.84	
	Add: Membership fees	\$153.00	
	Less Association Fees	-\$183.00	
	Catering	-\$21.20	
	Raffle Prizes	-\$49.98	
	Zoom renewal	-\$237.81	
	Closing Balance as at 31/12/2023		\$3,842.85
<u>Term Deposit</u>	Opening Balance as at 01/12/2023	\$12,022.72	
	Closing Balance as at 31/12/2023		\$12,022.72
<u>Petty Cash</u>	Opening Balance as at 01/12/2023	\$38.30	
	Closing Balance as at 31/12/2023		\$38.30
<u>Undeposited</u>	Opening Balance as at 01/12/2023	\$0.00	
	Add: Membership fees	\$85.00	
	Closing Balance as at 31/12/2023		\$85.00
	<b>Consolidated Closing Cash Position</b>		<b><u>\$15,988.87</u></b>



### **This month's meeting**

Our next meeting is on Wednesday, 7th February, at Club Noble. We will have a special guest speaker, so stay tuned for emails from the Committee with further details. The committee would also like to discuss with all members about facelifting the VFWDC logo for release on the club's 50th anniversary. The same logo has been around since the start of the club and needs a modernized facelift, as well as giving us the ability to edit and alter it based on our requirements. Please have a look at the new proposed logos below. If you have any concerns about this change, please email the committee or have a chat with us at the next meeting



### **Membership Fee Changes**

Temporary Membership fees have increased to \$25, and these memberships will no longer be offered for snow trips. You will need to become a full member of the club to attend snow trips. General membership fees have increased to \$85 for a single and \$95 for families. Silver membership fees have increased to \$55.

### **Club's 50th Birthday**

Just in case you weren't aware, next year is the club's 50th birthday. A working group has been formed to organise an amazing event(s) and are starting to look into options and ideas. So anyone who has any amazing ideas, please get in contact with any committee members. We are looking to make it an incredible event so all ideas, no matter how crazy are welcomed.

### **All and any contributions welcome**

You know the score - I need trip reports, photos and any content to make the magazine an interesting read. Don't be shy, send the editor something!!

Please visit our website at [VFWDC.com](http://VFWDC.com) to view all our current membership forms and club policies.

For all new and renewal of memberships, please complete [the online form here](#)

If you are looking for a Temporary Membership, please complete the online form, [which can be found here](#).

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us via the Club Secretary on [secretary@vfwdc.com](mailto:secretary@vfwdc.com)

### **Payments:**

Payment can be made via Bank Transfer. The details are as follows:

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<b>Account</b>	Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club
<b>Name: BSB:</b>	Inc 633108
<b>Account No:</b>	111761979

Please ensure your transfer includes your name as provided on the membership application and renewal form in the reference.





Once you have made your payment/transfer, please send your completed membership application and renewal form to [treasurer@vfwdc.com](mailto:treasurer@vfwdc.com) or you can present it to the Treasurer at any general meeting.

**Thank you for choosing the Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club**

If you are interested in joining [Club Noble](#) where we hold our monthly meetings, their application form can be found [here](#).

# Track Classifications

Four Wheel Drive Victoria have a track grading classification scale which has been developed to assist in advising Trip Leaders and participants on 4WD trips of the type of tracks that they can expect to encounter. On most trips participants can expect that a variety of tracks will be traversed each with an appropriate rating. Trip Leaders should advise participants of the range of track ratings expected to be encountered on the planned route. The following classifications will assist in determining an overall Trip Rating:

Considerations	Easy	Medium	Difficult	Very Difficult
Overall Description	All Wheel Drive and High Range 4WD. Novice Drivers	Mainly High range 4WD but Low range required. Some 4WD experience recommended.	Significant Low range 4WD with standard 4WD ground clearance. Should have 4WD driver training.	Low range 4WD with High ground clearance. Experienced Drivers
Advisory Sign				
Expected terrain and track conditions	Mostly unsealed roads with no obstacles and minor gradients.	Tracks with some steep and/or rocky/slippery/sandy sections. May have shallow water crossings.	Tracks with frequent steep and/or rocky/slippery/sandy sections. Possible water crossings.	Tracks with frequent very steep and/or rocky/slippery/sandy sections. May have difficult river crossings.
Vehicle suitability	All wheel Drive and High Range 4WD. Can be low clearance with single range and road tyres.	Suitable for medium clearance vehicles with dual range and all terrain or road tyres.	Suitable for medium to high clearance vehicles with dual range and all terrain tyres.	Suitable for high clearance vehicles with dual range and tyres suitable for the terrain. (Mud Terrain tyres).
Recovery equipment			Recovery equipment required.	Winch / Recovery equipment required.
Driver Training / Experience	Suitable for novice drivers.	Recommended that drivers have experience or 4WD training. Recommended to be done in groups of vehicles.	Recommended for drivers with reasonable experience or 4WD training. To be done in groups of vehicles.	Drivers with extensive experience and advanced training should only attempt as there are several technical challenges. Recommended to be done in groups of four or more vehicles.
Weather	May be difficult in wet conditions.	Will be more difficult in wet conditions.	Will be more difficult in wet conditions.	Will be more difficult in wet conditions.

## Upcoming Trips

<b>Destination</b>	<b>Proficiency Training</b>
	Phil Griffith – 0419 865 472 Ashley Martin -0428 134 999 John Partridge – 0405 058 079
<b>Dates</b>	Theory – Tue 12th March – 7.30pm start Practical – Friday 15 th March– Sunday 17 th March
<b>Meeting Details</b>	<p>Theory – Noble Park Football Club, Blue and Gold Room Practical – Service Centre Officer (Princess Hwy) Friday @5pm / Saturday @7.30am</p> <p>The Club encourages all members to participate in a proficiency course to ensure the basic fundamentals of 4-wheel driving are gained.</p> <p>Theory provides an overview of the tread lightly principles, vehicles dynamics and functions, tackling various terrains along with other subjects. This provides the background for the practical weekend. Practical we run through individual vehicles and differences, basic recovery equipment and recap some of the theory (including homework). We then begin the practical side running through several techniques to ensure safe vehicle recovery when in difficult situations. Once all participants are confident with these, we hit the tracks to put all the theory into practice.</p> <p>Sunday will be a leisurely start then we will traverse a number of tracks which allow you to become familiar with your vehicles' capabilities and gain further confidence. We should be finished by 2 o'clock arriving back to Melbourne around 4. As with past participants the weekend provides confidence to safely 4WD either with the club or friends</p>
<b>Vehicle Limits</b>	MINIMUM: 4    MAXIMUM: 8
<b>Approx km's meeting place to destination</b>	Approx. 300 km
<b>Last available fuel</b>	PETROL: Moe DIESEL: Moe
<b>Distance between supplies</b>	Theory - pen and concentration
<b>Equipment required</b>	Practical - You will need to be self-sufficient for camping and have your brain switched on!
<b>Maps required</b>	<a href="https://goo.gl/maps/GTrQDz5RLHS2">https://goo.gl/maps/GTrQDz5RLHS2</a>
<b>Radio Channel CB/UHF</b>	UHF Ch 12

## Upcoming Trips

Destination	<b>Hut2Huts Aid Station - Mount Speculation</b>
	NAME: Ly MOB: 0433 387 811 EMAIL: ly.tri.ho@gmail.com
Dates	Friday 16th February to Sunday 18th February 2024
Meeting Details	<p>The Oscars 100 Hut 2 Hut Challenge is a 100km loop course that takes in 10 climbs and 8 iconic huts, starting and finishing at Mt Buller Village in Victoria.</p> <p>Brett and I will be volunteering at an aid station up at Mount Speculation – providing water, snacks and encouragement to the runners.</p> <p>Meet up on Friday morning and make our way to Mansfield to fill up and grab supplies. Then head up to Mount Speculation to join up with the aid station crew we worked with last year – they're an awesome bunch and excited to be with them again!</p> <p>Camp Friday night. Saturday morning and afternoon will continue at the aid station. Once the last runner is through, we'll head down to Kings Hut for the night festivities and camp. Last year the Peninsula 4x4 Club made homemade pizzas!</p> <p>Sunday morning make our way out to Mirimbah Park to air up and head home.</p> <p>If you can't make it Friday, can meet us on Saturday at Mount Speculation.</p> <p>Itinerary: <a href="https://goo.gl/maps/QRj34FMErMENKnQS6">https://goo.gl/maps/QRj34FMErMENKnQS6</a></p>
Grade	WET: Medium/Hard DRY: Easy/Medium
Vehicle Limits	MINIMUM: 2 MAXIMUM: 4
Approx km's meeting place to destination	104km from start to finish
Equipment required	Recovery points and gear. Walking boots. Food and drinks for few days. Camping gear.
Maps required	Google Maps will suffice
Radio Channel CB/UHF	12



## Upcoming Trips

<b>Destination</b>	<b>Bruce's Big Trip</b>
	NAME: Bruce Dunlop MOB: 0448 318 467 EMAIL: bdunloptrip@gmail.com
<b>Dates</b>	King's Birthday Long weekend
<b>Meeting Details</b>	<p>So I'm planning a 6-8 week trip next year. Starting around the King's Birthday Long weekend.</p> <p>Please see rough order of the trip on the next page.</p> <p>The fuel and driving may be a tad too much for the proposed standard trip form. Taking enough for 1000km should cover it with water and food for 10 days per person as well. Given most roadhouses etc are 400-500 km apart it's only the Tanami to cover.</p> <p>As well, leaving earlier, starting mid way or combination of both is more than welcome for the time poor folks.</p> <p>I will take the Cub Camper, caravans at a pinch, but be prepared to park up at places, swags of course an option.</p> <p>Will have some one night stop and prop sleep overs IOT spend longer at destinations ,but will not be doing extended stays IOT get it all done in time.</p>
<b>Grade</b>	TBC
<b>Vehicle Limits</b>	TBC
<b>Approx km's meeting</b>	Approx. 1000km and 400-500 km apart it's only the Tanami to cover
<b>Equipment required</b>	Water and food for 10 days per person
<b>Maps required</b>	TBC
<b>Radio Channel CB/UHF</b>	UHF Ch 13

Destination	Bruce's Big Trip Continued
Trip Activity Details	<p>Here is the rough plan for the route:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Mildura,</li><li>2. Burra,</li><li>3.Oodnadatta,</li><li>4. Mt Dare,</li><li>5. Lambert Centre,</li><li>6. Alice Springs,</li><li>7. Tanami Rd,</li><li>8. Wolfe Creek,</li><li>9. Broome, FIFO (Fly In Fly Out)</li><li>10.Barn Hill Station and or Cape Leveque, FIFO</li><li>11. Gibb river Rd,</li><li>12. Mitchell Falls,</li><li>13. Kununurra,</li><li>14. Mataranka,</li><li>15. Borroloola,</li><li>16. Hells Gate Roadhouse,</li><li>17. Normanton,</li><li>18. Cairns, FIFO again</li><li>19. Palmer River Roadhouse,</li><li>20. The Tip,</li><li>21. Palmer River again, (great steak sanger last time),</li><li>22. Cairns, FIFO ,</li><li>23. Normanton,</li><li>24. Burke and Wills Roadhouse,</li><li>25. Cloncurry,</li><li>26. Birdsville,</li><li>27. Innamincka,</li><li>28. Camerons Corner,</li><li>29. Wilcannia,</li><li>30. Hay,</li><li>31. Echuca,</li><li>32. Melbourne!</li></ol> <p>The fuel and driving may be a tad too much for the proposed standard trip form. Taking enough for 1000km should cover it with water and food for 10 days per person as well.</p> <p>Given most roadhouses etc are 400-500 km apart it's only the Tanami to cover.</p>

## Upcoming Trips

<b>Destination</b>	<b>Big Desert Wanderings Part 2</b>
	NAME: Sally, Tristan and Steve Card Sally: 0435782207 Tristan: 0468958444
<b>Dates</b>	Thursday 25 th April – Sunday 28 th April
<b>Meeting Details</b>	BP Calder Park outbound 8am for 8:30am departure
<b>Grade</b>	WET: Medium DRY: Easy
<b>Trip Activity Details</b>	<p>This is a shake down trip for our new Patrol. We will head to Blue Gum campsite ( no facilities) on Thursday 25 th to base camp for the weekend. Camper Trailers are able to get into the site with a couple of dunes to climb to get into it.</p> <p>Friday and Saturday will be exploring Big Desert and also having a go at Big Dune again.</p> <p>Head home on Sunday</p>
<b>Vehicle Limits</b>	MINIMUM: 3    MAXIMUM: 10
<b>Approx km's meeting place to destination</b>	Approx. 611 km
<b>Last available fuel</b>	PETROL: Ouyen DIESEL: Ouyen
<b>Distance between supplies</b>	250 KM
<b>Equipment required</b>	Recovery Gear. Camping equipment that makes you self sufficient for 4 days. Food and Drinks
<b>Maps required</b>	VIC Desert Maps Hema Maps
<b>Radio Channel CB/UHF</b>	UHF Ch 12

## Upcoming Trips

Destination	<b>Millers Hut / Lake Tali Karng</b>
	NAME: Steve Pitcher Mobile: 0421 205 529
Dates	Friday 3rd – Sunday 5th May 2024
Meeting Details	BP Service Station, Princes Freeway (Pakenham Bypass), Officer (Meet 9:00 am for 9:30 am departure), GPS Coordinates: Lat: -38°0699" Long: 145°3872"
Grade	WET: Hard DRY: Medium
Trip Activity Details	Base Camping at Millers Hut (GPS Coordinates: -37° 5415" Long: 146° 7871"). From there, we can head over on the Saturday to the Sentinels lookout to view Lake Tali Karng from above (no vehicular access down to the lake itself – those that are interested can hike down to the water's edge from camp, and get back in a day, but it takes the whole day and the walking trail is really only suited to experienced hikers). Time permitting, we could also head over to Moroka Hut and/or Horseyard Hut. Either way, a packed or easy to prepare lunch is recommended for the Saturday. Camper trailers are welcome but getting into or out of Millers Hut can be quite challenging if it should rain or snow (which is possible that time of year).
Vehicle Limits	MINIMUM: 2    MAXIMUM: 10
Approx km's meeting place to destination	Approx. 350 km
Last available fuel	PETROL: Licola (Heyfield is the 2 nd nearest) DIESEL: Licola (Heyfield is the 2 nd nearest) – no Alpine diesel available (BYO additive such as IceBreaker)
Distance between supplies	50 kms (approx) back to Licola from Millers Hut
Equipment required	All equipment and supplies required to be self-sufficient for 3+ days / 2+ nights. Be prepared in case it snows. Basic tools, spares and recovery gear (vehicles to be fitted with rated recovery points but winches are not essential). Quality A/T tyres (min) or M/Ts recommended due to rough/rocky terrain.
Maps required	While not essential, quality maps covering the area include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rooftop's Dargo-Wonnangatta Adventure Map; and</li><li>• Hema Maps' High Country Victoria.</li></ul>
Radio Channel CB/UHF	UHF Ch 12

## Ulupna Island, Murray River - Trip run by David and Carolyn Bruinsma Australia Day Long Weekend (25 – 28 January 2024)

### Attendees

David and Carolyn Bruinsma (Trip Leaders): Nissan Navara

Samuel Bruinsma and cousin Maddy: Holden Berlina

Steve, Sara and Mia Pitcher: Toyota Land Cruiser

Dean and Joy Fischer: Nissan Patrol

Michael Fischer: Nissan Navara

Mark Felton (former member) and David (Guest): Nissan Navara

### Details

David headed up before the rest of the pack, leaving home on the Wednesday afternoon in order to secure a spot for us all along Long Beach, Ulupna Island.

Dean, Joy and and their son Michael were next cab off the rank, electing to head off in tandem early on the Thursday morning.

Some time later that morning, Carolyn, Samuel and their relative Maddy were headed for Shepparton where we would rendezvous after a bite for lunch. From there, we all made our way towards Strathmerton then turned off towards the island.





We spotted a koala along the way and pulled in at camp around 3pm or so.



## Trip Report

David, Dean, Joy and Michael were already set up, relaxing (which was everyone's main aim for the weekend) when we arrived.

The weather was warm and pleasant, although a little muggy. The rest of us set up our camp before taking a refreshing dip in the cooling waters of the mighty Murray! Rain soon followed later and into the evening, so we decided not to bother with a campfire that night.



## Trip Report

Australia Day fared much better and the younger members of our group all had a bit of a fish. Samuel managed to catch a couple of fish, all before 8:30 in the morning. Towards late afternoon, a ute pulled up at camp which we soon learned was carrying Mark and his friend, David.

They went about setting up camp while the rest of us enjoyed the sun, sand, water and a few Australia Day bevvies. Dean and Joy spoiled us all with a very nice spread of nibbles to enjoy with our drinks. Samuel managed to snag another fish which Mia reeled in and was considered a 'keeper' - it promptly made its way to the frypan.



## Trip Report

On the Saturday, a group of us drove out to the Big Strawberry for some pancakes, waffles, milkshakes and a chance to pick some fresh strawberries off the vine.



After making our way back to the island, we noticed another koala except that this one was right next to our camp near the water's edge.



Mark wasn't feeling the best so he and his mate decided to head for home while the rest of us enjoyed another swim in the sun.

Everyone set about their dinner before settling in for our last night along the Murray. Samuel was pleased to have successfully made yet another catch while the day's events got the better of some who were keen to call it a night.



Sunday was our final day. We all had a fairly leisurely start before saying our goodbyes and breaking camp. It was yet another great and relaxing weekend away, and with great company.

Steve and Sara



## Swifts Creek- McKillops Bridge - Trip run by Ken Kilby

### Attendees

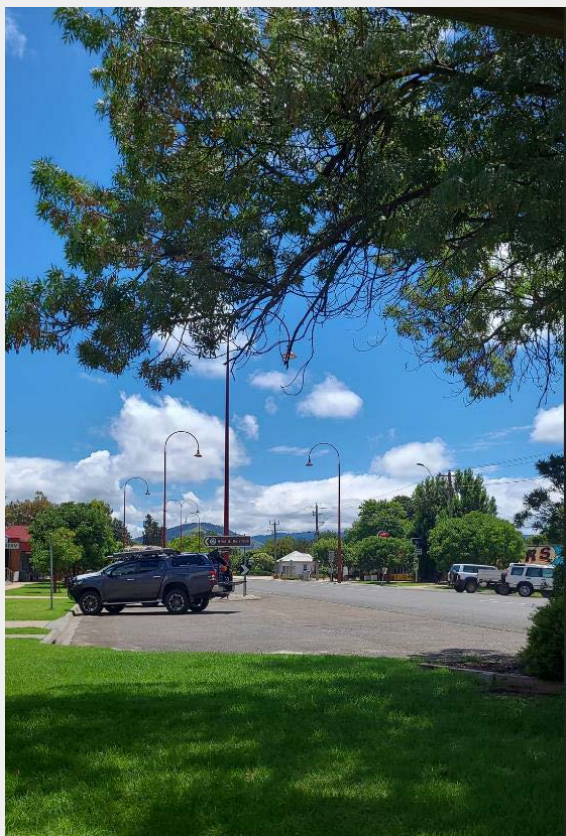
Ken Kilby- Trip Leader –Mitsubishi Triton

Steve & James Disher- Ford Everest

### Day 1

After a couple of late withdrawals, the trip was now down to just two cars. We planned on leaving on the 9th Jan but after the heavy rain and flooding that occurred around the State the day before, Steve and I discussed whether to cancel. As the worst of the rain had fallen further West from our destination, we decided to continue.

Leaving our meeting point at Officer at 8:15, the day started off cool and overcast. Our first destination was Swifts creek which was also the last refueling point. Arriving at 12:30 it was a good spot to stop for lunch as well. By this time the clouds had cleared to a nice sunny day which turned out to be a harbinger of things to come. The Trip plan was to head north from Bairnsdale to Swifts Creek, then onto Bentley Plain Campground for the first night, second night at Native Dog Creek and third night at McKillops bridge..







After re-fueling the cars and ourselves, we drove the 5 km to the Bindi Road turn off which would take us to the first point of interest, the Washington Winch. This is a steam powered winch made in Seattle, USA and shipped to Australia in the 1920's.





Washington Winch operating in Noojee salvaging timber after the 1939 bushfires.



Final resting place near Swifts Creek





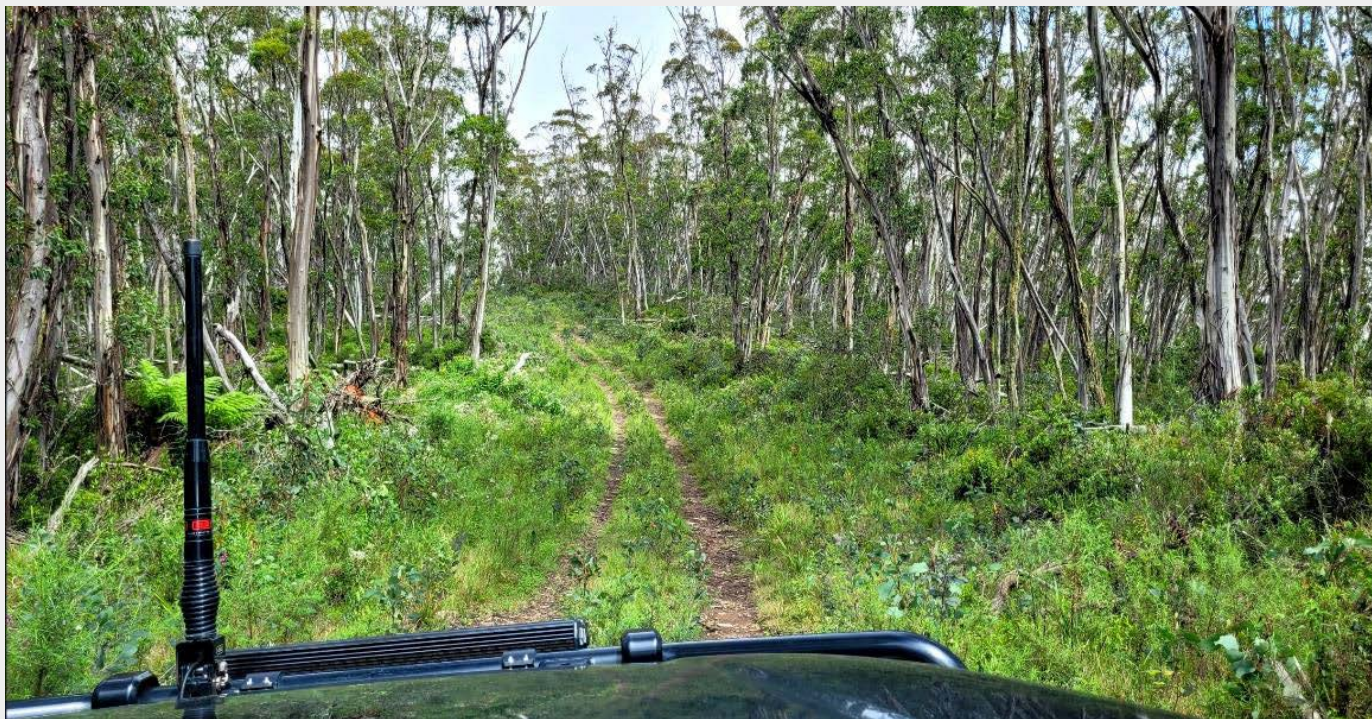
## Trip Report

Not far from the Winch is Mt Nugong fire tower which unfortunately does not much of a view at ground level . South Escarpment track took us to the top for a quick look around, then we continued on. This little used track was very interesting as it turned out to be very wet and extremely slippery. One steep downhill section proved to be very tricky, and we were sliding sideways at times as there was just no traction. We would be winching back up if we could not get through, but we made it through to Bentley Plain road and turned left for the for the short drive to Bentley Plain Camping area, arriving at 3:00 pm.





## South Escarpment Track





The main camping spot at Bentley Plain was occupied but we had another nearby large area all to ourselves. The picturesque Billabong and wetlands next to the campground added to the lovely location. The worry of mosquitoes turned out to be unfounded as surprisingly there weren't any to speak of. There were a few leeches around though and both Steve and I made blood donations.



Bentley Plain Wetlands





Only a short stroll away is Moscow Villa Hut, one of the best Huts up in the High Country.

Steve & James at Moscow Villa Hut



Inside Moscow Villa hut.





## Day 2

This morning, we headed North along Escarpment track with a turn off to the top of Mt Bindi at 1494 metres. There is a small grassy area at the top, again the trees blocking most of the view. Back again along Escarpment track which provided some downed trees, muddy rutted sections and one big bog hole for our entertainment. Two large gum trees had come and would have taken too much effort to clear but fortunately there was just enough space to drive through the bush to get around them.







Escarpment Track





Turning onto Nunniong Plains track we headed to the picturesque Nunniong Plains. After the rain, the tracks across the plains were saturated and boggy but a firm base made the drive across without problem. A herd of Brumbies were spotted in the distance but ran off as soon as they saw us.



From Nunniong Plains we skirted the Alpine National park taking Jam Tin Flat Track and Nunniong Road stopping at the junction of the sadly named Forlorn Hope Track for lunch, at an altitude of 1540 metres.





## Trip Report

Our destination for the night was Native Dog Flat Campground. A diversion was made along Limestone creek track to check out the Limestone Creek camping area and then continued up to the first creek crossing where we turned back. A surprise encounter way out here was a fully marked Colorado Police Divv van.

Jam Tin Flat road



Native Dog Creek Campground





## Trip Report

We arrived at Native Dog Flat around 3:00 and secured a great spot right next to the river. As the afternoon rolled on the campground was proving very popular with many vehicles coming in. The area is also full of Brumbies with large piles of dung on the roads seemingly every few hundred metres.

Native Dog Creek





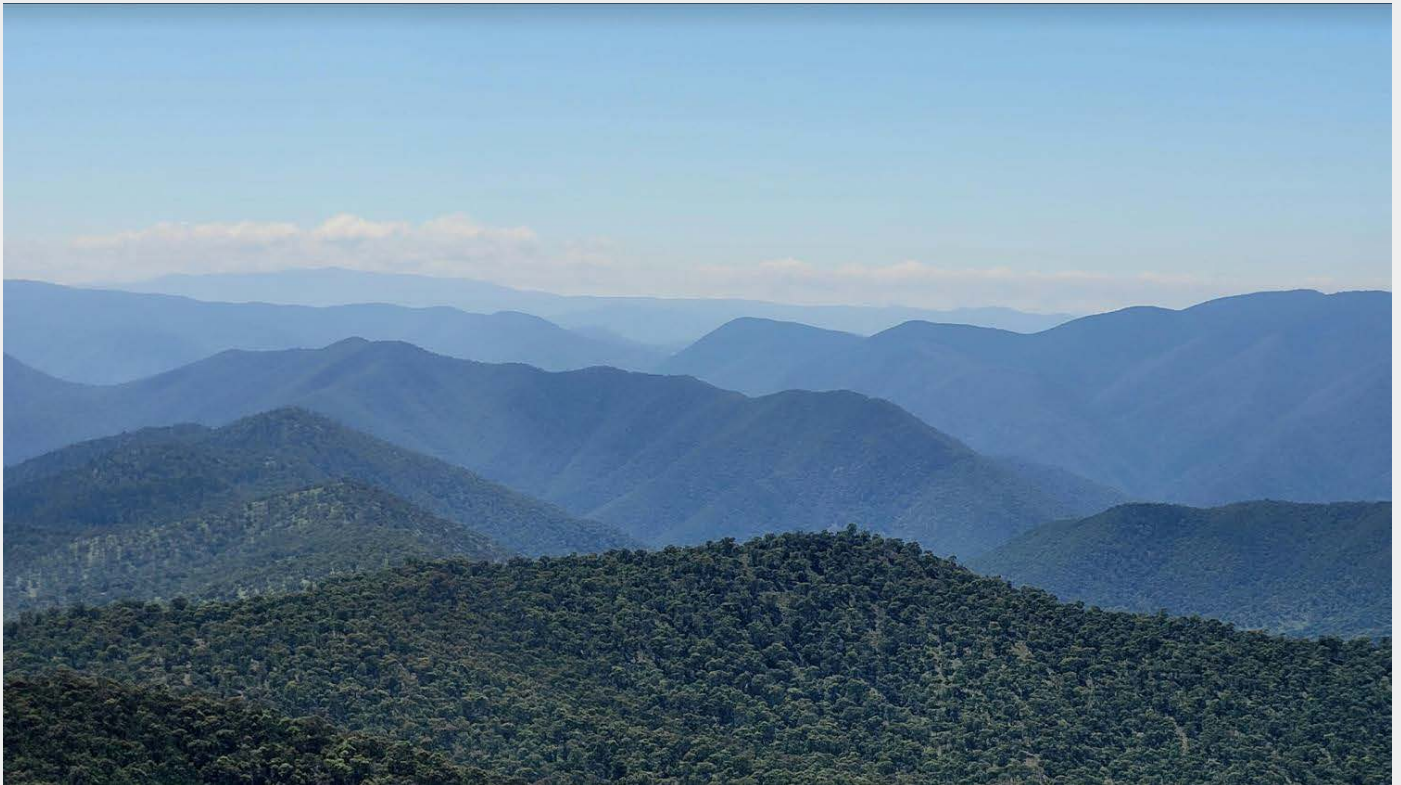
### Day 3

After a lovely night around the Campfire, Steve was up early and spotted a mob of Brumbies up close just near the camp.

A late start at 10am, we departed for Suggan Buggan following Limestone Creek Road to the Snowy River Road.

The Snowy River Road is quite narrow & descends almost 500 metres into Suggan Buggan offering fantastic views, made all the better with the clear blue skies.

Suggan Buggan is notable for its old school house built in the 1860's.

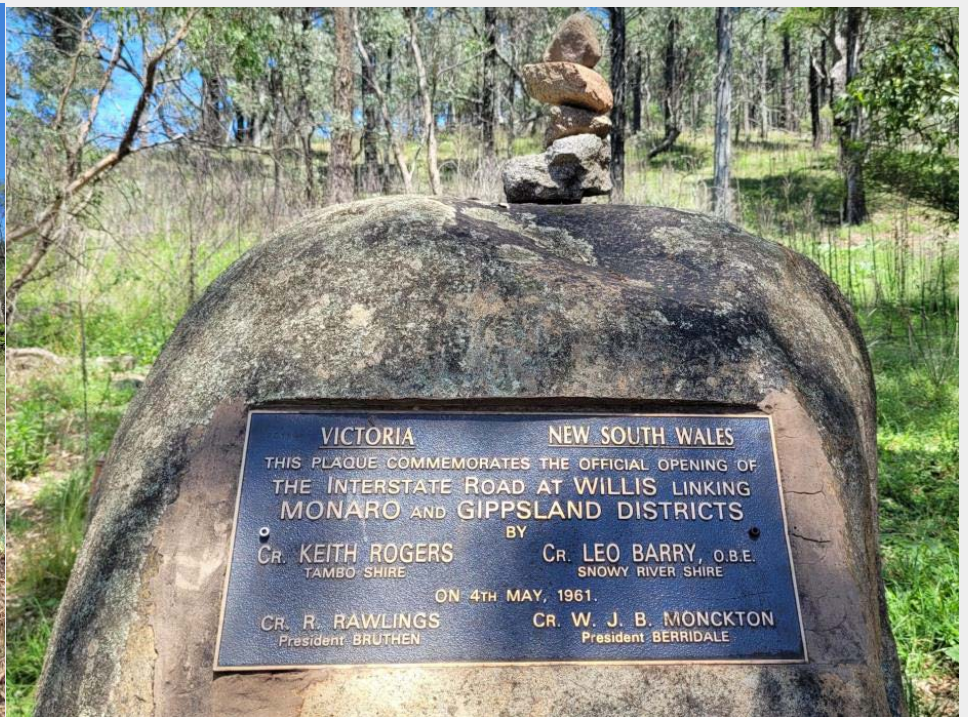




## Snowy River Road



## Suggan Buggan Schoolhouse





From here we continued further north to Willis on the NSW Border and to check out the Snowy River.

Heading back after having had lunch by the Snowy, Steve said, "Let's have a look at Sandy Creek Track as it loops back to the main road and Hema rates it Medium".

Well, this Medium track was heavily washed out with deep ruts and a few go-around tracks, was a bit more than medium in my opinion. About half way in we passed a Double Black diamond sign. It didn't seem too bad at this stage, so we kept going. Coming to a steep climb, we started off ok, but at about a third of the way up the track became very steep with some ominous looking rocks, holes and ruts. We walked up to have a look and decided that we did not have the ground clearance necessary. Making a 20 point turn we avoided having to reverse back down. By this time it was 2:00 pm so with the remote location and the time of day retreat was definitely the sensible option.



Sandy Creek Track-The Picture does not do justice to the Track condition.

After making it back to the main road, we headed off to our last campsite at McKillops Bridge, not arriving until 5:30pm after making a diversion to Gilantipy for fuel. The camping area at McKillops Bridge is on the side of the hill with not many flat areas to pitch a tent and quite dry and devoid of grass. It would be very muddy when wet.

Last night around the Campfire and we had some visitors looking for a free meal. The local Brush Tail possums were quite tame and could be hand fed.

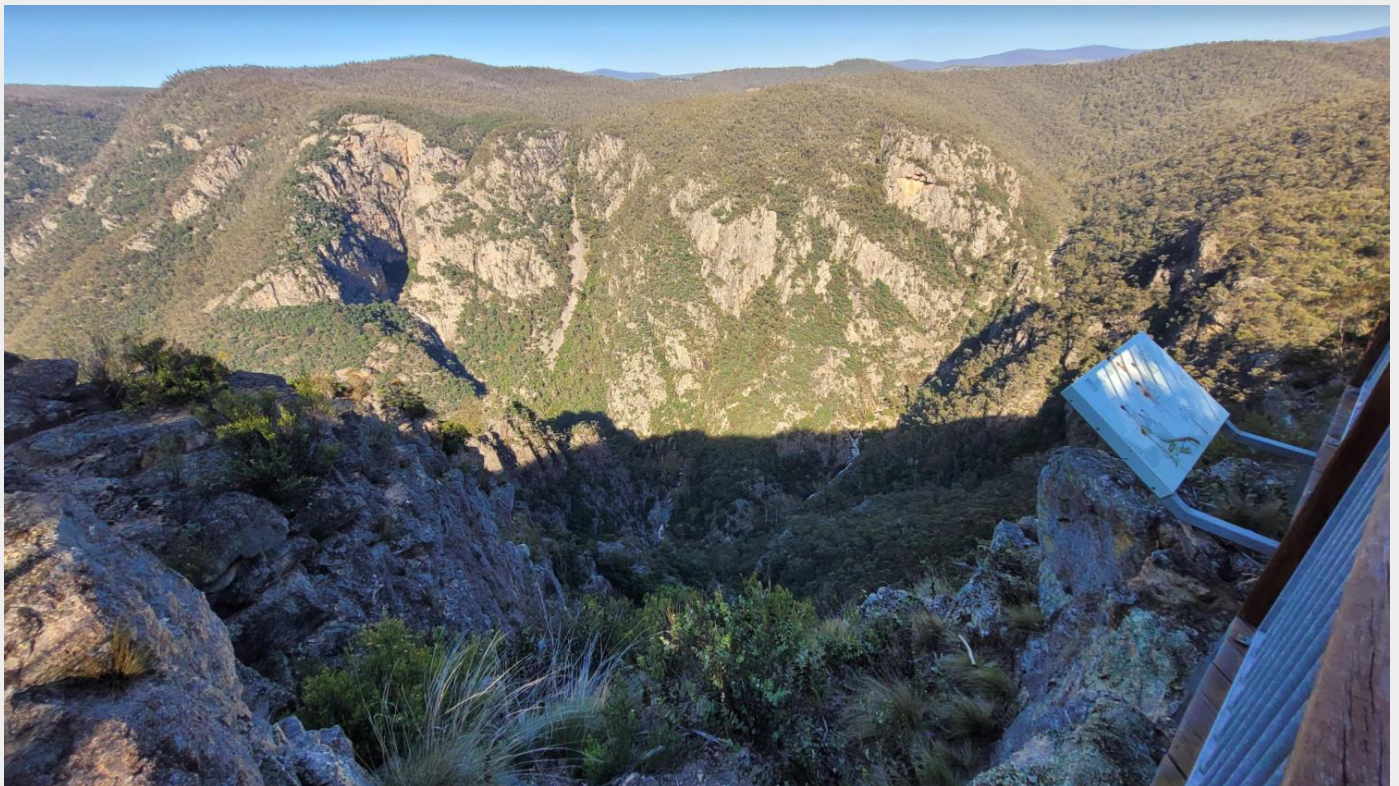




### Day 4

Leaving for home the next morning with a planned stop at the Little River Gorge, which is Victoria's deepest at 500 metres and about 4km long.

It is a 400 metre walk from the carpark to the viewing platform to see one of Victoria's lesser known natural wonders. Again the pictures just do justice to the landscape.

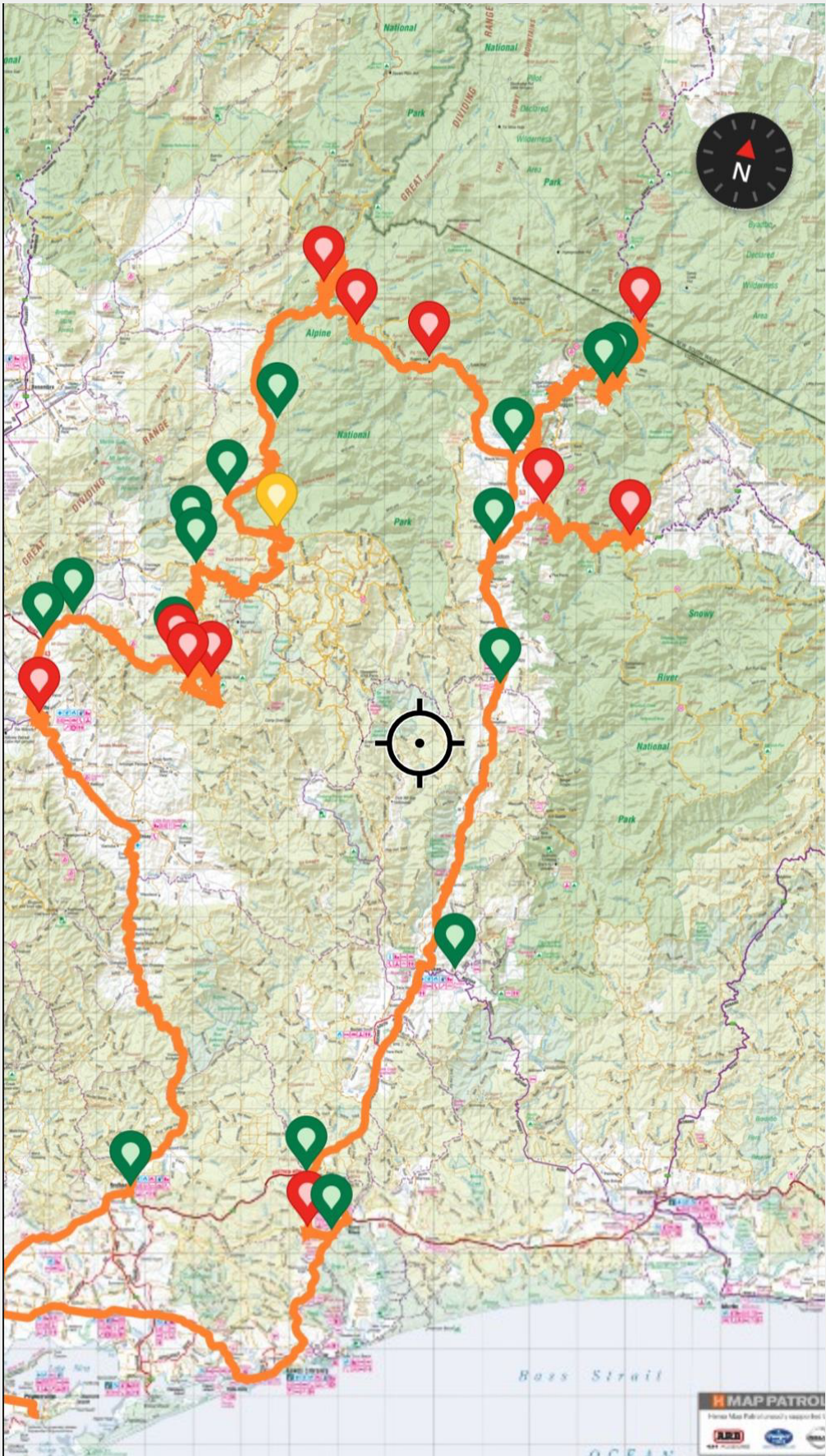


The planned stop at Buchan caves didn't go ahead due to the caves being closed. The last item on the agenda was the Trestle Bridge at Nowa Nowa,



The final leg home via Lakes Entrance finished off a fantastic 4 days in a corner of the High country that perhaps doesn't get visited that often due to the distance from Melbourne. Well worth the visit when you have more time . All up we drove just over 1000 km.







# **We need your help on and off the tracks**



**If you have some spare time  
please consider joining the committee.  
Your club needs you— do it for your club!**

**Contact your Committee...**



