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From the President



Winter has arrived, and the days are shorter and colder. It's also time for Seasonal Track Closures and Mt Skene permits. For some that's great but for others it's time to head north and soak up the sun – some for several months at a time. More and more of our club members have retired and so have the time to travel like this. I've also noticed that more and more club members are opting for the glamping style of travel purchasing camper trailers or caravans. If you've done this then welcome to the club. Having a camper trailer and a caravan as well as half a dozen tents means I have the best of all worlds and have no excuse for not getting away. I am finding that more people are towing and that suggests a need for training in handling a van or camper. They do take additional concentration when on the road.

Wayne and I have a busy schedule coming up. We are meeting with senior people in Parks and DELWP and will be discussing a number of things of importance to the Association. Amongst these are our ongoing funding as well as a place to conduct our training. It's becoming expensive to hire facilities so to have our own would be a great bonus. Through the Ministerial Advisory Committee, we are about to send out a request for tender to conduct research around four wheel drive ownership and how people prefer to use their vehicles. This will be very helpful for us as it will help identify what people like doing and more importantly, what they want to do to enjoy our bush. We'll have a list of potential activities that we can develop and support.

Last month Wayne and I travelled to Adelaide for the National Council meeting. There will be some news regarding this in coming weeks, so I won't pre-empt that here, but watch this space. We did make a good contact with the South Australian President and his trainers and hosted them in Victoria on the weekend of our recent trainer's update. We learnt a few things that they are doing and as well we explored options to have their training come under our banner – both accredited and non-accredited. This will be exciting as it gives our RTO opportunity to expand.

We are already delivering a large number of corporate training programs and it seems the more we run, the more the word gets out and we get extra requests. We have some quotes to deliver training in the system and if these are successful, they will certainly put us in the limelight. We have recently appointed a new training manager, Mrs Sheila Douglas, who is an expert in things RTO. Sheila will be working hard to ensure we are fully compliant and will take over from where Mentor and Matt Lilley finished last year.

Like so many others I too will be heading north over the coming weeks. I will be travelling on the Madigan Line with my Club (Eureka Ballarat) where some of the group will stay on for the Big Red Bash. It'll certainly be the long way to get to Big Red. It's a trip I've wanted to do for some years and I'm grateful for the opportunity with a great bunch of people. I'll be back two weeks and will then head off to Europe for six weeks. This was meant to be my start to retirement with my wife, but I started that last year. That's another trip I'm looking forward to and there will be no off-road included and stays in hotels and resorts. I am also looking forward to returning home where I can again start to explore this great country of ours. There's something about driving to a remote place and being at one with the bush.

Keep your eye out for news about the National Council over the coming weeks.

See you in early September.

Garry Doyle
President

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CLEAN UP THE BUSH

Morning briefing

6th-8th April, 2018

Just after midday on Friday, Wayne and Dave arrived at the Smythesdale Gardens Camping Grounds, southwest of Ballarat to begin setting up for the weekend. Months of planning and preparation had gone into getting to this point. Countless hours on the phone, and e-mails sent out, getting our sponsors and permissions had reached their fulfillment.

Wayne met with the members of the Smythesdale Progress Association and discussed our planned activities for the weekend. The two 36 m3 bins were already in place ready to receive all that was thrown at them. Wayne and Dave then set about getting things ready. The marquee was set up and tables put underneath.

Alison from the office, arrived a short time later and together with Wayne, went back to Ballarat to pick up supplies for the weekend. Having met Garry Doyle in town, he returned with the meat for the weekend. Jeff, our cook also arrived and set up everything for the catering ready to feed the hungry. Then, as time passed, the volunteers started to arrive and set up their own accommodation for the weekend. Two car carrying trailers were also picked up and brought back. Many of those there headed off to the local pub for dinner and socialised for a while before heading off to bed for the night.

Saturday morning dawned bright and clear and cool. Volunteers roused from

their sleep, met at the marquee, and devoured the bacon, eggs and sausages for breakfast, washed down with coffee, tea and fruit juice.

Then as more volunteers arrived, we assembled for our briefing. Having been told where the rubbish and car bodies were, everyone headed out. Around an hour and a half later, the first of the crews arrived back to unload their rubbish into the skips. Then it became a steady flow throughout the day, with trailers and utes loaded to the top emptying the tons of rubbish collected. Among the more unusual items collected were a jet ski shell and a safe (sadly empty). The usual household and builders waste, wire, white goods, mattresses, chairs and couches accounted for the bulk. Our tyre pile grew from a small collection to a veritable mountain. And by late afternoon, the pace slowed and we took stock of how much rubbish had been brought back. Both bins were nearly full and there were around 200 tyres piled up.

Some went and had showers to wash off the day's grime while others gathered for fivesies. A barbeque dinner followed and the evening was very pleasant. As the fire danger period was still in force, camp fires were not permitted, however a fireplace in the shelter was warm and inviting and very popular.





No shortage of car wrecks collected!



Mapping rubbish spots

Sunday was another spectacular morning as people rose and came together for breakfast. Sadly, some had to leave due to other commitments, but those who remained once again went out to pick up the filth of others. Given that the skips were already almost full, one trailer load each would see them completely filled. And so it was. As the last scraps were shoveled into the skips, the last tyres thrown on the heap, we closed the doors on the skips, knowing that we had done a very good job.

We had removed more than 70 cubic metres of rubbish, more than 200 tyres and 18 car wrecks from the bush. The local people we spoke to were so grateful for the work done and the results.

Goodbyes were said and everyone packed up and left for home.

The success for the weekend, amongst the volunteers certainly, can be summed in the comments of one

teenage boy: "Can we do another one dad? When is the next one?"

To all those who came out and worked so hard, to our sponsors who provided us with goods and services, we give you our most sincere thanks. Without you, it simply would not have happened.

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Saturday tyre collection



A wreck awaiting collection



The Ballarat & District FWD Club lend a hand to support a community celebration of a significant local anniversary....

A JOURNEY TO MT BECKWORTH AND THE LOLLY POP TREE

The centry old Mt Beckworth "Lollypop" tree

Mt Beckworth is one of two granite outcrops, Mt Bolton is the other, rising above the surrounding farmland roughly 30 kms north-west of Ballarat and just west of the township of Clunes in Central Victoria. They were formed during volcanic activity some 300 million years ago and provide the name of the Mt. Bolton/Beckworth Landcare Group. Mt Beckworth is a Scenic Reserve managed by Parks Victoria, hence any activity within this Scenic Reserve requires their approval. This journey really starts in the 1830-1850 era when the area was first settled and the locals used the Mount as their recreation area for walking, picnics, hunting and adventuring. Many descendants from those original families still live, work and farm in the area and have a strong connection to the two mountains. Stories abound about bushrangers having hideouts there, locals enjoying picnics and parties there and many other anecdotes of dubious adventures being carried out.

We move on to the time of the First Great War when Government encouraged the planting of Pinus Radiata Forests for work for returning diggers and future community resources. Enter Jack Scarfe and four young local boys who in 1918, encouraged him to plant some trees on the summit as well as the extensive plantations they were planting on the lower slopes. These trees prospered, but further official directions required summits of prominent peaks to be cleared of vegetation, but somehow the local wisdom prevailed, and the most prominent tree was left standing. Thus grew the lone pine known

affectionately by locals as the "Lolly Pop Tree" which has become a local icon and landmark to this day. This tree can be seen for miles and gives locals a sense of belonging and "home" once it comes into view.

My journey with "the tree" began in 2016 when my friend and fellow Landcare member John Drife suggested we should celebrate the 100 years since the planting of the tree which would be in 2018, with a gathering at its foot to mark that milestone. We did a bit of research with Parks Victoria and the State body of Four Wheel Drive Victoria and looked at each other and said, "Is this all too hard, should we just have a small local ceremony on level private ground at the foot of the Mount and walk away from the challenges?" Reflection said 'no way' if we are celebrating 100 years for the Tree, it had to be right at the Tree, so let's give it our best shot!

So the journey continued starting with permission from Parks Victoria to hold the Centenary event and access their Management Vehicle Only tracks. Then followed the logistics of managing First Aid, making the track safe to walk and drive, facilitating a staging area for parking, registration and further history presentation, collection and discussion.

With Linda Newitt and the CTDA sharing the organisation load and Julia Cornwall, secretary of our Landcare Group keeping our meetings on track and on budget, we moved forward to the actual day.

Being in the position of wearing both a Landcare and a Four Wheel Drive hat, I can't help but elaborate on the 4WD component. When the proposal was first presented in early 2017 to the Ballarat & District 4WD Club members, many hands went up to offer support for the event and any prior input that may have been required. We scheduled in two track review trips prior to the event to familiarise drivers with the track, develop first aid procedures and apply some manual track maintenance if required.



The first review trip was in late November 2017 and the day dawned overcast and raining, so I was duly ribbed about my choice of weather. However, the day cleared and members had a great day driving the track and then descending via the northern ridge track to check its suitability for use in any emergency. Lunch at 'The Cork Oaks' camp at the north of the Mount had all participants happy with the driveability of the tracks, but challenging enough to keep it very interesting.

When we had to cancel the second review trip on 14th March 2018 due to a Total Fire Ban and gale force winds, and the rescheduled trip on April the 14th dawned with rain and predicted showers, my credibility with picking the weather was somewhat tarnished. Being just eight days prior to the event we had to proceed as we needed to ensure the track was clear and locate the best spot for the first aid stations. This type of granite country does not get slippery or break down in summer time, so the track was very driveable. With tyres aired-down, we made the Summit easily where some minor track maintenance was carried out before heavy rain forced us into John's shed for lunch under cover. With tyres aired up to road pressures, we adjourned to my place for a cuppa and to dry out around the fire. The afternoon of the Saturday prior brought the Landcare members to the staging area where most of the needs for the day were marked out and infrastructure put in place.

The day dawned bright and sunny with an expected 24 degrees C – a perfect Autumn day in central Victoria. My credibility around weather conditions was restored. The workers arrived early and finished setup, the 4 wheel drivers put three First Aid Stations in place along the track and took chairs and audio/ recording gear to the top. They then helped with gate duty, parking, registration and prepared vehicles to take our VIPs to the summit. Our VIPs are the older descendants of the original settlers, four of whom are over ninety with the remainder not too far behind.

Nine o'clock arrived and walkers were already at the starting gate and headed off happily in the sunshine. Our VIPs were arriving, were helped into waiting vehicles, and sent off three vehicles at a



Transporting the VIPs up the hill was interesting...



time. All went well with the last vehicle taking the workers and the press to the top just in time for the ceremony. Everyone made it to the top with walkers and 4WDs managing very well on the same track. It was obvious both vehicles and walkers needed a lower gear to negotiate the steeper more difficult parts.

The ceremony at "The Tree" got under way with John Drife, our MC. Calling on Neil Hewitt, Hepburn Councillor and representative to present the "Welcome to Country" and to welcome all in attendance. Dr Kevin Tolhurst AM spoke about "The Tree" and its registration with the National Trust "Significant Trees of Victoria" with Kevin and Neil then ceremonially unveiling the plaque which attests to that registration.

Bob McKinnon, a local poet then read a poem he had written about "The Tree" and its connection to community. A few words from a couple of the older descendants and the ceremony was adjourned for lunch and further historic discussion and recording. People and vehicles then headed down to the staging area for lunch and live music.

Following lunch, further discussions on some history of the area with some historical and photographic displays on show. John Drife then thanked all for their input and closed the event. The Journey was over.

Mt Beckworth "Lollipop Tree" One Hundred Year Celebration has been a great success. It proves that if all differing community groups and our Government Management bodies can work together as one, great things can be achieved.

Well done to all the people who made the effort to walk or ride to the summit and to those who assisted with the organisation of what proved to be a fantastic and successful event.

Ken Campbell
Ballarat & District FWDC

*A DVD of the event will be available for purchase by contacting the Mt Bolton/Mt Beckworth Landcare group Secretary Julia Cornwell via email on; - Julia Cornwell
<julia_cornwell@yahoo.com.au>*



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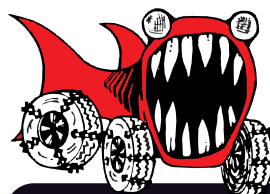
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MIDWEEK FWD CLUB

Bush walkers taxi service 2018

Briefing

For the last three years, each Labor Day weekend in March, the Midweek FWD Club has provided vehicles and drivers to support the volunteers associated with Bushwalking Victoria in their track clearing activities in the High Country. This activity is a way of encouraging interaction with other groups that share our vast bush reserves. These activities are overseen by Parks Victoria with on-site involvement of their staff and equipment. This year the area selected for clearing was in the Barry Mountains west of Mt. Hotham.

The role of the Midweek team members was to transport the bushwalkers to and from their worksites each day. During the day we were assigned a number of tasks to complete.

Friday 9th March

The Midweek team of five members with their vehicles met at 2.00pm at Porepunkah, before heading off down the Buckland Valley to Beveridge's Station campsite. The weather was fine and warm and the outlook good for the weekend.

The campsite was excellent with sheltered grassy sites near the Buckland River. At the campsite we met the local Parks Victoria Supervisor Al Hodgson along with fourteen volunteers from various Victorian bushwalking clubs. Al brought along a dual cab tray truck that could comfortably carry five passengers so it turned out that we had plenty of vehicles for transporting the walkers and equipment around the area.

Saturday 10th March

After an early night on Friday, we met at 9.00am Saturday and after safety and planning briefings we all headed off at 10.00am.

After heading up the Mt. Murray Logging track we turned east along the Twins Road. After about an hour of very dusty conditions, we reached the first

drop off point. The bushwalkers were tasked with clearing the Australian Alps Walking Track (AAWT), with brush cutters and chainsaws, supplied by Parks Victoria. The track mainly runs along the Great Dividing Range ridge line but does follow roads off the ridge line in some places.

We dropped half the walkers at the first drop point then proceeded further East along Twins Road. After we dropped the second team the Midweek group were tasked with installing some walking track markers on wooden posts. We observed that the track was very overgrown in some places and the track line difficult to detect in some spots. We took care to ensure the yellow track markers attached to the posts were angled to point the walkers in the correct direction.

After lunch we headed east towards Mt. Hotham and the MVO Machinery Spur Track heading north east, with a view to checking if the track was clear and visiting the Red Robin mine site. By the time we reached the Mt. Loch area we realised that we were out of time to proceed further given that we needed to pick up the bushwalkers by 4.00pm. While we were travelling on the MVO track some bushwalkers made comments as we carefully passed. Our trip leader took the time to stop and explain we were volunteers supporting Parks Victoria in track clearing work.

After we picked up the weary bushwalkers we all headed back through the dust to Beveridge's and a bit of downtime before dinner. Parks Victoria provided all the food for dinner on Saturday night and a good time was enjoyed by all along with the occasional glass of red wine.

Sunday 11th March

On Sunday morning we were rolling by 9am returning to the walking track again via a short cut (not on my map, and



Local Parks Victoria Supervisor Al Hodgson briefs the team on Saturday morning

definitely not a logging road) up to the Twins Road.

After dropping off the bushwalkers at 10.00am we were tasked with fixing the roof of a water tank on the AAWT, as well as some roadside markers on a new culvert where a bridge had been replaced on the Riley River Road, down near Wonnangatta Valley.

We headed west along the Twins Jeep Track. It was an interesting drive with some steep pinches and was rough in parts. We passed Mt. Selwyn and headed down Canyon Road. We stopped at this point and calculated that with quite a distance still to cover, we had run out of time, given the need to pick up the bushwalkers by 3:30pm.

We turned around and tried ascending Mt. Selwyn to have lunch but were defeated by very loose rock and soil on a severe slope. After lunch on the track, we travelled back along the Twins Road to pick up the bushwalkers.

Then we headed back to camp where we had a quiet dinner and an early night.



Installing a sign for bush walkers



Installing road markers



Repaired water tank

Monday 12th March

On Monday morning all the bushwalkers and Al headed towards home. The Midweek team stayed on and headed off by 8:30am to complete the water tank roofing and roadside marker installations.

We travelled up Mt. Selwyn Road which seemed like a super highway compared to the other tracks, then down Walsh's Spur (very picturesque) and on to the East Buffalo River Road (good) reaching the water tank at 10.00am.

Three of the team started work and the other two headed further south west along Humffray River Track (steep but OK) then Riley's River track (good) before arriving at the culvert just before midday.

After an hour's work with shovels and

crowbars, and a quick lunch break the installation was complete, then both teams met back at the water tank.

They had done a terrific job repairing the roof and clearing lots of timber that was laying across the walking track.

We were all pleased to have completed our tasks and having travelled through some spectacular country, even though it was extremely dusty. We got back to camp at 3:30pm and after a few took a swim in the Buckland River, everybody chilled out before a reasonably early night.

Tuesday 13th March

Tuesday morning was pack up and head back to Melbourne time. We all agreed it had been an enjoyable week-end in some great country.

The feedback the club received from

the Bushwalking Victoria team was very positive about the involvement and assistance of the Midweek team.

Ross Hancock
Midweek FWD Club



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TRACKWATCH

JUNE 2018

9





Who murdered James Barclay and John Bamford in the remote Wonnangatta Valley one hundred years ago?



Information tents at Wonnangatta



Some of the visitors that came to celebrate the Wonnangatta mystery

of the Wonnangatta Murders.

d at the
ago?

Who murdered James Barclay and John Bamford at the remote Wonnangatta Valley one hundred years ago?

There have been several books about the mysterious series of events that took place and dozens of competing theories but the murders remain unsolved. James Barclay was the station manager and probably murdered at or near the homestead. John Bamford's body was found much later on the Howitt Plains. At the time Wonnangatta Station was a successful cattle enterprise with stock over several thousand acres. There was a homestead and a large collection of outbuildings, yards and fencing. The unsolved murders add a little intrigue to the beautiful valley in the Alpine National Park and prompt many round the campfire debates.

Over the Labour Day long weekend the Friends of Wonnangatta Valley, with considerable planning and on the ground support from Parks Victoria, Foothills and Southern Alps team, conducted an event to mark the centenary of the murders. Four Wheel Drive Victoria, the Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria and the High Country Huts Association were supporting organisations.

The valley, despite being very dry after a low rainfall February, looked superb. On the Friday the sky had an eerie orange tinge created by the smoke from the Caledonia River / Dingo Hill bush-fire. There was some last minute setting up on Saturday morning as groups, with display and information tents, prepared for the day. The Macalister 4WD Club represented Four Wheel Drive Victoria and ran a Camp Host program as well as providing advice about responsible four wheel driving.

Over the weekend there was plenty to do. The Friends of Wonnangatta Valley conducted regular talks on the history of the remote cattle station at the cemetery and homestead sites. A talk treating the murders as a cold case and discussing police investigative procedure was held on Saturday afternoon. On Saturday evening there was a happy hour at the homestead site. A speech by Philip Davis was rudely interrupted by the arrival of a very large black snake. It is rare that a retired politician is upstaged giving a speech. The movie "The Man From Snowy River" was screened on Saturday night.

On Sunday afternoon a forum was held where Keith Leydon, co-author of one of the books on the murders and Geoff Burrowes, producer of "The Man From Snowy River", went through the facts and speculation about the murders. As an open forum, members of the large audience were able to ask questions and put forward their own point of view or evidence. There were descendants of some of the people involved at the time on hand to add to the knowledge about the crimes and subsequent events. Another movie was shown Sunday night.

Apart from the organised events there was something to watch all the time; a large horse trail ride group winding its way slowly into the valley, camp oven cooking demonstration, people in period costume including two police troopers, convoys of all makes and models of four wheel drives, weary hot and dusty trail bike riders, interesting camping setups, and more Akubra hats than you could count.

It was a great weekend for catching up with people and making new friends. The members of all the supporting groups were able to broaden visitors' understanding of the history of the area and the Alps in general. Parks Victoria had six rangers on duty and they were very happy with visitor behavior. It was very difficult to arrive at a figure for the number of visitors, estimations range from five hundred to one thousand. There were certainly plenty of camps right through the valley and the folk making delicious camp oven scones ran out of supplies after baking twelve dozen.

Philip Davis made an exciting announcement on Saturday evening. There is a proposal, put up by the Friends of Wonnangatta Valley, and supported by many other stakeholder groups, to build a replica of the homestead at its original location. The homestead was accidentally burnt down in the 1950s. The building would be a visitor centre and information hub for travellers. The detailed proposal documents are being considered by the relevant government departments at the moment. Four Wheel Drive Victoria is one of the supporting groups.

The Macalister 4WD Club did a fine job representing Four Wheel Drive Victoria over the weekend. As a regular visitor to the Wonnangatta Valley since the early 1980s it is the best weekend I have ever had in there. The Friends of Wonnangatta Valley and Parks Victoria managed to create a truly unique event.

And who murdered Barclay and Bamford? As Geoff Burrowes stated at the conclusion of the forum, it is best, after all this time, that it remains a mystery.

Greg Rose

Four Wheel Drive Victoria Regional Representative Southern Alpine National Park.

Centenary of the Wonnangatta



The Wonnangatta Valley, like the Simpson Desert or Cape York is one of the “must do” four wheel drive destinations.

Wonnangatta even features as one of Victoria's Iconic 4WD Adventures with trip notes available from Four Wheel Drive Victoria.

The Wonnangatta Valley is a remote area within the Alpine National Park. The valley is only accessible by four wheel drive, and there are a number of routes that can be taken travelling in from Licola or Dargo to the south of Myrtleford from the north. Many of the tracks are rated as Very Difficult. On our most recent journey into the valley, we started with an early morning coffee at Licola Store and then enjoyed the views at Bennison Lookout, Dimmick Lookout and other sites along Howitt Road and then drove down Zeka Spur Track. We left the valley, on a very wet day, via Wonnangatta Track and the East Riley Road to Myrtleford.

It is important to the enjoyment of a trip into the valley to understand its rich history. Oliver Smith, who had been unsuccessfully prospecting for gold in the Crooked River area, first settled the valley in the 1860's. When he found the valley he realised the farming potential of the river flats.

Wonnangatta Station was a working cattle property with several owners until the Gilder family sold it to the State Government in 1988. The homestead site and historic graveyard are a highlight of any trip into Wonnangatta. The most well known incident at the valley was the mysterious and brutal Wonnangatta Murders. Still unsolved, the murders probably occurred in January 1918. The vagueness of the date is due to the fact that the first body was found well after the event.

The remains of the manager, James Barclay, were discovered near the homestead. It was originally speculated that station worker and only other resident at that time, John Bamford, had committed the crime, however he had also been murdered and his body was found in November, 1918 near Howitt Hut.



Guys Hut

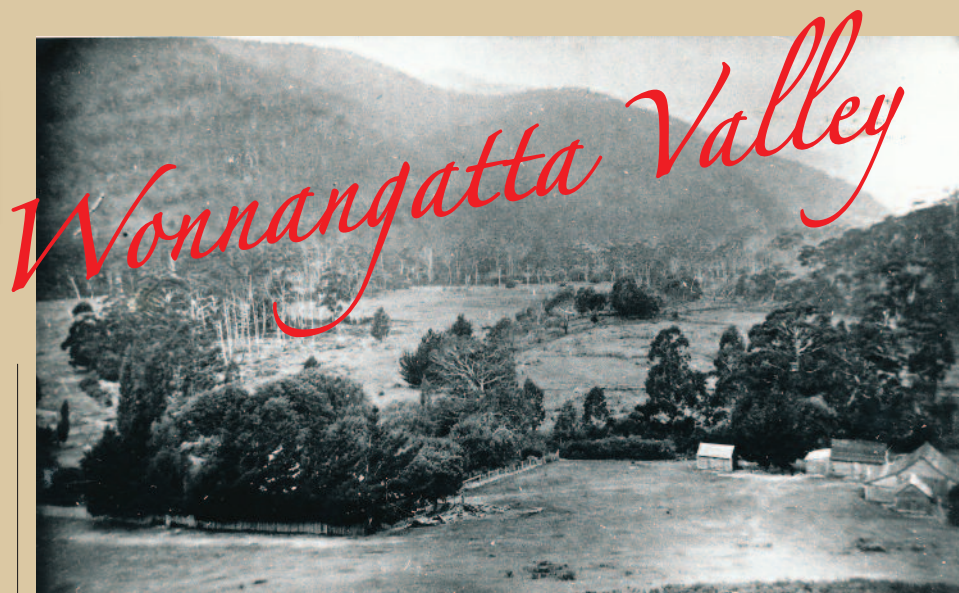


Looking towards the homestead



Three generations of Toyota

Murders.



There are numerous theories about what occurred and there are several excellent books about Wonnangatta Station.

In 1934 Alex Guy purchased the run and the Guy family worked the property until it was sold to the Gilder family in 1972. On our

recent trip into the valley we were lucky to meet up with Cath Noble (nee Guy) who is the granddaughter of Alex

were very few people about.

Parks Victoria manages and maintains the valley, which is popular not only with four wheel drivers but hunters, horse riders, bush walkers and trail bike riders. In order to cater for the high numbers of users, toilets have been constructed near camping areas. It was reported that three hundred vehicles per

ochroma). The Wonnangatta Valley is one of the two locations this species is found in Victoria.

On March 6th, 2014, Federal Minister for the Environment, Greg Hunt M.P. approved a Fuel Reduction Cattle Grazing Trial. Fifty-seven cattle were introduced into the valley. The cattle were on a two hundred and sixty-two

hectare area of river flat between the bottom of Zeka Spur Track and its junction with the Wonnangatta Track, and a few hundred metres before the Dry River crossing. An electric fence surrounded the trial area with two arched cattle grids on the track. Apart from the actual trial area there are no restrictions on folk using

the valley. Members of the Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria were present in the valley at all times for the duration of the trial.

The cattle were walked out on May 11th.

Guy. Cath has an intimate knowledge of the valley, and when we met up with her she had just ridden in having left her four wheel drive and horse float at Van Dammes Helipad. The photos of Wonnangatta in the past, illustrating this article, were provided by Cath Noble from her family collection.

The tracks in the valley have changed since the 1988 Government acquisition. The deep bog holes we had to negotiate in the late seventies and eighties have been eliminated by re-routing the main track from the bottom of Zeka Spur to Dry River at a higher level. The seasonal closure of the valley has also assisted in preserving the track surfaces so that we can all enjoy the area. The infamous Widow-maker Track has been closed and revegetated. When Graeme Walsh, Lois and I visited the valley in May, some of the deciduous trees at the homestead site had autumn colouring, the campsites were clean and there

day passed through over Easter 2012. Groups like Friends of Wonnangatta help keep the valley attractive for visitors and the

If you have not yet visited the Valley add it to your list of places to go. The tracks into the Wonnangatta Valley are seasonally closed. It is a remote area and you do need to be self-sufficient. Information can be found on the Four Wheel Drive Victoria website and on parkweb.vic.gov.au.

Hema, Spatial Vision and Rooftop have excellent maps of the area. "The History of

Wonnangatta Station" by Wallace Malcolm Mortimer has been my historical reference.

Greg Rose

Land Rover Owners' Club of Gippsland

Historical images courtesy of Cath Noble (nee Guy) from her family collection

Macalister 4WD Club run a Camp Host program at busy holiday weekends.

Parks Victoria has spent approximately \$500,000 on weed management in the past five years. The main target species are Cape Broom and Blackberry. Ecological burns have been carried out in 2011-12 and April 2014 in support of the protection and germination of the rare Pale Golden Moth Orchid (*Diuris*



70th Anniversary of Land

Text & pix by Graeme Walsh & Greg Rose



Panoramic view of vehicle display at the showgrounds

On the 30th April 1948, the Land Rover marque was publicly launched at the Amsterdam Motor Show. In Australia a tradition has developed, starting with the 40th Anniversary of celebrating the birth of Land Rover every ten years, at Cooma in southern New South Wales. 2018 is the 70th year of Land Rover and this Easter over 1,600 Land Rover enthusiasts in more than 900 Land Rovers descended on Cooma to be part of the 70th Anniversary of Land Rover event.

Cooma is regarded as the gateway to the Snowy Mountains. The town is an obvious choice for the Land Rover anniversaries as it was the main base for the construction of the impressive Snowy Mountains Hydro Scheme. Land Rover was the backbone vehicle in transporting initially surveyors and engineers, then construction workers, over the difficult terrain in sometimes appalling weather conditions. From 1949 to 1966 the Snowy Scheme had a 1,000 vehicle fleet with 715 being Land Rovers, with some 300 at any one time. Cooma and Land Rover therefore have had a long association.

The 70th event had the very enthusiastic Mark Richards as Coordinator. Mark did a great job, backed up by a team made up of members from the four organising clubs; the Land Rover Owners Club of Victoria; the Range Rover Club of NSW; the Land Rover Club of the ACT; and the Land Rover Club of Sydney.

Additional to the clubs, the Cooma Tourism Centre, capably led by Donna Smith, provided immense service in handling bookings, accommodation and advice. They were brilliant at what they did. The Snowy Monaro Regional Council, the local government authority, were also very supportive of the event.

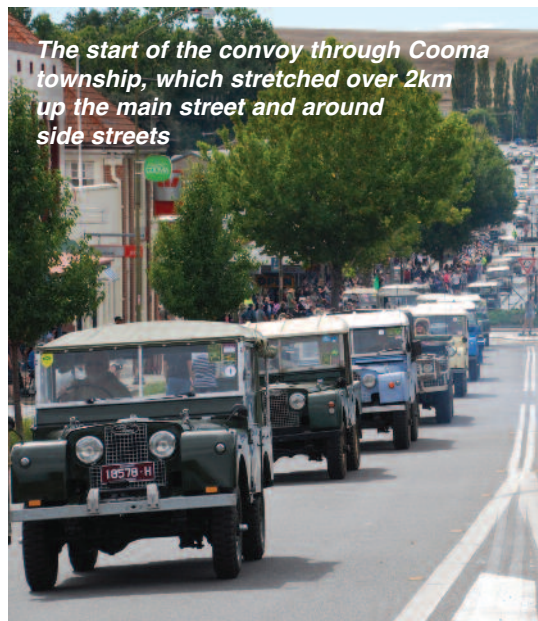
The Cooma Monaro Historic Car Club (locally known as the Cooma Mafia!) provided some 80+ volunteers supporting anything and everything around the event. The car club even rounded up numerous other local community organisations to help out. Without this local support the 60th and the 70th Anniversary events just would not have happened the way they did. These locals worked wonders over the weekend. The event was estimated to have injected over one million dollars into the



Presidents of the four organising Land Rover Clubs plus a Land Rover executive member

local economy over the four days. We highly recommend these organizations in assisting with such events.

The 70th event had a range of features for the enthusiasts,



Rover at Cooma



- Five tag-a-long tours of three to five hours duration travelled to some out-of-the-way places, some of which were Management Vehicles only areas. Each trip was well patronised.
- A Retro Navigation Event was conducted around nearby farm roads.
- A Trials event where 62 competitors completed some easy off-road courses on a private farm
- An easy Motorkhana tested driver's skills in negotiating several courses without hitting anything
- A Saturday night family BBQ with 920 people in attendance. It was a very good social event where everyone mixed and mingled. A comedy stunt motorcyclist and a band added to the fun of the night.
- A Grand Parade of 620 vehicles along

the main street of Cooma. This was a main highlight of the weekend. It took over 90 minutes for the whole cavalcade to pass a given point where over 4,000 people (from a population of 6,000) lined streets to watch the parade.

- A huge display of all the Land Rovers on the Showgrounds oval. This is where the enthusiasts were beside themselves as they drooled over all the vehicles, comparing one vehicle against another. Quite an impressive display.
- A Sunday night Gala Dinner with various guest speakers and 31 awards before an audience of 620 people seated for a two course meal.
- The Land Rover Terrapod driving display conducted by the Land Rover Experience Team.
- A Land Rover Swap Meet which had quite a range of bits for restorers.
- Numerous Land Rover trade displays with products catering for Land Rovers from Series One through to the all new Discovery.
- A Farewell Breakfast on the oval on the last day put on by one of the exhibitors.

As stated above, a high point of the 70th event was the running of the Grand Parade of Land Rovers along two kilometres of Sharp Street, Cooma's main street, which was closed off for several hours. The Parade was very well organised by the Cooma Car Club with their Marshalls everywhere. These volunteers were even there well before dawn marking out the various streets where groups had to assemble. The parade had the Land Rover Experience vehicles in the lead followed by Series Ones and then groups of vehicles arranged by model and age.

The usual Land Rover foibles were evident; starter motors not working so push or rolling starts were required, flat batteries requiring jump starts, leaking diesel fuel under numerous Perenties, and a fine oil trail in places along the route. There was talk that the Council might need to enlist a sand truck to follow the event! Once the Parade was under way, from a vantage point on the main street hill could be seen a fine blue smoky haze in the morning sunlight as the vehicles proceeded up the hill.



From this point it was a really spectacular sight.

There were many more Land Rover enthusiasts in Canberra than the official numbers of registered people indicated. As well as folk from every State and Territory in Australia there were a few international Land Rover fans attending. A large number of people chose routes to and from Cooma that included some of the best four wheel driving that the High Country has to offer, using their Land Rovers in conditions the first ones, shown in Amsterdam 70 years ago, had been designed for.

It was commented on many times over the weekend that there is a strong contingent of young Land Rover enthusiasts keen on owning and restoring the 'Best 4x4 By Far'. This is great news for continuation of events like Cooma and the preservation of the vehicles.

There is talk that maybe the next event could be either the 75th or maybe the 80th Anniversary in Cooma. There will no doubt be a debrief after this year's event discussing areas that could be improved in the future. Hopefully some of the key personnel from this year could be involved in any future events. Let's watch for a future announcement with interest!

Graeme Walsh & Greg Rose



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Tuesday 31st July - PC180804 - Theory

Saturday 4th August - PC180804 - Practical

Tuesday 28th August - PC180901 - Theory

Saturday 1st September - PC180901 - Practical

Tuesday 18th September - PC180902 - Theory

Saturday 22nd September - PC180902-Practical

Tuesday 9th October - PC181013 - Theory

Saturday 13th October - PC181013 - Practical

Tuesday 16th November - PC181117 - Theory

Saturday 17th November - PC181117 - Practical

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Training Course Refund Policy

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

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

• 30 days prior - less 10% of course cost; • 29 days - 15 days - less 25% of course cost; • 14 days to 8 days - less 50% of course cost; • 7 days prior - no refund allowed *Refund applications must be made in writing to FWDV.*

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

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

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

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

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



TLCCV Western Victoria Fire Response

Out of the night came the fire. The residents of Terang and Garvoc in Western Victoria recalled how on Saturday 17th March the winds howled, trees buckled and power lines clashed, creating sparks and inevitably flames followed. The power sub-station at Terang imploded and within minutes flames raced across the parched landscape. The sky turned orange and residents worst fears were realised. One home quickly exploded and like an Olympic sprinter the flames fuelled by 104km/h winds, raced south-easterly towards the Otway Ranges and the townships of Cobden and Timboon.

The fires were finally halted in the early hours of Monday, but not before they had burnt approximately 4,087 hectares, destroyed 26 homes, 64 sheds, fencing and countless livestock.

The Toyota Land Cruiser Club of Victoria activated their Emergency Response Group, and a week later the first group from TLCCV arrived in the fire zone. Under the guidance of Sandra Tanner, contacts had been established and jobs lined up to tackle.

We headed to the first property, and commenced removing burnt boundary fences. No special skills are needed for removing fences and the group quickly got on with the task. Wires were cut off burnt posts and rolled and left coiled for easy pickup by the farmer.

Drag chains were used to pull out burnt pine posts.

The local Country Womens Association provided us with a sumptuous lunch, before we moved on to another farm, where more fences were removed.

The Club also organised donations of hay from farmers near Geelong and through member Simon Musty, arranged a truck to collect and transport the load of hay to Garvoc where it was greatly appreciated.

A second convoy returned to the area the following day and we moved into the centre of the fire area, where we witnessed numerous items of heavy equipment removing trees along roadsides and on properties.

Many other groups of volunteers also arrived to assist the local farmers, and other allocated jobs were already being worked when we arrived. Similarly, it was quite brilliant how many cleared areas already had new fences being erected.

While at Cobden the Prime Minister was scheduled to visit to thank volunteers, but we chose to head for home instead.

Much was achieved over the weekend, and once again TLCCV members were at the forefront of assisting communities that had endured natural disaster. While the work was manual and often a little dirty, everyone worked with great attitude and cheerfulness. I think all knew that we were doing something special in helping our rural friends, by showing care and acting to help them and let them know that they are not forgotten.

With more work awaiting us, we organised a special convoy to the area on Easter Saturday on short notice. Again the response from members was great, especially considering many were ready to go off on long weekend Easter trips.

Again arriving at Garvoc, we headed off to assist a local farmer and his family, who were very pleased and appreciative of our arrival. Fences were totally gone, with just wire left laying on the ground. A grim reminder was the sight of two burnt out tractors, and farming equipment. The intensity of the heat melting tail lights and cabin interiors. The teams worked efficiently and in under 3 hours had rolled up



Group

approximately 3-4km of fencing. Neil Chambers had brought a trailer along and much of the wire was then transported to a shipping container dumped at the property as part of the clean up.

The farmer fortunately lost few stock, unlike his neighbour who lost 300 dairy cows - such was the fickle nature of the fire, with small areas untouched, surrounded by burnt paddocks. As a reminder of the toll, not only of stock, but on our native wildlife, was the body of a Koala caught in open ground trying to cross a paddock.

In the afternoon we headed towards Cobden and to a farm where a farmer had requested our help, after seeing what we had achieved in the area the previous weekend. We followed a windy gravel road along the edge of Lake Elingamite. There was plenty of smoke still rising from the peat fire that continues to burn underground. We were surprised by the number of resources situated around the lake, bulldozing a containment line, several large tankers with water, fire trucks and numerous DEPI trucks.

TLCCV cleared about 15km of burnt fences and left locals with a positive view of 4WD Clubs.

Brian Tanner
TLCCV



Some of the devastation near Garvoc, Western Victoria

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McMicheals Hut Chimney rebuild

McMichael's Hut is situated off Kellys Lane on Arbuckle Plain. It was rebuilt where it stands today around 1972. (ref. Alpine Heritage survey)

At a height of 1400 metres above sea level, this area is subject to extreme weather conditions and therefore the gates to this hut and others are closed during the winter months. Because of the fragility of this area and the peat soil Kellys Lane is closed earlier than the normal seasonal closures to protect the fragile landscape and this is determined jointly between Parks Vic and Four Wheel Drive Victoria.

The Geelong 4WD Club was approached by Wayne Peterken from the VHCHA to see if our club would be interested in assisting Parks Vic in rebuilding the chimney, as it was in great need of attention to protect the hut going forward. The club agreed.

Plans were drawn up of the outside of the chimney and Wayne Foon from Parks Heyfield obtained all the materials needed to reclad the outside chimney structure and all the bricks etc. needed to repair the fire place.

On the 18th May members of the Geelong 4WD club met at the Thomastown campground which is just outside the closed gate. (Great camping area with plenty of room). We set up camp and while we waited for Wayne Foon to arrive we went for a drive down to Moroka hut and also gathered wood for our camp fires.

On Saturday morning we headed to the hut to begin our work. We were so lucky with the weather on Saturday. Blue sky and sunshine, perfect working conditions.

Below is the work that was carried out on McMichael's.

1. Removed necessary existing gal iron cladding to expose the frame and brick work.
2. The existing frame work was in good condition and we were able to use it.
3. A 4mm plate and steel baffles were secured to the frame work and the chimney was reclad in corrugated iron.
4. Holes in the existing brick work were repaired with new bricks where needed and new bricks were laid on the inside

of the existing brick work creating a double brick fire place.

5. A steel lentil was secured to the front of the fire place to stop any logs from rolling out. New bricks were laid in front of the fire place for added protection.

6. The old mantelpiece was replaced with a new piece of timber.

We returned on Sunday ready to put the last of the corrugated iron on the outside and finish the fire place. However, the wind had picked up making it unsafe to be handling iron. It was decided that Wayne and his crew would return and finish the chimney when the weather permitted and the rangers had the time.

The hut already looks great and will stand the test of time for many years now.

This was a great experience for the Geelong 4x4 club to be involved in this project and we are proud to be assisting in projects like this one.

On behalf of the Geelong 4x4 club thank you to Wayne Peterken from VHCHA, and Wayne Foon from Parks Heyfield for sourcing materials, supplying all the tools and transporting all the equipment needed to do the work.

I would like to thank the Geelong 4WD club members for giving up their time to come up and help with this repair.

Shez Tedford.

Geelong 4x4 Club





Kelly Lane, with its two huts and fragile Shaw creek environment has had a lucky escape from the Tamboritha / Dingo Hill Fire of late summer. The Land Rover Owners Club of Gippsland, in conjunction with Parks Victoria, Heyfield had worked on a plan to undertake some work around McMichaels Hut on Kelly Lane for about twelve months.

On Saturday the 5th of May the group of twenty-two volunteers met at Licola Store for a coffee before driving up Tamboritha Road. After admiring the mini waterfall at Thomastown, the group travelled along Kelly Lane to meet up with Parks Victoria Ranger, Wayne Foon. We (FWDV and myself as Regional Representative with cooperation from PV Heyfield) had been able to negotiate an extended open time on Kelly Lane due to the unusually dry season.

Over two days the group completed one of the club's trademark concrete fire

rings. That was located over the top of an existing fire scar. Two fences were erected to prevent off road driving across the sensitive grass and peatland. This originally had not been an issue but once you get one set of tyre tracks more and more vehicles follow them ending up with rutted tracks pushing further into the creek edge vegetation.

The hut and surrounding areas were cleared of rubbish. Old fire scars were covered over. Firewood was cut and stacked at the hut for use as the winter weather closes in.

One of the Land Rover Owners Club of Gippsland members is an architect and she was able to do a complete set of accurate drawings and measurements of the hut for future reference. Full sets of detailed reference photographs of both McMichaels and Kellys Hut were taken as well. These are two good examples of how you can use specific

expertise in your club to help land managers.

Another great volunteer weekend for the benefit of all Park users. Two hundred and eighty six volunteer hours, or if you count travel, three hundred and ninety six hours; all reported to Four Wheel Drive Victoria for the all important data collection.

The Land Rover Owners Club of Gippsland have two more activities with Parks Victoria planned for this year; one along the camping areas on the Wellington River in July and a three day venture (more fire rings and picnic tables) on the Dargo side of the Park in November.

Greg Rose.

Land Rover Owners Club of Gippsland Regional Representative, Southern Alpine National Park.





Victoria burns...



Cave Gate Creek

TAMBORITHA/DINGO HILL FIRE and the surrounding tracks

Aerial photography courtesy Parks Victoria

Spectacular views, secluded high altitude and riverside camping spots, rocky hillsides, damp ferny gullies, dry ridge lines, places to tempt a trout to join you for dinner, tracks less frequented than the more popular routes; does this sound good? Located in the Alpine National Park north of Licola, there is a network of tracks offering all these things plus some challenging driving.

Black Soil Gully, Macalister River Track, Butcher Country Track, Butcher Link Track, Dingo Hill Track and Caledonia River Track form an excellent network offering some great drives for experienced drivers in well equipped high

clearance vehicles. Adventures on these Seasonally Closed routes often appear on YouTube videos. Unlike some other states and territories, it's all free.

Unfortunately it seems not everyone appreciates the privilege we have to use these tracks and campsites.

At 1150 hours on Tuesday the 27th of February 2018 a member of the public reported a fire in the Caledonia River valley. The cause of the fire is being treated as an escape from an abandoned or unattended campfire, and is currently under investigation.

The fire fighting operations resulted in short to medium term reduction in



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4X4 ACCESSORIES



access to a number of tracks in the area however there are some significant long term gains.

The fire was initially attacked using fixed wing and rotary (helicopter) fire fighting aircraft and ground crews from Forest Fire Management Victoria (DELWP and Parks Victoria). The extremely low ground moisture content, high summer temperatures, low humidity and difficult steep terrain combined to make the fire very difficult to control. For ground crews the very poor state of the tracks, particularly Butcher Country Track and Caledonia River Track made access potentially unsafe for Forest Fire Management Victoria personnel and contractor crews.



The location of the fire presented other challenges to fire and land managers. Within the area there were significant cultural and environmental sites to be preserved as much as possible. There were several historic huts; Kelly Hut, McMichaels Hut and Guys Hut, potentially in the line of the fire. The huts were wrapped in insulating foil to prevent embers entering them. The area has significant aboriginal heritage sites that had to be protected. There are Alpine wetlands and fragile creek environments to consider as well as the water catchment implications for the Macalister Irrigation District, the river and lake system downstream of the fire site. This irrigation district is a major



focus area for the State and Federal Governments and is critical for the ongoing health of our food bowl .

Those of us who went into Wonnangatta Valley for the Centenary of the Wonnangatta Murders over the Labour Day weekend experienced the thick smoke from the fire. There was also a chance to observe the water bombing helicopters, based out of Snowy Range Airfield beside the Howitt Road, in action.

It is important to remember that the primary function of the four wheel drive tracks we use in the Alps are for operational management. What might be a challenging rock bar or winching exercise through deep muddy ruts, to a weekend four wheel drive group, could have life threatening consequences for a crew driving a heavy slip-on fire fighting vehicle. Even the impressive new Mercedes G-wagon based 4x4 fire fighting units and the bigger Unimog trucks have limitations.

For public safety, because active fire fighting was taking place, the decision was made, in consultation with Four Wheel Drive Victoria, to close the track network detailed above. Contractors were brought in to work under the guidance of the fire controllers to make the tracks safe for crew to use. Quoting Mike Dower, Parks Victoria Area Chief Ranger, Foothills and Southern Alps, "Collaboration between PV, DELWP, FWDV etc., during the incident was fantastic with regards to emergency closures".



Caledonia River Track presented the greatest engineering challenges at first. The notorious bog holes and damaged river crossings had to be repaired. Corduroying was employed; that means digging out the bog holes, building up successive layers of logs (like rafting) and filling with gravel and rock, finally creating a smooth top layer.

Butcher Link, Dingo Hill, Macalister River Track and Black Soil Gully were all upgraded. Hazardous trees were removed from tracksides.

Butcher Country Track was dozed and rock bars eliminated. The northern section of Butcher Country Track presented the greatest environmental challenge. The "Trackwatch" December 2017 issue, pages 12 and 13, has a report on an inspection carried out by Four Wheel Drive Victoria (Wayne Hevey and Greg Rose), the West Gippsland Management Authority and several members of Parks Victoria including Helen Dixon, the District Manager for Central Gippsland. Butcher Country Track traverses the Howitt Plains, a significant peatland area and the deeply rutted track was preventing surface and sub-surface water reaching the down-slope plants. All those at the onsite inspection agreed on a solution to prevent permanent track closure, with work planned in stages over several years.

The need for urgent work to help crews and contractors access the fire and save the whole area has resulted in the top section of Butcher Country being reformed so that it is now crowned and slightly above the surrounding plains. It has been formed so that sub-surface water can reach the plants and ultimately the catchment area. This work, aided by a significant grant from the Catchment Management Authority, is a fantastic result for continued four wheel drive touring in the area, as all the planned work has now been completed.

The fire burnt (including back burn operations) 10,389 hectares. The fire operation took over fifty days. The resources used included rotary aircraft, including the huge Sikorsky 61 from Mansfield, fixed wing fire bombing aircraft, up to thirty pieces of heavy equipment operated by skilled contractors as well as large numbers of Forest Fire Management Victoria and Parks Victoria crew. All these contractors and crew had to be accommodated and fed. The costs are enormous and run into many millions of dollars. Andy Gillham, Parks Victoria Ranger In Charge, Fire and Emergency Operations, Central Gippsland District indicated that a significant amount of money had been allocated to the road and track work. Howitt Road right through to Howitt Hut and off shoots like the track out to

Campfire Safety

The campfire is a great part of being out in the bush. Great for socialising, great for cooking, great for warming the toes on a frosty night. However we live in an increasing fire prone part of the world. The regulations state that a campfire must be under the supervision of an adult at all times. That means you can see it. No crawling into the swag with the fire going so that it can be stoked to life for bacon and eggs in the morning. The fire must be extinguished by putting it out using water. The test is, "are the coals down in the fire place cool to touch after you have put it out". Covering the fire with soil is not an acceptable option. This only creates an oven to keep the heat in the coals, which can flare up days later. Fires should also be kept small.

Dimmick Lookout have been graded as part of allowing access for contractors large vehicles.

From all this came some positive outcomes for the touring four wheel driver, four wheel drive clubs and other members of the public who use the area. The upgrading of the tracks will mean they are useable for many years to come. The tracks are still challenging with steep climbs and descents, tight switchbacks, red clay hills that will be interesting if they are wet and the area is remote. The great campsites are still accessible. The fantastic fire fighting efforts have saved the environmentally and historically valuable assets.

I was invited by Mike Dower to travel over most of the track network recently while he did an inspection of the work. The quality of the contractor's work is outstanding. I'm looking forward to getting back into the area when the tracks open for Melbourne Cup week-end. After the winter rain and snow consolidate the surfaces and promote some regrowth in the burnt forests, the area should be well worth an extended camping trip.

I would like to thank Andy Gillham, Mike Dower and Sarah Noonan from Parks Victoria for their assistance in putting all this information together.

I know that Wayne Hevey, the Four Wheel Drive Victoria office and myself were very appreciative of the constant updates on track and road closures provided to us by Parks Victoria.

Greg Rose,
Land Rover Owners Club of Gippsland.
Four Wheel Drive Victoria Regional Representative, Southern Alpine National Park.

UPDATE: BUTCHER COUNTRY WORKS

Before



After



Photos by Greg Rose

4WD Crossword #3
by Tony Heathcote



Across

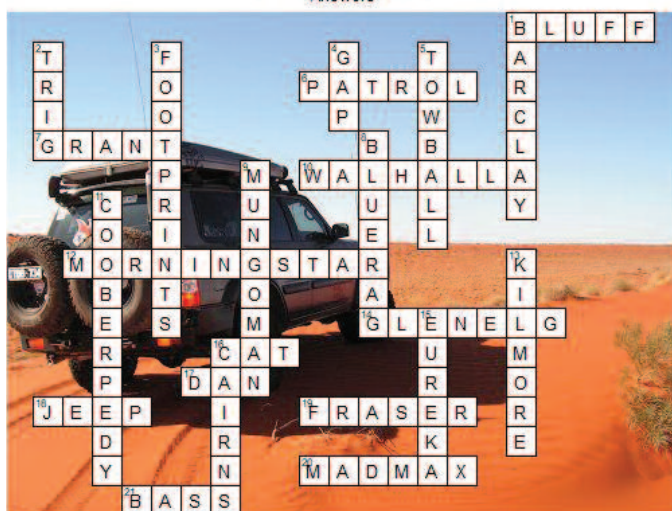
1. 2017 4WD movie '_____ Stuff'
5. Long rally held in South America in January
7. Simpson Desert track
9. An 'Ankle Biter' is an Australian expression for a _____
10. Location of the 'Morning Star Mine'
12. Location of the Victorian Four Wheel Drive Show held in February '_____ Park'
14. Country where the Volkswagen Amarok is made
15. Town near Crooked River
16. Hut located along the Howqua River

Down

2. Track with 353 sand dunes located in South Australia '_____ Track'
3. Current model of Jeep Wrangler
4. This state forest visited by 4WDers is also an Aboriginal word meaning 'Tall Trees'
5. Australian word for toilet
6. Brand of 4WD accessories
8. Campground currently undergoing upgrade - '_____ Flat'
11. Name of a hut located in Donnelly Creek Victoria
13. Variant of the current Ford Ranger

Last issues crossword answers

Crossword #2
Answers



With thanks to Tony Heathcote for designing and producing these 4WD oriented crosswords.



"It is just 10 more minutes ..."

Driving while fatigued is a killer and while we are all tempted at some point to go that little bit longer to get to our destination just that little bit sooner, it is obviously much safer to drive in such a way as to arrive alive. But all too often we put unrealistic expectations on how far we plan to travel just so we can pack in as much time as we can at the other end.

Especially for the four wheel drive enthusiast, the lure of the dusty tracks and time in the bush provides us with the perfect excuse to push the boundaries in order to enjoy the destination. But in reality, who are we kidding? We justify our efforts in so many ways, however this can lead to driving tired and putting yourself and others on the road at great risk.

Some practical tips to avoid driver fatigue are:

- Plan your trip so you can take regular breaks
- Avoid driving at times you would normally be asleep
- Avoid starting a trip after a long day's work

- Share the task of driving with another person
- Be aware of the effects of any medication taken
- Set some rules ... if you start to feel tired, the only way to keep safe is to stop and sleep.

Most of us know our limits, research by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau has identified that there are two periods of the day when the effects of fatigue are most evident - between midnight and 6am, and between 2pm - 4pm. For me, driving through sunrise and sunset is when I am most vulnerable. Driving after a heavy meal can be difficult for many people. When is it that you know you are not at your best?

Whilst there are a significant number of factors that contribute to the reasons for driver fatigue (including road design issues), the number one solution to avoiding the onset of fatigue is simply to get enough sleep before you set out. Stopping every two hours and getting out of the car, some fresh air and some exercise, perhaps a 10 minute power nap is going to help, but how much can vary.

Why does fatigue cause accidents?

- Slower reaction times
- Reduced attention to notice potential hazards
- Reduced information processing including accuracy of short-term memory

Recognising the Signs of Fatigue

Constant yawning, blurred vision, slowed reactions, heavy or sore eyes, poor concentration, impatience, not remembering the last few kilometres of the trip and so on.

While turning up the radio and winding down the window might appear to rejuvenate you, who are you kidding? If you're tired, pull over and have a rest, it is not just your life you are playing with.

Plan to enjoy the trip, make it all about the journey, not just the destination, the message is clear - take note of your fatigue responses and use the rest area, as the difference between someone's life and death could be just 10 minutes.

Arrive alive!



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