

# TRACK WATCH



**WODONGA TO WALHALLA  
MOUNT WELLINGTON TRACK INSPECTION  
BRIDGEWATER BLAZE AID ASSISTANCE  
AUSTRALIA DAY TRIP TO MILDURA  
SIMPSON DESERT**

**MARCH 2023**

AUS \$4.95 INC GST



# ALL SHOW, ALL-GO.

SOME TYRES ARE MADE ALL FOR THE SHOW. THEN THERE ARE THOSE THAT GO THE DISTANCE TOO. EMPOWER YOU TO EXPLORE; FROM DAWN TO DUSK, OR TAKE YOU FROM THE WEEKDAY GRIND TO A WEEKEND ADVENTURE - **ALL DAY, EVERY DAY.**

ALL AMONGST IT OR GETTING AWAY FROM IT ALL. BECAUSE WHEN IT'S ALL SAID AND DONE, WE BELIEVE YOUR ALL-TERRAIN TYRES SHOULD BE AS VERSATILE AS YOU ARE AND **DELIVER ANYWHERE, EVERY TIME.**

***OPEN COUNTRY<sup>®</sup> A/T<sup>III</sup>***

Scan to  
watch  
the tyre  
in action



Make  
your  
*move.*

**TOYO  
TIRES<sup>®</sup>**



## FOUR WHEEL DRIVE VICTORIA

The peak representative body for all Victorian four wheel drivers since 1975

Victoria Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs Inc.  
PO Box 292 Mitcham Vic 3132

Phone 03 9874 7222

Email [office@fwdvictoria.org.au](mailto:office@fwdvictoria.org.au)

Website [www.4wdvictoria.org.au](http://www.4wdvictoria.org.au)

ABN 40 891 301 368

ASSN A0013539S

RTO 21605

Print Post PP 100005076

## BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

### EXECUTIVE

**President** Eric Bishop (TLCCV)

**Vice President** Fred De Gooyer (LROCV)

**Secretary** Kane Harnden (Nissan 4WDC)

**Treasurer** Albert Giorgini (LROC)

### BOARD MEMBERS

David Roberts (Toyota 4WD Club), Gordon Porter (Everest 4WD Club) and David van Zanten (Albury-Wodonga 4WD Club, Wangaratta 4WD Club).

## STAFF

**Chief Executive Officer** Wayne Hevey  
(Just Mates 4WD Club)

**Office Administrator** Alison McLaughlin  
(Mansfield Alpine 4WD Club)

**Accounts** Di Hodgson

**Projects & Events Officer** Daniel Whitby

**RTO Compliance** Micah Spedding

## TRACKWATCH

**Editors** Four Wheel Drive Victoria team

**Email** [editor@fwdvictoria.org.au](mailto:editor@fwdvictoria.org.au)

**Individual Contributors** Wayne Hevey, Eric Bishop, Daniel Whitby, Russell Boynton, Greg Rose, Peter Beech, Glen Sutherland and Dennis Webb

### 2023 Copy Deadline next issue

10th February for March 2023 issue

5th May for June 2023 issue

4th August for September 2023 issue

3rd November for December 2023 issue

**Advertising** [projects@fwdvictoria.org.au](mailto:projects@fwdvictoria.org.au)

Design and Artwork by Jaz Effect Design

Cover picture: *Simpson Desert, Ian Fletcher MJOC*

All material appearing in Trackwatch magazine is copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part is strictly forbidden without prior written consent. Freelance contributions and submissions are welcome by this magazine. No responsibility is accepted for unsolicited manuscripts, photographs, etc. The opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of Four Wheel Drive Victoria. All statements made, although based on information believed to be reliable and accurate, cannot be guaranteed and no fault or liability can be accepted for error or omission. The publisher reserves the right to omit or alter any article or advertisement. Advertisers agree to indemnify the publisher for all damages or liabilities arising from the published material.

*In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.*

## FROM THE PRESIDENT



We are now well into 2023 and 1/6th of the year is already over, however, FWDV have not wasted anytime getting back into the fray promoting our recreation.

FWDV have a KPI agreement with the Victorian Govt, to provide effective education that will promote responsible behaviours and deter irresponsible ones. To that end we have produced a video which can be seen via our website. This is part of the funding program we enjoy with our Government Partners in responsibly promoting the Four Wheel Drive activity.

Showcasing the team at FWDV, this video got a run on WIN News at the start of the new year and is also being run by Parks Victoria as part of their summer safety advertising campaign.

Of course, our funding is also heavily linked to the volunteer network within the association and is extremely well respected within Parks Victoria (PV), Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA).

For new members of the Association, FWDV is a member of the Four Wheel Drive Advisory Committee to the Government along with PV, and DEECA, which gives us a direct voice to the Minister for the Environment.

The Labour Day 3-day weekend is upon us and as usual we are seeking volunteer clubs to take up the opportunity to host a 'Camp Host' weekend activity. Whilst we are providing a benefit to the community, Camp Host also provides a financial benefit to the clubs. Contact Daniel at [projects@fwdvictoria.org.au](mailto:projects@fwdvictoria.org.au) and put your club down for this weekend or perhaps Easter.

There are many other ways Clubs can consider helping us by taking part in other projects we put forward this year such as Clean Up the Bush programs, Track Clearing and the shows that we are being involved in around the state. The year starts with the LROCV's Victorian 4wd Show at Lardner Park Feb 19th, followed by the Great Outdoors shows at Mornington Racetrack in March, Ballarat - March/April, Mildura - June/July, Shepparton - September and Sale - November, plus the National 4X4 Show in August this year. We have also been asked to come back into the Caravan and Camping Show which we shall discuss with the organizers for

2024. This is a massive undertaking over 5 days and requires a lot of assistance to fulfill!

Our RTO is rolling along very successfully mostly due to the immense effort our CEO provides in support of our Trainers, all of which are extremely talented and capable people. We were successful in getting the upgrade to our units being put on scope and are pushing forward in conducting the accredited training.

The FWDV Training Ground at Toolangi is moving forward. We have recently assessed the very robust shipping container type buildings which will provide great protection against vandalism and the like.

We have spoken to both DEECA and the Taungurung personnel regarding how we may proceed with the installation of toilet facilities at the training centre. We are progressing with LUAA

(Land User Activity Assessment) paperwork through appropriate channels to establish approval for this to proceed. We have joined the Murrindindi Scenic Council which has also put us in the right space to move forward with all of this.

March 4th will see us developing our strategic initiative goals for the future and following that workshop we will advise the clubs when the next Presidents day is pencilled in to discuss these initiatives moving forward.

So, keep the shiny side up, take photos and leave no trace, all in all have a safe trip when next venturing into our remarkable country.

**Eric Bishop**  
**President**



 **BOOK ONLINE**

Four Wheel Drive Victoria is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO21605) offering non-accredited Proficiency 4WD training and a range of Accredited 4wd and Chainsaw courses. Open to all club members, the general public and corporate organisations. Browse courses and book online at [www.fwdvictoria.org.au/training](http://www.fwdvictoria.org.au/training) Call the office (03) 9874 7222 for further information

## PROFICIENCY COURSES

Tuesday 5th July – PC230708 – Theory	Saturday 9th September – PC230905 – Practical
Saturday 8th July – PC230708 – Practical	Tuesday 3rd October – PC231003 – Theory
Tuesday 1st August – PC230801 – Theory	Saturday 7th October – PC231003 – Practical
Saturday 5th August – PC230801 – Practical	Tuesday 28th November – PC231128 – Theory
Tuesday 5th September – PC230905 – Theory	Saturday 2nd December – PC231128 – Practical

### 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 to 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.

**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 transferable 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.

# The Great Outdoor and 4X4

EXP  
O



Love the outdoors? Then we'll see you at the Great Outdoor and 4X4 Expo

# Ballarat 2023

**April 28th - 30th**

**Friday 28th**  
10am - 5pm

**Saturday 29th**  
10am - 5pm

**Sunday 30th**  
10am - 4pm

**Ballarat Showgrounds**

Cnr Creswick Road & Howitt Street, Ballarat Victoria

[www.greatoutdoorexpos.com.au](http://www.greatoutdoorexpos.com.au) |   @thegreatoutdoorand4x4expo

Next Expo - MILDURA | 30 June - 02 July 2023, Mildura Racecourse

## FROM FWDV CEO



**H**appy New Year to all. I hope you have all had a good Christmas and the New Year is looking exciting and prosperous at this early stage.

I would like to pay tribute and thank Brian Tanner for his excellent work as editor of this Trackwatch magazine since 2013. He has performed a sterling job in bringing everything together for so long, to produce an outstanding quarterly magazine. Unfortunately, the upturn in material costs including postage and the downturn in advertising content and subsequent revenue, has forced us to take a hard look at our financial situation which has led to this change in direction. We wish Brian all the very best in his future dealings.

Here in the office, we have started the year with a flurry of courses being run and booked into the immediate future, clearing the backlog that occurred prior to shutting down for the holiday break. Changes have taken place in the course units we deliver in our accredited driver training with our instructors also having to be brought up to speed with these upgrades. We are once again forging ahead with these to ensure maximum output for all concerned, whilst being very diligent with the professional delivery of our product to maintain the level of excellence we have become known for. This, we consider will keep the consistency of work flowing into the foreseeable future.

Our training centre at Toolangi is progressing, albeit slowly, due the machinations of dealing with a variety of entities whose wishes and directives must be handled with respect and given the proper attention. Sizeable gates have been procured and installed at considerable cost along with the mandatory cameras to hopefully catch any vandalism that may occur there. We are hoping to be running courses in the facility towards the middle of this year.

Late last year we were offered the chance to shoot some advertising material with Parks Victoria to emphasis the Summer Safety Awareness Campaign they are running. This was invaluable in putting Four Wheel Drive Victoria at the front of mind on their social media pages, as well as ours,

along with a story which aired on WIN TV News early January. We are looking forward to following up with Parks Victoria and similar material content into the future. We are also working with DEECA on similar projects which we hope to finalise in the very near future. In case you haven't caught up with the news, DELWP has had a name change and is now the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, DEECA.

We are presently seeking an audience with the new Minister for the Environment, Ingrid Stitt and her Senior Advisor to profess what we are able to supply to the government regarding our commitment to looking after the landscape both through our advocacy and volunteer efforts across the state.

Last year whilst working with the Gunaikurnai mob in East Gippsland, I was made aware of the ability to partake in a GLaWAC Cultural Awareness Day. Alison McLaughlin, Daniel Whitby and I drove down to Bairnsdale and Kalimna recently to take part in what was a wonderful day, full of Australian history and generally unknown tragic events, delivered by Wayne Thorpe, an exceptional Gunai man. (Please look him up on Google to see his qualifications) We recommend this to anyone who feels inclined to learn more about the Gunaikurnai traditional owner's history and way of life from their dream time to their present day "Caring for Country" outlook and aspirations.

We have a number of clubs who are reaching important anniversaries this year. The Land Rover Owners Club of Victoria are celebrating 60 years this year, while the Dandenong Ranges 4WD Club are celebrating 50 years in April as are the Geelong 4x4 Club and Toyota Land Cruiser Club of Victoria. The Wangaratta 4WD club are celebrating 40 years in May, the Port Phillip Club are 35 years in May and Amarak Club of Victoria are celebrating their 10 year anniversary also in May. Wonderful achievements by all those concerned in these clubs. It is excellent to see there is still momentum being carried through by the members to encourage activities and events essential to the longevity of the clubs and our association.

If your club has any significant milestones coming up in the near future please let us know in the office so we can make sure it is celebrated by all.

I hope you enjoy this edition and look forward to catching up with you on the tracks soon.

**Wayne Hevey**  
CEO



Planning your next adventure?  
Demand reliable communications - Demand Icom

## IC-410PRO

UHF CB Mobile Transceiver



## IC-455

UHF CB Mobile Transceiver



IC-41PRO  
UHF CB Handheld Transceiver

**5 YEAR  
WARRANTY**

Icom UHF CB Radios are designed and built from  
Commercial Radios tried and tested all over the globe.

Available at your nearest Icom Reseller



# WODONGA TO WALHALLA

BY: RUSSELL BOYNTON

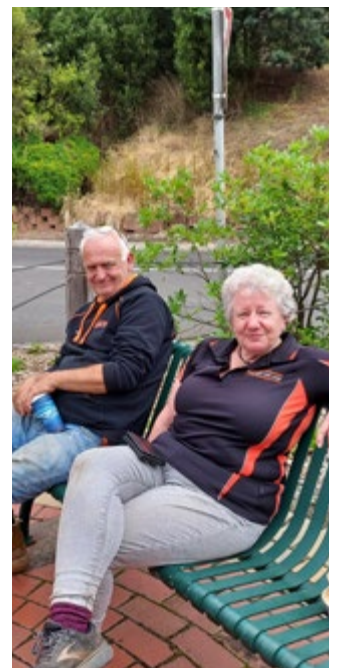


Recently, members of the True Grit 4wd Club, headed south from their hometown and surrounds of Wodonga over the range into West Gippsland. 7 days of great driving, spectacular scenery, club camaraderie and plenty of time to take in the interesting mining history and attractions of Walhalla and beyond.

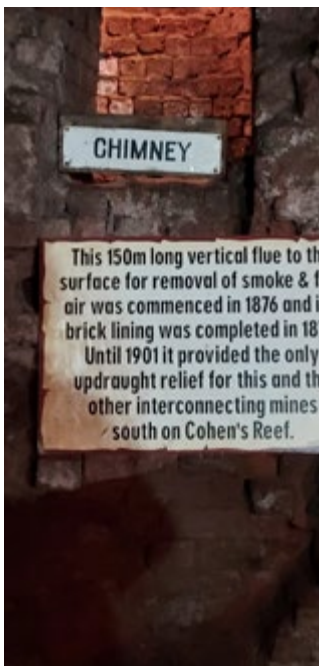
Boxing day was the getaway day. The convoy took off on an early morning start bound for their basecamp destination by the end of the day. The five and a half hour journey took in Mansfield, Gaffneys Creek, the Thomson Dam, eventually arriving at Walhalla. Their camp set up was about a 15 minute walk into the township. Perfect!

For the next few days the group explored the region taking in the Long Tunnel Mine, Museum, Mt Baw Baw, Noojee and its beautiful trestle bridge and waterfalls. Bruntons Bridge and Coopers Creek were also on the list. In contrast they also visited the last of Victoria's coal fired powerstations – Loy Lang.

The last highlight of the trip was a train ride on the historic railway line from Walhalla to Thomson's Station before returning to camp for a sumptuous new year's eve roast lamb dinner.










## Victorian4WD SHOW

After 3 years of cancellations due to Covid, the Victorian 4x4 show was back on again at Lardner Park. The sun was out, the hot weather had settled and we were set for an excellent show.

Saturday saw the many hard working volunteers from the Land Rover Owners Club of Victoria, the shows organisers, making sure exhibitors found their sites with ease and adding any finishing touches to the grounds in preparation for a busy Sunday. The Four Wheel Drive Victoria stand was set up with assistance from Roger McGrath (FWDV Trainer, Nissan 4WD Club), Ron Bell (Just Mates 4x4 Club), Wayne Hevey (FWDV CEO) and Daniel Whitby (FWDV Projects Officer). Displays were erected to show the punters all about our affiliated clubs and the great trips and volunteer work they do as well as everything about Four Wheel Drive Victoria.

Camping onsite overnight, we were awoken early to the sounds of cars and trucks, belonging to those who opted to set up their stand on the Sunday instead of Saturday, from as early as 5am. This caused quite a long queue

for coffee as everyone who camped seemed to have received the same wake up call and looked for a way to get that last bit of energy for their morning.

The final displays were set up on the Four Wheel Drive Victoria stand as Alison McLaughlin (FWDV Office Manager) arrived to help with these. 9am had arrived and the gates at Lardner Park were flung open. Large crowds started streaming through, making a great sign that the show would be a busy one. Shortly after we were joined by Eric Bishop (FWDV President) and Kane Harden (FWDV Secretary) from the Four Wheel Drive Victoria board to assist at the stand. We were also extremely fortunate to be joined by Lachlan from Affinity Insurance Brokers to talk to interested parties about the associations Insurance and motor vehicle insurance. Richard Wadsworth and Sam Monaham from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) spent time on the stand to talk about the partnership between Four Wheel Drive Victoria and DEECA, More to Explore and Explore Outdoors.

As the morning progressed

there was a steady stream of visitors to the stand with all different types of questions and enquiries. Many were enquiring about joining clubs with punters shown how to go about contacting clubs they may be interested in, or if the club attended the show, how to get to their stand. There was also many questions about training courses and the benefit of doing a training course with a clubs driver training. Affinity and DEECA also had many enquiries from the public.

As the afternoon rolled around, the heat started to pick up and the cool breeze died down leaving traffic to slow down during the afternoon with the crowds disappearing just before close at 4pm. A quick pack up and we were back on the road heading for the Four Wheel Drive Victoria office to drop off the gear, ready for the next show, the Mornington Great Outdoors Expo! A big thank you to all the volunteers, LROCV and all the other exhibitors for making it a great show. We look forward to another great event to come in 2024!

## 4X4 Protection



Window Tinting



Full Bonnet, Front Fenders, and Headlights



Full Front, Lower Doors and Lower C-Pillar



Full Wrap

### Window Tint

99% UV Protection  
53-98% IR Heat Reduction  
Darkest Legal  
Lifetime Warranty

### Paint Protection Film

Self-Healing  
Scratch Resistant  
Stone Chip Protection  
Scrub Protection  
10 Year Warranty



Windscreen Protection

*Congratulations*



At the last Bendigo Four Wheel Drive Club AGM, President Bill Sanson bestowed the greatest club honour to Frank and Heather Fenwick by presenting them Life Membership. This was acknowledgement of all the contribution they have made to the club over nearly 25 years.

It all started when Frank and Heather attended a four-wheel drive course through Bendigo Continuing Education back in 1998 where John Stafford (also a Life Member) was the trainer. Frank and Heather had purchased their Forerunner a few months prior and thought they should learn how to drive it as most of their experience to date was in their trusty XD Falcon or Peugeot.

At the time of joining, the monthly club meetings were held at the Newmarket Hotel with President Sandy Tod at the helm. Heather and Frank went on many trips in those first few years and finally they traded the Forerunner in on the Landcruiser they still have today. A few years after they joined the club, John Stafford came around to their house and gave Frank the dregs of a port bottle, which was the passing of the Port and Poetry baton across to them. They have continued to run the annual Port and Poetry trip ever since.

Over the years, Heather has been an active committee member in roles such as Social Coordinator and Secretary and spent countless hours organising Leisurefest events including being a presenter. She also helped track down previous club members for the 30th Anniversary of the club a few years ago and more recently, taking the lead in organising the Bunnings BBQ fundraising events.

Frank's longest role on the committee was Liaison Officer and over the several years he was in this position, he and Heather attended countless Regional Reps meetings going to places such as Bairnsdale, Geelong, Tatura, Mansfield, Grampians, Bright, Colac and Warragul. He too also shared his knowledge to attendees at Leisurefest events as a speaker.

In recent times, Frank has been Trip Coordinator and has led some day trips around the Castlemaine and Heathcote areas. Both Frank and Heather have made a significant contribution to the club, and on behalf of the club, we thank them for their continued service and good humour on trips and at meetings. Congratulations Frank and Heather.

**FIT OUT YOUR 4WD WITH HUGE SAVINGS ONLY AT THE REDSHED!**

**Husqvarna 236e CHAINSAW**

This 38cc chainsaw comes with 14inch (35cm) bar. It is fitted with 3/8 low profile .050 safety chain.



**Husqvarna 236e ONLY \$274**  
RRP \$ 399 SAVE \$125

**GREAT BUY**

**HONDA EU22i GENERATOR**



Australia's No. 1 **CAMPING GENERATOR**  
**BUY NOW, SAVE \$400**  
on Honda's EU22i Generator!

**Honda EU22i ONLY \$1699**  
**SAVE \$400**

**Only Available while STOCKS LAST!**

To claim these SPECIAL OFFERS Visit one of our 6 GREAT LOCATIONS:

**Dandenong - Mitcham - Bunyip**  
**Bayswater - Cranbourne - Pakenham**



**Call 1300 136 572**

**arbormaster**  
Australia's Tree and Garden Equipment Specialist

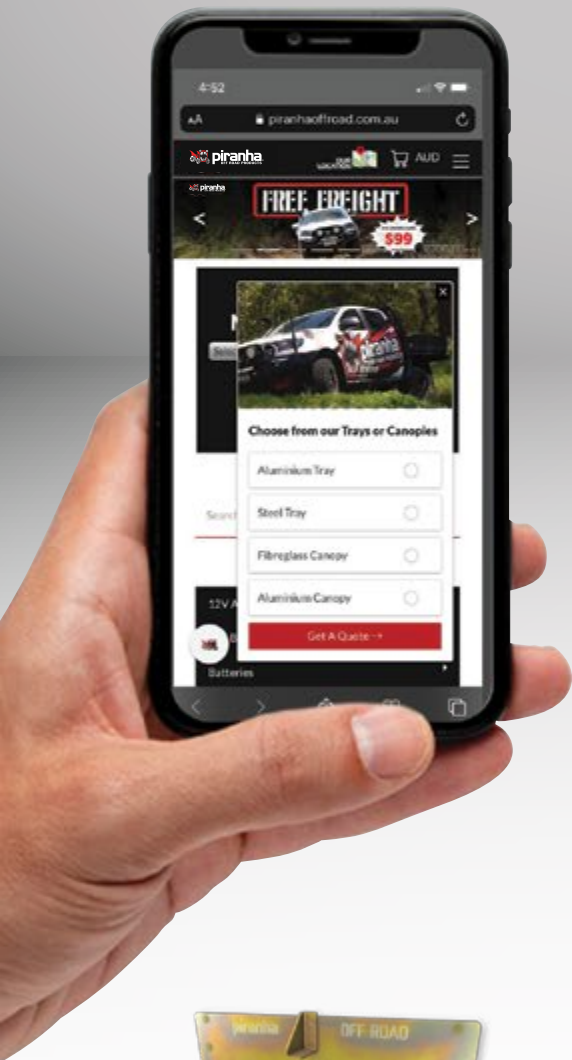


If you would like to learn more about the clubs featured in this edition of Trackwatch or about any other club that is affiliated with Four Wheel Drive Victoria please visit our website [www.fwdvictoria.org.au](http://www.fwdvictoria.org.au) and click on the **'4WD Clubs'** section at the top of the page.



# piranha

OFF ROAD PRODUCTS

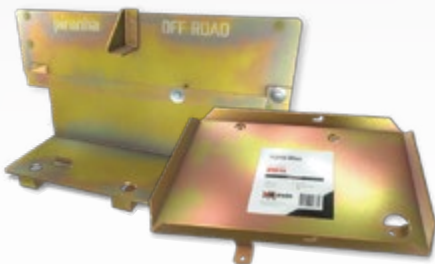


## CHECK OUT OUR ONLINE STORE

[www.piranhaoffroad.com.au](http://www.piranhaoffroad.com.au)



PREMIUM ALUMINIUM UTE TRAYS, STEEL UTE TRAYS, AND FIBREGLASS CANOPIES



**BATTERY TRAYS**  
Over 150 different models available



**SUSPENSION PRODUCTS**  
Heavy Duty Upgrades & lift Kits



**DUAL BATTERY MANAGEMENT**  
DBE140SF Smart Isolator &  
DBDC1230s DC-DC Charger with Solar Input



**DRIVING LIGHTS**



**RECOVERY GEAR**



[www.piranhaoffroad.com.au](http://www.piranhaoffroad.com.au)

(03) 9762 1200

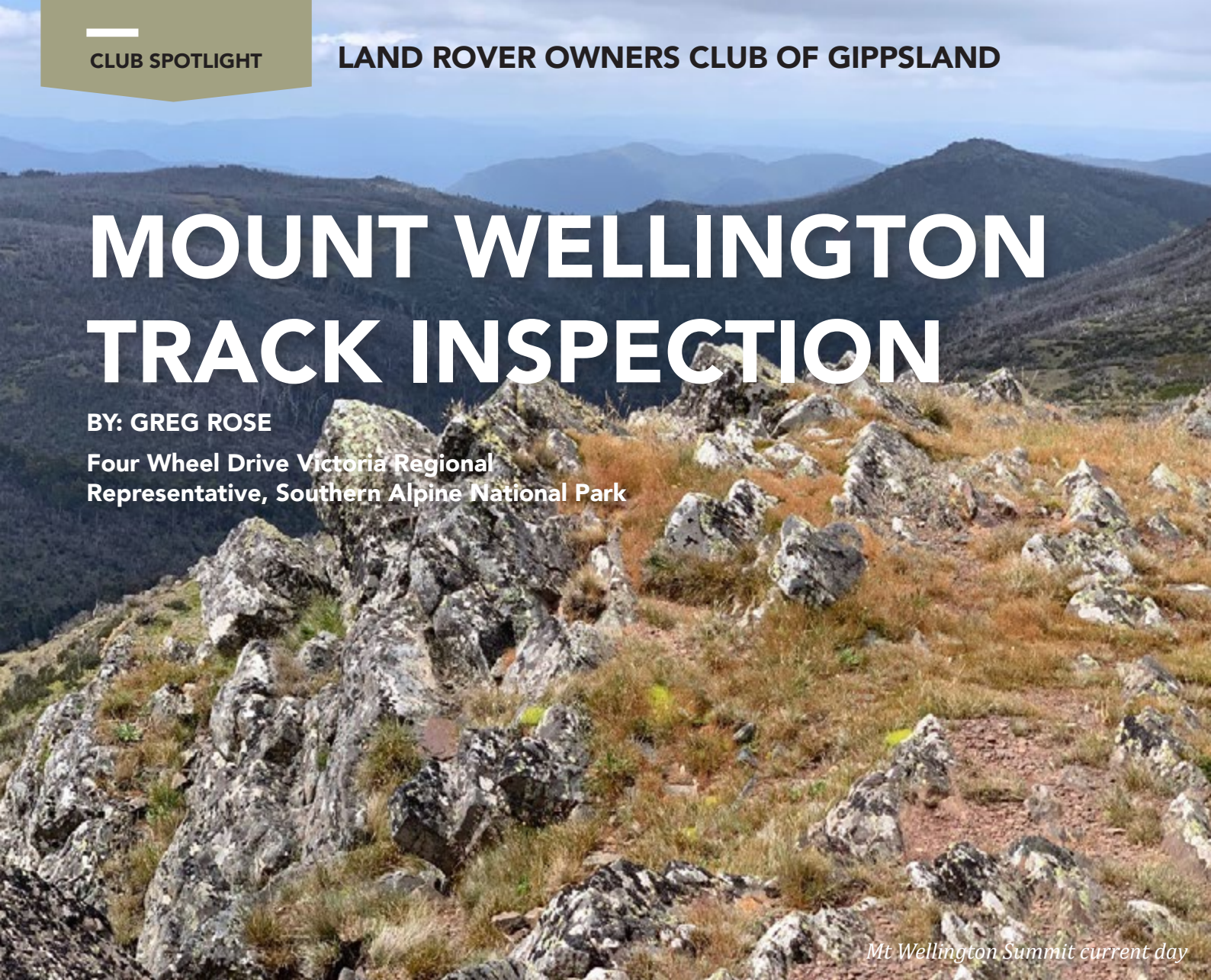
/piranhaoffroadproducts

piranhaoffroadproducts

# MOUNT WELLINGTON TRACK INSPECTION

BY: GREG ROSE

Four Wheel Drive Victoria Regional  
Representative, Southern Alpine National Park



*Mt Wellington Summit current day*



*Mt Wellington 2019*



*Campfire and dinner*



*Horseyard Flat*



*Parks Victoria Vehicle outside Millers Hut*



*Millers Hut*

**A** biting chill wind had us reaching for another layer of clothing. Even though it was mid-January, we had clothing suitable for four seasons in our packs in the Parks Victoria Hilux dual cab. Victorian Alps weather, especially at the higher altitudes, can be quite unpredictable. I was standing at the craggy 1634 metre summit of Mount Wellington with Parks Victoria Area Chief Ranger, Foothills and Southern Alps, Mike Dower. The views from the summit were quite spectacular. The various peaks and valleys of the Great Dividing Range were spread out before us with a three-hundred and sixty degree view. Looking south there were the valleys of the Turton and Avon Rivers, winding their way through the Avon Wilderness Area. The Turton joins the Avon

and the waters eventually flow out of the hills and through flat, highly productive, farming land and into the Gippsland Lakes.

In 2019 a bushfire swept over Mount Wellington and much of the area we could see. On the 18th May 2019, Parks Victoria Ranger Wayne Foon and myself lead a Four Wheel Drive Victoria Regional Representatives trip over Mount Wellington. In the words of one of the participants, the sight was distressing. Everything seemed to be charred. Now, in January 2023, the regeneration is amazing. Incredibly the fire had not impacted on Millers Hut, which is reached by continuing on the track beyond the summit. The snow gums and understorey plants surrounding the historic building make it a special place to visit. The regeneration we saw was made even more interesting by the number of wildflowers blooming after the wet seasons.

Mike Dower had invited me to accompany him on a two-day inspection of the recent road and track work in the Alpine National Park north of Licola. The track up to Mount Wellington and down to Millers Hut had become seriously eroded with numerous deep ruts and holes that held water. Contractors have done an enormous amount of work and the tracks are currently in very good condition. Apart from the delays to work brought about by Covid restrictions, the very wet conditions of the past two years, which included an extreme weather event in June 2021, have made life difficult for crews working on roads and tracks. We accessed Mount Wellington Track from the Moroka Road. The crossing of the Moroka River had been significantly improved with the large, differential crunching rocks, relocated. The tracks are still best suited to high clearance four-wheel drives with low range and good tyres, all terrains at a minimum.

Deciding that a slightly lower altitude might provide a warmer night for camping we headed from Millers Hut, back over Mount Wellington and took the Moroka Road to Horseyard Flat. We stopped and had an interesting conversation with some Zoos Victoria researchers on Mount Wellington Track. Horseyard Flat has plenty of camping site options. There are secluded spots for just a tent or two and more open areas suitable for a small group or people with camper trailers. The pit toilet, originally built by Macalister 4x4 Club, has to be shared with a nesting swallow. We set up our camp near one of the picnic tables the Land Rover Owners Club of Gippsland volunteers had constructed a few years ago. Our dinner of steaks from a steer raised on pasture on the flats near the Avon River, mushrooms and plump tomatoes was



cooked on coals from the warming campfire. We sat and chatted with the sound of the gurgling Moroka River as background music.

After a good night's sleep, in my case only broken by a large deer grazing outside my tent, we brewed coffee and ate breakfast. We had been the only people camped at Horseyard Flat. Flame robins hopped around our campsite and hundreds of small black insects came to visit at night if you used a white light. By the time this is published, work should have been completed improving the drainage and surface of the access tracks to the various campsites.

Retracing our route, we made a short detour to look at the work being undertaken on Howitt Road. The surface and drainage are being improved with numerous loads of gravel, graded and rolled. A helicopter, 333 helitac, had just landed at Snowy Plains Airstrip after dropping a rappel crew into inaccessible country to the East of Snowy Plains in the Snowy Darling Wilderness Area. Crews had been working on containing a lightning strike for several days. There's always something happening in the alps.

We were committed to returning home via Heyfield but there is an alternative from Mount Wellington, Horseyard Flat or the Pinnacles. Marathon Road is a direct route from Moroka Road to Briagolong from where it is an easy run through to Stratford and the Princes Highway. Marathon Road has recently been worked on and is a scenic route out of the mountains. It is best travelled in dry weather and, like Mount Wellington, is subject to seasonal closure.

There are some hidden gems in the area like the walk to the top of Castle Hill. The carpark area has just been cleared and work is progressing on making the walking track more open. Moroka Hut is an easy walk from a small carpark on Moroka Road. For those wanting a longer, more spectacular walk, Moroka Gorge with its waterfalls is well worth the effort. The trail head is at Horseyard Flat.

Thank you to Mike Dower for inviting me along on his inspection trip. It is impressive to see the amount of work that land managers, Parks Victoria and DEECA and their expert contractors are doing to improve visitor access and experiences in the high country.



**YOUR ONE STOP SHOP**

*No mobile connection, no worries*

**SatPhone Shop**

Communicate "EVERYWHERE"

# For all your remote communication needs



**SATELLITE PHONES**



**NEW IRIDIUM GO! EXEC**

Talk to the Satphone Shop experts and learn more!



**SATELLITE DEVICES**



**UHF RADIOS**



**PORTABLE POWER SOLUTIONS**

• Cel-Fi Mobile Boosters • Airtime Packages • Satellite Car Kits • PLB'S • Accessories + More!



**1300 368 611**

**satphoneshop.com**   



# BRIDGEWATER BLAZE AID ASSISTANCE

BY: PETER BEECH

Well, what a trip. Snappy, Ray and Jules and I met at Bunnings Nunawading car park at 9 am on Friday 18/11/22 and we travelled to Bridgewater Recreational Reserve on behalf of the Four Wheel Drive Victoria Rural Response Group, where BlazeAid had a camp set up to receive volunteers from across Australia to assist in rectifying flood-affected farm fences from the recent central Victorian floods.

Bruce and Michael rolled in later in the afternoon after a stopover for some "Lunch" at a nearby town.

Matt Wills rolled in next as our group expanded.

The camp had access to the Football / Netball club rooms where there was a full commercial kitchen, club rooms, and plenty of toilet and shower

facilities.

We set up around the oval with lots of room for those who were coming over the next few days, registered, had dinner, and met our new group of volunteers.

Every day after breakfast we made up lunches with food supplied and listened to an in-depth safety talk by the camp Co-Ordinator Graham Allen who is also a member of the Range Rover Club of Victoria. We were then split up into groups of 4-5 people which included at least 1 BlazeAid volunteer in the team who had been on previous camps.

We hooked up 8 x 5 tradesman trailers full of gear needed to complete every task required and set off around 8.30am each day "via the coffee shop" to farmers' properties within a 50 km radius who had registered for assistance via the BlazeAid website.

We were often assisted by the farmer or a farm hand to locate

the correct fence or to operate the farmer's equipment like tractors.

Some of us were lucky enough to have a farm that offered us morning tea and lunch in their home as part of their way of saying thanks to the volunteers who had come to help.

Over the next few days, other YV4x4 members attend including Sandi, Peter, Carol, and Alphonse, and Judy.

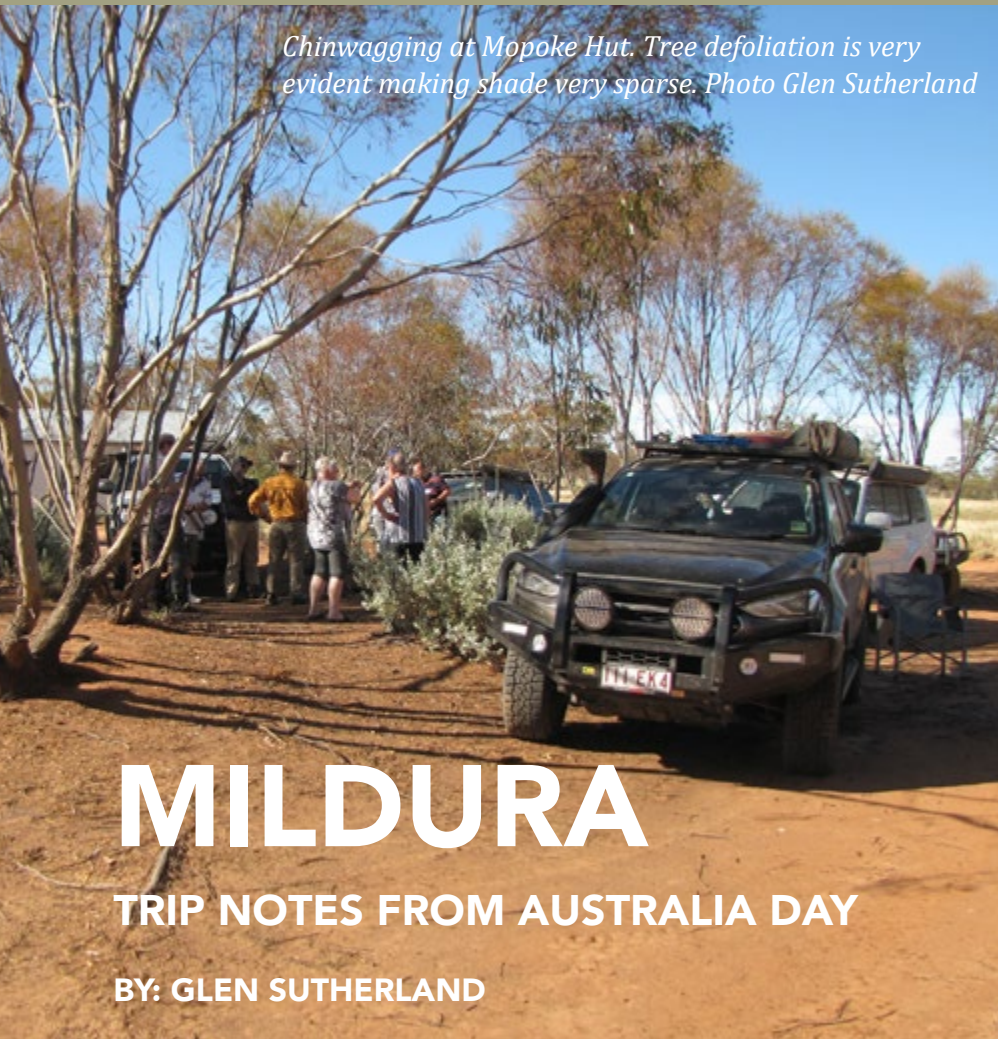
The last of us finished up on Friday 25/11 and packed up for home on Saturday 26/11.

Every farmer we assisted was extremely grateful for our assistance and BlazeAid was over the moon with Four Wheel Drive Victoria's and Yarra Valley 4X4 Club's commitment to the community.

Thanks again to all the members who attended, we made a difference in people's lives who needed a helping hand.



*Chinwagging at Mopoke Hut. Tree defoliation is very evident making shade very sparse. Photo Glen Sutherland*



# MILDURA

## TRIP NOTES FROM AUSTRALIA DAY

BY: GLEN SUTHERLAND

### EVENING & NIGHT DRIVE TO MURRAY SUNSET NATIONAL PARK, MOPOKE HUT & ROCKET LAKE

**F**inally it looks like the club has broken the hoodoo that has plagued our trip plans since.... too far back to remember. Our Club trip coordinator, Terry, had flagged back in December that he was planning an Australia day afternoon-evening-night drive, but whether we went or not would ultimately depend on how hot it was going to be on the day. He set a cut off of 32 deg. day time temperature. Terry has hit oracle status because that was the exact temperature it got to. Clearly a lot of us members were experiencing something akin to cabin fever and jumped at the chance to go on the drive. But La Nina hadn't quiet given up yet

and thunderstorm downpours earlier in the week forced some hasty changes to Terry and Anne's plans, plus it meant a reconnoitre to check track conditions on the day before the drive.

With Terry and Anne in the lead the convoy, departed the Big Lizzy Park at Red Cliffs to commence the drive out into the wilds of the Murray Sunset National Park. Entry into the Park was made via Midnight Tank, Henscke and Nowingi Line tracks with Mopoke Hut firmly in our sights for the first stop of the trip.

The wet year has certainly had an impact on the Park tracks with mostly firm, relatively smooth sandy conditions encountered,

most unusual for this time of year. Even the notoriously rutted and corrugated Nowingi track was found in good condition. The other major surprise was the huge amount of caterpillar damage to the Mallee trees. Hundreds of hectares of trees have almost been totally defoliated by the hungry little beggars. We have observed this before in other places, including at our club's NSW campground where the trees are only now slowly recovering. The closer we got to Mopoke the worse the track became with washouts, ruts, bog holes and other water damage encountered, not unusual though as this part of the park has a lot of clay soil and hard pans. After having a good look around the Mopoke Hut and surrounds and a chinwag or two the convoys headed off North with the Rocket Lake campground our next scheduled stop for dinner.

We made the Rocket Lake campground in good time and on arrival there was no time wasted in setting up for our evening meal. And it was a perfect evening for it too, no wind and balmy conditions saw everyone settle in for a very social meal topped off by Jo's fresh peaches and Di's lamington rolls (paying homage to Australia day) for dessert.

Reluctantly, we gathered up our dining gear in preparation for the night drive home. But what made our stay at Rocket Lake so enjoyable (lack of any wind) made our drive home more challenging with the dust from the leading vehicles hanging like thick fog over the tracks. This became even more annoying after the absolutely stunning sunset and after dark set in. In

response to the dusty conditions the convoy spread out somewhat to improve driving visibility. This strategy worked fairly well up until the first turn off Rocket Lake Track down Cleary road. Unfortunately one vehicle missed the turn and 3 more followed that vehicle. The rest of us made the turn but due to a series of unfortunate circumstances and some turn-a-rounds and the ensuing banter on the radio, the main bunch of vehicles didn't realise that the convoy has shrunk by 4. Well, not until the phone rang to ask where we were, as the breakaway group had arrived in Red Cliffs only to discover they were on their own. Anyway, we did all have a good laugh at the minor debacle and as the saying goes "no harm, no foul". The main group soon made it to the Calder Highway and turned north once more to head for home. Vehicles peeled off the convoy on the way back to Mildura with cheery goodbyes and thus ended the first club trip for 2023. And wasn't it great to see interest from younger generations. Many thanks to Terry and Anne for again organising a great drive and also the brilliant weather.



*Enjoying the company and meal at Rocket Lake. Photo Glen Sutherland*



*Obligatory group shot of participants vehicles on arrival at Rocket Lake campground. Photo Robin Purchase*

**i** Mopoke Hut is an isolated camping area nestled in the rugged centre of Murray-Sunset National Park. The quaint campground is a great escape from the busier options around the Pink Lakes. Toilets, picnic tables and fireplaces are provided. Access is by 4WD only. No fees or bookings are required. Visitor Tips: This is a remote area with no mobile reception. Campers must be self-sufficient and carry all the water and provisions they need. Please practise minimal impact camping and observe relevant fire regulations. Fires are permitted only in the fireplaces provided and must be extinguished with water before leaving. Please bring your own firewood or a gas or electric stove or barbecue. No bins are provided – please take all rubbish home with you for recycling or disposal.

**Reference:** Parks Victoria (<https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/places-to-see/sites/mopoke-hut-campground>) Download the Murray-Sunset National Park Visitor Guide for more information.



# MJOC DO THE SIMPSON DESERT

BY: DENNIS WEBB



**F**inally, we were off on the Simpson Desert Trip which had been high on the bucket list of must do trips for many years.

The convoy consisted of 5 Jeeps and a Chevy Silverado. We had Stuart in his new Gladiator Rubicon V6 petrol leading the way, Peter in his Grand Cherokee Overland V6 petrol, Alan in his Grand Cherokee V6 diesel, Brian in his Grand Cherokee V6 diesel, Stefan in his Grand Cherokee V6 diesel and myself in the 2500 Chevy Silverado. I was going to take my 2 door Wrangler Rubicon but some of the distance stages required plenty of fuel, so with the fridge, swag, bags and 4 jerry

cans of fuel, I simply could not fit it all in the little Jeep. For our sleeping accommodation, Stuart, Brian and Stefan had rooftop tents, Peter, and Alan both had tents, and I Dennis in a swag on a swag platform under my 270-degree bush company pole less awning, - this will be my first time in a swag, and sometimes a motel may be involved.

Everyone except me met at the BP Calder Park, I joined them at Bendigo, we proceeded to Swan Hill for a bite of lunch and top up with the cheaper fuel prior to heading to the Lake Mungo camping ground, on arrival we picked out an individually laid out camping area – recommend

this site.

Next morning, we headed off to Zanci homestead site comprising of many outbuildings, some of have been restored back to original condition and the Mungo Woolshed built in 1869 has an ingenious drop-log cypress pine construction from the historical Gol Gol pastoral station which is located in Willandra lakes region-very interesting walks and information to be learnt including the Mungo lookout.

Back on the gravel heading towards Menindee, the roads were in brilliant condition as smooth as the best highways, the only thing that slowed us down



was the dust, to enjoy these outback areas and appreciate what you are driving through, it is important to put some distance between you and the car in front, this makes for a pleasant, relaxed drive and the air cleaner doesn't need servicing as often.

On arrival to Menindee, we met up with many other 4-wheel drivers and caravanners congregating at the local cafe for food and drinks. Relaxing stay then off to the huge Menindee Lake which is bordered on one side by a raised well-maintained Adelaide to Sydney rail line.

Leaving the Kinchega National Park, we headed out to the black top to Broken Hill to refuel. After a quick stop in Broken Hill, we cruised down the Barrier Highway to Yunta to camp for the night. We arrived later in the day so camping options were limited, either stay in the Pub or unknowingly camp beside the main Broken Hill railway line. (Each time a train went past the vibrations could be felt in the swag)

The next morning Stuart was all excited that we were going to see the Waukaranga ruins, this was a small gold mining township established in 1888 and abandoned in the 1950s. At its peak the population was around 500 people the skeleton of the old hotel is the main attraction supported by a few outbuildings. While we were at the site the sky turned on a very special display for us at one point the angle from where we were standing the clouds just plumed up out of the hotel taking a spectacular photo opportunity with all the vehicles parked in front of the hotel. Back on the road again enjoying this superb road surface heading towards Martins Well, only separated by dust conditions.

Martins Well is a huge 260,000-acre station, which is now also a tourist destination, boasting beautiful surrounding and native wildlife, in its peak the station carried approximately 6000 merino sheep and 500 poll Hereford cattle but due to severe drought conditions these





numbers have been drastically reduced.

Next stop was in Blinman, a look around and then onto the great wall of China.

The great wall of China is a magnificent rock ridgeline capping a mountain in the Flinders Ranges. On a closer look at the wall is made up of very eroded rock formations which now give natural shelter to animals, it is another one of nature's miracles.

Leigh Creek was our next destination, which is a former coal mining town established in 1943

and then became an open cut copper mine. The closure of the Leigh Creek coal mine in November 2015 closed as a result of the decommissioning of the Port Augusta Power stations, putting over 400 people far north region out of employment. Leigh Creek welcomes people to come and stay.

On the way to Maree, we called in to Farina (ruins) established in 1878, it had 2 hotels, school, post office, bank, brewery, and several stores. It was the rail junction for both narrow gauge track and standard gauge track. The area had a successful water well and nearby copper and silver mines. The small ruins- village has volunteer workers restoring some of the better ruins and are looking forward to receiving a train loco to complement their train

restoration programme. This great community welcomes visitors.

We camped at Maree and were surprised at the amount of people, cars, campers, and caravans there. It didnt take long to find out why, the town was mainly the overflow people from the Birdsville Bash in Birdsville and on arrival here they learnt there was no fuel. Luckily for us the fuel truck was arriving overnight. The pub was fairly bubbling, and people had their own parties happening and turned it into a fun time for all. I was up and packed and waiting at the servo before 6, on arrival it had just opened- a quick phone call and the rest of the troops arrived, with full tanks we were ready to venture up the Birdsville Track. Heading up the Birdsville Track we passed Lake Harry and passed through the vermin proof fence to Mungerannie Roadhouse. The petrol users topped up in case there may have been a fuel shortage ahead. While we were having lunch it was a great opportunity to look at all the money notes, caps, cards, hats, signs, horns, and anything else one could imagine hanging up or pin to a wall or roof.

Once again, we were on a great track surface all the way to Birdsville, somehow both Stefan and Brian each had a puncture on this road.

We stayed in the Birdsville Caravan Park, had a



# DIRT ROAD 4X4 & CAMPING

Fully independent store personalised trips, gear and advice.



8/61-65 Russell St, Werribee VIC 3030
 1300 037 222
 sales@dirtyroad4x4.com.au
 www.dirtyroad4x4.com.au

## AUTOPHIX AUSTRALIA



### DIY - SELF DIAGNOSE PLUG AND PLAY

Always be prepared. Autophix Australia's range of OBDII scanning tools was made with off road explorers, adventurers and even the everyday traveller in mind, with a variety of features and models. Autophix OBDII scanners are suited for all experience levels to keep you going when trouble hits. From wireless Bluetooth scanners to fully-fledged workshop grade units Autophix Australia has a scanner to suit you.

### - NEW ARRIVALS -

**OUTBACK 9360**  
TOYOTA DEDICATED SCANNER

**AUTOPHIX 9310**  
PROFESSIONAL SCANNER FOR LAND ROVER & JAGUAR

**OUTBACK 9000**  
SELF DIAGNOSE VEHICLE ISSUES ON THE GO

**AUTOPHIX 9210**  
PROFESSIONAL DISGNOSTIC SCANNER FOR HOLDEN & GM

www.autophixaustralia.com.au
 1300 037 222
 sales@autophixaustralia.com.au

good meal at the pub, sharing information sharing information on where we had been and where we are going. Next morning everyone lined up in front of the Birdsville Pub for a photo opportunity, as the pub is on a corner, guess what? We photographed the fleet on both sides. Brian left us this morning to go to Queensland to join up with his family.

Then it was out to Big Red, which was given its name from a particular sand dune that marks a symbolic edge of the Simpson Desert and stands approximately 40 metres high, when we arrived, we stopped to air down the tyres and happened to be opposite where the final clean-up was happening after The Big Bash event. A couple of workers circulated though us to see where we were from and where we were going, one guy suggested to me that it would be a waste of time me trying to get my big heavy THING up the steep side as he had many tries before he got his Landcruiser over and it was much lighter than my big THING. Being tail-end Charlie I was last one up the easy side and sitting on top looking down and seeing the other Jeeps way down the bottom, it wasn't hard to realise – yes, this hill does have some height attached to it. Alan lined up and gave it a fair crack, but only made it up three quarters, reversed down and off he flew making it over the top to a big applause from everyone – well done Alan. I looked at the hill we were using which was the steepest track and thought, what the heck I am here now, I must give it a go, thinking about what the guy said on the other side of the hill – I lined the big THING up and took off, the big THING flew over that hill without hardly dropping a rev or speed – I wish that guy was here to see it. I turned around at the top and went back down and asked to Stuart to video it while I did it again. I thought at the time (what was all the fuss about Big Red) (maybe 6.6 litre 400 hp plus and 1340 Nm torque with a little determination may have had something of an input.

Well with Big Red behind us travelling along the QAA line going east to west not the norm of west to east taking on the dunes on the steepest side giving us a bigger driving challenge. Heading across the sand dunes as the day got hotter, the sand became looser and deeper requiring more power to drive through it making the steep dunes at times quite challenging.

Stuart with his Gladiator being up front was the recovery vehicle and they were becoming more common as the dunes heated up, there were a couple of dunes where almost everyone needed assistance to conquer the dune, there was one in

particular dune that had had so many recoveries on it that the sand was extremely loose and deep, and the time of day did not help. Most of the dunes had both a steep climb and a less steep bypass climb all of the recoveries on this hill were on the bypass track.

It was now my turn at this dune I gave it a fair dinkum go but the deep sand was not to be climbed over, I reversed back down to the bottom ( Stuart was at the top wondering how he was going to get this 4.5 ton plus Silverado over the top) as he had only just been able to recover the heavy Grand Cherokee's Stuart looked down and saw me driving straight up the steep side and over the top, he couldn't believe it! On this leg of the trip everyone at some point needed some assistance except the Gladiator Rubicon with all of its built-in technology who also had some difficulty but did conquer every dune and the Silverado. This was a real fun leg of the trip.

Before leaving the QAA line we crossed many large semi dried salt pans, luckily for us they had dried enough after the big Queensland floods and the premade tracks had allowed us to pass across them without getting bogged.

Departing the QAA line, we arrived at the Eyre creek which is a tributary of the Warburton River which flows from the western southwest corner of Queensland into the north-eastern corner of South Australia we decided it was time for a well-earned break and cuppa enjoying the scenery looking down the huge mainly dried up river bed which only a few weeks earlier was under flood and impassable.

The next leg of our trip was Poeppel's corner, which is the corner of the state boundaries of Australia where the state of Queensland meets South Australia and the Northern Territory.

This was a real buzz with all of us standing around the marker post verbally talking to each other across 2 States and 1 Territory. A great photo opportunity. After leaving Poeppel's Corner we drove to Approdirna Attora Knowles which is a mountain within the Simpson Desert Conservation Park in Northeast South Australia with an altitude of 31 metres above sea level. This is a great tourist attraction mountain.

We then visited Lake Tamblyn known for its tourism and fishing, then onto Rig Road – French line, which is also known as the Shot line, this named after the French petroleum company who put the line in 1964. This line is one of Australia's great touring tracks and can be one of the most

dangerous crossings more than 1100 sand dunes, it is known to be the most demanding in the Simpson Desert with very soft sand and was slow going. When topping a hill, you see a long straight road bordered by low vegetation disappearing into the horizon, eventually driving to that horizon and over the top and there would be another visual just the same as we had just driven across. Eventually we arrived at Purni Bore, it was drilled in 1964 by the French Petroleum Company tapping into the Great Artesian Basin, the water flow exited the ground at 85 degrees Celsius and the flow rate at over 1.5 million litres a day, when the oil exploration activities ceased in the early 80's, the bore was left to flow openly creating an artificial wetland, in its peak over 80 species of birds were recorded. Lobbying from the environmentalists had the bore recased and restricted to slow the flow down enough to maintain the wildlife in the area that now had relied on this water source, the main reason for capping this flow was because it was upsetting the water levels throughout the Dalhousie water system 70 kilometres away.

Dalhousie Springs is our next stop, also known as Witjira – Dalhousie Springs which is within a group of over 60 natural artesian springs located in the Witjira National Park on the western fringe of the Simpson Desert.

After arriving it didn't take long to find our swimmers and jump into the spring for a well aren't dip.

The water temperature was absolutely perfect, the water was nice, clean and the little black 3 – 4 cm fish swimming around us cleaning off any dead or dried skin on our bodies – really therapeutic. While we were in the springs it was a good opportunity to swap information with fellow travellers giving us the inside info on what we should look out for up ahead. The swim was fabulous, but all good things must end.

It was time to gather around and confirm thoughts of our direction and fuel supplies, we all decided to alter our original trip and incorporate William Creek for a flight over Lake Eyre as this was a fairly rare sight opportunity to capitalise on the extreme flooding Queensland had been suffering. With our fuel levels under control, we visited Dalhousie area ruins, down to Pedirka ruin along the side of the Old Ghan line, then out to Hamilton onto the heritage trail to Oodnadatta to refuel and camp for the night. Next morning all packed up and refreshed we took a photo opportunity of the fleet in

front of the famous Pink Oodnadatta Roadhouse.

Time to hit the road towards William Creek, on the way we called into a couple of old ruins scattered along the road, then Stuart made a radio call asking if anyone would like to go into the old telegraph station approximately 20 kms in, I was the only one answering the rest of the convoy continued into William Creek to arrange a flight over Lake Eyre.

Meanwhile Stuart had already turned off into the old Telegraph station as he was well ahead of me, finally I reached the site 19 kms into a real surprise, healthy palm trees and vegetation around a small artesian area, expecting just to see maybe an old building ruin but there was more lots more this turned out to be not only a small telegraph station but a small copper mine and smelter. The smelter was tiered into the mountain with a copper mine located right on the top of the mountain. Many of the old machine parts are still scattered around the site, the site operated around the 1850s to 1904, it wasn't hard to see the pride in the building workmanship constructions the property, signage stated that this is now owned by the Kidman family cattle grazing company. On arrival into William Creek, we had to wait an hour for a larger plane to arrive suitable for 6 adults or more the flight was amazing.

Having the opportunity to actually see Lake Eyre in flood near full of bird life thriving to see waterways directing flow as far as the eye could see and the natural land formation channelled and controlled by the water flow directions.

The young pilot worked seasonally in William Creek township doing a variety of shared jobs, in the cafe, accommodation, cleaning and the list went on. Basically, this was a great opportunity for him to build up his flying hours fast and affordable and work with like-minded people.

The town is famous for the William Creek Hotel, one of the world's most remote pubs, the town was once on the Old Ghan Railway line, it is renowned for being the smallest town in Australia with a current permanent population of 3, in the busy season the town grows to 10. In this area is Anna Creek station – the largest working cattle station in the world sprawling over 15,746 square kilometres and encompassing 5 large cattle stations and a large bull breeding programme.

The next overnight stay was in Coober Pedy where we said goodbye to Stefan as he was leaving us to go back home. We all weakened and chose to



stay in a comfortable motel as it was our last night in the real outback country. After a good meal we made our way down to the underground pub where we played some serious hit and giggle billiards – Alan ended up champion of the night.

Coober Pedy is often referred to as the Opal Capital because of its quantity of precious opals that are mined here, the town is also famous for its sun-baked lunar landscape with thousands of mine shafts clearly visible from the road and scattered throughout the town, underground homes, churches, motels, pubs, carparks, hairdressing salons and a caravan park in fact if you name it, it is probably underground in Coober Pedy. This is really something special to see and feel the stable climate of these diggings.

In the morning we were all fuelled up, tyres pumped up and ready for the 250 km drive to Glendambo turned right into Tarcoola Rd which ran parallel beside the Trans Australian Railway Line, we crossed the line from side to side until we came to Googs Track.

Googs Track was given its name from a farmer John Goog Denton who wanted to put a track through the Yellabinna Regional Reserve from his Lone Oak property to Tarcoola which basically halved the travelling distance.

Track works started in 1973 with an old Fordson Major tractor fitted with a front-end loader with a blade fitted, later a bulldozer was introduced,

works halted for a while due to breakdown and fuel shortages. Goog put the track through to Mt Finke then a grader was purchased, and the local station owners joined forces and completed the track through to Malbooma in 1976. The sheep farmers wanted the road to continue so they could get their wool through to the Port Thevenard, and Ceduna faster, however it was too tough and was abandoned. The track is approximately 200 kms long with over 300 dunes, some were challenging dunes especially to the inexperienced, some sections are very narrow with bush and scrub lined sections, some corrugations and is now often used for a training desert sand driving track for those who would like to cross The Simpson Desert or The Canning Stock Route etc. It has many hill crests that are blind, so a sand flag is recommended.

Our first night was at Mt Finke, just before we turned into the campground the sun was very low and, in our eyes, the track was narrow and, on a bend, I didn't see a small stump on the edge of the track and wrecked my rear tyre on it. Alan helped me change the wheel in the soft sand – Stuart and Peter were already in camp and set up for the night, it took a while to change the wheel just slow going. On arrival into camp a really nice surprise was waiting for us, Stuart had prepared a meal for us – with a nice warm fire and a few drinks and nibbles it turned out to be a great night. Before turning in for the night Stuart asked if there were any takers to

go up Mt Finke in the morning to catch the sunrising, only one reply, Me! Mt Finke is 170 metres to the summit; the climb is through rugged rocks and some light scrub.

All packed up and, on the track, again, enjoying the challenges and precision driving was required through the narrow sections and enjoying the stunning views across the park.

We called into Goog Lake which is 15 kms long and up to 1 km wide in some places bordered by scenic vegetation, it has a nicely laid out camping areas with planted pine trees scattered throughout the grounds and has a really nice tranquil feel about it. There are no toilet facilities here – a family memorial for some of the Denton family members is on display. The day was getting on, so we all decided to spend one last night in the bush before returning to civilisation.

Alan had some tucker he wanted to cook up and there was enough for all of us, I had some flavoured Kranskys which were cooked as an entree the nibbles, nuts, and drinks were all out on the table, fire going what more could one ask for – perfect last night.

Down the track again to the start of the Yumbarra Conservation Park which was the end of our trip and the big double gated heavily meshed dog wire fence. This fence is one of the longest structures in the world. It stretches 5614 kms from Jimbour on

the Darling Downs near Dalby Queensland through thousands of kilometres of arid land ending west of Eyre Peninsula South Australia on cliffs of the Nullarbor Plain above the Great Australian Bight near Nundroo. Time for a few final photos before we leave the desert side of our fabulous trip.

Next into Ceduna to have my tyre changed with the spare carcass I was carrying so I had a spare on the way home if needed. Met up with the troops at Ceduna Bakery for a nice coffee and snacks.

Back on the black top for home this would be approximately 1600 kms away.

Our way home from Ceduna was through Port Augusta, Crystal Brook, Burra, (stayed overnight) Renmark (for breakfast) we drove the Stuart highway across the Calder highway down to Bendigo where I said thanks for a great time guys -Stuart, Peter, and Alan – I turned off towards Yea and the others continued towards Melbourne

The total trip covered just over 5500 kms.

Fuel consumption in the sandy desert – the petrol's were up to 25 litres per 100 – the diesels were around 21 – 23 per 100 and the Silverado was an unbelievable 15 litres per 100.

This trip certainly was a massive tick of the bucket list and would have no hesitation if you get the opportunity to do this trip – DO IT.

See you on the track



## The journey ... or the destination?

Heading out to the bush on your next four wheel drive trip, you are looking forward to a fun and enjoyable day. On this trip, you have decided to take a couple of friends along in your vehicle with you to introduce your friends to the comradery of your 4WD Club. You begin packing the essentials; recovery gear, first aid kit, the fridge and the food and finally everyone starts adding their "little bit" until there is barely enough room for anyone to sit.

Remember most vehicles will drive differently when you have a number of people and their gear so you will need to drive accordingly.

Some thought should be given as to how you will pack each of the above items in or on your vehicle, because overloading your vehicle can be just as dangerous as not taking along the right gear in the first place.

The extra weight can cause poor balance and unnecessary stress on your vehicle, so try to pack accordingly, being careful not to overload your vehicle. Ultimately, which tools, equipment, and spare parts you take along will depend on where you are going and for how long.

It is extremely important to keep all of the items you've loaded in your vehicle securely strapped down or safely stowed away, because loose items could become projectiles when you make a sudden stop or take off a bit too quickly. You should use heavy-duty straps (not bungee cords) to secure items in your vehicle.

Contain and strap down anything that will hurt if it hits you. Remember that all supplies inside your vehicle should be contained in some way that will prevent bodily injury especially if you are driving through rough terrain or hill country.

If you invite non-members along on your club trip, remember to take out a Temporary Membership for your guests to ensure compliance with your club's rules as well as ensuring they will have all the insurance coverage of a full member in the event of any incident. This not only protects you and your club, it protects your guests too!

Plan to enjoy the day, allow extra time so you don't have to rush and remember what it is like as a passenger in the back seat especially on winding roads and hills. Is the purpose of your trip simply to get to a destination or is it more to enjoy the journey and the friends you are spending time with?



**AFFINITY**  
FOUR WHEEL DRIVE INSURANCE



### 4WD Insurance

#### For the experts, by the experts

With our long association with Four Wheel Drive Victoria we have reason to be proud of the insurance we offer. Our policy delivers specialist features and benefits that complement the lifestyle of an adventurous Aussie. Take your journey to the next level. Give us a call or find our website below to obtain a free no obligation quote today.



Get a free quote today  
[4wd@affinityib.com.au](mailto:4wd@affinityib.com.au)

1300 655 850  
[affinityib.com.au](http://affinityib.com.au)

This product is issued by One Underwriting Pty Ltd. ABN 50 006 767 540 AFSL 236653 and distributed by Affinity Risk Partners (Brokers) Pty Ltd trading as Affinity Insurance Brokers ABN 15 091 944 580 Licence No. 1288354. It is subject to underwriting acceptance criteria. This is a summary of the benefits available. Conditions apply. To decide if it is right for you please read the Product Disclosure Statement and Policy before you make a decision. If you purchase this insurance, Affinity will receive a commission that is a percentage of the premium.

Max out on everything

# All-New Amarok

That feeling you get when you know nothing stands in your way? That's what it's like to drive the All-New Amarok. Built tough from the ground up, uncompromising in its performance and capable of taking on any challenge, the All-New Amarok takes everything to the max.

Let's not forget the All-New Amarok's impressive levels of new technology, premium exterior and interior styling, and exceptional standards of comfort. When you drive a ute maxed out like this, there's nothing you can't do.



Coming soon



Commercial  
Vehicles



patrolapart.com.au

navarapart.com.au



sales@patrolapart.com.au



# We know Nissans.

39 Industrial Park Dr Lilydale VIC

03 9735 9099