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TRACK WATCH



**REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES MEETING
OTWAYS & MANSFIELD TRACK CLEARING
PROJECT TALBOTVILLE - PART 2
BIG BILLY BORE 4WD ADVENTURE
RETRO FJ CRUISER
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DECEMBER 2016





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From the out going President



I would first like to apologise for the fact that readers of Trackwatch will have to endure one last President's report from yours truly. If things had gone to plan, I would not have been writing this. The AGM had to be postponed, due to circumstances out of our control so, by the time the Trackwatch deadline came around, I was still in the chair. If I had read the fine print on the job description, I would have realised that unpredictability is just a normal part of the President's role.

When I nominated for Vice President back in 2012, little did I know that I would ultimately lead the Association through some fun times, and some very tough times for over three years. Well, as much as I have enjoyed the ride, the time has come for me to hand over the reins to a new President, and I wish them the very best for the future. The Association is in an excellent position, with a continued strong Club membership and tenure of government funding until 2019, however there is still plenty of work to be done. It is imperative that all Clubs support the Board as they work towards maintaining our position as the premier Four Wheel Drive Association in the country.

In September we held a combined regional and general meeting in Geelong where we had a great opportunity to meet local Club members. We also trialled video conferencing technology to allow remote delegates to attend. While the video conference suffered from an under resourced PC overall it was

reasonably successful. Knowledge gained however will help in improving the solution for future events. The response from the local Clubs was also pleasing and we will continue with these regional Club meetings in the future.

Following on from our Geelong meeting was an equally successful regional reps meeting in Traralgon. Some excellent presentations highlighted the strong relationship between the regional reps and their government counterparts. This strong relationship is also evident in the work being done at the four wheel advisory council, which I will miss being involved in when I leave the President's role.

A visit to the Aberfeldy heritage area allowed the regional reps to witness the great work that has been achieved by Rudi Paoletti, his team and a number of Association Clubs. This relationship has been one of the great success stories of my time on the Board, and I hope to see many more of these in the Association's future.

In closing, I would like to thank everyone for their support and look forward to representing the Association as their National Council delegate. I would also like to wish all members and supporters a great Christmas and a happy New Year.

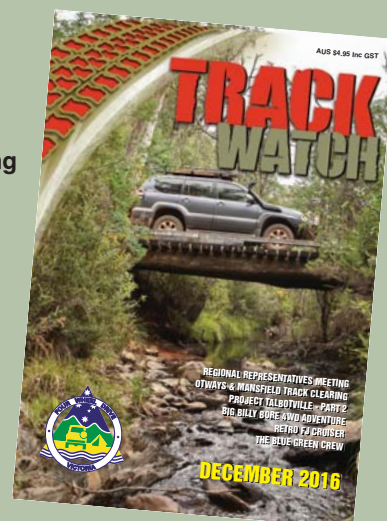
Damian Stock

President, 4WD Victoria

Garry Doyle has been elected President of FWDV. Garry shares his views on page 2.

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Can you believe Christmas is nearly upon us again? After a long wet winter, favourite tracks will soon be dust bowls to travel and we will be complaining about the heat instead of the cold.

For those that intend venturing into the High Country and other fire prone areas, remember to be fire safe and aware of prevailing and predicted weather conditions. Things can change oh so quickly. A handy aid is a free new government emergency app that you can download to your mobile phone or tablet. Basically it combines all emergency warnings for everything from shark sightings (not many of them in the High Country!) to fire and extreme weather event warnings. Great information to have when travelling off the beaten track.

This month many thanks to all in the FWD office that came to the rescue with contributions for this issue. Alison, Wayne and Karl certainly stepped up to the plate, chasing some interesting articles on activities that some of our 4WD Clubs have been doing. We know that there are many Clubs that are doing great work, or quietly working on a long term community project, but unless you tell us about your activities, we can't share the good news with all our readers. We would like to spread the word about your activities, and I urge you to appoint a scribe to provide a story for Trackwatch.

As we go to print, FWDV Board elections have just been held. We welcome in new President Garry Doyle and Board member Michael Coldham, and especially thank outgoing members for their contributions.

Since the last issue of Trackwatch, the pace hasn't slackened for FWDV and I thank Wayne for his report on FWDV activities. He has his finger on the pulse and it's good that members learn of some of the activities occurring behind the scenes.

As this is the last issue of Trackwatch for 2016, I extend thanks to those members/Clubs that have contributed to the magazine. Best wishes are extended from me and the Board of FWDV to all members for a safe and happy holiday/festive season. We also note the terrific support we have received from our advertisers throughout the year, and now might be a good time to pick up a Christmas bargain?

Have a great holiday period.

Brian Tanner
Editor



Thanks Damian for the work you've done in your time as President of our Association. Damian was right about the AGM, and there were challenges around rules that created an interesting dynamic on the night. At the end though, the outcomes were what our membership wanted. It was a real delight to see so many Club members and Club Delegates attend on what was the first very warm day for the season. There are a number of issues I'd like to reiterate from that meeting, which is the basis for our future direction. Firstly, we'll be reviewing the rules for our Association to avoid any confusion in the future. These will by necessity be voted on at a Special Meeting we'll call. Secondly, positions appointed by the Board, such as our National Delegate, must be the subject of a discussion at Board level following the election of the new Board, and any decisions won't be made in haste or ahead of all the evidence being presented. Finally, we will be working closely with our partners in government to create a strategic plan that serves all of us well. Importantly though the content of that plan will have to be of benefit to our Clubs and their members. If it doesn't we'll mount a strong case to make alterations to have that part of the plan realigned. To date,

the plan's development has seen real advantages for all of us and that's encouraging. Things like being involved in the tourism sector, providing education in the field for four wheel drivers, getting more involved in local decisions regarding our parks and natural environment. If the benefits aren't directly felt by Clubs, and I believe they will, then the results must provide a very clear line of sight to how our Clubs will benefit indirectly. After all, this is what you will hold the Board accountable for.

One question that came up during the AGM was my role on the Board as RTO liaison. I will stay on doing that at this stage, however my role in chairing the RTO and driving, a lot of the work will be handed over to others who are equally as qualified. The RTO is an important part of FWDV's business and it needs to and deserves to thrive. This all sets us up for a big 2017.

So from me and the rest of the Board and staff of FWDV, thanks for having confidence in the new Board and have a safe and merry Christmas, and I'll see you in the bush in 2017.

Garry Doyle
President FWDV



LEISUREFEST 2016

During the wonderful Melbourne Spring weather on the 6th-9th October we attended the 2016 Leisurefest at the Sandown Racecourse. Provided with a stand for ourselves and any club wishing to get involved, it was fantastic to have the Toyota Land Cruiser Club and Nissan 4x4 Club take up the free opportunity we offer for some club spruiking. Battling the wind, we saw numbers up on last year, with approximately 30,000 attendees passing through over the weekend. Enthused, we conducted

presentations on each of the stages showcasing the good work being done. With interest peaking, the team were eager to share our messages, courses and club benefits with attendees. News in from the Nissan Club was that they signed up 1 new membership on the Friday and by the end of the Show they had over 40 expressions of interest to work on.

Overall it was a fantastic weekend and we encourage more of our clubs to get involve in the future.



News from FWDV CEO

Quite a lot has occurred since the last edition of Trackwatch. We have had an Annual General Meeting, some Clubs have conducted their annual general meetings, and most of the seasonally closed tracks have reopened. Those members who were lucky enough to have time off and travel to warmer climates have returned and many are now planning on returning to the High Country on other trips. It has also been a busy time for volunteers from many of our Associated clubs, performing a range of volunteer activities.

Leisurefest has come and gone with your Association being represented by the presence of a manned stand and also by means of giving presentations to members of the public twice daily at two venues within the show. It was great to have the opportunity to catch up with visiting members of Clubs from around the state as well as to have the opportunity to engage with members of the public and encourage them to join a 4WD Club. I say a big thank you to all the Club members and board members who assisted me by manning the FWDV stand. Thank you also to the members of the Nissan 4X4 Club and the Toyota Land Cruiser Club of Victoria, for supporting our efforts by manning individual stands for their Clubs. I trust you received a boost in memberships in the process.

4WD Club members have been busy since the start of July in a number of volunteer projects, all of which help promote and enhance the reputation of those Clubs and the Association in general.

These include a number of clubs conducting Camp Host events over the Grand Final weekend and the longer Melbourne Cup Weekend. Some Clubs have had an involvement at regional exhibitions and shows. A number have supported local charities or charity events. Among this group, mention should be made of the Wangaratta 4WD Club supporting a local charity ride in the Strathbogie Ranges, the Nissan 4X4 Club assisting the Gippsland Charity Ride. Mention must also be made of the great works done by Werribee District 4WD Club conducting 2 Peace of Mind 4WD Adventure days, as well as handing over a substantial

cheque to the charity. Of course, we also need to mention Ballarat 4WD Club doing their annual Gateway Kids Drive and the separate Canteen Drive Day. Sorry if we have missed an honourable mention of any other Club in this regard, but it would only be due to not being aware of your involvement.

Some clubs are starting to do maintenance works on various High Country huts. We applaud them also. Please let the office know if you are involved in these works. A number of Clubs have also performed tasks with the Aberfeldy Heritage Project, looking after historical sites associated with our early gold mining sites. Other clubs have apparently recently undertaken maintenance works at old cemeteries. Again, please let the office know if you are involved in these or similar works.

Recently, the big volunteer effort has been on Track Clearing, where various Clubs have recently completed over 1000 hours of actual work in various areas of the state, assisting land managers get the tracks ready for seasonal reopening. Thank you to the Idlers, the Nissan 4X4 Club, Yarra Valley 4X4 Club, the Pajero Club, Midweek 4WD Club, the Land Rover Owners Club, Mansfield Alpine 4WD Club, Ballarat 4WD Club, Geelong Four Wheel Drive Club, the Otway's 4WD Club, Bellarine Four Wheel Drive Club, Wangaratta 4WD Club and the Toyota Hilux Club.

Once again I apologize if we have missed an honourable mention of any other Club in this regard but again it would only be due to not being aware of your involvement.

If you are interested in the progress of our volunteer efforts, look for the occasional updates which appear in the news items on the FWDV website under the heading, NEWS & EVENTS.

Travelling around the countryside visiting various club nights and being involved in a working bee at Talbotville with Parks Victoria staff, the Gippsland LROC plus Just Mates friends, gives me great pleasure to see the enthusiasm and commitment coming to the fore. We are in a fortunate position because of the great work being done by our generous and supportive members, and I can tell you it is being noticed. In fact we were just recently nominated for an award in the Regional Achievement & Community Awards under the Parks Victoria - Environmental Sustainability Award. We made it to the final three but missed out to a Primary school group from Castlemaine who had done some lovely work in their gardens. It was a real pleasure to have been in the mix and were loudly applauded for our efforts by the numerous attendees on the night.

October 15th and 16th was the Regional Representatives weekend based in Traralgon for the Sunday meeting whereas Saturday saw a number of us join with Rudi Paoletti in exploring the historic sites dotted along the Aberfeldy trail. Crawling down steep embankments to plunge into century old gold mines was certainly interesting in regards to learning about the lives of the determined explorers and those who made a living on the gold fields, the passion shown by Rudi and seeing the effort he has put in over many years researching the region was truly remarkable and we can't thank him enough for his time and trouble. Sunday's meeting saw an excellent gathering of DELWP and PV personnel as well as our own members. Compliance issues were the subject which prevailed from the DELWP Rangers and forest Managers, whilst the PV emphasis was mainly on the Strengthening the Partnerships and all that this entails. Another worthwhile weekend was had by all and thankfully we are still moving forward with these events.

Wayne Hevey, CEO, FWDV



Ballarat District 4WD Club
invites you to come and try
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Smythesdale.

WHEN:
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25 & 26 March 2017

WHERE: Wills St,
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For more information contact Glenn on 0419 384 275, Peter on 0417 263 108 or call our club phone on 0439 014 366

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Track Clearing with the Mansfield Alpine 4WD Club

By Alison McLaughlin



Several Clubs, including the Mansfield Alpine 4WD Club, hit the dirt on the weekend prior to Melbourne Cup Weekend to assist Parks Victoria with track clearing in preparation for track openings.

Whilst we had to skirt the fast flowing rivers, we still had plenty of tracks to clear.

We met with Ranger Fleur Smith at Mansfield for our induction and briefing early on Saturday morning and by morning tea we had passed through snow flurries at Telephone Box Junction and were setting up camp at King River Hut, where we would share the night with the gang from Wangaratta 4WD Club who were track clearing in from the Whitfield end.

With sufficient chainsaw tickets amongst us, Mansfield's brief was to head out in two groups over the weekend. One conquered Mt Speculation and Bluff Link Tracks with bits and pieces in-between and the other off down to Bindaree Hut and Pikes Flat Saturday then Clear Hills to Craigs Hut and down Monument track.

The chainsaws certainly got a workout as did the drag chains and log rollers, and it was a mighty effort by all members. We came across plenty of

spots that had been semi cleared and some really big trees that had uprooted and smashed themselves across tracks at quite regular intervals.

At this point, I'd like to mention about carrot and sticks. Greg Rose spoke at a recent Regional Reps meeting about the benefits or 'carrots' that result from volunteering time and effort working with Land Managers.

Well, I've talked about the hard yards - sticks (literally and sorry about the pun)

now I'll tell you about a bunch of carrots ...

As Club members and volunteers, we have built a great relationship with the Rangers we work with. We had the privilege of being behind the gates and having the tracks to ourselves. We enjoyed a barbeque dinner generously provided by Parks Victoria and spent an evening around the campfire with members of the Wangaratta Club.

Our group took time out to walk the



track and see the spectacular torrent of water gushing at Bindaree Falls, and we were also lucky enough to call into Craigs Hut and see it with a pristine, fresh dusting of snow.

The carrot of course for Parks Victoria, is a network of tracks across the State that have been cleared and are now safe for travel.

I have no doubt that other Clubs enjoyed their weekend track clearing too.

Looking forward to next year's carrots.



TRACKWATCH CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions to Trackwatch are welcomed. They should relate to a club activity, interesting destination, event, etc.

1. Type your story in Word.
2. Do not include any fancy fonts, colours, layout, borders or embeded photos.
3. Photos need to be of good quality and high resolution - suitable for print reproduction. Do not resize, crop or embed as part of the story. Send images as seperate JPEG files. Ed

RESULTS OF FWDV RAFFLE

- 1st: Engel Legacy Series - 40L Chest fridge/freezer - Fred J, donated by Engel Australia
2nd: Oricom Rechargeable hand held twin pack - Leonard P, donated by Milandy Outdoor Adventure
3rd: RFI antenna - Damien E, donated by RFI Industries
4th: Kings Roof top bag 110x90x30 - David P, donated by Milandy Outdoor Adventure
5th: 4WD Recovery Kit - Leigh S, donated by Opposite Lock

Many thanks to all who generously supported the raffle, and the terrific support of our sponsors

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It's a united team effort in the Southern Alps

Parks Victoria staff in Heyfield hosted a Volunteers recognition day to acknowledge the incredible support provided by both individuals and groups to assist in delivering a number of key programs in the Southern Alps area.

Parks Victoria Area Chief Ranger Mike Dower said the ongoing support and hard work of volunteers is helping Parks Victoria maintain its vision of being a world class park service, ensuring healthy parks for healthy people and helping to conserve Victoria's special places.

The groups that attended the Volunteers day included the Land Rover Owners Club of Gippsland, Nissan Four Wheel Drive Club and Friends of the Wonnangatta.

The Friends of the Wonnangatta received a special 25-year volunteer certificate recognising their work in protecting the historic Wonnangatta Valley, which is a nationally significant four-wheel drive destination.

"The best part of the day was everyone coming together to share their ideas and to learn the valuable contribution

each of them made to conserving such a special part of Victoria.

"Whether it was the 4WD Clubs talking about their track clearing programs, the restoration of huts by the Victoria High Country Huts Association or a hike and track marking exercise organised by one of the bushwalking clubs, it was great to see that everyone appreciated the combined efforts of all volunteers to protect and enhance the Southern Alps", added Mr Dower.

Gates destroyed on public land near Dartmouth

Thousands of dollars worth of damage has been caused to seasonal road closure gates on public land near Dartmouth in the past two months. Forest Fire Management Victoria's District Manager – Upper Murray, Aaron Kennedy, said: "At least four gates have been damaged with some concrete footings pulled from the ground."

"It is no easy task to remove them and we suspect those responsible have a good quality winch on their vehicle," Mr Kennedy said.

"The majority of forest users respect the closures that are put in place for environmental, safety and road maintenance issues, however, a small minority do not obey the closures.

"Each gate roughly costs \$1000 to install which could be better spent maintaining recreational facilities in our State Forests.

"Some roads and tracks on public land in the Upper Murray will remain closed until 30 November or until these areas dry out. "The closures are important for driver and passenger safety as the forest roads and tracks become much more difficult for drivers (of all vehicles) to use safely after prolonged wet weather.

"It also protects the tracks from suffering significant damage including erosion that



causes silt to wash into rivers, creeks and reservoirs.

"Forest users, including four-wheel drivers and trail bike riders, travelling in and around Dartmouth, Granite Flat, Eskdale, Mount Willis, Mount Pinnibar, Mount Gibbo, Mount Granya, Mount Lawson, Mount Burrowa and Tom Groggin may come across extended seasonal road closures.

"We will continually assess these tracks and consult with stakeholders such as Four Wheel Drive Victoria and local clubs/users.

"As always we urge anyone driving in our forests and parks to stay on the

designated routes, take their rubbish home and take particular care with campfires, so that everyone can enjoy the bush."

Damage to seasonal road closure gates, bollards and unauthorised driving are offences under the Forest Act 1958. If anyone sees any vehicles doing the wrong thing, they should call DELWP on 136 186 or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

All information is treated confidentially. To plan ahead, go to the Public Access Map at www.delwp.vic.gov.au and/or the 'Safety/closures and conditions' section at www.parks.vic.gov.au

Regional Representatives Meeting

On the weekend of October 14th/15th we attended the Regional Reps meeting held in the Gippsland Region. On the Saturday we went out for a drive with Rudi Paoletti, who took us up alongside the Thompson Dam visiting historical places such as Kitty's Canes hotel and grave site.

The signage and exploration work, which Rudi has done over the years, is amazing to say the least and he guided us to a couple of gold mines that were in operation back in the 1860's. Once inside these mines you could appreciate the enormity of the manual labour involved in searching for the treasured item, as well as feeling for the way these families have endured the hardship of life in these isolated outposts. We travelled up into the Aberfeldy region viewing more interruptive signs along the way before being shown work carried out early that day by the Victorian 4x4 Club on the Aberfeldy Crossing, where a new crossing and steps had been installed. We then headed back along McGuire's and McEvoy's Tracks into Traralgon for a pub dinner and some bonding where many great stories were shared.

Sunday was time to get down to business; track clearing and seasonal closures were discussed and reviewed amongst other topics. Greg Rose, Gippsland LROC spoke on the work being done in collaboration with Parks Victoria from both the Heyfield and



Dargo offices and the ongoing relationships being developed from this. Project Talbotville is a great example of the planning and execution of productive efforts in replacing tables and fire pits throughout the campsite.

John Hasler, LROCV, spoke about the track clearing activities in the Deddick Trail and Armstrong Track areas north of the Deddick River. He also alluded to discussions being had regarding the closure of the track due to safety reasons and the upcoming community engagement meeting happening shortly.

Alan McKay, Just Mates, along with Ray Cranston PV, took the floor to explain damage to gates and dumped cars in the Bunyip region with 100 gates and locks broken or stolen over the last few months. Many of these problems stem from the close proximity to urban centres of the park, and measures are being taken to try to stop the flow with concealed cameras now being bought into play more often.

g - October 14th-15th - Gippsland



Mark Millsom, Mansfield Club and Dick Gill, Wimmera 4x4 also gave updates on their respective areas concerning track clearing and closures post fire activity.

Richard Wadsworth spoke on the strategic planning happening presently with the advisory committee, emphasising the importance of achieving those challenges we set ourselves enabling us to strive towards much bigger goals as the year's progress whilst attracting funding to complete the tasks. He also spoke of the legality of the side by side, Polaris and quad bikes and their eligibility for the bush.

Richard Teychenne from DELWP, spoke with authority on the subject of fire management and prevention/compliance, vandalism/damage, illegal dumping, illegal structures and theft of firewood and more. Richard explained that more than \$15000 was spent in 2015 on hidden cameras for compliance/enforcement, and they were a very effective tool for reducing the illegal behaviour.

Matt Zanini and Peter Simpson also from DELWP discussed compliance issues and how they are dealt with.

Roger Fenwick from Parks Vic gave a presentation on the "Strengthening Parks Victoria" project, highlighting the strong and ongoing collaborative partnerships between Parks Victoria and FWD Victoria. He pointed out that national parks are set aside for conservation and recreation, whereas other parks have a range of uses and purposes. He noted that PV staff are unable to cover the whole of the public estate, and that for this reason there is a need for collaborative partnerships with other organisations such as ours.

Simon Dobie from PV West Coast addressed the meeting on upcoming track clearing and fire management in the West Coast as well as the recent floods and land slips along the Great Ocean Road. He spoke about how this impacted the area in terms of tourism and camping and other effects.

Gail Wright and I spoke about Camp Host and called for comment on the merits and experiences flowing from them. The history of the Camp Host program was offered up and discussion was had about what to do as opposed to what not to do.

It was a great meeting and we're looking forward to the next Regional Reps meeting in 2017.



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Big Billy Bore 4WD Adventure

The Big Billy Bore, located along the Murrayville-Nhill Track, is an increasingly popular touring route for four wheel drivers visiting the Mallee. We wanted to find out more about this unique yet accessible place, so we visited with Scott McLean from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Loddon Mallee.

You know that feeling: you're dying to get right away, out into desert country, but you don't have the spare time or cash to head off on a grand tour into the middle of Australia. Well, there's a great option that hits the desert touring spot, yet it's so close and accessible: the Big Billy Bore campsite and surrounding network of tracks, one of the few camping areas within the Big Desert State Forest.

DELWP Loddon Mallee's Scott McLean is a member of the forest management team that has worked to do all they can to contribute to a great visitor experience.

"We welcome visitors up here and we're always looking for ways to do what we can to see that everyone has a great time when they get here," Scott explained.

His passion for this unique place is clearly evident as he talks about the bore and the remarkable country that stretches away as far as the eye can see.

**Restored King Billy
Windmill**

Scott says that as you stand here, it's impossible not to think of the many parched travellers who would have stood here before you in the very same place, quenching their thirst.

"It's an iconic site, that's for sure. How much would the people grazing stock out here have valued this supply in those boiling hot summers? A water source like this would be like gold as the drovers moved along this old stock route."

Scott's deep knowledge and passion for the history of the area is evident as he speaks.

"You also had many broombush cutters out here too, we can't begin to imagine how tough their daily lives must have been – there's a number of tracks around here named after these people, and in fact this area here (the Big Billy campground) used to be the brush cutter's camp back in the day where they stockpiled their bundles of cut broombush."

"To think of that urge they had to get out here, and make a life for themselves and their families, it would have been tough. I've stood out here myself as the sun has set and just felt that sense of the land and sky going on for ever," Scott said while looking to the north.



"And then you think of the traditional owners, the Aboriginal people who called this land home for so many thousands of years and, as the scatter sites found round here would tell us, travelled through here on their trading routes; simply amazing."

DELWP Loddon Mallee saw the need to repair and rejuvenate the infrastructure at The Big Billy Campground and therefore allocated funding for the works and maintenance at the site. Works included removal and replacement of old pump-

ing pipes, cleaning of the bore hole, re-casing the bore with PVC pipe and replacing the brass bore pump.

The water at the bottom of the bore hole, which is just over 72 metres down, sits in an old sea bed aquifer of limestone and coral. Since the bore casing itself goes to 69 odd metres and the static water level lies around 22 metres below the surface, this is caused by the aquifer being under pressure and makes the water rise up the bore casing.



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The Big Billy Windmill is an iconic feature along the Murrayville-Nhill Track and of the visitor area here at the Big Billy camping site. Therefore, the windmill received a major overhaul. It was lifted and laid down carefully so the contractor could work on stabilising the legs, replace five damaged cross stays and tower pipe and change out the old pull out wire and lever for new ones. Scott and his team have worked hard to make this place more inviting and by creating a designated area for camping, with basic remote camping facilities, and ensure key structures are safe and still standing well into the future. New tables and barbecues are to come in the near future.

"Statistics show the area is becoming ever more popular for four wheel driving, not surprising given this place's natural beauty and unique features, which include the opportunity to experience deep sand four wheel driving," Scott said.

"The vegetation changes considerably as you drive from north to south, as the annual rainfall increases from about 13 inches to 16 inches, so you really do get that variety of country as you drive.

"In springtime, there's a vast array of wildflowers and the Big Desert has a number of mammal and reptiles that call it home: hopping mice, shingle backs, small snakes, the area is so rich in this sort of life that we get university researchers here regularly with their pitfall traps and vegetation monitoring, analysing the life in this place."

Scott says he always enjoys meeting people here on their four wheel drive adventures, and finds that a common theme in his chats with them is how many are struck by the diversity of the country and the vastness of the landscape.

"To the north we have the Murray Sunset National Park and the heavier Mallee country whereas the Big Desert is mainly deep sands with Mallee tree species, heath country, Banksia plains and some stringy barks to the south. I completely understand why they're so taken with the place; I get to work out here, yet I never take it for granted; there's always something new to see," he said.

"For visitors, it's a real pleasure to drive roads that follow what look like old creek lines — some of them bordered by box trees and red gums that are 20 metres high — or drive up into the jumbled dune system with peaks up to 30 metres high; they make for great lookouts." During the cooler months, observing birds is a highlight of trips here, and so much of the area is untouched.

"You can drive for days, it's a real eye opener, even locals haven't seen some of these remote areas with patches of red gums, black box, yellow gums and blue gums in soaks, personally, I just never tire of it," Scott said.

He adds that, as with all touring of this nature, safety has to be a top priority as the harsh dry summers and remoteness can be unforgiving.



"While this area is remarkably accessible, we do of course advise visitors to think safety when preparing to head this way, so make sure your bringing the right equipment and test your equipment, and with the warmer weather, bring lots of water.

"I'd also add that while tracks are signposted in the Big Desert and Wyperfeld, phone coverage is very minimal, so let people know what you're doing."

The areas accessibility means it's good for long weekend trips and is becoming increasingly popular with South Australians too, as they take the border fence track, Ngarkat Conservation Park in South Australia from Pinnaroo, through to Red Bluff, across to the Murrayville-Nhill Track, eventually camping here at Big Billy.

"I think it's remarkable, an outback experience on your doorstep," Scott said as the sun sets on another perfect day at the Big Billy Bore.

The Big Desert State Forest areas joins Wyperfeld National Park and has a combined area of over 700,000 hectares with a vast array of tracks, flora and fauna to enjoy.

The Blue Green Crew



There is an old adage, “blue and green should never be seen” but this has not discouraged the members of the Victoria Police 4WD Club. In fact, they are widely known as the Blue Green Crew.

This is a foundation created in 2014 by Marcus Nash, Vice President of the Victoria Police 4WD Club, as a means of helping personnel from the military and emergency services (past and present), cope with some of the trauma and stresses encountered in the course of their working lives.

Typically, this is exhibited in the form of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder otherwise known as PTSD.

This is not exactly a new phenomenon of the modern era. Back in World War 1, servicemen referred to “shell shock”, i.e., mental confusion, upset, or mental exhaustion caused as a result of excessive stress. Today we might look on PTSD as trauma that originated in experiencing a catastrophic event or events that are outside the range of usual human experience. The problem knows no barriers and can equally affect men and women, of all ages and backgrounds, in the course of their service.

The Foundation has the motto, “Looking after you this time”.

In practice, members of the Victoria Police 4WD Club conduct monthly trips into the bush, accompanied by

members of the Australian Defence Force, Victoria Police, Australian Federal Police and Ambulance Victoria, who are in need of some “time out”.

This time in the bush gives them time to relax in a different environment, away from the pressures of the everyday lives, at home, at work, in the barracks, etc. On these Trips, they can talk to people who understand the pressures and stresses, as some of them have already dealt with them. As is in any 4WD Club, it’s about having some fun and sharing a laugh.

The visitor goes along on day trips or overnight camping trips as guests of the club. All of the necessary camping gear and food is provided for free so there is no expense for the visitors. The guests can either drive their own vehicles on these excursions or a seat will be found for them in the front seat of a club member’s vehicle.

All referrals to the Blue Green Crew Trips are completely confidential.



The Blue Green Crew

In conjunction with



Supporting those that need support



The Trips are all very well patronised with some convoys now in excess of 30 vehicles. In August 2016, a total of 60 members and guests participated in trips to Mount Skene. July saw a big crew turn out for a drive behind Warburton. There was a June trip to the Wombat Forest and a May trip beyond Mansfield. These are just a sample of the energetic Trip calendar.

This project is emphatically supported by Victoria Police Command, The Victoria Police Association, The Chief of Army, The Chief of Defence Forces, Ambulance Victoria and the Federal Police. Many business organizations have provided generous support.

The following quotation comes from the Police Association of Victoria Journal, June, 2016.

"It shows the dramatic importance of this magnificent initiative," "There are a lot of friendships and a sense of mate-ship that has been built from this program, people you wouldn't otherwise know, and together, we all look forward to the next drive." What Nash didn't anticipate was the magnitude of the effect his program would have on some



participants – one woman in particular. "One girl turned around and said, 'You saved my life, I would have taken my life if it wasn't for the fact that I came across your email and went on the drive, and I couldn't wait for the next one,'" he recalled. "It wasn't until she told me that and gave me this great big hug and said, 'I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for you and this drive,' that I ended up in tears, because to know you've had that impact on one person, or more than one person, is a pretty overwhelming thing." Such is the success of the Blue Green

Crew and the recognition of its benefit to the Army has opened its doors to offer camping and survival resources for the expeditions".

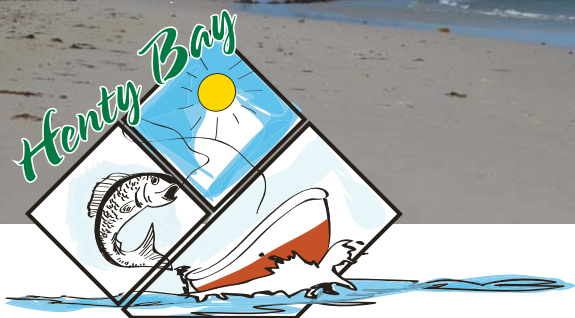
In September 2016, The Blue Green Crew received an award for Most Outstanding Achievement for 2015/2016 from The Victoria Police Sports and Welfare Society.

Congratulations Marcus and the Victoria Police 4WD Club.

Geoff Kenafacke

Midweek 4WD Club

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Project Talbotville – Part Two – November 2016

Land Rover Owners' Club of Gippsland and Parks Victoria.

The Location.

Talbotville is a clearing that in the 1860s was the site of a small town supporting the gold mining operations along the Crooked River. Due to the area being a fertile river flat small farming operations were carried out there for some years and the last resident left in 1950.

Talbotville is now an important camping area along the Iconic Four Wheel Drive Route that takes in Wonnangatta Valley and attracts four wheel drive tourists from all over Australia. "Unsealed 4x4 Magazine" an online monthly with a readership of tens of thousands, recently rated Talbotville as one of the Top Ten camper trailer/4x4 camping destinations in Australia.

The LROCG Involvement History.

In 2014 Wayne Foon, who was at that time a Parks Victoria Ranger at Heyfield, suggested that the Land Rover Owners' Club of Gippsland might like to do some work at Talbotville. Cliff Ireland and Vicki Jones PV Dargo took this up and in November 2015 the club undertook phase one of the operation under the guidance of Rangers Vicki Jones and Dannica Shaw. In 2015 we constructed

four concrete fire rings, erected three picnic table and seat sets, cleared a significant amount of metal rubbish, cut grass around all the camping areas, chipped out thistles and erected new signposts.

Phase Two – 2016.

The logistics and planning required to get volunteers and materials into a remote location are quite complex. Vicki Jones and Greg Rose, Four Wheel Drive Victoria Regional Representative, Southern Alpine National Park, had many meetings, email communications and onsite inspections. On Sunday 13th November most Land Rover Owners' Club of Gippsland volunteers and Wayne Hevey, CEO of Four Wheel Drive Victoria plus his wife Diane and Alan and Andrea, two members of the Just Mates 4x4 Club, met at the Dargo Hotel for dinner and stayed the night ready for an early start on the Monday. An advance group from LROCG had gone into Talbotville to set up the Club tent and secured the camping area. With fuel, meals and accommodation the Land Rover Owners' Club of Gippsland and friends injected quite a bit of money



up weeks delivering aggregate to the site.

Once at Talbotville we had our safety briefing and got straight into identifying the work areas and beginning the tasks. Conor had the unenviable task of driving back to Dargo to pick up another trailer with the prefabricated picnic table and seat sets.

The weather improved and we worked well into the afternoon assisted by Gary and Mick, Parks Victoria workers from Sale. By the end of the first day most of the fire pit holes had been dug out, old and dangerous picnic tables pulled out



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of the ground using high lift jacks and large areas had been cleared with brush cutters. While Wayne, Diane, Alan and Andrea headed home, the remaining twenty folk settled down to a well-earned bar-b-que put on by the Club members. The clouds cleared just enough for a glimpse of the "super moon" event.

Tuesday was a big work day. Two more Club members arrived in time for the work. Tables and seats were assembled and oiled and the folk, including children, in their white protective clothing looked like aliens at work. Fire pits were framed up, cement mixed on site and poured then carefully finished off. The remainder of the damaged tables were removed. Thistles and blackberries were sprayed. Existing informal fire areas were removed and the scars covered with fresh soil. More long grass was cut in readiness for the summer season. Rubbish was collected and bagged up. By late afternoon all the designated tasks had been completed. Some four wheel drive tourers from South Australia had been watching our work, and were full of praise for what was being undertaken and the fantastic way our group and the Parks Victoria personnel got on together.

Tuesday evening's dinner was one of Vicki Jones's usual triumphs. A sensational Bolognese, olive bread and individual apple and blackberry pies heated up in the camp ovens and served with cream. We even had three of our members "dressed for dinner" in crisp white shirts, bow ties, arriving to saxophone music played by one of the South Australian crew.



On Wednesday we packed up the camp, cleaned all the equipment and repacked the trailers. Our route out was along the Crooked River Track with some crossings a little deeper than usual after the recent rain. We left the Talbotville valley looking magnificent. Let's hope the summer campers appreciate and respect our work and the considerable investment in time and money from Parks Victoria.

One club member commented, as we enjoyed lunchtime hamburgers at the Dargo Store, that he felt twenty years older physically but twenty years younger mentally, following an excellent "recharge" after the few days. Perhaps that's the essence of Parks Victoria's "Healthy Parks – Healthy People" motto. The Land Rover Owners' Club of Gippsland and Parks Victoria

Heyfield/Dargo under the leadership of Area Chief Ranger Mike Dower, already have plans in place for 2017. We intend to shift our focus to Horseyard Flat off the Moroka Road, another magnificent camping area that is part of the Iconic drive taking in Billy Goat Bluff Track, Wonnangatta, etc.

These exercises are another example of what can be achieved when four wheel drive clubs, under the Four Wheel Drive Victoria banner, and Parks Victoria work together for the benefit of all Park users.

Greg Rose.

President Land Rover Owners' Club of Gippsland.

Four Wheel Drive Victoria Regional Representative, Southern Alpine National Park.



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- Saturday 4th February - PC170204 - Practical
- Tuesday 28th February - PC170304 - Theory
- Saturday 4th March - PC17034 - Practical
- Tuesday 28th March - PC170401 - Theory
- Saturday 1st April - PC170401 - Practical
- Tuesday 2nd May - PC170506 - Theory
- Saturday 6th May - PC170506 - Practical
- Friday 2nd June - PC17063 - Theory
- Saturday 3rd June - PC170 - Practical
- Tuesday 25th July - PC170729 - Theory
- Saturday 29th July - PC170729 - Practical
- Tuesday 15th August - PC170819 - Theory
- Saturday 19th August - PC170819 - Practical
- Tuesday 12th September - PC170916 - Theory
- Saturday 16th September - PC170916 - Practical

- Tuesday 17th October - PC171021 - Theory
- Saturday 21st October - PC171021 - Practical
- Tuesday 14th November - PC171118 - Theory
- Saturday 18th November - PC171118 - 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 – 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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Bellarine 4x4 Club

Great Otway National and Forest Park Track Clearing

The Otway Parks have seasonal track closures from the 1st of June through to 27th October. Before the gates can be opened on these tracks, an inspection is required to make sure they are clear and safe. The Four Wheel Drive Otway's Liaison Committee has been operating for many years. This committee comprises delegates from Parks Victoria, DELWP, Otway Four Wheel Drive Club, Bellarine 4x4 Club, Geelong Four Wheel Drive Club and Warrnambool 4WD Club.

Through this committee the weekend before the scheduled track opening due date, an activity is organised using suitably trained members of the above four Clubs to clear and inspect tracks. By providing these Club workers Parks Victoria and DELWP are able to have the seasonally closed tracks opened by the scheduled date.

The Otway's is split up into different sections and assigned to Clubs. For the

east section of the Otways the weekend activities start with a briefing from Parks Victoria to Bellarine and Geelong Clubs at Deans Marsh.

Simon from Parks presented this year's briefing which covers the safety requirements for the weekend activity; showers and hail were mentioned for the Saturday.

For the first time in many years, tracks in certain areas won't be opened by the scheduled date. Further works are being carried out in the Otway Park area between Carlisle River and Gellibrand, where some gates will remain closed after the scheduled opening date. Gates will remain closed in the area of last year's Christmas fires, which covered the National Park behind Wye River and West of Lorne.

The Club's members split up into crews to assess and clear tracks, each crew consist of accredited chainsaw operators, competent four-wheel vehicle



drivers and debris clearers.

It is not uncommon for the crews to find damage to gates or the forest itself. To gain access when the tracks are seasonally closed, we find cut locks, bent gates and felled trees. This type of damage is costly to Parks Victoria and DELWP in both resources and repairs.

The crews often use the snig method of moving logs from the track. This involves a four-wheel drive in low range and a drag chain.

The crews managed to clear all the allocated tracks in two days. Well done to everyone involved.



Above: working on a fallen tree

Right: On our way with a cut and a snig

Below: Briefing at Deans Marsh



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The HX-1 delivers street and 4WD navigation in combination with over 45,000 points of interest (POI) for adventurers, which is packaged in a bright 7-inch multi-touch screen that's backed by a fast processor, wireless updates and a rear-facing camera for capturing the moment while you travel. In addition to intuitive trip recording tools and other navigation features, the HX-1 enables you to connect with other explorers and share journeys online, making it the ultimate device for planning, navigating and sharing your adventures off the beaten track.

"The Hema Navigator has been the navigation system of choice for four-wheel drivers, tourers, campers and other adventure travellers throughout Australia since the original Hema Navigator in 2008," said Rob Boegheim, Hema's managing director. "The HX-1 carries on that mantle while allowing you to do so much more, including capturing your trip with geotagged photos and videos, finding campsites and caravan parks to stay at, recording and sharing your trips, and using tracks created by other explorers to guide your own adventures – all on the one device."

For navigating around town with ease, the HX-1 comes with Drive mode street navigation. Drive mode delivers a complete turn-by-turn navigation experience using HERE road data and

Hema track data, allowing you to quickly and easily create single or multi-point routes to addresses, coordinates or points of interest (POI).

To help you find accommodation, attractions, facilities and more on your travels, Drive mode comes preloaded with over 45,000 points of interest for adventure travellers. These include over 40,000 Hema-verified POI, as well as a targeted directory of free and low-cost sites from Camps Australia Wide and Caravan Parks Australia Wide.

Once your adventure begins, you can switch over to Explore mode to find and navigate places off the beaten track. Explore mode features the award-winning Hema Explorer Map, which combines over 1,200,000 kilometres of 4WD tracks and outback roads throughout Australia to help you find your next adventure. The Hema Explorer Map is backed by the entire Hema database of remote roads and tracks, which has been updated and expanded first-hand by Hema's Map Patrol expedition field teams for over 20 years, giving you detailed topographic mapping for navigating out-of-the-way places with confidence. For a different perspective, Explore mode also contains alternative map sources

Once you've returned from your trip, you can share it online directly from your HX-1. Log in to your Hema account on the web to view your trips in a 3D slideshow, share them with other explorers on the trip gallery, or send the URL to friends and family to show them where you've been. You can even browse other people's tracks and download them to your HX-1, giving you a ready-made guide for your next adventure.

The Hema HX-1 Navigator is backed by Hema's expert technical support team, and comes with 3 years of free street map updates, free Explore mode map updates for the life of the unit, while the HX-1 itself comes with a 12-month warranty. The HX-1 is available for \$699(RRP) from hundreds of physical and online retailers, or directly from the Hema Maps online shop.

Hema Maps has been prepared to explore since the company was founded in 1983, and has been empowering adventurers through maps, atlases, guides, apps and dedicated navigation devices ever since. To give adventure travellers the best mapping possible, Hema uses expedition field teams that drive Australia's remote roads and tracks to update and expand their mapping database - a process that has been in practice for over 20 years

From the Island State.... Tasmania

Late September the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) and Four-Wheel Drive Tasmania were privileged to undertake the two day 4WD Track Classification Course conducted by Four-Wheel Drive Victoria.

The two-day course comprised of both PWS employees and Four Wheel Drive Tasmania club members. The course enabled participants to understand the Victorian Four Wheel Drive Classification model and how the classification model was implemented from grassroots and above. The course provided healthy discussion as to how the classification could be adopted on PWS managed lands involving the affiliated clubs of Four Wheel Tasmania.

The comradery of the group, the positive attitudes and willingness to participate and work together was one of the most significant outcomes from the course. There is now a greater awareness and understanding of the importance to work with one another on matters relating to recreational off-road use.

PWS Four-Wheel Drive Ranger Jenna Myers will continue to liaise and work with club members from Four-Wheel

Drive Tasmania to ensure both parties are on 'track'.

The Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service would like to thank Four Wheel Drive Victoria for the delivery of the course, sharing own working experiences with Victorian governments and their continued support whilst PWS and Four-Wheel Drive Tasmania embark on this exciting journey of sustainable off-road recreation in Tasmania.



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Modern fire-fighting vehicles a boost for DELWP

More than thirty-five new 4WD Ultra-Light tankers or 'G-Wagons' will be delivered to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) in north-east and eastern Victoria in the coming months to boost the capacity of Forest Fire Management Victoria staff to protect local communities from bushfires.

The vehicles are part of state-wide roll-out of more than 300 of these specialised fire-fighting vehicles that have specific training and accreditation requirements.

The new wagons are being delivered to DELWP depots including Bright, Corryong, Mitta Mitta, Mansfield, Marysville, Erica, Heyfield, Dargo, Swifts Creek and Bendoc.

The Ultra-Light tanker has several safety and efficiency features specifically designed for forest fire-fighting and planned burning needs.

These tankers have a 630 litre water carrying capacity, much bigger than the 400 litre capacity of older vehicles, which means Forest Fire Management fire-fighters are able to stay longer on the fire-ground.

The body of the vehicle has been ergonomically designed to accommo-

date people of all sizes. Also added are electronic rewind to the hose reels, and repositioning of heavy items so they're lower and more accessible.

These tankers have a Falling Object Protection Structure (FOPS) above the cabin to help better protect our crews from falling trees and branches, which is of particular importance because DELWP fire-fighters work in some of Victoria's toughest and most remote forest terrain. Victoria is the first state in Australia to have implemented this level of falling object protection in its fire-fighting vehicles.

The rollout of more than 300 vehicles across the state is based on hazardous tree risk in each location and their area's typography for bushfire response.



The Mercedes-Benz G-Professional 4WDs were chosen for the Ultra-Light fire-fighting fleet through an open, competitive tender process to deliver the most cost-effective solution

Prototypes of the Mercedes G-Professional first appeared in Australia around four years ago, and customised G-Wagons have been used by the Australian Army.

The new vehicles will be used by Forest Fire Management Victoria crews who work with local communities and its partners, CFA, Parks Victoria, VicForests and Melbourne Water to reduce the impacts of bushfires.



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Toyota farewells FJ Cruiser

Launched in Australia in 2011, Toyota has sold more than 11,000 vehicles at an average of 180 a month. Production ended in August 2016 of the retro-inspired

Cruiser, which unashamedly was marketed on the origins of the original FJ40 Land Cruiser.

The thoroughly modern FJ Cruiser updated the classic FJ40 theme in a contemporary way. The front grille with two round headlights recalls the FJ40's frontal styling. Other heritage design cues include the bonnet and wheel-arch contours and a rear-mounted and exposed full-size spare tyre. The FJ Cruiser design offered plenty of functionality. Side access doors open 90 degrees in clamshell fashion for easy access to and from the rear seats. A swing-up glass hatch is incorporated into the side-hinged tailgate, opening independently and also useful for accommodating longer items.

The pedigree

The FJ40 LandCruiser became an icon among Toyota's vehicles, generating widespread recognition and respect for its authentic off-road capabilities.

More than 1.1 million were produced between 1960 and 1984; however, Toyota's enthusiasm never waned for the spirit of this rugged, go-anywhere vehicle.

In the late 1990s, Toyota in the United



States encouraged design projects that ultimately led to the development of a new FJ - a modern vehicle that would appeal to younger drivers, even those who

knew nothing about the original FJ.

Here are the key developments.

Model: FJ40

First seen: 1960

In brief: The third generation of LandCruiser

Description: Tough and functional, the original FJ was a two-door, short wheel-base, four-wheel-drive vehicle. Its exterior design has become iconic - angular lines, two round headlights set on either side of a mesh grille, an upright windscreen, wrap-around rear corner windows and a flat, white roof. The FJ40 amply demonstrated its suitability for the toughest conditions and it became a part of life in outback Australia. FJ40 established LandCruiser as the vehicle of choice for large construction projects, in mines, on cattle stations - in fact, anywhere requiring a rugged, dependable vehicle that could travel to, and return from, any extreme environment.

Model: Retro Cruiser

First seen: Chicago Auto Show 1999

In brief: A converted 1967 FJ40, created by Rod Millen

Description: More than a concept vehicle, it was a running prototype that combined the bodywork of an FJ40 LandCruiser from the 1960s with a contemporary LandCruiser chassis and V8 engine. It successfully drew attention to the potential for a vehicle with FJ heritage styling cues and modern mechanical components.

Model: Rugged Youth Utility

First seen: 2003 North American International Auto Show (Detroit)

In brief: FJ Cruiser concept

Description: It was developed as a basic, capable and affordable off-roader, exploring new possibilities for a next-generation SUV aimed specifically at young buyers with active outdoor lifestyles. A thoroughly modern vehicle, it adopted several styling cues from the original FJ40 including the wide and narrow grille, round headlights, upright windscreen, white roof and wrap-around rear corner windows. The cabin was designed specifically for basic functionality and flexible utility.

Model: FJ Cruiser

First seen: 2005 Chicago Auto Show

In brief: Public demand leads to production

Description: The overwhelmingly positive response to the FJ Cruiser concept prompted Toyota to launch a production version - a capable, affordable and durable vehicle that is youthful, fun-to-drive, aggressive and tough. Retaining many of the design details of the original concept, it is the modern interpretation of a Toyota classic, combining Toyota heritage with modern safety and refinement.

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It Will Never Happen To Me...

That famous saying ... "It will never happen to me" has been uttered many a time by all at some point in time. But those of us who have been involved in the outdoors and four wheel driving long enough know, accidents unfortunately can and do occur.

We see risk management practices in place at our major events and gatherings, when on trips, training days and on work parties, all designed to minimise the risk of accidents occurring. As good as these practices may be, they will be in vain if you do not have insurance in place for when things do eventually go wrong. There are several insurance policies in place to protect the members of 4WDV.

What happens if you get injured?

If you are injured, there may be a period that you are unable to work due to your injury. Once options such as sick leave have been exhausted, this can leave you in a situation where you do not have the means to pay for basic costs of living including bills, rent/mortgage, food, car loans as well as any ongoing medical expenses resulting from the injury.

Personal Accident Insurance provides weekly benefit payments for the period you are unable to work, available for up to two years after the injury has occurred. There are also additional benefits available including non-Medicare medical expenses and in the case of Permanent Disablement or Death, lump sum benefits are available. What happens if someone else is injured or their property is damaged?

When involved in preparing for, running

events, training days and trips, we have a responsibility and legal obligation to avoid causing injury to third parties and their property. If a person sustains an injury or their property is damaged, and they believe you are responsible for the loss, they can take legal action against you and seek compensation. If this occurs, you will be forced to defend the claim, even if you have not been negligent or believe you have not been negligent. The legal costs involved in defending claims like this are significant.

In the event that you are found to have been negligent, you may be ordered to pay a significant amount of money by way of compensation, as well as the injured person's legal costs. If you are financially unable to comply with such orders, you may be made a bankrupt and your assets, including your home, sold to satisfy any judgement made against you.

Public Liability Insurance covers you in the event where you are required to defend a claim made against you for personal injury or property damage and includes cover for compensation as well as the legal costs incurred to defend the claim on your behalf. Even where you have not been negligent, the policy will respond to ensure that the claim against you is defended and that your legal costs are paid for. The policy also extends to property in your Care Custody and Control, in the event where the owner believes that you are responsible for the damage to their property and wishes to recover their costs.

What happens in the event of damage occurred to your vehicle?

Vehicle insurance is a specialist area, four wheel drive vehicles often go places, do things certain insurers exclude. The last thing you want to be worrying about is whether or not my insurance will cover me in these circumstances?

Comprehensive Motor Vehicle Insurance provides you with the ability to insure your four wheel drive for accidental damage, fire, theft, hail as well as damage to other vehicles and property. Whilst it would be great to think it will never happen to us, if an accident occurs, you should ensure that the appropriate insurance is in place to protect yourself and the assets so that you can keep enjoying the activities that you participate in way into the future. If you would like to know more about what types of insurance is available, contact the team at Affinity Four Wheel Drive Insurance.

The article above refers to some of the insurance policies that are in place for Four Wheel Drive Victoria and their membership.

For a detailed summary you should go to <http://www.fwdvictoria.org.au/>

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Coordinator: Steve Fitzgerald

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Jeep breaks record for recalls

Jeep is about to make Australian motoring history with the most number of recalls ever issued by a car-maker in a calendar year.

So far this year, the troubled US brand has issued 14 recall notices for 17 models - covering every vehicle in its range. Depending on which Jeep you own, it could catch fire, roll away after it had been put in "park", or the airbags may fail in a crash!

Series II Nissan Navara

Nissan is adding more models to the Navara range, as it hopes to keep up with other brands. There are now 30 models ranging from \$19,490 to \$55,490.

The NP300 name has disappeared and there is a new 4WD mid-grade SL with steel wheels and vinyl floor mats for tradies and fleets.

Minor changes in the dual cab's suspension aim for a better ride. There are also revised spec levels, for example the ST grade gets Satnav while auto is available on the RX 4WD dual cab-chassis. Drivelines are the same and there is no change to the styling or cabin. The SL 4x4 dual cab grade will feature a 2.3-litre twin-turbo 140kw/450Nm diesel engine.

More punch for Amarok

Volkswagen's class-leading twin cab Amarok V6 ute now comes with an over-boost function. It increases standard power from 165kW to 180kW, while torque lifts from 550Nm to 580Nm. Optional over-boost is delivered in third or fourth gear from 50km/h and hangs in for 10 seconds

Piranha's tilt slide

Many 4WDers who set up their vehicle for touring put their fridge on a fridge slide that allows easy access and utilises the space in the back of the

4WD to the best advantage. As space is very limited already, if you install a drawer system, raise the suspension or fit bigger wheels, the easy access may become just a little too high and possibly dangerous.

The all-new Piranha Tilt Slide system is a very clever product that can convert an existing fridge slide in many cases, to a tilt slide making access a breeze and safer.

It can also be purchased as a combination unit, which includes the Tilt mechanism with slide attached. Pricing is \$299 and \$627 for the combo tilt slide.

Campfire escape a timely warning to campers

Forest Fire Management Victoria and CFA crews extinguished a small bushfire that started from an unattended campfire fanned by strong winds next to the Aberfeldy River on Fultons Creek Road recently.

Forest Fire Management Victoria's Assistant Chief Fire Officer Chris Stephenson said: "Crews were called to an unattended campfire not properly extinguished next to the Aberfeldy River on the weekend that had escaped to nearby bushes."

"The campfire had been lit outside designated camping areas - fortunately we were able to extinguish the fire quickly in this case, however the outcome could have been vastly different

had it been in the middle of summer."

"This was an area that is still recovering after being heavily impacted by a major bushfire just three years ago - the effects of which are still very visible today."

"This is a timely reminder and we urge people to learn about and follow safe campfire practices, which include:

- Always extinguishing your campfire with water, not dirt;
- Make sure there's always an adult attending your campfire;
- Use a fireplace where available; and
- Keep a three-metre air and ground perimeter around your campfire clear of flammable material."



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