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From the President



Well the year is almost at an end and like many of the previous years, one always is left asking where did the last twelve months go? It seems like no time at all since we were holidaying and travelling this great country of ours. Mind you, a lot has also happened since then and maybe that's the clue. With so much happening the time goes quickly.

I have been fortunate to retire this year and since then have been busier than ever. It's helped with the time I can spend on Association business and Wayne and I have attended several meetings since the last Trackwatch. We have had a National Council meeting and AGM in Sydney. It was a meeting which has us asking more questions, especially in regard to what we get as a benefit. We did have presentations from Aon – their national insurer and again we have asked for a quote for us to join the scheme. It certainly looked attractive earlier this year but when we examined what cover was being provided, we would have been left with limited insurance cover which was insufficient for our Association. We require cover for the office and the RTO which wasn't part of the plan. Victoria also has a claims history going back some years so this may have an impact. The final decision will be made when we have all the facts. The National body are also looking at a deal with Club 4x4 which we would also be interested in. There are still some tough questions that need answering. I know their cover is second to none, however second year premiums seem to escalate considerably – even without a claim.

We have had a Ministerial Advisory Committee meeting as well and the Victorian 4WD Strategy has been accepted. It was to be launched by the Minister, however she was called away on other business. The Strategy has been signed off and printed copies are being made available. It will be launched via Social Media early December. Clubs will be receiving copies of the document after we receive them in a few weeks. At the meeting, it was agreed to revitalise the Track Classification process. This means that

we will be offering training in regions and for individual or groups of clubs in the techniques. The major difference will be that our Classification reports will be sent to FWDV office and we will post the tracks and their classification on our website. Over time we will have quite a repository of tracks, their classification and hopefully some notes regarding condition. This will be useful for trip leaders and clubs generally to run events. It is hoped that clubs will be able to 'adopt an area' and provide regular updates on track conditions.

I've been facilitating our corporate training over the last two months and there are some interesting insights. Many of the staff who have to be accredited with 4WD driving skills for Workplace Health and Safety reasons have been driving fourbies for some time. This makes the training easy as it's effectively a Recognition of Prior Learning process. Some have not driven a 4WD at all but have to do the training 'just in case'. Making the course relevant to all is sometimes a challenge. And then there's the variety of vehicles. I've had lots of Ford Rangers, some VW Amaroks, Land Cruisers ranging from 80 series, 105 series, 200 series, 79 series and in various model levels. There was a very early 1990's Diesel Jackaroo, some Nissan Navara D22's, a 90 series Prado and others. Keeping up to date with these vehicles and their technology requires some intense homework. It is great to see how far the technology has come and how useful it is. We have plenty more training scheduled for next year so this is one part of the Association that is really successful, but we do need more trainers able to deliver accredited courses mid-week.

Our AGM was very successful and I welcome back Michael Martin as Vice President and welcome Colin Oates and Dave Roberts onto the Board.

I also thank Chris Kershaw and Lou Catherine for their service on the Board over many years. We passed some resolutions to make changes to the rules which have been altered and accepted by Consumer Affairs.

continued over page

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Finally thank you to Wayne, Alison, Karl, Myles and Dave for their work in the office. Without them we wouldn't have the Association we've got.

Thanks to those volunteers who also spend time in the office doing the very important work required for our KPI reporting. Also thanks to the Board who have been very productive this last year and will continue their efforts next year. Finally thanks to all of you - our Clubs and your members who are really why this Association exists. Your input and involvement have been outstanding again and it makes it very easy to lead an Association when these things happen.

Have a safe and enjoyable Christmas and New Year and take care whatever you might be doing. Enjoy time with the family and the break from work - no matter how long.

Garry Doyle
President

*From all at Four
Wheel Drive
Victoria, we wish you
and your families a
safe and enjoyable
Christmas and festive
season.*

*Take care and be alert
when four wheel
driving*

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 embedded photos in documents..
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 separate JPEG files. Ed

News

RED25 PROGRAM



Four wheel driver hits milestone

Recently Four Wheel Drive Victoria office volunteer and Toyota 4WD Club of Victoria member, Dave Roberts, joined an elite group of just 36 Australians (of whom 11 are Victorians) in making 600 blood donations. In doing so, he has contributed to helping save the lives of more than 1800 people.

After being hit in the face by a cricket ball at the age of nine, hæmorrhaging, and needing more than eight pints of blood, he made a commitment to help others as he had been helped himself.

On his 18th birthday, Dave gave his first donation and has continued to do so for more than 42 years. Asked why, Dave said "I do this because I know it makes a difference. I am absolute proof that blood donors save lives."

Dave donates blood plasma and platelets every two weeks at various donor centres around the country as meet the time needs. These donations take a little longer than a whole blood donation, which takes around 15 minutes plus a little more for the interview process before and refreshments afterwards. Plasma takes around 40 minutes, and platelets around an hour.

Dave is also the coordinator for FWD Victoria's Red25 program.

Red25 is a program run by Australian Red Cross Blood Service to achieve a stable base of 25% of all donations from a regular core of donors. Dave asked that if you are a donor or thinking about becoming one, to please join the "Four Wheel Drive Victoria" team. It's easy. Next time you donate, simply fill out a form to register and that's it. Nothing else changes. It also demonstrates the community involvement of four wheel drivers.

"For a small part of your day, you can save the life of somebody. Perhaps even someone you love," Dave said. "Which is greater, a small inconvenience or a person's life?"

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VALE: NEVILLE LESTER

It is with great sadness I advise the passing of long-time member of the VAFWDC, Range Rover Club and formerly Land Rover Clubs. Neville was a past President of the VAFWDC and the Range Rover Club where he was a life member.

I introduced Neville to four-wheel driving and the world of Land Rovers in 1973 when he purchased a Series 2A Land Rover station wagon. After several years and many hard miles Neville looked for a bit more comfort and style and graduated to a 2 door Range Rover. Following this Neville joined the Range Rover Club in 1980 and was immediately impressed with the range of trips being run by club members and the care and attention to detail the trip leaders exhibited. With his wife Jenny and children Stephen and Kirsty, Neville took part in many memorable trips to the Victorian High Country and outback Australia. Trips led by Neville became legendary for the tracks he chose, the well planned campsites, and frequently the lateness of arrival at the campsite or getting back home. Neville's trips were always full as members quickly learnt that they would see some amazing country and driving challenges.

As the pressure to close tracks and exclude 4WD's from much of the High Country, Neville realised that unless some strong action was taken there would be little opportunity for our recreation. The Association of 4WD Clubs was in its infancy and had yet to gain influence with land managers or the state government. Neville was tasked with chairing the VAFWDC general meetings and AGM in 1986 and in 1987 Neville was elected as VAFWDC President, serving in this role for 3 years.

Neville maintained a strong stance on the retention of 4WD opportunities and served on the Alpine Advisory Committee, and the Public Land Council where at its meetings Neville forged bonds with like-minded groups such as the Mountain Cattlemen's Association and the Sporting Shooters who were also threatened with exclusion from the newly formed Alpine National Park. Neville also

enjoyed a strong and beneficial relationship with key land management staff including Gus Geary, Frank Noble and Rocky Barca. Aided by his large stature and eloquent manner of speech, Neville was a tireless campaigner for the track access we now enjoy. Throughout his term as VAFWDC President he continued his firm stand for continuing track access with politicians and senior land management agency staff,

culminating in the agreement for limited club access to management vehicle only tracks.

Neville continued as an active club member for many years, became a driver training instructor in 1991 after completing the VAFWDC instructor training program and continued to run many popular club trips.

Sadly Neville was suffered the terrible disease Muscular Dystrophy, something he concealed and fought bravely against for many years. Over time its impact led to an early retirement and limitations on his four-wheel driving.

Consigned to the passenger seat he was still able to enjoy his travels for a few years but eventually he became unable to cope with the bouncing and jolting, and sadly no longer able to continue his much loved 4WD and camping pursuits.

The 4WD fraternity has lost a long serving member, a friend to many, and a fearless advocate for our recreation.

Neville is survived by his wife Jenny, son Stephen and family and daughter Kirsty and family and our sympathy goes to them for the loss of a husband, father, father-in-law and grandfather.

Ken O'Connor
Range Rover Club of Victoria



Editorial

Volunteer: one that gives freely to help or assist others...

Four wheel drive club members annually provide an enormous amount of hours performing volunteer tasks, often at their own expense. Club members selflessly give of their time, resources, expertise and 4WD skills to assist in numerous projects that assist in promoting the ideals of the four wheel drive movement, raising our profile in the wider community, and preserving the bush assets we love to explore. Whether it is track clearing, rubbish collection, sign replacement, Alpine hut restorations and preservation projects, Christmas tree distribution, fire and drought support and many other projects, there is probably a Club undertaking some activity most weeks of the year. Many are regularly carried out in partnership with Parks Victoria and provide a great conduit to assist and to get to know local Rangers and to appreciate some of the problems they encounter.

Most of us have participated in some (*or many*) club community projects and as we draw to the end of another year the figures meticulously compiled by Geoff Kenafacke are an incredible reflection on the work undertaken by club members.

Documenting the voluntary hours and projects provides a great reference point when seeking access, demonstrating our commitment to bush and related activities. We ask that Clubs provide Geoff with details of their activity to continually allow him to undertake this important role.

The scary thing is that despite the facts and figures compiled by Geoff they are most likely well short of actual activities undertaken by Clubs. Quite often we hear of annual projects that clubs have been involved, but have never reported details of how many hours they have contributed. Many clubs don't report on their activities and we would love to hear about what you have been doing. Likewise what about providing a report to Trackwatch and spreading the word on your initiative? These reports can provide a launching pad for other clubs to become involved in similar activities, and certainly provide authorities that receive our magazine positive recognition of the 4WD Club movement.

A big thank you to those many 4WD members involved in so many voluntary projects.

Regards

Brian Tanner
Editor

Volunteering

Volunteering has a different meaning for different groups of people

by Geoff Kenafacke
Midweek 4WD Club

At about 8.00am on 8th February 1968, I shared a moment in history with the pop singer Normie Rowe. I'm not claiming to have known him or to have become mates. It's just that at that precise moment we simultaneously arrived at the army barracks that used to exist in Batman Avenue where AAMI Stadium now stands.

Normie came by car whereas I came by train to Richmond and made the lonely walk down Batman Avenue. He arrived amidst a throng of press reporters and TV cameras. Unfortunately for me, all the screaming young ladies were also there for him. We both faced the grand-mothers and middle-aged mothers protesting on behalf of the Save our Sons anti conscription- anti Vietnam War movement.

We were both ushered into the Drill Hall

by well-known St Kilda Footballer Carl Ditterich, looking resplendent in his best dress uniform. He was based there and doing a cushy number as some sort of orderly so that he could continue to play football, whereas Normie and I got sent quite a few thousand kilometres further north to get involved in the real dirty work.

So, what has that got to do with volunteering you say? Well, very soon as young Diggers, Normie, like me, no doubt learned the timeless old army rule of the ordinary soldier, i.e., you never, ever, volunteer for anything!

A wily sergeant I knew used to talk to his soldiers and drop innocuous queries into the conversation. It might have been something as simple as asking a young soldier if he played the piano. Or he sometimes asked who barracked for

Collingwood in which case at least half a dozen blokes would enthusiastically respond. The inevitable next response from the sergeant was, "right, you've just volunteered

So far, I have been talking about reluctant volunteers.

Then there are the community minded people living all over the state who act in voluntary capacities in their local area, driving ambulances, being members of the local Country Fire Authority Brigade or the State Emergency Service. Usually, the same people can be found cleaning up school yards, acting in various capacities at local sporting events during weekends or conducting sausage sizzles for charities. Unsurprisingly they will also be among the first to roll up their sleeves and get stuck in following floods and



fires in their region. In talking to a number of these folk, they don't even look at themselves as volunteers, but merely as good neighbours.

And now we should look at a third group of people.....the members of four wheel drive clubs.

The data I have collected from about 44 different clubs during 2016/2017 Financial Year, paints a picture of people giving up time and effort at some personal financial cost to themselves, to help others or to help the environment, often in parts of the state quite distant from their home towns.

During 2016/2017, 1320 volunteers travelling in 914 4WD vehicles completed a total of 12,283.75 volunteer hours. Based on a 7.66 hour working day, this is the equivalent of 229 weeks of work. In performing this volunteer work, the members paid for their own fuel so they could collectively drive nearly 229,000 kilometres.

Some clubs are also finding volunteering is creating quite a good rapport with specific land managers in various areas. That surely must be a help if the same club subsequently applied for access to an MVO track.

There are certain activities which Four Wheel Drive Victoria must fulfil to qualify for government funding. The three which most readily spring to mind are track clearing, Camp Hosting and providing disaster relief aid. No doubt all of you are aware of those ones but what about all the other good work that 4WD clubs do? How much of it goes unrecorded

- helped a disabled or disadvantaged community organization?
- worked on an environmental project?
- worked on a project for elderly citizens?
- been volunteers on a 4WD Club stand at a 4WD Show in Melbourne or regional Victoria?

During 2016/2017, 1320 volunteers travelling in 914 4WD vehicles completed a total of 12,283.75 volunteer hours. Based on a 7.66 hour working day, this is the equivalent of 229 weeks of work.

and unacknowledged? We know there are other activities regularly undertaken and we estimate that we have been unable to report at least 2000 more volunteer hours and a great deal more travel kilometres.

How many clubs have:

- participated in Clean Up the Bush this year?
- worked on the Aberfeldy Heritage Project?

- worked on the annual clean-up of the little cemetery at Gaffney's Creek? We know other clubs have worked on other clean-ups but unfortunately, they have not reported the details to us.
 - sent a work party up to Farina to help with that outback town's restoration?
 - acted as marshals or back-up transport for a community event such as a charity ride?
 - packed Show Bags for 4WD shows?
 - delivered Christmas Trees for Oxfam last December?
 - been involved in hut maintenance?
- or
- asked by land managers to assist under-prepared motorists who have become stranded in the bush?
- All the above qualify as volunteer activity on behalf of Four Wheel Drive Victoria.



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Celebrating 4WD Club members volunteer efforts



Consider the above list as the “tip of the iceberg” in terms of possible volunteer activities.

The point I am trying to emphasise is that volunteer activities come in many, many forms. Perhaps you or your club have been involved in something similar and never thought to tell Four Wheel Drive Victoria about it. Perhaps you haven't told us because you considered it would be a case of “blowing your own trumpet”.

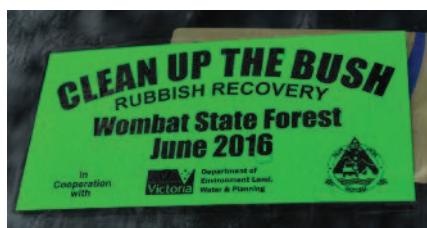
At the very least, your efforts should be reported to Four Wheel Drive Victoria via email and the statistics provided so that we can show DELWP, Parks Victoria and the Minister for Environment, just how much effort is being given to the Victorian community by four wheel drive club members.

It would be great if you wrote an article for Trackwatch. These are all good news stories that deserve to be heard and acknowledged.

We can provide individuals or clubs with a form showing all the data we would like to capture for every volunteer activity undertaken during 2017 /2018 by our affiliated 4WD Clubs. For those among you who are savvy with modern forms of media, an online submission of volunteer data will shortly be available through Survey Monkey, which can be linked via email and Facebook.

During 2017/ 2018, volunteer data collection will be managed by our Projects Officer, Myles Brown and Board Member, Kat Marmara-Stewart.

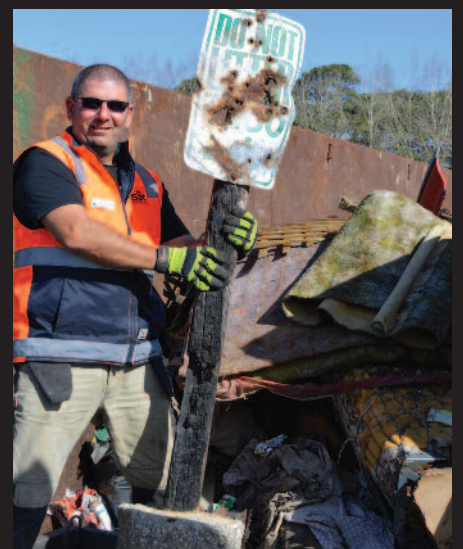
Geoff Kenafacke
Midweek 4WD Club



A selection of the many and varied volunteer projects that 4WD members are involved.



Celebrating 4WD Club members volunteer efforts





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The force is strong in the Western Alps!



David, Graham, Barry & Manfred

Members from the Mansfield and Wangaratta 4WD Clubs joined forces with Parks Victoria for annual track clearing in the Western Alpine National Park

A sense of partnership and teamwork was the driving force behind Parks Victoria, Mansfield Four Wheel Drive Club, Wangaratta Four Wheel Drive Club and Tim Bates 4WD Adventures working together to undertake the annual track clearing program.

The groups joined forces to tackle some difficult terrain within the Western Alps section of the Alpine National Park, in readiness for the reopening of seasonally closed tracks. These remote areas have to be checked and cleared every year to ensure safe travel for all 4WD visitors prior to the reopening.

"With the invaluable assistance of volunteers from Wangaratta 4x4 Club, Mansfield Alpine 4WD Club under the banner of Four Wheel Drive Victoria, Parks Victoria's Western Alps team recently completed two very successful track clearing weekends.

It is always difficult to know what the volunteer crews may encounter due to the highly-varied weather that has occurred over the winter months. During the three working bees, the crews encountered several felled trees and branches that were blocking vehicle

access so they had to be removed.

Incredibly, the Mansfield 4WD and Wangaratta Four Wheel Drive Clubs contributed over 250 volunteer hours over two working bee weekends. This was in addition to the work by rangers and the Tim Bates 4WD Adventures crew contributing over 80 volunteer hours clearing the Bluff Track. The support and assistance provided by the groups is highly valued due to the amazing contribution to the overall park management.

The region has been impacted by an extended winter period with a number of tracks across the Western Alps affected by the wet weather and snow. Visitors are advised to drive to the conditions

and be prepared especially around Bluff, King Billy and Little Cobbler tracks.

"We are always humbled by the incredible generosity from the 4WD clubs and volunteers by offering freely of their time and expertise. It certainly makes a big impact on our overall park management and effectiveness in delivering quality 4WD tracks for our visitors to explore."

"Their help goes a long way to ensuring the tracks are in good condition, in readiness for the reopening of seasonally closed tracks", said Parks Victoria Bart Smith, Area Chief Ranger Western Alps.

Parks Victoria





Report and images by Greg Rose

Butcher Country Track Inspection

Butcher Country Track will be well known to many four wheel drivers.

Describing its location, from the south the track begins at the Macalister River in the Alpine National Park north of Licola. The track climbs steeply onto the ridgeline between the Macalister and Caledonia River valleys. At its northern end the track joins the Howitt Road near Zeka Spur Track, which runs into the Wonnangatta Valley and close to Howitt Hut. The elevation at the northern end of the track, where it traverses the Howitt Plains, is approximately 1600 metres above sea level. Caledonia River Track runs parallel to Butcher Country Track for much of its length but where Butcher Country stays on the ridge Caledonia follows the river in the valley. Butcher Country Track is seasonally closed.

The last several kilometres of Butcher Country Track cross Howitt Plains. The flora of the plains consist of patches of twisted snow gums (*Eucalyptus pauciflora*) and peatlands.

At the request of Parks Victoria a group went on a "walk and talk" site inspection to the impacted zone on Wednesday the 18th of October. Taking part in the inspection were; Wayne Hevey, CEO Four Wheel Drive Victoria, Greg Rose, FWDV Regional Representative Southern Alpine National Park, Helen Dixon Parks Victoria District Manager Central Gippsland, Mike Dower, Parks Victoria Area Chief Ranger Foothills and

Southern Alps, Sarah Noonan, PV Team Leader Heyfield, Jenny Lawrence, PV Heyfield, Adam Van Baalen, PV Heyfield and Shayne Haywood, West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority.

On site we were able to see the impact vehicles are making on the plains. Jenny Lawrence, using maps, charts, photographs and her extensive knowledge of the area explained the problem.

The disturbance caused by the track on the plains alters both the surface and sub-surface catchment of the peatlands downslope. The deep wheel ruts collect

water retaining it in the compacted grooves. Evaporation then removes this water which is no longer supplied to the peatlands. The deep ruts also interrupt the natural sub-surface water flow that would normally maintain the health of the peatland system. The water that flows through the peatlands eventually flows as a healthy source for the headwaters of the creeks and rivers that ultimately flow all the way south to the Gippsland Lakes system. As Shayne Haywood pointed out, a small change in this high altitude environment, has multiplying effects right through the health of the system.



From a management point of view the easiest solution would be to close the track and rehabilitate the area to restore the natural balance. This option was not on the agenda for the day. The purpose of the inspection was to find a solution that would leave the track available for recreational four wheel drive use and provide a solution to the environmental issue. Realigning the track is also not an option as it would bring with it other environmental and engineering issues.

Using the extended closure regime and track works at Kelly Lane and Shaw Creek, further south in the Alpine National Park, as an example the preferred action plan has a couple of stages. Part one is to put in place a negotiated extended closure, as on many other sensitive tracks. This reduces the vehicle impact in the "shoulder weeks" from normal closure and opening dates when there is more likelihood of wet conditions. Part two is the big dollar item. The braided out multiple tracks would be sensitively rehabilitated leaving just the main track at its original alignment. It is proposed that after some preparation work the best solution may be that large river rocks would be brought in to fill the wheel ruts and track to the same level as the surrounding soil. These large rocks do not compact like gravel, so water can percolate through maintaining the sub-surface flows. The ride for a vehicle might be a bit bumpy but a big improvement on sliding and churning through the black mud and crunching expensive parts on hidden rocks.

The solution is expensive and will have to be carefully managed to ensure success. The West Gippsland Catchment Authority, who have a vested interest in having the highest quality water in the catchment areas, will be contributing a significant amount to the project from the Federal National Landcare Program for Peatland Protection.



The onsite inspection and discussions highlighted Parks Victoria's ongoing commitment to recreational four wheel driving. The presentation given to us was excellent and compelling. We, as four wheel drivers, are fortunate to have this outstanding level of consultation and input into major policy decisions. The logistics of the day were handled by Parks Victoria and they are to be complemented on the professional approach to hosting us.

The work will take some time to complete and will be undertaken in stages with the most severely impacted areas tackled first. Four Wheel Drive Victoria will be given regular updates which will be passed onto clubs and individual four wheel drive users.

Greg Rose.

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



| Working together

Horseyard Flat

Volunteers working with Parks Victoria

Report & images by Greg Rose

Horseyard Flat is a popular camping and day visitor area in the Alpine National Park. Access to the picturesque site from Licola is via the two wheel drive Tamboritha Road then Moroka Road. Depending on snow depth on Moroka Road, which reaches elevations of 1500 metres, the flat is accessible all year round. The elevation at Horseyard Flat is approximately 1000 metres. If you are heading to the Pinnacles or to the top

of the drive down Billy Goat Bluff track you will pass the site. The Moroka River forms a boundary of the camping area. Horseyard Flat was recently listed as one of the ten best camper trailer destinations in Australia. It's a great base camp spot for exploring Moroka Gorge with its waterfalls, Moroka Hut, Mt Wellington, Mt Kent, the Pinnacles, Castle Hill and Billy Goat Bluff Track. There's even a good chance of catching a nice pan sized trout.

The easy access presents a management problem, as some of the weekend warriors seem to think ripping through the fragile tracks to create bog holes, is the way to behave. Parks Victoria Foothills and Southern Alps staff, lead by Area Chief Ranger Mike Dower, formulated a plan to improve the facilities and hopefully attract more families to enjoy the shady campsites dotted among the trees.



There is already a long drop toilet, constructed many years ago by the Macalister Four Wheel Drive Club. Entering the flat there is a hut on a track to the left, but like all other huts, should be used for refuge only, not camping in.

The Land Rover Owners Club of Gippsland specialise in working remotely with Parks Victoria in the Southern Alps and we were asked if we could replicate the sort of asset

building we had undertaken over two years at Talbotville. As the club had already completed some general cleanup work at Horseyards we were happy to oblige. With a range of building skills, plenty of driving experience in the high country, members qualified in first aid, willingness to work safely under Parks instructions and enjoyment of working remotely, we are a good fit with the Parks Victoria Foothills and Southern

Alps Team. Our volunteers are all entered on to the relatively new ParkConnect online volunteer registration system.

After many on-site inspections and consideration of some of the unique flora of the area, it was decided that stage one would be the construction of four concrete fire rings and four picnic table and seat sets adjacent to the fire pits. Over the 20th, 21st and 22nd of November, under the leadership of



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Ranger Wayne Foon, fourteen volunteers and two additional Parks Victoria staff, set to work. Club members not only completed the main asset building tasks but also repaired and cleaned the toilet, conducted a plant survey, cut large areas of long grass, inspected the Moroka Gorge walking track, cut saplings away from roadside signage and generally cleaned up the area. The worst task has to be giving the table and seat timbers a final coat of protective oil once they are assembled and cemented into place, potentially very messy.

The logistics of these operations are quite complex, with everything needed including a large cement mixer, hand and power tools, bags of cement, sand and gravel, generators, several large steel rings that are the form work for the fire pits and the table and seat timbers, having to be transported from Heyfield. We have a comprehensive checklist so that nothing is left sitting in the storage sheds in Heyfield. Sand and gravel were placed on site before the working days. It was a long slow drive with heavily laden trailers. We have our catering organised so that everyone self caters except for the evening meals. For those meals the club and Parks Victoria take it in turns to see who can provide the best banquet. These are not activities to join if you are trying to lose weight.

We managed to get all our tasks completed leaving enough time for a drive to the summit of Mt Kent. In recent years the track has been quite rutted and overgrown. Dozer work as part control measures for the fires in the area late last summer has made the trip easier. The views from the rocky 1561 metre summit are spectacular. There is an impressive stone cairn marking the summit. Numerous species of wild flowers were in full bloom adding to the colour to the area. The helipad at the top of Mt Kent allows plenty of parking



and manoeuvring space for vehicles.

While we were working at Horseyard Flat a number of tourists and campers called in and were amazed and impressed that Four Wheel Drive Victoria affiliated clubs do so much volunteer work across the whole state and have such a close working relationship with the land managers.

Volunteer work is very important to Parks Victoria. Sarah Noonan, Ranger Team Leader at Heyfield, commented that without the volunteer input the work probably would not have been undertaken. Although the club supplies the labour, none of this work would happen without significant commitment from Parks Victoria; staff time, allocation of money for materials and a passion to

improve the Park. There will be a stage two with more improvements in the future. The second stage will include additional fire rings and table sets and some contractor machinery work rehabilitating the deeply rutted informal tracks.

Let's hope that the small number of people, who thoughtlessly damage our Parks, respect the new assets and appreciate the great opportunities we have in Victoria to enjoy the outdoors and free camping areas in the alps.

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





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Working together

Annual Far East Gippsland Track Clearing



4WD CLUBS AND PARKS VICTORIA - Working Together to Make our Tracks Safer -

*By Gary Bellisini – Parks Victoria Team Leader at Bendoc.
As published in the November Edition of the Tubbut Tattler
20 and 21 October 2017*

The annual track clearing weekend held in conjunction with 4WD members from the Pajero and Land Rover clubs was again a successful and enjoyable weekend. Three separate teams each with a Parks Victoria staff member leading the group cleared many tracks in the Alpine, Snowy and Errinundra National Parks.

It was very pleasing to have tracks cleared in time for the seasonal road closure gate opening that occurs just prior to the Melbourne Cup long weekend each year when members of the public look forward to once again driving on tracks that have been closed for approximately six months. The track clearing work undertaken each year with the volunteers also has the benefit of the tracks being cleared for fire access.

The Saturday was somewhat of a long day and everyone enjoyed a sumptuous evening meal with the Tubbut community in Tubbut. After dinner everyone convoyed to McKillops bridge camping area to set up camp and get a campfire going to sit around, enjoy some refreshments and have a good chat.

Thanks to Committee members from the Tubbut Hall & Tubbut Neighbourhood House for the great catering which was funded by Parks Victoria.

Local News

Great to see holiday makers at Watte Camp for a week. The couple from Mario have been enjoying the fine weather and spending time fishing.

Healing Through Narrative – Fire Stories, a community documentary.

The fire documentary film is nearing completion! It is currently still being edited with producer Hannah Cairns and her colleague in Oregon, U.S.A. and we should have the first screen launch locally in 6 to 8 weeks. It has been a massive amount of work for all involved and we appreciate your patience and we are so grateful to those who participated in the interviews – there were over 40 people interviewed in March! Thank you J
Birgit and I have been reviewing 'rough cuts' to help the editing process – the first rough cut was 6 and half hours long!! Thankfully the next cut was only an hour long so it only took a few hours to review and determine feedback! Stay tuned..... See poster elsewhere in Tattler
Lorelee & Birgit

4WD CLUBS AND PARKS VICTORIA Working Together to Make our Tracks Safer

The annual track clearing weekend held in conjunction with 4wd members from the Pajero and Landrover clubs was again a successful and enjoyable weekend. Three separate teams each with a Parks Victoria staff member leading the group cleared many tracks in the Alpine, Snowy and Errinundra national parks. It was very pleasing to have tracks cleared in time for the seasonal road closure gate opening that occurs just prior to the Melbourne Cup long weekend each year when members of the public look forward to once again driving on tracks that have been closed for approximately six months. The track clearing work undertaken each year with the volunteers also has the benefit of the tracks being cleared for fire access. The Saturday was somewhat of a long day and everyone enjoyed a sumptuous evening meal with the Tubbut community in Tubbut. After dinner everyone convoyed to McKillops bridge camping area to set up camp and get a campfire going to sit around, enjoy some refreshments and have a good chat. Gary



Thanks to Committee members from the Tubbut Hall & Tubbut Neighbourhood House for the great catering which was funded by Parks Victoria.



By Tony Jambu – Pajero 4WD Club

The annual Track Clearing Weekend was definitely a success with the mild weather, large number of crews and tracks cleared. And most importantly, no incidents or injuries.

My observation of the weekend was how well the two clubs, LROCV and Pajero clubs work well together in mixed crews and socialised around the campfire and dinner. The other 4WD clubs could learn from this.

I like to say a big thank you to all the 4WD members, kids and guest. Not only did you volunteer your weekend to assist with this initiative but also the long drive, fuel, equipment and food. It is so rewarding to be putting something back into the community by doing what we love, four wheel driving and putting our toys to use.

On behalf of the whole group, I would especially like to thank

- Dave Burton (Area Chief Ranger – Snowy Croajingolong) for his support of this initiative with the 4WD community and annual attendance
- Gary Bellesini and Dave Butterworth (Parks Victoria – Bendoc) for organising the weekend and being with us on the



track clearing.

- The Tubbut community for putting on the fabulous and delicious dinner.

The “A” Team Departed from Orbost.

By Richard Groom - LROCV

I arrived at about 4.00 pm on the Friday afternoon at Orbost and set up my tent

in the caravan park on lush grass.

Michael Millstead headed out of town to a campsite near the mouth of the Snowy River, and others went to the hotel or motels around town.

We got together at the hotel for dinner to rubbish the illustrious reputation of Land Rover and various other topics.



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Annual Far East Gippsland Track Clearing



After packing up the next morning I headed up town to the bakery for coffee and raisin toast, then the four of us (3 LROCV members and 1 Pajero Club member) congregated outside the Parks Vic offices to wait for Dave Burton (PV Area Ranger). The other club members having camped at McKillops Bridge ready for track clearing on different tracks for the weekend.

Soon enough we were on our way north heading for the Deddick Trail and chatting on the UHF. Pausing at the start of the Deddick we aired down and Dave ran through the safety issues and passed out PPE [Personal Protective Equipment] to those who weren't carrying their own gear. After Dave unlocked the gate and we headed onto the Deddick we travelled about 50 metres before being stopped by the first fallen tree; not a good start! The next fallen tree was encountered soon after and we started to think it was going to be a very slow trip to McKillops Bridge. However there was no pattern in the fallen trees. Sometimes there would be a few close together, then we would travel for kilometres before encountering another. Being the first to use the track since last autumn there was plenty of wildlife and abundant regrowth of the forest. This really is magnificent mountain forest country. Soon enough we reached the top of the legendary Staircase. This section of the Deddick is a descent when approached from the south as we were. It is very steep and so large conservation mounds have been constructed for its entire length. Looking over the lip from the top caused me to think with some apprehension about my proposal to go to Land Rover 70th Anniversary at Cooma next Easter in my SWB Series 2 Land Rover and driving it down this track! As I drove over about the 3rd conservation mound the surface becomes strewn with loose shale rocks and is very steep. The Discovery lost grip and slid forwards, gathering momentum. It is in low range, first gear so I start to feather the brakes but it's still sliding and the ABS system is causing the brake pedal to bounce back at me. Then the car reaches the next conservation mound, still the front is ahead of the back; all good, as it now starts to slow as it rises up onto the next conservation mound. That was the steepest part of the descent and the rest was driven without drama.

A little further on, after a moderate river crossing we reached about the only area on the Deddick that offers a clearing big enough for a reasonable sized convoy to stop overnight and we paused here for lunch. This spot is in a deep valley with spectacular escarpments and surrounded by dense forest to provide shelter from any wind. After lunch we moved on until reaching Campbell's Knob Track [MVO] which Dave opened up to check on some previously placed cameras and to try to spot some feral cattle down by the river. Our progress down this track was stopped by a massive dead tree fallen across the track. After careful examination Dave decided to have a go at clearing this with his chain saw which had a long bar. Eventually we did manage to clear this away but we then needed to push on to get to Tubbut. The community of Tubbut and the rangers had agreed to host us for a dinner to thank us for volunteering. Obviously keeping the tracks open is very important to this community that has known the danger of bushfire to their remote community. So we arrived just on dark and enjoyed a hearty meal with the community.

After dinner we had an interesting drive back to the McKillops Bridge camp ground, dodging assorted wildlife and



then trying to select a less sloping campsite away from the many ant mounds on which to erect tents. I found that driving even really solid tent pegs into the rocky ground somewhat challenging! Most then gathered around a blazing campfire made from wood gathered during the day and getting to know folk from the Pajero Club. A couple of glasses of red wine, lots of chatter about the adventures of the day and then off to the land of nod. The next morning some elected to head off for some more track clearing and others wanted to head home. It was

decided that rather than just drive straight back out we would head out via World End, a spectacular lookout. We ended up doing track clearing to reach the lookout and the views were definitely worth the effort. My total trip distance was 940 kms and the trip achieved much by way of track clearing prior to the opening of the 4x4 season and helping to open tracks in case of bushfires.

**Compiled by Prue Thwaites
LROC & Pajero 4WD Clubs**

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Jordan Valley Spring Clean

by Mel & Inga Broders
Toyota Land Cruiser Club of Victoria

The Toyota Land Cruiser Club of Victoria (TLCCV) adopted an area comprising various historic sites in the Jordan Valley locality several years back. Under the leadership of Dulcie Watts the Club has cleaned up the Jericho Cemetery and several other historic landmarks. They return to the area for a working bee every few months. On this latest trip they were introduced to the Chinese Historical Cerimonial Ovens.

Over the weekend of 7th-8th of October a modest convoy of five vehicles and many helping hands gathered at the campground above William Creighton's grave site on a clear, cold Friday evening under a full moon. We enjoyed sitting around the fire getting to know each other, discussing the upcoming weekend activities and getting an insight into the history of the area.

Saturday morning was met with blue skies, low clouds moving across the ridge just below the camping area and ice on the tents – scenic High Country.

Soon enough, the group headed out to meet Trajco at the top of Victor Spur track as well as the Wanderin' Four Wheelers who would be cleaning up other heritage sites; Red Jacket township, Blue Jacket and Violet Town.

A bonus of partaking in this working bee is that we get to access the Jordan Valley behind locked gates. This was the first time that Dulcie has been here in Spring, and it was beautiful. Where the old homesteads and buildings had been, we found daffodils, summer snowflakes, and bluebells.

Saturday was our big day working. We started at Chinaman's Point, where we cleared the path and cleaned up the information sign. We also checked on the condition of the ceremonial oven, which is an important historical relic. This oven was used by the Chinese to burn food and money offering to the souls of the dead. Our next stop was the Jericho oak tree and Chinese memorial planted in 1902 by a new bride with an acorn from the family tree

as she set up her new home/life. This area is stunning with the massive oak tree beside a pond and many spring flowers. It was a perfect location for the Chinese memorial foundation to set up a monument to all the Chinese who relocated here to live and work so far away from their families. After cutting back the grass and clearing the encroaching blackberries we stopped for morning tea.

After clearing the old township area, which included information posts on the church, bank and police station, we split into two groups. One focused on the Jordan River diversion tunnel where we cut back growth, removed fallen debris and fixed up the path to stop erosion and the other focused on the Bennetts house, the Father & Son grave site and the Jericho school sign. Even now, as more land is cleared from the blackberries which have taken over, a consequence of the heavy sluicing done in the area by the last remaining families, the Bennetts and the Christies,



Chinese Monument in Spring

we were still able to find the remnants of their life here, old shovels, bed frames and other metal mining tools.

Before undertaking the large clearing job at Jericho cemetery, we had lunch. This cemetery was gazetted in 1870, but there were burials here before that date. We spent a few hours cutting back a 3 metre clearing around the edge of the cemetery fencing and clearing the bracken and thistles from within. After a well-earned afternoon tea, and chance to rest the weary arms that had been holding whipper snippers, we headed back along the valley floor towards Red Jacket and met with Noel Lee, the DELWP ranger, who was kind enough to show us the intact unmarked Chinese ceremonial oven, which Dulcie has been trying to find since knowing about it. This is definitely a spot that can only be found if you are with someone that knows where it is, the directions for future reference, at the curve, past the landslide down from the big tree, sounds easy to find doesn't it? It was great to know what the oven at Chinaman's point is meant to look like,

and Dulcie has plans for the next trip to do a little more reconstruction on this public one.

On our way back to camp, we stopped at the historical Harry Sallar's restaurant site to clean the sign and check on the area. According to Dulcie this is only the second time we've completed this

historical site. She keeps forgetting about it!

After a hard day's work, it was fantastic to relax around a well-stocked fire with snacks and refreshments. Eventually, a few of the group ended up remembering to have dinner late in the evening!



Dry Creek Mine Railway Bridge



Chinese Historical Cerimonial Ovens

On Sunday morning we were rudely awakened by Dulcie returning from her 14km return trip to the Matlock toilet block telling us all that there were threatening rain clouds so pack up camp! Fortunately, the rain did not come and we packed up dry tents before heading back to the top of Victor Spur. This morning, the Wanderers took us down Dry Creek track which is never open to public vehicles. It was a very scenic High Country drive and we stopped at a mine switchback which had an old railway track and bridge running into the mines. We explored two adits dug into the side of the hill. Blackberry tendrils scratched and pulled at those adventurous enough to go inside these two mines, not very pleasant.

A little further down the track and below these two mines, was Harbinger mine. This mine had been working up until 1990, and looked like the people who had been working there had just walked away one day. It was definitely a highlight, as we got to explore about 100 metres (or 300 feet) into the gold mine, walking along the rails with the fresh air pipe and electricity cables still mounted on the side walls. At the entrance to the mine, there remains a shelter with an old stand-up stove and fridge and eating utensils – surprisingly no one wanted to sample the jar of dill pickles still sitting in the fridge!

On our way back from the Harbinger mine, we decided to check out the Victor Quartz mining area near the top of Victor Spur Track. Apparently there is a significant dump of old glass somewhere off the track as it goes down the hill to the left. Suffice to say we found the sign telling us all about the man who found this particular successful source of gold but sadly no mound of glass, even though Mark and Steve checked out the whole track to where it drops over the cliff face. This site is dotted around with deep vent shafts so you need to be wary where you walk.

Overall, we feel very fortunate to explore this terrain and see and learn about some of Victoria's heritage behind locked gates – a great reward for helping to maintain this part of our history for others.

It was a thoroughly enjoyable weekend and you never know what you will get to explore next.

Mel & Inga Broders
Toyota Land Cruiser Club of Victoria



Dry Creek Railway Bridge



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Recharging your batteries

At last summer has arrived and we are looking forward to getting away and recharging our batteries ... so to speak. One of the most frustrating things you can come across as you set off on your trip is battery failure. Whether it is your vehicle's primary battery or a second battery you have set up, the camping battery you use for the fridge or the water pump, you want to be sure that when you flick on the switch there will be power!

I am allergic to 12 volt power, I am sure I am not alone, I know enough to get into trouble and I have had my share of "zaps" when I get it wrong. This can unfortunately end up being a very costly exercise.

My friends, Shane and Belinda and their team at Battery World in Mentone have always been amazing when it comes to anything to do with batteries. Apart from access to great products, what I have appreciated the most is the advice they have provided to maximise the investment I have in my 12 volt systems in my four wheel drive and my off-road trailer.

There are so many things that can negatively affect your batteries,

strangely, infrequent use is a major cause of battery failure, so what can we do to ensure our batteries are at their best when we need them the most?

Other causes of battery failure include; electrolyte starvation (low water level), vibration, overcharging, undercharging, corrosion, open circuit failure, a short circuit (the infamous zap) and of course making sure you have the right battery for the job!

If there is one thing I have learned from my friends at Battery World it is that prevention is the best cure!

If possible, keep batteries fully charged either with regular daily use, ensuring that your alternator and charging systems are fully functional and set to appropriate charging Voltage. If this is not possible then use a use of a standby charger. Depending on the size of the battery standby chargers are available from 0.75 Amp upwards. These products are designed to top up charge after use and then switch to a floating mode with enough power to keep the battery at optimum charge.

When out and about in a remote location a solar module can be used.

Depending on the size of battery or battery bank, solar panels can be used to assist in keeping a battery at peak charge.

They tell me that for the best battery life, your batteries should not be discharged below 80% of their rated capacity.

Always make sure that the charger and battery system match. An undersized charger will never get the job done, no matter how long you let it run. An oversized charger will cause excess gassing and heat; this situation could cause explosions or other damage.

A weak battery will cause premature failure of companion batteries. In situations where multiple batteries are connected in series, parallel or series/parallel, replacement battery(s) should be of the same size, age and usage level as the companion batteries. Do not put a new battery in a pack, which has 50 or more cycles.

As batteries age, their maintenance requirements change. This means longer charging time and/or higher finish rate (higher amperage at the end of the charge).



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- Tuesday 27th February - PC180303 - Theory
- Saturday 3rd March - PC180303 - Practical
- Friday 16th March - PC180317- Theory
- Saturday 17th March - PC180317 - Practical
- Tuesday 10 April - PC180414 - Theory
- Saturday 14th April - PC180414 - Practical
- Tuesday 1st May - PC180505 - Theory
- Saturday 5th May - PC180505 - Practical

- Tuesday 29th May - PC180602 - Theory
- Saturday 2nd June - PC180602- Practical
- Tuesday 19th June - PC180623 - Theory
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- Tuesday 10th July - PC180714 - Theory
- Saturday 14th July - PC180714- Practical
- Tuesday 31st July - PC180804 - Theory
- Saturday 4th August - PC180804- Practical
- Tuesday 28th August - PC180901 - Theory
- Saturday 1st September - PC180901- 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.

Continued from previous page

Periodic battery testing is an important preventative maintenance procedure. Lead acid batteries should be brought up to full charge at the earliest opportunity. Avoid continuously operating batteries in a partially charged condition. This will shorten their life and reduce their capacity.

So ... some golden rules for those of us who rely on our batteries seasonally ...

- Completely charge the battery before storing.
- Remove all electrical connections from the battery, including series/parallel connectors.
- Store the battery in as cool a place as possible. However, do not store in a location which will consistently be below 0°C. Batteries will discharge when stored, the lower the temperature the lower the self - discharge.
- When not in use, boost every two months .

When all else fails ... ask an expert!

Enjoy the journey!

Affinity Insurance

Crossword

by Tony Heathcote



Across

1. Desert in northern Australia situated in the Northern Territory and Western Australia
6. If I am "On my Pat Malone", what am I?
7. A track in Waihalla
10. Camp oven named after a town in Queensland
11. A hut near Mt Buller
14. Highway across the Nullarbor Plain
15. A north/south track in the Simpson Desert
16. Early explorer who crossed Australia south to north, passing through the centre of the continent.
17. A type of wattle
21. Popular Melbourne Cup weekend destination
22. An Australian snake
23. A 4WD destination north of Melbourne
24. UHF stands for " _____ High Frequency"
25. These should be kept out the wheel

Down

2. The largest piece of limestone in the world
3. The worlds largest sand island
4. A popular snow destination for 4WDers
5. The only thing you should take from the bush
8. A brand of UHF radio
9. A kookaburra laughing is known as a " _____ Clock "
12. Australian desert race
13. The only thing you should leave in the bush
18. A brand of maps
19. Used to hold your wheels on
20. An Australian Spider



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