



OCTOBER 2018

SOUTHERN TRAILS

NEXT CLUB MEETING

Tuesday 13 November

Deakin Football Club

3 Grose Street

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PRESIDENTS REPORT

Hi everyone,

At the end of last month the club continued it's fundraising work by organising a Show & Shine, hosted at ARB Fyshwick. We ended up with 9 vehicle entering the competition and another 5+ vehicles on display. With the BBQ going and the weather clearing, it was a fantastic day out with the club successfully raising \$792 for Buy a Bale of Hay - Making a difference to Australian Farming Families. 1st place went to Jon Bresnik with his Toyota Hilux. Jon at the time was not a member of the club but has since joined, welcome Jon. 2nd place went to our Vice-President Michael Loberger in his 80 series Toyota Landcruiser, with 3rd place going to Michael Kerr in his Ford Ranger. I would like to thank Glenn Wilson and his team at ARB Fyshwick for hosting the event and putting on the BBQ.

The track building team will be out at the Working Bee this month to cut in 3 new tracks. There will also be a bulldozer on site to level and expand the existing campsites and to cut in new ones. This will allow those with camper trailers and caravans 10-15 new flat camping

sites at the top of home paddock. The Social Sub-Committee will also be providing a BBQ lunch and dinner on the Saturday, so if you are able to come down and assist, please nominate via the website so we know how many to cater for.

The dates for the Cape York trip have been brought forward to avoid school holidays. I will also be putting up another trip for expressions of interest for those that would prefer to go during the school holiday period. So if going to Cape York in 2019 is something you'd like to do, don't forget to put your name down, the significant trips sub-committee will be organising surveys shortly to aid in their planning and will be interested in hearing from those that would like to attend.

Have a great month everyone and see you at next month's meeting!

Matthew Maddigan

Club President



MEMBERSHIP MOMENTS

INFORMATION ON CURRENT MEMBERSHIP AND OTHER MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

New members

There have been seven new memberships for the month of September. The new memberships were:

- **ALAIN & FRANCOISE ARBAUT**
ISUZU D-MAX
- **ANGELA KATIC**
DRIVING A MITSUBISHI PAJERO
- **BRIAN MINTY & MARGARET BRODRICK**
TOYOTA PRADO
- **CLIVE KING**
LAND ROVER DISCOVERY
- **JON BRESNIK**
TOYOTA HILUX
- **MARTIN & EVERLINE GEERSE**
TOYOTA LANDCRUISER 76 SERIES
- **SELWYN FETTELL**
TOYOTA HILUX

Please say hello to our new members and visitors if you are at the Club meeting - if you see a new face, make them welcome and say G'day.

Welcome to the Club all.

Membership Renewal

It's coming up to that time of the year to think about renewing your membership. All membership renewals are due on the 31 December 2018. However, I thought I would send out an early reminder to give members time to pay their fees.

For members who joined in 2017 or before the membership renewal fee is **\$100**.

For members who joined in 2018 you may be eligible for a pro-rate membership fee for 2019. If you are not sure please email me and I can confirm your fees for 2019.

When paying your fees by electronic transfer please check you are using the correct Club account details and don't forget to include your name in the payment details.

A Big Thank you!

While I've been away these past few months (I highly recommend both Norway and Maralinga in South Australia) Lynne Donaldson has kindly taken care of Membership business.

As most of you would know Lynne does a huge amount for this Club and as well filling in for me, she continued organising social events, assisted out at Talooge and participated as a driver trainer.

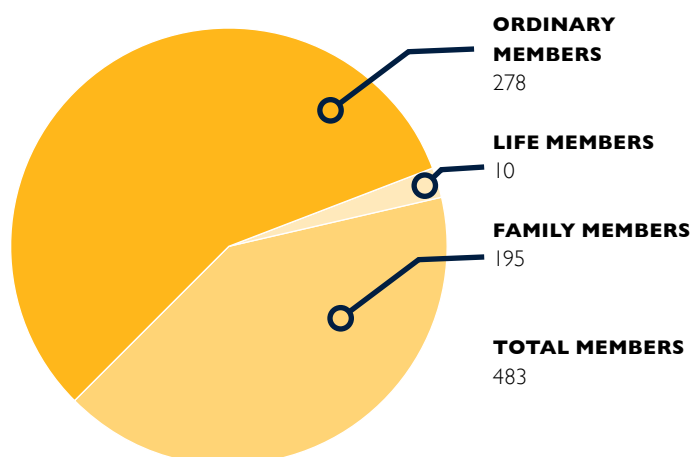
Lynne has made a huge contribution to the club and her willingness to take on the additional work of Membership Secretary was fantastic. Thank you heaps Lynne.

Please feel free to contact me regarding any membership matters you may have either by email, phone or grab me at the meeting.

Dim

CLUB BANK DETAILS

Bank: Bank Australia
Account Name: ST4WDC
BSB Number: 313 140
Account Number: 1213 0617



MEMBERSHIP GIFT CERTIFICATES

These certificates are a great way to give the gift of membership to friends and family and are available for both current member's Annual Membership Fee (Cost/Value \$100) or for new members for their Joining fee and Annual Membership Fee (Cost/Value \$330).

If you would like to give a gift of ST4WDC Membership please contact:

Membership Secretary
membership@st4wdc.com.au.

 <p>Southern Tablelands 4 Wheel Drive Club Inc</p>	<h2>GIFT CERTIFICATE</h2> <p><i>This Certificate entitles:</i> _____</p> <p><i>To:</i> _____</p> <p><i>From:</i> _____</p> <p><i>Authorised by:</i> _____</p> <p><i>Date:</i> _____</p>
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CLUB CLOTHING

CLOTHING ITEM	COST
Polo Shirts	\$35.00
Chambery Shirts	\$45.00
Jackets	\$110.00
Hoodies	\$45.00
Rugby Tops	\$50.00
Caps	\$15.00
Bucket Hats	\$15.00
Beanies	\$20.00
Name Badges	\$10.00



Here are examples of the club clothing options. To order talk to Marie McDonald at the meeting to order for pickup at the following monthly meeting.





4X4 ACCESSORIES

SALE

ARB FYSHWICK

WEEKEND

27 - 28 OCT

9AM - 3PM

188-190 Gladstone Street
Fyshwick ACT 2609



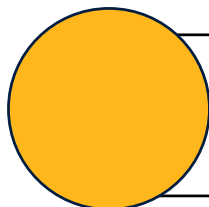
UPCOMING TRIPS

DON'T MISS OUT — NOMINATE ONLINE

START DATE	END DATE	ACTIVITY	TYPE	LEADER
20-Oct-18	21-Oct-18	Explore The Tracks of Abercrombie River National Park	Grade 3	Michael Patrick
20-Oct-18	21-Oct-18	Talooge Park Muster	Muster	Peter Reynolds
27-Oct-18	28-Oct-18	ARB Fyshwick Open Day	Social	Matt Maddigan
28-Oct-18	28-Oct-18	Bush Walk	Grade 1	Andrea Szabo
01-Nov-18	04-Nov-18	"Safe One" Basic Driver Training at Talooge Park	Training	Joe Briguglio
08-Nov-18	08-Nov-18	Trivia Night - Put your thinking cap on !!	Social	Lynne Donaldson
10-Nov-18	10-Nov-18	Motor Maintenance for 4WD Diesel Vehicles	Social	Rob Donaldson
11-Nov-18	11-Nov-18	Brindabella Ramble	Grade 3	Michael Patrick
17-Nov-18	23-Nov-18	Victorian High Country Ramble Vers 3	Grade 3	Michael Patrick
18-Nov-18	24-Nov-18	Fraser Island	Grade 3	Scott Grogan
18-Nov-18	18-Nov-18	Dargo to Dogs Grave	Grade 3	
18-Nov-18	18-Nov-18	Dargo to Crooked River	Grade 3	
19-Nov-18	19-Nov-18	Dargo to Blue Rag	Grade 3	Dim Veteri
19-Nov-18	19-Nov-18	Dargo to Billy Goat Bluff	Grade 3	
19-Nov-18	19-Nov-18	Dargo to Crooked River	Grade 3	
20-Nov-18	20-Nov-18	Dargo to Wonnangatta Station	Grade 3	Michael Patrick
20-Nov-18	20-Nov-18	Various tracks around Dargo	Grade 3	
21-Nov-18	21-Nov-18	Dargo to Blue Rag	Grade 3	Dim Veteri
21-Nov-18	21-Nov-18	Various tracks around Dargo	Grade 3	
21-Nov-18	21-Nov-18	Dargo to Billy Goat Bluff	Grade 3	
22-Nov-18	22-Nov-18	Dargo to Crooked River	Grade 3	

START DATE	END DATE	ACTIVITY	TYPE	LEADER
22-Nov-18	22-Nov-18	Dargo to Billy Goat Bluff	Grade 3	
22-Nov-18	22-Nov-18	Dargo to Dogs Grave	Grade 3	
01-Dec-18	02-Dec-18	Talooge Park Muster	Muster	Peter Reynolds
01-Dec-18	02-Dec-18	End of Year Celebration	Social	Lynne Donaldson
07-Dec-18	09-Dec-18	Vic High Country Friday Night Dash v2	Grade 3	Stuart Watts
12-Dec-18	13-Dec-18	Mid Week at Talooge	Grade 3	Michael Patrick
09-Mar-19	11-Mar-19	Touring around Tilba	Grade 2	Rob Phillips
30-Mar-19	05-Apr-19	Vic High Country	Grade 3	Michael Patrick
19-Apr-19	22-Apr-19	4WD Club's Jamboree 2019	Event	Matt Maddigan
22-Jun-19	23-Jun-19	OziExplorer Nav X	Grade 3	Michael Patrick
01-Jul-19	31-Aug-19	The Red Centre 2019	Grade 3	Chris Nicholls
13-Jul-19	13-Jul-19	First Aid Training	Training	Michael Patrick
24-Jul-19	14-Jul-19	Advanced OziExplorer	Training	Michael Patrick
10-Aug-19	11-Aug-19	Trip Leader Workshop	Grade 3	Michael Patrick
17-Aug-19	26-Aug-19	Flinders Ranges 2019 - An Introduction	Grade 3	Dim Veteri
01-Sep-19	16-Sep-19	Getting to Cape York placeholder for EOIs	Grade 3	Matt Maddigan
07-Sep-19	08-Sep-18	Chain Saw Awareness Training	Workshop	?????
16-Sep-19	29-Sep-19	Cape York placeholder for EOIs	Grade 3	Matt Maddigan
30-Sep-19	13-Oct-19	Getting home from Cape York placeholder	Grade 3	Matt Maddigan
28-Sep-19	13-Oct-19	Cape York (School holidays) placeholder for EOIs	Grade 3	Matt Maddigan

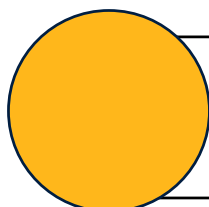
TRIP SPOTLIGHT



ARB Fyshwick Open Day

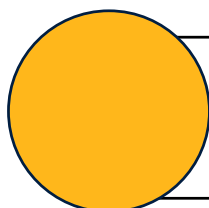
ARB Fyshwick are having an open day and have invited us to have a stall there. If you are interested in volunteering to help man the tent, please nominate. Details of the open day itself can be found on Facebook at the below link.

facebook.com/events/2057512874508303/



Victorian High Country Ramble Version 3

The concept of this trip is to have varying degrees of driving difficulty, to enable members from the most inexperienced to very experienced off road drivers, to participate in driving some of the tracks of the Victorian High Country.



Cape York 2019

Thank you to club members for their good tips to help the Significant Trip Sub-Committee plan for Cape York in 2019. Please keep them coming!

To avoid school holidays, the planned trips on the website have each been brought forward by 3 weeks. In this way, crowds will be less and the tracks should be in better condition.

Of course, there will be some of you who would prefer to travel during school holidays so that you can take your children. There will also be a School Holidays Expression of Interest entry in the trip calendar where you can nominate. While the dates are nominally for the ACT/NSW Sep/Oct 2019 holidays, the travelling group will be able to decide if they wish to travel in the mid-year break instead.

Of course, we are happy to receive nominations to be trip leader for any of the EOI trips. Please contact Imogen, Roscoe, Peter and Alex via

stsc@st4wdc.com.au

TRIP REPORTS

DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL?

Please email items for the ST4WD Club monthly newsletter or hand it to the 2018 Publications person at the monthly meeting.

Cut off for Items for the Newsletter is now the last Friday in each month. Anything received after that date will be placed in the following months newsletter.

Michael Jackson-Rand
2018 Publications Coordinator
publications@st4wdc.com.au

Please make sure you supply your images separately to the word document and then reference them in text. Word destroys image quality and I want your adventures to look the way you saw them when you were there.



FLINDERS RANGES

**CHAINSAW TRAINING
BUSHSKILLS WEEKEND
SAFE ONE BASIC TRAINING**
Talooge

CHAINSaw TRAINING

TALOOGE

Resplendent in their brand-new helmets and chaps, well most though some forgot, nine aspiring lumberjacks arrived at Talooge eager to learn some new chainsaw skills. Led by Diana from Sutton SES, we learnt how to undertake basic maintenance, sharpen the chains, check everything was adjusted and operating correctly and we were ready to get stuck in. A variety of Stihl, Husqvarna and a lone McCullough had us comparing the different features of each saw and the different techniques required to service each.



Split in groups we learnt how to safely cut up felled timber. New terms to our vocabulary were compression and tension cuts, V cuts, bore cuts, step cuts, scarf cuts and more. We learnt how to use wedges to make the job easier and how to tackle logs with a diameter twice the length of the chainsaw. Neil demonstrated water divining with his chainsaw, whilst showing us how the experts do bore cuts he managed to find a reservoir inside a fallen log and wore 3 or 4 litres of very cold water down his leg.

More practice throughout Saturday afternoon until about 3 o'clock when we stopped cutting and cleaned, sharpened and refuelled our saws ready for tomorrow. A few pleasant hours socialising around the fire over happy hour nibbles and dinner saw our weary bunch making an early move for bed to rest some seldom used muscles.

A cold and frosty Sunday dawned but we soon warmed up around the fire with coffee and breakfast and once again fired up the chainsaws for some more practice. V cuts were made, testing of where to find compression and tension, more fallen logs were dispatched to the woodheap, and we practiced step cuts for 'hangers' (trees that have fallen but become wedged in another tree) and watched Tim from the SES cutting breadboards. A further delight was watching Diana drop 2 trees with exact precision of where she said they would fall. A clean-up around the machinery sheds has the wood pile looking much healthier, the wood is a bit green still but will dry when summer arrives.



Tools down at lunchtime before cleaning the club house and facilities and making the quick run into Bredbo for lunch, or so we thought! Rounding a corner on Bundarra road what did we find but a huge tree completely blocking the road? Talk about timing!! The local land owner was already on site with his saw and was quite pleased to have some assistance. It was interesting to see all the safety tips we had been shown were completely absent from the methods on display when we arrived at the scene. We were informed Rob (another local) was on his way with the Bull dozer and would soon have the road cleared so it looked like we would not have too much work to do. The Bull Dozer turned out to an asthmatic old tractor singularly unsuited to the task of moving 10 tons of fallen tree, so its back out with the chainsaws.

An hour or so later and the road was cleared and once again we set off for home. Thanks go to Neil from Canberra SES, Diana from Sutton SES, Tim and Trent from Queanbeyan SES, your time and knowledge is much appreciated. Thanks also to Jane Watts for all your behind the scenes work. It was an enjoyable weekend and adds to our safety when out on trips or just getting firewood.

This was a great course. The instruction was spot on and the end result was a greater understanding of the chainsaw and the different approaches to take when handling different scenarios. Much more confident with the chainsaw now and looking forward to using it in anger





FLINDERS RANGES

10-17 AUGUST 2018

Day one (11 August) Canberra to Mildura 800Km

Dim Veteri, Rob Calvert, Rosemary James, Steve and Glenda Haywood, Rob and Sue Phillips, Humayun Qureshi, Alex Szabo

Seven cars led by trip leader Dim left Canberra for the very long uneventful drive to Mildura. Due to the drought we were expecting the countryside to be brown and dry but were surprised by how green it was. We experienced much needed rain in Narrandera which continued to fall on and off most of the afternoon. Mildura met us with a chilly 10o causing some of the swag dwellers to opt for an upgrade to a cabin.

Along the way Rosemary stopped to offer assistance to an injured emu who did not appreciate her help so after a call to the local constabulary she bid the emu farewell. We were also reminded of the need to have regular rest breaks when we passed a sedan on its roof and all the contents of the car spread across the side of the road.

Dinner at the Gateway Tavern then an early night.

Quote of the day goes to Rob Calvert:

'I wish this bloke in front would let his seeing-eye dog drive!'

As many of you are aware, Lynne Donaldson agreed that if Rob saw one hundred '79 Series Land Cruisers while they were on the trip (9-24 August) he could buy one. Poor Lynne we all spent the next week pointing out '79 Series to Rob.

79 Series count: 10th August (7) 11th August (9) = 16

Day two (12 August) Mildura to Willow Springs 666Km

We now had nine cars as we were joined by Brad and Chez Wells and Stuart and Sarah Wallace.

Today was another long day in the saddle. We travelled from Mildura through the quarantine station, Renmark, Burra, Hawker and arrived at Willow Springs Campsite on dusk. Along the way we passed a public weighbridge but as we had just fuelled up, no one was game to drive across. We stopped in Peterborough for lunch and played on the old steam trains in the park. Once we left the Riverlands at Morgan the land changed quite quickly and you could clearly see that we are experiencing a severe drought. The land was barren of vegetation and the dams and creeks were all dry.

On arrival at the camp we were met by Ian and Carolyn Sakkara, Gary and Pauline Lymbery, Bron and Andy Squires, Lynne and Rob Donaldson, Ross Hincksman and a lovely camp fire.

79 Series count: 8 = 24

Day three and four (13-14 August) Skytrek, Wilpena Pound and Bunyeroo Gorge

On day three and four we split into two groups and alternated our activities. Dim and Rob Calvert were our group leaders.

Skytrek

Skytrek is located on the Reynolds family property 'Willow Springs' 30km NE of Wilpena Pound. This 80km 4WD track consists of a series of station roads, mining tracks, goat tracks and a fire break. There are fifty points of interest along the way and it takes approximately six hours to complete. The track starts at the homestead and travels through a native pine forest and beautiful gorge complete with magnificent River Red Gums. We came across some rock carvings believed to be created by a race of Aborigines who inhabited the region before the more recent Adnyamathanha people. Fourteen kilometres into the track we crossed an ancient sea bed where the rock surfaces had ripple marks from the huge volume of water that once covered the land. Hard to believe at the moment as all the creeks are dry.

Skytrek includes some spectacular lookouts and amazing scenery and while most of the track is fairly easy going there are a few steep and slippery sections that required low range. Dotted along the track is evidence of early pioneers with old huts, rusting machinery, dingo traps and old muster yards reminding us of the harshness of the country. The track finishes with a drive through a hillside filled with native grass trees and the Willow Springs Homestead Lookout.

Day three also saw the first of many, many sightings of the Lynne Donaldson selfie stick. Who would have guessed that a thirty year old woman could have so much fun taking photos of herself!



Wilpena Pound and Bunyeroo Gorge

The morning was spent exploring Wilpena Pound. A short walk along a gum-lined creek brought us to some sandstone walls covered in ancient engravings. Images showing animal tracks, people and waterholes illustrate the resources available to the Adnyamathanha peoples. Some community minded club members decided to stay at the visitors centre and ensure the security of all our vehicles, the fact the vehicles were located next to the pie shop is purely coincidental.

Following the morning's strenuous walk we took a leisurely drive through the gorgeous Bunyeroo Gorge. The gorge displays over sixteen different types of rocks some of which were laid by sediment forming over 50 million years. We saw lots of wildlife including the rare Yellow Footed Rock Wallaby who exhibits an amazing yellow striped tail. Most of the drive took us through the creek bed which once again was very dry – not even a puddle. This was the first time we noticed the smell of the rotting wildlife.

Back at camp we had a fire to sit around and Rob Phillips flashed up his OZ pig which was a hit with the people camped at campsite No 2.

Quote of the day goes to Sue Phillips:

'Did everyone see the Yellow Rock Footed Wallaby' – poor fellow would have had trouble jumping with rocks for feet.'

Day 4 '79 Series Count: (0) = 24

Day 5 (15 August) Willow Springs to Weetootla Gorge

During our trip Dim had been spruiking the delights of Blinmans Pie shop so we decided that we would have an early lunch there on the way to Weetootla. All was going well until the shop ran out of pies. Alex being an easily pleased fellow opted for a pastie instead. He was sitting at his table enjoying his pastie when he commented, 'It's a shame they ran out of pies'. The lady on the counter who apparently went to the Basil Fawlty school of customer service was quick to reply that we should have rang through if we expected to all get a pie. This is a bit hard when there is no mobile coverage. We quickly finished our food and left.

Would highly recommend stopping at the local Pub, the food and drinks were great and the Publican loved a chat. An interesting sight in the pub was thousands of business cards pinned to the walls, some seem to date back 30 or 40 years. Blinman might be a bit of a back water but they evidently get plenty of visitors.

After lunch some of the team went for a tour of the Blinman Mine. The mine was well worth the visit and the tour guide was a real character. The mine operated for around 120 years and the only person who made money was the prospector Robert Blinman who first discovered copper deposits and quickly sold off the rights to a mining company. The rest of the mine's history is littered with bankruptcies of subsequent owners.



The richest gold find was made here by Allan Lively in 1946. Then back to Arkaroola before heading back to camp.

We had a lovely treat awaited us when we got back from today's drive as Chris and Julie Nichols stopped by the campsite on their way to yet another desert adventure.

Around the campfire this night we were treated to roti's cooked by Alex and waited on by the lovely Rosemary wearing her obligatory safety boots (aka thongs). They were delicious-the roti not the thongs.

Wortupa Loop track

What a lovely relaxed drive to do on our last official day. We followed the track around the top of Illinawortina Gorge and spent much of our time searching for a lost phone that came with the promise of a foot massage. We detoured off the track to Idninha ruins for lunch

We left Blinman and headed north for Weetootla where set up camp.

Shortly after we set up camp we were all on tenterhooks when a bus pulled up and out poured about 20 youth and all their camp gear. Turns out they were medical students who had been doing some community work and were heading off on a hike early the next morning. We didn't have to worry about them disturbing our peace and quiet, they were much quieter than us!

Day 5 79 Series count: (I) = 25

Day six and seven (16 & 17 August) Arkaroola, Echo Camp Backtrack and Illinawortina Gorge Loop.

Once again due to numbers we split into two groups and alternated activities.

Arkaroola and Echo Camp Backtrack

After stopping at Arkaroola to fill up with petrol, diesel and coffee we commenced the self-guided 4WD tour along Echo Camp Backtrack. This 37km track has sections that are grade extreme 4WD only and a 10km one way section. There are 27 points of interest along the track including waterholes, old corrals, historical markers, magnificent views over Lake Frome and even a gold mine.

Nowhere in our travels had we witnessed the drought like we did at Arkaroola Waterhole. This permanent waterhole was dry and surrounded by many, many rotting carcasses. The smell of death was in the air. We left the waterhole quickly and feeling saddened.

We travelled through Claude's Pass and were impressed by the hillside caves then onto Welcome Pound. Did you know a 'pound' is a valley with no exit? Leaving the pound (we found an exit) we visited Lively's Gold Mine and witness the remains of his bush camp.

and were pleasantly surprised that someone had done some work to restore the homestead-they still had a way to go.

We passed quite a few wells but they were all dry and lots of ruins and old corrals. The 3600 views from the top of The Gill were quite breathtaking and it is amazing how many cars you can fit in a tiny carpark.

After a quick stop at Lochness Well and Grindell's Hut we headed back to camp and the official end of the trip.

Thanks goes to Dim for his wonderful trip leaders skills, patience, ability to keep the group on track and for making the trip so pleasurable. Also to Rob Calvert for backing Dim up so well.

Day 7 79 Series count: (I) = 26 – thanks to Chris Nicholls

Quote of the day goes to Steve

Dim (over the radio)

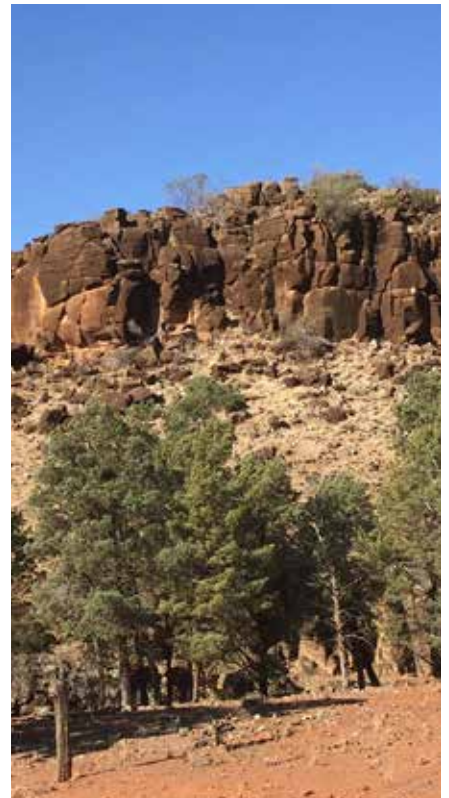
'Sheep on the right, goats on the left'

Steve

'Charlie copies, mixed grill ahead'.

Over the following week Rob, Lynne, Andy and Bron travelled from Flinders ranges through to Silverton, Broken Hill, Menindee Lakes, Mungo National Parks and then home, the final count was 113 (much to Lynne's dismay and Rob's delight).

The colour will be Graphite.





“SAFE ONE” BASIC DRIVER TRAINING

SEPTEMBER 2018

Trainers

- **JOE BRIGUGLIO**
- **PETER BUTTERFIELD**
- **LINDSAY JONES**
- **ROD WILLIAMS**
- **TARA MCLAUGHLIN**
- **PELICAN**
- **ROB DONALDSON**
- **LYNNE DONALDSON**
- **DIM VETERI**
- **SCOTT BROADHEAD**
- **STEWART WATTS**
- **MICHAEL PATRICK**

Students

- **LISA TATEM**
- **MARK GODDARD**
- **COLIN MCLACHLAN**
- **CHRISTINE BARNES**
- **ROBERT STEVENSON**
- **BRENDAN CARNEY**
- **ANDREW SLATER**
- **LUKE JONKERGOUW**
- **JEREMY GUERIN**
- **PHILLIP GOBBLER**
- **NEIL COFFEE**
- **SELWYN FETTELL**

Having recently moved to Canberra, finding likeminded people that enjoy 4x4 responsibly has been a challenge.

The training provides a very good coverage the basic 4x4 driving and techniques that one needs to master and was very useful.

The training takes a large amount of time from all the trainers but the benefit of getting to know the trainers and older club members is invaluable.

It allows new members to feeling part of the club, as after the training you know at least 30 club member. This is often missing if the training is only done by 1 or 2 instructors.

Phillip Grobler

Had a great learning experience with the ST4WDC Basic Driver Training weekend.

I've been 4wd'ing regularly for the last 2yrs and there was still a ton of things I learned. Like many I had some bad on road habits that needed gentle reminders to overcome ;) I had 2 fantastic instructors, Scotty and Stew who brought a varied approach and emphasis that worked well for me. Biggest take home was learning about how other vehicles behave. It's easy to focus on your own and not be aware of challenges or strengths of other vehicles.

I met a really varied group of people who I'm looking forward to seeing out on future club events.

Luke J

I found Driver Training Weekend very informative with a wealth of knowledge in the Driver Training Team . These people obviously need to be very patient trying to retrain people like me with some very old engrained bad habits. Nonetheless it was a fun weekend with the size of the stick needed to retrain the habits reducing in size by the end of the weekend.

I'd like to thank all the Trainers for giving up their time and the effort they put in.

Thanks,

Robert Stevenson

I joined the ST4WD club with a zero base of experience and the training component of this club made joining very attractive. The format of the course is well designed, the pace is good and the theory provides a basis for the practical. I particularly liked the attention to detail and the one-on-one training creates a safer environment to learn. There were many learnings from this course, but letting the tyres down was a key learning (along with keeping the bonnet straight). I did not understand how much difference reducing the air pressure would make. On day one I was driving on approximately 28psi and bounced around a fair bit. Day two we went to 22psi and the difference was immediate, same tracks but a smoother and more stable drive. You hear the need to reduce air pressure and before the training I did not have the knowledge or experience to understand how much it could improve the ride and traction (I didn't have the means to reinflate either though!). The tracks around Talooge were challenging and as a first timer

driving tracks like these presented as "way too hard", but the course moves along in a way that as you progress what looked impossible on day one, hard on day two was achievable by day three. Michael Patrick was my in-car trainer and he has forever changed my view of the Hume Hwy. Every new track we drove would be described as "like the Hume Hwy" which I soon learnt meant "challenging". I had a great three days doing the training, the course instructors were great fun while imparting valuable lessons, the people doing the course were good company and between challenges we had some great laughs. I would like to give a big thank you all to all the trainers (Michael and Joe in particular) who volunteer their time, and commend all who have been involved in establishing a training course and training environment that provides a solid basis for learning safely

Neil Coffee

The Basic training course was everything I could have wanted. Not having done any sort of training I really didn't know what to expect. I came out with more confidence in myself and my car. Picking the line, how to safely use recovery gear, staying calm when stuck and how to get out safely.

I enjoyed both theory and practical sessions, and it was definitely a good idea to take notes.

Over all it was a truly enjoyable 3 days with lots of laughs, quality training and facility's. I would highly recommend the course as it is a credit to the club. I am looking forward to joining in on future club events.

Regards

Sel

Well what an amazing weekend. Having had very little 4wd experience ahead of the course, I was learning from the moment I arrived into Bredbo on the Thursday evening to the moment I was back on the road back to Canberra on Sunday.

Whilst all 3 days were really intense there were also many moments of laughter (Fact v Crap - such a terrible game we couldn't help but laugh) and good food, beers and lots of chat around the fire.

All of the volunteers from the club did an amazing job to give us the best possible learning experience in a safe environment. Everyone's safety was at the forefront of all the learning throughout the weekend.

I now have the confidence to drive trails I would never have even considered in the past. Here's to the beginning of yet another new adventure in Oz

Thank you ST4WDC

Lisa Tatem

Dear Dad,

Just a quick note to let you know about the 4WD training course I mentioned to you on the phone. Quite a few things about it reminded me of when I was younger and at home with you and

Mum. Like this place we went to, Talooge Park. It's an amazing place, with heaps of tracks, a bit like the ones I use to ride my bike on as a kid, except most of them are MUCH narrower than the bike tracks, and bumpier, and steeper. Lots steeper... Getting the car through them was a bit tricky at times, but I think I eventually got the hang of it, hardly scratched the paint at all. The campsite was a bit like the place you and I used to go camping near the lake, except for the -5C nights... been a while since I felt that cold. The lessons themselves were a bit like when you first taught me to drive, but without the screaming. Somehow the instructor (Hi Rod!!) managed to avoid screaming, despite my antics at the wheel. He remained totally calm and professional, without any of the swearing or hysterics I remember from my time learning with you... And I learned some cool and useful stuff. Did you know that if you do left-foot braking (like they taught us to) that you can make the car display a whole new warning message? Apparently it made the pedals feel very sad. Here's a picture of it. Those clever Toyota engineers have thought of everything... Oh, what a feeling!



Love,

Mark

I went into this course with an open mind and in short thoroughly enjoyed all of it. I would consider myself experienced but by no means an expert.

I have done 4wd driving courses before but this is the best.

Kicking off with theory is never the most attractive thought, but the instructors were lively, entertaining, and well versed.

This was a common theme throughout the weekend with all the instructors. Friendly good people who are only too happy to share their wealth of knowledge.

The highlight of the course is the driving. I enjoyed all the practising of techniques on the tracks. Such a unique environment where you can spend hours driving tracks without spending long amounts of time getting from one track to the next.

Thankyou to the club and all the volunteers for putting on a great enjoyable weekend of learning.

Andrew

Looking for excuses to finish work early on a Thursday and kick off the weekend one day early? Then sign up for the 4WD basic driver training! With a 5.45pm rendezvous planned at the Bredbo pub, it was the perfect excuse to blow off the boss and jump in the 4WD for a weekend out bush. After a quick but tasty beer and schnitty at the friendly Bredbo pub, the 15 car convoy was off into the bush through a cloud of impenetrable dust as PB intentionally kicked up as much dust as he could as the lead vehicle.

All up, the weekend was a fantastic experience for a new club member with really good training outcomes. There was a good mix of information and theory, balanced with plenty of time on trails. The success of the training is a testament to the hard work and time given up by the volunteers. Every trainee had a one-on-one experience with a trainer sitting in the car to talk people through everything from simple wheel placement, to climbing up steep and gnarly 4WD tracks. Speaking of tracks, how good is the network on the property! It's a great mix of meandering picturesque sections and tougher tracks with interesting obstacles. Of course, the real stand-out of the weekend was the mighty Triton that refused to get stuck and broke ground for all the 'real' 4WDs.

Jeremy

This was a great weekend where I learned so much about my vehicle and my own skills. All of the trainers agreed that my Patrol Y62 was a 'bloody big truck', but I was also told that I had a good sense of where my vehicle was and what track to take to get it through. This was very encouraging. Having the individual trainer helped me to learn about my own vehicle's features like independent suspension, automatic traction control, the cars gearing, and hill descent control. I could practice using all of these on the great range of slopes, creek crossings and tracks. The only tricky moment was when my vehicle hooked up a concrete block which wedged under the car. This was quickly fixed with the help of the other trainers. This course has given me confidence in my vehicle and in my own skills. Derek just had a whale of a time in the passengers seat.

Christine

I found Driver Training Weekend very informative with a wealth of knowledge in the Driver Training Team. These people obviously need to be very patient trying to retrain people like me with some very old engrained bad habits. Nonetheless it was a fun weekend with the size of the stick needed to retrain the habits reducing in size by the end of the weekend.

I'd like to thank all the Trainers for giving up their time and the effort they put in.

Thanks,

Robert Stevenson

BUSH SKILLS WEEKEND

29 SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER, TALOOGEE

The annual Bush Skills weekend was held at Talooge during the long weekend from Friday 29th September to Monday 1st October.

Thanks to all those club members who were able to give demonstrations / talks on various topics of interest to our four wheel driving community including visitors from the South Coast, the Shoalhaven and Wagga Wagga 4WD clubs. Also, thanks to those who lead convoys driving the club's tracks and showing visitors around our great property. Pelican's walk around and talk about vehicle and camping setups was again very informative and engaged many attendees.

Our club had a total of 45 people and 30 vehicles with some attending for the whole weekend, a day trip or staying for two days. There were 20 people and 12 vehicles present from the visiting clubs. It was great to socialise with club members and members from the visiting clubs. The following reports have been received about the Bush Skills weekend.

THE SOUTH COAST 4WD CLUB PARTICIPANTS

• **COL FLANAGAN (TRIP LEADER)**
TOYOTA LANDCRUISER

• **MICK COLLIS / PAM TOWNSEND**
ISUZU

• **DONALD KOWALCZYK**
TOYOTA LANDCRUISER

• **JOHN, JACQUI & PHILLIPA COUSINS**
TOYOTA PRADO

• **ANDREW FLANAGAN/ SUE JEONG**
NISSAN PATROL

• **GEORGE & CHRISTINA GATSOS**
OKA

• **RICHARD TWIST**
TOYOTA LANDCRUISER

Friday I travelled to Bredbo to meet up with Jim at the Snowy Mountains Café at 12:00 noon, we were later joined by Mick and Pam and a few members of the Southern Tablelands club. After a bite to eat we all proceeded to "TALOOGEE". Just as well there was a group of us as all the gates had been closed, lucky for me I only had to close one as Chris pulled in behind. On arrival we checked out our camp spot for the weekend looking for a sheltered spot as it was extremely windy. The rest of the day was spent setting up camp and having a look around the property and a bit of catching up, the fire was up and going by around 4:00pm so time for happy hour as the group had started to build in numbers and there was a massive pile of firewood just waiting to be burnt thanks to the efforts of the host club. The wind dropped at around 6:00pm but the night turned out to be bitterly cold, I hung in around the fire until 11:00 pm then said goodnight to the night owls.

Saturday morning arrived overcast and even a little snow shower at about 8:00am but it all cleared away quickly and turned out to be a really nice day. The rest of our south coast members arrived steadily over the rest of the day.

Jim welcomed everybody to the weekend festivities and the program got under way. First up Peter Reynolds gave a demonstration on how to service your camper trailer wheel bearings. This was an in depth hands on display by Peter and I thought it was extremely informative, thank you Peter. We then broke for lunch.

After the lunch break Chris gave a talk on various jacks, tyre inflators/ deflators and a demonstration on bead breaking and some of the gear he carries, this was also very well put together by Chris. The troops were summoned as there was a couple of groups setting off to drive the tracks. And in the meantime Alex was holding an in depth talk on how your GPS functions and the systems available up in the clubhouse. The two groups returned from their driving of the tracks and it was now time for our happy hour and get the fire going, we would need a much larger fire tonight as the circle had certainly expanded since last night and it looked like another cold night and we were not disappointed.

Sunday morning we all woke to a nice looking day and after breakfast Pelican commenced his now very popular and entertaining walk around looking at types of vehicles and various camp setups like o/r caravans and camper trailers, George's OKA and the new Trayon that Chris has just purchased. It was time to once again set off to drive the tracks and our lot did not fare to well with the scrutineers, George was sent packing as his OKA was too big, Micks tyres were a little past their use by date and Richards new Geolander a/t's had too soft side walls. But Donald in the old 60 series kept our flag flying and passed the test with flying colours. Asked during the drive if he was having any problems, he replied! I have front and rear lockers if I were to need them. While this was in progress Chris and Alex were giving

a talk in the clubhouse on communications, as I was not present I cannot comment on the presentation but I would expect it to be very informative.

After the lunch break Joe and Pelican gave a talk on recovery gear and soft shackles also a winching demonstration that sort of went a little pear shape when the rock anchor point started moving down the hill, well done lads a fine for that from the Sargent at Arms. This was followed by Jim and Brad giving a talk on petrol and battery chain saws, this was a little tame after the winching demo previous.

Another day has drawn to an end and it is now time for our happy hour and solve the problems of the world before breaking for tea and another cold night around the camp fire. Thank goodness for all that wood.

Monday morning the best looking day, cereal, coffee and cooked up the remainder of my bacon, sausages and eggs an excellent breakfast if I say so myself. After breckky Michael Patrick gave a

talk on solar panels, dual battery setups and various fridges, there was a very good roll up and lots of contributions from many of the spectators talking about the particular setup that they used.

It was now time for the last drive of the tracks before packing up and preparing to say goodbye to the many new friends we have made over the weekend.

On behalf of our club I would like to thank Jim and his club members for the hospitality we have received over the weekend and look forward to catching up with you all down the track.

And a special thankyou to Michael Patrick my fellow Victorian high country comrade who made this all possible 4 years ago when he organised for our club to join with you all at your bush skills weekend.

Col Flanagan

THE SOUTHERN TABLELANDS 4WD CLUB PARTICIPANTS

Arrived at Talooge (after opening and closing multiple gates) to find a roaring fire and lots of good company. A pleasant few hours around the fire catching up with friends, and discussing the shortcomings of every Jeep ever built before calling it a night and heading off to bed.

Saturday saw a number of members and visitors learning all about wheel bearings. Peter Reynolds showed us all the bits and pieces needed to inspect and repack bearings and how a few minutes work at home before a trip could prevent an awkward roadside job. Peter also demonstrated the antiseptic qualities of wheel bearing grease by liberally smearing some on a cut on his hand. Not sure this is a Doctor recommended treatment.

After Dr Pete it was over to Dr Chris Nicholls and his assistant Alex to show us all how to deal with damaged tyres, how to break the bead, remove the tyre from the rim, repair damage and put it all back together again. Chris thoughtfully demonstrated both the easy and the hard way to replace a tyre on the rim and Alex showed us his method for breaking a tyre bead, yet another use for a high lift jack. We were all impressed with Chris' ingenuity in rigging up a pulley system for raising and lowering wheels onto his truck bed and also his home made gadget for lowering tyre pressures. Both great ideas for preventing back pain.

Rob Phillips

What a great weekend !!

Saturday started out very cold with a snow flurry and we wondered what the weather gods had in store for us. As it turned out the sun started to shine and the weather was good (except very cold in the evenings and overnight).

The demonstrations were fantastic and we are very lucky to have such knowledgeable members to volunteer their time and expertise.

Rob and I had the privilege to go on one of the drives around the tracks in Rob Azzato's Pinzgauer - what an experience !!

The walk around the camp site looking at everyone's set up was very informative and if you were on the look out to upgrade or change your camping needs then this was the place to be.

Overall an awesome weekend and thanks to all the members who put their time and effort in volunteering their time and expertise.

Lynne Donaldson

The weather forecast was somewhat mixed as we headed off for Talooge for the October long weekend. Showers had been forecast for the Saturday with sunny conditions promised for Sunday and Monday.

Being the start of school holidays as well as the long weekend saw rather heavy but freely moving traffic as we headed down the Monaro Highway towards Bredbo.

Arriving at Talooge mid afternoon Friday meant that we had a wide variety of camping spots.

After setting up out Tvan happy hour was called and we gathered around the very large fire which had been established.

Rob Dunlop

Trailer Bearing Servicing Peter Reynolds

As usual Peter gave a great demonstration of how to service trailer bearings. He outlined that such servicing is frequently neglected by owners. Many only realizing that they have a problem when it is too late and a tow is their only option.

When jacking the trailer the need for safe working practices was emphasized. The opposite wheel needs to be chocked, a jacking plate should be used on soft ground and an extra support along with the jack must be used.



Jack on jacking plate along with second support

Pete mentioned the importance of ensuring that after the bearing is removed and thoroughly cleaned that the appropriate bearing grease is carefully worked into the bearing race. This can be achieved either by a special adaptor to which a grease gun can be attached or via the "greased palm" technique. This is where a dollop of grease is placed in the palm of your hand and with the other hand the bearing race is pressed into the grease. This is quite an involved proceed as the bearing cage which holds the roller bearings must be thoroughly filled with the grease.



Pete removing the castle nut from the axle

Reassembly of the of the bearing races, there is generally an outer race and an inner race, will often involve the replacement of the bearing seal which can often be adversely affected by dust and by the removal process.

Once the hub is reattached to the vehicle then the next critical stage is the adjustment of the castle nut that holds the hub onto the axle. Of course, all parts must have a generous coating of grease prior to assembly. The nut needs to be tightened in such a fashion to seat

the bearing securely but not to the extent that binding occurs. Pete explained that an overtightened castle nut will soon see the bearing overheat and subsequently fail.

The final task is to insert a split pin through the castle nut to ensure that the hub remains on the axle.

All About Tyres Chris Nicholls and Alex Szabo

Before getting down to the challenging task of removing a tyre from its rim Chris outlined the use of the ARB type tyre deflator which allows for the rapid deflating of a tyre based on the temporary removal of the valve. These units are very effective but on a cautionary note Chris mentioned the importance of ensuring that the valve is properly resealed by the device and also the need to have spare valves available just in case the unthinkable occurs and the valve is lost.



Chris demonstrating instruments for tyre maintenance

Chris also demonstrated his recent purchase of a new compressor. A vital addition to any off road travel.

Next came the demonstration of the bead breaking device as well as how a high lift jack can be used for this often challenging process.

The subsequent removal of the tyre from the rim and its replacement back onto the rim was demonstrated using tyre levers. As Chris stated at times you wished you had three hands for this process.

Everything You Needed to Know About GPS and Mapping Alex Szabo

Alex's main focus for this talk was how GPS is incorporated into a variety of mapping products. In particular he focused on OziExplorer. As discussed there are a number of other mapping products available for off road navigation which suit a variety of platforms.

Walk Around – Vehicle and Camp Setups Michael (Pelican)

Michael escorted the group around to the varied camping setups. What was noted by all was the breadth of knowledge that Michael had for the options available.



Michael discussing one of the camping options

On display were AOR Off Road Van, Cub Campers, Tvans, Track Trailer Topaz, a TrayOn and relatively less expensive options such as swags.







ST4WDC END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

TALOOGIE, 1ST DECEMBER FROM 1PM

Santa will be making an appearance at 4pm.

There will be games and entertainment , come along and enjoy the weekend and get to know other Club Members and have a few laughs.

A spit roast dinner with all the trimmings will be supplied on the night.



THE FOLLOWING SOCIAL ACTIVITIES ARE ALSO UP FOR NOMINATION:

Trivia Night - 8th November

End of year Celebration/ Christmas Party - 1st December

Come along to these events and support the Club and get know other Club Members!

HEADING TO THE VICTORIAN HIGH COUNTRY?

NEED A GOOD MAP (OR TWO)?

Having grown up at the foot of the Victorian High Country it's a special place for me. The 4WD community has also taken to it and ST4WDC runs quite a few trips each year to various parts of the High Country.

But if after one of these Club trips it captures your imagination and you want to head off on your own (or you are off on the upcoming November Club trip and want to make sure the trip leaders don't get lost) you are going to need some good quality maps. The High Country is literally littered with tracks and it is easy to end up getting miss placed (or to use the Clubs official description – to end up doing a "Recce").

Here are some map options which will hopefully keep you on the right track.

Hema High Country Victoria 4WD Pack

This pack from Hema contains their three high country products, which are:

- **HIGH COUNTRY VICTORIA ATLAS & GUIDE**
- **HIGH COUNTRY VICTORIA MAP**
- **VICTORIA STATE MAP**

The High Country Victoria Atlas & Guide (3rd edition) is a staple product for many in the Club. As well as containing maps of the high country it has many recommended trips, with detailed descriptions. A great product. The two maps provide a great overview for your trip planning into Victoria generally and the High Country specifically.



The Pack is available from Hema at <https://shop.hemamaps.com/collections/featured-products/products/high-country-victoria-4wd-pack>

Cost is \$60.00 (a \$17.85 saving over the RRP of each individual item) and they currently offer free postage.

Rooftop's Maps

Rooftop's produce a large range of maps of both the Victorian High Country and the Snowy Mountains areas including maps for Namadji and the areas surrounding the ACT.

A some particularly good maps from them for the Victorian High Country are:

● **BAIRNSDALE – DARGO – OMEO ADVENTURE MAP.**



This map is great for planning trips in the area to the west of Dargo and covers tracks such as Murdering Spurt Track, Messmate Track, Haunted Stream and Engineers Range Road (Scale 1:50,000).

● **DARGO – WONNANGATTA ADVENTURE MAP**



This is the map you need to keep the trip leaders honest on the Club's November High Country Trip. This map is of the area to the east of Dargo and covers such iconic tracks as Blue Rag Range Track, Basalt Knob track, Bill Goat Bluff Track, Cynthia Range Track and Brewery Creek Track. It also covers Wonnangatta Station and the tracks leading into and out of it. These include Herne Spur Track, Humphry Harts Spur Track, Wonnangatta Track, Zeka Spur Track and much more. The great thing about this map is that its double sided with a Scale of 1:100,000 on one side and 1:50,000 on the other (though of a smaller area).

● **WALHALA – WOODS POINT ADVENTURE MAP**

This map covers the area between Licola and west to Woods Point. This is also a double-sided map with a Scale of 1:100,000 on one side and 1:50,000 on the other (of a smaller area). Some of the great tracks include Black River Road, Selma Track, Spud Spur Track, Morning Star track and Willoughby Spur Track.

● **JAMIESON – LICOLA ADVENTURE MAP**



This map covers the area just to the north of the Walhala – Woods Point Adventure Map.

There are some 20 maps in the Rooftop's range covering anywhere you would want to go in the Victorian High Country.

There are many online shops that sell Rooftop Maps. The online store with the complete range that I have used is Melbourne Map Centre http://www.melbmap.com.au/cgi-bin/site/wrapper.pl?mcat=1&c1=Australian_Maps&c2=Victoria&c3=Rooftops

Price of Rooftop's Maps range from \$7.95 up to \$24.95 depending on the map.

Locally, Club Sponsor ARB stock some of the series and the Namadgi National Park office also has them. Several camping stores in the ACT also stock them.

Spatial Vision (SV) Maps

SV Maps is a company that produce a range of very good maps for Victoria. In their series the ones most relevant to the Victorian High Country are:

- **DARGO HIGH PLAINS FOUR WHEEL DRIVE MAP**
- **BOGONG ALPINE AREA OUTDOOR RECREATION GUIDE**
- **BULLER – HOWITT ALPINE AREA OUTDOOR RECREATION GUIDE**
- **DARTMOUTH – COBBERAS FOUR WHEEL DRIVE MAP**
- **WONNAGATTA FOUR WHEEL DRIVE MAP**



These maps are often difficult to find. In fact, the Four Wheel Drive Map series are out of print and generally you need to search the web to find stores that still have stocks. Locally we have found a few at the Namadgi National Park office and in stores in the Alpine region. They are worth the effort of getting.

Digital Maps of the High Country

While there will always be differences of opinion on who produces the best digital maps, I find that Hema produces the most compressive range of digital maps for the Victoria High Country. If you purchase say a Hema HN-7 you will get their whole range of maps covering the entire country including the Victorian High Country. With the Hema HX-1 you can download them from the Hema Cloud. If you prefer using an OziExplorer GPS device, then you can purchase the entire Hema set of maps from OziExplorer at <http://www.ozieplorer.com/au/> for \$149.00. OziExplorer also sell State sets of 1:100,000 topographical maps for \$19.00 per State. These aren't as good as the Hema maps I find, but they are cheaper if you are only after the Victorian set.

Ok I have a High Country Map but how do I use it?

Not everyone was born with a map and compass in their hand, some have had to learn the skill of map reading. A really handy starting point is to get hold of Geoscience Australia's Map Reading Guide (how to use Topographical Maps). You can get an electronic version free here – https://d28rz98at9flks.cloudfront.net/102240/Map_reading_guide_v4.pdf . Alternatively, you can pay between \$7.00 & \$8.00 and get a hardcopy which comes with a handy Plastic Map Card (yep it's a fancy ruler thingy for measuring distances on maps of varying scales). I picked one up at the Namadgi National Park Office for \$7.35

I have a great GPS Unit – where can I learn how to make the most of it?

I'm glad you asked!

The ST4WDC through Life Member Michael Patrick (known as "no turn around Michael") and a few of his friends run a fantastic OziExplorer GPS Workshop each year for members and it's a great place to learn how to make the most of your GPS unit. The next course is on the 22 & 23 June 2019 – book in through the members website. (they will even help with your Hema device). Cost? – last time I check I think it was 1 packet of black jelly beans.

In the meantime, if you're after GPS advice drop Michael an email at trips@st4wdc.com.au and he will help you out.

If you want any info about maps generally (High Country or broader afield) drop me an email at membership@st4wdc.com.au

Dim

THE BENEFITS OF VACUUM SEALING FOOD

BY SHAY BOSWORTH FROM
SNOWYS.COM.AU/BLOG

When most people think of vital pieces of camping or travelling gear they think of tents, sleeping bags, chairs and camp ovens. Something that is often overlooked but should follow closely behind is the humble vacuum sealer and a roll of bags.

Vacuum sealing allows for food, such as meat, to be stored for much longer periods of time. This allows you to take food you wouldn't normally be able to take on your trip. And, you will be able to make fewer trips to the shops whilst travelling. Not everything can or should be vacuum sealed, for example, when done correctly, red meat can last up to 6 weeks at the bottom of your camping fridge, set at 0-2°C.

Pre-cooked meals like stews and spaghetti bolognese can be prepared at home and then ready to eat on the road, in just a few short minutes with minimal prep and next to no cleaning up!

Hard cheeses go great in the vacuum sealer and certain vegetables, with the right prep, can also benefit from some work at home before going in the camping fridge in a vacuum pack.

What does vacuum sealing do to food?

Vacuum sealing removes the majority of oxygen from the packaging. This vastly reduces the ability of aerobic (oxygen-dependent) bacteria, which is a prime reason for spoilage. Not only does the reduced ability of bacteria help extend the shelf life of your food, but oxygen itself is often the culprit, involved in several chemical reactions that result in food spoilage.

The number one aim of the game when preparing food is removing as much oxygen as possible. So anything less than a perfect seal should be done again. One of the ways to improve the quality of your seal is to fold the top of the bag in on itself.

Ensure that the part of the bag you wish to seal is dry and contaminate-free before sealing, as this will drastically improve your chances of getting a good seal.



Here's a range of some of the vacuum packing gear available. Clockwise from top: Campfire Vacuum Sealer, Travel Chef 12V Rechargeable Vacuum Sealer, Primus Re-Sealable Vacuum Sealer Bags, Dometic Vacuum Sealer Roll 8 and 11 and Dometic 12/240V Vacuum Sealer.

Tips for using a vacuum sealer

One of the best things about a vacuum sealer is that you can cook meals in the comfort of your own home, without worrying about cleaning up and using precious water supplies or how much garbage you produce, when out at the campsite. Red meat stews go absolutely fantastic, along with mince bolognese sauces.

Cook them up, throw them in some plastic containers in appropriate serving sizes (either individual or group) and then straight into the freezer. Once your meal is sufficiently set (not quite frozen, but so that liquids are more solid than not) scoop it into your vacuum bag. Just remember the trick to keep your edge clean and seal that bad boy up!

Once you know you have a good seal, into the fridge it goes ready for your trip.



You can pre-season your meat before vacuum sealing it. The same is true of marinating. In fact, the longer it's in the vacuum pack for, the tastier it will become.



See, all the air has been removed. This cut of beef will keep significantly longer now, in the fridge or freezer at home. Or in the car fridge or icebox.

Re-heating vacuum sealed food

Once on your big adventure, you have two options. If using good quality bags, you can pop the bags into a pot of hot, but not necessarily boiling (70°C is plenty warm), water for a few minutes to heat your meal up. Out of the water, being careful not to burn yourself, snip off the top and straight into a bowl it goes. Put it on top of whatever you're serving it with – rice, pasta, baked potato – and dinner is ready to go!

No mess, no stress, and ready in under 10 minutes. The other option is emptying it into a pot or pan and heating it up as you would a meal at home. More conventional, but more washing up afterwards! For ideas on meal planning for your adventure, head here.

You can pre-season your meat before vacuum sealing it. The same is true of marinating. In fact, the longer it's in the vacuum pack for, the tastier it will become.

What are the best foods to vacuum seal?

Hard cheeses go great in the vacuum sealer. Buy a big block of tasty cheddar, cut into 4 smaller portions and vacuum seal individually. Open as needed and always enjoy fresh cheese!

Vegetables are a little different when it comes to vacuum sealing. Many vegetables will give off a gas when vacuum sealed. This leads to almost immediate spoilage as those gases have nowhere to go. To counteract this, cut vegetables as if you were to eat them straight away. Always blanch vegetables for 1-2 minutes, followed by a quick dunking in ice water.

Dry thoroughly before storage to ensure the seal is tight and a good vacuum is achieved. Preparing vegetables such as green beans, snow peas, potato, pumpkin, and carrots in this way is a great way to extend their shelf life to up to 3 weeks when on the road.

What vegetables shouldn't be vacuum sealed?

Cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage should never be vacuum sealed. This is as even after blanching they can emit gases at fridge temperature.

See, all the air has been removed. This cut of beef will keep significantly longer now, in the fridge or freezer at home. Or in the car fridge or icebox.

Vacuum sealed meat

Vacuum sealed meat can often have a darker colour when you first remove your package from the fridge. Upon exposure to oxygen, however, this should slowly return to a much more 'normal' red. Meat will often have a slight odour when first removed from packaging and this should dissipate after a few minutes.

Like all food, you should use your common sense. If it smells and looks off after 10 minutes out of the packaging, it's safer to discard it than to regret it later.

My experiences with vacuum sealing

I spent a month on Fraser Island fishing and camping and before leaving home I prepared and vacuum sealed several meals and packets of sausages. But I ended up catching so many fish that we hardly needed to touch them!

On our last day on the island, we ate a packet of sausages that had been sitting at the bottom of the fridge for exactly 30 days. After giving them a few minutes to air, and cooking them in the frypan, we enjoyed a delicious meal of beef sausages after weeks of fish!

While you might not always need your meat to last 30 days, vacuum sealing is a fantastic way of preparing and storing your meat, cheeses, some vegetables, and pre-made meals when camping or on the road. I would highly recommend one to everyone.

Do you vacuum seal your food for camping trips? Let us know, we'd love to hear about your experiences with it.

This article is kindly reprinted with permission from Snowys and appeared on their blog - <https://www.snowys.com.au/blog/>. Snowys are a camping, hiking and travel goods store with some 23 years' experience in the industry.



THANK YOU TO THURLINGS TRANSPORT QUEANBEYAN

TALOOGE 25-26TH AUGUST 2018

For the TALOOGE muster held on the 25th and 26th of August, club member Kelvin Berry, arranged for the loan of a 7 1/2 metre 8 tonne flat top truck (with a Hi-Ab loading / unloading device) to remove surplus metal and various items stored on the property.

With the help of partner Nicola and son Ethan and many energetic club members volunteering over the weekend, Kelvin took two truck-loads of metal including old sheds, fencing wire and sundry other items donated over time to the Bredbo transfer station for future recycling etc. The Hi-Ab device certainly came in handy to

unload the truck. The removal of the unneeded items has certainly improved the look of the area and more importantly significantly reduced areas where snakes and vermin might frequent around the top of the property.

In addition to the use of the truck, Thurlings Transport donated the cost of the fuel used for the weekend.

A huge thanks to Thurlings Transport Queanbeyan for supporting our club. Please keep Thurlings in mind for your transport needs.

CLASSIFIEDS

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- **ARB TOW BAR**
- **SAFARI SNORKEL**

Since purchase, the vehicle has been fully equipped with a long list of accessories including HF Radio, and is

currently configured for remote outback travel either alone or as part of a group

For full details email Jim@Raleigh.id.au and I will respond with a detailed description, or please call on 0413 612 305.



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