



SOUTHERN TRAILS

ISSUE 350 July 2008



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General meetings are held at the Canberra Deakin Football Club, Grose St, Deakin at 7.30 pm on the second Tuesday of each month.

Next General Meeting— 12th August.

Guest Speaker Harry Hickling

Who drove his 1938 MG SA from Peking to Paris, in 2007, and have written a book about their adventures called "To Finish is to Win"



The deadline for material to be included in the next issue of *Southern Trails* is the Friday following the General Meeting.

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All magazine correspondence should be directed to the Publications Coordinator.

Trip reports & articles of interest are very welcome. Contributions may be edited.

We gratefully acknowledge the support given to this magazine by our advertisers and encourage our readers to support and patronise them whenever possible.

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General Meetings are held at the
Canberra Deakin Sports Club, Grose St, Deakin
at 7.30pm on the second Tuesday of each month.

General Meetings are a focal point of the club where members can meet and get information about past and future club activities. Meetings are structured with a minimum of formality. Meetings regularly feature talks from experts on topics of interest ranging from vehicle mechanics to bush lore. Reports on past trips are presented and new trips are announced. Visitors introduce themselves, there is a raffle with generous prizes and a coffee break for catching up with other members. Don't forget to wear your name badge.

Ideas for guest speakers are welcome. Contact Vivian Henderson if you know of someone who could make an interesting and topical presentation. Many members gather before and after the meeting to enjoy a meal or drink at the club.

Publications

Website www.st4wdc.org. The site is used to provide timely information regarding Club activities and variations from previously announced plans. When visiting the site, always check the "What's New" page for recent announcements and current news. Especially, check for any last minute variations to trips you are undertaking.

Southern Trails is the ST4WD Club monthly Magazine.

Trip reports, and articles that are relevant to Club members are welcome, as are photographs and illustrations.

Closing date all material is the Friday following the monthly meeting. Send contributions to publications@st4wdc.org

Talooge Park

Talooge is the Club's 600+ ha bush block in rugged country east of Bredbo. It is used for training and other club activities, and members are welcome there for private camping, recreation and the simple pleasure of enjoying the bush. Several areas have been set aside for basic bush camping. Some have firewood and long drop toilets, but no other services – no water, no electricity, no phone, very limited mobile phone coverage. Pets and the discharging of firearms are not permitted on the property. Visitors should assume that they are solely responsible for their own wellbeing and be conscious of the risks of fire, snakebite, etc. In an emergency, neighbours Mr Richie Southwell and his sons, can usually be contacted using UHF channel 18.

Many details are on the Club's website, and intending visitors should check there for current access details and other information. Committee members can advise regarding the combination locks securing the gates.

Code of Ethics

These are the rules of conduct that we should all observe when using our vehicles in the bush. We should all take them to heart. Image is a difficult thing to change!!

1. Obey the laws and regulations for Recreational Vehicles that apply to public lands.
2. Respect the cultural, heritage and environmental values of public/private land, by obeying restrictions that may apply.
3. Respect our flora and fauna. Stop and look, but never disturb.
4. Keep to formed vehicle tracks.
5. Keep the environment clean. Carry your own, and any other, rubbish, out.
6. Keep your vehicle mechanically sound and clean to reduce the environmental impact.
7. Adopt minimal impact camping and driving practices.
8. Seek permission before driving on private land. Do not disturb livestock or watering points, leave gates as found.
9. Take adequate water, food, fuel, basic spares and a first aid kit on trips. In remote areas travel with another vehicle and have Royal Flying Doctor Service, or equivalent, in radio contact.
10. Enjoy your recreation and respect the rights of others.
11. Plan ahead and lodge trip details with a responsible person.
12. Support four wheel driving as a responsible and legitimate family recreational activity. Consider joining an affiliated four wheel drive Club.

Training

The Southern Tablelands Four Wheel Drive Club is devoted to providing the best driver training possible. The Driver Training Team provides a range of courses throughout the year. Students are assigned an instructor over the period of the course. The 1:1 instructor/student ratio ensures maximum transfer of skills and experience.

The current courses are:

Mandatory Courses

Basic Driver Training,
Very Difficult Terrain, and
Advanced Recovery (for Grade 4 and 5)

Supplementary Courses

Water Crossing,
Sand Driving,
Mud and Snow,
Practical Map Reading,
Navigation,
Route Planning,
GPS, and

Other specific training relating to Club activities such as camper trailers etc may also be introduced..

Training for Driver Training Instructors

Trainee Instructor,
Assistant Instructor,
Instructor, and
Chief Instructor

Visit the ST4WDC web page for full details which are expanded on in detail in the Driver Training Policy document located under the Training menu tab.

Partners are encouraged to undertake the Basic Driver Education course, and any of the other courses offered from time to time. Unfortunately couples cannot undertake the course at the same time as only one driver per vehicle can be instructed during a training course. Training of a member's child is subject to approval by Club management and only when spare places are available. Couples may attend the Navigation, Map Reading & GPS courses.

Maps and travel publications

Members may purchase maps and travel publications through the Club at substantially discounted prices. For a comprehensive catalogue of electronic and paper maps, travel guides, and lots of associated publications, visit <http://www.hemamaps.com.au>. For further details, and to download an order form, visit "What's New" on the Club website.

Gone travelling!!! This facility is suspended temporarily due to travel!!

RO'S RAMBLINGS

Rosemary Orr



Oh bother! Oh blast! The cold weather has caught up with me (germs, cold and flu!!!!). I have stayed at home and am missing out of one of the best weekends away that the club has to offer. Christmas in July at Laurel Hill. I will be wondering all weekend what everyone is up to – I know that they will be having a great time and when they all get back and tell me how good it really was – I will be so put out!!!! Even Victor is sulking because he is missing out on some bush driving and some dirt roads for a change.

But when you have a disappointment you should just get over it and get on with it. So to the next big thing that is happening. Our working bee at Talooge on 13 and 14 September is not that far away. So planning must begin to enable us to achieve all of the things on our wish list. If you look at the Trips and Events pages in the magazine this should give you a great idea of what we hope to accomplish. If you have any skills such as, carpentry, electrical, concreting, jack of all trades, and just a will to do whatever – we need you. If you have any equipment that would help with any

of the tasks please let us know. The old saying that many hands make light work is so very true.

If you feel that you are not up to heavy or even moderately heavy work then just come along and offer your support and encouragement. There is always plenty of small jobs to be done and errands to be run. Even if you just make a cup of tea and hand around the biscuits – its all part of helping. I look forward to seeing you all there. Remember that while we work hard we also have a great time when all the hard work is done!

The next weekend 20 and 21 September is our “Bush Skills” weekend. You can all come along and enjoy the fruits of your labours from the previous weekend and learn new skills or brush up on old lessons. We are hoping to cover such things as navigation skills, bush repairs, preparing for a trip and packing a vehicle, and camp cooking. Preparing trip leaders may be another skill we will look at for the weekend. There are

(Continued on page 5)

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Catherine and Peter at info@independenttrailers.com.au www.independenttrailers.com.au

RO'S RAMBLINGS

Rosemary Orr



(Continued from page 4)

many sub-headings from all of these basic skills that it will be a very full and productive weekend. More on this weekend as time go on.

A little housekeeping. Following our Annual General Meeting, we had some positions which were not filled on the Committee. Catherine Panich kindly offered to come back onto the Committee initially as a general committee member. However, as we did not have a Property Co-ordinator John Kjar offered to move into this role and Catherine then offered to move back into the position of Secretary. A big thank you to both of these members for moving within the Committee to ensure that all of our major roles were filled.

Our shortest day has passed and we are fast approaching the warmer weather. So lets get out into the bush and enjoy the great Australian outdoors (and kiss goodbye the Canberra winter blues!).

Enjoy and stay safe.
Ro

This one caused the spell checker to have a meltdown!! - Ed.

Only great minds can read this
This is weird, but interesting!

fi yuo ena raed tihs, yuo hvae a sgtrane mnid too

Cna yuo raed tihs? Olny 55 plepoe out of 100 can.

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waht I was rdanieg.

The phaonmneal pweor of the hmuan mind!

Aoccdrnig to rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it
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the olny iproamtnt tihng is taht the frsrit and lsat ltteer
be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and
you can still raed it whotuit a pboerlm. Tihs is
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by istlefl, but the wrod as a wlohe.

Azanmig huh?

and I awlyas tghuhot slpeling was ipmorantt!

The power of language!!

Planning a trip?

The following experienced trip leaders have offered to assist new trip leaders in planning their trips.
Budding trip leaders are encouraged to seek their advice.

Name	Phone	Mobile	Email
Peter Watson	6254 7118	0418 649 823	pwatson1@tpg.com.au
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Keeping us on Track

Richard Brand



Computer Gremlins

When I first tried to join the ST4WD Club a decade or two back, there was a feeling that the club could not handle any more members without employing a paid secretariat. Nowadays there is no suggestion that we need administrative help, and that surely has to be because most of the work is done using personal computing and networking tools. This has relieved the club of a lot of processing stress, while at the same time increasing our reliance on computing and computing skills, especially for key committee positions like membership, publications and now trips and even general meetings.

Unfortunately computers can place individuals under great stress when things go pear shape, and there are a myriad glitches waiting to happen. At one extreme is stupid human error, like me not bringing a laptop power supply to meetings, or 'losing' an IEC power cable in the wrong equipment bag. In these instances the evening was saved by borrowing another laptop and moving all the required files before my battery died, and scouring the club for a power cable. Unplanned but very handy redundancy.

The other extreme is when a critical personal computer loses a disk which has not been backed up. You may have noticed that there was a lot of stress getting the last magazine published as the stand-in editor had severe computer problems which required him to have a complete rebuild (his words, and I know the feeling!).

I have just spent a full elapsed 24 hours trying to get emails out to shed suppliers requesting final quotes for a new shed at Talooge Park. After throwing in three digital photos and pressing the send button I realized the email was 15-Mbytes in size, and it was also copied to the committee. After that my virus-ware, Trend Micro, somehow got itself configured to prevent any e-mail from any of my accounts going out. I suppose it was protecting the world from me.

This is the second major glitch I have had with what is supposed to be "anti" virus software, and I just hope it has not stopped us getting an order in before the 15% price rise in steel takes effect.

As a computer professional I am horrified at what users have to put up with, but then we do keep buying the cheapest.

Virtualisation

I confess I do not know how to fully backup a Windows computer, let alone recover from a hard disk failure. With hundreds of thousands of files, and the dreaded flaky registry configured for specific hardware, plus dozens of installed programs, expect to spend several painful days rebuilding from scratch.

There is a better way and it is taking off like wildfire in big server farms. Known as virtualization, it allows one machine to run one or more computer emulations, using a software layer which kids each emulated system that it is running on real hardware, when in reality it is just interacting with the software.

For me the huge advantage is that each virtual system is totally represented by a dozen or so files. This makes it easy to copy the entire system, back it up, move it to another host, and restore it. I keep my virtual systems on a portable drive, so if the host machine fails, just plug in to another host and reboot. Voila. If the external drive fails, I usually have a full copy made the previous night. With 16-Gbyte memory sticks on the market, you can have an entire virtual PC on a thumb drive.

The downside is that each virtual computer still behaves like a real one. It needs to have its virtual disks formatted and defragmented, and it is booted up and shut down just like a real one.

A bonus is that a virtual machine can be

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Keeping us on Track

Richard Brand



suspended, and later resumed from the exact instruction it was suspended at. You can also take snapshots of its state, and roll-back if need be. Virtualisation was great for the Ozi-Explorer workshops, because absolutely identical copies of virtual machines were made for each participant, and rolled back so the following day's starting place was also identical.

Now I've just got to work out how to virtualise my email ... while it is running!

Pets and trips

Somehow my article last month got cur-tailed just as I was describing some of the issues surrounding pets and trips, and in particular one Burmese cat that was a fixture on club trips for several years. The rest of the article follows ...

I am not aware of anybody asking to bring horses on a trip, but no doubt it will happen one day. At the other end of the scale, all sorts of possibilities come to mind. At uni one of my mates was an ecologist, and the spitting image of David Attenborough. Jim used to travel with terrapins in his pockets. He got amazed looks on the London Underground when little reptile heads popped out of his collar.

Pets and National Parks

There is one absolute rule. Pets are not allowed in National Parks. This means that almost certainly pets will not be allowed on long club trips.

Like all absolutes, there may be some exceptions. National Parks are not truly national, and rules will change between jurisdictions. We are told that NSW National Parks will allow pets in vehicles if they are transiting a National Park and that is the only route available, and if the vehicle does not stop. It is hard to think of examples, but the village of Depot Beach near Bateman's Bay is surrounded by National Park and could be one. Another may be a stretch of the Barry Way in Victoria

but I do not have a specific ruling. Horse riding is allowed on designated formed roads in some new Queensland National Parks.

NSW National Parks will allow vehicles to carry pets on the Alpine Way, and will allow the vehicle to stop. Probably to pay the park entrance fee! However pets cannot get out of the vehicle.

Bottom Line

You can buy a lot of kenneling for the price of an average vet bill. Enjoy the natural wildlife on your travels, and make the most of other people's pets at your stop-overs. At Belowra, my sleeping bag and lots of provisions were commandeered by a 'lost' farmhouse Burmese cat that had been missing for a couple of months.

For dog lovers, a good top-up can be had at Christmas in July where the owners of Laurel Hill Forest Lodge have a small fleet of genuine ankle biters on hand.

Allan and Marj Jones have put a big effort into finding interesting ways to Laurel Hill, and with Allan now away on active police duty in the Solomon Islands, please make a big effort to come along and support Marj on this club tradition! It is not too late, and it will be heaps of fun. But please leave the terrapins and horses at home.

Richard Brand
Events and Trips Coordinator

Driver Training 17, 18 & 25 May

Vic Adamson



Lorna Sullivan, John Nettle, Neil Owns, Paul Cordwell, Alex Kratzel, Peter Janas, Michelle Huet, Kor-ske Ara, Bill Karaeanas, Nicole Voysey, Vic Adamson, Gary Martin, Colleen Fox.

Some folk philosopher once postulated that we all start life with an empty bag of experience and a full bag of luck. The trick he said is to try and fill up the bag of experience before we empty the bag of luck. It seems to me that one of the best ways of tipping the odds in your favour before you run out of luck is to tap into someone who has the experience and is prepared to share it.

That now seems like a very valid strategy after having been through the "Safe One" Basic 4WD Driver Training. The one common thread in the feed back of virtually all the participants was how far they thought they had come in such a short time. From the "No way on earth" reaction when viewing the "highway to hell" photos on the wall to the personal triumph of navigating very similar tracks in their very own vehicles on "graduation day".

First things first if you are thinking about attending this course. One of the simplest tools you can provide yourself with to help you get the most out of it is a handy notebook and pen. (An A5 size notebook with a spring binding big enough to slip a pen into is perfect). This seems innocuous but it's more serious than that. As someone who started driving all sorts



of farm equipment at an illegally early age to someone now on their third 4WD vehicle, at first blush one might have been tempted to lay claim to some experience or proficiency.

Experience is all relative though and as with so many other areas of life it doesn't pay to mistake length of

experience with quality or depth of experience. The team providing the training on this course has a collective expertise spanning several hundred years. Of the twelve or more instructors leading or assisting in the weekend many had twenty or more years of 4WD experience and much of that to a degree much more challenging than the average family four wheel driver. You can try your luck with trying to cram all that into your memory but a better idea is to write it down. Bring a notebook. Use it.

How do you take a group of novice 4WD owners and take them, safely, to some degree of self sufficiency and proficiency? Answer: Step by step. The building blocks of traction, wheel placement and momentum are the key. Learning about them one by one and then learning to put them in to practice together, instinctively, is the key to the success of this training.

The driver training followed the usual format of a two day weekend "school" at Talooge, 17-18 May, with the one day "real world" graduation day the next Sunday, 25 May, in the Brindabella ranges west of Canberra.. As schools go it was definitely more fun than most with a good blend of theory and practice.

The experience of this group would mirror very closely that of the previous group. For an excellent description of the experience, track down a copy of the April issue of this magazine for Kerry Lejsek's fine article detailing the experience of the March alumni. One important distinction of the May group over the February-March group: the weather, meaning overnight frost. Fortunately that meant that the fire pit at Talooge made for a much appreciated central focus of the evenings activities.

There was also a satisfying blend of age and gender within the group. Four of the group of thirteen were female participants. Some were young drivers with their first 4WDs, both new and used, while there were also "grey nomads" setting out on extended trans-Australian trips within days of completing the course. Two participants brought off road camper vans, one a tandem wheeler. That is a sight to see negotiating the creek inside the Talooge boundary.

Driver Training 17, 18 & 25 May

Vic Adamson



There is another benefit to be derived from completing the course. Confidence. Participants were able to build up a small but varied repertoire of experience of various gradients, cambers, track surfaces, and convoluted or open tracks in a relatively short time. The large number of instructors meant skilled help is either in the cab or at the most only a radio call away.

After a single weekend of 4WD training there are a good number of things I found a good idea to commit to writing. Things like tyre pressures for various conditions. The variation in the driving conditions across the two successive weekends meant that the tyre pressures on one were not as appropriate for the other. While we may or may not remember our own tyre pressures in our own vehicles spare a thought for your 4WDing partner. As this course demonstrated, more and more often the spouses are also doing the driving duties. The time may come when a written down detail will provide a partner with some welcome guidance when the going gets tough.

The note book may include four wheel driving lists which may extend to many other items. First aid kit lists, Recovery equipment lists, Food lists, camping equipment checklists, morning maintenance checklists on multi-day trips, "to buy" lists for when you



hit the next own, road conditions and / or trip directions. Lists of "things to bring next time". This is usually prompted by how well something works for some one else on a trip.

Some of my notes from the two weekends:

There are no holes unless you drive in the holes;
Straddle the ruts; use the high spots where you can;
Mark your path if necessary.

Always remove your tow hitch on a day trip – but



leave the securing pin as a recovery point for snatching;

The most important piece of recovery gear is your tyre pressure gauge:

The triumvirate of four wheeling = Traction
+Momentum + wheel Placement.

Difficult Terrain Driving:

- (a) Do I have to go?
- (b) Is my vehicle capable?
- (c) Am I capable?

At the wheel

- (a) Hand at 9 to 3
- (b) Push pull steering - no cross over.
- (c) Thumbs inside the steering wheel.

That's enough from here though. Get your own notebook. Start your own lists. Start having your own fun.

Many in the club, maybe most, will have been through the Driver Training. It follows then that this is of primary interest to those few who have not. For any of this latter group, maybe spouses of those who have done the course, don't hesitate. Don't just think of it as being good information, but also think of it as having a good time. Another fact of life is that the greater the challenge the greater the sense of achievement. Make sure you come prepared for a good time. It's virtually guaranteed.

Destination Kimberley

A Traveller's Tale - John Wiseman



This was not a Club trip, rather a few friends travelling independently but loosely together to ensure support when required – we didn't at the outset realise just how valuable that support would prove to be.

Val and I lifted off in our Troopy from the Barton Highway layby near Hall in company with Jim and Jane in their 100 series with camping trailer and Vivian and Allan with traytop camper. First night's destination Willandra NP, but as the shakedown day developed, we decided on a shorter challenge, and went into a known good bush camping site in a State Forest just west of Rankin Springs. A delightful camp in a Cyprus forest – and a first chance to identify deficiencies in the packing lists, and enjoy good company around a campfire – a social shakedown. Next day west to (almost) Broken Hill, with another known good camp at the Menindee Lakes, actually containing water for the first time in years. Then west through Broken Hill with an essential stockup and fuelup. Having fitted new tyres before leaving home, each fuel stop was a reminder that tyres are a consumable item – they each cost much less than a fill of fuel!

The plan was to travel to the Kimberly through interesting and varied country, with strong emphasis on enjoying the travel rather than on achieving destinations. Daily destinations were to be flexible, with regular contact with VKS737 to log progress and receive any messages. We turned north at Yunta and travelled back roads up the eastern side of the Flinders. By now we were well behind our notional travel plan and stopped for the night on vast flood plain. Before we had set up camp the property owner arrived to check that we were OK. We were welcome, after all the land belonged to the Queen and she was a most gracious lady. In any case, he had another 600 square miles of country. Our first

night without a campfire, and the stars were incredibly bright. Flooding was unlikely since the last rain (which had covered the plain to a depth of 2 metres) was 11 years ago as the many dead gums testified.

On to Chambers Gorge, an outstanding Aboriginal art site, and a chance to explore on foot some savage country before heading west through the Flinders and onto the Oodnadatta Track. A leisurely day through Hans Heysen scenery, with frequent photo stops, ending at Farina, our first paying camp ground, but at \$3.30 per head we didn't grumble.

To Lake Eyre South for lunch, keeping a watchful eye on the GPS altitude reading as it went negative when we dropped below sea level. Then continued northwards, stopping to view mound springs (created where artesian water comes to the surface, trapping dust and slowly building a mound, in some cases many metres across and several metres high). The road here follows the old abandoned Ghan railway line, and as is customary we picked up a couple of old sleepers for that night's campfire. Troopy is accustomed to carrying firewood on the bulbar, but for the first time ever began overheating. At the time we didn't think much of it, but far worse was coming. We headed north through William Creek, stopping briefly to examine the bits retrieved from the desert when it functioned as a rocket test range. Overnighted at one of our old campsites in a dry creekbed. (Dry creekbeds are often good campsites, usually offering soft digging for personal waste disposal, and have trees which provide shelter and privacy.)

Next day, over rough tracks to Dalhousie Springs - big mound springs where one, perhaps 50metres across and hundreds of metres long, offers the bliss of swimming and lazing in water at about 38



It's a Big Country

Destination Kimberley

A Traveller's Tale - John Wiseman



degrees. This oasis, in incredibly dry country, has been one of the (many) highlights of travel so far.

After another soak in the spring, another day northward, through Mount Dare, now a shiny pub/motel (we missed the rough and friendly hospitality that we experienced there years ago.) North from Mt Dare and on to Old Andado. The Fink River which passes this way not far from Mt Dare, is underground, resulting in subsidences and supporting an extensive eucalypt forest in the desert. Users of the track following rain some time back had created long stretches of hub-deep wheel tracks now filled with the finest bulldust. Fortunately our little convoy met no oncoming traffic. (We later learned that the condition of a track can be determined by finding out if it is used by road trains – if the 50+ metre long road trains aren't using it, it's no place for 4WDs.) This leg took us through the western edge of the Simpson Desert, providing some new experiences for those who hadn't tackled desert dunes previously. Overnight at Old Andado homestead, home of Molly Clark, an iconic figure now retired to Alice Springs, and fondly known to some of our members.

We had booked into an Alice Springs caravan park, dictating the time of our arrival in Alice, so one more night on the road first, again at a camp we'd used previously, a few km south of Santa Teresa. By now we'd settled into a good routine – up with the sun, and a (reasonably) efficient packup. It was sobering to pass through Santa Teresa (a dry Aboriginal community), with more windblown rubbish littering the little town than we'd find at Canberra's garbage tips. Just outside the town boundary a group of men were starting on their liquid breakfast, with ample supplies for the day. The roadside for the 80 km run into Alice was festooned with discarded cans, VB a clear favourite. The need for some kind of action is undeniable, though the liquor laws in Alice clearly aren't sufficient. (So far as we could tell, there were no sales of alcohol before 3pm, no casked fortified wines (eg port) at all, only one unfortified cask per customer (identified by drivers licence) and only after 6pm – a nuisance for the traveller and clearly not having much effect on local consumption). Apparently a case of "We must do something. This is something. Therefore we must do it."

We'd planned on two nights in Alice, allowing a day



Lined up at Mt Dare

for shopping, servicing vehicles, clothes washing and dealing with any dramas that had developed. Rain set in and prudence dictated that we abandon the plan to travel the Tanami Track, about 1000 km, mostly corrugated sand and bad gravel. We later learned that much of it had been closed due to the boggy conditions. We elected to follow the bitumen north, overnighing at the Devils Marbles after a day of driving in cold and rain. The following day north again and we opted to stop early at a known excellent campsite on the shores of Lake Wood, near Elliot. North again, refuelling at Dunmarra before heading west towards the Gregory NP. Overnight in the bed of the Victoria River, not far from Victoria River Downs homestead. Braved a welcome swim in the river though we realised that we were very close to croc country.

The following morning to Victoria River Downs for approval to travel through to the Gregory NP – stopping at what proved to be the maintenance depot for a major helicopter charter company serving the Kimberly. They checked that access was OK and wished us well. The park was a disappointment – awful tracks, little interesting scenery and at the end of the day, more excitement than we wanted. We elected to travel to a remote camping area, which required a 100+ metre river crossing, poorly marked and consisting of a series of rock ledges covered by up to half a metre of water which we later saw was croc infested. Having crossed, we faced such an awful track that we turned back after a few km and again braved the water crossing. It was here that we saw crocs, and realised that we'd dislodged a critical track marker on our outward voyage. It was a great relief to have all three vehicles successfully negotiate the crossing a second time. Overnight at the Bullita homestead camping ground, surrounded by enigmatic boabs.

The plan then called for a visit to the Keep River NP,

Destination Kimberley

A Traveller's Tale - John Wiseman



a known gem. At morning tea time though Troopy was seen to be leaking coolant (green blood) which could only be due to a leaking radiator. Accordingly plans changed and we headed directly for Kunanurra, which, among other things, took us earlier than planned into Western Australia through the plant quarantine inspection station where we surrendered all the fruit and veg we hadn't been able to give away to east-bound travellers. The leaking radiator was expected to be a major problem, although Kunanurra is well endowed with engineering services. A serious concern was the availability of a replacement one for a 20 year old petrol vehicle. Although Troopies are very common throughout northern Australia, very few are petrol powered and fewer still are of mature age. We hit town and asked at the first service station where to find a radiator person; this was the first of many helpful people we met. We were directed from person to person, finally reaching one who offered to see us on the road by tomorrow. We booked into a caravan park, removed the radiator and delivered it to the repairer – but it was too badly corroded to be reliably repaired. His mate had one but it wasn't quite right. We could have one in by road within a week, or for an extortionate amount, could fly one in. A few phone calls though and one was located in town – it was new, but had some minor dings – we could have it for 30% off – done! An hour spent straightening fins and it was near perfect. We fitted it and were ready for the road again. At this time, the significance of the earlier overheating problem wasn't recognised. We were soon to be abruptly

reminded.

From Kunanurra we headed east, back into the Northern Territory to Keep River NP, a fabulous area, somewhat similar to the Bungle Bungles. An overnight there, then south along the Duncan Road, which winds back and forth along the WA-NT border. By stopping time, 4:30 in NT or 3pm in WA (very confusing) we were near a tributary of the Ord River and spent the night on a vast area of shingle in the riverbed near the water. The next day, further south, we passed east of the Bungles (Purnululu NP) to a fabulous camp at little known Marella Gorge. We had an enormous gorge with huge stretches of water largely to ourselves. On arrival we had morning tea with a departing group of three - a nurse and admin couple from one of the local aboriginal communities. We were greatly moved by their commitment to assisting the indigenous people in spite of intractable difficulties arising from traditional social patterns subject to the impact of ill-conceived programs invented by well meaning white fellas far away. . These people are paid a pittance to be the meat in this emotionally charged political sandwich. They work 24/7 on contracts of a few weeks duration and can be told to leave at any time by any of the conflicting community leaders.

Next day, west to Halls Creek to refuel. (Not easy since 2 of the 3 diesel suppliers had no fuel, and the remaining one, the Toyota dealer, insisted on personally serving each of the long queue of travellers to ensure that all fuel was paid for. Our



Crossing the Gregory River, NT

Destination Kimberley

A Traveller's Tale - John Wiseman



own previous experience, and numerous traveller's anecdotes regarding this establishment confirmed our relief that as petrol users, we didn't need to rely on their goodwill.) Fuelled (at last) and victualled we headed north on the Great Northern Hwy to overnight in a grassy layby close to the Bungle Bungles turnoff. Tomorrow – into the Bungles.

The 50 km track into the Bungles is said to take 2 –3 hours. We took much less, though it was no picnic. First to the northern areas, where we explored Echidna Chasm, an awe inspiring slit mostly no more than a metre wide between 100+ metre high conglomerate cliffs. Then viewed the massif from an elevated lookout as the gold of the setting sun highlighted the intense reds and oranges of the mountain range. The following day, up early to drive to the southern part of the park and take in the southern walks before the day got too hot. This is the area where the iconic world heritage listed beehive domes prevail. The final walk to the Cathedral Gorge was absolutely awe inspiring, with towering red cliffs leading to a vaulted ceiling – a natural amphitheatre and place for silent contemplation.

The following morning, out of the park and northward towards Kununurra. A short sidetrack to a pretty river for lunch led us to find another perfect bush campsite. Then northward again, and Troopy introduced another curve ball. Power was down and after a time temperature was up. A check under the bonnet found coolant sprayed over the engine. After allowing things to cool down sufficiently to add more coolant we limped slowly into Kununurra. Suspecting a bad thermostat, we removed it and normal operation seemed to have been restored. A replacement thermostat was fitted and off to buy more coolant. Then things went truly pear shaped when Troopy bowled the last (we hope!) ball of the over. . The starter wouldn't turn the engine. Surely not a seizure due to low oil?

Check the oil level. The sump contained an emulsion of oil and coolant. Oh bugg..! This pointed to a head gasket or far worse, a cracked cylinder head, or far worse.....This was not good anywhere, but in a small town where old petrol Troopies were very rare and spares and support pretty limited this was a near disaster. We'd already met a helpful and capable mechanic and he outlined the options – could be just a gasket, fly it in in a couple of days; could be a head

repair. Say a week by truck to Perth, say a week there, then a week back, allow another week in case we miss the truck, too heavy to fly, cost a mint.....all assuming it's repairable. We were starting to think in terms of thousands of dollars. Are we emotionally attached to the vehicle? Second hand petrol Troopies are available cheaply here.

By removing the spark plugs and using the starter to pump coolant out of number 1 cylinder we



Playing in the Dunes

determined that there was a major leak – far too large a leak to be a little crack, so probably a gasket. Then a weekend interrupted the smooth development of the saga. On Monday Jim towed Troopie to surgery, three hours later we had an answer – head gasket, but would we run the risk of assuming that there was no head damage too? Yes.

Gasket and other bits should arrive on the mid-day plane Wednesday. They didn't. Probably Thursday's plane then, so should be right by the weekend.

It's now Thursday morning. Our patient fellow travellers have been prevailed upon to press on and, Troopie willing, we'll catch up with them along the Gibb River Rd. They've had lots of time to comprehensively explore the local area!

At this time the drama isn't fully resolved, but we've had time to count our blessings – the value of good supportive friends, both our fellow travellers and those good people of Kununurra who are making it all happen. We've even had time to write a few words for Southern Trails!

ABOUT TRIPS

TRIP GRADING

For trips in the club's calendar a grading system of levels 1 to 5 is used to assist members in deciding which trips they would most enjoy and which grade suits the driver's level of skill and experience. This system of grading is a guide only. The grade assigned to a trip may change due to weather conditions, and the trip leader should be consulted in such circumstances. The trip leader has the right to deny a request from a driver who is considered not to have the necessary level of skill in 4Wdriving, or whose vehicle is deemed inadequate.

- ***GRADE 1:** very easy with little, if any 4wdriving involved; will usually consist of a scenic tour or a trip to camp. No 4WD skills are needed.
- ***GRADE 2:** a relatively moderate 4WD trip with winching and/or towing unlikely. Moderate level of 4WD skills needed, as well as completion of Basic Driver Education Course.
- ***GRADE 3:** a medium 4WD trip which requires cautious driving; winching should not be required. Good level of 4WD skills needed, as well as completion of Basic Driver Education Course.
- ***GRADE 4:** a moderately difficult 4WD trip with some winching and/or towing almost a certainty. High level of 4WD skills needed, as well as completion of both the Basic and Advanced Driver Education Courses.
- ***GRADE 5:** an extremely difficult 4WD trip. Participants must be experienced at traveling over difficult terrain. Winching and/or towing will definitely be required and participants must have all their own recovery equipment. Skill levels the same as Grade 4.

DRIVER EXPERIENCE

Conditions on some trips at Grade 3 and above may prove too difficult for inexperienced drivers. Please advise the trip leader of the level of skill, and vehicle equipment when signing up for such a trip. Members must have attended the 'Safe-One' Basic Vehicle Operation Course before driving on a Club trip above the Grade 1 level, unless they have satisfied the Club's Education Coordinator that they have the necessary experience.

TRIP PLANNING

If you are planning a Trip or Social Event for the Club contact the Club Trips Co-ordinator, preferably at least two months in advance of your chosen dates. This will allow time to give your event a 'good plug' in the Southern Trails, and it helps to avoid clashes with other people's plans. However, if a good event opportunity comes up at short notice our rules are sufficiently flexible to enable a quick approval. Club policy requires that a Club event shall be publicised in the Club magazine, or at a General Meeting of the Club, or on the Club's website in order for it to be considered a formal Club event and so be covered for the purposes of insurance, subsidies and so forth.

For a trip using tracks that are not public roads it is Club policy to confirm with the appropriate authorities that access is permitted on the chosen dates. This includes National Parks, State Forests as well as private property.

CB RADIOS

The Club strongly recommends that a UHF radio be carried to facilitate convoy procedures. UHF channel 14 is used as the standard channel for trips.

FIREARMS & PETS

Firearms are not permitted on club trips. Pets are not allowed in National Parks, otherwise refer to Trip Leader.

TRIPS AND EVENTS



12 Aug Monthly Club Meeting

(2008-011)

Start: 7:30 PM
Description: Deakin Sports and Social Club

13 Aug My Fair Lady

(2008-053)

Trip Leader: Catherine Panich
Email: capan@homemail.com.au
Phone: 6281 5175 (h); 0412 866 375 (m)
Vehicles: 10
Grade: 1
Start: 7:30 PM
Departure: The Canberra Theatre
Description: Musical with all the ingredients of a 'lurveverly night in the theatre. Starring: Reg Livermore, Taryn Fiebig and Nancye Hayes.
Comments: Cost is \$90.50 per person, only 10 places are available. Booking and payment are essential by 1st July

16 Aug 4 Wheel Drive NSW & ACT

(2008-055)

Trip Leader: Peter Fenwick
Email: pfenwick@homemail.com.au
Start: 9:00 AM
Departure: Port Macquarie
Description: Quarterly meeting of the Association. See Association website for more details: <http://www.4wdnsw-act.asn.au/>

16 - 17 Aug Bendethera Caves

(2008-061)

Note: Moved a week earlier and regraded

Trip Leader: Michael Patrick
Email: Michael.patrick2@bigpond.com
Phone: 0412 377 942 (m)
Vehicles: 8
Grade: 3
Start: 8:30 AM
Departure: McDonalds Car Park Queanbeyan
Fuel: Full tank
Maps: Southern NSW
Requirements: Basic driver training, basic recovery gear, UHF radio, food and drink
Description: This will be a cold trip so rug up warm and bring a good sleeping bag. Bendethera valley is great in winter, crisp and dry. The plan is to venture via the Mericumbene Fire trail and depart on Sunday via the Dampier fire trail. A great winter trip

TRIPS AND EVENTS



17 Aug **Mt Selwyn Resort Snow Fun - Kosciuszko National Park** (2008-072)

Note: New since July magazine

Trip Leader: Richard and Rachelle Arranz

Email: marketing@emailme.com.au

Phone: 6292 4004 (h); 0402 333 747 (m)

Vehicles: 6

Grade: 2

Start: 6:30 AM

Departure: Tharwa township

Fuel: Full tank. Fill up in Canberra (ensure diesel fuel has anti-freeze additives). Fuel available in Adaminaby. Diesel was over \$2 litre in early July!

Maps: Gregory's Snowy Mountains and South Coast (Map 228)

Requirements: UHF CB radio, good truck and tyres (chains not mandatory for 4WD's in the Kosciuszko NP), basic recovery gear, change of warm clothes, wet weather and warm wind proof clothing, water proof sturdy footwear

Bring your own food and drink for convenience or buy from the Resort or at Adaminaby. If it's not too windy, you can consume your own food and drinks beside your vehicle in the car park - we'll try and get a few good spots on the edge of the car park!

Description: Mt Selwyn is one of the best family fun snow resorts in Kosciuszko National Park. The snow is literally metres from the car park. We love it! See here www.selwynsnow.com.au. The 'back road' drive to Selwyn is characterised by fantastic sweeping views of rolling hills, open plain farmland and plenty of wildlife. It's a relatively easy drive through mostly open country and a nice mix of bitumen and dirt trails/roads. Expect falling snow close to Selwyn. A bit of gold rush history awaits us in Kiandra – it's what touring is all about with friends and family. Adaminaby for morning tea. There are several bakeries and cafes open on Sunday mornings. Be prepared to leave by 3pm sharp to avoid the night time microsleeps! We will head back to Adaminaby and turn left past the big trout to Rosedale and onwards to Shannons Flat. Turn right into the Namadgi National Park towards Tharwa and home. Overall there is approx 300kms of driving. As a convoy we should allow 2 - 3 hrs one way with stops.

Comments: NSW National Park Fees are \$27 per vehicle at the entry to Kosciuszko NP near Kiandra (cash or credit card) or get an Annual pass. Passes must be fixed to the vehicle (no sticky tape allowed...the Ranger will fine you!).

24 Aug **Wine Ramble with Ro** (2008-069)

Trip Leader: Rosemary Orr

Email: president@st4wdc.org

Phone: 6241 0464; 0414 568 358 (m)

Vehicles: 10

Grade: 1

Start: 9:00 AM

Departure: Car park Dinosaur Museum, Barton Highway

Fuel: Full tank

Maps: Canberra wine map

Requirements: Basic Driver Training, basic recovery gear, UHF CB. Well maintained and reliable vehicle, good tyres, good sense of humour, lunch

TRIPS AND EVENTS



Description: We will concentrate on the Murrumbateman wineries. Plan to have a basket lunch at Long Rail Gully winery the other side of Murrumbateman. If the weather is not the best, could do lunch at Murrumbateman pub instead. Favourite wineries include Brindabella Hills, Jeir Creek and Pankhurst. Some new ones to try might be Gallagher and Greystones. Too many to choose from.

Comments: This trip will evolve – but be prepared for a great day with lots of fun and some good wine.

6 - 7 Sep Yerranderie Ghost Town & Silver Mines (2008-073)

Note: New since July magazine

Trip Leader: Ian Goodacre

Email: newtricks@bigpond.com

Phone: 0403 304 505 (m)

Vehicles: 6

Grade: 2

Start: 8:15 AM

Departure: Car park behind Shell Service Station, Federal Highway, Mitchell

Fuel: Full tank at start. Round trip approx 500kms. Refuel at Goulburn on return

Maps: Richlands 1:25000

Mt Armstrong

Bindook

Yerranderie

Requirements: Basic recovery kit. UHF radio. Drinking water, happy hour supplies.

No pets or trailers. Trip numbers limited by available campsites

Description: Yerranderie Township is a privately owned historic township and wildlife sanctuary within a large volcanic (extinct) crater in the Blue Mountains National Park. It is 44kms west of Camden and on the opposite side of the Burragorang Valley. The camping area is within the village precincts and has showers and a flush toilet. Onsite firewood supplied by the caretaker. For a small fee a fascinating walking tour of the village can be arranged with the caretaker on arrival. For the more active and energetic there is a walking track up to the peak of the volcanic core with its stunning views. As we leave on Sunday we may choose to visit the historic cemetery and Government town near the airstrip. There is also the option of exiting via Limeburners Flat. Yerranderie website: <http://www.yerranderie.com> (also Google Yerranderie for other websites and information)

Comments: Deposit of approx \$6/adult may be required to confirm campsite booking.

9 Sep Monthly Club Meeting (2008-012)

Start: 7:30 PM

Description: Deakin Sports and Social Club

13 - 14 Sep Talooge Park Working Bee (2008-066)

Trip Leader: John Kjar

Email: kjar@optusnet.com.au

Phone: 6287 7574 (h)

Vehicles: Unlimited

Grade: 1

TRIPS AND EVENTS



Start: 8:00 AM
Departure: Williamsdale
Requirements: BYO lunches, Sunday breakfast, snacks and happy hour supplies. Make your own way to Talooge Park on Friday or join the Saturday convoy. Stay for the Saturday night if you can, or just come down for a day.
Description: The weather will be warming up so we are planning a major working bee at Talooge Park, supported by some heavy earth-moving machinery courtesy of Robert Knight, and probably our own tractor. The major objectives are: assembling the 14 x 14m Queanbeyan school shelter on a site overlooking the river bank on Central Thurbon flat; and skidding the two ATCO shower / toilet blocks into final position on Lower Thurbon Flat, ready to host the Bush Skills Weekend. Of course, we will need a new firepit on Thurbon Flat as well! A lot of finishing work will be ready to start: fitting out the ATCO blocks; replacing the garage door in the kitchen with bay windows; paving and lining one of the single garages; and paving a pergola area outside the driver training facility. We would also like to initiate conservation measures for the fireplace ruins on Thurbon Flat and the old harvester on Raynor's Firetrail. Earthworks will include levelling a site for a new shed to house all our major equipment (firetruck, tractor, trailers, etc) and a chemical storage lock-up; plus work on Duck's Crossing and access roads.
Comments: Please email John early to offer your services, tools you can bring, and your areas of special interest - eg painting, catering, concreting, roofing, fencing, paving, plumbing, etc

20 - 21 Sep **Bush Skills Weekend at Talooge** (2008-028)

Note: Help wanted!

Trip Leader: Richard Brand
Email: trips@st4wdc.org
Phone: 0418 568 358 (m)
Vehicles: Unlimited
Grade: 1
Start: 8:30 AM
Departure: Williamsdale
Fuel: Full tank
Description: Our Club members have an amazing range of skills they can impart! These range from bush welding using two car batteries, through damper cooking using camp ovens, to extracting survival water from vegetation, plus fixing tyres and navigating with and without GPS and lots more. We need attendees and especially contributors.
Comments: Offers of assistance are more than welcome, as are suggestions for topics

2 - 6 Oct **Deniliquin Ute Muster** (2008-070)

Note: New since July magazine

Trip Leader: Jan McGuinness
Email: janmcg@tpg.com.au
Phone: 6258 2253 (h); 6265 2180 (w)
Vehicles: unlimited
Grade: 1
Start: 8:30 AM
Departure: NSW layby on Barton Highway near Hall, Ellen will depart from Adelaide Hills region TBA
Fuel: Full tank
Description: The 10th Annual Deniliquin Play on the Plains Festival and World Record Ute Muster is on. Ellen, Jan and Bryan McGuinness invite any other club members who are into country music and dust to cele-

TRIPS AND EVENTS



brating their transition to ute ownership. Plan to spend Thursday night in the queue outside the venue, then roll through the gates when they open at 0600hrs on Friday morning to join the convoy. Stay Sunday night along the Murray and return to Canberra on Monday. Passes include all entertainment and camping facilities throughout the 2 days of the Festival. Two big night shows: Fri night - Lee Kernaughan and the Songbirds plus others; Sat night - the Living End and Casey Chambers plus plus. Over 30 hours of day entertainment is planned including the Yamaha freestyle team, championship Whip-cracking, Bull rides, Bars!!, Day stage, Circlework competition and trade displays, exhibitions etc. Camping at the muster is in one of three sections: closest - ute only; then no utes; furthest - trailers, motorhomes, tents, caravans and cars! Numbers unlimited, trailers welcome understanding that there may be up to three camping zones

Comments: Tickets are presold on www.deniutemuster.com.au Prices before 31 Aug are \$110 per adult, \$280 Family pass (2 adults, 2 juniors 13-17yrs), then \$125 and \$315 respectively. Additional Juniors \$35 then \$50. Kids under 13yrs are free.

4 - 6 Oct Labour Day long weekend

4 - 6 Oct Willow Glen 4x4 Challenge

(2008-029)

Trip Leader: Peter Reynolds
Phone: 6251 1258 (h); 0428 623 458 (m)
Vehicles: 6: 4 competitors, 1 reserve, 1 team leader. Unlimited supporters
Grade: 2
Start: 8:15 AM
Fuel: Full tank
Requirements: Good truck, excellent tyres, twin lockers and suspension lift an advantage
Description: This is the best inter-Club competition weekend in the calendar. What's more, Southern Tablelands has won outright for the last three years! Anybody can enter and have a real ball. Drive to your limit. It is not a time trial style competition. All spectators are welcome, plenty of camping space for everyone. More details in due course. We need your support

14 Oct Monthly Club Meeting

(2008-013)

Start: 7:30 PM
Description: Deakin Sports and Social Club

18 - 19 Oct "Safe One" Basic Driver Training at Talooge Park

(2008-024)

Note: Date changed from 30th - 31st August

Trip Leader: Peter Reynolds
Phone: 6251 1258 (h); 0428 623 458 (m)
Start: 8:00 AM
Departure: Bredbo Service Station
Description: This is the Club's official and accredited basic driver education course

26 Oct "Safe One" Basic Driver Training Course Follow-up Day (2008-025)

Note: Date changed from 6th September

Description: This is day three of the basic driver education course on the 30th and 31st August and MUST be attended before participating on any Club trips where the proposed route is expected to be at Grade 2 or above

TRIPS AND EVENTS



1 - 2 Nov Bendethera Spring Overnighter

(2008-058)

- Trip Leader: Greg and Vickie Taylor
- Email: vickie.taylor@bigpond.com.au
- Phone: 6241 3547 (h)
- Vehicles: 8
- Grade: 3
- Start: 9:00 AM
- Departure: Braidwood – side of service station past the pie shop
- Fuel: Full tank (Fuel at Bungendore and Braidwood)
- Maps: South Coast Forest Map (1:150 000) and 1:25 000 maps of Araluen, Snowball, Bendethra, Michalego, Colinton, Tinderry, Jerangle, Whinstone, Burrumbela
- Requirements: Basic driver training, basic recovery gear, UHF radio, good tyres, well maintained and reliable vehicle, camping gear including gas stove for cooking (in case of fire ban), food and water, happy hour supplies.
- A blind/tarp may be necessary for water crossing. Apple turnover from the pie shop. Don't forget your binoculars and camera. Kids and teenagers are encouraged!!
- Description: Morning tea as we assemble at Braidwood. We plan to travel via Araluen and cross the Deua River at Dry Creek. A tarp or blind may be necessary depending on the depth of the river (this is usually low but can rise with recent rain). We will then head up the Mericumbene Fire Trail to Bendethera Mountain, collect firewood, lunch and descend to the valley and camp. Chance to swim or laze around before happy hour on Saturday night with a chance to see who has the better story. Slow pack up Sunday with mid to late morning departure through Dampier Fire Trail, Minuma Fire Trail then Middle Mountain Road and Krawarree Rd. There is an old Homestead and the Bendethera Caves to explore (three hours or more walk for the caves and torch, water required). There is a large camp ground in the valley with pit toilets.

1 - 4 Nov Whale Watching in Croajingolong

(2008-071)

- Note:** New since July magazine
- Trip Leader: Catherine Panich and Peter Fenwick
- Email: capan@homemail.com.au
- Phone: 6281 5175 (h); 0412 866 375 (m)
- Vehicles: 10
- Grade: 1
- Start: 8:30 AM
- Departure: Williamsdale
- Fuel: Full tank (fuel available on route)
- Requirements: Basic driver training, basic recovery gear, UHF radio, good tyres, well maintained and reliable vehicle, camping gear including gas stove for cooking (in case of fire ban), food and water, happy hour supplies.
- Description: Croajingolong is a huge park with estuaries, lakes, rivers, beaches and four wheel drive tracks. Fishing is permitted with plenty of safe boating areas. We will camp at Point Hicks in the National Park. Camp sites are secluded, surrounded by bush and have drop toilets. From June onwards Mother whales with their babies migrate south to summer in Antarctica. We have been assured that the best time to see them is from mid October to mid November. They swim and play 50 meters from the shore so no expensive boat trips. Binoculars may help. To reach our destination around lunch time we will travel

TRIPS AND EVENTS



via Cooma, Bombala to access the coast at Cann River. From camp, it's a 2km walk to the Light Station Reserve where the whales are easily viewed. A tour of the light house and keeper's home is optional. As Tuesday 4 November is our new public holiday this little jaunt has been extended to 4 days for those who want to. Visit www.parkweb.vic.gov.au for more information.

Comments: Camping fees are about \$11.00 per night. The optional lighthouse tour is about \$7.

4 Nov **Family and Community Day** (0)

8 - 9 Nov **Waratah Flat** (2008-057)

Trip Leader: Dennis & Margaret Collins
Email: margden1@actewagl.net.au
Phone: 6292 7423 (h)
Vehicles: 6
Grade: 3
Start: 8:00 AM
Departure: Williamsdale opposite Petrol station
Fuel: Full tank at start, fuel avail at Bombala, Cooma or Delegate.
Maps: 1:50000 Delegate and Goonerah-Ellery
Requirements: Basic Driver Training, basic recovery gear, UHF radio and good tyres, well maintained vehicle, drinking water and communal happy hour nibbles.
Description: Waratah Flat is located in the Snowy River National Park and this is a follow up trip as the area is surrounded by Gippsland Waratahs should be in full flower. We will take the black top through to Delegate then explore some of the tracks in the area before arriving at the Waratah Flat camp ground which is the limiting factor as it a small camp site. We will return to Canberra on the Sunday following much the same route

8 - 9 Nov **Water Crossing and Sand Driving Course** (2008-030)

Note: Date changed from 25th - 26th October

Trip Leader: Peter Reynolds
Phone: 6251 1258 (h); 0428 623 458 (m)
Description: This is the Club's official water crossing and sand driving course. For more information contact Peter Reynolds

11 Nov **Monthly Club Meeting** (2008-014)

Start: 7:30 PM
Description: Deakin Sports and Social Club

29 - 30 Nov **Blue Waterholes** (2008-062)

Trip Leader: Michael Patrick
Email: Michael.patrick2@bigpond.com
Phone: 0412 377 942 (m)
Vehicles: 8
Grade: 2
Start: 8:30 AM

TRIPS AND EVENTS



Departure: Point Hut Crossing Car Park
Fuel: Full tank
Maps: Southern NSW
Requirements: Basic driver training, basic recovery gear, UHF radio, Aeroguard (horse flies are big) food and drink
Description: Blue Waterholes is located in the Kosciuszko National Park and has excellent camping facilities. The plan is to depart Point Hut crossing and head to the southern side of Namadgi National Park. Whilst passing through this area we will check out Bobyan hut. We will then transit through Yaouk valley to Adaminby. From there we will head up the Snowy Mountain Highway and turn onto Long Plain track. This area has lots of old homesteads so we will view these on the way to Blue Waterholes. There is a lot to see from Blue Waterholes and the caves that are abundant in this area. We will depart Sunday after lunch and proceed via Long Plains and Broken Cart back to Canberra. This is a very easy trip and off road camper trailers are welcome.

29 Nov Driver Trainer's Christmas Party (2008-067)

Trip Leader: Peter Reynolds
Email: debpete1@bigpond.com
Phone: 6251 1258 (h); 0428 623 458 (m)

6 - 7 Dec Christmas Party at Talooge (2008-031)

Trip Leader: Richard Brand
Email: trips@st4wdc.org
Phone: 0418 568 358 (m)
Vehicles: Unlimited
Grade: 1
Start: 8:30 AM
Departure: Williamsdale
Fuel: Full tank
Requirements: UHF radio, happy hour provisions, pot luck main course, lunches and breakfast. Also a secret wrapped present for each child you are bringing, plus an inventive wrapped grown-up present valued under \$15. Table decorations
Description: Two packed days of fun for children and adults alike. Kids games will be followed by games for kids-at-heart. Santa will visit, there will be the Gift Grab, kid's movies then the communal dinner following happy hour. Best table decoration, club-provided desserts and camp-fire camaraderie take us through to the "Morning-after Funkana". Bigger and better than ever, this will test your driving skills, patience, trust and communication abilities as never before. Not to be missed.

9 Dec Monthly Club Meeting (2008-015)

Start: 7:30 PM
Description: Deakin Sports and Social Club

TRIPS AND EVENTS



Important Notice—Bendethra and Blue Waterholes Trips

Due to data loss on my laptop, I have lost all nominations for the Bendethra Caves Trip 16-17 Aug and Blue Waterholes 29-30 Nov can all nominees please resend to me their nominations.

Michael Patrick 041 237 7941

email michael.patrick2@bigpond.com

Stop Press this baiting program may still be continuing when the magazine reaches your mailbox, so please make a note.

A feral pig poisoning program will be conducted in Brindabella National Park and State Conservation Area. After free feeding with grain, 1080 bait will be used in targeted areas starting on approximately Thursday the 22nd July 2008.

The following trails will be affected by the baiting program: Gentle Annie Trail, Waterfall Fire Trail, McIntyres Trail, Lowells Flat Trail, Mitchells Ringings Trail, and Firebreak Trail. If free feed is taken in the vicinity of McIntyres Flat and Lowells Flat, and these campgrounds are targeted for poison baits, then the areas and associated trails will have to be closed to the public for 24-48 hours.

Powerline Trails—message from NPWS

Dear Rosemary,

Thanks for getting back to me with the location of the trails accessed by Richard Arranz and his group. These trails are access trails for the powerlines. They are heavily degraded. NSW NPWS is currently in discussion with the energy providers regarding maintenance, or potential closure of these trails due to environmental concerns.

We would appreciate if you could notify your members that these trails are for management rather than recreational use, and although there is no signage or barriers we would appreciate if your members did not access these trails due to their degraded nature and the environmental impacts resulting from their use.

Thanks for your assistance with this matter.

Susannah Power

Ranger Alps

Queanbeyan Area, NPWS

Department of Environment and Climate Change

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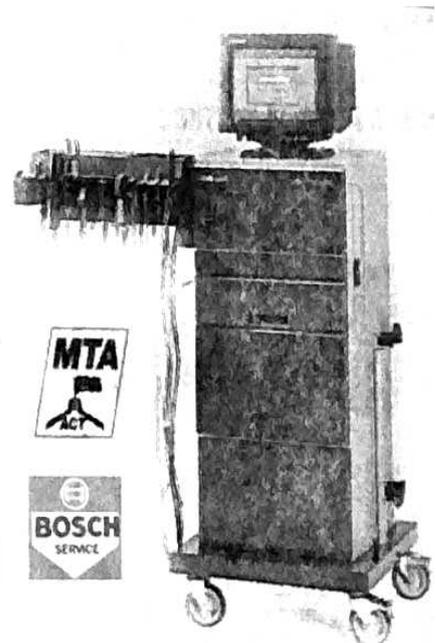
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The Simpson Desert

Continued from July



Tuesday 22nd April - 134kms, 4hrs.

Underway again on the Rig Road and we paused for a photo opportunity at Moakri emergency airstrip and the memorial to Jaroslav Edward Pecanek (Mr Peck).

By mid morning we'd joined the French Line for the 100kms push west to Dalhousie Springs. We stopping at the capped Purni Bore which has a controlled water flow supporting an interesting walk through the back country 'wetlands'. The old hot shower, laundry and bush camp facilities are as they were last time... ordinary. But then someone suggested that this would be a golden opportunity to press-gang a few into using the shower. Animals.

There's a signposted bypass, the Bingy Lowe Track, on the French/Spring Creek Delta Track. At the time we passed through, it made an interesting short northern loop to our wanderings. As with most dirt tracks, corrugations are competently supported by



On the edge of a 2 metre blow hole - WAA

bulldust holes, especially at the western end. Making the right turn to rejoin the Delta Track, we were totally engulfed by thick clouds of self generated bulldust.

And then there's Dalhousie Springs. Under

cover, well maintained hot showers, proper flushing loos, laundry sinks and solar lighting.

Some areas are fenced, limiting the number back-of-vehicle campers per site. Each area has a camp fire pit with steel fittings (bring wood).

Then there's that 38 degree thermal loitering pool. We bludged here for 2 nights.

People, with a strikingly different aroma and skin tone, turned up for happy hour and the evenings communal dinner.

A useful tool at Dalhousie is the card phone. From here we arranged Hotel accommodation at William Creek for Thursday night, rang mum and the grandkids.

With PJ's fuel light permanently ablaze since the turn onto the French Line, we poured in the last 20 litres of fuel to cover the 140kms to the next bowser.

Thursday 24th April - 391kms, 9hrs.

Refreshed and invigorated, we set off to William Creek Hotel.

Our first stop was Dalhousie Homestead Ruins where we regrouped with Charles and Terry. They'd departed the evening before in order to enjoy the Ruins at dawn and to be entertained by the local dingo's territorial love songs.

Having spent an hour at Dalhousie HS, we pushed onto the old Ghan's Pedirka Siding ruin and spent half-an-hour investigating and photographing this location.

Then we hit Oodnadatta at lunch and immediately pulled PJ up at the diesel pump. After pouring in all the fuel it could possibly hold, we calculated that there was 8 usable litres (50kms) left in the tank. Price tag: \$242.50 at

The Simpson Desert

Continued from July



\$1.94 per litre.

A quick check amongst the convoy found that most vehicles only managed 5kms per litre or less for the crossing.

(PJ's average consumption for all other trips, including the 3,750kms of the Gunbarrel and Canning Stock Route, had never fallen below 6.3 kms per litre despite carrying more weight.)

A one and a half hour lunch stop with time to partake in the delights of a mega burger, with all the trimmings the Pink Roadhouse could provide. Much too big to eat normally - At last, real food. To aid digestion, there was a town waddle before setting off to enjoy a smoko break at the old Ghan's Algebuckina Bridge over the Neals River.

Pushing on we arrived at William Creek Hotel just on 5:45 to our pre-booked accommodation and a the prospect of a nice hot shower, followed by a cooked Hotel meal, to be washed down with one of South Australia's finest... Well, that was the plan.

While having a happy hour drink, and to our amazement, we were told that they had expected us last night. There wasn't enough accommodation available but you can have the keys to



the

South on the K1

available rooms later... To clean up before dinner, you'll find the shower block out the back. On inspection they were found to be absolutely filthy and without lighting. We were then told to use the showers somewhere across the road in the (dimly lit) van park. Also, the last meal orders are taken at 7pm. Current time, 6:45...

So much for settling into our rooms, dumping our bags, a shower and a quick clean-up before dinner. Further, we respectfully enquired - Will there be some sort of ANZAC Day gathering in the morning? Oh... That was held that yesterday (the 24th..??)!

Not much use going on about it, suffice to say it's an interesting style of (non)service from those whose main source of income is us - the travelling public. Sigh.

Compared to our delightful experiences and conditions encountered in May 2001, our current recommendation is to seek the delights of a Neals River bush camp and stopover at the Creek for smoko.

Friday 25th April - 406kms, 8.5hrs.

And so, as it had been resolved amongst us all, that on this morning we from Australia and Canada would gather by the shade of the parking meter tree for a moment to pay tribute to our countries fallen.

"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old; Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning We will remember them" were the familiar words spoken by Wal.

This was followed by the appropriate one minute of silence. Our observance of Remembrance Day.

And thus at 9am we saddled up for the drive

The Simpson Desert

Continued from July



down the next third of the Oodnadatta Track towards the township of Parachilna.

Having now crossed the heart of the desert, Smoko and Snobben continued their progress, while others stopped over at Coward Springs for a look around. These Springs were followed by visits to Mound Springs, The Bubbler and Curdimurka Siding. Wal and Lyn had been to the Siding to attend an outback fund raising ball a while back. Shame, a few years ago the ball was closed down.

As the now three vehicles progressed we encountered our Chris & Julie on the side of the track with a flat... not once but twice. We'd travelled some 3,500kms without a flat and poor Chris had 2 in the space of 50 kilometres. From then on he and Julie rejoined the convoy to the blacktop without further mishap.



Simpson Dunes

Around 1:35pm we reached Marree for lunch. Where? The Marree Hotel naturally. "Normally lunch finishes at 1:30, but we'll never turn a customer away". And "we've heard a few of those stories about those up the road."

Chris got his tyre fixed while we waited at the Marree Hotel over lunch.

After the refreshing experiences at Marree, we still had about 180kms to Parachilna. We briefly stopped at Lyndhurst to do the tyres, ice creams and fuel.

Here we temporarily farewelled Charles, who was bound for an overnigher in the Gammon Ranges to the east.

We hit the blacktop south and arrived at Prairie Hotel just in time to join the gathered being consumed by another magic sunset.

After sharing an enjoyable sunset, we dumped our bags in our rooms, took to the hot showers and refreshed, sat down to a most enjoyable hot a dinner.

26 April - Parachilna to Burra, 389kms 8.33hrs.

After the Hotel's breakfast, Chris and Julie headed for home while Heinz & PJ diverted into the Flinders Ranges via Brachina Gorge.

We caught up with Mike and Trish for lunch at Wilpena Pound, while Terry was sorting out a climb to the top of St Mary Peak.

Just prior to departing, Charles rejoined us and we enjoyed his overnight encounters in the Gammons.

It was while pushing on towards Burra, that we had a radio conversation with Terry. He had made it to the top of the Peak and was using a handheld to transmit to us... some 60 kilometres south of his position. What an astounding range for a handheld.

Six days ago on the French Line, we were enduring 58 degrees of heat in the sun. Today we're down to 10 degrees supported by an Antarctic blast, some welcome rains and the first

The Simpson Desert

Continued from July



snows of the season.

27 April - Mildura, 356kms 5.5hrs,

28 April - Hay, 295kms 3.5hrs, and then

29 April - Canberra, 534kms 7.5hrs.

And so it was in these cold & snowy conditions we were forced to motel Burra, Mildura and Hay on the way to Canberra.

For those planning a desert trip, we offer the following figures for consideration...

PJ's on the road expenses were about...

Fuel 43% - \$1,300

Accommodation 27% - \$800

Eating out & drinks 25% - \$740

Tourist & supplies 5% - \$160

Alternatively, bank on spending at least \$1,000 per week on the road costs - April 2008.

Note: The following are approximates only...

Desert water used, litres: PJ 50, Charlie 40, Snobben 50, Heinz 70, Smoko 40

Fuel per litre cost range: From \$1.58 to \$1.94

Total fuel cost: PJ \$1,310, Charlie \$1,675, Heinz \$2,202, Snobben \$1,500

Total fuel litres used: PJ 763, Smoko 724, Charlie 1,031, Heinz 1,462, Snobben 935

Fuel litres per 100 avg: PJ 14.10, Smoko 13.86, Charlie 14.94, Heinz 19.81, Snobben 17.00

Total kms: PJ 5,414, Smoko 5,230, Charlie 6,830, Heinz 7,378, Snobben 5,500

Fees:

Simpson Desert Parks Pass - \$90

Bollards Lagoon's Bore Track - \$10

Accommodation costs:

Cabin:

Nyngan - \$85

Motels:

Tibooburra - \$80

William Creek - \$50

Parachilna - \$145

Burra - \$108

Mildura - \$112.50

Hay - \$81

Homestay:

Cooper Creek Homestay - \$95

Camp grounds:

Innaminka - \$5 per person per night

Birdsville - \$25 per camp per night

Bush camp - 9 free camps

The group's breakdowns:

Air compressor cylinder unfastened

Brakes needed adjusting

Collapsed starting battery

Clutch & pressure plate replaced

Cracked headlight lens

Electric window switch failed

Failed spotlight

Leaking fuel pump

Door mechanism jammed

Rear shock absorbers failed/replaced

Two punctures

Window winder regulator failed

The Joy of Camping

Gwen Henderson



I have never wanted to go camping, I did it once with my father in one of those old tents, you know white walls and green roof, no floor, on the banks of Burrenjack, it must have been the early sixties! The temperature seemed like minus sixties - never again, if it did not have an en suite I was not going.

Pete loved camping, sorry love, no ensuite - I don't go! Then one momentous day we went for a picnic out to Wee Jasper Caves and then decided to stop at Billy Grace Reserve for a look see on the way home, I thought it was just lovely and said the fateful words "this is so lovely I think even I could camp here".

The following week Pete went shopping and we were camping at Billy Grace that week end. No showers there then, cooking over the fire, with 3 small children, their holidays were never the same again. We managed to fit all the camping gear and 3 small children into the Volvo station wagon, it was easier on the way there than on the way back, how come it never fitted on the way back? Then we broke an engine mount on that ROUGH road (sealed these days) - I was hooked!

Progressing to 4wd and camper trailer we have so many family memories to cherish, and it is usually the challenges we remember not the perfect weather. Here are a few of our most memorable.

Our first trip to the centre was when the middle of Australia seemed to be underneath a cyclone, we could not see the Rock until we were next to it, and everyone kept saying how lucky we were to see the purple rock with waterfalls, I was unconvinced - why I can see waterfalls at home without the rain. Setting up at Yulara was lovely, the awning had got a little wet on the underside as we packed up at Kulgera so it acted like a sieve when the torrential rain at the rock hit it, and those lovely children stayed out of the way while we "calmly" set up by sitting in the car and complained about the cold. Very memorable.

Another memorable time was at Coward Springs on the Oodnadatta Track, such a lovely campsite. We were there with another family, they were singing made up washing up songs while doing the dishes after a shared baked dinner over the camp fire when their son and I saw the most amazing shooting star! All were envious, so the next couple of hours we all

sat along the fence line as if we were at the pictures watching the sky, we saw nothing but lots of stars and just chatted. Moments like that are priceless.

One of my most and least favourite was the time we went on a recce of the Turtle Fire trail. Before camper trailer, in the tent with the 3 rug rats and 2 dogs, one of which was prone to car sickness (both children and dogs!!). We thought we were very clever managing this, youngest child kept the dog on her lap and when she noticed his tummy contracting she would put the handy icecream container to his mouth and he would very neatly vomit into it. (you can take the family pets on recce's) We camped near the river at the top of the Turtle, all was well until the morning, Mum and Dad toiling away packing up, one sibling tells on the other, ##\$%^ did a p%^& in



Ferry across the Jardine River, road to the Cape

the bush and didn't bury it and dog number 2 ate it! Yeah whatever, stay away from the river.

All packed up on the road nothing more was said. As we started the Turtle, youngest child yells dog is going to be sick! Projectile vomit across the back of the drivers seat! Dad says that doesn't smell like sick. Can't stop, children screaming, dog heaving, no where to stop until the bottom! You have never seen five people exit a car so quickly at the bottom. Moral of the story bury it or listen to your children or don't take dogs who suffer from car sickness. I have never liked the Turtle since (now closed to protect the environment).

Another of our earliest memories was the time at

The Joy of Camping

Gwen Henderson



Camp on the OTL, Cape York

Bournda, children very young, son took some asthma medication he really did not need, swinging on tent poles and bouncing around the campsite while we were setting up. Dad bought them all torches, kids thought this was great and wouldn't turn them off. Dad said put them somewhere safe until it gets dark. Mum and Dad had invested in a brand new camp oven, put it on the fire to cure, golly that camp oven smelled funny just like melting plastic, you can guess the safe place son put his torch! Don't you just love camping with kids??

And then there is more, you wouldn't be dead for quids! We went to the Cape, with another family, and what Cape trip would be complete without a trip out to Thursday Island. A guy called Tim came around the park offering us a trip out to TI, including snorkelling, fishing, (guaranteeing enough for dinner) Horn Island and lunch at the pub, all for the same price as a plain boring ride on the ferry sans snorkeling, fishing and lunch at the pub, we were in!

The fishing and snorkeling were as promised, fantastic. At Horn Island we were referred to as Turnover Tim's group, that was disturbing as we had to get back to the mainland, Oh well we will ask Tim later. As we neared Thursday Island Tim told us the jetty was a couple of K's from the pub so he would bring the boat in close to the pub and we could wade ashore! Very elegant. Said go into the beer

garden at the back, ever the obedient tourists we did as we were told.

Picture this, 4 adults and 4 teenage tourists looking very bedraggled after fishing and snorkeling, still wet from wading ashore wander through the pub to the beer garden (the Federal Hotel, if you've been to TI) where there is lovely island music playing and it is packed with islanders at tables having a great time, luckily there was a spare table! Isn't this lovely we thought! We organised ourselves around the table, borrowing chairs from various other tables, sat down, the Dads took drink orders. We smiled at the islanders, they were so friendly! Dads went to the bar, came back, sorry, this is a private function for the island pensioners, we had to leave. You've seen dogs with their tails between their legs? That is how we felt! We had lunch in the front bar and it was nice.

Turns out Tim did get his name from tuning over his boat but that is another story.

These are just a few highlights some of you were there. You wouldn't be dead for quids would you? And it seems that the kids weren't scarred for life from our camping adventures! They are really quite normal now - why they won't go camping at all! But we are still loving it.



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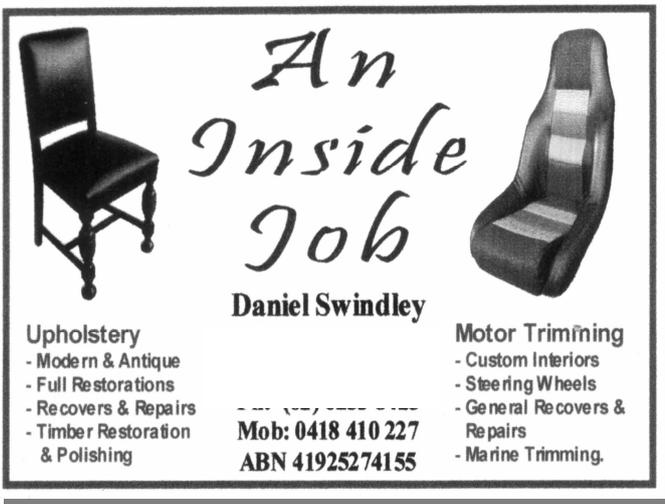


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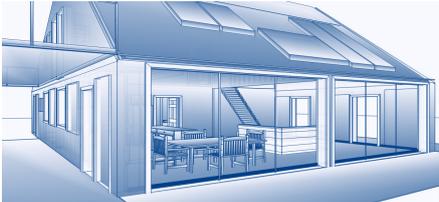
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First year membership \$330.00 - Ongoing Years \$100.00

The Club membership year is from 1 January to 31 December. **(Rates effective from 1 January 2004.)**

Please forward this form and your cheque / money order to ST4WDC at the above address.

Membership entitles the member and partner to attend the Club's training courses, including Basic 4WD Vehicle Operation Course, Very Difficult Terrain and Advanced Recovery, River Crossings, Sand Driving, Mud and Snow Driving, Navigation, Map Reading and GPS courses.

Full membership of the Club (and participation as a driver on Grade 2-5 trips) requires successful completion of the Club's training courses according to the Trip Grading shown elsewhere in this magazine, or recognised equivalent prior learning / qualification approved by the Club's Education Coordinator.

Following the Club's acceptance of your membership application, you should contact the Club's Education Coordinator (Mr Peter Reynolds, 6251 1258 AH or 0428 623 458 to be allocated the next available position on a scheduled Basic course are unable to attend the allocated course, you will be allocated the next available position on a later course.

Member 1: (Preferred first name, last name)

Member 2: (Preferred first name, last name)

.....

Address:

Suburb: State: Postcode:

Preferred contact phone:(h)(w)(m)

E-mail:

Vehicle Make: **Model:** **Registration number:**

(Optional) Personal Details: Member 1 Member 2

(Occupation)

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(Relevant skills / additional info)

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How did you find out about the ST4WDC ?

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Upon acceptance of this application, then for the duration of my membership, I agree to abide by the Constitution of the Southern Tablelands Four Wheel Drive Club Inc, together with any Club By-laws as they apply from time to time.

Signed: (Member 1)..... Date:

Signed: (Member 2)..... Date:

Form & fees received: Fees forwarded to Treasurer:.....

Membership database updated: Membership package despatched:

Membership Card: Receipt Number:

Training Surcharge (\$200) paid Total received: \$.....

Other comments: