



SOUTHERN TRAILS

ISSUE 349 June 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— 10th June.

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

Many members contribute photos to Southern Trails. Special thanks this month to Mick Hines.

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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!!

ROSEMARY'S RAMBLINGS

Rosemary Orr



Autumn – Canberra at its best – sunny crisp days and chilly nights. It's a pity that the next step is winter, when we all seem to hibernate. But it's a great time for planning so when spring and summer come we can move ahead to bigger and better things.

Much discussion has taken place recently in relation to our Website. Your committee is investigating ways to make this a much better tool to serve and support the club. So if you have any ideas, or have any expertise in this area, we would love to hear from you. In this electronic age our Website should be somewhere we all go on a regular basis to see what is happening in the Club. So let's have all of your ideas – BURY ME IN THEM!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

In the coming months we will also be looking at more improvements to Talooge to improve some of the facilities we already have there. We are looking to improve the camping facilities and opening up more areas for camping. Our property is a wonderful asset and we would love to see more members of our Club enjoy the peace and tranquility of this lovely part of Australia.

The Balloon event is over for another year. The weather was not as kind to us this time around but a good time was had by all. I have been crewing for my pilot "Mac" for a number of years now and it is always a thrill to see our balloon in the sky over Canberra. For those who did not take part this year – mark the event in your calendar for next year and become a balloonaholic!!

Our next major event is Christmas in July at Laurel Hill Forest Lodge. This is a great weekend away with lots of fun and great food. Make sure you put your name down early so you don't miss out.

Well guys and gals this is short and sweet this month. So until next time enjoy the bush!

Rosemary



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SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

8th July, 2008



The Southern Tablelands Four wheel Drive Club will conduct a Special General Meeting on Tuesday 8 July 2008, commencing at 7.30 pm at the Deakin Football Club. The sole purpose of the meeting is to discuss and, if considered appropriate, approve changes to the Constitution of the Club relating to the definition of what constitutes a "Family Member". The impact of the changes is to clarify which members of a 'family' are entitled to the benefits of membership. These changes have been previously agreed by the Committee.

The normal monthly meeting will follow the completion of this Special General meeting.

The proposed changes relate to Rule 6(4) of the Constitution and if approved would read

Family Member

Family membership is extended to those persons who are the spouse, partner or dependent under the age of 21 years of an owner-member and are domiciled under the same roof.

Any family member meeting the requirements of rule 6(2) shall have the full privileges of a member as specified in rule 6(2). The spouse, including any person in a recognised domestic relationship, of an owner-member has all the privileges of an owner-member provided he or she is of sufficient age to obtain a licence to drive in Australia.

Moved by Jim Raleigh, seconded by John Kjar.

The change will be effective if it is passed by at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the votes of those members of the Club who, being entitled to vote, vote in person. There are no provisions for proxy votes. Owner Members and Life Members are entitled to vote on this motion.

Please note the existing Constitution and By-laws can be downloaded from the Club's webpage.



TALOOGIE TOPICS

John Kjar



Many of you would be aware the Committee has appointed me to act as Property Co-ordinator. I intend to be very much a co-ordinator and will need your ideas and assistance to implement an ambitious program of activities in 2008.

I would also like to publicly acknowledge the very fine work carried out by Jim Raleigh in establishing a structure for the Talooie operations, the planning and the huge amount of work he has facilitated at Talooie over the past three years.

The Committee has requested me to bring forward a plan for the development of Thurbon Flat (the large, relatively flat area about 200 to 400 metres below the Driver Training shed) that will encourage members to use the areas for camping and related activities rather than the area near the Driver Training and storage sheds. Shade, views, shelters, toilets, showers and firepits are seen as desirable for 'major' camping areas and we want to also provide some smaller minimal impact camp sites. A possible plan was discussed at the May general meeting and we hope to announce the final plan soon. We will then be calling on members to assist in the implementation.

The Committee has also agreed in principle to purchase a tractor and appropriate attachments to help with land care (eg mowing/slashing the grass/weeds, moving dirt, carrying heavy things, etc. We are currently looking at possibilities – if anyone knows of a suitable tractor etc please contact me asap.

We have also agreed to fund considerable additional work to be undertaken by the land Care Group at Talooie (including spraying, weeding, planting, watering etc). Your assistance in their activities would also be appreciated by us and future generations.

In addition to the need for help on the big picture items on Thurbon Flat and Land care, we need to finish off several projects in the existing facilities near the Driver Training shed.

We would be grateful if you could supply any of the requirements listed below, and also for offers to undertake the installation of these items:

additional lights in the kitchen area of the Driver Training shed

complete the lining of the kitchen area of the Driver Training shed (to replace the tilt-a-door at the western end)

water supply to the kitchen in the Driver Training shed

guttering, downpipe and a 44 gallon drum with a tap to enable us to store and utilise the runoff from the roofs of two toilets

simple shower shed/enclosure on Thurbon Flat

a passage set of door handles on one of the toilet doors in the Driver Training area

an air compressor to reinflate tyres after a busy tour around Talooie

supply of fire fighting equipment such as rake hoes.

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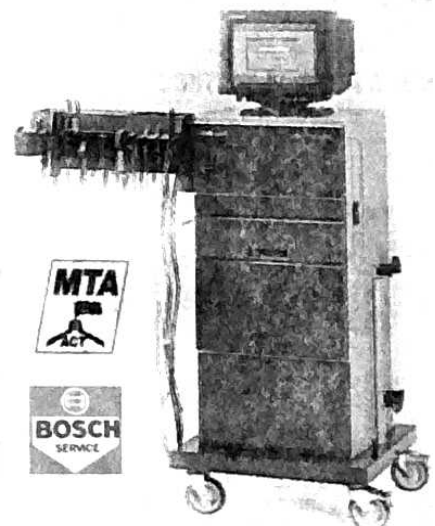
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PUBLICATIONS

John Wiseman



We're hoping to inject a bit more life into Southern Trails, some new ideas and hopefully some articles exploring new and interesting areas. Thanks to those who have contributed the technical articles in recent issues. Please keep them coming. Who will offer some insights on communications, HF radio v's satellite phone for remote travelling, internet access for travellers,? What's happening to EPIRBs, indeed, what are they? What about tyres – why are some \$150, others the same size \$300 or more, and what do all those markings mean? (Or is it all marketing hype and good enough so long as it's round and black?).

Opinion pieces are welcome too and this month we have an interesting article on fuel prices, a topic close to our hearts (or wallets) as the travelling season approaches.

Another area we'd like to develop is Travellers Tales, coming from the many trips undertaken by members outside the club trip system. This month some interesting fuel consumption statistics are presented; these were contributed following a recent Simpson trip by several members.

During coming months while Val and I are exploring the top of WA, Southern Trails will be produced by

Peter Henderson and Michael Patrick. Thank you both. Michael has suggested that we should routinely aim to hand over production for a month or more to those who'd like to try their hand at such an artistic expression. This we'd like to do, partly to build a pool of expertise, but especially so new ideas can be injected into our magazine. We recognise that the views of a retired couple aren't really representative of the many "less mature" members!

Speaking of artistic expression, there are moves afoot to mount a public exhibition of members' photos, which I think is a top idea. Among our members are some very skilled photographers, some ex-professional, whose work is very impressive and worthy of exhibiting. Its public display would raise the Club's profile too. I'd like to see a workshop day set up as well, so that we less impressive photographers can benefit from the artistic expertise of other members.

For now, please keep the material flowing in, early rather than dead on time, and NEVER late! Thank you Michael and Peter for taking over Southern Trails while we escape the Canberra winter – we look forward to some innovations! For now, we're off to follow the sun.

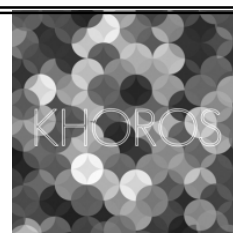
John Wiseman



KHOROS

An exhibition

8 am – 4pm daily, 31st May to 29th June
Art-Inn Café Diakonia - Scullin Shopping Centre



Khoros (a Greek word meaning chorus) refers to the "chorus" of artists making art as individuals but together providing a chorus in which viewers perceive the merged beauty of Australian nature and environment.

This is a group exhibition by 15 artists sharing their appreciation of Australian wildlife, nature and environment with the community. Many of the artists, who include ST4WDC members, are members of Wildlife and Botanical Artists Inc. (www.waba.net.au)



EVENTS AND TRIPS

Richard Brand



Keeping us on Track

Snowy Mountains Challenge

Off-road competitions are apparently the fastest growing motor sport in Australia and it is not hard to see why. For spectators, conventional track racing usually turns into a boring procession of vehicles punctuated by occasional drama, while rally spectators usually get a glimpse of action between long waits. Events like the Snowy Mountain Challenge let spectators see close up the engineering that goes into highly specialized vehicles achieving amazing feats at low speed over near-impossible terrain. Club members even have a chance to get paid to spectate – see the trip calendar for details.



For competitors the cost of setting up a vehicle will run into several tens of thousands of dollars, but this is cheap compared with most other motor sport, and what some spend on big boys toys.

Ballooning expenses

Those crewing for the National Autumn Balloon Spectacular got the chance of flying from Dick Smith's place just outside Gundaroo, and seeing first hand the sorts of toys big money can buy. Apart from a full size tarmac airstrip, Dick has a replica vintage aerodrome including a Biggles and Co workshop, club house, vintage plane and hangar, all immaculately presented. A garden railway loops around at the back of the aerodrome and heads off towards the homestead. This is a full-size narrow gauge set-up, not a model! It was a real privilege being there and highlights the special places being active in the club can take you.

Ballooning is not usually a cheap sport either, but my young Gold Coast pilot just picked up a second-hand balloon envelope for the price of a couple of tanks of diesel, which must be the deal of the century. Being in the right place at the right time obviously still works, and he has his eye on a basket at about the same price.

Mind you, diesel is rapidly turning into liquid gold. When it costs fractions of a grand to fill up, many people must have second thoughts about going on a trip. I'd be interested in hearing how you feel about

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
Neville Simpson	6295 9021		bl.ng@bigpond.net.au
Dennis Collins	6292 7423	0418 969 452	margden1@actewagl.net.au
Chris Nicholls			calypsol@gmail.com
Doreen & Plod McEnroe	6241 8188	0429 008 436	doreen.mcenroe@act.gov.au
Neil Telfer	62919683	0427 263 805	ntelfer@tpg.com.au
David Whight		0438 882 696	tdavidwhight@hotmail.com

how this affects trip participation. It does seem odd that a tank of fuel can now cost the same as a new tyre or half a brand-new electric winch from China.

Night driving

I thoroughly enjoyed Rob Tiele's Brindabella night drive, and I am delighted that Val Brusensky has proposed leading his thirteenth trip, this time going down to Canooli at night.

For Rob's trip, I fitted new IPF low-beam headlamp inserts with a very wide light spread to replace a failed Toyota sealed beam unit on my old 80-series. Expensive at about the price of a full tank, but worth it!

Incidentally, seeing sideways and even backwards can be far more important on fire trails and bush tracks than on the road. A good handheld spotlight or torch can help, but Rob impressed us all with reversing lights which equal some headlamps in power.

The bush takes on a completely new, somewhat magical, character when seen in the close-up of vehicle lighting. At night it is easy to become fooled into believing the track in front of you is flat, the same way photographs rarely convey the feeling of slope, even in extreme situations.

Photography

Talking of photography, we have some superb photographers in the club and now there is a chance for some public recognition. Club member Oung Niennattrakul (mobile 0407 549 429, home phone 6259 0081, email e:oung.artinn@gmail.com) also organizes visual art exhibitions for the Art Inn Café Diakonia at the Scullin Shopping Centre.

She would like to organize an exhibition of photographic works by ST4WD club members in the August – September time frame. This could be a great opportunity to further publicise the club and the many interests we represent. We could also combine it with a general meeting talk on photography. Oung and our public relations officer Mick Hines, who recently took the best ballooning photographs I have seen, would like to hear from you.

Private Trips

Many members are heading off on extended private trips to escape the Canberra winter, and who can blame them? Of course, from time to time the issue of club

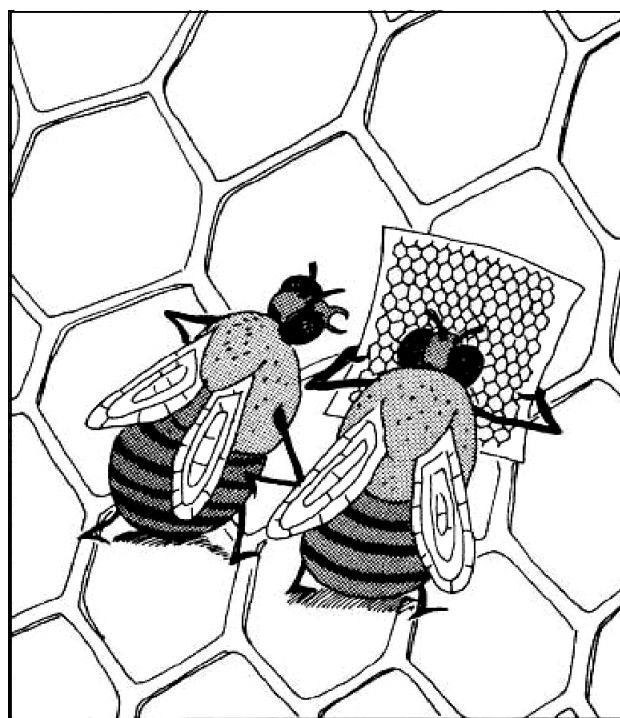
versus private trips raises heated debate. As the person responsible for trying to ensure there is an adequate supply of club trips, you would probably expect me to pressure members to turn their private trips into club trips open to all club members, but this is far from my personal view.

I see absolutely nothing wrong with compatible club mates teaming up and heading off on private outings, especially if they have received the benefits of club training and shared club experiences. That is fundamentally what the club is about – preparing people for great adventures. There is better safety in numbers, so joining together with capable friends to tackle the outback makes great sense.

Equally, I imagine that opening up that long planned "trip-of-a-lifetime" to all comers could be quite risky from a personality management point of view. Although club policy is that trip leaders can always decide who goes on a trip, in reality it is much harder to say no than yes.

Members who do not get invited to join private trips may well feel left out or disadvantaged. The answer is pretty straightforward – become well known and active by participating in, or leading, club events. You will quickly find your own set of compatible mates!

Richard Brand
Events and Trips Coordinator



So, Where are we exactly?



Christmas in July

*12th - 13th July
Laurel Hill Forest Lodge
Tumbarumba*

*Join us for a fun - filled weekend.
A leisurely drive through our beautiful countryside,
Enjoying a lunchbreak in a scenic spot
And arrive just in time for a delectable Afternoon Tea.
Time to choose and settle in to your accommodation then
participate in some fun activity until Happy Hour and preparation
for a mouth - watering Three Course Dinner.
To complete the evening, join everyone in some great activities.*

*The next day, after an appetising breakfast, there will be two
options to return home, either quickly, or at a more meandering
pace.*

*What you need to bring
A great attitude and sense of humour
"Santa's Helper" theme clothing for Saturday Dinner,
Morning Tea /Lunch for Saturday & Sunday (if you can fit it in)*

*Please contact Marj Jones on 62843456 /0427284236
and book your place*

Cost will be \$65 - \$70 a head.

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



10 Jun **Monthly Club Meeting**

(2008-009)

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

20 - 22 Jun **Snowy Mountains Challenge**

(2008-063)

Trip Leader: Chris Nash
Phone: 6230 2227 (h); 0438 418 011 (m)
Departure: Dromore Road, Cooma - off Monaro Highway 19Km N of Cooma
Requirements: For competitors, highly modified vehicles and \$400 entry fee.
For spectators, \$15 entry fee with under 16s free.
For Club Members who want to help, \$100 payment for services.
Description: Part of the Engel 2008 4WD Challenge Series, this will sort the boys and their toys. High up in the rocky hills of Cooma the best will fight it out again. Be there for the battle of Tough Truck against Challenge Truck, Victoria versus New South Wales. Held on club member Chris Nash's private rock farm, spectators are welcome on the Saturday and Sunday. Overnight camping is available. For more details see www.ccda4wd.com.au. This is the fastest growing motor sport in Australia, and is probably both the most spectacular and the safest.
Comments: Assistance is required to ferry spectators from the parking area to the competition areas. Club members willing to use their own vehicles to ferry spectators will be reimbursed \$100 for the weekend.

8 Jul **Monthly Club Meeting**

(2008-010)

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

12 - 13 Jul **Christmas in July**

(2008-018)

Trip Leader: Marj Jones
Phone: 6284 3456
Vehicles: unlimited
Grade: 1
Start: 8:15 AM
Departure: Uriarra Homestead
Fuel: Full tank
Requirements: Well maintained vehicle, good tyres, water for the day, morning tea plus lunch for both days, and bring happy hour nibbles and drinks for the evening
Bring your own bedding for the supplied bunks
Description: A four-year old 'tradition' in the making! Great drives there and back, in 'easier' and 'harder' convoys. We stay overnight in bunkhouses in a converted low-security gaol "Laurel Hill Forest Lodge" set in picturesque alpine grounds - see <http://www.laurelhillforestlodge.com.au/index.htm>. Our hosts provide warm scones and cream on arrival, a great 3-course Christmas dinner and a memorable breakfast to set us up for the trip home. Unspeakable games have been played into the early hours. A great social weekend with a choice of easy or harder drives there and back
Comments: Costs \$65 per person which is unbelievably cheap for accommodation, tea, dinner and breakfast. Please book as soon as possible so numbers can be locked down at the gaol!

TRIPS AND EVENTS



25 - 27 Jul Canooli

(2008-060)

Trip Leader: Val Brusensky
 Phone: 6231 9878 (h); 0428 880 233 (m)
 Vehicles: 6
 Grade: 3
 Start: 6:30 PM
 Departure: Corner Captain's Flat Road and Kings Highway outside Queanbeyan
 Fuel: Full tank, maybe extra for petrols
 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: To make the most of the weekend, this trip will feature a night drive getting to Canooli. Easy driving to Hoskinstown then the Big Badja Fire Trail.

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, 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/>

23 - 24 Aug Bendethera Caves

(2008-061)

Trip Leader: Michael Patrick
 Email: Michael.patrick2@bigpond.com
 Phone: 0412 377 942 (m)
 Vehicles: 8
 Grade: 2
 Start: 8:30 AM
 Departure: McDonalds Car Park Queanbeyan
 Fuel: Full tank
 Maps: Southern NSW

TRIPS AND EVENTS



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

30 - 31 Aug "Safe One" Basic Driver Training at Talooge Park (

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

6 Sep "Safe One" Basic Driver Training Course Follow-up Day

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

20 - 21 Sep Bush Skills Weekend at Talooge

(2008-028)

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.

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

TRIPS AND EVENTS



4 - 6 Oct **Labour Day long weekend** ()

25 - 26 Oct **Water Crossing and Sand Driving Course** (2008-030)

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

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. 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.

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

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.

TRIPS AND EVENTS



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

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

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.

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.

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WE WON'T LET YOU DOWN.

Rising fuel costs – what crisis?

John Kjar

Daily we hear that petrol and diesel costs are high and rising (\$3.20/l on the Canning Stock Route), peak oil has arrived (ie oil supplies will decline from now on) and, coupled with escalating interest rates, grocery costs increasing, taxes increasing, family budgets are stretched, we have to reduce our greenhouse emissions (less farting and less 4WDing) – what is the future for us the endangered species of 4 WDers, club trips and indeed the Club?

Sometimes we can be seduced by the doom and gloom of immediate events to the exclusion of taking a more balanced, longer term perspective. As a (former) (dry) economist involved in energy and oil policy matters, I have some views I thought it may be useful to share with you. In this article I will take the optimistic view rather than be pessimistic (economists always have two hands – some say one is to give and the other is to take) and hopefully stimulate some reaction and even a response in the next magazine!

Economists are aware of the power of prices in changing our spending patterns – higher prices encourage us to re-evaluate our priorities and we generally spend less on the goods after a price increase. So, for example, following the recent increase in oil/petrol prices it is likely we will travel less. Doesn't take much brains to work that out I hear you say. But how much of a reduction will occur? I believe it will be relatively small, compared with all the other potential influences going on. That prediction is

based on past observations from oil/petrol price increases – typically we huffed and puffed, changed the way we did some things and got on with life in the new environment. Despite dire predictions the world did not collapse.

So what things may we change in response to these higher prices? Firstly, yes we will reduce our travel – less or shorter overseas trips, maybe substitute a domestic holiday for an overseas one, yes some will also reduce their travel within Australia (eg shorter trips, less trips) But we also have a range of other measures to enable us to continue driving as we did before – eg we could better maintain our vehicle engines, drive our vehicles slower, use higher tyre pressures on the blacktop, share our vehicles with other (maybe paying) passengers, tow a smaller van or use a tent on trips and, when it comes to replacing our vehicle we could select a smaller and/or more fuel efficient vehicle (eg diesel) and also find that the higher petrol prices had depressed the market (and price) of 4WD vehicles. Sounds pretty glib I know, but these measures can have a major impact on fuel use (eg slower speeds and correct tyre pressures can reduce fuel consumption by 20%) – however it will require a change in attitudes on many fronts, and some will think the effort is not worth it - but that's your choice.

Taking a slightly wider perspective, oil prices have had a roller-coaster ride over the past 30 years – roughly peaking every

10-15 years and plumbing new lows 5-10 years later. Such lows may not happen this time but it is likely there will be some correction (ie reduction) in the oil price over the next 5 years or so (despite the rise and rise of China, India etc). Why can I be so confident of history repeating itself? Well, these high oil prices do work in encouraging explorers to find and develop more oil, and recover more oil from existing discoveries (in the US, when prices were low, they typically only recovered 35% of the oil found in the oil fields), clever people find and commercialise new ways to make transport fuels (we can expect to see more ethanol being used in our vehicles and less in our belly's, use of compressed natural gas will become more widespread, oil will be produced from coal (the Germans did it in WW2) and natural gas, we have more oil locked away in oil shales in Australia than all the oil in Saudi Arabia, and these technologies (and many more) will be assisted by the high oil prices. Further, vehicle manufacturers will spend more on improving the fuel usage rates of new vehicles. Governments are even offering (non means-tested) subsidies to convert our vehicles to LPG! Over the longer term (when many of us may be driving our 4WD's in the sky) fuel cells and hydrogen may be powering our engines. These responses will all work to moderate oil prices.

Another big picture view is to recognise that our incomes have been increasing and are likely to continue to increase. As these incomes exceed our basic requirements, further increases mean we have more money to spend on

discretionary items such as 4WD's and fuel, and to take more holidays and more travel – provided of course we have the time. Also, as our lifestyle in suburbia becomes 'softer', many of us still yearn for the outdoor challenges, the lure of the desert and remote/beautiful areas and a return to nature. And we are not getting any younger – there is a strong desire to do that big trip while still young and able to do so – as evidenced by the recent major increase in 'grey nomad' traffic all around Australia. Typically, these influences had a much greater (positive) impact than that from higher petrol prices.

Despite all the fuss about the high petrol costs, the Government continues to quietly pocket about 40% of the petrol price in the form of taxes and GST. But don't expect them to give it up any time soon. The tax revenues are too easily collected and this is (in treasury terms) an 'efficient' tax –

in that we don't change our usage patterns to any great extent when the tax/price increases (for reasons discussed above). It is quite likely the tax will increase further when greenhouse 'emission permits' are introduced – I expect the tax/price increase to be about another 5 cents per litre – again, not enough to change most people's patterns significantly.

So what are the implications for the Club?

First, I think whatever our views on the impacts of higher prices, the Club must continue to offer members a wide range of trips and let us, the members, choose which types of trips (long/short, remote/local etc) we want to participate in.

Second, we will continue to have a need to use Talooge – perhaps a greater need than at

present – for both 4WDing and relaxation (and escape from higher taxes/greenhouse gases etc).

Third I think we, as a club, could develop some guidelines for trips – such as encouraging members to adopt lower speeds (and this would also bring us good PR), some guidelines (not rules) in sharing our vehicles with other members (eg a mileage contribution to the vehicle owner), greater use of trip planning packages reducing the need for reccie trips, as well as more information to members on diesel vehicles, proper vehicle maintenance and blacktop tyre pressures (as well as off-road).

Am I off the planet? What are your views? I'm off taking my trip around Australia in my gas guzzling Landcruiser before petrol prices rise further!



Club Clothing

The Club clothing or a name badge can be ordered from Kathy Solomos at the monthly Meetings.
Payment for any item is expected when ordering.

Jackets	\$70.00
Shirts:	\$35.00
Vests:	\$45.00
Caps:	\$15.00
Hat:	\$15.00
Beanies:	\$15.00
Name Badges	\$10.00

Look for the sign on a table at Meetings



COONGIE LAKES AND SIMPSON CROSSING

Track Conditions and Fuel use. April 2008

John Haalebos



During April some friends and I did a trip to Birdsville, then crossed the Simpson going from east to west (said to be the harder way). For the club's information & convenience, the following is a report on the roads & tracks out west that we used:

10 April 08 - Bourke to Tibooburra via Wanaaring: Good, dry conditions

11 April 08 - Cameron Corner to Innamincka via the Bore Track: Excellent & dry conditions

12 April 08 - Cooper Creek at Innamincka: Water over the causeway around 300mm

12 April 08 - Innamincka to Coongie Lake: Good, dry conditions with waters flowing into the lake

15 April 08 - Coongie Lake to Innamincka: Good, dry conditions

15 April 08 - Cooper Creek at Innamincka: Water over the causeway about 300mm but going down

16 April 08 - Innamincka to Birdsville Track via Walkers Crossing Track: Excellent & dry conditions

16 April 08 - Cooper Creek at Walkers Crossing: Dry

16 April 08 - Birdsville inside track: Flooded & **closed** at Goyders Lagoon/Diamantina River crossing

16 April 08 - Birdsville Track from Goyders Lagoon turn off to Birdsville: Good, dry conditions

The Simpson Desert tracks - east to west:

18 April 08 - Birdsville to K1 via QAA: Soft ridges but reasonable at 16psi tyre pressure. Eyre Creek crossing was dry.

19 April 08 - K1 south to the Rig/Warburton/K1 intersection:

K1 south: Good, dry conditions. We heard that the Warburton Track was closed at the Diamantina-Clifton Hill end.

Rig Road heading west to the AAK junction (about 100kms) is **closed**. Two to four metre sand drifts on top of dunes as far as could be seen west through the binoculars (about 6 or 7 major dunes).

20 April 08 - French Line, Poeppel Corner to AAK Track: Very soft ridges with blows. Slow going. Severely cut up by high pressure tyre freaks, some trailer dragging tagalongs & some fools who just don't have any idea, radios nor warning flags. Workable between 10 to 16psi tyre pressures.

Warning: Diesel fuel consumption increased by 45 to 50% above normal.

20 April 08 - AAK Track to WAA Line intersection: Good, dry conditions

21 April 08 - Intersection of the AAK Track/WAA Line west to the Rig Road: Very soft ridges & blows but reasonable going at or below 16psi tyre pressure. **Warning:** On the west side of some dunes there are angled and scoured out holes down to 2 metres deep. Seeing them over the bonnet will, in some cases, be too late!!! Get out & look. Expect increased diesel fuel consumption around 20 to 25%.

22 April 08 - Rig Road to Dalhousie Springs: Reasonable with some bulldust holes at the west end of the new by-pass. A grader went east not long after we arrived.

24 April 08 - Dalhousie Springs to William Creek via Oodnadatta: Good, dry conditions. Slow down at Hamilton Homestead. They don't like eating the dust either.

25 April 08 - William Creek to Parachilna: Good, dry conditions

A brief look at PJ's desert stats:

Birdsville to Oodnadatta: Distance: 857 kms, Fuel: 143 litres, Kms/litre: 6.00, Litres/100 kms: 16.67 litres. At Oodnadatta, we had 8 usable litres in the tank - 48kms.

Birdsville to Dalhousie: Distance: 673 kms

Fuel: 123 litres, Kms

per litre: 5.48, Li-

tres/100 kms: 18.25

We may have been

down as low as 4.5

kms per litre on the

heavier parts of the

French & WAA

Lines..? Total distance

5,414kms, with top

fuel cost at 194 cents

per litre.

Averaged fuel cost

comparisons: in May

2001 was 109 cents

per litre. April 2008

fuel was 178 cents per

litre.



HISTORY, WINE AND ANIMALS

8th-23rd September 2007

Kerry Blakston & Barry Woodyatt



Leaders Kerry Blakston & Barry Woodyatt BJ 73-Bundy

Participants

Beverly Blakston until Mungo	Hilux-Freedom
Plod & Doreen McEncroe	100 series-Turbo
Phil & Julie Henderson	Prado & Camel Camper-Thaj
Neil & Sandra Telfor	Jackaroo-Jack

Approximately 4,500 kms

No flat tyres

One incident involving the Bundy, a new battery and an electrical fault under the bonnet.

Continued from last month

15th September 2007

Next stop Seppelts Winery at Great Western another interesting winery dating back to 1865. More purchases were made there as well.

Another winery stop was at Mount Langhi Ghiran. This was recommended by some of the local boys in blue. The cellar door was very modern and the wines not bad. We got a few bargains, especially the 2001 Shiraz.

Then we continued on to Ballarat where we visited the Eureka Stockade exhibition to refresh our memories prior to our dinner show tomorrow night, "Blood on the Southern Cross."

Due to inclement weather again the Telfor's, McEncroe's and our leaders opted to stay in cabins at the Ballarat Goldfields Big 4.

Sunday 16th

Windy night again and the day just as bad. A visit to the Gold Museum, Sovereign Hill and Art gallery for some - all great and worth doing.

Kerry and Baz drove to Daylesford for a spa, but it was closed for renovations

We all attended the dinner and show of "Blood on the Southern Cross", a sound and light show re-enacting the history of the Eureka Stockade – a fabulous show, highly recommended.

Monday 17th

We started off about 9.30 and made our way to Bendigo, arriving there about 10.50. Kerry and Baz suggested we go on the talking tram, old trams run by volunteers, all funds being directed to maintaining the

trams. The talking tram trip takes about an hour and passes through central Bendigo with a commentary on the old buildings and monuments. Then a trip to Bendigo pottery is a must do.

Afterwards we made our way down the highway via Shepparton and Benalla to Rutherglen, arriving about 5.20pm. The weather again appeared a bit yucky so we opted for cabins at the Rutherglen Tourist Park

Tuesday 18th

Julie had a job interview via phone at 9am.



At 10am we boarded the Purple bus of Grapevine Getaways Winery Tours driven by Gary for a day of wine tasting and history of the area. First stop was Fairfield established by George Morris in the 1800's. It is now selling only fortified wines. Grapes are being sold to a cousin at Morris Wines that was our next stop. More tasting and purchases.

Gooramadda Olive farm was our next stop. Here we



were treated to a tour and informative talk about Olive oil and table olives. Never again will we purchase just olive oil it needs to be Extra Virgin olive oil. These olives were extremely good, as the group's purchases showed.

The little purple bus then took us to Tuirelles café in Rutherglen for a gourmet lunch.

Gary returned to the Caravan park to drop off our many purchases so as to allow more room in the bus for next leg of our tour.

We drove past the only Australian Uncle Toby's factory, which employs some 800-1400 locals, to All Saints winery. Here you can experience the Coopers Keg factory and Indego cheese factory. Plod purchased a keg to house his bulk Muscat supply, purchased back at Bests winery at Ararat.



Pfeiffers was the next tasting and more purchases from there, then on to Stanton & Killeen to sample some of their Tokay and Muscats which are kept in the freezer. These were a hit and of course led to more purchases. Campbells down the road had some nice wines but by this stage our credit cards had been overworked. We were all feeling fairly weary.

Gary then drove us and our purchases back to the C'van park where dinner and an early night was on the agenda. Our purchases were delivered to our door by Gary in his wheelbarrow. It took him 3 trips, the most he said he has ever done. Rutherglen did very well from the ST4WD club group. The Rutherglen C'van park run by Gary and Sue is highly recommended, and be sure to have a trip in Gary's purple bus.



Wednesday 19th

After a photo shoot of the group we left Rutherglen at 9am, taking

the tourist route to Albury for shopping and refuelling. Lunch at Cootamundra and then on to Weddin National Park and its small Fuzzy Box campground to overnight. Had a great campfire and Plod introduced Phil to the good bush camp damper.

The night was clear and mild.

Thursday 20th

We woke to a very damp and freezing morning. Bit of a shock as the previous evening was fine and warm. Some were awoken at 2.30am with very strong winds and rain and it got colder and colder. Plod was up at 4 am trying to put back a very wet fly that had blown off their tent. Kerry & Baz's gear was soaked as they had left it all outside overnight. Neil and Sandra packed up early and headed off to Grenfell for breakfast because the rain looked to be on its way again.

The rest of us packed wet gear into the trucks and also headed for Grenfell for breakfast. We left Grenfell about 10am and made our way to Dubbo. After a short stop and refuel at Parkes and the mandatory visit to "the Dish" we arrived at Dubbo Big 4 about 2.30 and went about our duties. Kerry and Barry opted for a spa cabin so they might dry out some of their gear.

Friday 21st

Some woke early, some late –free day in Dubbo

The zoo was top of the list for some.

Kerry and Barry did the behind the scenes tour of the zoo and found it extremely interesting.

A visit to the Dubbo Jail is a must and the exhibition is well put together.

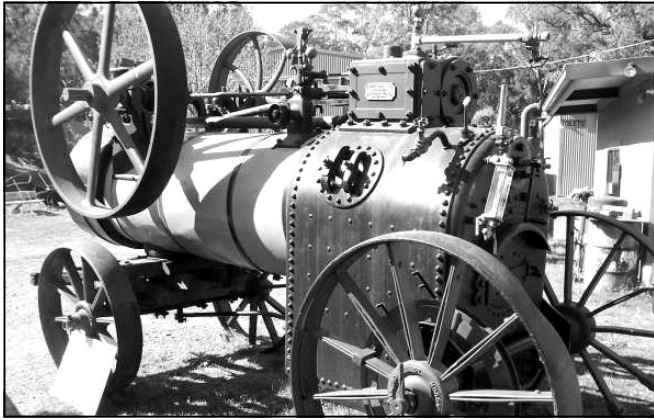
We all met again for happy hour and then on to dinner at the Bowling Club.

This was our farewell dinner to Sandra and Neil as they would leave us tomorrow to start their trip to Coongie Lakes.

Saturday 22nd

After a slow start we left camp at 9.30am and made our way to Wellington then across to Mudgee for a late morning tea/early lunch.

On our way to Sofala we stopped at Turin Technology Museum midway between Ilford and Sofala.



This is an exhibition of steam engines, pumps etc dating back to the early 1800's. Jim & Jenny showed us around, both were full of knowledge and stories regarding the machines. At \$8.00 per adult, well worth seeing.

We left there at 3.45pm and decided there was not enough time to visit Sofala so it was straight through to Hill End.

The trip was very slow as the road is gravel and was very dusty with the sun straight in our eyes at that time of day.

We arrived at Glenora camp at 4.30. It is a large open bush area with flushing toilets, coin operated showers and cost \$5.00 per adult per night. Highly recommend.



Dinner was a BBQ mixed grill courtesy of Barry and Kerry's win at the club the previous night.

Sunday 23rd

Our last day - we will be in our own beds tonight!! A big day on the road, so just a quick look around Hill End. Then the drive down the Bridle Track was very interesting and extremely beautiful.

We only encountered 2 cars coming the other way. 2 1/2 hours to complete the approx 20kms of narrow, hilly, windy road with sheer cliff face and long drop. The drive to Bathurst is very scenic with lots to see and do, however that will have to wait for another trip.

We did the must-do lap around Mt panorama. As Bathurst was only a couple of weeks away we were able to see the grandstands and marquees being set up.

We didn't realise how steep the mountain is. Poor Bundy struggled in some parts.



A look through the museum and lunch then on the road again.

We decided to debrief at Crookwell so that Phil and Julie could go straight through to Queanbeyan. Then home at about 5.45pm via Trunkley, Tuono, Crookwell and Gunning.

Our holiday was a tremendous success with lots of amazing Australian scenery.

Plans had to change sometimes due to the unknown and the vastness of this country.

The areas we didn't see will now entice us back.

We have come away with great memories and events that will always remain present in our minds.



Never give up....

Return to the High Country with the Man from Snowy River

Jim and Jane Raleigh



Trip Leader:

Neville Simpson/Ian de Plater Prado TD

Participants:

Jim & Jane Raleigh	100 Series
Don Wiltshire / Howard Staples	Jackaroo
Graeme Kruse	80 Series
Chris Harris	100 Series
Rob Dobson	Patrol
John & Adrea Kjar	100 Series
Denis & Margaret Collins	Prado
Rob Leaver	Pajero
Chris Nichols	Patrol (Departed Day 2)
Gerry & Monica Silvano	100 Series (Departed Day 3)
Gary & Sue Caitcheon	80 Series (Departed Day 5)

ing along Wheelers Creek Logging Road, Benambra – Corryong Road, Gibb Range Road, Cravensville Road, Callaghans Creek Road, and Dartmouth Road to the Dam Wall – all very easy driving with excellent progress. Back towards Mitta Mitta to join the Omeo Highway we headed south before camping 2.3km south of the Holloway Log Road intersection. This turned out to be the most wonderful campsite on the banks of the Snowy Creek with massive spreading Walnut and Chestnut trees.

Rob Leaver was motivated to get the fly rod out but with limited success (one caught and returned to the river).

Saturday 29 March

It goes without saying that being a trip run by Neville, all participants (except John & Andrea who had an excuse and advised they would catch us up) were duly assembled well before the departure time knowing full well they would be left behind otherwise. Morning tea at Jindabyne saw all 12 vehicles finally assembled and looking forward to an interesting excursion into the high country, so well known by Neville.

The temperature soon reminded us that it was no longer summer, by dropping to 4°C at Thredbo. The crossing at Tom Groggin presented no real challenge, and we proceeded west for lunch on the river at the boundary of Tom Groggin Station. The long climb to the summit of Mt Pinnibar led us to enjoy the incredible views, albeit in very cold conditions not helped by the chilling winds. The descent down Dead Finish and Shady Creek Lower Tracks led us to afternoon tea at the junction with Cattleman's Track where some visitors were busy with chainsaws building what appeared to be cattle yards. Continuing along Cattlemen's Track we set up camp near Wheelers Creek Hut.

Sunday 30 March

We awoke to fog and farewelled Chris Nichols, who unfortunately had to return to work, before proceed-

Don and Howard did much better by talking to a fellow camper who kindly gave them three trout caught earlier in the day. They skilfully cooked them over the campfire and most generously shared them with the rest of the party – never has fish tasted so lovely.



Monday 31 March

We bade farewell to Gerry and Monica before returning to Mitta Mitta to join the Scrubby Creek Road, Trappers Gap Road, and Mountain Creek Road, before joining the Kiewa Valley Highway to Mount Beauty for fuel. From Mt Beauty we climbed to the west across the Bright-Tawonga Road, noting that the views were very limited due to low cloud, before heading south on the Great Alpine Road to Harrietville for lunch. The climb up towards Mount Hotham

was made difficult by a large number of cyclists on a charity ride for the Starlight Foundation, who were spread out at irregular intervals throughout the ascent in very heavy fog. Eventually we joined the Dargo High Plains Road where we noted the



massive areas affected by the bush fires early in 2007 but still enjoyed the excellent views.

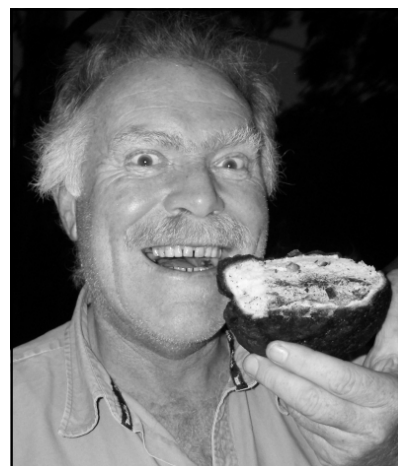
Camp was made at the very extensive Italian Flat Camping area on the Upper Dargo Road. As an introduction to the following evening's activities, Neville performed an excellent reading of 'The Man from Ironbark'.

Tuesday 1 April

With a brief stop at Dargo for some essential supplies we continued south on the Dargo Road and the Freestone Creek Road to morning tea at the junction with the Lee Creek Track. Plans to continue south to join the Marathon Road near Briagolong were revised and instead we followed the Lee Creek Track and after many (10) shallow water crossings and a very long steep climb (300 metres in less than a km) with spectacular views and a pause for lunch on the side of the track, we eventually reached our objective, turning north on the Marathon road. Joining the Pinnacles Road we soon reached the most spectacular Pinnacles Lookout. With an altitude of over 1400 metres this lookout provides the most stunning views over a huge tract of the surrounding countryside.

Descending the Billy Goat Bluff Track took us all the way down to less than 300m in a little over 6km on what was in places a very steep and rough track, before turning to the north on Wonnangatta Road. The evening was spent on the banks of the Wonnangatta River where Neville's orchestrated reading of 'The Man from Snowy River' was indeed memorable.

Rod L's first attempt at cooking a damper was also memorable!



Wednesday 2 April

After bidding farewell to Gary & Sue, Ian braved the cold water to walk the crossing of the Wonnangatta River which turned out to be the deepest of the many crossings encountered on the trip. The large rock found by Ian was avoided by all and we proceeded up the Eaglevale Track and the Cynthia Spur Track, before the steep descent of the Herne Spur Track leading into the spectacular Wonnangatta Valley. Eight further water crossings were negotiated but none presented the challenge of the first.

Having enjoyed excellent weather throughout the trip to date it was disappointing to hear the forecasts of dangerous winds and advice to all campers to seek shelter for the night. The plan to explore the ruins of the old Wonnangatta Station became secondary to an extensive debate as to where a suitable place to camp could be found, as the winds were clearly increasing. A really well sheltered spot without large trees was found in the 'Horse Paddock' where camp was established just as it began to rain.

Despite the conditions an excellent evening was enjoyed by all after a fire was built in the fireplace inside the slightly crowded Wonnangatta Station Hut, during which Rob L excelled in his second attempt at making damper, but failed miserably in his choice of accompanying drinks.

Thursday 3 April

The overnight rain left all vehicles and tents covered in mud from the rain combined with the dust from the Mallee. The amount of rain generated some discussion as to the best route to follow out of the valley. Neville was sure that the planned Zeka Spur Track would be unsuitable and so we agreed to retrace our steps along the Wonnangatta Track to join the Harts Spur Track. Although the surface was still a little damp in places only one vehicle experienced difficulty on the steep climb to join the Mount Hart Track and the Tea Tree Range Track. As we approached the junction with the McKenzie Track it was apparent

that there has been snow overnight and the temperature dropped to a very cold 2°C. On the final climb up to the McKenzie Track the expletive from Neville announced a large tree across the track. With many hands and a trusty chainsaw working in occasional sleet, the track was cleared in 15 minutes.

From here a relatively straightforward passage to Bright took us along Tea Tree Range Road, Selwyn



Creek Road, Buckland Valley Road and the Great Alpine Road. A brief stop at one point resulted in the recognition of a radiator leak in Rob D's vehicle which unfortunately became progressively worse during the afternoon despite the lunch time addition of some leak sealant.

Neville negotiated a most favourable rate for all to camp together at a campground in Bright within walking distance of the town centre and the showers were a most welcome facility. A meal at the local pub during which the beard growing contest was judged rounded off a memorable trip with all participants going their separate ways next morning.

Although the trip was cut a little shorter than originally planned due to the weather, it still represented an outstanding excursion into a huge but picturesque area. Neville's detailed knowledge of the area was always evident as he described where almost every track we passed led to and what views were available there. For this reason this trip was, typically of a Neville led trip to the High Country, thoroughly enjoyed by all – thank you Neville.



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“SAFE ONE” BASIC 4WD VEHICLE OPERATION COURSE

*The Southern Tablelands Four Wheel Drive Club conducts **two-day weekend Driver Training** exercises, with **Follow-up Days** on the **Sundays, 1 week later.***

Purpose:

To introduce new & old club members to vehicle equipment, daily maintenance, recovery techniques & equipment, and in particular teach them the skills necessary to safely operate their 4WD in a variety of terrains.

Meeting Time/Place:

Service Station in Bredbo (right hand side of highway) no later than 8.00 am on Saturday.

**The Club's Education Coordinator is Peter Reynolds,
Tel (h) 6251-1258 or (m) 0428 623-458.**

**PLEASE BOOK A PLACE ON ONE OF THESE COURSES WELL IN ADVANCE AND ALSO RING PETER ONE WEEK BEFORE THE COURSE TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE!
IF YOU DON'T, YOU WILL LOSE YOUR PLACE ON THE COURSE**

ONLY ONE DRIVER PER VEHICLE PER COURSE, THOUGH A SUPPORT CREW IS WELCOME.

COURSES FOR 2008 WILL BE HELD ON

**23RD, 24TH FEBRUARY
17TH, 18TH MAY
30TH, 31ST AUGUST**

**WITH FOLLOWUP ON
WITH FOLLOWUP ON
WITH FOLLOWUP ON**

**2ND MARCH
25TH MAY
6TH SEPTEMBER**

WHAT TO BRING

Yourself & family and a 4WD in good mechanical condition
Camping gear for overnight stay
Food and Cooking gear for 2 days
Chairs to sit on in lessons and around the fire
Recovery gear, if you have it, but not essential
Garbage bags for all your rubbish to take home
Notebook & pen
Camera
A full tank of fuel
Torch
Drinking water.
UHF Radio (optional – talk to Peter)
Front and Rear Recovery Points preferred.

There is a large First Aid Kit at Talooge. Also a large gas BBQ

PLEASE DO NOT BRING PETS OR FIREARMS.

Autumn Balloon Spectacular 19 – 27 April

Dennis Collins



Participants

Peter Fenwick

Richard Brand

Jed Bartlett

Judith Eisnen

Catherine Panich

Rosemary Orr

Warren Shardlow

Brian Fleming

Robert Tiele

Mick Hines

Dave Hay

Mark Prichard

Bryan & Julie Buttriss

Neil & Adele Craven

Peter & Jill Jolly

Dennis & Margaret Collins

For those of you who were unable to provide time to participate in the 2008 Autumn Balloon Spectacular you missed out on a great event. The official launch of the event was held on the foreshore of Lake Burley Griffin at the end of Anzac Parade on Wednesday 16th April, it was hoped to tether the Kookaburra balloon for the media but strong winds prevented this from happening but they did manage to inflate the KAZ balloon. The ST4WDC was mentioned during the launch as one of the volunteer groups who provide invaluable support to the event, and that without this support the event would experience difficulties in encouraging interstate and overseas balloon pilots to these events.

There were some 35 local, interstate and international balloonists who came to Canberra to fly as part of the spectacular and include numerous regular balloons as well as two special shapes, the Canowindra Kookaburra and the Shamrock from the United States.

The spectacular began on Saturday 19th April and as ballooning is subject to the impact of the

weather, the flight for Saturday had to be cancelled due to strong winds at around the 500ft elevation mark and this was considered to be unsafe for balloons and pilots, there were a lot of disappointed balloonists, balloon crew and spectators. Sunday started in much the same way with some strong winds; however, the flight director allowed flights to take place at pilot discretion, three pilots indicated their intention to fly and once on the launch site other pilots changed their mind and we saw many more take to the sky.

The remainder of the week from Monday to Thursday saw excellent flying conditions and balloons were seen flying over most of Canberra's north with many balloons landing out near Hall, Wednesday's conditions were such that balloons flew for nearly an hour and were landing near the Museum of Australia or around the southern end of Commonwealth Bridge, there were some who used their handling line to get them ashore when they were unable to move over the water and fuel was becoming an issue.



Weather conditions changed dramatically on Friday (Anzac Day) and we saw the first sight of fog which prevented balloons from flying this morning, this was repeated again on Saturday morning and strong winds from the cold front put flying on hold again on Sunday.

There were two afternoon flights from Dick Smith's property at Gundaroo, the first on Tuesday when 3 balloons launched, there were several others balloonists there but the winds were somewhat strong and they opted to have drinks at the Murrumbateman pub rather than fly, Friday they flew again and this time

17 balloons flew towards Murrumbateman and again a great social event was held in the pub after the recovery.

All told the balloons flew for a total of 5 days which is not bad when one compares this event to events which have been run in past years, and for those who participated as crews for the first time, or who volunteered again we all had a great time.

I am advised that the organisers are keen to run a similar event in 2009 and that they hope they can announce the event much earlier so that people who may be interested in volunteering will have much more time to make a decision, our President has indicated that the ST4WDC will continue to provide vehicles and crews to any future event.



Friday Night in the Brindies

Richard Arranz



Leaders

Robert and Learna Tiele and family plus 1 ring in – Patrol on steroids (Trip Leader)

Participants

John and James Howarth – another Patrol on steroids and with a heart transplant.

Richard Brand – 80 Landcruiser

Thommo & Julie – 80 Landcruiser

Barry (Bazza) and Matthew – Bundy (the famous yellow one)

Richard Arranz & Duncan – 95 Prado

End of a working week and what else is there to do if you belong to the ST4WDC, but a night time drive into our very own Brindabella Ranges. Of course! The weather was cold but clear. The tracks mostly dry to damp. Perfect.

Most of us know this area very well - in daylight. At night it's a very different experience. You will be amazed what our club members turn into.

The excitement was evident by the fact that we all arrived at Uriarra Homestead in good time. Clearly my stock 95 Prado was the baby of the convoy and I was the apprentice.

We began our night drive run on Brindabella Rd dodging a few kangaroos as we made our way towards the quarry to air down. On to Piccadilly Circus and then into the deep dark abyss.

From here I won't be providing much detail on tracks taken etc, as the street lighting wasn't working and it wasn't a full moon. Richard Brand brought his laptop and GPS as passengers but had challenges with selecting a suitable starting point for the system to work properly. I'm not surprised, it was so dark the computer couldn't even see. I found comfort in Robert's method - drive up a track a bit, quick blast of the spotties and see where the track leads. At night this method seemed to work best.

In essence we zig zagged across the power line tracks not far from the main trails. Most tracks we happily climbed and descended, although there were a few tracks that got the lads salivating, at least a little.

First real encounter was a steep rutted climb which

was blocked by a large log at the top. After a mini club meeting to discuss the best line to take, Robert sent his fire engine red truck to work and reveled as he listened to the popping sounds from his engine....music to his ears. He then reversed back down using his wicked rear mini spot lights that worked better than our headlights. We turned back to explore elsewhere.

Soon enough we hit upon the most interesting section of track. This required a short and steep walk to stretch the legs and collectively conclude that it was best to go down but not up and to continue out the other end.

Some of the convoy decided to take the hard right hand side and others the far left hand side of this slippery and shaley descent. Now I know why they say in training, 'make your own track...don't always follow the vehicle in front'.

A few of us dropped air out of the tyres as Robert went ahead in search of a steak....sorry, a stake, which he found burrowed in his front tyre. It was nothing a quick puncture repair job couldn't fix.

This track provided a great drive and a good test for the less experienced or for the wise old owls a few moments of added concentration. Correct lines, clearance and speed (walking) were the key. I now know what it's like having my vehicle's rear end try catch up with the front on a descent whilst preventing myself from falling out the window sideways.

Supper was at the top of Gentle Annie trail/turn-off, at around 9.45pm. Cheese, wine and coffee were on the menu. Quite civilized really. The weather threatened to get damp, but prevailed long enough for us to depart sometime after 10.15pm.

We headed up another power line that caused minor

wheel placement issues for some. Our reward was the most magical views of Canberra doused in bright orange lights. Fantastic.

Further on down and we returned to Piccadilly Circus. A quick air up and some final briefing words before our trucks turned into pumpkins.

In summary it was a great trip with an even better group of friends. Thanks to Robert for the initiative to lead an interesting trip in familiar surrounds and to experience driving with a difference.

What are you doing this Friday night?



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CHANGES TO THE BY-LAWS

At the January meeting of the Committee, approval was given for some changes to the club's By-Laws. These changes were considered necessary to clarify policy on membership renewals, and the entitlement of dependant Family Members to participate in Driver Training Courses.

In regard to membership renewals, changes were made at paragraph 16d and paragraph 19 and particular attention is drawn to paragraphs 19b and 19c. It was decided that dependant 'Family Members' should cease to be entitled to participate in Driver Training Courses once they reach the age of 21 however such 'Family Members' wishing to become 'Owner Members' will have the opportunity to transfer without having to pay a joining fee (See paragraph 19h). The entitlements of each membership category are summarised at paragraph 18.

A complete copy of the updated By Laws is available on the web site and a related change to the Constitution will be proposed at a Special General Meeting in July. (See page 5)

CLUB POLICY

• Applications for Membership

15. The Club's procedures for consideration of applications for new membership shall be based on the following principles -
 - the Committee may require an applicant for 'owner-membership' to provide proof of ownership in the form of a current motor vehicle registration slip for the prescribed vehicle and proof of age by provision of a current driver's licence or birth certificate, or a statutory declaration in their stead;
 - the Committee may require an applicant for 'associate-membership' to provide proof-of-age by provision of a current driver's licence or birth certificate, or a statutory declaration in their stead;
 - all new applications shall be considered and voted on by the Committee at its regular meeting on the motion of the Membership Secretary and the decision shall be notified to the applicant in writing. Any refusal of membership shall only be on the grounds that the Committee was not satisfied that the applicant would abide by the Constitution and By-Laws of the Club;
 - the Application Form(s) for Club membership shall require the applicant to declare the type of membership desired and that criteria for membership is satisfied and attach the appropriate membership fee;
 - the Application Form(s) for Club membership shall require the applicant to declare that they will abide by the constitution and by-laws of the club as extant at any time.
16. The Club's procedures for consideration of applications for renewal of membership shall be based on the following principles:
 - renewal applications received after the close of the February general meeting will be deemed "late";
 - subject to paragraph (c), the deadline for receipt of applications for renewal of membership for a calendar year shall be ten (10) days before the Annual General Meeting in that year;
 - memberships not renewed will be terminated at the June Committee meeting;
 - applications for renewal of membership received later than the date specified at paragraph 16(b) will be deemed to be new membership applications. Fees payable in such cases are detailed at paragraph 18 below.

Members who have not renewed by March will cease to receive a club magazine until they renew.
17. Prior to making a decision under rule 6(13) of the Club Constitution, the Club Committee will, based on a written submission from a member concerning the grounds on which the member should continue to be a member of the Club, consider the circumstances of the case. This will be carried out on a case by case basis.

- **Categories of Membership**

18. The rights of each of the categories of membership shall be as follows:

Responsibility/ Entitlement	Owner Member	Associate Member	Competition Member	Family Member	Life Member
Joining Fee Payable	Yes	No	No	No ¹	NA
Membership Fee Payable	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Vote at Monthly General Meetings	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vote at Annual and Special General Meetings	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Join the Committee	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Join a Sub Committee	Yes	Yes	No ²	Yes	Yes
Receive the Club Magazine	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Free access to Talooge Park	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Participation in Driver Training Courses	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Participation in Club Events (Subject to clause 20	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

¹ see also Paragraph 19 (h)

² except in the instance of a competition subcommittee

Membership Fees

19 Fees

The joining fee for new Owner Members of the club is \$230 plus the annual membership fee;

A former Owner Member who ceased to be a member for a period of less than 3 consecutive years will be required to pay a re-joining fee of \$30 plus the annual membership fee on rejoining.

A former Owner Member who ceased to be a member for a period in excess of 3 consecutive years will be treated as a new member (see above).

The annual membership fee for Owner Members is \$100;

The first year's membership fee for new applications received after the July general meeting is \$50;

The Annual Membership Fee for Associate and Competition Members is \$50;

The late renewal fee is \$5 for renewals received after the February general meeting.

Family Members, who have satisfactorily completed the 'Safe One' basic driver training course, and wish to become Owner Members, will be exempt from paying the Joining Fee provided their application to become Owner Members is received by the Membership Secretary before their 22nd birthday.

FOR SALE/WANTED/LOST/FOUND



Advertising on this page is **free to members** but is restricted to **Two Months**. Non-members will be charged \$20 per advertisement for 5 lines for the same period.



1) Toyota Land-cruiser GXL '95 -

One Owner, Manual, Dual Diesel Tanks, ACT Rego until 01/09, 199,000 km, Recently Acquired Coopers A/T Tyres, CB Radio, Air-conditioning, Power Windows, Central Locking, Suspension Airbags, ARB Bull-bar.

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2) Daihatsu Feroza II SX '94 -

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This is a reliable and hearty vehicle which is ideally suited for beginners. It has been well maintained and serviced with a good internal and mechanical condition. \$5,000 ono

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Set of 4 Old Man Emu Nitrocharger Shockers \$ 330.00

ARB 2200 x 1250 roof rack with mesh floor and wind deflector \$ 400.00

2 Brand new 265/75/R16 BFG A/T tyres \$ 490.00

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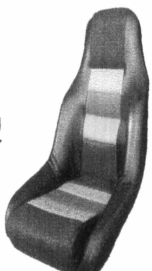


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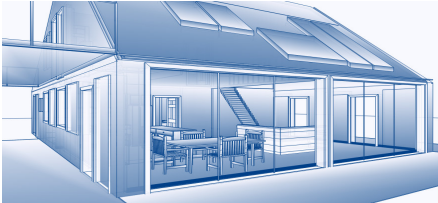
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www.st4wdc.org



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. If you 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)

(Relevant skills / additional info)

How did you find out about the ST4WDC ?

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: