



# SOUTHERN TRAILS

## ISSUE 355 December 2008



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

### Next General Meetings— 9th December ACT Rural Fire Service - Fire Preparedness. and 13th January

Andrew Jones of National Tyre Wholesalers—Selection and Care of Tyres  
**Both at Canberra Deakin Football Club**

There will be no *Southern Trails* in January

The deadline for material to be included in the next issue  
of *Southern Trails* is the Friday following the General Meeting  
i.e. 16th January 2009

Many members contribute articles and photos to *Southern Trails*; the role of editor is shared.

This month's magazine is compiled and edited by Val. and John Wiseman.

Front Cover Photos by David Cross, Bob and Sylvia Allen

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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.**

# SOUTHERN TABLELANDS FOUR WHEEL DRIVE CLUB INC.



## Directory



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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](http://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](mailto: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.

# ROSEMARY'S RAMBLINGS

Rosemary Orr



That happy mad season is well and truly upon us. It is now count down mode for the festive season. This will be our last magazine for the year. There is no magazine in January, BUT there is a meeting in January.

This is traditionally a quiet time for our Club with everyone thinking about Christmas – the presents – where they will be for Christmas – family and much more.

But as you can see from the magazine there are still trips to be on, including the Return to the High Country and Blue Waterholes. The most important trip is our Christmas party at Talooge Park for our ST4WDC family.

This event promises to be heaps of fun for everyone. There will be something for the adults, something for the children and lots, lots more. We have invited our sister club Brindabella Rangers to join us and there may be other special guests. So read all about it and come along. Telephone or email me or Richard Brand or any other member of the committee if you need to know more. Please let us know if you are coming so that we have numbers for catering.

Once we have all enjoyed Christmas there are more activities with a ladies trip to do Bird Watching in Pink Pyjamas. So, all of you ladies who have completed your driver training, here is the trip for you. Come and enjoy driving, sight seeing, bird watching and lots of fun with no-one telling us what to do. It should be a great weekend, so pinch hubby's pink pyjamas and

come and join us.

Also, it is time to consider that our 12 months as a committee members is drawing to a close and our AGM is close at hand. Would you like to have a greater say in the running of your club? Would you like to be part of the decision making? Please think about the future of your Club and put your hand up to help out in this important way. All positions on the Committee are declared vacant and anyone in the club can nominate. ST4WDC belongs to us all, the members. It is important that it functions in accordance with the member's wishes – here is your opportunity to make a difference.

Nomination forms will be included with the February magazine and will be available at meetings between now and February.

While I am hoping to give everyone a hug and convey best wishes when I see you at the Christmas party, I would like to take this opportunity of wishing everyone a very happy Christmas, safe journeys and much enjoyment.

Enjoy  
Ro

## MAPS

ST4WD Club members may purchase Maps and mapping related products  
**at significant discounts.**

Products available cover a wide range including Sheet Maps, Wall Maps, Globes, CD/DVD Maps, Road Atlases, Guide Books, Playing Cards and Jigsaw Puzzles. Sheet maps include Topographic Maps (25K, 50K, and 100K), Forest Maps, and those from HEMA, Westprint, Sunmap, Meridian, Geosciences Aust, Rooftop, TASMALP, VICMAP and many more, even many from overseas publishers such as AA-UK, AA-NZ, Collins and National Geographic. Guides include publications from HEMA, Explore Australia, Moon, Boiling Billy, Camps Australia and many more.

For further details see the Club web site under 'What's New' and a full range of the available products can be found on the Hema website [www.HemaMaps.com.au](http://www.HemaMaps.com.au).

If you have any questions, please contact Jim Raleigh by E-Mail to [vpresident@st4wdc.org](mailto:vpresident@st4wdc.org) or on 0413 612 305

# TALOOGIE TOPICS

John Kjar



## Calendar of Events

Please advise additions or corrections by E-mail to [Property@st4wdc.org](mailto:Property@st4wdc.org)

From	To	Activity	Contact	On
6-Dec-08	7-Dec-08	Christmas Party	Richard Brand	<a href="mailto:trips@st4wdc.org">trips@st4wdc.org</a>

Talooie is looking good and awaiting your next visit. Major improvements have been made to the Driver Training area as well as Thurbon Flat. The grass is green, the camping is great, you can use your camper-van, there are many interesting walks (see the December 07 issue of Talooie Topics for information on the Hole-in-the-Wall walk and the Devil's Hole walk) and there are many great places to 'chill out' and enjoy the scenery and wildlife or hone your 4WDing skills. Members are welcome to use the facilities. Ensure you bring your sunscreen, walking boots and first aid kit. The greatest medical risk at Talooie in the summer months is from snake bite - ensure you are appropriately dressed and know what to do in the event of a snake bite.

If you are planning to go to Talooie, please advise the Property Officer ( well in advance. This will ensure your visit does not clash with other users eg AFP, weed spraying etc. Members should note that there are no restrictions on the use of Talooie during the conduct of AFP Training Courses. While weapons may be carried during some of this training, firearms will NOT be discharged at Talooie.

The Property Officer will also advise you the combination for the access gates to Talooie and also a separate combination for the locks on our sheds at Talooie if you wish to use them. However, please do not use the tractor, chainsaw, fire truck etc equipment unless necessary and you have been trained and approved to use this equipment.

Please note the fire season is on us and fire represents the greatest risk to personal safety and our facilities and equipment. Please respect all fire warnings and restrictions, especially the use of wood fires and, in some cases, even gas stoves. (See Val's article on p34) The second greatest risk to personal safety is trying to cross creeks after heavy rain. In view of the seriousness of these matters, I am repeating information contained in earlier issues. Please read and observe the following guidelines for these circumstances.

## In the event of fire

### Report all fires

Report all fires to Cooma Fire Control on 1300 722 164. Cooma Fire Control can contact Fire Brigades by pager and this is more reliable than using direct contact numbers shown below. OR report the fire on "000". Telstra Next G services are generally accessible from the Driver Training shed – you may need to go to higher parts of Talooie with GSM phones or some other mobile service providers.

In all cases be precise as to the location of the fire, particularly to '000' (see below).

### Evacuation

Historical evidence indicates that the greatest threat is from the North West which means that fire could reach Talooie with very little warning.

Those not involved in fighting a fire should evacuate the area as quickly as practical taking care not to interfere with emergency vehicles.

Under most circumstances, evacuation via Southwell's entrance will be the most prudent however if this is not safe, you should proceed to the middle of a large open area (such as the Horse Paddock or the northern portion of Southwell's) and remain in your vehicle. Do NOT attempt to leave the area on a track with which you are not thoroughly familiar unless escorted by an experienced person.

### Location when reporting fires

The location of the Driver Trainer shed at Talooie is within the Cooma-Monaro Fire District at UTM: 55H 7 04 038E; 60 29 727N or Lat/Long:35° 51' 19.6"S; 149° 15' 34.5"E

Alternatively, it could be reported Talooie is located 10km NE of Bredbo at the intersection of 'Strike-a-Light' and 'Rayners' Fire Trails'.

The peak at the southern (Southwell) end of Talooie is approx 3.5km distant from the Driver Trainers shed.

The range to the West (Calabash Fire Trail) is approximately 1km distant.

Alternative contact points, if Cooma Fire Control cannot be contacted:

Jerangle Rural Fire Brigade (Normally monitors UHF Channel 14) Captain– Bill Stephens, 6454 3123. Pres-

ident & Senior Deputy Captain– Bob Boate 6454 3110.

Colinton Rural Fire Brigade (Normally monitors UHF Channel 25) Captain – Graham Povey, 6454 4150; 0419 406 908

Senior Deputy Captain - Bob Morrison, 6235 9022; 0408 488 939

Bredbo Rural Fire Brigade (Normally monitors UHF Channel 12)

Although Talooge is not within the Bredbo area of responsibility it is very close by and Bredbo RFS have an interest in our area (Richie Southwell's property is within the Bredbo RFS area).

### **In the event of heavy rain**

Flash floods last December resulted in a wall of water that moved large logs a considerable distance down Strike-a-Light and other rivers/creeks. Extreme care should be exercised in crossing any creeks after heavy rain. In most cases, the most prudent option is to cross before the river becomes impassable. However if the crossing is unsafe, it

is recommended you wait until the crossing is safe – the water level usually drops quite quickly. The alternative exit from the Driver Trainers shed area using Calabash Fire Trail (and via several turns and roads through private property onto Tinderry Road) should only be used in an emergency and only by those who have previously driven this route. You may be able to get assistance by mobile phone (reception may necessitate moving to a higher location) or by calling Richie or Peter Southwell both of whom normally monitor UHF channel 18 both at home and in their vehicles.

### **Future developments**

We are currently updating our Talooge plans for 2009 and beyond – and how we can finance and resource them. Any suggestions would be appreciated. Work planned includes finishing the shelter on Thurbon Flat and our new equipment shed, and land care activities. We will be organising a working bee in March/April - offers of assistance appreciated.

## **Hire a Tvan the most robust, comfortable, go anywhere camper trailer available**

This serious off road camper trailer built by Track Trailer in Melbourne was awarded "Campertrailer of the Millennium"

The Tvan lets you camp wherever your vehicle can go. It is compact, light – 750Kg dry, sets up in 3-4 minutes with a hard floor under the tent. A solar panel and battery ensures continuous power. Sleep in comfort under a solid roof in a queen size bed and cook on a stainless steel kitchen with running water. The tent packs in the hatch away from the bed so no damp canvas on your pillow!

**Independent Trailers in Canberra has 2 fully equipped Tvens available for hire at \$550 per week. Price reduced for hires of more than 6 weeks.**

If you are thinking of buying one but want to try it first, this is your opportunity. We give you back your hire fee (up to one week) with an order placed within 3 months.

Download an application from [www.independenttrailers.com.au](http://www.independenttrailers.com.au) or ring Catherine on 0412 866 375 or email [catherine@independenttrailers.com.au](mailto:catherine@independenttrailers.com.au)



# CHRISTMAS AT TALOOGA

6 AND 7 DECEMBER 2008

Come and enjoy our Christmas Celebration at Talooge.

Here's what's happening:

**For the kids:** Santa, sack races, egg and spoon races, film night.

**For the adults:** Gift grab, egg throwing, tug of war, treasure hunt.

Don't Want to do anything - that's OK, just relax, chat, read a book...

**GPS TREASURE HUNT.** If you don't have a GPS come and join a team

Find your way around Talooge and collect a prize at the end.

**DAMPER COOKING COMPETITION.** Come and try your skills at cooking and collect a prize.

This is one for the kids as well (supervised)!!!

**HAPPY HOUR.** Bring something to share with everyone

**POT LUCK DINNER.** Cook something in your camp oven - or prepare something before hand - put it all together for everyone to share and you have a pot-luck dinner.

Your committee will provide "yummy pudding!!!!"

**BEST DECORATED TABLE AND THEME OUTFIT.** Do it and win a prize!!!!!!

**What to bring:** Wrapped labelled gift for each child in your vehicle. One inventive anonymous wrapped gift (under \$15) per adult in your vehicle.

Table decorations, happy hour supplies, pot-luck main course, theme evening wear. Food and drink for the weekend.

**FUNKANA 7<sup>th</sup> December.** An entertaining way to test your driving skills and your trust in your team-mate

**RSVP:** [trips@st4wdc.org](mailto:trips@st4wdc.org)

# EVENTS AND TRIPS

Richard Brand



## Keeping us on Track

### Softroader Experience

If you read my articles you will appreciate that from time to time my 1990 80-series Landcruiser is out of action for various repairs, and I have now been forced to use my 2006 Holden Adventra wagon for three club trips. Admittedly, two of these were grade 1 social trips, but the Hill End trip was a little tougher with lots of mud so I thought I'd share some views on how a soft-roader performed.

Apart from a UHF radio with a magnetic aerial mount, my Adventra is stock standard. Based on a Commodore wagon, it has a permanent all-wheel drive system and extra ground clearance over the base wagon. It is only available in petrol automatic configuration, and Adventras have no low range. However they have done Australia west to east including the Gunbarrel Highway.

My Adventra has only one hard recovery point – the standard towbar. Although there is provision for a recovery hook at the front, I have not shelled out the \$500 or so it costs for extra metalwork to brace the attachment point. Nor have I forked out close to \$1000 for the optional aluminum underbody protection plate, or steel rims and high profile tyres.

My Landcruiser on the other hand has serious off-road tyres, raised suspension, bullbar, winch, side-rails and air-locking differentials front and rear so the comparison is a bit unfair.

Comfort and handling.

Because the Adventra has independent suspension all round, the unsprung weight is much less than the solid axle Landcruiser. This keeps the wheels in closer contact with the terrain, and significantly smooths the ride. With 60-40 rear biased drive and low centre of gravity, the Adventra is brilliant on fast dirt.

Ground clearance

The cruiser should be a clear winner here, and it is, with solid axles, plus better approach, ramp-over and departure angles. However the Adventra is surprisingly good and its self-leveling rear suspension maintains clearance even when fully loaded. It was able to do the hard test track at Promo, and everything Hill End threw at us, without scraping the ground. Its wheel articulation is much more limited than the cruiser with its long travel spring set-up, but the Adventra's traction control system works brilliantly to keep all wheels rotating evenly, even if one or two are right off the ground. I rate this system as equivalent

to having locking differentials all round and better than most proper four-wheel drives.

Note that the Adventra has open differentials, and applies brakes to individual wheels to give the effect of having diff locks. A downside is that if any one of the four half-shafts or two drive shafts breaks, all the drive disappears into the broken shaft and you stop.

On the muddy, potholed tracks into Hill End, we could hear the traction control system feeding in the ABS brakes from time to time to control slippage. On some potholes there seemed to be an extra bang which I think was the ABS pouncing on an airborne wheel. All this is fully automatic, unlike the hill descent control which you have to turn on, but is then linked to the cruise control so you can dial in a sensible pace.

Load capacity

The Adventra seems much bigger inside than the cruiser, and unlike the cruiser its load space is long enough to sleep in comfortably. The rest is an illusion because the rear compartment is actually narrower and lower than the cruiser, though a lot easier to get at. Towing capacity at 2-tonnes is not much more than half the cruiser's. It only has half the fuel capacity, though it is at least as thirsty overall, and there is nowhere under-bonnet for a second battery.

At Croagingalong we carefully managed the fridge's use of the main battery. On solo trips I'd take a generator and / or solar panel if I had one, but I have also managed to flatten all my batteries on the cruiser in the past.

Summary

Just as not all four wheel drives are created equal, there is great disparity between the abilities of soft-roaders and my comments are not meant to be generally applicable.

Personally, for grade 1 and 2 trips I prefer the Adventra. For a trip to the Kimberleys, I might choose the Adventra with extra fuel, knowing that it might not make some side tracks. For any trip on hard High Country trails, the Landcruiser every time.

Which one will make it to the Christmas Party?

**Radio Problem Solving**

On my first Adventra trip, there were complaints that my UHF transmissions were much weaker than other people's. As I had just fitted a brand-new

UHF set with all the controls in the microphone this was a bit disappointing, so I took it in to the supplier for a check-over.

Expecting a radio lab with the ability to measure the radiated power from my antenna, I was a bit surprised with the diagnostic technique actually used. This involved getting on the truckies channel and asking the world for a radio check. When we realized a reply was coming from Queanbeyan, the transmitted power was exonerated. Our friendly truckie was then asked to stay on air while we rummaged for a new set and switched microphones over. "Bin the first one" was the definitive reply, so we did. A brilliant bit of Aussie diagnostic ingenuity, but raises a question of the wisdom of incorporating all the controls in the microphone unit. Microphones seem to be a fairly common problem on trips, and in the old days, somebody usually had an interchangeable spare handy.

Catherine wrote a great article on radio etiquette in the last magazine, and I must admit I have always been reluctant to get on the air especially with the call-signs and protocols used for HF radio. This caution is totally misplaced, and UHF radio is anonymous – nobody need know who you are unless they can actually see you talking into the microphone. Once I was stuck in a massive traffic jam in Civic, so I got on the UHF and asked if anyone knew what the problem was. "Cars, mate" came back, presumably from a truckie assuming he was talking to another.

### **Trips**

There are four great new trips in the magazine for next year, taking advantage of long weekends to go to the High Country and Bendethra, plus a weekender to Yerranderie and a longer trip to the Red Centre.

This is the last magazine until February, but there is nothing to stop trips being circulated by email so if you feel like some company on a trip over the summer, just drop me an email describing it and wait for the circular email to arrive.

### **Christmas Party**

This should be even bigger than the Bush Skills weekend! If you have not been to Talooge Park recently, it will be well worth the effort. With the rain, tree plantings and weed control measures, Talooge Park has never looked better. There is a brand new shed to house the firetruck and tractor, the kitchen now has extended panoramic views, there is extensive paving and the shelter on Thurbon Flat is ready for use so try camping on the grassy level bits at the bottom for a change. There will be driving events on both Saturday and Sunday, plus all the social fun and games. See the advert elsewhere for details on what to bring.

Looking forward to seeing you on a track somewhere, and of course at the Christmas Party.

Richard Brand  
Events and Trips Coordinator

## **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.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Mobile</b>	<b>Email</b>
Peter Watson	6254 7118	0418 649 823	<a href="mailto:pwatson1@tpg.com.au">pwatson1@tpg.com.au</a>
Neville Simpson	6295 9021		<a href="mailto:bl.ng@bigpond.net.au">bl.ng@bigpond.net.au</a>
Dennis Collins	6292 7423	0418 969 452	<a href="mailto:margden1@actewagl.net.au">margden1@actewagl.net.au</a>
Chris Nicholls			<a href="mailto:calypsol@gmail.com">calypsol@gmail.com</a>
Doreen & Plod McEncroe	6241 8188	0429 008 436	<a href="mailto:doreen.mcenroe@act.gov.au">doreen.mcenroe@act.gov.au</a>
Neil Telfer	62919683	0427 263 805	<a href="mailto:ntelfer@tpg.com.au">ntelfer@tpg.com.au</a>
David Whight		0438 882 696	<a href="mailto:tdavidwhight@hotmail.com">tdavidwhight@hotmail.com</a>

# PUBLICATIONS

John Wiseman



Southern Trails results from the joint efforts of lots of people. This month, Dave Cross has supplied two of the trip reports, and very readable they are too. As some will have heard, Dave and his family recently sustained injuries when involved in a nasty vehicle accident. We wish them well and a speedy recovery.

The next Southern Trails will be published in February; there will be no January magazine, though the January meeting will be held as usual on the second Tuesday (13<sup>th</sup>). This month's meeting and the January meeting will be at our usual venue in Deakin. The possibility of a move to a different venue will be canvassed at these meetings. We are working on the problem of unsatisfactory sound amplification.

Enclosed with this issue is a membership renewal form. The Club's membership year ends on 31<sup>st</sup> December, and renewal is due at that time. Please fill in and return the form so that our Club's records can be kept current. As we increasingly use email, your email address is especially important. If you don't wish to be contacted by email, please say so on the form.

A reminder that the Annual General Meeting will be held in March. A new committee will be elected at that

time. Please give some thought to joining the committee. New ideas and viewpoints here can only enrich the Club.

Although I hope to continue to contribute to Southern Trails, I don't intend nominating for the Publications Coordinator position again. I'd be very pleased to discuss this role with anyone who'd like to take it up. It does take some time, but is very rewarding, an outlet for artistic creativity and an excellent way to contribute to the Club without needing much physical energy, or the emotional stability of a Driver Trainer. Publications embraces both Southern Trails and the website. Moves are afoot to significantly update the website. Although I'm generally pleased with Southern Trails, it too will benefit from fresh input. Please give it some thought.

John Wiseman



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Email: [sales@wattscom.com.au](mailto:sales@wattscom.com.au) Fyshwick ACT 2609

Web Address: <http://www.wattscom.com.au> ABN 62 008 641 923

We are a one stop communications shop providing GARMIN GPS and Navigational equipment, Vehicle Tracking, UHF and AM CB radios, Marine VHF & UHF radios, HF Radios, Commercial Two-Way radios, Hands Free Kits for mobile phones, sales and rentals of Mobile and Satellite phones, HF, UHF and Commercial radios.

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GARMIN, GME-ELETRAPHONE, ICOM, KENWOOD, UNIDEN, MOTOROLA, SIMOCO, AND TAIT. We can also provide satellite phones on the Iridium and Globalstar satellite networks.

## At the November meeting.....

The November meeting was a great success. Unusually large numbers attended to hear Frank Morrison of the Outdoor Power Centre, Fyshwick discuss the care and use of chainsaws, and the essential personal protection equipment.

Frank had a number of saws with him, and unexpectedly announced that he was donating one of the larger ones as a prize in the night's raffle. There was a scuffle to buy more raffle tickets.

Came the big moment.

There was a loud silence as the first winning ticket was drawn – loud murmuring followed as the winner came forward to claim his prize..... but the winner already had a chainsaw so selected a different prize.

The silence returned, it was even louder. A second winner was drawn..... But noone came forward to claim a prize! More loud murmurings.

The silence deepened yet again. A third ticket was drawn.....

There was a delighted victory cry from Jayne Hynes.

We understand Mick has been angling for a saw for some time but so far unsuccessfully. Perhaps Jayne will share it!



Thank you Frank for a most generous donation.

Need we encourage members to support those businesses who support us?

The **Fyshwick Outdoor Power Centre** is a major supplier of motorised gear such as chainsaws, mowers, diggers etc. They also have a strong service department with an excellent reputation.

When you're there, let them know where you're from. It's of mutual benefit to us all to do so.



# 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 4W driving, or whose vehicle is deemed inadequate.

- \***GRADE 1:** very easy with little, if any 4w driving 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



## 6 - 7 Dec **Christmas Party at Talooge**

(2008-031)

Trip Leader: Richard Brand  
Email: [trips@st4wdc.org](mailto: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—Note return to this venue**

## 11 Jan **Brindabella Range Ramble**

(2009-020)

Note: New since November magazine  
Trip Leader: Peter Fenwick  
Email: [pfenwick@homemail.com.au](mailto:pfenwick@homemail.com.au)  
Phone: 02 6281 5175 (h)  
Vehicles: 8  
Grade: 2  
Start: 8:30 AM  
Departure: Uriarra Homestead  
Fuel: Full tank  
Maps: Cotter Dam 1:25000  
Requirements: Basic Driver Training, Basic Recovery Gear, UHF radio, good tyres, well maintained vehicle, drinking water, morning tea and lunch  
Description: A great trip through some of the main trails of the Brindabellas, taking in breath taking scenery. Depending upon access and weather we will travel along Brindabella Rd, Webbs Ridge Road and the Powerline Trail stopping at Flea Creek and Mt Coree for some spectacular views across Canberra. There are a couple of options for the home trip and time will determine the choice.

## 13 Jan **Monthly Club Meeting**

(2009-006)

# TRIPS AND EVENTS



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

## 17 - 18 Jan Bird watching and Pink Pyjamas in the South East Forest NP (2009-001)

Trip Leader: Vivian Henderson  
Email: vivian@st4wdc.org  
Phone: 02 6288 3629 (h); 02 6289 4670 (w); 0407 969 057 (m)  
Vehicles: 6  
Grade: 2  
Start: 7:30 AM  
Departure: Williamsdale  
Fuel: Full tank, refuel at Candelo  
Maps: Badja 1:25000  
Belowra 1:25000  
Requirements: Basic Driver Training, Basic Recovery Gear, UHF radio, good tyres, well maintained vehicle, drinking water, binoculars, bird book, pencil and happy hour nibbles  
Description: This trip will traverse rocky fire-trails, Tuross River, Postman's Track and the rolling plains of Belowra – taking in the scenic views of the Wadbilligia and Deua NP's. The trip is aimed at those who wish to gain more 4WD experience without the pressure from the other half and go bird spotting or wildflower hunting, bushwalking or just relax and read a book. Not suitable for young children (too noisy for the birds and too boring for them). Please see Vivian if pink pyjamas are a problem.  
Comments: Fellas - don't rush out to buy pyjamas - this trip is for the ladies!

## 24 - 26 Jan Australia Day Weekend – High Country Hill-billies 003) (2009-

# LEE & THOMAS

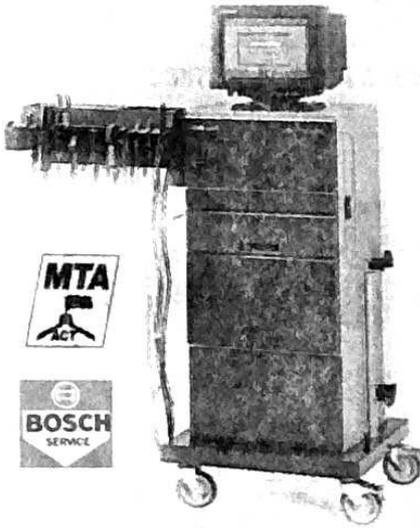
## Auto Electrics

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**6281 1455**

**OPEN MON - FRI**  
8.00am - 5.00pm  
**SATURDAY**  
8.00am - 12.00



# TRIPS AND EVENTS



Note: New since November magazine

Trip Leader: Greg and Vickie Taylor

Email: vickie.taylor@bigpond.com

Phone: 6241 3547 (h); 0411 281 087 (m)

Vehicles: 6

Grade: 3

Start: 8:30 AM

Departure: Williamsdale

Fuel: Full tank

Maps: Hema 1:200000 High Country Victoria  
Hema 1:385000 South East NSW  
1:25000 maps of Thredbo, Suggan Buggan, Deception/Deddick, Murrindal/Valmy and Goongerah/Ellery

Requirements: Basic driver training, basic recovery gear, UHF radio, good tyres, well maintained and reliable vehicle, camping gear.  
Gas stove for cooking (in case of fire ban), food and water, happy hour and pot luck dinner supplies.  
Bowsaw and axe for track clearing and a blind/tarp may be necessary for water crossing.  
No trailers without explicit approval from the trip leaders

Description: We plan to travel via Jindabyne and have morning tea. Head down Barry Way to Suggan Buggan, McKillops Bridge and then Deddick Fire Trail, The Staircase and onto Waratah Flat for the night. We will head back to McKillops Bridge and Black Mountain Rd to Limestone Creek. If time permits, side trips to The Poplars and The Playgrounds on Cobberas Trail may be included. Charlie Creek Hut is our intended second camp. Onto Davies Plain Track for a visit to Davies Plain Hut and then Dogmans Hut and a climb up to Mount Pinnibar for the grand view of the Victorian High Country. Back to Tom Groggin and we will cross the Murray River to New South Wales, Thredbo, Jindabyne and home to Canberra. Many of the locations and campgrounds we are visiting have toilet facilities – but, as usual bring your shovel and paper! A pot luck dinner for Sunday night to make sure we have enough strength for Mt Pinnibar on the Monday!

Comments: This is the plan but we may deviate to camp at other locations depending on our progress each day. Many of these tracks will be unsuitable / unsafe in wet weather

## **28 Jan Wind of Shaolin (2009-018)**

Note: New since November magazine

Trip Leader: Catherine Panich

Email: capan@homemail.com.au

Phone: 6281 5175 (h); 0412 866 375 (m)

Start: 7:30 PM

Departure: The Canberra Theatre

Requirements: Ticket price is \$80.30 for a group booking (a saving of \$10)

Description: This dance and martial arts spectacular is a traditional Chinese story of love and loss.

Comments: Expressions of interest immediately to Catherine

## **6 Feb Brindabella Sunset (2009-021)**

Note: New since November magazine

Trip Leader: Warren Shardlow

Email: warren.shardlow@hotmail.com

# TRIPS AND EVENTS



Phone: 0409 321 213 (m)  
Vehicles: 8  
Grade: 3  
Start: 6:00 PM  
Departure: Uriarra Homestead  
Requirements: Basic Driver training, basic recovery gear, UHF, good tyres, well maintained and reliable vehicle.  
Description: A short drive to end the week. We will do a couple of tracks during the daylight. Stop for some supper whilst we watch the sun set from an optimal viewing point. Then do some night driving. About 4hrs duration overall.

## **10 Feb Monthly Club Meeting** (2009-007)

Start: 7:30 PM

## **15 Feb New Members Picnic** (2009-023)

Note: New since November magazine  
Trip Leader: David Whight  
Email: tdavidwhight@hotmail.com  
Phone: 0438 882 696 (m)  
Vehicles: unlimited  
Grade: 1  
Start: 8:30 AM  
Departure: Queanbeyan Red Rooster car park  
Maps: South Coast Forest Map  
Requirements: UHF radio is recommended. Bring your own morning and afternoon tea, and salads for lunch. The club will provide sizzling bits for lunch.  
Description: This is a gentle meander through the Tallaganda State Forest, designed for new members and old members alike. Lunch will be at the Lowden Park historic site where relics of a logging camp are scattered throughout the park, including a waterwheel and header ponds originally used to generate electricity. The surrounding native bush of Tallaganda State Forest includes majestic stands of brown barrel. Bird watching is also popular, with the rare olive whistler a possible sighting. Lunch walks include a short nature trek through magnificent ferns, a visit to the header ponds, or exploration of old traction engines and logging gear. The tracks should be suitable for soft-road 4WDs.  
Comments: Driver training is not necessary, and existing members are welcome. Early bookings to assist catering numbers, please.

## **21 - 22 Feb Yerranderie Ghost Town & Silver Mines** (2009-005)

Note: New since November magazine  
Trip Leader: Ian Goodacre  
Email: newtricks@bigpond.com  
Phone: 0403 304 505 (m)

# TRIPS AND EVENTS



Trip Leader: Ben  
Vehicles: 6  
Grade: 2  
Start: 8:30 AM  
Departure: Car park behind Shell Service Station, Mitchell  
Fuel: Full tank at start  
Maps: 1:25000 Richlands, Mt Armstrong, Bindook, Yerranderie, Gurnang  
Requirements: Basic recovery kit. UHF radio. Drinking water, Happy Hour supplies. No pets or trailers  
Description: Yerranderie Township is a privately owned historic township and wildlife sanctuary within an extinct volcanic crater in the Blue Mountains National Park. It is 44kms due west of Camden, on the opposite side of the Burraborang Valley. The camping area is within the village precincts and has a hot shower and flushing toilets. Onsite firewood (fire restrictions permitting) is supplied by the caretaker. For a small fee a fascinating guided 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 (reportedly) stunning views. As we leave on Sunday we may choose to visit the historic cemetery and Government town near the airstrip. Yerranderie website: <http://www.yerranderie.com> (also Google Yerranderie for other websites and information.) Note the Limeburners Flat detour option is closed to vehicles indefinitely for regeneration.  
Comments: Deposit of approx \$6/adult required to confirm the campsite booking one week prior to the trip. Full camping fee is \$12/adult

## 7 - 9 Mar **Canberra Day Weekend - Trailer Trip to Bendethera** (2009-004)

Note: New since November magazine  
Trip Leader: Greg and Vickie Taylor  
Email: [vickie.taylor@bigpond.com](mailto:vickie.taylor@bigpond.com)  
Phone: 6241 3547 (h); 0411 281 087 (m)  
Vehicles: 8+ (two convoys can be arranged if necessary)  
Grade: 3  
Start: 8:30 AM  
Departure: Braidwood – side of service station down from pie shop  
Fuel: Full tank (Fuel at Bungendore and Braidwood)  
Maps: South Coast Forest Map (1:150 000)  
1:25000 maps of Araluen, Snowball, Bendethera, Michelago, Colinton, Tinderry, Jerangle, Whinstone, Burrumbela  
Requirements: Basic driver training, basic recovery gear, UHF radio, good tyres, well maintained and reliable vehicle, camping gear.  
Gas stove for cooking (in case of fire ban), food and water, happy hour and pot luck dinner supplies. A blind/tarp may be necessary for water crossing.  
Off road camper trailers are welcome and should have good all terrain or off road tyres.  
Description: We plan to travel via Araluen and have morning tea at Dry Creek or Deua River Camping area. We will then head to Wamban Rd just before Moruya and then head up Little Sugarloaf Rd. Side trip through Wamban Fire Trail and back onto Little Sugarloaf Rd with lunch stop at Hanging Mountain. Collect firewood and descend to the valley and camp. A pot luck dinner for Saturday night and Sunday will be free to explore, swim or just laze around. There is an old Homestead site and the Bendethera Caves to explore (this takes three plus hours and torch water necessary). Monday can be a slow start with return home via Dampier Fire Trail, Minuma Fire Trail, Middle Mountain Road and Krawarree Rd. There is a large camp ground in the valley with pit toilets. Kids and Teenagers are welcome and will enjoy this trip. Where more than one convoy is planned there may be opportunity for a second convoy to travel across Deua River at Dry Creek and travel via Mericumbene Fire Trail

# TRIPS AND EVENTS



**7 - 9 Mar**

## **Stockton Beach**

(2009-024)

Note: New since November magazine

Trip Leader: John Kjar

Email: [kjar@optusnet.com.au](mailto:kjar@optusnet.com.au)

Phone: 6287 7574 (h), 0432 737 440 (m)

Vehicles: 8

Grade: 3

Start: 8:00 AM

Departure: Shell Service Station at EPIC on the Sydney Road

Fuel: Full tank at start

Requirements: Basic Driver Training, Sand Driving training, basic recovery gear including snatch strap, strong recovery points on vehicle, UHF radio, good tyres, well maintained vehicle.

Also required will be a long pole attached to the vehicle with a flag. Porta-potti or similar if possible.

We would be grateful for any offer from an experienced sand driver to co-lead this trip

Description: Stockton Beach is a popular venue for sand driving. It tests to the full the skills learnt on the Sand Driving course and stand you in good stead for an assault on the Simpson Desert, Canning Stock Route etc. We will drive to Newcastle on Saturday, returning on Monday, leaving us a full day (or more) of driving on sand. We will camp at the campground on Stockton Beach on Saturday and Sunday nights. We also need to purchase permits for the beach/sand. Costs for the permit and camping to be advised, but we need to book early. Please note, sand driving can be dangerous and we will not compromise on safety. This trip involves two days of driving on bitumen and one day of fun on the beach and dunes. The Canberra Day long weekend has been selected as it is the only long weekend for ACT only, and hence not as crowded as other holidays. Camping trailers are welcome, but not on the sand!

Comments: We will use the M7 tollway. You can pay the toll via a phone call after using the tollway or purchase an electronic tag from either the RTA (<https://ols2.rta.nsw.gov.au/myEToll/>) or Roam ([www.roam.com.au](http://www.roam.com.au) or ph 13 8655 )

**7 - 15 Mar**

## **National Autumn Balloon Spectacular**

(2009-019)

Note: New since November magazine

Trip Leader: Dennis Collins

Email: [margden1@actewagl.net.au](mailto:margden1@actewagl.net.au)

Phone: 6292 7423

Vehicles: Unlimited

Grade: 1

### **Travel Tips**

Welding gloves are great for handling hot containers around the fire. Light leather gloves are good when setting up and pulling down camp, especially in cold weather.



# TRIPS AND EVENTS



**27 Apr Anzac Day long weekend** (0)

**12 May Monthly Club Meeting** (2009-010)

Start: 7:30 PM

**8 Jun Queen's Birthday long weekend** (0)

**9 Jun Monthly Club Meeting** (2009-011)

Start: 7:30 PM

**29 Jun - 18 Jul Dash to the Centre** (2009-002)

Note: New since November magazine

Trip Leader: Ian Brown

Email: brown271@bigpond.com

Phone: 6241 9468 (h); 0412 148 096 (m)

Vehicles: 6

Grade: 2

Start: 8:00 AM

Departure: Gungahlin

Fuel: Full tank at start

Maps: Hema Australia 4WD Raster Map Collection

Requirements: Basic driver training, basic recovery gear, UHF radio, good tyres, well maintained vehicle, dinking water

Description: Canberra to Uluru via the Oodnadatta Track and Alice Springs. Along the way visit Lambert Centre, Fink, Chambers Pillar, Kings Canyon, Uluru and Kata Juta. Return home via the black top visiting Coober Pedy and Woomera

# Driver Training

Dave Cross



## Talooeing for Beginners

It's late Sunday. The sun's heat is abating and the light begins to fade as the high-level cloud cover increases. It's been a long day. My eyes are sore and my back and shoulder muscles ache from the tension and concentration of the day's efforts.

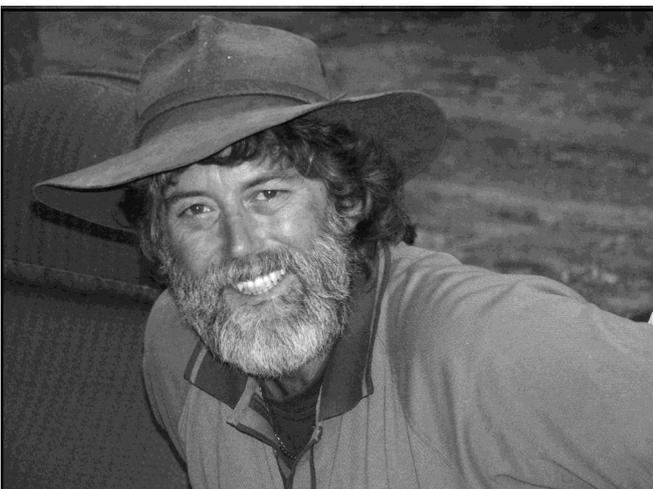
As I walk around our 1992 Toyota Surf a faint smile crosses my lips. There's the mark from the gum tree I rubbed against and there's the bent runner board from when the truck bottomed out over a large stump. Dust coats the entire vehicle and mud stubbornly clings to the wheel arches even after today's roads. Yes, there are probably scratches that won't buff out but who cares. I've done it!

The CB radio, still tuned to Channel 14, gives a bleat of static and suddenly it's last weekend. We're driving in convoy along a dark country road east of Bredbo. My 10 year old son, Oliver, beside me eagerly listens for instructions from the convoy leader and confirmation from Charlie.

The road dips and the 4 wheel drive vehicles slow just before a small creek crossing and turn into a property entrance. This must be Talooe, I think. But, like for most of the weekend, my beliefs, assumptions and knowledge about 4 wheel driving will be proved lacking and my skills and experience fully tested.

A swinging lantern stops by the passenger door. In the ghostly light I can make out the figure of a tall man with a thick greying beard. He stubs out his cigarette and removes his stockman's hat to reveal a weathered face and thick brown hair. As he pulls the door open and climbs in the vehicle he introduces himself simply as "Duck".

The convoy starts to move again and Duck instructs me to select low 4wd for the remainder of the trip into the property.



By now there is a thin line of sweat running down my back. I've signed up for the Basic Driver Training with almost no experience at 4 wheel driving. And now I'm in the middle of the pitch black night, no idea where we are, "Ben Hall" as my instructor and I'm being asked to select low 4wd as we head down into my first water crossing!

Within minutes Duck's laid back attitude and calm reassurance has us steadily rising along the dirt track. Duck is an instant winner with Oliver and the kilometres pass quickly with easy, light conversation.

At 9.30pm we make a final creek and climb to a shed lit by electric lights. We are instructed to make camp up the hill from the shed and by 10pm the throbbing electricity generator lulls us to sleep.

The morning comes early with no curtains to shield us from the sun's harsh glare. As I break through the outer skin of the tent I am greeted by the bush all around me. We are perched on a stony slope looking past the shed and out across the valley.

Gum trees stir in the early breeze and the sounds of birds fill the cool morning air. Already people are up and about and I can hear the generator commence work once more.

By 8.30am we are assembled in the shed ready to



commence the 4 hour theory component of the day. In the training room there are assembled the other students. A wide range of people from different backgrounds with various 4wd experiences. Vanessa who wants to tow horse floats with her Land Rover Discovery (Disco), Bernie is retired with a Series 200, Tyson who is young and keen in a big Patrol, Peter has a new Jeep, Warwick a Kia Sportage, Edward with his 2 boys and a Hilux ute, Eliot a Landcruiser and Mat with his father's Landcruiser. And my old Surf. I am surprised and delighted at the range of vehicles and just want to rush

out and compare them all.

Peter Reynolds takes the floor and our lessons begin. We are invited to take a look at the photos on the wall. There are scenes from the Advanced Driver Training course which we all cringe away from. Photos on the other wall appear, to me, to be just as harrowing until I realise that they're of the Basic Driver Training. The thin line of sweat is back!

The theory progresses and we are introduced to 4 wheel driving and all its pleasures and hidden traps. I am amazed at how much I don't know about my vehicle. "Is it a 4wd?", "Is it always a 4wd when 4wd is selected?", "What type of differentials/suspension does it have?", "Where are the differentials in comparison to the centre of the vehicle?", "Can you drive your tyres on 10 PSI?" The questions go on and by lunch time I have several pages of notes and at least as many questions again to ask.

Lunch passes slowly. I'm anxious now to get behind the wheel and do some driving. After some target practice with orange cones we "convoy" up and again Duck climbs in beside me.

Back through the creek at the bottom of the hill we head off to a river flat where mounds and holes have been strategically placed along a 100m section of road. This looks simple enough but it is soon evident that even this exercise presents some challenges to the newly initiated. We witness each other driving through the obstacle course and learn about wheel placement and see some of the limitations of the various vehicles, their suspension and axle arrangements. Encouraged by this assignment we move onto the "nursery slopes". While the instructors are obviously enjoying our nervous novice jitters, they remain encouraging, supportive and professional. They answer our questions and provide sound advice when needed. I feel completely safe with Duck guiding me through some tricky manoeuvres even if my white knuckles on the steering wheel belie my lack of confidence.



Soon we are off up some real tracks. Shale and rocks, tree stumps, gutters and ruts. The bush crowds in around the tracks making for some tight turns and close shaves. The gradient of the tracks presents numerous difficulties. I would never have attempted half of them without Duck's encouragement.

By late afternoon we are crawling through deep gullies

and heading back to camp. As we approach the creek at the entrance to camp I am delighted to find that my confidence has grown so much that I am hardly concerned by the crossing's steep entrance and departure.

After debrief, it's time for dinner, some drinks and a quiet chat round the camp fire. Everyone is in a good mood. Tired from the days efforts but talking about their challenges and successes. As late evening darkens I reflect on how much I have learned from this one day. Although I have been driving for nearly 30 years, I believe I have gained more knowledge in the last 24 hours than in all my driving experience.

The second day starts much as the day before. This time the theory is a little shorter and we get to see some vehicle recovery techniques and equipment. Then it is off to the slopes again. But today is going to be very different.

Gone are the "gentle runs" of yesterday. It's up into serious terrain where the shale is unforgiving and the creek crossings are tactical challenges. Just after Duck's Crossing (guess who this is named after?) we strike difficulties.

First is a malfunction with Warwick's Kia that prevents him from making the hill. He is towed out and heads back to camp.

On the same climb a little further up I take the wrong line and can't make the rocky outcrop. My front right and rear left wheels lift off the ground and perform just as the theory predicted "wheels spinning, no traction". I roll back down the slope to have another go but slide into a tree and lose traction totally. With no way of going backwards and no chance of going forward, Edward backs down and tows me out.



I am shaken by this experience but there is no talk of returning to camp. I have to complete the training. More challenging runs and a couple of hours later we return to the scene of the crime but this time approaching it from the other direction. The difference is phenomenal. The exact same stretch of dirt looks an awful lot different coming down than going up. It's not until we are almost over the rocks that Duck mentions this is the spot where we were previously

stuck. I hadn't even recognised it although the up hill vision is imprinted in my mind.

The end of day 2 sees us all heading off back to our normal environments. At the main dirt road we pump our tyres up and speed off. For the next 5 days I walk in this surreal world where there is calm and order and wonder if it was all a dream.

The follow up day is held the next Sunday in the Brindabella ranges. This time I know there will be hard runs but I am not as anxious as before. After some easy dirt roads we tackle a few challenging hills. One has around 7 spoon drains but all take the climb in their stride.

By morning tea we are tackling the terrain with relative ease and relaxing into the work. That is until we come to the bottom a track that looks like a World War I battle field. The entrance is flanked by rocks and ruts. There are several severe spoon drains half way up and towards the top it turns to loose stones, rock ledges and fallen trees.

Taking the initial section with ease the Surf gets stuck on one of the spoon drains. The tyres are down to 10 PSI, the right rear wheel pressed hard into the suspension and the whole vehicle is pivoting across the drain. Several times I reverse and come at it from a slightly different angle only to become lodged again. Not able to move forward with dust and sliding wheels we contemplate being towed again. A final attempt and I'm free. The Surf bounces and bucks over the rocks but makes it to the top without further incidence.

There are a few more challenging runs after lunch before we give the treacherous run another go. This

time I tackle it with determination, picking my line correctly and there is no repeat of my earlier difficulties.

After another few hours we head for home stopping only at the bitumen to pump up tyres and a final debrief. It's been a marvellous experience. Although I have been well outside my comfort zone, I understand my vehicle, its limitations and capabilities. As Oliver said at debrief "I've learned that the vehicle can be capable of things even if the driver isn't". Thanks son!

The radio squawks again and I'm back in the front yard. By now the daylight has vanished and the evening is starting to chill. I look once more at the marks left by the gum tree and hope they don't buff out.



**Survivors of the Sand and Water Crossing Course - all dried out and ready for more!**

# Croajingolong Dreaming

1-4 Nov '08

Dave Cross (with additional notes in italics by Oung and Richard)



Catherine Panich & Peter Fenwick

Wendy and Rick Holland

Kerry & Bev Blakston

Julie & Phil Henderson

Oung Niennattrakul & Richard Nipperess

Jen Martin & Richard Brand

Lyndall & David Cross with Oliver

Sylvia & Bob Allen

Sue & Steve Angelo

Jenny & Brian Delroy with Emma

Freelander with Tvan

Pajero

Toyota Hilux ute

Prado with Camel Camper

Pajero

Adventra with kayak

Toyota Surf

100 Series Cruiser

Troopie

Patrol with Ultimate

*Trip Leaders*

“Croajingolong” is derived from ‘Kruaetunglung’, the aboriginal clan of the Ben Kurnai (Man of the East) tribe that inhabited East Gippsland. Although my father was born not far away in Orbost, I had never been into the Croajingolong National Park and down to Point Hicks to watch the whales before. The mighty creatures migrate past the lighthouse every year on their way to their summer ‘feeding grounds’ in Antarctica.

*Points Hicks was named after Lt Zachery Hicks who, aboard Captain Cook’s Endeavour, first sighted the headland on 19 or 20 April 1770. Subsequently called Cape Everard, it was proclaimed Points Hicks on 20 April 1970 by the Victorian Premier Sir Henry Bolte, marking the bicentenary of Cook’s Voyage of Discovery. The lighthouse was built in 1890. Apparently two ships have come to grief on the reefs in the waters off the point, the latest being the ‘Saros’ on 23 December 1937 when all aboard survived. The wreck is still visible. A defined area of the surrounding waters comprise the Point Hicks Marine National Park, in which*

*no fishing of any sort is allowed and presumably, no sharks are allowed to bite..*

When we read about the trip being organized by Catherine Panich and Peter Fenwick we jumped at the chance to tag along for the four days in early November.

As new members and first time trippers, we were eager to get going. At 8.30am on Saturday we met up with nine other vehicles at Williamsdale and headed south along the Monaro Highway.

*There were around thirty Ducati Club bikers assembled at the servo at Williamsdale and as we watched them stream onto the highway heading south with that wonderful resonating sound distinctive of Ducati motors, Peter Fenwick informed us, perhaps with a hint of nostalgia, he was a founding member of the club many years ago.*



Convoy procedure was followed as we strung out down the road. We soon passed through Cooma and, arriving at Nimmitabel, the fleet lay anchor for a quick pie and coffee. This was our first real opportunity to speak with everyone if only briefly.

*Watch for the Wedge-tailed Eagles around the blue sculpture south of Bredbo and at least three spiraling upwards on the thermals between Cooma and Nimmitabel in the afternoon on the return journey.*

*We picked up Sue and Steve Angelo as 'Charlie' on the run through Bombala where they had stopped for coffee on their way to join us from their coastal paradise. Met up with hundreds of cows with calves in the 'long paddock' south of Bombala.*

Lunch was had at the park in Cann River. Food, fuel and flushing toilets-the last for four days-quickly gave way to winding country roads, farms and tall gum trees. End of the bitumen took us into the Croajingolong National Park. A relatively good dirt road brought the group down a steep hill and across the bridge over Thurra River to the camping grounds. Each site was set back from the road amongst coastal mahogany trees and only metres from the beach.

*The water from Thurra River is of good quality but should be boiled for drinking.*

Once camp was established we had time for an explore by ourselves along the wind torn sands and still, tannin waters of the Thurra River inlet. From the bridge we glimpsed the 163m high sand dunes and, by the turbulent ocean, one could see the Point Hicks Lighthouse jutting out into the southern seas.

By 5:30 it was happy hour around the communal camp fire. The 'pot luck' dinner was a great success and the variety of dishes mirrored the mix of people on the trip. This was a great experience for us and by next morning we felt we were really getting to know everyone.

At 10 am on Sunday a possie commenced the 2 hour



return walk to Point Hicks. Along the way were glimpses of white sandy bays studded with granite boulders.

The walk was flanked by wild flowers and banksia. Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos made the most of the banksia's seed pods to the delight of our intrepid group.

*Wendy thought she heard a chook down in the gully near the Lighthouse-unlikely in a national park-but! her observation was subsequently confirmed by*



*Paul, the light station keeper-Lesson: if you hear a chook in the bush...it is a chook. Paul also volunteered there is a resident Kelpie at the light station called 'Keeper'. Paul and his wife share the light station duties with two other couples on a two weeks on, four weeks off basis and...you guessed it, he loves fishing. Sylvia and Bob caught a whiting and a salmon from the beach on Sunday.*

*Saw lots of lizards, Teddybear bees (natives), some bunny rabbits, a wallaby, a pair of Tawny Frogmouths, a Wonga Pidgeon and of course, seals. There are 306 species of birds in the park, representing half of Victoria's and a third of Australia's total bird species.*

A final hill and we are standing below the lighthouse, at the spot on the Australian mainland Captain Cook first sighted. However, after an hour or so and only a few signs of whales, most people headed back towards camp. Oung and Richard stayed another hour and a half and were rewarded by a small pod of Humpback whales breaching and frolicking in the deep blue waters just off the point.

*After seeing some, spouts, humps and tails, we were about to leave when Oung requested a whale "jump! ...come on!" and...in succession, several began breaching in spectacular fashion...hours of waiting and Oung's request had paid off. (She's scary like that!)*

Sunday evening the weather closed in and rain marked the start of Monday. My family decided to try for whales again and this time we were lucky enough to see a spectacular display of them playing

about 500m out around the headland. Many others had similar experiences over the course of the week-end.

*We were visited around the fire by mother possum with very large off spring on-board. We walked early back to Point Hicks on Monday morning and with calm seas, saw lots of whale activity. A storm moved in from the west and we said goodbye to the whales until May/June maybe, when they head north again.*

In the afternoon, with rain still threatening, a small group took the road over to Tamboon Inlet.

We decided to take advantage of a break in the clouds and climb the enormous sand dunes that dominate the hinterland. The wind on top was fierce but the 1 hour climb was well worth it.

*The wildflowers in the area at this time of year are really abundant and very beautiful, deserving of more exploratory time.*

Rain and a howling wind accompanied by the ever present roar of the waves filled our last night at Croajingolong.



Protected from the worst of it by a tree-bound ridge of sand, the camp ground was relatively calm. We all spent another pleasant evening around the communal fire eating, talking, drinking and simply taking in the cool night and surrounds.

Tuesday was much brighter, with heavy rain over-night. A final walk before heading off home.

Point Hicks, in Croajingolong National Park proved to be a wonderful trip. The range of scenery, wildlife, wildflowers and fellow travelers made for a great



weekend. It was an excellent introduction to the Southern Tablelands 4 Wheel Drive Club, some of its members and, the driving trips organized by its members.

Catherine and Peter did a superb job in organizing the adventure and were gracious hosts and good company. I think another trip to Croajingolong is a high probability...perhaps as the whales migrate back up the coast passed Point Hicks from May to July.

For more information go to [www.parkweb.vic.gov.au](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au)

### **Membership Renewal time**

The Club's membership year is January to December, so it's time to renew your membership.

Renewals after the February general meeting are considered "late" and may attract a late fee. Members not renewing before the end of February will be removed from the *Southern Trails* mailing list.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held in

March, and any renewal not received at least 10 days prior to the AGM may lead to that membership being terminated.

So..... It's time to renew!!! Please complete the renewal form enclosed with this magazine and return it to the Membership Secretary with your renewal subscription.

# The Pilbara

A Traveller's Tale

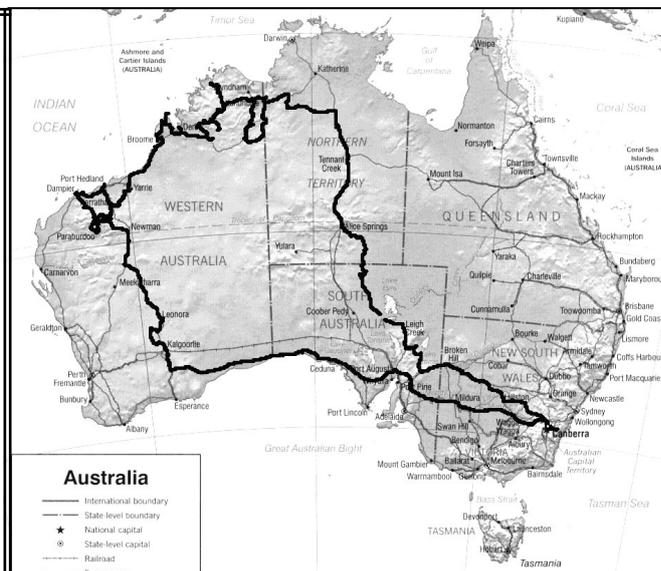
Val Wiseman



## Preface

This trip, in the good company of Jim and Jane in their 100 series towing a camper and Alan and Vivian with their traytop camper, took us from Canberra to Alice via Broken Hill, the Flinders, Dalhousie Springs and Old Andado. Then up the bitumen to turn west to the Gregory NP and Kunanurra where our Troopy underwent major repairs. A loop around Keep River NP and the Bungles, then west to Broome with some side trips to the Mitchell Plateau and Mornington Wilderness. Alan and Vivian left us for home via the Tanami, while we pressed on into the west with Jim and Jane.

Next stop the Pilbara but we'd gone only 100 km or so when Troopy again called in sick and we returned to Broome with our second leaking head gasket. A cheap chemical "quick fix" and with quite some trepidation we headed for the Pilbara a second time. The original plan called for a return to Alice from the west, taking in Rudall River NP, but that was abandoned – too remote in view of Troopy's delicate condition. South to Kalgoorlie then east across the Nullabor offered far easier travel being largely bitumen. We take up the story as we again head for the Pilbara.



The Great Northern Highway is a good bitumen road running roughly 40 km inland and parallel to the coast, south from Broome towards Port Hedland,. There is little to see as it runs through almost continuous low scrub, broken here and there by dry salt lakes. After refuelling at the partially burnt out Sandfire Roadhouse we turned inland down the Boreline Road, a good dirt road through more flat scrubby country. About 35km south we arrived at some low red rocky hills and quite suddenly we were in a typical Pilbara landscape, stark and brilliant with spectacular red rocks, flat-topped hills and white-trunked gum trees. A stretch of old track provided a good campsite, with spectacular views and plentiful snappy gum for a cheery fire.

The next morning the scene had changed as a thick,

lingering sea fog softened the harsh brilliance of our surroundings. One of our most memorable camps.

We continued south through the once-was township



of Shay Gap, then great excitement when Jane spied some Sturt's Desert Peas, the first we had seen. After a photo session, on to the de Grey River with its extensive beaches of sand and shingle where we found lots of jasper. (This would be an excellent spot for an overnight stop.) Then on to beautiful Coppins Gap for lunch and a walk down the gorge. This too would be a top overnight spot. On to Doolena Gorge, wide and sandy with lots of corellas and we finally stopped for the night on the bank of the Coongan River.

Our first day in the Pilbara had been marked by a dramatic change in scenery from what we experienced in the Kimberley, with new vibrant colours,

vegetation and landforms. And many tracks with notices proclaiming “prohibited entry - mining lease”.

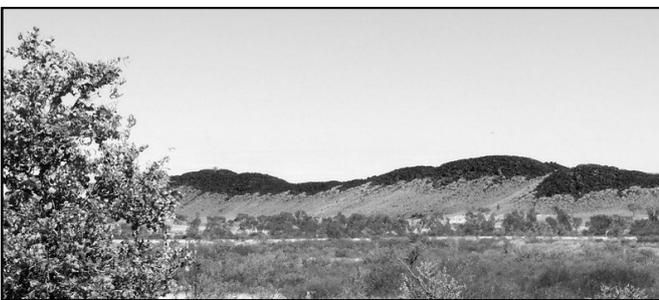
Another foggy morning, as we drove down to Marble Bar, a neat and surprisingly green town with an impressive pioneer memorial and “warm winters”. A helpful lady at the “I” centre gave us a mud map that pointed us towards the “marble” bar and its impressive striped jasper, Chinaman’s Pool, the jasper quarry where rock samples may be collected, and the Flying Fox lookout with its impressive views back over the river. Then on to the Old Comet gold mine where for \$2 we could browse through a collection of old photos, artefacts and mineral samples. We bypassed the WWII airbase at Corunna Downs and went on to Glen Herring gorge, finding another excellent and more remote campsite. We arrived early enough to explore along the impressive gorge, finding more striped rocks and Sturt’s Desert Peas, before the rock walls turned a brilliant red in the setting sun.

From Glen Herring we headed SW towards Hillside and Woodstock, following a generally good road through some very scenic and varied country. We are particularly taken by rocky ranges, some of them real



“choc tops” covered in rough brown rubble.

Quite suddenly we were in railway country; first the new line recently built by Fortesque, then the older BHP line servicing the giant Newman iron ore mine. Out onto the bitumen and south to the Auski road-



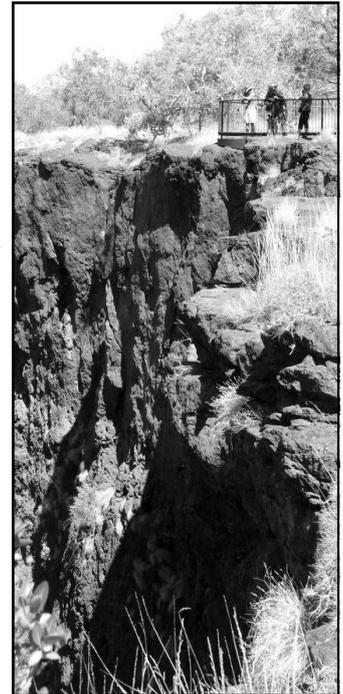
house to refuel. We were in mining country, sharing the road with massive tonka trucks and other heavy machinery on low loaders as well as many ore carrying road trains.

South from the Auski Roadhouse the road winds through part of the spectacular Hamersley ranges via a gorge of brilliant red rock, a colour we would become

familiar with during the next few days in the Karajini National Park.



We followed the bitumen to the extensive Dales campground Karajini where we were allocated a site by volunteer rangers. This campground is very well set out allowing plenty of privacy, but is close to walks leading off to Circular Pool, Dales Gorge, Fortesque Falls and Fern Pool. Over the next couple of days we explored these beautiful places, and visited the major gorges further west in the park. The Karajini rocks are a deep glowing red, and the gorges are very deep with vertical sides. Just getting out to the Oxer lookout was an adventure along a narrow neck of land with precipitous gorges falling away on either side. From the lookout we watched adventurous folk abseiling and canyoning 100metres below us.



Our Karajini experience concluded with a visit to beautiful Hamersley Gorge and a cold swim for Jane. From there we headed north on gravel still marvelling at the scenery. We followed the northern boundary of Karajini round past what remains of the one-time asbestos town of Wittenoom – a dead town where even the road signs have been painted over to deter visitors, though signs remain to warn of asbestos hazard. The country to the north is desert and the riverbeds that held deep water in the gorges were now just dry sand.

Leaving the Hamersley ranges and Karajini behind us, we headed north to Port Hedland, an easy run up the bitumen, through dry but often scenic country. Our first sight of PH involved massive power lines, converging railway lines and a big power station. This is industrial country and tourists have to fit in as

best they can. Finding a caravan park with a vacancy was the next challenge. Long stay residents occupy most of the space in van parks, but we did find a small space in the expensive and very regulated Big 4 – single vehicles in this row, vans only in the next row, drawbars must face the road.... At least the washing machines were friendly!

But we found Port Hedland to be really interesting. We watched at close quarters the big ore carrying ships entering and leaving the port, the busy tugs and pilot boats, the huge carriers loading iron ore, the enormous machinery and ore stockpiles. There are huge salt evaporators and massive piles of salt. Best of all was the road overpass underneath which the mighty ore trains rumble while we counted the number of ore trucks – 224 with 5 engines that took 10 minutes to pass us. A wave to the train driver was returned with a cheeky blast on the airhorns as the lead engine passed below us.

From this industrial outpost we headed west towards Roebourne, through increasingly stunning patches of Sturt's Desert peas, and past many mine sites. We called in to see some of the area's history at the once a bustling port of Cossack before finding a very new caravan park full of southern exiles at Point Samson.

Next morning's routine check revealed that Troopy's water level was down, but there was no water evident in the cylinders, so we topped up the tank and set off. But during the short run to Karratha the temperature gauge crept up a bit.....it was a hot day, wasn't it. Was power down a bit? Surely not.....

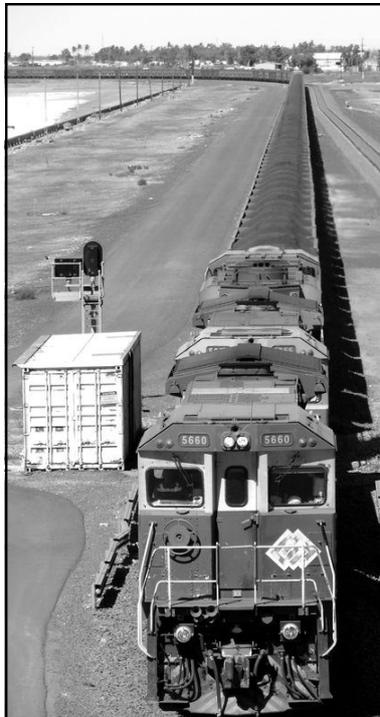
The Tourist Info Centre is conveniently located on the outskirts of Karratha, and when we pulled in there our optimism evaporated at the sound of the now all too

familiar gurgle under the bonnet. Another \*@\$% boiling radiator... what now! With our hopes in our boots we sought solace in a cappuccino while checking for obvious problems. And there it was, (spotted by a girl) a split heater hose! That's easy, we are carrying a spare... or so we thought, but it wasn't where the lists said it should be. So Jim and John set off to find a replacement. Toyota couldn't help but half a Holden part did the job very well. One and a half hours later, spirits and Troopy restored, we were on our way again. Will this saga never end?

The contrasts of the Burrup Peninsular soon diverted our attention. The massive Woodside natural gas processing facility rose from the landscape like some weird space monster. The big visitor centre overlooks the facility and provides an informative overview of the construction and operation of the plant. Then we went back in time as we explored the ancient petroglyphs at Deep Gully, said to be the most concentrated site for rock carvings in the world. Dampier township has a hard used appearance, iron ore and salt loaders and coconut palms fed by drippers. There are ammonia plants, kilometres of salt evaporators, and everywhere the distinctive tumbled brown rocks populated by agile rock wallabies. Even the beaches are memorable, made as they are entirely from shells, with more Sturt's Desert peas blooming happily right onto the shellgrit sand. What an amazing and memorable place. A photo of red pea flowers framing the flaring tower of the gas plant seemed to sum it all up.

At the Karratha Visitor Centre we had obtained our free permit to travel the private road that runs beside the railway line south to Tom Price. We had first to watch a video explaining the hazards of remote area travel, and of course fill in some forms. And be warned not to wear red clothing when close to the line as the train drivers will interpret this as a danger signal and stop the train. The northern section of the road is bitumen, and very new bitumen at that as this stretch of road had only been opened a few weeks earlier. But it was not so new that forests of Sturt's Desert peas had not had time to grow and thrive. These spectacular peas became such a common sight that we soon started referring to them as "red weeds"; how do the train drivers cope with them?

And then there were the trains. Loaded trains going north to the ports, empty trains with their distinctive sound going back for a refill. All of them big, with a



braking distance of about 3km. At one point the road crosses the railway at a level crossing with flashing lights. As we approached slowly the lights were green, only turning red as we were almost on the crossing. It was then that we saw the loaded train bearing down on us – too close! Well, it was chance to give the cameras another workout and clear a bit of adrenalin.

We were now in Millstream-Chichester NP, time to visit the Python Pool. The road in started out as good gravel, until we came to a steep winding section that is sealed. This section was lined with masses of those “red weeds”, in places they were growing out across the bitumen, and up to a metre tall, a truly amazing sight. Some had a cool swim in the pool, before we headed on to the park headquarters and the delightful but busy campground at Crossing Pool.

Then it was back to following the railway, and seeing many more trains. Each train is an awesome sight with statistics to match: about 230 trucks, each carrying 116 tonnes pulled by 2 x 9,000hp diesel locos with a top speed of 75kph. And all done with just one driver who will usually give a cheery wave and blast of the whistle.

We diverted from the railway to take in the view from the top of Mt. Sheila. The view was indeed splendid, but getting there required negotiating a 15% grade up a narrow but sealed track, with deep gullies falling steeply away on either side. There are only a couple of passing bays, so radios were essential to co-ordinate traffic. Not all of the passengers enjoyed the experience. So it was a relief at the end of a hot day to find a shady creek-bed with a good supply of firewood for a camp. We went to sleep listening to the endless stream of trains carrying Western Australia to the world.

At Tom Price and Newman we toured the mines, leaving our vehicles behind and travelling on the company bus, kitted out in the regulation safety gear of hard hat, goggles and safety vest over mandatory long sleeves and boots. These mines, plus the Superpit at Kalgoolie are mind boggling in their size and scale; no photo can do them justice. The machinery on site is truly awesome, especially the big dump trucks. The biggest of these carry 240 tonnes (that’s about the weight of 100 4WD’s) and have a top speed of 42kph. The wheels are 3.8m high, and the double wheels on the back were about the same width as Troopy. Not much wonder they have right of way on the labyrinth of roads that criss-cross the mine site! Many of these trucks are driven by women. Near Newman we met a young woman who drove one of them; she reckoned it was the best job, easy with minimal stress, good conditions and a six figure pay packet. Not too sure about the 12 hour shifts and 4 days/4 nights routine though.



From Newman our original plan had been to head east to the Rudall River NP then to Alice via the Gary Junction road, taking in a bit of the Canning Stock Route. But Troopy was still leaking oil so it seemed prudent to stay on the bitumen where there might be a better chance of getting help should there be any more trouble. So we headed south towards Wiluna and Leonora. From Menzies we ventured out to Lake Ballard to view the modernistic sculptures modelled on the residents of Menzies. These not quite life sized sculptures are spaced out across a dramatic salt covered lake, so that viewing them makes for a unique artistic experience.

From there it was home via Kalgoolie and the long drive across the Nullarbor, another new experience for us. Whales at the head of the bight were an unexpected delight. Next time we will go prepared with warm clothes and a thermos and spend more time there. The viewing platforms on top of the cliffs took us so close to the whales and their calves, we could hear them calling and blowing. We could have spent hours there but a biting wind and the call of home made us press on.



All too soon we were in more familiar territory. A hard frost and fog at Orroroo, and a van park manager at Hay apologising for the frost reminded us that it was close to the end of August and we were still in the grip of winter. Our last campfire had to be aborted when a biting wind made conditions unsafe. Gone were the balmy days and mild nights of the Kimberley and Pilbara. Swimming in the nearest river looked most uninviting. But it will be good to be home, and the memories of this wonderful trip will stay with us for a very long time.



And – except for a flat tyre on the Nullarbor, Troopy behaved perfectly all the way home.



### *Postscript*

Despite the tribulations this was a fantastic trip. In the past we've usually travelled alone permitting great flexibility. On this three month trip travelling with compatible friends we found the experiences and enjoyment were greatly enhanced by sharing them, and if Troopy was willing we'd do it again tomorrow. Troopy's antics made us very aware of the benefits of travelling with supportive friends. They have also brought home to us how even the best prepared vehicle can throw in the unexpected, (no amount of preparation will detect a weak head gasket) and how much we rely on our support networks.

Troopy made it home without a relapse and was referred immediately to a specialist. Tests indicated that there were two options. Major surgery was one. The other would result in Troopy becoming an organ donor and us spending up big on a more recent replacement. We were swayed by the merits of having an older simpler vehicle, being mindful of other members' alarming experiences with computer issues in newer vehicles. We have a good chance of repairing Troopy on the side of the road. Rod, of Monaro Off Road (who maintain Troopy), was very supportive of this approach – that's why he drives a 60 series .... if we can't make it go he'd talk us through it by phone. Again we were reminded of how very fortunate we are to have supportive friends.

We decided to proceed with surgery. As I write, Troopy's big six cylinder heart has been removed and is in some dark and noisy place where heads are shaved, cylinders made bigger, and where bearings run smoothly, valves seal and gaskets stop leaking and, above all, head gaskets don't leak.

For a convalescent run, maybe the Cape..... maybe head west from Alice to the coast, then south through the wildflower areas.....maybe next spring..... Troopy hasn't been to Tassie for over 10 years..... has barely touched the Canning.....and certainly some weekends at Talooge.....lots of possibilities.... lots of dreams.

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# Simpson Desert Summer Closure



The Simpson Desert in outback Australia is to be closed over summer for the first time, due to safety concerns. As of December 2008, the Simpson Desert parks in South Australia and Queensland will be closed each year from 1 December to 15 March.

Environment Department regional operations director in South Australia, Trevor Naismith, says extreme heat in the desert makes it dangerous for people to attempt crossings. Summer temperatures of 40-50° Celsius are common. "The Simpson is inhospitable in the extreme heat of summer and tourists should not be risking their lives by trying to cross it."

High temperatures can cause heat exhaustion, which in turn can lead to loss of proper body function and ultimately death. The region can be especially dangerous for tourists from overseas, who are often in a hired vehicle, with very limited four-wheel-driving experience and no real concept of the enormous distances involved and the difficulties that are encountered in driving in desert conditions.

High temperatures can also lead to vehicle problems including overheating, fuel vaporisation, tyre blow-outs, and most commonly, battery failure. Becoming stranded in this harsh and remote area can be life-

threatening for visitors and rescue personnel and there have been deaths in this region.

**Failure to comply may result in fines or court action. Rescue costs may be incurred by individuals.**

Authorities hope a summer closure of the Simpson Desert in outback Australia will not have too much effect on regional businesses which are reliant on tourism.

Witjira National Park, including the campground at Dalhousie Springs, will remain open during this period. "People will still have alternatives. They'll be able to go to Witjira National Park, which is adjacent to the Simpson Desert and make use of the Dalhousie Springs complex, which is really just a great area for the public to visit that doesn't present the same danger that the middle of the desert does."

## 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  
Kathy Solomos 0402 051 623



# Campfires and Fire Restrictions

Val. Wiseman



With summer here, and drought still with us, the possibility of bushfires is here as well. As we venture into the great outdoors its as well to be aware of the rules and regulations that govern the use of fire. These are complex and broad ranging. They are state based but are generally applied on a fire district or local government basis. In addition local government, parks and forest managers can impose additional limits on the use of fire.

In general the summer months are designated as a **fire danger period** (or some similar wording). Additionally, on hot dry windy days **total fire bans** (or some similar wording) can be declared. The circumstances under which a fire may be lit varies greatly between these two different fire declarations. Below I have tried to summarise the situation in the ACT, NSW, Victoria, Qld and SA mainly as it relates to campfires and barbecues. However to fully comprehend the regulations a close reading of the relevant websites is necessary.

Declarations are local and can change on a daily basis. For this reason, when out and about in summer keep a close eye on the weather, especially wind and temperature, and listen to local radio stations that broadcast fire weather warnings. Before you set out, note the phone numbers of relevant fire authorities and land managers. The following is from the authorities' websites.

## Australian Capital Territory

[www.esa.act.gov.au](http://www.esa.act.gov.au)

The **declared bushfire season** is usually from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> March. During this period a campfire requires a permit, either from the land manager if on Government land, or from the ACT Rural Fire Service (6207 8609) if the fire is to be lit on rural land. Campfires in the urban area require a permit from the ACT Fire Brigade (6207 8363).

A campfire must be no larger than 1 cubic metre, all flammable material for 5m around must be cleared away, must be in a designated campfire pit, under adult supervision and have a constant supply of water.

On **Total Fire Ban** days you are not allowed to light, use or maintain a fire in the open air. Also on such days many of the public reserves, pine forest and other areas will be closed or have limited access. Camping and recreation areas may be closed on days of extreme weather, even if no Total Fire Ban has been declared. See [www.tams.act.gov.au/live/environment/fire\\_management/](http://www.tams.act.gov.au/live/environment/fire_management/) for more details.

## New South Wales

[www.bushfire.nsw.gov.au](http://www.bushfire.nsw.gov.au)

In order to limit the number of fires that escape and threaten life, property and the environment, especially on days when it is very hot, dry and windy, the Rural Fire Service (RFS) can restrict the use of fire through Fire Permits and Total Fire Bans.

Before lighting any fire ensure that :

- it can be contained within the specified area
  - it does not contain toxic materials, such as rubber tyres, plastics, paint, etc;
  - it must not produce excessive amounts of smoke.
- You must also check:
- whether a No Burn day has been declared
  - whether a Total Fire Ban is in force
  - the expected weather conditions

The statutory **Bush Fire Danger Period** runs from October 1st to March 31st, however it may vary due to local conditions. If you are planning to light a fire in the open during this time, you will need a permit, although permits are not required for fires for heating or cooking, provided that the fire is:

- in a permanently constructed fireplace;
- surrounded by ground that is cleared of all combustible materials for at least two metres around;
- completely extinguished before leaving.

During a **Total Fire Ban** no fire may be lit in the open and all Fire permits are suspended. This includes incinerators and barbecues which burn solid fuel, e.g. wood or charcoal. You may use a gas or electric barbecue, but only if:

- It is on a residential property within 20 metres of the house or dwelling
- It is a picnic area and the appliance is approved by Council, National Parks or State Forest
- It is under the direct control of a responsible adult
- The ground within 2 metres of the barbecue is cleared of all materials which could burn
- You have an immediate and continuous supply of water available

Lighting a fire on a day of Total Fire Ban attracts a fine of up to \$5500 and/or 12 months gaol.

## NSW Park Fire Bans

Even when a Total Fire Ban has not been declared, the Dept. of Conservation (DECC) may declare a Park Fire Ban or even close particular reserves where the potential risk to visitors from fire is high.

This will include reserves with limited access (eg: only one road in and out), with a high or very high overall fuel hazard or reserves where all visitor access sites are upslope from vegetated areas.

Reserves to which a Park Fire Ban applies or that have been closed due to fire are listed on the DECC homepage under [fires, floods and park closures](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/index.htm)  
[www.environment.nsw.gov.au/index.htm](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/index.htm)

## Victoria [www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au)

### Fire Danger Period

Fires in the open air are subject to legal restrictions when the Fire Danger Period is declared by CFA for a particular municipality. The fire Danger Period generally starts in November and restrictions remain in place until 1st May.

In State forests, National, State and Regional parks and other reserves, Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) fire restrictions remain in force all year round. Local DSE and Parks Victoria offices can provide advice on what forest or parks campfire restrictions apply.

During the fire danger period a barbecue or campfire for warmth or comfort is acceptable provided all the following apply:

- ✦ the wind is not more than 10kph;
- ✦ the fire is lit in a properly constructed fireplace or trench at least 30cm deep;
- ✦ the fire is not within 7.5 metres of a log or stump;
- ✦ the ground and air space within 3 metres are clear of flammable material; and
- ✦ the fire and fuel used are the minimum necessary for the purpose and do not occupy an area of more than 1sq metre.

✦  
**Total Fire Bans (TFB)** are declared on days when the danger of fires occurring is high, when fire would spread rapidly and be difficult to control. During a total fire ban campfires, fires for warmth or personal comfort, and solid and liquid fuel barbecues and ovens are banned.

Gas or electric fired portable barbecues may be used provided that:

- ✦ the barbecue is located within 20 metres of a dwelling (portable places of residence such as mobile homes, caravans or tents are **not** dwellings in accordance with the CFA Act); and
- ✦ the area 3 metres around the barbecue is cleared of flammable material; and
- ✦ you have either a hose connected to a water supply or a vessel with at least 10 litres of water; and an adult is there at all times when the fire is alight.

### General Advice on a Day of Total Fire Ban

All barbecues which use solid fuel such as wood, charcoal or briquettes are banned. This includes closed oven or kettle-type appliances. Gas and electric barbecues provided in public reserves/campsites may be used providing:

- ✦ the barbecue is electric or gas fired
- ✦ the barbecue is a fixed permanent structure
- ✦ the area for 3 metres around and above the barbecue is completely cleared of flammable material
- ✦ an adult is in attendance at all times
- ✦ a hose connected to a reticulated water supply or vessel containing at least 10 litres of water is on hand.

## Queensland [www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au](http://www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au)

In Queensland, fire restrictions can be imposed as either Local Fire Bans or a State of Fire Emergency. When it is considered that there is a high fire danger and fires would be difficult to control, the local Rural Fire Service District Inspector has the authority under the provisions of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Act to enforce a local fire ban. During a State of Fire Emergency all open fires are prohibited, although gas or electric barbecues may be used.

## South Australia [www.cfs.sa.gov.au](http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au)

Within the fire danger season campfires for cooking and personal comfort do not require a permit provided they are lit in accordance with the regulations and council restrictions that apply. However fires may not be lit on a total fire ban day – a gas or electric barbecue can be used within 15 metres of domestic premises or on a coastal foreshore, provided there is a 4 metre cleared space around and above the barbecue and a responsible person in attendance has an adequate means of extinguishing the fire.

### Outback SA Parks

Vulkathunha – Gammon Ranges National Park, Witjira National Park, Lake Eyre National Park, Simpson Desert Conservation Park, Simpson Desert Regional Reserve, Tallaringa Conservation Park and In-namincka Regional Reserve: All wood fires or solid fuel fires are prohibited from 1st November 2008 to 31st March 2009 other than for Aboriginal people using traditional use of fire for cooking. Gas fires are permitted other than on days of Total Fire Ban. Flinders Ranges National Park: All wood fires or solid fuel fires are prohibited from 1st November 2008 to 15th April 2009, fires are permitted outside of these dates in designated areas only. Gas fires and fuel stoves are permitted except on days of Total Fire Ban.

Exception: Wilpena Pound - All wood fires, solid fuel fires or gas fires are prohibited throughout the year other than at Cooina Camp where gas fires are permitted except on days of Total Fire Ban.

For further information, please contact the Port Augusta Regional Office (08) 8648 5300 or the Wilpena Visitor Centre (08) 8648 0048 or CFS Fire Bans Hotline 1300 362 361.



## Four Wheel Drive NSW & ACT, INC

GPO Box 1371, Parramatta, NSW, 2124  
Phone: 1800 646 630, Fax: 1800 650 664  
@4wdnsw-act.asn.au

ST4WDC is an affiliate of 4WDNSW & ACT the peak State 4WD body which in turn is part of the Australian National Four Wheel Drive Council (<http://www.anfwdc.asn.au>). Part of your annual membership fee goes to the state association to fund operational and promotional costs. 4WDNSW&ACT represents nearly 100 clubs. Our Driver Training Team is an important part of the state Driver Training Unit and helps to standardise training for driver trainers across all affiliated clubs.

The following is the October Report from Greg Redfern, President of 4 Wheel Drive NSW & ACT, on 30 October.

Peter Fenwick

ST4WDC Delegate

### Bulletin – October, 2008

#### Access

As a result of our MOUs with NSW State Forests and NSW NPWS we are building stronger ties with the various land managers, through joint projects including:

- Yellomundee Regional Park by the Blue Mountains and the Kamikaze Clubs
- Limeburners, Abercrombie and Mt Airly are around the corner and promise to be a lot of fun and very rewarding projects. If your club is interested in participating contact me
- The Dingo Dell project was visited last week by NPWS They were very impressed by the work done by 4WD Club members, particularly Matt Barnes (LROC) for the considerable efforts he puts into the Dingo Dell project.

The on-going efforts of all the clubs in creating these partnerships through large or small projects are vital, and to our long-term benefit as it improves our access to trails and enhances our credibility. . Read the project stories especially Dingo Dell <http://www.4wdnsw-act.asn.au/>

#### Trip Reports

To strengthen these relationships mentioned above it is essential that clubs submit brief Trip Reports on the roads/trails they use. This justifies our continued access and strengthens our claims to providing useful intelligence on road/trail conditions.. By the time you read this the electronic entry form for trip reports will be available on the website. This will greatly simplify the lodgement process and provide reports to State Forests and NPWS.

#### Website

The association website <http://www.4wdnsw-act.asn.au/> is receiving a facelift. David Rossiter is reformatting the pages, both in the Public and Member's areas, and creating "quick bytes" to highlight news, current issues, and quick access to information. The website as our most valuable communication tool so I ask you to support us by registering as 4WD Club members. The process is easy; use the "register now" button and the system will take you through it.

#### Public Profile

As part of association efforts to lift the profile of 4Wding and attract members the first of a series of newspaper advertisements is appearing in the Sunday Telegraph "Car Guide" & editorial (pg2).

44 association vehicles took part in the Convoy for Kids (see <http://www.convoyforkids.com.au/>). Our thanks to Brian Bird for his efforts and mounting a display using the Association trailer as a promotional tool. Clubs can book the trailer to promote their activities. Bookings are increasing.

#### Meetings

The next Quarterly meeting will be hosted by the Land Rover Owners Club (Sydney Branch) at the Vintage Veteran Car Club, 134 Queens Rd, Five Dock on Saturday 15 November, 2008.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) will take place immediately after the Quarterly meeting. I am pleased to advise that all of the current Executive have nominated to continue on next year.

- Geoff Scott has decided to step down as Secretary but will retain an Executive position
- and Bruce Close has nominated for Secretary.
- Chris Tierney has nominated for the vacated Vice President's role and marketing.

All other executives have nominated for their present roles.

Greg Redfern

## Calling for recipes!!!!

The Club published a recipe book many years ago and it's time to do it again.

We want your favourite, tried and true camping recipes, including any hints on food storage, transport, preservation etc. and care of cooking equipment. The recipes can include favourite snacks, cakes/biscuits/scones, meat and vegetarian dishes and desserts. The main criterion is that they can be cooked on a camp/gas stove, BBQ, on or in an open fire and include ingredients fairly commonly carried when camping in the bush or travelling to remote regions.

Please email your recipes and ideas to Catherine Panich at [capan@homemail.com.au](mailto:capan@homemail.com.au). If you wish to be part of the team that puts this recipe book together please let Catherine know



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# FOR SALE/WANTED/LOST/FOUND

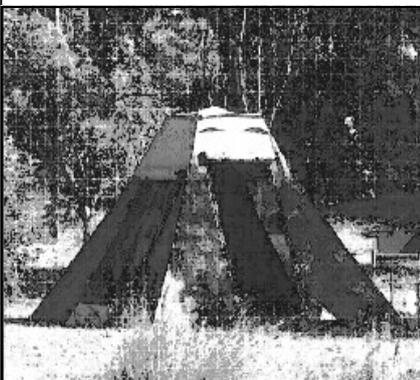


Advertising on this page is **free to members** but is restricted to **Two Months**. Non-members will be charged \$20 per advertisement for 5 lines for the same period.



**Sewing Machine - medium/heavy duty - available for short term loan.** I have custody of a medium duty Singer sewing machine that is ideal for all those small canvas repair jobs or to create new tent peg bags, tool rolls, billy can bags, camp oven bags, etc. How far does your creative imagination go? The machine will handle up to three layers of medium weight canvas and uses very strong upholstery weight nylon thread that is great for reasonably heavy jobs. Don 02 6161 1880. 0408 649 732

this storage cabinet for chains and tow ropes etc. 4)



### For Sale -

**Tent - Southern Cross Ultimate 10, 3m x 3m 'as new' having been used only 3 times.** Includes both centre and internal side poles. Cost over \$1,100 in Feb 06 but will sell for \$500. Contact Jim on 0413 612 305



**TrakShak Camper-trailer (Canberra).** 2003 Ex Cond. Heavy duty canvas, Coil suspension (spare sub axle), 2 queen sized beds, 3.5 M aluminium tinny, 9.9 HP 2 stroke, Mesh Gazebo, Self contained and portable kitchen, portaloos, 2 X 4.5L Gas cyl, 3 petrol gerrys, 3 water gerrys, Alloy mags, Stone guard, Fishing rod cavity, lockable side cabinet, on board 12V battery. All you need for self sufficient bush camping or that remote fishing trip! \$21,500 ono Contact Chris 0438 253062.

[www.trakshak.com.au](http://www.trakshak.com.au)

### For Sale

2 tyres Cooper Discoverer ST-C 265/75R16 good condition \$130 each. Contact Michael on 0428 928 242

### For Free

Light duty roof rack—4x4 wide (adjustable) x about 90cm long. John Ph 6230 2459

### PAJERO (late 90s model) PARTS FOR SALE:

NEW Goodyear Wrangler Tyre LT235/75R15 on ROH Track 2 steel rim \$225.00, Cargo barrier and drawers \$75.00, ARB Compressor in box \$100.00, Hydraulic Jack 8,000kg \$20.00, ARB snatch strap 8,000kg \$35.00, 20L Green Water Drums (Qty 2) \$25.00, Pajero V6 spares (head lamps, radiator hoses, oil filters, air cleaners, Pajero workshop manual (1997 - 2005), fuel filters, fan belt, and lots more) \$75.00.

Don Ph 6161 1880 mob 0408 649 732

### For Sale OBRIERN'S OFF ROAD TRAILER

This trailer is for sale and has the following features.

1)360 deg. swivel towing coupling. 2)Three drawer sheet metal storage cabinet mounted on the draw bar.3)Space behind

Mounting for 9 kG bottle. 9 kG gas bottle included. 5) One plug lead for trailer tail, brake and indicator light. One lead with "Anderson" plug feeds directly to the on board deep cycle battery.6)Four 12V power outlets inside trailer for lighting and other accessories.7)Two spare wheels, one mounted above the storage cabinet and one mounted on swing out bracket on the rear of the trailer.8) Provision on top of storage cabinet to mount a solar panel.9)Two water tanks mounted under trailer each with separate water filler and water outlet. Both water tanks can be completely drained when trailer is not in use.10)Separate LPG gas point on rear of trailer for gas lighting etc.11)Custom built table that can be mounted at the end of one of the two slide out drawers.12)Canvas annexe, complete with all poles, ropes and pegs. The annexe can be attached to the rear of the trailer when the tent has been erected to provide sun and rain protection.13)The trailer comes complete with 85 litre, 12V, fridge and two burner gas stove with grill.

**\$8500 ONO**

TELEPHONE:- (02) 6286 1433 FACSIMILE:- (02) 6286 1433 MOBILE:- 0412 484 699E-Mail: - polacsekr@hotmail.com

### For Sale

ARB steel roof rack to suit **100 Series Land Cruiser**. Dark grey in colour, with mesh floor. Excellent condition.

Also Milford cargo barrier to suit 100 Series.

Best Offer. Gerry or Monika 6280 6626 Bh

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**Travel Tips**

- . At night, fill a thermos with water boiled over the campfire. Reheat in the morning for your cuppa. Saves time and gas.
- For oil changing, slip the washing up dish into a garbage bag to catch the old oil.
- Next time remember to blow the bag up first to check for leaks.

## For Sale

Aussie Swag off road camper trailer. '99 Rover LX model. Camper dimensions 2.3m x 1.7m, approx 4.6m long when set up. Towing length 4.5m. Great off road capability with Treg coupling, independent suspension, near new 265/75 R16 BF Goodrich All Terrain tyres compatible with 80 Series Landcruiser. 3 jerrycan holders, pole carrier and utility box on drawbar. Raised solid floor. Battery Pack. Slide out/swing around kitchen featuring 2 burner stove top and grill and stainless steel sink. 60 litre water tank with lockable cap. Large and small awnings. Loads of under bed storage. A very comfortable and practical "go anywhere" unit for outback touring. Asking price \$15,000.

Contact Rod - phone 0407 456 330

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# NEW MEMBER APPLICATION

SOUTHERN TABLELANDS 4WD CLUB INC.

PO BOX 661 FYSHWICK ACT 2609

[www.st4wdc.org](http://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: .....