



SOUTHERN TRAILS

ISSUE 402 APRIL 2013



C O N T E N T S

Directory	1
Taylor Torque	4
Presidents Report	7
Soon to be Named	9,29
Trips & Events	11
Convoy Procedures	22
Tonka Gets a GVM Increase	23
Cooking with Kiera	29
Newnes & Lithgow Explorer	30
For Sale	34



The Editor

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

Next Meetings 14 May 2013

Guest Speaker will be Mike Boyd & Linda Schlencker from Self Drive Safaris

The deadline for material to be included in the next issue of *Southern Trails* is the Friday following the General Meeting
17 May 2013

This month's magazine has been compiled by Brenden Taylor

Cover photos

Top - Balloon Spectacular 2013

Bottom - Eighty Mile beach, WA

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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 Greg Taylor 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 Canberra Deakin Sports Club.

Publications

Website www.st4wdc.org. The site is used to provide timely information regarding Club activities and variations from previously announced plans. 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 for all material is the Friday following the monthly meeting.

Send contributions to publications@st4wdc.org

Talooge Park

Talooge is the Club's 700+ ha bush block in rugged country east of Bredbo. It is used for club activities and members are welcome there for camping and enjoying the bush. Areas are set aside for basic bush camping. Some have firewood, 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 well-being 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 Ch. 18.

Members are urged to inform the Property Coordinator or President of their plans to visit Talooge as from time to time the club allows use by other organisations. Your visit may also coincide with maintenance activities that may pose health hazards (for example, aerial weed spraying). You can then be informed if there are any issues to be aware of or confirm combinations for locks to the property including our clubhouse.

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.

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:

Main Courses

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

Supplementary Courses

Water Crossing,
Sand Driving,
Winching
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.

A special offer to travelers - 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 or 0408 649 732

Taylor Torque

Greg Taylor



Our new committee is:

Welcome to new members:

Mike Tegg and Nicole Rodrigues
Tim and Genevieve Power
Gary Antognelli and Lisa Grant
Julia Rozycka

March was the month of meetings with a Special General Meeting (SGM), Annual General Meeting (AGM) and General Meeting all held on the same night.

This was again during the Balloon Festival and saw many tired people on the night. With the glorious weather this year we saw the balloons fly most days of the festival with only the last two days being cancelled due to weather conditions. Thanks to Catherine Panich for her coordination role of our volunteers and thanks to all of the volunteers from our club. The pilots and community really count on us to make this event happen in the way it does. One pilot remarked to me that our club shirts really stood out as they were distinctive among the crowds.

One highlight for me (apart from going up in the balloons) was the Enlighten activity on the Saturday night. Several of us (Vickie, Brenden, Thommo and Julie Buttriss, Rick Holland, Dave Hay, Peter Fenwick, Warren Shardlow, David Buckley and I) tethered two balloons that had two trapeze artists performing a show underneath the baskets. What a show and we had the best seats in the house so to speak in the front row with our vehicles. Vickie and I will be heading to Canowindra at the end of April to help further with balloons – another excuse to get away again really.

Our SGM passed a motion unanimously to adopt the changes to our Constitution proposed by the committee. These proposals were detailed in February Southern Trails and on the website.

Then followed our AGM where Phil Henderson and I provided reports on behalf of the committee. It is good to see our club in a strong position particularly financially. David Whight (Returning Officer) conducted the election of our committee for 2013.

President	Greg Taylor
Vice President	Chris Nicholls
Past President	Rosemary Orr
Secretary	David Whight
Treasurer	Phil Henderson
Education Coordinator	Peter Reynolds
Events and Trips Coordinator	Michael Patrick
Membership Secretary	Lynne Donaldson
Property Coordinator	Rob Tiele
Publications Coordinator	Brenden Taylor
Information Coordinator	Richard Brand
Public Relations Coordinator	Vacant
General Members	Alan Jones Kiera Taylor Glen Watts David Read

Many new faces and ideas for our committee so please support these people where you can. Also, give them your feedback on what you think about our club or ideas you have. We on the committee are making decisions on your behalf so need your input to do this. Committee meetings are normally held on the first Tuesday of the month at the Canberra Raiders Weston Club 7:30 pm. Members are welcome to come along to the meetings.

I would again like to thank outgoing committee members for their commitment and support to the club. These people are Marj Jones, Ian Goodacre, Kim Pritchard and Mark Pritchard. Marj will continue in another role as a representative for our club with the 4WD Spectacular.

At our March committee meeting, our previous committee discussed club workloads, expectations and generally member contributions to their club. We have many members that contribute in many ways and always pitch in and roll up the sleeves when asked. However, there are many members who are not often seen at club activities or events too. Fair enough, life stages have many of us doing different things with family, work and other interests at different times of our lives.

Taylor Torque

Greg Taylor



The committee did think it is reasonable that members can pitch in at least once a year to help the club. One key area is the maintenance and improvement of your property Talooge. Another thought was that all members should run a trip each year behalf of the club. We know that being a trip leader is perhaps something that not everyone is suitable to do but we think being involved in a working bee at your property is something all can contribute in some way.

So the committee has determined that all members should be rostered for one of the working bees on our property each year. Where you cannot make the dates of your rostered working bee that is fine. However, it is up to you to swap dates with another member who can attend. In this way we will have some certainty of a workforce for property maintenance and improvement and we can plan larger scale activities accordingly. It is your club and your property. It seems the burden of work to provide member services has fallen on to a small group of willing volunteers – who always keep backing up and contributing to the club for the benefit of all members. This is not only an unfair situation but there are unfortunately those who join our club take what they can and leave without any contribution in return. We cannot continue in this manner as the consistent contributors may indeed burn out. You can expect to hear more on this initiative over the next few months.

Many of the committee positions listed above need helpers to form teams. Membership, Information, Property, Education, Publishing all need helpers to get the jobs done on behalf you the members. We still have a vacancy for Public Relations on the committee so if you think you can help there please contact me.

On a personal note, I have had some great trips last month with an interesting track (to say the least) where I followed Dan O’Hara. I don’t think that I have scratched the roof before!! This was another car wash with bush touching on all three sides. I had to pick up Dan’s shovel and give it back to him at the next stop – he didn’t know he had lost it.

Coming up next month includes the advanced driver training which promises to be an interesting journey. That means it is time to update my tired winch (9500lb) to a 12000lb. Thanks to Michael Loberger advertising a new winch at the right time. Rope rather than cable will mean that Tonka may lose some kilos in the front end. Good for the GVM. I will have to report how well the new winch works around the garden too!

Cheers,

Greg.



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ST4WDC 2013 Annual General Meeting

President's Report



Welcome everyone to the Southern Tablelands 4WD Club AGM. This is my second annual report as President and again, I am pleased to say that our club continues to be a strong and successful four wheel drive club. We continue as the largest 4WD club in our region, we are prospering financially and we continue to attract several new members each month.

Overall, we have 458 members which include:

2 Associate Members

228 Family Members (189 Partners and 39 Children)

9 Life Members

219 Owner Members

52 Members have so far not renewed their membership for 2013. However, since January 2012 we have had 100 members join the club so we continue to replenish the membership that leaves.

I have spoken to several ex members about the likelihood of rejoining. They have welcomed changes to our membership rules removing additional costs for rejoining the club at a later time. Some remarked this was a key consideration for rejoining. These rule changes were passed by members at a Special General Meeting in October. Thanks to Kim Pritchard for her efforts to welcome new members and help get them acquainted with the club they have joined. Also thanks to Jim Raleigh and Richard Brand for keeping membership systems working effectively throughout the year.

I have been very fortunate and very proud to be in this role where I can be involved in the awarding of Life Membership to deserving members. This year was huge with six life memberships being awarded. These were Peter Butterfield, Richard Brand, Peter Watson, Neil Telfer, Peter Fenwick and Mark Adamson. Together with existing Life Members Roy Worth, Peter Reynolds and Jenny Collins we now have nine. These people have all contributed significantly to our club and promoting 4WD driving in their own special ways. Well done and thanks for your devotion to the club.

In 2012 we had over one hundred trips and events for members. A very big thanks go to all of the event organisers and trip leaders who have volunteered their time and efforts on behalf of the members.

Trips are the life blood of our 4WD club and without trip leaders we would be a very different organisation. Richard Brand is stepping down from the role of Events and Trips Coordinator which he has performed for several years.

Many thanks for your efforts Richard and the development of the role in conjunction with the club website. This has greatly streamlined trip administration tasks that, for me as a trip leader, were time consuming and sometimes painful keeping records relating to trips and participants. I find this very easy to do now and trip records are visible to all members.

The driver training team has continued to deliver the high standard of training that benefits all members. The team is Peter Reynolds, Peter Butterfield, Peter Watson, Mark Adamson, Duck Tonge, Plod McEncroe, Doreen McEncroe, Julie Buttriss, Thommo Buttriss, Darryl Webb, Rob Tiele, Dave Buckley, Rod Williams, Joe Briguglio, Lindsay Jones, Mike Sharp, Michael Darman, Michael Briguglio, Brad Burnett and joining the team this year was Michael Loberger. Brad Burnett has moved to Cairns but says he will continue as a member. I enjoy talking to new members at or after training weekends and listen to their appreciation and admiration of the trainers.

Trainers have again equipped many members (105 trained) this year with the skills and confidence to safely tackle the bush in their trucks and cope with issues that arise. This also provides other members on trips with the confidence that all members on a trip are skilled to a minimum standard – an important consideration for trip leaders.

Our property continues to get better and better thanks to the people who have put in significant time making improvements and maintenance. Many members enjoyed their property at the Christmas Party. For some this was a new experience and others it had been sometime since they had been there. All remarked positively and I hope we now have a new tradition of the Christmas party being held on the last weekend of November at our property.

Michael Patrick has kept Southern Trails in our mailboxes each month. Michael is stepping down as our Publishing Coordinator and will be passing on a very well tuned approach for this key club resource.

ST4WDC 2013 Annual General Meeting President's Report



This year Michael introduced additional colour pages for advertising and photos and this have added a great centre section to our mag.

Thanks to Rob Dobson for his work in Public Relations. Rob has increased the advertising sponsorship of our club with the addition of Lennox Motors and Pride Auto Accessories. Of course, I also would express our appreciation to all our sponsors who continue to support our club. These are:

- Canberra Toyota
- Independent Trailers
- Watts Communications
- ARB
- Air Conditioning and Heating Centre
- 4WD Training Services
- Lee and Thomas Auto Electrics
- Battery World
- Around Town Plumbing Services
- Cooper Tyres, and,
- Monaro Off Road Centre.

Please continue to support these businesses where you can as they in turn support our club in many ways.

I would like to acknowledge and thank all of the members who have been a part of our committee over the last twelve months. These people are Marj Jones, Rosemary Orr, Phil Henderson, John Kjar, Peter Reynolds, Richard Brand, Michael Patrick, Kim Pritchard, Mark Pritchard, Ian Goodacre, Rob Tiele, Rob Dobson, Lynne Donaldson and David Whight. Thanks to you all for your time and commitment to the club.

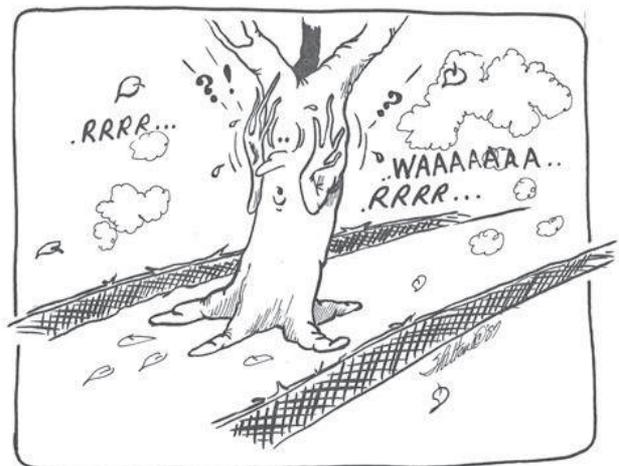
I remind members that all of our club roles are volunteers. We do not have paid positions in the club. Our trip leaders, trainers, property team, publications, public relations, information systems people, show representatives, clothing salespeople, public officer and committee members are all members who are giving back to and supporting the club.

Many of these people put in significant work for the club and use their own resources. I am happy to say that this year the committee approved and implemented a scheme of reimbursement for fuel expenses incurred by our volunteers. While not a full reimbursement scheme it is a scheme that will help enormously to defray the fuel costs of the people who put in the most.

At a general meeting, members overwhelmingly indicated that they wished to continue with the 4WD Spectacular we run with the combined clubs. In view of this support Marj Jones and I finalised an agreement with the clubs late last year for another three shows. I can also report that our relationships with both the Land Rover Club of the ACT and the ACT 4WD Club are strong and the spirit of cooperation and partnership are alive and well. Work is well underway in planning for the 2014 show next February.

I am again confident that we continue to meet the objects of our Constitution. We are doing well as a club contributing to four wheel driving and our community. As it happens, this is the time of year our club supports the Balloon Spectacular so many members are a bit bleary eyed thanks to many early morning starts in support of the interstate and international pilots visiting Canberra. With this event I can see that our club is well respected and counted on for community support each year. It is just one of the many ways our club does make a difference in the community. Well done everybody. 

Greg Taylor
President
Southern Tablelands Four Wheel Drive Club
12 March 2013



Introducing your new Editor



Hi from your new Editor

Firstly, congratulations to Michael Briguglio and Laura Maher on celebrating their engagement last month!

I am looking forward coordinating publications for our club. I am new to this role so you may need to give me a bit of a go to settle in while I am learning what to do!

I have been in the club for several years now firstly as a family member and now as an owner member. Kiera and I are enjoying our second 4wd which is a Nissan Patrol. Our truck is in need of a few mods so we will be building it up over the next few years. I have led a few trips for the club and look forward to leading more in the future and getting to know more members in the club.

For now, my focus will be publishing Southern Trails and I need your help to do this. It is member contributions that help to make Southern Trails the

great monthly read that it is. Without these contributions it will be a very thin publication. I will try and introduce a few things and this month you will see a segment for committee members to provide information for members generally. Initially, I was going to call this Committee Confessions - what do you think it should be named? There is a small prize for coming up with the successful title.

For now, I ask that you think about writing that short (or long) piece on your truck, camping set up, cooking gear or anything of interest to the readers of Southern Trails. Also, trawl your photos for shots to send me to publish. Michael Patrick has started a digital club photo library and it needs more. Don't forget the odd cartoon or funny piece that you come across and if it is suitable and not subject to copyright I can print it.

Let me know of any ideas you have for your magazine. 

Brenden Taylor

Soon to be Named Information Coordinator - Richard Brand



This is the first ever article for Southern Trails from the role of Information Coordinator, because until the March Annual General Meeting we have not had such a role. So why did the last Committee decide we needed one now, when we have managed without for thirty years?

The main reason can be found by looking at our 'new' website, which has now been operational for about three years. Before that we had a website which was essentially 'brochure-ware' with very little capability for interaction. Our new website is based on Web 2.0 principles – to quote Wikipedia "A Web 2.0 site may allow users to interact and collaborate with each other in a social media dialogue as creators of user-generated content in a virtual community".

What this means for you on our website right now is that you can apply to join, request trip bookings, propose new trips and events, update your own details, create your own member pages, participate in forums and comment on blogs. Committee members can approve new trips, approve new members,

participate in management forums and record payments.

When I joined the Club in 1995, we thought we needed a paid secretariat to keep the volunteer workload reasonable – keeping membership records, producing the trips calendar, mailing the magazine, etc. Of course, most businesses use computers to streamline their operations, and we are no different. We have managed without paying a secretariat by increasing the use of individual computers for functions like accounting, membership, asset management, publishing and even trip calendaring. We have also outsourced functions like the printing and distribution of Southern Trails – a far cry from the days when half the committee sat round a table stuffing envelopes!

Obviously, these individual computers have created single user 'islands of information' which can create serious coordination issues. The classic example is membership data, which is needed to record fee payments, to authorise trip and training participation, to generate magazine labels, to provide

Soon to be Named Information Coordinator - Richard Brand



secure access to our website and to help spell people's names correctly in trip reports. You are also permitted by law to peruse our membership list, should you make a request to! Not so easy if the data is on a stand-alone PC.

These days, most corporate applications are accessed through web interfaces, and many applications exchange data using web services. It is rare indeed to find a big organisation that does not have, or intend to have, a web service oriented architecture with end-users interacting with systems using web browsers. These systems usually come under an executive with the grand title of Chief Information Officer, who may be supported by a Chief Knowledge Officer, IT Managers, Record Managers and so on.

We have had a non-committee position of Webmaster for several years, reporting through the Publications Coordinator. Understandably, most Publication Coordinators (with the notable exception of Bob Allen who bit the bullet and chaired the new web subcommittee) have been primarily focused on Southern Trails. When the website was just brochure-ware this made sense, but now the website is core to so many of the basic functions of the Club it seemed to make sense to create a new committee position with the unassuming title of Information Coordinator.

I regard this as a support function to assist other committee members in performing their routine duties. It does encompass the functions of webmaster, and the Coordinator bit of the title implies that there should be an Information Team. Certainly more and more members are helping to create content for the website. Now that I have relinquished the role of Events and Trips Coordinator (my apologies that it took four years) I should have more time to train content providers.



Page 10

It is no co-incidence that I took on the Webmaster role three years ago, because I viewed the web as the ideal medium for managing events and trips, and events and trips as the hardest thing to put on the web! The requirements for tight integration with membership records have resulted in all membership records being moved to the website, where you can update your own email, address and many other details. Following the recent Constitution and By-Laws changes, many processes are now fully automated. For example, if you do not renew, your web access is automatically restricted and you disappear from the Southern Trails mailing list.

We still have islands of information and mountains of paper records distributed around Canberra (and Talooge Park). We are getting a better handle on publishing important documents like Minutes on the web. Our governance will be improved by making more of our processes and progress open and transparent. Handover from 'old' to 'new' committee is being documented on-line – have a look at MANAGEMENT > Duties. We have a team looking at our overall records management requirements.

Many areas of the website are under-developed – I would like to see much more under Publishing, Member's Forums, Training, Property and Finance for a start, and many more members creating their own pages.

Technology does not stand still – social media and mobile computing come to mind. Our chosen web platform does not lock us out of these advances, but I think they are a younger person's domain. I hope to only do this job for a year – and a key to a full handover is to find (or train) a technical volunteer with reasonable Microsoft T-SQL skills. Anyone you know? 



Trips and Events



6 Apr **Very Difficult Terrain and Advanced Recovery Pre Day in the Brindabella Ranges** 2013-048

Trip Leader: Peter Reynolds

Phone: 02 6251 1258 (h); 0428 623 458 (m)

Limit: vehicle limit

Start: 8:00 AM

Meeting Place: Uriarra Homestead

Description: This is the Club's official 'Very Difficult Terrain and Advanced Driving Course' pre day.

Important - This course is subject to strict eligibility criteria and approval by the Club's Education Coordinator due to the extreme nature of the terrain and the advanced skills covered. Participants must have a minimum of two years active membership after completing their Basic Driving Course and have participated in club trips of grade 3 or above in that time. Participant's vehicles must be modified including, at a minimum, a suspension lift, bullbar, electric or hand winch and rated recovery points

More information will be provided to approved participants at the information evening.

7 Apr **Brindabella Semi Classic - Reversed** 2013-042

Trip Leader: David Read

Email: twisty@live.com.au

Phone: 0431 980 487 (m)

Limit: vehicle limit

Grade: 2

Start: 9:00 AM

Meeting Place: Uriarra Homestead

Fuel: Full tank

Maps: ACT Region. GPS

Requirements: Basic driver training, basic recovery gear, UHF radio, good tyres, well maintained and reliable vehicle, morning tea and lunch. Camera, binoculars and a chair are also a good idea.

Description: This day trip is a great way for new members to explore Canberra's back yard.

We head to McIntyres Hut (a quick stop, toilets) via Blue Range, Dingi Dingi fire trail and Waterfall Trail. Then a short trip to Lowells Flat (toilets) for a long lunch.

Then back track Waterfall Trail and climb up Webbs Ridge to approximately 1200 metres, past the power lines to Flea Creek (toilets) on the Goodradigbee River for afternoon tea.

We'll then head home via Gentle Annie fire trail, Brindabella/Tumut Road and Picadilly Circus to air up and a "photo op".

ABOUT TRIPS

TRIP GRADING

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

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

DRIVER EXPERIENCE

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

TRIP PLANNING

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

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

UHF RADIOS

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

FIREARMS & PETS

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

Trips and Events



12 - 14 Apr

4WD Muster

2013-014

Email: webmaster@st4wdc.org

Phone: 0418 568 358 (m)

Limit: unlimited

Start: 12:00 AM

Description: The 4WD Muster is a family-friendly event for the broad 4WD community. The primary objective is raising funds for Variety, the children's charity, and creating a World Record parade of 4WD Vehicles.

The event is fully endorsed by Variety and will be held at Lardner Park in Warragul Victoria, which is ideally located about an hour's drive from Melbourne. Participants will have the option of camping on site over the weekend or attending as a day visitor. Food, entertainment, exhibits and lots more will be provided.

Comments: Follow the website link for unfolding details

14 Apr

Tallaganda Tour (south)

2013-046

Trip Leader: Peter Ogilvie

Email: ogilvie@grapevine.com.au

Phone: 0414 606 537 (m)

Limit: vehicle limit

Grade: 2

Start: 8:30 AM

Meeting Place: McDonalds Car Park Queanbeyan

Fuel: full tank at start

Maps: 1:25,000 – Kain, Krawarree, Jerangle, Tinderry

Requirements: Basic Driver Training, reliable vehicle with good tyres, UHF radio, recovery gear, morning/afternoon tea, lunch, and camera.

Description: This is a tour of the southern half of Tallaganda NP. From Captain's Flat Rd we will head south along Cowangerong and Flat Range Fire Trails, gradually climbing to 1400m. We then descend, crossing Jerrabatgulla Creek before heading north along Tumanang FT. After a couple more shallow crossings we climb again to 1400m for a fantastic view from Mt Tumanang, then loop back to Cowangerong FT for the return to Captain's Flat. A fairly easy trip with approx 70km of off-road driving and great scenery.

Comments: If there has been recent rain we can expect some mudholes

19 - 21 Apr

Very Difficult Terrain and Advance Recovery Course

2013-049

Trip Leader: Peter Reynolds

Phone: 02 6251 1258 (h); 0428 623 458 (m)

Limit: vehicle limit

Trips and Events



Start: 5:00 PM
Meeting Place: Bungendore Caltex Service Station, coast road
Description: This is the Club's official 'Very Difficult Terrain and Advanced Driving Course'.
Important - This course is subject to strict eligibility criteria and approval by the Club's Education Coordinator due to the extreme nature of the terrain and the advanced skills covered. Participants must have a minimum of two years active membership after completing their Basic Driving Course and have participated in club trips of grade 3 or above in that time. Participants vehicles must be modified including, at a minimum, a suspension lift, bullbar, electric or hand winch and rated recovery points.

20 - 28 Apr **Rosehill Supershow**

2013-035

Trip Leader: Make your own way
Email: webmaster@st4wdc.org
Phone: 0418 568 358 (m)
Limit: unlimited
Start: 10:00 AM
Meeting Place: Rosehill Racecourse, Sydney
Description: NSW caravanning, camping, recreation and holiday supershow

27 - 28 Apr **Talooge Working Bee and Social**

2013-045

Trip Leader: Rob Tiele and Greg Taylor
Email: greg.j.taylor@bigpond.com
Phone: 02 6241 3547 (h); 0401 710 071 (m)
Limit: unlimited
Start: 9:00 AM
Meeting Place: Williamsdale
Fuel: Full at start
Requirements: Gloves and a chainsaw if you have one.
Description: This weekend at Talooge is scheduled to carry out some basic maintenance activities in preparation for the following training weekend. It is also an opportunity to visit the property and socialise with other members.
Key activities for the weekend include gathering firewood and grass cutting. We will also be looking to reduce fire fuel load around our sheds.
This is an opportunity for new members to get involved particularly if you are participating in training on the following weekend.
Comments: Bring food and water plus supplies for happy hour. Depending on weather there may be fire bans so be prepared for that circumstance.

Trips and Events



3 - 5 May

"Safe One" Basic Driver Training at Talooge Park

2013-

026

Trip Leader: Peter Reynolds
Phone: 02 6251 1258 (h); 0428 623 458 (m)
Limit: person limit
Start: 7:00 PM
Meeting Place: Bredbo Service Station
Description: This is the Club's official Basic Driver Training Course . For specific details about the course including participant instructions please refer to the club magazine "Southern Trails" or speak to Peter Reynolds at the club meetings.
Comments: You must phone Peter to book this event or see him at the meeting. Peter takes bookings manually for driver training and will give you additional information when he takes your booking. Peter's contact number can be found on this website or in Southern Trails.

11 May

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

2013-029

Trip Leader: Peter Reynolds
Phone: 02 6251 1258 (h); 0428 623 458 (m)
Limit: person limit
Start: 8:00 AM
Description: This is day three of the basic driver education course and MUST be attended before participating on any Club trips where the proposed route is expected to be at Grade 2 or above.

2 Jun

Winching and Recovery Exercise

2013-030

Trip Leader: Peter Reynolds
Phone: 02 6251 1258 (h); 0428 623 458 (m)
Limit: person limit
Start: 8:30 AM
Meeting Place: Cotter Road, Cotter Bend carpark
Requirements: Basic driver training, vehicle with electric winch or hand winch, full recovery kit and any other equipment you would like to have inspected or trial.
Description: This course is designed to assist in understanding your winch and how to use it. You will get the opportunity to use your winch taking in recovery techniques at the same time in a secure environment.

This course has proven to be very popular giving our members the important background knowledge to use their winches and recovery gear in a safe and efficient way.

Winches are great if they are working and you know how to use them. This training day will help on both counts.

Trips and Events



2 Jun

Brindabella Winter Classic

2013-052

Trip Leader: David Read
Email: twisty@live.com.au
Phone: 0431 980 487 (m)
Limit: vehicle limit
Grade: 3
Start: 9:00 AM
Meeting Place: Uriarra Homestead
Fuel: Full tank
Maps: ACT Region. GPS. More information on the club web site under Trips/Destinations/Brindabella NP
Requirements: Basic driver training, basic recovery gear, UHF radio, good tyres, well maintained and reliable vehicle, morning tea and lunch. Camera, binoculars and a chair are also a good idea.
Description: This day trip is a great way for new members to explore Canberra's back yard.
This could be a cold, wet trip. Plan appropriately. Track closures or/and poor conditions may require back tracking and alternate routes. The plan is ...
We head to McIntyres Hut (a quick stop, toilets) via Blue Range, Dingi Dingi fire trail and Waterfall Trail. Then a short trip to Lowells Flat (toilets) for a long lunch. Then back track Waterfall Trail and climb up Webbs Ridge to approximately 1200 metres, past the power lines to Flea Creek (toilets) on the Goodradigbee River for afternoon tea. We'll then head home via Gentle Annie fire trail, Brindabella/Tumut Road and Picadilly Circus to air up and a "photo op".
Comments: Preference will be given to members who have just completed Driver Training

15 - 16 Jun

OziExplorer Nav X

2013-033

Trip Leader: Michael Patrick
Email: michael.patrick2@bigpond.com
Phone: 0412 377 941 (m)
Limit: vehicle limit
Grade: 2
Start: 8:00 AM
Meeting Place: Williamsdale
Fuel: Full Tank
Maps: Will be supplied where possible. If you have electronic maps of the general area bring them along
Description: This is a hands on OziExplorer Navigation Exercise. We will depart Williamsdale at 0800 and proceed to Talooge Park. We will then devote Saturday morning understanding trip planning and using OziExplorer, and plan a route to Cowarra Gold mine. After lunch each vehicle will drive to the gold mine using their GPS and return to Talooge. Saturday evening will be devoted to planning a route to Tallaganda National Park and driving the tracks. On Sunday each vehicle will follow their trip plan prepared on Saturday night and drive the National Park with the aim of being back in Canberra by 1700.
Comments: You must have a GPS using OziExplorer and the ability to transfer information from a Laptop to a GPS unit. If you have a laptop please bring it along. This is an exercise to enhance users skills in using OziExplorer for trip planning. Please note this is not a basic introduction to OziExplorer but slightly more advanced. (Note if you have other navigational devices ring me to discuss)

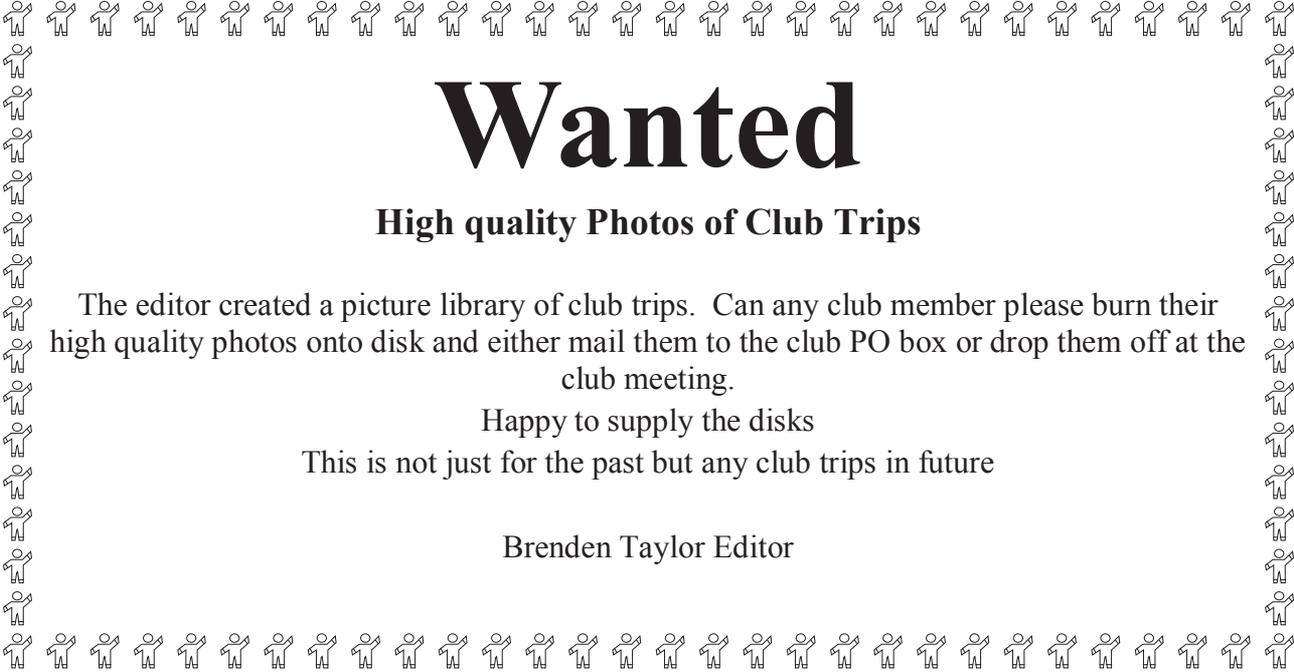


CLUB TRAILER AVAILABLE FOR USE

Free to ST4WDC members.

- Measures 2.1m x 1.6m x 0.54m
- High standing, tows level behind Hilux
- New fitted tonneau cover
- Standard 750kg carrying capacity - unbraked
- Much greater than standard box trailer volumetric capacity
- LED light fittings and standard 7 pin connector
- Removable jockey wheel
- Wheel bearings recently repacked
- Rugged good looks
- Not pretty, but practical
- Kept at Gowrie, Tuggeranong, ACT.

Contact Ian Goodacre on 0457 168 402 to arrange access and use.



Wanted

High quality Photos of Club Trips

The editor created a picture library of club trips. Can any club member please burn their high quality photos onto disk and either mail them to the club PO box or drop them off at the club meeting.

Happy to supply the disks

This is not just for the past but any club trips in future

Brenden Taylor Editor

Trips and Events



16 Jun **Brindabella Winter Classic**

2013-053

- Trip Leader: David Read
Email: twisty@live.com.au
Phone: 0431 980 487 (m)
Limit: vehicle limit
Grade: 3
Start: 9:00 AM
Meeting Place: Uriarra Homestead
Fuel: Full tank
Maps: ACT Region. GPS. More information on the club web site under Trips/Destinations/Brindabella NP
Requirements: Basic driver training, basic recovery gear, UHF radio, good tyres, well maintained and reliable vehicle, morning tea and lunch. Camera, binoculars and a chair are also a good idea.
Description: This day trip is a great way for new members to explore Canberra's back yard.
This could be a cold, wet trip. Plan appropriately. Track closures or/and poor conditions may require back tracking and alternate routes. The plan is ...
We head to McIntyres Hut (a quick stop, toilets) via Blue Range, Dingi Dingi fire trail and Waterfall Trail. Then a short trip to Lowells Flat (toilets) for a long lunch. Then back track Waterfall Trail and climb up Webbs Ridge to approximately 1200 metres, past the power lines to Flea Creek (toilets) on the Goodradigbee River for afternoon tea. We'll then head home via Gentle Annie fire trail, Brindabella/Tumut Road and Picadilly Circus to air up and a "photo op".
Comments: Preference will be given to members who have just completed Driver Training

1 - 19 Jul **Googs Track, Gawler Ranges and Eyre Peninsula**

2013-

038

- Trip Leader: Ian Brown
Email: ibr05930@bigpond.net.au
Phone: 02 6241 9468 (h); 02 6141 2754 (w); 0412 148 096 (m)
Limit: vehicle limit
Grade: 3
Start: 9:00 AM
Meeting Place: Barton Highway Dinosaur Museum car park
Fuel: Full tank at start
Maps: Hema Australia's Great Desert Tracks South East Sheet, Hema South Australia, Westprint Googs Track
Requirements: Basic driver training, recovery gear, well maintained vehicle, UHF, food and water to last four days, camping gear, fuel to cover 400km in low range
Description: Googs Track is an iconic 4WD track built by John 'Goog' Denton and his son Martin 'Dinger' Denton over three years in the early 1970's as a weekend activity. The track runs through the Yellabinna Regional Reserve and Yumbarra Conservation Park.
The trip will also explore tracks around the Gawler Ranges, including the tracks at Mt Ive Station. The Gawler Ranges National Park is in the heart of big rock country and offers a diverse landscape and spectacular scenery plus amazing rock formations. Lake Gairdner is a large salt lake well known for hosting speed week.

Trips and Events



The Eyre Peninsula also offers a range of interesting drives through some of South Australia's lesser known conservation parks, not to mention the tracks in Coffin Bay National Park.

Travel to Ceduna via Balranald, Mildura, Peterborough and Port Augusta. From Ceduna head north on Googs Track crossing around 300 sand hills, visiting Googs Lake and Mount Finke before arriving at Malbooma. Continue along the Trans Australian Railway line to Kingoonya and then head south to explore track around Mt Ive Station and the Gawler Ranges, including a visit to Lake Gairdner. Further exploration of the Eyre Peninsula before heading to Broken Hill for some culture and heading home via Hillston.

27 Jul

Christmas in July, Laurel Hill, Tumbarumba

2013-051

Trip Leader: Helen and Charlie Montesin

Email: montesin@tpg.com.au

Phone: 02 6238 3208 (h); 0402 155 240 (m)

Limit: unlimited

Grade: 1

Start: 9:00 AM

Meeting Place: Uriarra Homestead

Fuel: full tank at start

Requirements: Cost \$78 per person paid by 20th July. Saturday Morning Tea and lunch. BYO sheets, blankets, pillows, towels and personal items, BYO alcohol / drinks (tea and coffee are provided)

Description: This trip continues the tradition of Christmas in July at Laurel Hill Forest Lodge, Tumbarumba. After meeting at the very respectable time of 9am at Uriarra homestead we will travel via the back roads over the Brindabellas for lunch in Tumut and then on to Laurel Hill in time for afternoon tea.

Accommodation is in the lodge style cabins that have been converted from the low-security gaol / forestry camp. Each lodge accommodates 8 to 12 people on a twin share basis in separate bunk-rooms. The lodges have a common area with a heater, fridge, chairs and tables and a sink.

The weekend is well catered with afternoon tea of homemade biscuits and cakes on arrival, a three course Christmas dinner on Saturday night and full breakfast comprising bacon and eggs, cereal, fruit, toast and homemade Jams on Sunday morning. After breakfast we pack up and head off again via the back roads on a different route for the drive home.

Comments: special dietary requirements and times for meals can be catered for – please notify the trip leader of these by 20th July 2013.

10 - 11 Aug

Cold at Bendethera Caves

2013-032

Trip Leader: Michael Patrick

Email: michael.patrick2@bigpond.com

Phone: 0412 377 941 (m)

Limit: unlimited

Grade: 3

Start: 8:30 AM

Meeting Place: McDonalds Car Park Queanbeyan

Fuel: Full tank

Requirements: reliable well maintained vehicle, good tyres, basic recovery gear, cooking gear, water, radiator blind for water crossings

Trips and Events



Description: This will be a cold trip, temperatures will drop into the low minus so rug up warm and bring a good sleeping bag. Bendethera valley is great in winter, crisp and dry. The plan is to travel via Araluen and have morning tea at Dry Creek. From here will travel via Merricumbene fire trail. This track can be quite rutted and tricky in certain sections. There will be three water crossings that can be quite deep. We will depart Sunday midday and head out via Dampier fire trail and other tracks leading to Krawarree road. Parties may split up here to head to North Canberra. The rest will travel Snowball Road into Tallanganda National Park and eventually reach Michelago

Comments: Can possibly encounter snow in Tallanganda National Park

6 - 8 Sep **Penrith Supershow**

2013-037

Trip Leader: Make your own way
Email: webmaster@st4wdc.org
Phone: 0418 568 358 (m)
Limit: unlimited
Start: 9:00 AM
Description: Penrith caravanning, camping, recreation and holiday supershow

7 - 8 Sep **Explore The Tracks of Abercrombie River National Park**

2013-031

Trip Leader: Michael Patrick
Email: michael.patrick2@bigpond.com
Phone: 0412 377 941 (m)
Limit: vehicle limit
Grade: 3
Start: 8:30 AM
Meeting Place: Federal Highway, Eagle Hawk car park
Fuel: Full Tank
Maps: Taralga, Fullerton, Zone55 MGA OZF
Requirements: UHF Radio, Good Tyres, Vehicle in good condition
Description: Abercrombie River National Park is located 60km North of Goulburn. The park preserves the largest remaining intact patch of low open forest in the south-west central tablelands area. Casuarinas stand beside deep waterholes on the park's three main waterways. We will transit to the park via Goulburn/Abercrombie road and enter the park via Felled Timber road and Brass Walls fire trail.
Once inside the park we will travel the various tracks Saturday afternoon and either camp at Silent Creek or at Bummaroo Ford. On Sunday we will re-drive the tracks and lunch at one of the river sites. After lunch we will have a leisurely drive back to Canberra.
Comments: This is a easy trip with only a couple of sections that will require definitive picking of the line. This is an excellent bedding in for new members. Bring food, water and happy hour supplies.

Trips and Events



30 Nov - 1 Dec Christmas Party at Talooge Park

2013-023

Trip Leader: The Committee
Email: greg.j.taylor@bigpond.com
Phone: 02 6241 3547 (h); 0401 710 071 (m)
Limit: unlimited
Start: 8:30 AM
Meeting Place: Williamsdale
Description: This is our club's 2013 Christmas party at our property Talooge Park. Put it in your calendar now!
There will be lots of activities and fun for kids and the bigger kids too. We will have the riotous Adult gift giving / stealing game - the Gift Grab. We are planning another famous Funkhana on Sunday to test driving skills, patience, trust and communication.
Further details will be in Southern Trails - but get it in or on your calendar!

22 - 29 Mar Vic High Mountain Country

2014-006

Trip Leader: Michael Patrick
Email: michael.patrick2@bigpond.com
Phone: 0412 377 941 (m)
Limit: unlimited
Grade: 3
Start: 8:00 AM
Meeting Place: Uriarra Homestead
Fuel: Full tank at start
Maps: NSW South, Hema Victoria East Gippsland, Hema High Country Victoria West
Requirements: Basic driver training, basic recovery gear, UHF radio, good tyres, well maintained and reliable vehicle which should have good ground clearance (vehicles that have standard suspension will require approval by the trip leader), camping gear including gas stove for cooking (possible fire restriction could be enforce), food and water to last 4 days. Bow saw/axe for track clearing, and a blind/tarp for water crossing. If you have tyre chains bring them along. Fuel to cover 400kms in low range. No camper trailers
Description: Day 1 travel via Tumut to Glen Dart old town and camp. Day 2 proceed to Bentley Plain hut and then on to Ensay and camp. Day 3 travel the Haunted Stream and numerous tracks to Italian Flat camp area. Day 4 proceed to Licola via Dargo, Billy Goat, Pinnacles and numerous tracks. Day 5 proceed to Gardeners Hut (Howqua area) via McAllister River track and assorted tracks. Day 6 proceed to Cobblers Hut via Mount Beauty covering Razorback hut, Howqua Gap hut, Stirling hut, Craig's hut & King River hut. Day 7 proceed to Mansfield via Wild Horse gap, Pineapple flats, Refugee hut, Bluff Spur track and Mount Buller road. Day 8 head home to Canberra via highway. Due to the nature of the Victorian High trip scheduling could change.
Comments: This trip will encounter steep mountain trails and long deep descents into valleys. There will be quite a few water crossings at varying depths (blinds may be required). The mountain environment can change at any time so be prepared for hot and possibly cold extreme conditions. Camping will be at different sites. Long drops are available at all camp sites but not showers. Hot showers will be available at Ensay, Licola and Mansfield. There is a possibility that some vehicle recoveries may be required

CONVOY PROCEDURE – Explained



Trips can involve from a few vehicles to over twelve or more. For a trip leader to effectively manage a 'convoy' of vehicles there are guidelines for how we travel together. This also ensures that we end up at our destination with the same number of vehicles that left the starting point!

At the starting point the trip leader:

- assembles the drivers and passengers to provide a briefing of the trip and the arrangements they expect for the convoy,
- nominates a 'tail-end Charlie' who will be the last vehicle in the convoy,
- nominates the UHF channel to be used for the convoy. Channel 14 is the Club's usual channel but this may need to change due to heavy use of that channel by others or another Club convoy in the area,
- if necessary, place vehicles in position within the convoy. This may be necessary to space more capable vehicles throughout the convoy to assist with potential recovery situations in difficult terrain.

During the trip:

- all drivers are required to look after the vehicle behind them,
- trip leaders will normally inform the convoy by UHF where a major turn or deviation from the route occurs,
- wait for the following vehicle at any turn or deviation from the road/track, so when coming to a "T or Y" junction in the road, the first vehicle will stop and wait for the vehicle behind to catch up so the vehicle behind will know which direction the convoy is travelling,
- on cross roads "+" where no turn is effected and the convoy goes straight through, the vehicles in front do not normally need to stop for the vehicles behind as no turn has been made,
- similarly, where the main track is obvious and there are turns or deviations to an obviously minor track there is no need to wait for the vehicle behind,
- the procedure is to continue on the main track until the vehicle in front has stopped to indicate the convoy is leaving the main track,
- following vehicles can sound their horn, flash their lights or use radio to inform the driver waiting for them that they see the turn/deviation,

- it is not necessary to keep the vehicle behind in sight at all times and is usually not desirable due to dusty conditions,
- turn your headlights on in convoy as this allows people in front of you to identify where you are and is a safety feature in dusty/wet conditions,
- the trip leader may halt the convoy from time to time to allow 'bunching' for better control and radio reception,
- all instructions given by the trip leader are to be acknowledged by Charlie and in turn Charlie's response acknowledged by the trip leader,
- Charlie will inform the trip leader by UHF once a turn has been made or something highlighted by the trip leader has been passed,
- where necessary, vehicles in the middle of the convoy can relay messages between the front of the convoy and Charlie, and,
- trip leaders will clarify when they are calling oncoming vehicles, generally, this will occur on dirt or gravel roads. Beware, oncoming vehicles can enter a convoy after the leader has passed – for example, from side tracks or farm entrances.

A few more points:

- When travelling through difficult terrain or negotiating difficult obstacles, such as, steep rutted or boggy mud sections, pull up after the obstacle and ensure the vehicle behind you clears the obstacle. You may be needed to assist their recovery.
- Keep radio discussion 'Clean and Lean'! That is, others are listening including possibly children. Holding long winded conversations does not allow for the trip leader to inform the convoy of oncoming vehicles, turns or other important messages.
- Just keep your messages reasonably short to allow others to contact the convoy if necessary.
- All drivers are required to look after the vehicle behind them – yes, simple isn't it!

Convoy procedure is not difficult and it helps to ensure the safety of all participants present on a club or private trip. If every driver plays their part there will be fewer disruptions to the trip, no lost vehicles and all participants can relax and enjoy the fantastic adventure!



Tonka Truck (GU Patrol) Gets a GVM Increase

Greg Taylor



Note: Originally published in ST October 2011. I have asked for this article to be republished as I have had several enquiries regarding GVM.

GVM or Gross Vehicle Mass is the total weight of your vehicle including fuel, passenger and luggage load.

Tare mass is your vehicle without load or fuel (empty).

Unladen mass is the vehicle's Tare mass plus fuel.

Over Tonka's six years of being our family tourer, trailer tow vehicle and daily driver a bit has been added in the way of accessories. Actually, a lot has been added to improve our four wheel driving and touring. Many of these 'bolt on' additions also added significant weight. These include: long range fuel tanks, water tank, bull bar, side rails, electric winch, roof rack, roof top tent and a spare wheel/jerry can carrier. Then there is the drawer system and fridge, food, stove, radios, snow chains, tools, Bead Breaker tyre repair kit, table, chairs and so the list goes on. No wonder poor Tonka was getting overweight.

What does overweight mean for a truck? Well, it is exceeding its GVM which is the total allowable mass for legal operation of the vehicle on the road. If you want to check your vehicle's specified GVM you will find it listed in your Vehicle Owner's Handbook and it is also stamped on your vehicle's Compliance Plate that will be attached to your fire wall under the bonnet. Next, you can visit any of the ACT Government's rubbish tips and weigh your vehicle on the weighbridge. There is no charge for weighing your vehicle unless you ask for a weighbridge certificate. In that case it will cost \$21 for the certificate.

Better still, before your next big trip or even weekend away load your vehicle for the trip including full fuel and water tanks.

Then weigh it on the weighbridge. Now check it with your vehicle's specified GVM – I hope you are not over!

So what, you say if your vehicle may be a tad over its GVM? Well, if your vehicle is involved in a traffic mishap then it may be deemed unroadworthy. In the extreme circumstance your insurance company may refuse any payout. I have not heard of this happening - yet. But, I have been told insurance companies have referred vehicles involved in an accident for engineering checks before they pay the claim. There is also the potential for the roads authorities (in any state) to target modified 4wd trucks for compliance with regulations.

A trip to the tip did have me wondering about Tonka's GVM. I noticed figures on the weighbridge well over 3,000kgs. Perhaps this was a bit of an indication that I may have a GVM problem. You would think that the fact most of the accessories are made of steel would be a clue (doh!).

These changes to our truck were made over a period of almost five years. Because the changes were incremental it took a while for me to start actually thinking about the weight impacts of the changes. For example, the extra fuel capacity and water tank added a lazy 100kgs weight to our truck – this does not include the weight of the long range sub tank or spare wheel and jerry can holder though! 100kg is just the weight of the additional fluids.

These were necessities that had to be included for long distance travel and camping. Then there is the additional water or fuel that may go on the roof rack for a remote desert trip. Canning Stock Route comes to mind when you would need to carry more of these essentials.



Tonka Truck (GU Patrol) Gets a GVM Increase

Greg Taylor



However, this extra weight is reduced fairly quickly as you would certainly be getting the fuel off the roof by topping up your tanks often. This gets the weight back down low where it should be carried too. I don't think you will find any authorities on the Canning checking your GVM but you have to be careful just the same as an overloaded vehicle can break vital things when you need them most. Shocks can fail and springs or even roof rack mounts break!

I asked many people including accessory suppliers about GVM and no one really could tell me much about it. No one seemed to know if anyone had increased GVM on a truck and there were others whose advice was "better not to ask the question"!

In short, I found it hard to get any meaningful information on what was necessary to upgrade or increase GVM. There was information on 4wd forums but none of which really related to the ACT experience. So, on looking at Vehicle Standards Bulletin (VSB) No. 14 and the information available from ACT TAMs on Light Vehicle Modification in the ACT, I thought it time to get an engineer to help our GVM problem.

The information from TAMs also included a list of engineers who '...are acceptable to Road User Services (RUS).' One engineer was in Sydney, another VIC, yet another QLD and of the last three, their locations were Deakin, Mitchell and Queanbeyan. I initially took Tonka to Ray Spence at Mitchell (Canberra Motor Works) as he was the closest to me. However, I did have a discussion with Mario Larocca (Marloc Engineering Queanbeyan) too.

I have also talked with one of the manufacturer's of most of my gear – ARB. If our vehicle was new before initial registration then ARB can supply their DOTAR approval for a GVM upgrade with their suspension upgrade kit. They would supply the amended compliance plate without the need for a separate engineer's certificate. If the vehicle is already registered then you will need an engineer's certificate to increase GVM. In this case, engineers can contact them to get information on the ARB/Old Man Emu springs and shocks in use and information on the DOTAR approval. But, you still need to engage an engineer to certify the modifications to your vehicle for the roads authorities.

Unfortunately, most of us are totally unaware of this situation when buying a new vehicle.

But if you are contemplating a new 4wd that you are likely to modify with a new suspension then do your homework and seek increased GVM before it is first registered. You will save money this way.

On initial inspection, Ray discovered that Tonka was in fine condition including all accessories, the lift was within specification but Tonka exceeded its GVM (insert expletive here!).

As it came out of Mr Nissan's factory in Japan, Tonka had the following statistics:

GVM	3080 kg
Tare Mass	2485 kg
Unladen Mass	2612 kg

(Difference between Tare and Unladen is the allowance for fuel of 127kgs which was the standard fuel tanks – main and sub that came fitted).

So, the difference between GVM and Unladen Mass is $(3080-2612) = 468\text{kgs}$. This represents total loading capacity of passengers and luggage up to our allowable GVM.

Tonka also came out of Mr Nissan's factory as a seven seat vehicle. According to Australian Standard criteria allowance is made of 68kgs per seating position for a passenger and 13 kg per passenger seating position for luggage. So $(68+13) \times 7 = 567\text{kgs}$.

So, technically, from the day that Tonka immigrated to Australia from Japan it was overweight by some 99kgs!

Really, even without the factory fitted bull bar or tow bar when I picked up Tonka, if I had filled seven seats with people and put in luggage I would have been likely to go over GVM. Not to mention that our first trip across Australia as a family included six of us and a trailer with a roof rack jam packed!

We modified our truck's suspension when it was still 'new' as we were advised that the standard springs and shocks would fail on a prolonged trip around Australia. "Under warranty" I said but then my advisors mentioned good luck finding a dealer to fix suspension under warranty in remote parts of WA! This modification also gave the truck a bit of lift which we know is very helpful when driving off road. Many of the other accessories we have are either for vehicle protection off road or to better cater for our touring and camping lifestyle.

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completed. So, largely this was a paper exercise but necessary just the same. Although engineer testing was still necessary to determine nothing more was needed!

It was not a cheap exercise but I try and rationalise the cost with comparable examples of accessories we have bought to better enjoy what we do. This was I believe a necessary evil. Again, changing vehicles would likely cost more and I may still need to go through an engineering exercise if I do similar modifications or buy any accessories.

Costs were:

Engineering	\$2888.16
(10 hours @ \$250ph and includes weighbridge costs \$97, photos \$18.20 and of course GST)	
Inspection Fee (RUS)	\$55.70
Additional Registration Fee (RUS)	\$124.10
(Due to increased Tare)	
Anxiety, worry and frustration with officialdom	(priceless)
Total	<u>\$3067.96</u>

Final results:

GVM	3600 kg
Tare Mass	2913 kg
Unladen Mass	3100 kg

Tonka also now has increased wheel track front and rear and a change to steel wheel rims of 16" diameter (replacing 17" alloys). The tyre size increases rolling diameter by 14mm included in the report and the Speedo calibration was also confirmed at +/- 3%. Our seating configuration has been changed from seven to five which suits me as the drawers are unlikely to ever come out.

In effect, we have another half ton of GVM but that's it. While I did not need to change anything at the time to achieve this additional GVM allowance, the reality is that from standard we have replaced suspension springs, shock absorbers, sway bar and the wheel/tyre combination. These changes meant that we were effectively going through a paper exercise (albeit with engineering testing) to confirm the suitability of our modifications.

Are you selling or disposing of your vehicle? If so, please remember to remove your ST4WDC sticker if the buyer is not a member of our club.

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Tonka Truck (GU Patrol) Gets a GVM Increase

Greg Taylor



We will need to continue to be wary of what we load on trips. Everything carried must have two or more uses to qualify for a place! It might be time to replace my steel winch cable with rope which is much lighter. Geez, I could stand to lose a few kilos too to help poor old Tonka's GVM. No comments needed here please!

A few tips if you are thinking of a GVM upgrade:

- A GVM upgrade on vehicle is easier and cheaper if it is done prior to initial registration, that is, a new vehicle before it is registered.
- Talk to several engineers and discuss what is needed and estimates of likely costs. If an engineer has already done this work on a vehicle similar to yours previously then there will possibly be less testing to perform.
- Talk with manufacturers of accessories and suspension components. They may have technical information or pre-approvals from roads authorities for their goods.

This may help your engineer and reduce costs to you.

- Gather as much information as you can on your vehicle and its accessories. You doing this means you are not paying for an engineer's time to do it.
- An alternative may be to tow a camper trailer. This can help enormously to spread load over another axle. But, it also introduces more to consider including the tow ball load and suitability for planned destinations etc. But as mentioned, if like mine your vehicle may be technically over GVM if you put any accessory on it so towing a trailer may not help!
- Some manufacturers of suspension systems have package deals including engineering certification with the purchase of the complete suspension upgrade. The types of packages I have seen advertised were relevant to NSW/VIC road authorities. I am not aware how effective these would be with ACT registration rules. 



Soon to be Named General Member - David Read



Okay, hands up geeks.

The club now has a members only forum on the website. So what you may ask? The forum is a place where members can chat, swap ideas and show off. And that's not all! Trip destinations information is being added and Brindabella National Park is the first online. With maps, pictures, nature and history you can confidently plan your next trip in our backyard. Kowen Forest is next and will include access information for trip leaders.

Have you been to a club meeting and just not had enough time to catch with all the friends you've made, missed that chat about the latest camping gadget or just not had the chance to ask a question? Well, the forum is the place to go!

Still in its infancy the forum already has members rig build threads, trip YouTube links and GPS information. There's plenty of room for more though! Do you have a knack for campfire cooking? Then share your skill with the club! Got a great idea or found a new gadget? You can share it on the forum! Have you got a question? You can ask it on the forum! Planning a trip or just completed one? Let other members know in the Tracks and Trails section. Also check out the links to online information in the General section.

The forum doesn't replace club meetings or Southern trails. It enhances them. If you can book a trip online you can contribute to the forum. Have a go, drop in a reply and enjoy. 

Cooking with Kiera

Kiera Taylor



After completing my apprenticeship as a Chef I thought that I might share some of the recipes that we have used when we go camping. They are easy to prepare and very tasty.

Curried Sausages with Creamy Mash Potato.

(serves 2)

8 chipolata sausages
1 medium brown onion, sliced
1 1/2tbs Keens curry powder
500ml stock or 2 stock cubes dissolved in 500ml of water
1tbs flour
2 lge potato, peeled and chopped
1/4 cup milk
Salt and pepper to taste
Oil

Start by browning onion in a hot camp oven with some oil, then add sausages. Cook until soft.

Add curry powder, stir until everything is coated then add the stock. Simmer until sausages are cooked.

Meanwhile boil potatoes in a separate pot until soft and drain, then add milk, salt and pepper. Use a

fork to mash the potatoes, you may need to add a little more milk if the mash is too thick. (This step may be easier to do at home).

Once the sausages are cooked you may need to thicken the sauce with the flour, do this by mixing the flour in a small amount of cold water and add to the pot stir until it comes to the boil again to avoid lumps.

Serve with the mashed potato and enjoy!

For the more adventurous add a handful of peas or sultanas once the sausages are cooked. 



Trip Report

Newnes & Lithgow Explorer

16-18 Nov 2012

Ian Goodacre



Trip Participants :

Ian Goodacre (Leader), Hilux

Richard Brand, Adventra

Robert & Penny Azzato, 100 Series

Richard & Nicole Stevenson, Challenger

This trip was always going to be somewhat ambitious in terms of what could be done and seen in the time available. Lithgow is about 3 ½ hrs from Canberra and Newnes another 45 minutes further on.

So it was decided to stretch a normal weekend as much as possible by getting an early start by those who could on Friday afternoon, but camping about an hour short of Lithgow to allow the late starters to catch up for the first night. Black Springs, about 20 km before Oberon was the obvious choice as it was easy to find yet just over two hours from Canberra. As it happened and perhaps unsurprisingly, there were no late starters so our small group could press on to a more interesting (still free) camp site.

The most attractive option, for purely selfish reasons, was a free camp on the Fish River between O'Connell and Tarana, about an hour short of Lithgow. We passed through O'Connell where I noted a coffee shop of interest for future reference but Richard B., whose knowledge and skills never cease to amaze, pointed out the Hotel was built of straw bales so of course we had to have a beer there. The dinner menu was very appealing but we had to make camp before dark so pushed on the last 7kms to the Fish River camp site.

That evening both Richard B. and Richard & Nicole impressed with their bat-wing awnings off their vehicles. Both had fitted their awnings with useful low demand LED lights, Richard B. had gone the extra step of wiring his lights so that he could have certain parts on while the others were off. Still not sure about that feature myself but the technical challenge may have been part of the appeal.

Another challenge (and useful) feature for Richard B. was his fascinating and amazingly efficient portable pot-belly stove on which he heated/cooked his food and boiled his water. It has a tall chimney, pot-like belly, skinny little legs and runs very effectively on a mere hand full of twigs. Yet it all packs away into a compact package which fits readily into his vehicle. Amazing stuff.

Next morning all was going well with packing up until Richard B's batwing took flight. None of us noticed that a bit of a breeze had sprung up as the morning temperature rose. Neither did we notice that all the basic elements of primitive launching and possible flight were now available to the wide of wing. We had an elevated position, a bit of breeze, a ground crew of one (Richard B.), and wide spread wings. All that was missing was a pilot in control. Disaster was unavoidable. However the ground crew (Richard B.) recovered well and complete and total loss was avoided.

The personal benefit of the area for me was the apparent closeness to the main western railway line and the opportunity to pass through the delightfully and intriguingly named settlement of Sodwalls. Google Search indicates the points of interest for Sodwalls as a cemetery, the postcode and the weather. NSW Railways think they have a disused platform there, but not any more I'm afraid to say. Possibly souvenired by disappointed tourists.

The next area of interest, particularly to Richard B., was Lyell Dam Lake. For once Richard B. was without any kind of watercraft on his roof, which is probably just as well, but he did scope possible free camps and places to launch around the lake's edge. I think he will be back there again. It is a very popular recreation attraction for Lithgow area residents.

Lithgow at last. We checked out the Visitors' Information Centre and reviewed our options and interests. We opted to visit The State Mine Heritage Park on the way to the Glow Worm Tunnel walk, then head for The Wolgan Valley and Newnes to set up camp for the night.

Richard B's surprisingly eclectic interests and knowledge surfaced at The State Mine. We were fortunate to have a knowledgeable guide who responded appreciatively to Richard B's extensive knowledge of mining and associated activities and took us to facilities and places which I'm sure are not normally open to the public. It was a very interesting and rewarding tour.

Next up was the Glow Worm Tunnel walk. The tunnel is part of the railway route into the Wolgan Valley and Newnes from the main railway line on the escarpment above Lithgow. The Tunnel is approached along part of the original track bed of the

Trip Report

Newnes & Lithgow Explorer

16-18 Nov 2012

Ian Goodacre



line into Newnes and at one point the vehicular road passes through another former tunnel. This is a quite narrow and curved tunnel best approached with the lead vehicle calling the others through after him (or her). The car park for the walking track can accommodate about twenty carefully parked vehicles. The walking path again follows the original track bed, at one point where a rail bridge has been lost, it descends sharply into a gully, crosses a short foot bridge, then climbs steeply through a fissure in the rock face to rejoin track bed again. It's quite safe but not for the elderly or physically infirm.

That also applies to Glow Worm Tunnel walk itself. The track leads clearly downhill where perpetually running water has washed out most of the original track bed itself rendering the pathway too treacherous without torches once the tunnel curves away from the outside light. And you have to get away from the outside light influence to see the so-called glow worms. I'll leave the technical explanations of glow worms to the explanatory panels in the car park or any scientists among you.

Out the other end of the tunnel there is little sign of where the track bed used to be. The heavy rainfall in the district has both washed away the evidence and replaced it with a delightful temperate rainforest. The path does lead further on and you can walk the 6-7kms to Newnes if inclined, but in places it is not an easy walk. We, however, had to drive about 70kms to get to our camp site at Newnes that night.

We set up camp across the shallow sandy-bottomed river from the Newnes Hotel and much of the original settlement. There is plenty of free camping both sides of the river and also paid sites opposite the pub with access to hot showers and flush toilets. For the less adventurous there also some comfortable looking new cabins near the pub.

Next morning we followed the signed walk around the impressive ruins of the mining site. Despite anything useful to shale mining being transferred to Glen Davis in the neighbouring Capertee Valley after final closure of the Newnes venture there is still much to see and do. For instance, you can follow the track bed from Newnes up to the Glow Worm Tunnel, or even walk the 9km to Glen Davis as some workers did for a while after the closure.

We returned to Lithgow and toured the Small Arms

Museum (cost approx. \$6) then adjourned to Maccas for Lunch. Richard & Nicole needed to be home early so they left after lunch while Richard B. and I checked out Blast Furnace Park then as much as we could of the Zig Zag Railway which had recently been closed after several safety issues.

Any photos you may see or have seen of Newnes in ST were taken by Richard and Nicole and I thank them for their generosity in sharing them with us, and also for the pleasure of their company on the trip.

This trip, while somewhat under subscribed was planned as much as a gauging exercise for a future trip or trips as an actual trip in itself. Everybody on this trip has since determined they will return again to the area to follow up on what we had to omit this time. The next and longer trip to the area will be at Easter 2013 and may well have been run by the time you read this report. Watch out for the report on the Easter trip in future ST's.

I'd like to thank Richard B. for his interest, enthusiasm, and contributions on the trip. We share some arcane interests which Richard & Nicole quietly tolerated, making their own distinct contribution to our pleasure and enjoyment over the two days and nights.

I will be planning and leading another, shorter trip to the Zig Zag Railway after it reopens, hopefully later this year. Watch out for it. 



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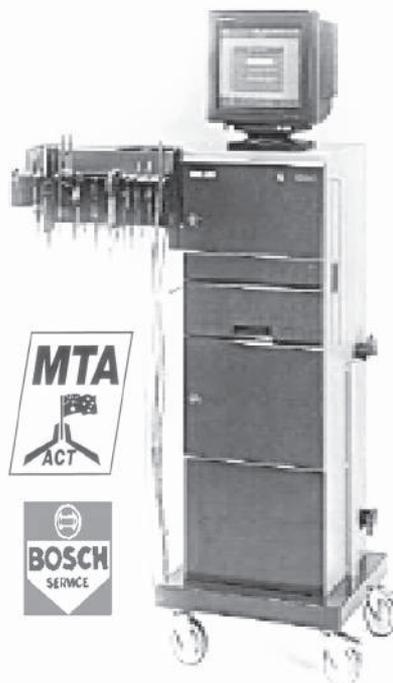
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Service Station in Bredbo (right hand side of highway) no later than **7.00pm** on the Friday evening preceding the course.

**The Club's Education Coordinator is Peter Reynolds,
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**PLEASE BOOK A PLACE ON ONE OF THESE COURSES WELL IN ADVANCE AND ALSO RING PETER ONE WEEK BEFORE THE COURSE TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE!
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Steve 0434 231 669

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