

Southern Trails

Complimentary Issue

Official Publication for Southern Tablelands Four Wheel Drive Club Inc.

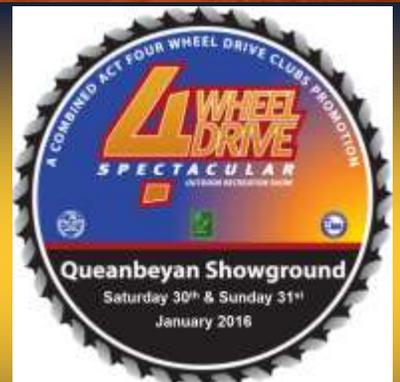


Simpson Desert

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Inside this Months Issue:
⇒ Canberra in Winter – No Thanks
⇒ The Simpson, Cape York & Fraser Island



November 2015, Issue 431
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Oh what a feeling!



SOUTHERN TRAILS

ISSUE 431, November 2015



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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 Meeting is the 10th of November 2015

The deadline for material to be included in the next issue of *Southern Trails* is Friday the 21th of November 2015

This month's magazine has been compiled by Graeme Booth

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Scan this QR code with your smart phone for more content.

Keep an eye out for them throughout the magazine!

The opinions expressed in the articles and letters in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Southern Tablelands Four Wheel Drive Club.

Southern Trails is printed by INSTANT COLOUR PRESS, 21 RAE ST, BELCONNEN, ACT 2617.

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.



Directory



Executive Committee

executive@st4wdc.com.au

Committee

committee@st4wdc.com.au

President

Alan Jones

0428 236 284

Email: president@st4wdc.com.au

Secretary

Brenden Taylor

0434 083 351

Email: secretary@st4wdc.com.au

Treasurer

Phil Henderson

Email: treasurer@st4wdc.com.au

Past President

David Whight

0438 882 696

Email: ppresident@st4wdc.com.au

Publications Coordinator

Graeme Booth

0408 693 843

Email: publications@st4wdc.com.au

Education Coordinator

Peter Butterfield

0417 480 856

Email: education@st4wdc.com.au

Membership Secretary

Lynne Donaldson

0418 631 669

Email: membership@st4wdc.com.au

Events and Trips Coordinator

Michael Patrick

0412 377 941

Email: trips@st4wdc.com.au

Property Coordinator

Peter Reynolds

0428 623 458

Email: property@st4wdc.com.au

Public Relations Coordinator

Jim Anderson

0408 283 496

Email: public@st4wdc.com.au

Information Coordinator

Chris Nicholls

0490 038 235

Email: information@st4wdc.com.au

General Members

Marj Jones

0427 284 236

Andrew Squire

0419 219 487

Kiera Taylor

0419 260 925

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 Jim Anderson 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.com.au. 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.com.au

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, the Southwells, 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 travellers - 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

President's Pitch

Alan Jones



What a busy world we have made for ourselves. It would appear there is little time to smell the flowers.

When last I wrote a 'Pitch' for Southern Trails, I was that far west in Queensland that I was north of South Australia. Now the month spent volunteering on Ethabuka seems an age ago; there has been so much happen since that time.

This weekend just gone provides a snapshot of just how busy it gets.

Club-wise there were a number of activities vying for attention. There was a Sand and Water Course; a muster at TALOOGGE; a meeting for the NSW & ACT 4WD Association Driver Training Unit (DTU) – while other members were involved with constructing a demonstration track for the show at EPIC next weekend.

For myself, I could only fit in two of these events; the DTU Meeting being held at the Motorsport Complex located at Eastern Creek and the TALOOGGE Muster. I shall therefore limit this report to these two events.

On Friday I drove to Eastern Creek where I was fortunate to have been offered an on-site bed, in a TVAN belonging to Independent Trailers.

Saturday involved attending the DTU Meeting and doing volunteer work for our Association.

The DTU Meeting was productive and could well result in medium to long-term benefits for ST4WDC, particularly if a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), currently being redrafted, achieves its potential. There will be more information available once the redrafted MOU is circulated to affiliated clubs.

The volunteer work involved driving the public around the Test Track at Eastern Creek in a variety of demonstration 4WDs. Members from various

affiliated 4WD Clubs were involved in this activity, with each session limited to two hours for each member. Additionally, demonstration driving was limited to only those club members with driver training accreditation. The Test Track is similar to the one we construct for the Queanbeyan 4WD and Camping Spectacular every second year but on a much larger scale.

I did have a chance to check out a variety of 4WD and camping related items, during Saturday but purchased very little. Once the Show finished for the day, I returned home to ensure an early start to drive to TALOOGGE on Sunday morning.

There was a great deal achieved during this month's muster at TALOOGGE.

The toilet/shower, under construction to accommodate individuals with mobility issuing, is nearing completion with the framing, walls and roofing completed. This particular unit has been an ongoing project for our member Brad Wells, over a period of many months and it is good to see it nearing completion.

There was hazard reduction clearing behind the Club House; weed spraying on Saturday and more stabilisation work at Cooper Gate Creek Crossing, which we hope will survive the next large rain event. The ongoing efforts of our members, during these musters, is bearing fruit and the property is looking a picture at the moment. Hopefully it will remain that way for our Christmas Function being held there during the last weekend of November.

A big 'Thank You' to the last-minute coordinator for the muster, when the designated coordinator for the weekend had to pull out with very little notice. A job well done and thanks to all who turned up and pitched in. Indeed, thanks to all the members who have attended TALOOGGE Musters throughout the year – all members attending our property benefit from your work.

***Got an awesome photo of your rig in action on a trip?
Want to see it in this magazine?
Email the full size photo to publications@st4wdc.com.au
Who knows your photo may even end up on the front cover...***

Vale – To a long time friend and associate of the Club.



Richie Southwell

It is with great sadness that we heard of the passing of Richie Southwell last month. Richie had spent the last few years in a nursing home in Cooma.

Richie had become, over the last 11 years, an ever-present part of our Talooge journey.

Many long-time members would remember his cheerful wave as we passed his house, along with his blue eyed dog in the kennel.

You could also be assured that, whenever you passed, although you didn't see him, he KNEW you were going by. Nothing appeared to slip by Richie!

If you had time, when he was outside, you'd stop and have a chat, or many just called into the house to say "Hi!" He appreciated that and always made you welcome.

Through him we learnt a lot of history of the area, as well as local bush knowledge... "Can't build a bridge over any river here, it won't last!" Did we listen?

He also attended a few Christmas Parties, held at Talooge in the earlier years.

Working with him, we were able to obtain Legal Access through his property, which has, and will always be, an advantage to the Club.

Our condolences go to Richie's family.

Fond memories.

Lynne's Latest

Membership Secretary

Lynne Donaldson



G'day everyone

The month of October has been busy for Membership with 4 new members, thank you to all that make the visitors and new members feel welcome.

We had a stand out at The Canberra Home Show and there was definite interest in our 4wd Club, I would like to thank the many helpers for making it a successful 3 days.

It is time again for **renewals for 2016**, please come and see me at the meeting to renew and I will give your membership card or else transfer the funds into the bank account - remember to add your name as reference. If you have joined during 2015, check the Pro rata price which is on the back of the application form in the magazine. If you need to give me a call to discuss please do.

Note - if you have not renewed by December 31st you will not receive email notifications and will not be able to access the website.

I have put my hand up to be part of the committee to organise the 40th Anniversary celebration of our club. If you are interested in helping or have any suggestions these would be greatly appreciated.

Take advantage of your club block and get out there and enjoy it at this great time of the year.

Below are the new members:

Brian and Kay Riley - Holden Colorado

Bob and Ola Robertson - Ford Ranger
Glen Heward and Maree Sainsbury - 79 Series Land cruiser and Jeep Wrangler
Michael and Christine Pratt - Toyota FJ Cruiser

Below are the numbers of membership

Owner member - 231
Partner - 187
Associate - 1
Life - 9
Family - 4
Total 432

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

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

Safe travels

Lynne



Club Clothing

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

| | |
|---------------------|---------|
| Jackets: | \$95.00 |
| Polo Shirts: | \$38.00 |
| Summer Polo Shirts: | \$35.00 |
| Hoodies: | \$48.00 |
| Rugby Tops: | \$50.00 |
| Caps: | \$20.00 |
| Bucket Hats: | \$20.00 |
| Beanies: | \$20.00 |
| Name Badges: | \$10.00 |

If there is any clothing item you would like to see here please call Michael Loberger - 0420 963 804





CHRISTMAS PARTY AT TALOOGUE!

28th-29th November 2015

There will be fun and games for the whole family!

Activities include:

- ◆ Egg and spoon race
- ◆ Egg toss
- ◆ Tug o' war
- ◆ 3 legged races
- ◆ Stories around the campfire
- ◆ And more...

Santa will be arriving around 3pm so make sure you bring along a labeled parcel if you know what I mean...

The annual Adult Gift Grab will be on again so make sure you bring along a gift to participate. Dinner will be pot luck. The Club will provide dessert for everybody. Sunday will be nice and relaxed leaving you to be able to pack up and leave whenever you want.

There will be a lucky door prize as well as prizes for the best decorated table, hat and car.

Festivities will kick off around 1pm on Saturday. Convoys will be arranged by request to Kiera Taylor (0419 260 925) and will leave Breadbo. If you have any questions please contact Kiera Taylor (0419 260 925)

Just a reminder that the Christmas party is just around the corner. Could all members who are planning on attending the Christmas party please nominate on the Web site. If you cannot nominate on the Web please contact Michael Patrick (0412 377 941) and he will nominate for you. It is important that we know which members will be attending as this will assist in the catering for desserts

See you all there!



4WD Spectacular Outdoor Recreation Show

**Queanbeyan Showground
30th – 31st January 2016**



Dear Club members,

As you are aware the bi-annual promotion event, 4WD Spectacular Outdoor Recreation Show at Queanbeyan Showground, is rapidly approaching. This event allows the club the opportunity to showcase itself to the community as well as providing a significant part of the Club's revenue. It's also a great social event, especially for those able to camp there, where you get to know other members far better.

There is a lot of work that takes place behind the scenes, as those of you who have contributed to this event in the past can attest.

We are now calling on all members to contribute their time and efforts to ensure that the next promo event lives up to and hopefully exceeds the last effort.

Volunteers are required for many different activities over the weekend and we would like you to consider helping where you feel you are able to.

Volunteer for the many jobs and put your name on a Roster
Club Tent

Volunteer to man the Club's display tent

Parking

directing traffic to orderly parking

Gates Glebe St/ Lowe St

Manning entrances and collecting admission fees

Catering

Preparing, serving, washing up the dinners

Garbage Collection

a "back-of-truck" trip around the grounds emptying bins

Volunteer to help with anything

All are rostered for 1 – 2 hours or so to suit you

DO IT NOW!!

IT'S LOTS OF WORK BUT IT'S HEAPS OF FUN !!

How do I volunteer?

1. Simply cut out, or pull out the facing page and fill in the form indicating: your preferred tasks, the day/s and time/s you are available. (There's no need to be too specific.)

Then return completed forms to me at the club meeting or email your response to: marjjones@rocketmail.com

2. Simply email me your request and preferences.

4WD Spectacular Outdoor Recreation Show Queanbeyan Showground

Saturday and Sunday 30th- 31st January 2016

Name/s: _____

Home Phone: _____

Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Nominate Preferred Activities (with a tick)

| | Any time | | 7:00-11.30 | | 11.30-2:30 | | 2:30-6:00 | |
|----------------------------------|----------|-----|------------|-----|------------|-----|-----------|-----|
| | Sat | Sun | Sat | Sun | Sat | Sun | Sat | Sun |
| Gates: Main (Glebe St) Low St | | | | | | | | |
| Parking Duties: | | | | | | | | |
| Garbage Collection: | | | | | | | | |
| Combined Club Catering: | | | | | | | | |

Working in week prior:
 Saturday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

Working Post Show Monday(3rd)

Please return this form to me:
 at a general meeting
 or by email: marjjones@rocketmail.com

REMEMBER:
 Your assistance will contribute to the success of our major event!

Thanks

Marj Jones

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OCTOBER TALOOGUE MUSTER



This weekend at Talooge was enjoyed by:

| | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Marj Jones | Coordinator by default |
| Brad Wells | Whizz builder/handyman |
| Chez Wells | Handyman's labourer |
| Sen Wijeratne | A Willing Horse |
| Phil Fisher | Brick Layer extraordinaire |
| Felicity Salmi | Brick Layer extraordinairee |
| Chris Cartwright | Jack of All Trades |
| David Whight | Sprayer from wayback |
| Alan Jones | Le Presidente, |
| Brendan Tait | A 'real' Tradie |
| Jesse Wells | "R and R" Savourer |
| Brae Tait | "There for the Ride" |
| Jordy Tait | "There for the Ride"'s partner |

Wonder what this group enjoyed and achieved in two days (and a night)?

Friday night

Brad, Chez, Marj, Jesse, Brendan, Brae and Jordy, after setting up camp, settled in to enjoy a great tea, (thanks to Chez) and then to talk and play games till the wee hours of Saturday.

Saturday

- * Brad and Brendan constructed the framework for the disabled toilet.
- * David, Sen, Marj and Chris sprayed lower Thurbon Flat and the off-set mounds area.
- * Phil and Felicity did an excellent job of bedding in bricks on Cooper Gate Crossing.
- * Chris, David, Marj and Sen cleared the area behind the Club Shed of the small acacias and shrubs to create a fire break.
- * David, Jesse, Brendan and the girls unfortunately had to return to Canberra.
- * Those left enjoyed a wonderful night of camaraderie.



Sunday (not so early for some)

- * Sen and Marj relocated the pile of wood which had been placed a bit close to the fire-pit, particularly given the recent sightings of snakes in the area. Also moved some of the wood, from the box so that the lid would close, into the chemical shed.
- * Sen, Chris and Marj dismantled a fireplace that had been constructed in an inappropriate location.
- * Sen and Chris reconstructed the fireplace in a more appropriate area where one had been knocked over previously.
- * Brad and Chez worked on putting up the walls and roof of the disabled toilet. A VERY long day!!!
- * Phil and Felicity continued with their work of art.
- * Marj and Alan hung the "Life Members Board" and the picture donated by Doc Baldwin as well as resituating the First Aid cupboard and AED, hanging both on the wall for easy access.
- * Chris, Sen and Marj relaid the pavers that had been



OCTOBER TALOOGI MUSTER



tipped up by a vehicle beside the Club Shed.

- * Alan continued with the general checking and maintenance, which ALWAYS needs doing, to keep Talooge in shipshape condition for the benefit of all.
- * Felicity and Marj cleaned the kitchen area, then moved their skills to the toilets.

A huge thanks goes to Brendan for his work on Saturday. Without his knowledge and skills, the disabled toilets may well not have progressed as far as it has.

All the building construction (except the door and some internal fittings) has been done! It is now over to the plumbers to do their bit to complete the project.

A BIG thanks to all those who did attend.

Although a lot of work was done, it was not over burdensome and actually enjoyable, working among friendly members and getting to know a lot more about each one as the weekend went on.

Talooge looks great by the way!.....for those who haven't been there for a while.

Perhaps you might think of coming to the November Muster, do your part and learn a bit more about members you haven't met.



Trip Leaders

A four wheel drive club cannot survive if there are no 4wd trips and to have 4wd trips we require people who are willing to organise and lead these trips (Trip Leaders). A new incentive program has been created to recognize and reward our trip leaders of the future. Commencing from 1st January 2015 onwards any club member who leads three trips will be awarded a ST4WDC Logo emblazed compendium. Please note this recognition award will not be backdated.

Michael Patrick
Trip Coordinator



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Canberra in Winter - No thanks

Trip Report



Trip Leader's Intro (Alex)

This trip had its genesis in my wife Andrea going to Japan on a Scout Jamboree. Because she couldn't break the trip (and therefore no point in me joining her for any of it), what to do? Spend winter in Canberra working? No thanks. Hence a trip and its title were born.

Where to go? Gotta be interesting but not too challenging – after all, I'm not yet experienced in remote area travel. With all the rains beforehand, I figured Lake Eyre might have some water in it and, with it, an abundance of wildlife. While we're over that way, why not take in Cameron Corner? The Dig Tree was suggested and incorporated (thanks Glynis). And I thought The Darling River Run would make a good relaxing final leg. 3 weeks, 3 legs. Recognising not everyone could take 3 weeks, the trip was coordinated so people could join and depart based on how much time they could afford. Thus, Garry and Michael Lymbery joined me for Weeks 1 and 2; Phil, Felicity and Peter joined for Weeks 2 and 3. We also had Dave and Jen (friends of mine from Adelaide) join us – intended for Weeks 1 and 2, but had to leave after only a few days due to an illness in the family. The followings paras outline the route. Needless to say, lots of sights, great experiences with wonderful friends, and fortunately no misadventure.

Leg 1 started in Broken Hill with 3 cars; after a look around we headed into SA and turned right at Yunta, encountering our first remote area travel sign. That night we spent camped at Dingley Dell in Flinders Ranges National Park, the following day headed for a camp at Arkaroola. The next day Dave and Jen had to leave us as we joined the highway just north of Leigh Creek; them returning to Adelaide, us headed for Coward Springs for a refreshing dip and camp. Then on to William Creek for road conditions; had a South African solo driver join us for the drive out to Halligan and ABC Bays to see and touch Lake Eyre (salt and mud, no water nearby unfortunately). We then returned to Lyndhurst to pre-position for the drive up the



Strzelecki Track to Innamincka. Early start, good conditions and progress, we turned off onto the Old Strzelecki for the rest of the drive into town. Quick orientation and we headed for an early camp at Cullyamurra Waterhole. The next day was exploring around Innamincka before heading into Queensland to The Dig Tree. After an overnight camp on the banks of Cooper Creek, we head into Tibooburra via Orientos and Santos.

A couple of nights of rest at The Granites caravan park, and being joined by Peter, Felicity and Phil, we headed out to do The Gorge and Jump Up Loop trails in Sturt NP. Overnights at Olive Downs, then on to Cameron Corner. Interesting arrangement there, as you go through a gate from NSW into SA, then across the border into QLD

where the Cameron Corner store and campsites are. Then the Corner Post itself – an opportunity to be cheeky in 3 states. From the Corner, we headed south along a minor track which then took us to Milparinka, a resurrected ghost town. Back into Tibooburra for an overnight (and another pub dinner) before heading for Bourke and the start of The Darling River Run.

At Bourke, the Lymberys left us to return to Canberra, work and the cold. We enjoyed Bourke's hospitality before then heading along the Darling and a few side trips before overnights at Tilpa Weir. The next day had us camped at Menindee Lakes before heading into Mungo NP, where we arrived at dusk after a rain shower (rainbow over a moonscape!). We camped remotely, had one of the coldest nights for the trip then headed into Wentworth to finish the trip at the junction of the Darling and Murray Rivers. What amazed me about The Run was how little we saw of the Darling River!

With the route explained, lets now cover the highlights and any lessons learned.

Leg 1 – Lake Eyre and Innamincka (Alex)

Canberra in Winter - No thanks

Trip Report



The first leg was originally envisaged to be about 5-6 days long, but in planning we realised more time would be needed. Fortunately, it actually suited Phil, Felicity and Pete to start Leg 2 later, so Garry, Michael and I had a bit more time for the significant distances we were to cover. We had some wonderful encounters, like the owner of the Manna Hill pub with all its relics, and the solo South African traveller who joined us for the trip from William Creek out to Lake Eyre. We first spotted Uncle George doing some repairs to his car at one of the Innamincka camp spots, and then chatted with him as we refuelled back in town. An aboriginal elder from northern Queensland, we had surprising things in common and enjoyed the different tales of his life around the world. We also had encounters with wildlife including wild goats, varieties of roos, emus aplenty and other magnificent birds either in flight or in their resting places (corellas, pelicans). This was the first time I had seen wild goats and at Wilcannia was told that a semi-trailer load leaves the area every week and they're still way out of control.

From Maree to William Creek we travelled along the Old Ghan line, seeing locomotives (you can buy one in Maree if interested) and many of the station stops are still in very good condition. Lake Eyre we are told did have water in it. I'm not sure if what we saw was water or mirage, but just to be able to see way into the distance along the salt pans, and even walk out onto it was special. Unfortunately, the hoped for abundance of wildlife wasn't abundant where we were. One of the lasting feelings of the trip in general was BIG SKY – and vivid colours of red, blue gold and green.



The road conditions were actually very good. I think we got lucky, because they could have been far worse had it rained. On the Strzelecki just out of Lyndhurst, we were complimented by a road train driver for having lights on and using the radio to call them – thank you ST4WDC for the good training! Further along the Strz, Montecollina Bore would make a great overnight stop, but we were making such good time (and still had lots to cover before meeting the others in Tibooburra) that we pressed on. We deviated onto the Old Strzelecki which was in as good condition but because of sand banks either side of a more windy road, I decided to fit the sand-flag. Never having been into this area, the maps depicting sand dunes 10 or so metres high had me cautious in planning. I'd only seen images of dunes like on the Simpson so expected some challenges. Turns out that these dunes are all vegetated and therefore stable, and the roads are cut through and firm pack underneath. Only a relatively small layer of soft sand on top. Easy driving.

Innamincka is an amazing spot with lots to see and do. You could easily spend quite a few days around there. Next time we will make time to go out and overnight at Congee Lakes. Instead we camped on Cooper Creek at Cullyamurra Waterhole, and then again at The Dig Tree. Only after I returned, did I find out that Andrea's Uncle Don is also commemorated there for his work in the area. A good reason to go back with Andrea! Once in Tibooburra, it was time for a relax for a couple for nights at The Granites Caravan Park, run by lovely people who also run the servo where you check in. The park is overseen by the warden – a self-appointed guest who greets you and lays down the law! She and her husband spend a lot of time there and are great to chat with (she chats, you listen). Of course, Tibooburra is noted for its two pubs, and both are a great place to eat and relax – good reasons to spend at least a couple of nights in Tib!

Leg 2 – Corner Country (Pete)

Phil and Felicity in their 'Defender' and me in my 'Challenger', met up with Alex, Dave and Mike at Tibooburra on Tuesday 28 July for the second and third weeks of the trip.

Today, Tibooburra is the gateway to the Sturt National Park and the Corner Country, but originally it grew up as a settlement to service the Albert goldfields after gold was discovered in the late 1870's at Depot Glen and then later at Mount Brown. Originally, miners travelled overland from Wilcannia, and from Fari-na on the Ghan Railway line in South Australia, walking up to 300 kilometres overland across largely wa-

Canberra in Winter - No thanks

Trip Report



terless terrain. Conditions on the Albert Goldfields were regarded as worse than at any other goldfield in New South Wales. Continued drought created major problems for the supply of rations for the goldfields and in the early 1880s miners literally ran out of food and were starving until a camel train brought in supplies from South Australia. No such problems for us – the meals at the Hotel Tibooburra are excellent.

The following day, the four vehicles left Tibooburra on our journey to Cameron Corner. Rather than drive the direct road to the Corner, the decision was made to drive through Sturt National Park on the Loop Road to Mount Olive, and then the Middle Road which runs through the north of the Park roughly parallel with the NSW/Qld border. The Loop Road runs to the north-east of Tibooburra, around Mt Wood outdoor pastoral heritage museum, with the Mt Wood Homestead & shearers quarters. The road then crosses the plains to Twelve Mile Creek Gorge with its lookout. Amongst the features visible from the Loop Road are 'Jump Ups'. These ancient landforms are the remains of an ancient mountain range that have been eroded down over millions of years leaving the 150m high mesas. The view from the lookout on the top of the largest Jump Up is spectacular.

We camped for the night at the Olive Downs camping ground, which had excellent facilities, including electric barbecues, pit toilets and tank water. The nearby Olive Downs Station is now a NPWS heritage homestead complex, having been incorporated into the National Park in 1972. In the mid-19th century the Station was the social hub of the area and even boasted a tennis court and a swimming pool.



The following day we continued on the Middle road from Olive Downs, and took a short side trip to the Toona Gate in the Dog Fence which marks the NSW/Qld border. The fence was built in 1887 and extends from Jimbour in Queensland to the coast of South Australia. At 5614 kilometres, it's the world's longest fence – even longer than the Great Wall of China. Back on the Middle road, we drove through dune country past the Lignum Swamp and Lake Pinaroo (both dry). Lake Pinaroo was declared a Ramsar wetland in 1996 – when it fills it is a significant refuge for large numbers of waterbirds and waders. Fort Grey was named after the then Governor of South Australia, Sir George Grey, by Charles Sturt when he established it on Lake Pinaroo as a forward base for his expedition in 1845. There is a NPWS campground at the Fort, where we had lunch, and then drove on to Cameron Corner. The camping area at the Corner has a great camp kitchen, and we spent a very pleasant evening yarning with other 4WDers, and toasting marshmallows provided by Alex – each of which was about the size of a tennis ball.

Instead of returning to Tibooburra by the main road, we decided to follow a more southerly track to Milparinka, also originally part of the Albert goldfield. One of the things that impressed me during this drive was the white gibber plains. Being gold country, much of the underlying rock is quartz. White quartz pebbles make up so much of the gibber, that at times it looked like the hills were covered with snow. Gold was never found at Milparinka, but it had something even more precious, water. Milparinka developed along a large waterhole in Evelyn Creek and gold bearing gravel was bought to Milparinka to wash out the gold. In time, Milparinka grew into a substantial township with four hotels, a bank, shops, a police station and courthouse, a post office and more. The telegraph linked the town to Sydney in 1896, and coach services arrived twice a week from Wilcannia and later Broken Hill. Today, Milparinka is a ghost of its former self with only the court house, police station, and one pub remaining intact. From Alex: one of my favourite memories of Milparinka was having a great chat with a modern day gold fossicker. I was surprised at how open he was about what he is doing and he even showed us equipment and gold that he had found (so I guess modern techniques are more effective!).

We returned to Tibooburra, and the following day (Saturday) headed to Bourke. Garry and his son Michael

Canberra in Winter - No thanks



Trip Report

had to be back in Canberra for the Monday and were leaving the convoy at Bourke. Following their departure, we spent two days at Bourke, during which we went to the 'Back-o-Bourke' show at the exhibition centre, and had an excellent meal and entertainment at 'Poetry on a Plate'. Both are well worth a visit if you're in the area. The following Monday we left Bourke to begin the Darling River Run.



Leg 3 – The Darling River Run (Phil)

Felicity and I found the trip very enjoyable. This was down to many factors but route choice, scenery and experiences, and good company, were amongst the most significant. It was our first long driving trip of this kind and it proved to be a great way to sort out vehicle packing and gear issues. It was also a great learning experience from other perspectives such as trip research, planning and day to day management which were conducted very effectively by our leader Alex Szabo. There were many elements

of good trip management and leadership that contributed to learning but if we were to choose amongst them, to briefly discuss, we would select convoy procedure as a top learning experience. This was directed very effectively by Alex with appropriate back up from Garry Limbery, an obviously experienced off road driver. Well executed convoy procedure gave us a sense of safety and confidence that we were in good hands. Often we were travelling at relatively high speeds on dirt tracks that were quite drivable but nevertheless presented their fair share of obstacles such as longitudinal ruts, wash outs, wandering livestock and unpredictable feral and native animal activity. The occasional oncoming vehicle presented perhaps the most significant risk. Having an alert and mindful leader calling in conditions, obstacles and on comings gave us the confidence to select lines that exploited potentially all parts of the track in order to keep up a good speed. We had not driven at these kinds of speeds on dirt before but the learning was that this can be done safely and is important for a number of reasons including ride comfort, vehicle preservation (so it doesn't shake to bits) and of course covering distances in our vast outback landscape. Safety is of course of the utmost importance in all of this and good and sustained convoy procedure, facilitated through appropriate convoy communication, was a significant contributor to this and a learning for us. Thank you to all participants for a great experience. From Alex: we found that about 80km/h was a good compromise speed to iron out the corrugations and still provide margin of safety.

We cannot leave our comments on the trip at lessons learnt and without saying something about how we experienced our first trip into part of the vast Australian outback. We enjoy mountain activities and have in the past travelled a long way to experience what alpine environments have to offer. However, we were exhilarated by the sense of wide open space and vast skies that we experienced in most of the areas we drove through in our largely flat outback landscape. And we know that this



Canberra in Winter - No thanks

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was only a taster. We most definitely want to do a lot more outback touring. The sense of space, freedom and solitude that this experience provided refreshed both body and spirit. If we were to pick a couple of stand-out places though it would be hard to go past Kinchega National Park where the Darling River winds its serpentine way through beautiful open forest providing scenery that is easy on the eye and many excellent camp spots. Menindee Lakes also stood out because of the beauty of abundant water in an otherwise dry landscape, and the abundance of bird life. And one final mention. Mungo National Park: beautiful moonscape like scenery, remoteness and the home of Mungo Lady and Mungo Man. They were found some 40 years ago and dated as 42,000 years old, "the oldest human remains in Australia and some of the oldest modern humans in the world outside of Africa" <http://www.visitmungo.com.au/archaeology>. The large white sand dunes that wouldn't look out of place at the beach will remain in our memories.



All in all a great trip. The driving was not difficult, although it could be after rain. With competent people in the lead this is a great trip for new, or older members for that matter, wanting to experience just a taster of extended outback travel with minimal risk.

Overall (Alex)

Sometimes in the planning stage, I wondered if I was over-planning. Looking back, the time invested in coordinating and making sure everyone is prepared is never wasted - in remote areas such as some of these were, it could even save someone's life. Phil kindly lent me his new satellite tracker and communicator and for the first week he tracked where we were on the web. I also carried a lot of books (and bought a few more) and these turned out to be mostly dead-weight because we tended to rely on local signage and word-of-mouth rather than sifting through the books.

It was very convenient that Garry's and my car had interchangeable parts, so we coordinated carriage of spares. Being relatively new vehicles and because we had them, we didn't need them. With all but Pete's Challenger being diesel made our spare fuel carriage easier, but a tad more onerous for Pete because he had to carry extra petrol. But regular refuelling meant we were never in jeopardy.

At Cameron Corner, a fellow traveller told me about the Fuel Map app which helps identify where fuel can be bought and at what price - well worth a look. We also used the Camps Australia Wide book and I often referred to WikiCamps to both find camp options and charges, then uploaded our experiences for others to read. What I found surprising was that after Lyndhurst, we had no mobile coverage at all until Tibooburra (even with Telstra). Innamincka has a couple of payphones. The signs are right, this is remote area travel and you have to carry some form of emergency comms.

Probably the biggest lesson learned and the one to conclude with: we all agreed there was too much driving. The trip was an ambitious sampler of lots of places I had never been. Except for start/rest/finish locations like Broken Hill, Tibooburra, Bourke and Mildura, we didn't spend more than a night in the same spot. This made for great practice in set-up and pack-up (with their own valuable lessons), but a more leisurely approach with some base camping is the plan for next time. Might even provide the chance to delve into some of the books I will likely carry again!

I hope you have enjoyed reading about this trip and are motivated to get out there and safely explore what Australia has to offer. We certainly are!



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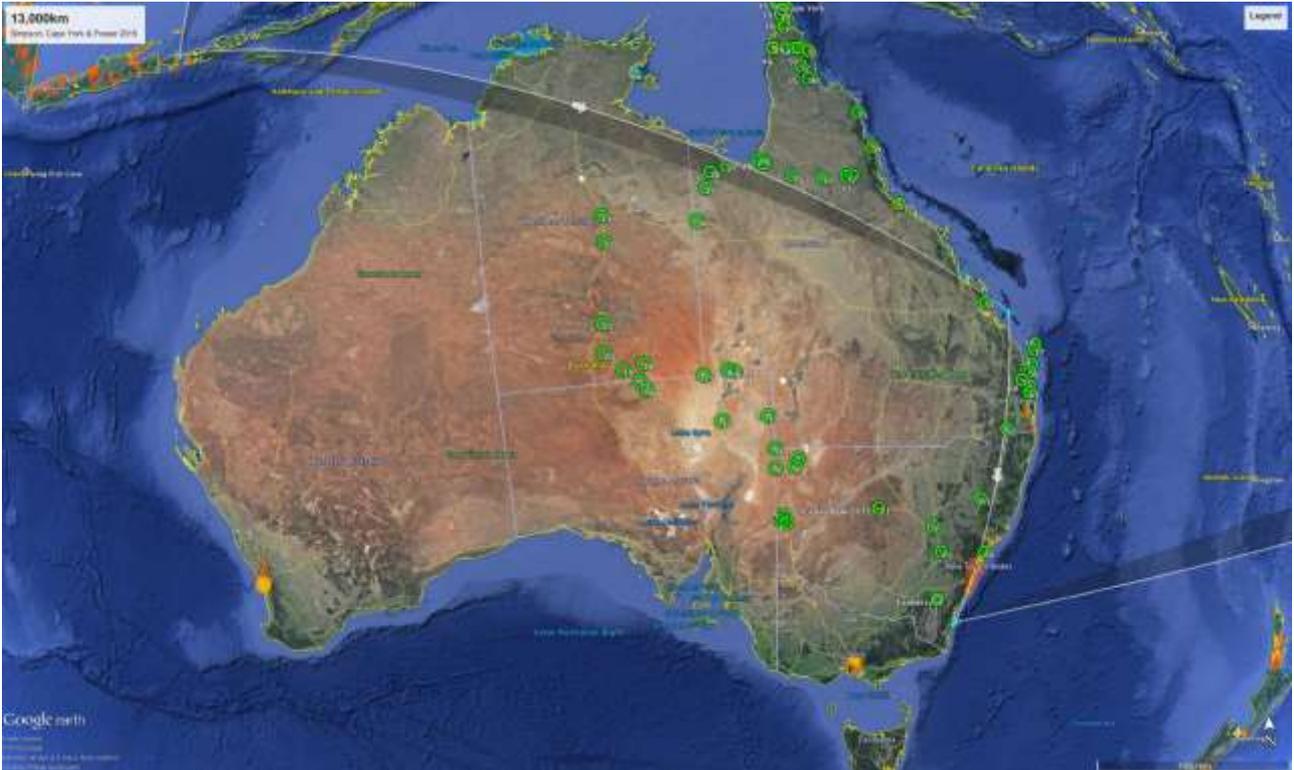
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The Simpson, Cape York & Fraser Island 13,000km June & July 2015



Trip Report

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| Glen Torr & Christine Fulton | Landcruiser 200 Series | Simpson Desert |
| Jake Vanderstock & Patrick Conroy | Hilux Dual Cab | Simpson Desert |
| Ann Gibbs-Jordan | GU Patrol Wagon | Simpson Desert |
| Scott Cumming | GU Patrol Cab Chassis | Simpson Desert, Cape York & Fraser Island |



Mid May 2015 - Glen Torr mentioned that he and Jake Vanderstok were doing a Simpson Desert crossing over 3 weeks with a few others in June and an open invitation was announced by Glen at our monthly meeting for any additional club members to join the trip. After some thought and quick but detailed preparation which included a full pre trip inspection at Monaro Off Road I was ready in about 2 weeks to head off on the adventure.

Both Glen and Jake had done the Simpson before from West to East so they provided some valuable experience and knowledge about what we could expect and how they were preparing for the trip which is definitely a remote area but with a fair amount of traffic but you certainly need to self sufficient as a team. Although I have done some semi remote travel around Alice Springs in the past, this was going to be a good challenge.

We were all to meet in Birdsville for a departure on Friday 12th of June. This flexible departure time was great as it allowed for each of us to take a slightly different route and see places we hadn't before the crossing. Glen's brother and sister were to meet us in Birdsville in a FJ Cruiser but unfortunately they changed their mind which was a pity as we watched a FJ Cruiser really power up some of the steepest sections of Big Red using its great power to weight ratio and easily handle the sand dunes. My additional 5 weeks travel wasn't planned from the start and just eventuated as it all fell into place.

Week 1 Canberra to Birdsville

After all the preparation it was great to finally be on the road and after just 70km the low tyre pressure warning alarm sounded one of the tyres which had some sidewall damage from a previous trip was leaking air. You have got to be joking!! I thought as I plugged the tyre and inflated it. A couple of stops to re inflate and I was in Boorowa where I was certain that a new tyre would be needed but they assured me that the repair was up to Australian standards and I would be fine so reluctantly I agreed and history eventually



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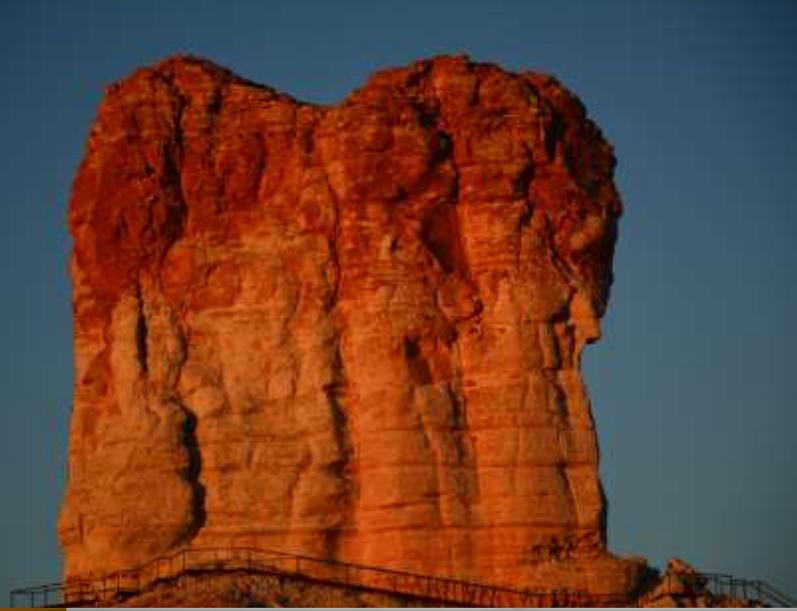
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showed that it did last about another 7,000km so I continued on to Dubbo where I quick visit to the local supermarket upon arrival to get a hot water bottle certainly made the minus 3 degree night very comfortable.

Dubbo to Broken Hill, Silverton and to Eldee Station (25km from Silverton) for a couple of nights allowed time to see the sights mainly around Silverton such as the Mad Max Museum, Pub and some interesting art galleries. The owners of Eldee Station Stephen and Naomi were very relaxed and made all visitors feel most welcome. I definitely can recommend a visit there and will spend more time exploring the many relatively easy tracks the station has to offer not to mention the well regarded outback restaurant.

Tibooburra was where I met Glen, Christine and Ann and we stayed at the local caravan park in town and within easy walking distance to either of the two pubs which we had to visit over our 2 night stay there. Glen and I did a day trip to Milparinka, Cameron Corner through part of the Strzelecki Desert on tracks that were only just re opened following rain a few days earlier where we needed to stop and clean the mud off the headlights so we could see where we were going in the dark as we got back to Tibooburra.

The tracks to Innamincka were straight forward with a section which was like a fast dirt highway and we stopped to check out The Burke & Wills Dig Tree on the way which was interesting. We decided the next morning to head West on the Walkers Crossing 4x4 track which has sections of soft sand but wasn't too difficult except for very high concentration levels as we encountered well over 50 motorcycles travelling in the opposite direction. This track eventually joins The Birdsville track about 120km South of Birdsville where it was and easy run into Birdsville.

All the usual things done in Birdsville starting at the Pub and spending 3 nights there doing vehicle maintenance, tightening nuts & bolts, relaxing and getting ready for The Simpson Desert. I had to remove my front sway bar ball joints which had given way due to premature wear from dirt and grit. New ones were ordered to arrive in Alice Springs. Glen and Christine took Ann for a day trip to Haddon Corner to see the marker which was about 200km from Birdsville (A medal for you Glen & Christine!). Jake and Patrick arrived so we had 3 vehicles ready for the crossing.

Week 2 The Simpson Desert

After coffee and a couple of Camel Pies at the Birdsville Bakery we were off to tackle Big Red which is about 30km from Birdsville. We all reduced our tyre pressures to around 15psi and comfortably made it to the top on a medium steep track.

Many photos were taken from the top of Big Red then it was time for Jake and I to have some fun on a much steeper track on the Western side of Big Red after watching another Hilux have a few goes Jake decided to drop his pressures to 10psi before attempting the track and just made it first go. I left mine at 18psi



and had to have a second go at it before I made it over the top. Glen rolled a tyre on his 200 series on the top which we had to change and later found that the valve wasn't completely sealed after the initial pressure reduction so it was slowly leaking.

Eyre Creek was our first night on the QAA Line in The Simpson and at about 20km from Big Red is was planned as a relatively easy day. The Western side of the dunes were very chopped up due to a few reasons, The Finke Desert Race traffic, People towing Camper Trail-

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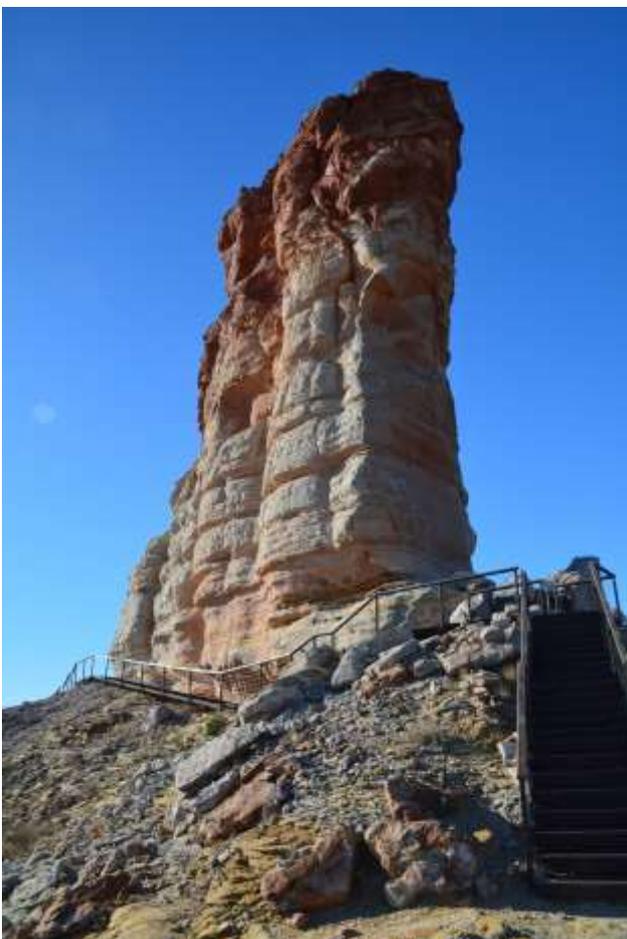


ers and standard trailers but mainly due to people not reducing their tyre pressures enough. The rough rutted sand certainly slowed our progress and tested our suspension but was ok as we weren't in a hurry. The sand was fairly damp in sections especially on the main track so 1st or 2nd gear high range with a steady momentum was fine.

The second day we travelled past Poeppel Corner and then South to join the French Line. Some rain made for some interesting crossings across a couple of the Claypans, in fact too much more and there would definitely be some recoveries but we all made it through to the second night without any real problems.

The 3rd day we woke to mist, fog and light rain which was a really eerie sight in the middle of this very dry desert. Jake, Patrick and I were challenging many steeper parts of the dunes today making our own tracks in the sand until I followed Jake up one with a bit of a side angle and didn't quite make it to the top so instead of doing the smart thing and getting Jake to Snatch me over the lip, I backed down and slowly slid sideways into a V between the dunes and a tree behind!! A fairly heavy winch out was needed to get me over the top and all was good again?? Oh.... Glen was now bogged to the right of the track so needed a Snatch and Ann had difficulty going up the main track so Jake drove her vehicle over.. All good fun! Around half way through the crossing today and we spotted a McDonalds opening soon sign at the top of a steep dune just off the main French Line track. Jake was first to attempt this dune but didn't make it, apparently due to slightly higher tyre pressures at 18psi??, I was next and just made the sign at the top for some photos(18psi too & plenty of power!!!).

Day 4 and 5 were straight forward but we did come across a group of elderly men in Britz Rental vehicles including an Amarok and Troop Carriers. These guys were travelling from West to East and were getting stuck on simple easy dunes due to high tyre pressures. Luckily we saw that they weren't well prepared and encouraged them to re think continuing to Birdsville which they did turn around and proceeded to pump up their tyres back to full road pressures the minute they were off the sand and onto the corrugated road past Pernie Bore to Dalhousie Springs.



Week 3 Dalhousie Springs, Mt Dare, Chambers Pillar to Alice Springs

Dalhousie Springs was so good to soak in the 34 to 38 Degree Spring water at the end of the Desert crossing. Even an early morning sunrise swim before heading to Mt Dare was just the best start to a day in the out-back. Advice from Dave at Mt Dare was to take a slight detour from the main road to Mt Dare to avoid a section of very rough tyre punishing sharp rock. The detour was good advice and we arrived at Mt Dare. We all filled our tanks even at \$2.30 per litre to show support for the Roadhouse especially considering to huge transport cost to get the fuel there.

I expected to have the highest fuel consumption in the 500 or so Kilometres since leaving Birdsville 5 days ago but was pleasantly surprised. Jake's Hilux 93 litres, Glen & Christines 200 Series 130 Litres and My GU Patrol 4.2 just 119 Litres. Not bad considering I had 220 litres and a spare 20 litre jerry can in case of a tank puncture. Probably would have used even less with 100kg less fuel weight on board!!

Old Andado Station was our stop for the night and I am sure that many who have visited would agree that this is a truly unique place to visit where the previous owner Molly Clark instructed the station to be left as she left it following her passing in 2012. It is still pretty much left as a museum to Molly's life on the sta-

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tion and as a big part of Australian Outback History is well worth the visit.

Glen, Christine and Ann head off to Alice Springs via the Binns Track which was a straight forward 330km trip. Glen, Patrick and I took off for Finke, spending a few minutes on the Finke Desert Race track which runs beside the Old Ghan track in sections. The reason for a few minutes on the track was that we could reasonably comfortably travel at up to warp speed of around 20kph over the ridges before everything in our vehicles became airborne! How the competitors manage to travel at speeds up to 150km/h is beyond me. Definitely need to come as a spectator one year!

Chambers Pillar was our stop for the night where we were able to take some spectacular photographs of this rock formation at sunset, sunrise and at night. Aerial video footage from my camera drone while no one was there was amazing. Jake did a minor repair adjustment on his rear brakes in the car park and it was fine. After the sunrise photos and breakfast we travelled the 160km trip to Alice Springs McDonnell Ranges Big 4 Park. Glen, Christine and Ann had already spent a couple of days there so took off South for home, Jake and Patrick stayed a couple of nights before heading off for home and I spent three nights there checking out the sights of Alice and replacing my Sway Bar ball joints with the new ones. Angle Grinder, Grease Gun and Fencing wire which I had were all used with this issue but all good now.

Week 4 Alice Springs to Karumba

Too cold to head South yet so North it is! Devils Marbles overnight for more photo opportunities especially with the Blade 350QX3 Camera Drone and some night shots with my new tripod and remote shutter release. Early start for a big day driving through Tennant Creek, 3 Ways Roadhouse for a snack and fuel then to Camooweal before heading North to Adel Grove in the Lawn Hill National Park. Travelling fairly quickly over the sharp gibber to Adel Grove and not dropping the tyre pressures back down caused a couple of slivers of gibber rock to lodge in the main tread of the same sidewall repaired tyre and a slow leak just lasted till I arrived at the resort. Fixed the next day. Very scenic place to visit and an enjoyable swim in the river at the resort. Burketown, Normanton then Karumba for a couple of nights at the Point Sunset Caravan Park. Full of grey nomads with either boats or caravans or both. I need to get out of here!! Great meal of Chilli Mud Crab at the Pub and an early morning fishing charter but not too much luck fishing. Shell Depot had Diesel for \$1.49 a litre so was happy to fuel up there!

Week 5 Karumba to Cairns



Undara Lava Tubes 275km Southwest of Cairns and the location of the Earths longest lava flow from a single Volcano is a place I highly recommend a visit. The tour is included in the camping fee and is worthwhile. A well developed resort where you can enjoy your own campfire and a nice restaurant with entertainment after around a communal campfire.

Cairns is a fair way North, about 2/3rds of the way from Canberra to the Tip so it makes sense to head further North!! A couple of days preparation and I am ready to tackle the Old Telegraph Track, Frenchmans Track and whatever else looks good.

Week 6 Cape York

Cairns to Coen was straight forward and an overnight stop out back of the Pub which had some entertainment. Fairly busy campground and the start of the QLD school holidays meant I wasn't going to have a problem being on my own. A short trip the next morning to Bramwell Station which is the last stop before The Old Telegraph Track. Early the next morning the fun begins and its not long before you come across the first major river crossing Palm Creek where there are a few options but as I was on my own I took a

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relatively straight forward one which was blocked for a while later that day winching out 3 vehicles all with camper trailers. The Creek crossings keep adding up throughout the day but were all fine. That was until Gunshot where the original drop in was near vertical and only one 80 series was lowered over it with a winch from behind while I was there. Most of the bypass routes into the creek were impassable so it was still a fairly steep one along side the vertical drop but no problems with careful wheel placement. Water levels were not too high at this time and still plenty of crossings without any issue.



Fruitbat Falls were a welcome place for an afternoon swim and to relax in the fresh water where even though there was plenty of people and it was safe to swim, you cant help think about the what if?? what if a croc managed to get there?? We all survived.

I bypassed Elliot Twin Falls to set up camp a couple km's past the turn off as I didn't have a camping permit for that area and planned to go back in the morning. I met Michael & Michelle from Kewarra Beach near Cairns in a Troop Carrier at the camp spot and as they were on their own agreed to travel in

a small two vehicle group for safety.

Early start to travel back to Elliot Twin Falls and I was there just after sunrise so managed to get the best aerial footage of the trip flying the drone along the falls with no one else there. Footage to be shown at the ST4WDC monthly meeting. Back to pick up Michael and Michelle and more great 4 wheel driving with plenty of river crossings.

Logan's Creek was our first really deep crossing and was about bonnet height on my Patrol with the 3 inch lift. No problems getting across but definitely got the adrenalin going. Nolan's Brook had an audience of people in folding chairs just sitting in the creek!

This was the one we had heard had claimed a few vehicles earlier in the season. I made it through fine, then Michael in the Troopy bogged down a bit in the middle but made it. A late model Pajero just made it after Michael event though the back was floating, steady momentum got him through. The next 6 vehicles all got bogged in the middle starting with a Hilux, 80 Series, Prado, 200 Series, 100 Series, 79 Series. Even though the river bed was soft wet sand and advice was given on reducing tyre pressures, all 6 of the vehicles were running near road pressures!! I guess that they all need some driver training or they might like a cool wet seat. A couple of tricky sections heading out of the Nolan's brook area needed lockers, then a little celebration after completing the Old Tele Track and now to the Jardine Ferry.

The sidewall repair done in Boorowa after 7000km finally started leaking and needed a wheel change as the belts strands in the belt were parting so it was done. A short run to Bamaga then to Seisia to camp right beside the beach. Next morning a 45min drive to the Tip of Cape York!! after a walk over the headland we had made it... Yee Ha!!

Day trip to Friday Island Pearl farm, Thursday Island where we briefly saw some of the main attractions including The WW2 Base, Japanese Pearl Diving history and were made to feel most welcome by some of the locals. The Top Pub in Australia for lunch was great spot. Horn Island was visited also on the day trip. Three 4x4's in line joined by heavy rope over the tow balls was used by the operators to get the 5 tonne boat and trailer out of the water and up the beach at the end of the day. Hopefully the owner will take my advice and arrange correct tow points on the vehicles. Just because it has worked each week 4 or 5 times

The Simpson, Cape York & Fraser Island 13,000km June & July 2015

Trip Report



doesn't mean that a tow ball missile isn't going to happen one day.

Seisia to Weipa with a nice 1.7kg Blue Salmon caught on the Pier after all others had left for the evening. Persistence did pay off this time. Lockhart River I thought was worth heading to and Frenchmans Track was great. Most of the track was fine but would be a different story if it was wet as with most of the tracks in the Cape. Pascoe river is definitely a challenge and it had some deep holes which are interesting when negotiating bonnet deep water however it has a rocky bottom and traction was good. Lockhart River wasn't really worth visiting as a small community so I kept on driving eventually arriving at Archer River Road House where I smoked the Salmon in my Cobb Cooker.

Cooktown was next on the list and an excellent fishing day trip with 4 Mangrove Jacks and a Mud Crab to end my count for the day. Kewarra Beach just North of Cairns to spend a couple of days with my new friends Michelle and Michael who travelled back in their Troopy a day earlier from Seisia. My Chilli Mud Crab was entree for dinner. A real Bed, Shower and civilisation was most welcome not to mention the great hospitality.

Week 7 and 8 Cairns to Noosaville via Fraser Island then to Canberra.

After sorting out a new tyre in Cairns and parting with \$500 for a Mickey Thompson ATZ P3 it was time to head to Townsville. The Townsville 400 V8's were on so after I jagged some camping accommodation about 3km from the track I sorted tickets for the Sunday and had a great day. I even bumped into Peter Reynolds there so knew I was on my way home! Next to Gympie to catch up with a friend for the night



then to Fraser Island the next morning. I cruised up the beach and made it all the way to Ngkala Rocks and up onto the rocky outcrop but decided that as the tide was incoming I would spend the night just back a few hundred meters in the dunes. Next morning I travelled to Sandy Cape and walked to the Lighthouse helping a couple stuck on the Waddi Point Bypass track. 20psi dropped to 10psi and they just drove straight out... amazing!! Camp at Sandy Cape where a relatively friendly dingo was hanging around the camp.

Last day on Fraser started with a quick fish with no luck, a couple of stops at Champagne Pools and a couple of the small villages on the way south then about 3km South of Eurong as I was heading along the beach to set up camp at about 70kph, there was a loud thud and the right rear wheel had completely come off and passed the drivers side window!! I said something and tried to head the vehicle up the beach away from the incoming tide as it came to a stop. I said something else as I opened my door and walked to retrieve my wheel which luckily didn't hit anything or anyone and was in about a metre of water. Back at the vehicle I see that all the studs have been sheared off. This wasn't good as I was about an hour before the tide would reach the vehicle and at least 20 metres from the high tide mark. Luckily Blair who was an off duty ranger saw most of what happened and was there to assist. With the rear hub buried in the sand like an anchor I decided that winching was the best and most powerful way to recover the vehicle using Blair's vehicle as an anchor. I plugged in the winch control and nothing!! I said something and then sprayed WD40 into the control box thinking that moisture may have effected one of the solenoids but still nothing. Plan B, I connected the Snatch strap and directed Blair to select 2nd low and go as hard as he could as I tried to drive with 3 wheels and lockers engaged to see if he could get me past the high tide mark. I lent him my handheld UHF as he didn't have a radio. We managed to get a fair way up the beach about 2 car lengths short of passing the high tide mark. At least we had some breathing space now so next check was the battery connection for the winch and it had loosened with all the rough roads so once tightened the winch worked fine and using Blair's vehicle as an anchor I was able to get a few metres past the high tide mark. Phew!! Now what??

The Simpson, Cape York & Fraser Island 13,000km June & July 2015



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The tow business was on the other side of the island so Steve who has the Taxi in Eurong was called and we met him to go through a tub of old wheel studs and try to find 6. Steve dropped me back at the vehicle and as I was walking to the vehicle a dingo decided to have a go at me. I have it on video and although he didn't land a bite he was close. A local came past in their vehicle and helped chase the dingo away. I wasn't in a very good mood at this stage. Eventually back at my vehicle and almost dark I used the Hi Lift jack to raise the side which was a struggle as it was still loaded but carefully it worked ok. After removing the broken studs it was clear that the old ones were too small so I decided to take 3 from the front but soon changed my mind as I didn't want to take the hub apart on the sand so it went back together. The other rear was my second option but with all the weight of a vehicle on that side it wasn't going to be easy. As soon as the tyre was off the sand the vehicle started to tip that way so at 11pm I decided that it was time to call it for the night and supported the back with the hydraulic jack as best as I could to stabilise it then climbed in to try and sleep.

The next morning I was up early and continued to clear space around the wheel then a police vehicle stopped and he gave me a lift to Eurong where I matched the removed studs with 6 rusty old ones. Back at the vehicle I cleaned up and installed the studs which worked fine. Either overloading at some time, over tightening or not tightening completely possibly in Cairns where I had all wheels balanced could be the cause of the failure. I have since replaced all rear wheel studs with new ones and carry spares. Happy to be on the ferry the next morning and to Noosaville to catch up with some friends for a week before continuing my trip South and back home to Canberra.

13,000km were travelled during almost 8 weeks of travel and it certainly was an adventure I will not forget. Plenty of great people were met and some great places were visited. Thanks to Glen and Jake for arranging the Simpson trip and including me in the group and thanks to Jake for some excellent night photography tips which has helped get some great photos. Australia is a huge place and it sure takes some time to get around but its definitely worth the effort. I look forward to my next adventure.

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Balgo Road and Beyond



Trip Report

Participants

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| David & Helen Sutton | 79 Series Land Cruiser with Wedgetail Camper (Trip Leaders) |
| Peter Butterfield | 79 Series Land Cruiser |
| Thommo & Julie Buttriss | 76 Series Land Cruiser with Kimberley camper |
| Jim & Jane Raleigh | 100 Series Land Cruiser with Ultimate camper |
| Sheri & Tim Saxon, Bailey & Liam | 100 Series Land Cruiser with Conqueror camper |
| Bill Szydilk & Gabrielle Burns | 80 Series Land Cruiser with Ultimate camper |
| Danny & Beth Williams | Nissan Patrol GU3.0 with TVan camper |

Everyone gathered at Curtin Springs on Friday August 14th from a variety of directions and spent Saturday 15th completing final vehicle checks – how many men can you have with their heads looking under the bonnet at one time. Meanwhile the washing was done before a pleasant pre-departure dinner at the road-house.

An early start on Sunday 16th to have our last coffee, supermarket visit and top up of fuel at Yulara before heading off past Kata-Tjuta (Olgas) to points west stopping only for short breaks and to take pictures of the Len Beadell plaque at the Sandy Blight Junction Road (SBJR) turnoff. Crossing into WA the road to Warakurna, where we stopped for the night, was a delight.



The following morning we had organised a tour of the Giles Met Station but most disappointingly despite this having been confirmed only 3 weeks previously, no guide appeared. We did witness the launch of the daily weather balloon

at 0845 before backtracking to the east to turn up the Sandy Blight Junction Road. About 25kms up the Sandy Blight is Bungabiddy Rockhole a lovely distance off the road in the Walter James Range where there was a beautiful pool of water and lovely camping spots but too early for our needs.



Past the southern turnoff to Tjukurla to the junction at the northern turnoff we found a working hand pump delivering very good drinkable water. Following a stop at the Len Beadell 100 mile marker we continued on to find the next Len Beadell landmark, the Blaze tree to be lying on two concrete blocks having decayed badly and no longer standing.

Continuing on to the Sir Frederick Range turnoff we unfortunately found it was unsuitable for camping due to the dense spinifex. For the more adventurous, trailers (where applicable) were unhitched and an extension track created by Len Beadell was followed to the top of

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the Sir Frederick Range. The track was very steep with large boulders and deep wheel tracks but the view from the top was outstanding and worth the effort. Continuing north on the SBJR we soon found an excellent camp site among Desert Oaks – our first bush camp. The evening's entertainment was provided by listening to the Len Beadell Shepparton talk.

Next day, we met our first oncoming vehicle on the SBJR, the Policeman from Kintore doing his rounds down to Warakurna back into Alice Springs and home via the Gary Junction Road. Bailey did his rounds at morning tea to check what everyone was enjoying. Maggie's bore was found to also have a working hand pump but the quality of water was very poor – heavily salted. It did serve to ease the pain for poor Liam who had fallen into a spinifex bush and acquired a painful number of very sharp prickles.



Across the border back into the Northern Territory we found the Len Beadell 200 mile marker and shortly after, our ever alert trip leader noticed a track off to the right straight over a sand dune which shortened our travels by about 5kms compared to the main track which continued around the end of the dune and back again. Next we encountered the Tropic Of Capricorn marker which initiated a debate as to whether it was in the correct location which it turns out on subsequent investigation was a moot point anyway. According to Wikipedia, on 21 October 2015 it was/will be at latitude 23° 26'14.1" South (or 23.43724°) but it is actually moving North at the rate of around 15 metres per year!!

Arriving at the community of Kintore, fuel was topped up and the delights of the local store, pies and ice cream, were enjoyed. Turning on to the Gary Junction Road was a delight, wide and smooth as we continued west finding a lovely campsite on graded ground at an aboriginal outstation with a cinder brick house and a bore as well as the shell of a Telstra phone booth. The site was well off the road and we would never have known of it except for advice received in Kintore.

Next day (19th) we saw our first camels and dingo as we continued west passing the site where Len Beadell's supply truck was burned out although it has since been relocated to Kiwirrkurra just up the road. Being our last chance of fuel for some time we topped up at Kiwirrkurra (more pies and ice cream) before enjoying morning tea around the remains of the supply truck.

We had no real idea what to expect as we headed off to the east towards Lake Mackay and into the Great Sandy Desert. The track we were following is not shown on any generally available maps, and we had drawn a large portion of the map from Google Earth imagery. As we headed out from Kiwirrkurra, it was encouraging to see that it was more used than we had anticipated and shortly afterwards we met an oncoming convoy from the Idlers 4WD Club in Melbourne who were able to reassure us on the state of the track.

Shortly after lunch we came across a lovely lake, not very salty, populated with lots of ducks and a few brolgas. We continued on to find a camp site on the shores of Lake Mackay where the loose sand presented a challenge to some of our party – even a recovery vehicle got stuck and had to be recovered – it's all about tyre pressures! Lake Mackay, the fourth largest lake in Australia and the largest in WA extends across the border into the NT, has a total area of around 3,700sqkm and is over 100km in length. The surface where we were camped was quite firm salt and everyone enjoyed playing cricket and throwing frisbees and boomerangs on the flat surface, one of the absolute joys of having a young family with us.

Departure was delayed briefly next morning (20 August) while Bill, with the usual generous help, replaced a missing bush on a rear shock absorber. A short distance down the track we found where a large hole had

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been dug in the lake, presumably by a mining company looking for some minerals. We did hear that they were actually mining Sulphate of Potash way out in the middle of the lake somewhere but it must have been over the horizon.

The spinifex was growing quite high necessitating regular checks under the vehicles, and we encountered the usual 'spare parts shops' – abandoned vehicles some of which still contained useable parts. On reaching Dwarf Well Tank, we stopped early to take advantage of the abundant supply of good quality warm water and the bath under the hand pump. Bailey and Liam helped with the washing by stomping on clothes in the bath and the Sutton wringer was again put to good use. Sheri and Tim rigged up their external pump to the water supply and everyone enjoyed an excellent hot shower – thanks Sheri and Tim. On our departure next day we left the bath containing water with a large stick protruding to allow access by the many Zebra Finches living in the vicinity.



One of our objectives had been to try to locate Dwarf Well discovered by David Carnegie in May 1897. Although the location is a little vague we did have reliable information which should have allowed us to find it about 5km to the east of the track. There being no visible tracks off in that direction, Jim and David separately headed off across country using GPS and the rest of the group followed only to be brought to a halt after only 1 km when Tim suffered two simultaneous punctures. After they had been repaired, on returning to his vehicle Jim also found a flat tyre. With the effort to repair all three punctures we decided to abandon our excursion and return to the main track and were reunited with David and Bailey.

We stopped briefly at the deserted Bibarrd outstation where the apparently plastic windows had clearly been so hot in a strong wind at some time that they had blown into a large dome shape.

Another of our original objectives had been to follow a clearly marked (on Hema Maps) shot line to the east of the apparently nonexistent Mangkala. The plan had been to follow this line about 20kms towards Warri Peak at the southern end of the Stansmore Range then proceed across open sand to the east of the ranges up to picturesque Wilson Glen. We had noticed over several days that shot lines marked on the map were in most cases impossible to identify as they had become completely overgrown. The one we planned to follow turned out to be no exception and noting the distance we would have needed to go, this objective was also abandoned as being unsuitable for vehicles towing trailers.

Passing even more 'spare parts shops' we found ourselves at the abandoned Lamanbundah outstation. The ever present hand pump took some priming but eventually produced slightly salty water albeit rather brown in colour. It would happily satisfy a desperate traveller. The outstation consisted on 4 houses, 2 shower buildings, 2 toilets, a cool room and large tank, very similar to the Bibarrd outstation seen the day before. Dates stamped into concrete foundations indicated that it was all built in 1991/92 but it clearly had not been used for long.

As we continued north, we found ourselves squeezing through an increasingly dense avenue of shrubbery - some serious buffing of vehicles will be required on return home. Bill suffered the loss of a mirror during this section which was a mixture of old shot lines and some more recent tracks. Eventually, after passing

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even more spare parts shops, we arrived at the deserted settlement of Yagga Yagga on a now very warm day – 32 deg at 5:30PM. Before setting up camp we did a brief tour of the abandoned town which seemed to be in a surprisingly good state of repair and looked as if the residents had just walked out.



We all set up for a two night camp and had a pleasant happy hour at PB's bar & grill. Gabrielle and Bill were reading a book "Death in the Sand" (This was about the young jackeroos that were found dead in the Great Sandy Desert.) There is a chapter in the book discussing the start-up and demise of Yagga Yagga and travel from Balgo to Yagga Yagga. – "the track changes from hard set sand or gravel to ruts, rocky outcrops and soft sand. Branches from tree-like bushes slap the windows on both sides. It is a harsh country out here."

We were surprised to hear the approach of a truck which turned out to be carrying a

load of 200litre drums of A1 Jet fuel which the driver proceeded to unload directly adjacent to our camp. He loaded up the many empties that were littering the area, having been blown around by the wind, and went on his way with the advice that he would be returning with another load next day. It seems the place was to be invaded by helicopters doing mineral surveys the day after we were to leave and the fuel supplies were being brought in from Balgo in readiness.

At that stage we had been unable to find any water supply which we knew had to be nearby as there were many birds in the area. The truck driver directed us to a solar pump and tank a short distance down a track we had not explored.

Next day we tracked down the water supply and undertook a more detailed reconnaissance of the town, which despite some vandalism was in surprisingly good shape. A faded but excellent children's playground remained, probably around 15 or more houses, a large community store, health centre, school, swimming pool, very large water tank on a high stand, a power station (equipment removed) which had obviously had a solar farm attached, and the power distribution lines are all still in place. We were camped in the close vicinity of the football ground and enjoyed the availability of three nice concrete floored shelters which were made good use of as a 'men's shed' to undertake repairs, mainly tyres.

As the water was a short distance from the camp and surrounded by vegetation, we took turns to have an open shower in the lovely warm water so we were all fresh and clean for our roast dinner that evening after the truck had delivered his second load of drums.

Next morning (24th) after topping up water supplies from the Yagga Yagga bore we continued on towards Balgo with the close trees still slapping the sides of the vehicles. The track was clearly more used the closer we got to Balgo and it varied from sand to corrugated ironstone. About 15km south of Balgo we made a photo stop at a magnificent outlook over rocky escarpments – we had not even realised we were on high ground at that point. Telstra coverage became available for the first time in over a week so phones were busy and emails being checked.

We rolled into Balgo and began the slow process of filling up from the single fuel pump although it was well organised in that it was totally unattended – just slip in the Credit Card. The usual warm snacks and

Balgo Road and Beyond

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ice creams were obtained at the very well equipped shop and we eventually headed out of town to the refrain of David singing "Put another log on the fire" This song had been mentioned a few days earlier and no one could remember the words, but David had made use of the phone coverage to Google it!

We were heading west again towards the tiny community of Mulan and on to the shores of Lake Gregory, known by the local community as Paruka. In August 2001 the High Court of Australia formally recognised that the Traditional Owners of this area held native title over the land. The handover ceremony was conducted on the shores of Paruka symbolising the significance of this place to local Aboriginal people. Traditional owners believe the system was formed when a star fell from the sky into the lake and then transformed itself into a man becoming the very first Traditional Owner of this place.

Although there was an extensive campground at the location, it was too early in the day to stop so we continued around the southern shores of Lake Gregory to join the Canning Stock Route and set up camp at Well 51 (Werriaddo Well). There was some debate about the time, whether it is Western, WA Central, Central or Northern Territory but it was agreed it mattered little and we would be back in the Northern Territory within 48 hours anyway. Dinner was enjoyed as the brilliant red, orange and yellow sunset appeared behind the windmill.

Next day (25th) was to be the penultimate day with the full group and we decided to find a very nice campsite for a slightly extended stay. Morning teas at Bloodwood bore resulted in agreement to continue on to Stretch Lagoon where we camped by the lovely waterhole – a very relaxing and peaceful camp, till the crows arrived near sunset.

Our final day as a full group necessitated the usual group photo before departing north to Billiluna where Tim was the only one requiring petrol. Everyone bid their fond farewells to Bill and Gabrielle and Beth and Danny. Both of them were turning left on the Tanami towards Wolfe Creek Crater while the rest of us turned right headed for Alice Springs on a very smooth Tanami Road.

While it was disappointing that we had been unable look for Dwarf Well and Wilsons Glen, nevertheless it was a very enjoyable trip through a part of our country that is very little travelled except by the local communities. The Sandy Blight Junction Road has the well deserved reputation of being the most picturesque of the Len Beadell roads. Although we had our reservations as to what to expect on the Balgo road it turned out to be a reasonably well used and distinctive track with few corrugations, probably because it is little known. For those who enjoy 'out of the way' places, it is a recommended addition to your bucket list.

An enormous amount of time and effort goes into any excursion into such unpredictable unknown terrain, so as always, our thanks to David and Helen for leading such an enjoyable trip.

Do you have a destination you would like to see in this calendar?

Do you want to go where you want to go?

Do you want to be up the front of the convoy out of all the dust?

***If you answered yes to any of these questions then perhaps you should become a Trip Leader!
Any Club Member can be a Trip Leader.***

If this sounds like you then get in touch with Michael Patrick, our Trips and Events Coordinator, and he will be able to assist you in planning your first trip. It could be the big trip out in the desert, the one dayer to McIntyres Hut or anything in between.

There are many experienced Trip Leaders in the club that are willing to offer their knowledge and advise for new Trip Leaders.

You can find Michael Patrick's contact details in the front of this magazine.

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, vehicle 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 easy 4WD trip with high range driving, minimal low range. Winching and/or towing unlikely. Moderate level of 4WD skills needed. Completion of the Basic Driver Education Course is recommended. (Trip leader's discretion in regards to driver's competency and vehicle setup).
- ***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 Training Course. Sand and Water Crossing Course is recommended. (Trip leader's discretion in regards to driver's competency and vehicle setup).
- ***GRADE 4:** a challenging 4WD trip with the expectation that track building, winching and recovery are likely. High level of 4WD skills required. Mandatory: Basic Driver Education Course; Winching and Recovery Course; Sand and Water Crossing course and a minimum of three Grade 3 club trips completed. Advanced Driver Education Course is recommended. (Trip leader's discretion in regards to driver's competency and vehicle setup).
- ***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. A high level of 4WD skills needed including completion of the Advanced Driver Education Course. (Trip leader's discretion in regards to driver's competency and vehicle setup).

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 2 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



13-15 Nov **"Safe One" Basic Driver Training at Talooge Park**

Trip Leader Peter Butterfield
Phone 0417480856
Category Training
Start 19:00
Meeting Point: Bredbo Pub Friday Evening

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 Butterfield or Peter Reynolds at the club meetings. Bookings must be done via the Web site.

14 Nov **Clear Range West of Bredbo Recce**

Trip Leader Glen Watts
Phone 0457934942
Category Grade 3
Start 09:00
Meeting Point: Williamsdale

Description This trip is a Recce so if you enjoy a little bit of adventure, not knowing where you're going and with no set Itinerary this could be for you. I have been lucky enough to be granted permission to drive the tracks West of Bredbo from the local property owners. Leaving Williamsdale at 9.00am will be drive to Bredbo where we will have morning tea, walk the Murrumbidgee River and prepare the vehicles for the river crossing. Once across we will work our way up to the boundary of Clear range, seek out Poveys Hut and hopefully the old Cobb and Co Hut (Packsaddle Station) returning to the Bredbo Pub for dinner and then back to Canberra. Due to being a recce and driving unknown tracks this trip will be for experience drivers, track clearing and building is very likely. The River and Sand course is mandatory for all drivers due to the length and depth of the Murrumbidgee River. (Blinds must be carried by all vehicles). If there is rain in the week prior or on the day, this trip will be cancelled due to the Murrumbidgee River rising rapidly.

14-15 Nov **Talooge Musters**

Trip Leader Peter Reynolds
Phone 0428623458
Category Talooge Muster
Meeting Point: Make your own way or contact Peter Reynolds to make arrangements

Description These weekends are organized to not only fulfill our obligation as property owners, but to encourage and nurture the camaraderie between members. Tasks are usually complete by 3.30 on Saturday to allow members to take in the surrounds, drive tracks, explore or just interact with others. Sunday is usually relaxed, no pressure. Members can relax, do their own thing, or if they wish, assist in any job completion or undertake small tasks that always need attending to. Lunch usually signals "It's time to leave!" We intend to go out on Friday, so will not be organising an official "convoy". Come in your own time from Friday onwards, or if you need to make special arrangements please contact us.

It is not intended to be an "All Work, No Play" weekend. The fact that these working bees are each month keeps the numbers of tasks to a minimum, unless there is a project that needs doing. Come for the weekend, a day, half a day. The traditional Happy Hour and camaraderie goes without saying.

20-22 Nov **Lithgow and Capertee**

Trip Leader Steve Smith
Phone 0412034530

Trips and Events



Category Grade 4
Start 15:00
Meeting Point: McDonalds EPICcorner of Federal Highway and Stirling Avenue Mitchell ACT
Description This trip is to Lithgow area, staying at the local pub and driving some of the amazing tracks in this area. Meet at McDonalds EPIC on the corner of Federal Highway and Stirling Avenue Mitchell at approx. 3:00pm, depart Canberra at approx. 3:30pm on Friday, arrive at Capertee Royal Hotel (188km Northwest of Sydney, 41km North of Lithgow) at around 8:00pm. *Drive the 4WD tracks of the area on Saturday, you will need morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea supplies with you. *Return to Capertee Royal Hotel for dinner and accommodation Saturday night - Saturday night at the hotel is 'Foodies Night'. *Pack up on Sunday morning as we will not be returning to Capertee then more 4WDing of the local area on Sunday, you will need morning tea and lunch supplies, depart Lithgow area approx. 1:00pm for arrival back in Canberra at approx. 5pm. Capertee Royal Hotel accommodation starts at \$55 per night for a single room to \$110 per night for a family room. However, just like camping, there are shared bathroom facilities. More details are available here: www.caperteeroyalhotel.com.au Once you receive trip approval, please go ahead and book your accommodation. The specific tracks we use will be dependent on weather and track conditions at the time but hopefully we will be doing Mt Airlie and the Spanish Steps. As we are staying indoors, the trip is likely to go ahead even in wet conditions but the track selection will change as appropriate. However, we are likely to encounter difficult tracks at Grade 4 standard so high clearance 4WD is required along with tyres in good condition and with reasonable tread depth (all terrain or better). There are some quite rocky areas so some form of sill protection would be advantageous.

21 Nov **Towards Batemans Bay**

Trip Leader Alex Szabo
Phone 0417579066
Category Grade 2
Meeting Point: McDonalds carpark Queanbeyan NSW. Please be fed, watered and ready to brief at 8:20 for an 8:30 departure. Thank you.
Description This is an interesting day trip through a variety of scenery and conditions. Expect ferns and rain forest in Monga NP on the way towards the Bay, lunch at Eurobodalla Botanic Gardens (BYO lunch or buy at the cafe), then we wind our way via Quart Pot, No Name and Misty Mountain Fire Trails back onto the Kings Hwy to return home. Could be a longish day, but heck, there's daylight saving to compensate!

22 Nov **"Safe One" Basic Driver Training Course Follow-up Day**

Trip Leader Peter Butterfield
Phone 0417480856
Category Training
Start You must contact Peter Reynolds for the meeting point and time
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.

29-30 Nov **ST4WDC Christmas's party**

Trip Leader Brenden & Kiera Taylor
Phone 0434 083 351
Category Social Event
Start 09:30
Meeting Point: Talooge. Convoys will be available by request to Kiera Taylor

Trips and Events



Description

This is the Southern Tablelands Four Wheel Drive Club's annual Christmas Party held at our club property, Talooge. There will be fun and games for the whole family! Festivities will start around 1ish on Saturday. There will be prizes for best decorated hat, table and car. There will also be a lucky door prize and the adult gift grab. Santa will be making a special appearance for the kiddies so please make sure you make a labeled parcel available for him if you get what I mean... There will be a pot luck dinner and the club will be providing desert for everybody. Sunday will be left to you with a relaxing day to do as you please. Convoys will be made available, leaving from Bredbo, by request to Kiera Taylor. Keep an eye out for the ad in Southern Trails for more information.

11-13 Dec

High Country Weekender

Trip Leader

Greg Taylor

Phone

0401 710 071

Category

Grade 3

Start

17:00

Meeting Point:

Willamsdale

Requirements

Requirements: Basic driver and water crossing training, basic recovery gear including max trax if you have them, UHF radio, good tyres, well maintained and reliable vehicle which should have good ground clearance, camping gear including gas stove for cooking, food and water, happy hour supplies. Bow saw/axe for track clearing and a blind/tarp for water crossings. You should be prepared for all weather conditions including snow. Tyre chains are something you can consider carrying for steep mountain fire trails – bring them if you have them.

Description

Travel to Jindabyne and top up with fuel. We will camp at the Jindy CP (\$27 per couple unpowered) and have dinner at the pub. Saturday 8:30 am on to Thredbo and then Tom Groggin for a dip in the Murray River (water crossing) and head down Davies Plain Track to McCarthy's Track, past the Poplars and onto Limestone Road - visiting Davies Plain and Charlies Creek Huts. We will camp at Limestone Creek. Sunday 8:30am we will wander past the Cobberas to McFarlane Flat and onto the Ingeegoodbee Track. A climb up to Mt Menaak and then down to Barry Way and the magnificent Snowy River. On past Willis and the many camp spots on the Snowy to perhaps visit Wallace Craigie lookout. Jindabyne, Cooma then home. This is the plan but we may deviate to visit or camp at other locations depending on our progress. Many of the areas we are visiting have toilet facilities – but remember your shovel, toilet paper, good humour and camaraderie! To book on this trip please ring Greg 0401710071 or email the trip leader.

12-13 Dec

Talooge Musters

Trip Leader

Peter Reynolds

Phone

0428623458

Category

Talooge Muster

Meeting Point:

Make your own way or contact Peter Reynolds to make arrangements.

Description

These weekends are organized to not only fulfill our obligation as property owners, but to encourage and nurture the camaraderie between members. Tasks are usually complete by 3.30 on Saturday to allow members to take in the surrounds, drive tracks, explore or just interact with others. Sunday is usually relaxed, no pressure. Members can relax, do their own thing, or if they wish, assist in any job completion or undertake small tasks that always need attending to. Lunch usually signals "It's time to leave!" We intend to go out on Friday, so will not be organising an official "convoy". Come in your own time from Friday onwards, or if you need to make special arrangements please contact us.

It is not intended to be an "All Work, No Play" weekend. The fact that these working bees are each month keeps the numbers of tasks to a minimum, unless

Trips and Events



there is a project that needs doing. Come for the weekend, a day, half a day. The traditional Happy Hour and camaraderie goes without saying.

24 January 2016 **Backyard Explorer**

Trip Leader Alex Szabo

Phone 0417579066

Category Grade 2

Meeting Point: Visitor car park at Mt Stromlo Observatory Stromlo ACT. Come along a bit earlier and join us for a look around this fascinating place. Note that the cafe is not open.

Description We're not going far out of Canberra, but don't bring the town car because low range will be required! The emphasis is on scenery, some of which you may not have seen from the ground before. Just behind Cotter is some wonderful tracks that provide spectacular views back towards Canberra, Cotter Dam and beyond. We'll spend the morning exploring this area. The afternoon is TBD at the moment, but views and streams figure heavily in my thinking.

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Trip Name</u> | <u>Trip Leader</u> |
|---------------------------|--|--------------------|
| 30th - 31st January 2016 | 4Wheel Drive Spectacular Outdoor Recreation Show | Marj Jones |
| 6th - 7th February 2016 | Blue Waterholes | Alex Szabo |
| 12th - 14th February 2016 | Iced Tea at Bendethera caves | Michael Patrick |
| 12th - 20th March 2016 | Huts of the Victorian High Country 2016 | Michael Patrick |
| 9th - 10th April 2016 | Cowarra Gold Mine | Michael Patrick |
| 14th - 15th May 2016 | Hang out at Talooge | Michael Patrick |

Got an awesome photo of your rig in action on a trip?

Want to see it in this magazine?

Email the full size photo to publications@st4wdc.com.au

Who knows your photo may even end up on the front cover...

CLASSIFIEDS

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.



Engel fridge/freezer and a custom alloy roofrack for sale. **FRIDGE:** Little used 45L 12-240V Engel fridge/freezer with digital thermometer. A legend in reliability. Very efficient, can freeze to -20 degrees C in a few hours. Used for a few trips only over last 12 years, excellent condition. Both 12V and 240V cords provided. New Engel 45L fridge has an RRP of \$1375, transit bag \$210. Sell as a bundle for \$890. **ROOFRACK:** Fits guttered roof of large 4WD such as Nissan Patrol. Four legs each side for better weight distribution. Long barrel nuts for ease of installation. Has 100 mm PVC tube on one side for storing long light items, such as tent posts. Has canvas awning at back to keep you dry while you make a cuppa. You can secure two gas bottles to the fitted holders at front. Was \$900 new without accessories. Sell for \$495. Free Bushranger roofbag for club members. Pat 0418 219 478.

Free to a good home. MQ Patrol Diesel, 1 top and 1 bottom radiator hoses, never been used. 1989-1993 Nissan Pintara Gregory's manual (some dirty paw prints on some pages).

Call or text on 0419 784 983.

Greg Hellessey

0419 784 983 | ghelless@bigpond.net.au

Set of 4 Pedders foam cell heavy duty shock absorbers to suit 2004 Toyota Hilux 4WD IFS. Excellent condition, low km's and no oil leaks! \$80 the lot.

See Mark at Battery World Phillip or ring - 0422 101 840

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.

Club Clothing News



The Club now has Ladies' and Men's long sleeved Chambray Shirts, with the Club Logo, for sale.

Cost: \$45.00

A great lightweight, sun-protection item!

There is a range of sizes available to try on. (General Meeting are a good venue).

Payment

To make things easier, payment for clothing can be done straight in to the Club Account.

But don't forget to put in the reference section:

Your name and the word CLOTHING!

“SAFE ONE” BASIC 4WD VEHICLE OPERATION COURSE

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

Purpose:

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

Meeting Time/Place:

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

**The Club's Education Coordinator is Peter Butterfield,
Mobile: 0417 480 856.**

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

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

WHAT TO BRING

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

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

PLEASE DO NOT BRING PETS OR FIREARMS.



SOUTHERN TABLELANDS FOUR WHEEL DRIVE CLUB Inc

GPO Box 2122, Canberra ACT 2601

MEMBERSHIP

Categories of Membership

Full details of the categories of membership of the Southern Tablelands Four Wheel Drive Club Inc. (ST4WDC) can be found in the Constitution of the club. The following is a summary of the key differences:

'Owner Member'

Owner membership of the Club may be open to any person interested in the furtherance of the objects of the Club, which is an owner or part owner (at least 10%) of a four wheel drive vehicle registered in Australia. The partner of an owner - member has all the privileges of an owner - member.

'Associate Member'

Any person interested in the furtherance of the objects of the Club may be eligible for associate membership and entitled to vote at any general meeting but shall not be entitled to a vote at the annual general meeting or at any special general meeting. An associate member is not able to be a committee member of the club.

'Competition Member'

Any person interested in the furtherance of the objects of the Club but wishing to join the club for the principal purpose of participating in 4WD competition events may join as a "Competition Member". A competition member is not entitled to a vote at the annual general meeting or at any special general meeting, and is not able to be a committee member.

'Family Member'

Family membership is extended to those persons who are the spouse or partner or a dependent under the age of 21 years of an Owner Member and are domiciled under the

same roof. Dependent Family members who have already completed the Basic Driver Training course are not required to pay the Joining fee if they become Owner Members before their 22nd birthday.

'Life Member'

Life membership of the Club may be extended to any owner member who has been a member of the Club continuously for at least 10 years and has in the opinion of the Club Committee, contributed significantly to the endeavours of the club. Life members pay no annual membership fee.

Approval of Membership

Applications for membership of the ST4WDC are subject to approval by the club committee. The Club reserves the right to refuse a person membership. Reasons may be given at a meeting of the committee and the applicant.

Membership Entitlements

Membership of the ST4WDC entitles Owner Members (including partners), and licensed Family Members to attend the Club's training courses and to make use of the Clubs 700ha property Talooge Park. Participation as a driver on other grade 1 trips require successful completion of the Basic Driver Training course, or recognised equivalent prior learning/qualification approved by the Club's Education Coordinator. Grades 4 and 5 trips also require advanced training. Details of Trip Grading can be found in **Southern Trails**, the club magazine issued monthly (except January) to all Owner Members, Associate Members and Life Members.

Returning Members

Lapsed Owner Members can re-join just by paying the annual fee. You are entitled to a pro-rata reduction in fees for the following year if paid at the same time as renewing.

| Payment Month | Fee to 31Dec 2015 | Fee 31 Dec 2016 |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| January | \$100 | \$200 |
| February | \$100 | \$192 |
| March | \$100 | \$184 |
| April | \$100 | \$175 |
| May | \$100 | \$167 |
| June | \$100 | \$159 |
| July | \$100 | \$150 |
| August | \$100 | \$142 |
| September | \$100 | \$134 |
| October | \$100 | \$125 |
| November | \$100 | \$117 |
| December | \$100 | \$109 |

First Renewal for New Members

For new owner members, joining from 2013, your first annual renewal fee is due by the 31st December 2013. The amount depends on the month you joined. Please refer to the table on the right.

| Joining Month | First renewal fee due December |
|---------------|--------------------------------|
| January | \$100.00 |
| February | \$92.00 |
| March | \$84.00 |
| April | \$75.00 |
| May | \$67.00 |
| June | \$59.00 |
| July | \$50.00 |
| August | \$42.00 |
| September | \$34.00 |
| October | \$25.00 |
| November | \$17.00 |
| December | \$9.00 |



SOUTHERN TABLELANDS 4WD CLUB Inc.

GPO Box 2122, Canberra ACT 2601

New Member Application

Membership type (tick one) Owner Member Associate Member Competition Member

| | | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------|--|----------|
| | Applicant | Partner (if applicable) | | |
| First name and surname | | | | |
| Address line 1 | | | | |
| Address Line 2 | | | | |
| City/Suburb | | State | | Postcode |
| Contact phone | | | | |
| SMS | | | | |
| Contact email | | | | |
| Vehicle make and model | | | | |
| Are you a returning member Yes / No | If yes, what was your last membership year? | | | |
| How did you find out about the club? | | | | |
| Payment of fees (\$.....) made by (please indicate) Bank Transfer Cheque (enclosed) Money Order (enclosed) Cash | | | | |
| Signature(s): I agree to abide by the Constitution and By-laws of the Southern Tablelands Four Wheel Drive Club, Inc. | | | | |
| Signed: | | | | |

Completed form may be scanned and emailed to membership@st4wdc.com.au.

The club membership year extends from 1 January to 31 December.

Membership fees:

| Membership category | Joining fee | Annual membership |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Owner Member | \$230 | \$100 |
| Associate Member | Nil | \$50 |
| Competition Member | Nil | \$50 |

Payment:

We prefer to receive payment by bank transfer to
 Account name: **Southern Tablelands 4WD Club Inc.**
 BSB: **112-908** Account No. **458 741 863.**
Important: Please include your name as reference.
 Alternately you can pay by check or money order payable to the account name above. You may pay in person at a monthly meeting (second Tuesday each month at Canberra Deakin Soccer Club Grose St Deakin). Applications can also be posted to ST4WDC, GPO Box 2122, Canberra ACT 2601.

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Membership Secretary use only: | | |
| Application accepted: | Fees banked: | Form & fees received: |
| Total received: \$ | Receipt No: | Membership pack sent: |
| Database updated: | Date entered: | Web access enabled: |
| Other comments: | | |

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