



Free Wheeling

Official Newsletter of the Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club

Registration No A0002184F

"Bringing Four Wheel Drivers Together"

NOVEMBER 2004



Advanced Training – September 2004



Labertouche – October 2004



The Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club Inc is an affiliated club of the Victoria Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs Inc (VAFWDC) www.vafwdc.org.au, and a member of Tread Lightly! Australia www.treadlightlyaustralia.com.au

treadlightly! Australia
Respect the Environment with your Recreation

Highway Tyres AUSTRALIA

At Highway Tyres we offer over 100,000 tyres to choose from and manufacture our very own product at our Doveton plant, selling **DIRECT TO THE PUBLIC** at the most competitive prices available!

We stock a large range of the following:

- Michelin
- Goodyear
- Marshal
- Kumho
- Falken
- B.F Goodrich
- Bridgestone
- Highway Max

just to name a few....

VIP Privilege Card available to Club Members

Head Office:
Highway Tyre Service Pty Ltd
34 Princes Highway
Doveton Vic 3177
Tel: 03 9706 0066
www.highwaytyres.com

TENTS *SLEEPING BAGS *CAMPING GEAR *HIKE BOOTS *DAY & TRAVEL PACKS *MILITARY GEAR *4x4 *CAMPING GEAR *TENTS *SWAGS *WORK CLOTHING *GAS EQUIPMENT *FISHING *HARDWARE *SWAGS *WORK CLOTHING *CAMPING & OUTDOOR GEAR *PACKS

Aussie Disposals

THE OUTDOOR ADVENTURE STORES PROUDLY AUSTRALIAN
Est 1962

Don't forget to use your 10% off V.I.P Card when making a purchase

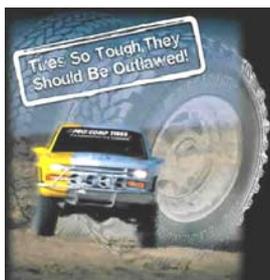
*WORK - HIKE BOOTS *TARPS (Large range of sizes)
*WORK / SAFETY GEAR *SWAGS (Single & Double)
*CAMPING EQUIPMENT *TENTS (Hike- Weekend & Family)
*FISHING GEAR *X/MILITARY (Clothing & Hardware)
*4 x 4 *HARDWARE *PORTABLE FRIDGE/FREEZERS

THE OUTDOOR ADVENTURE STORES
HEAD OFFICE:- Ph 9799 8888
www.aussiedisposals.com.au

*TENTS *SLEEPING BAGS *CAMPING GEAR *BAGS & PACKS

PRO-COMP 4x4

www.procomp.com.au



Pro Comp 4x4 is a complete 4WD outlet handling tyres, wheels, suspension, servicing, and accessories. We target the enthusiast off roader with Australia's greatest range of 4WD tyres including Pro Comp, Good Year, Simex, Dunlop, Swamper, Mongrel, and most other leading brands. We import wheels to suit all the major brands as well as Jeep TJs and CJs, Series II Discos, BMW, and many other hard to find applications, not to mention awesome wheel sizes (up to 15x14).

Club Member Discount

11 Vesper Drive
Narre Warren Vic 3805
Tel: 03 9705 6677

4WD MEGASTORES.COM.AU
YOUR ONE STOP 4WD SHOP!

4WD MEGASTORES

WHERE YOUR JOURNEY BEGINS

Quality 4WD Equipment at Competitive Prices

Privilege Card available to VFWDC Members

TJM 4WD Megastore DANDENONG
166 Princes Highway
Dandenong Vic 3175
Phone: 03 9792 1116
Fax: 03 9792 9130
www.ultimate4wd.com.au



PRESIDENT'S REPORT November 2004

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT 2004-2005

President	John Partridge	0428 331211
Vice President	Carl Surtees	9706 2692
Treasurer	Roger Baird	9704 9045
Secretary	Lesley Peters	9540 0007

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Stephen Boyle	Projects Coordinator	9754 4412
Ashley Martin	Events Coordinator	9540 0007
George Pledger	New Member Contact	9547 4021
Michael Rodger	Trip Coordinator	0412 530666
Paul Ryan	Assistant Secretary	9807 5193
Anthony Van Buiten	Web Manager	0413 784074
Ian Warburton		9754 2341

Association Delegate	Roger Baird	9704 9045
Club Historian	Phil Alder	9754 8487
Training Officers	Mark Kochan	9763 2052
	Ashley Martin	0438 600904
	John Partridge	0428 331211
Newsletter Editor	Lesley Peters	9540 0007
	lespet03@yahoo.com.au	

Registered Name: Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club Inc

Registration No: A002184F

All correspondence: The Secretary
VFWDC Inc
PO Box 778
Dandenong Vic 3175

Web Site: www.vfwdc.com

Meetings: Held first Tuesday of each month
excluding January (no meeting).
The November meeting is held on the
2nd Tuesday of the month due to
Melbourne Cup public holiday.

Location: Dandenong Library
Stuart Street, Dandenong 3175

The opinions given herein are those of the individual contributors and are not necessarily those of the Editor, the Committee of Management, or the Member body of the VFWDC Inc.

Hello and welcome once again to this month's *Free Wheeling*.

You may have noticed a transformation of the newsletter. The printing is now being done by Barry's contact at Fuji Xerox, Collette-Marie Belmuda. Thanks to Barry and Lesley for the work they have put into this, and of course thanks to Collette for the offer. I think you would all agree that the newsletter, which has always looked great, is now even better now in full colour. To enable us to continue to outsource the printing, we require all articles to be submitted no later than the 15th of each month. Thanks for your help with this.

Over the last couple of months we have held both an Advanced Training weekend and a Proficiency Training weekend, both of which were well attended. It is great to see that quite a few partners have participated in these training weekends. Next year we plan to hold another two Proficiency and one Advanced Training weekends. If you haven't attended a training course, please try to make the time and come along.

We had Robert Pepper, author of the book *GPS Vehicle Navigation in Australia*, come along to the meeting last month and it was most informative. I can obtain limited copies of this book through Adventurer Maps & Books for \$20.00. If you would like a copy, email me and I can bring them to the next meeting.

Please note that the next meeting is at All Terrain 4x4 in South Road, Moorabbin. They have all sorts of 4wd equipment, camping gear and full workshop facilities – and some specials for us on the night. Start time is 7.30pm.

I have contacted St. Johns Ambulance with regard to having somebody come to our December meeting and bring along some of their First Aid Kits. They will also be able to update your own first aid kits.

Take care and I hope to see you at **All Terrain 4x4** on the **second Tuesday of November**.

Regards

John
John Partridge

gujohnno@yahoo.com.au

MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING

5 OCTOBER 2004

The September General Meeting was held at Dandenong Library and opened at 8.05pm by John Partridge.

42 members present.

APOLOGIES:

Graeme Ralph, Judy Murray, Maxine Ryan, Aline Van Buiten, Gary & Paula Johnston, Terry Johinke, Sue & Graeme Lyne, Rosalie & David Hughes, Ray & Dawn Brown, Jessie & Glenn Smith, Liz Beaton.

VISITORS:

Welcome to Tony Waghorn, Jean-René LeBon, Darren Archer, Peter Davies, Alan Curphey, Chris Jennings, Leanne Young, Norm Barry, Les Beer.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

Minutes of September meeting as per Newsletter.
Accepted: Ian Webber. Seconded: Anthony Van Buiten.

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Nil.

SUPPER DUTIES: Thanks Steve and Ashley.

CORRESPONDENCE IN:

- Membership renewal from Andy Merlo – thanks.
- National 4X4 Show tickets.
- Four Wheel Drive Victoria:
- Annual and Financial Reports
- Email notification of President's & General Meeting to be held on Sunday 10 October 2004 at Greythorn.
- Letter from Up the Creek Discovery Festival inviting the club to attend its festival to be held at Swifts Creek on Labour Day weekend 2005.
- Email broadcast by Anthony Van Buiten regarding availability of *Free Wheeling* on club web site. Members are encouraged to download their own copy of the newsletter from the website. Those who wish to do so should notify Lesley and you will be taken off the hard copy mail circulation list.
- Various Club magazines.

CORRESPONDENCE OUT:

- Dudley House Gift Voucher to Alan and Mary Wade – winners of AGM Dinner Door Prize.
- Just Corporate Wear: Cheque in payment of current order and further order.
- Letter of recommendation to Association Driver Training Unit submitting Carl Surtees as Driver Trainer trainee.
- Letter of thanks and invoice to Highway Tyre Service re ongoing commitment to advertise in our newsletter.
- Newsletter.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Petty Cash: \$ 200.00
Cheque Account: \$4,386.98
Term Deposit: \$5,184.15

Accepted: Pat Casey. Seconded: Craig Rea.

PRESENTATION:

Robert Pepper, author of *GPS Navigation*, gave a comprehensive presentation on all things to do with the the GPS.

Also Rudi Paoletti of Adventurer Maps brought along his collection of books, maps and videos for sale.

Thanks to both Robert and Rudi for their time.

TRIP CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT:

➤ Trip Reports:

- **Rodney Fountain Memorial Car Rally:** Congratulations to James and Kathryn on another successful rally. A very good day was had by all and the winners were David and Rosalie – who have the good fortune to run next year's event.
- **Pub-to-Pub:** Barry Leitch gave a quick overview on the revealed mystery weekend and expressed thanks to the organisers, David and Rosalie.
- **Advanced Training:** Ashley provided a snapshot of the weekend.

See reports on all of the above trips in the Trip Report Section of this month's newsletter.

➤ Forthcoming Trips/Events: Michael Rodger reported on the following upcoming trips as per calendar:

- Sunday 10 October: Labertouche Day Trip
- 13/16-17 October: Proficiency Training: Ashley asked those members who were attending to contact him regarding the theory session to be held on Wednesday 13th.
- 30 October-2 November (Cup Weekend): Wonnangatta Roast. See info Forthcoming Trips.
- 13-14 November: Nav Run. John and Rudi Paoletti gave a run-down on activities for this weekend.
- 27-28 November: Annual Mayford Fishing Trip.
- Saturday 4 December: Christmas Party. Ashley confirmed that due to various restrictions at Bimbimbie, the venue will now be Gilwell Park. Peter Petrou to assist with purchase and cooking of food – thanks Pete. Numbers **must** be confirmed by November meeting. Also donations to the hamper gratefully received at that meeting.
- Saturday 11 December: Oxfam Christmas Tree Deliveries. Names required by end of the month. Thanks to those who put their hands up: Ian F, Anthony, Craig, Carissa, Steve & Tania, Paul, Mark, Roger, Ashley.
- Christmas/New Year: Collins Hut.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

Newsletter: This was the first month of having the newsletter printing outsourced and there were many favourable comments regarding the full-colour edition.

As stated at the previous meeting, to enable the continuation of this arrangement, all items/articles etc must be submitted to the editor by 15th of each month. Items of interest most welcome.

4WD Radio Show: Don't forget to tune in to 97.4 FM at 10.00am Saturdays for up-to-the-minute news and views.

Merringtons: Further problems with both Merringtons and O'Tooles. See JP's email to Association.

November Meeting: Will be held at All Terrain 4X4, 690 South Road, Moorabbin.

Driver Training Certificates: Proficiency Certificates presented to Steve and Jill Boyle, and Sujee Panagoda.

RAFFLE:

Rooftops Toolangi Map: Won by Ian Webber.

Fire Extinguisher: Won by Derek Hymas.

Rudi Paoletti's book *Victorian Prospectors Handbook*

Won by Chris Jennings (visitor).

MEETING CLOSED at 10.35pm.

NEXT MEETING: **Note** that due to the Melbourne Cup Public Holiday the meeting will be held on Tuesday, 9 November 2004. The meeting is to be held at All Terrain 4X4 Moorabbin, commencing 7.30pm sharp.

CLUB NOTES:

BY-LAWS: Members should be made aware that a new By-Law has been written which states that Club Members **only** will be eligible to undertake Training conducted by the Club.

NEW MEMBERS: A big welcome to the new members who joined up at the October meeting:

Leanne Young	Toyota Hilux (White)
Peter Davies	Toyota Hilux (Champagne)
Alan Curphey	Nissan Navara (Black)
Brian Martin	Toyota 100 Series (Silver)
Tony & Carol Waghorn	Nissan Pathfinder (White)

VFWDC MERCHANDISE

For Sale

New Club Polo Shirts	\$25.00 ea
Polar Fleece ½ Zip Jumper	\$36.00 ea
Polar Fleece Full Zip Jacket	\$48.00 ea
Sleeveless Vest	\$42.00 ea
Caps	\$10.00 ea
30 th Anniversary Travel Mugs	\$15.00 ea
Flags	\$15.00 ea
Stubbie Holders	\$ 6.00 ea

! DON'T FORGET !

**The NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING
will be held on
Tuesday, 09 November 2004
at All Terrain 4X4
690 South Road, Moorabbin
commencing 7.30 pm sharp.**

Merringtons Update

Following is a summary of the email sent to the 4WDVic by John Partridge on Tuesday 5 October 2004:

On a recent club training trip (26 Sept) we dropped by Merringtons Camping Ground to check on its condition. We were very surprised to find the gaetst locked with a bi-lock. The next working day (Mon 27/9) I rang Noel Lees (DSE) to express my concern over this popular camping ground being closed and the lack of communication. Noel apologised and stated that the ground shouldn't have been closed and that he would try to find out how it was the gate was locked... He has since opened the gate and removed the lock. We also talked about an email I recently sent about some idiots performing donuts on the grass at O'Tooles camping ground which included the offenders rego number and business ame that was on the side of the vehicle.

Today (Tues 5/10) I ran into Neol Lees to see how he went. He still doesn't know how the gate came to be locked but it is now open. After opening Merringtons, he went to inspect O'Tooles. He is distressed with the damage there. It is so bad that he will need to get a grader in to repair the damage. As a result of this, the camping ground will be closed until the end of the season closures (just before Cup w/end). I passed on to him that we understand that these areas may need to be closed from time to time as conditions dictate and that it seems that we are banging our heads up against a brick wall. Noel is fed up with the constant damage that is being caused in recent times. I floated the idea that maybe clubs could obtain the keys to these gates during times they are closed. This has a few benefits:

1. Undesirable people are kept out during periods when the area is wet.
2. They can monitor who has been in. As this would only be clubs which follow the Tread Lightly! Principles there should be no damage to worry about.
3. It would encourage other people to join a 4wd club to gain access to these camping grounds, therefore more people are educated about responsible 4wd driving and camping.
4. The grounds will be in great condition when reopened.

Noel was very keen on the idea and will talk to the head ranger, Peter West, on Thursday.

CLUB CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

OCTOBER

Melbourne Cup Weekend

Saturday 30th to Wonnangatta Roast John Partridge
Tuesday 2nd Nov

NOVEMBER

Tuesday 9th Club Meeting John Partridge
All Terrain 4X4
Moorabbin

Saturday 13th to Nav Run John Partridge
Sunday 14th

Saturday 20th to Association Regional Roger Baird
Sunday 21st Meeting, Ballarat

Friday 26th to Annual Mayford Ashley Martin
Sunday 28th Fishing Trip

Tuesday 30th Committee Meeting Steve Boyle

DECEMBER

Saturday 4th Christmas Party Ashley Martin

Tuesday 7th Club Meeting John Partridge

Saturday 11th Oxfam Christmas Ashley Martin
Tree Deliveries

Tuesday 21st Committee Meeting TBC

Christmas/
New Year Dargo – Collins Hut TBC

JANUARY

Australia Day Otways John Partridge
Weekend

Stress Management...

Just in case you've had a rough day, here is a stress management technique recommended in all the latest psychological texts.

The funny thing is that it really works:

1. Picture yourself near a stream.
2. Birds are softly chirping in the cool mountain air.
3. No-one but you knows your secret place.
4. You are in total seclusion from the hectic pace called "the world".
5. The soothing sound of a gentle waterfall fills the air with a cascade of serenity.
6. The water is crystal clear.
7. You can easily make out the face of the person you're holding underwater.
8. See! You're smiling already!! 😊 😊 😊 😊 😊 😊



VFWDC ADVERTISING DIRECTORY

BUSH BQ

Manufacturer of the Barbeque of the Outback

Don & Thelma Montague

Tel: 9808 1200 Mob: 0414 355 488

Email: info@theldon.com.au www.theldon.com.au

B&Y CARPENTRY

Home & Office Maintenance

Barry Hempston

Tel: 9700 1014 Mob: 0412 101 450

CAMSEW-SEWRENT

Domestic & Industrial Sewing Machine Repairs

Ron Camm

Mob: 0419 884 920 Fax: 9766 4598

Email: sewrent@camsew.com.au

COMPUTER TROUBLESHOOTERS

"Member of the worldwide network of computer professionals"

Anthony Van Buiten

Bus: 9755 6614 Fax: 9755 6621 Mob: 0413 784074

Email: abuiten@comptroub.com

FRANKLAND ELECTRICS PTY LTD

Electric Motor sales, service, repairs & modifications

Power Tool service & repairs

Peter & Janine Frankland

Tel: 9555 6624 Fax: 9555 6565

Email: fralecpete@aol.com

METALAIR INDUSTRIES

4x4 Camper Trailers, Accessories & Camping Equipment

David Hughes

Tel: 9798 1492 Fax: 9798 2593

Email: metalair@tenex.com.au

RAYDAW PAINTING SERVICES

Quality Workmanship at the Right Price

Ray Brown

Tel: 5967 1437 Fax: 5967 1439 Mob: 0411 799 054

SOUTHSIDE SERVICES PTY LTD

Specialising in gas repairs and maintenance

Pre-season heating specials

Craig Rea

Tel: 9589 0042 Fax: 9589 0842 Mob: 0425 772 823

TECOMA ELECTRICAL SERVICES

Industrial, Commercial & Domestic

24 hr Emergency Service

Ian Warburton

Tel: 9754 2341 Mob: 0409 797 675

Welcome to

The Corner

This month we have a couple of things that are nice to just have around...

Berry Cream

Using electric beaters, beat 2/3 of a cup of cream with 2 tablespoons of icing sugar until peaks form. Ad a cup of lightly crushed raspberries and stir through with a metal spoon. Yummmmmeee...



Or for the chocaholics...



Choc Nut Cream

Spread 1/2 cup of pecan nuts on an oven tray, place in 190° oven for approx 10 mins, or until lightly toasted; finely chop when cool. Beat one cup of cream until peaks form, then fold in chopped nuts, together with 1/3 cup grated chocolate.

Or for something a little different...



Liqueur Jam

Put 1 cup Apricot Jam, 1 tablespoon of Grand Manier, and 1 tablespoon of grated orange rind in a pan, stir over a low heat for a couple of minutes, allow to cool and... mmm mmmmm, wonderful on raisin toast!



Annie's Little Stress Reliever (*one needs one when one goes out with you know who!!!*)...

Add 2 drops of sandalwood and 1 drop of frankincense to the water of a burner and light the candle underneath. Close yhour eyes and relax... Silently count each breath, inhale 1, exhale 2, inhale 1, exhale 2, and so on up to 10. Repeat as many times as you need - usually 3 times. Sounds silly(?) but it works!

The Corner: If anyone has an interesting snippet they would like included, just email to: anniesinternet1@iprimus.com.au Don't be shy. All contributions will be gratefully received!



TRADING POST

FOR SALE

ARB SIDE RAILS and STEPS to suit 100 Series LC, live axle, never fitted, **\$680.00.**

5 x 100 SERIES FACTORY GXL STEEL RIMS to suit live axle, new, gunmetal grey powdercoated, EC, **\$400.00.**

Contact: Ashley on 0418 600904

6x4 TRAILER, 18" sides, near new 245/75R16 BFG all terrain tyres, jockey wheel, rear stabiliser leg, facility to attach bike rack at rear. Has been used mainly for camping. **\$850.00.**

Contact Michael Rodger ph: 0412 530 666

email: mjrodger@optusnet.com.au



STEREO 974

Four Wheel Drive Radio Show
"Talking Four Wheel Drive"
Saturdays at 10.00m



Four Wheel Drive Victoria 'e' News
at www.fwdvictoria.org.au

Yahoo Groups

Sign yourself up as a Yahoo user at
<http://groups.yahoo.com>
(There is no charge for this service.)

Then go to
<http://autos.groups.yahoo.com/group/vfwdc>
and click on "Join this group".

To keep non members out of the group, your membership will need to be approved.

Any problems, email
anthony@ctsmoash.com.au

FORTHCOMING TRIPS

WONNANGATTA ROAST – CUP DAY LONG W'END

Date: 30 October to 2 November 2004
Trip Leader: John Partridge
Contact Nos: Mob: 0428 331 211, AH: 9789 6985
Destination: Wonnangatta
Meeting Time/Place: Officer Weighbridge – 7.30am.
Ashley will be leading the group on the Saturday.
Vehicle Limit: *Min:* 5, *Max:*15
Grade: Social
Approx Distance: 160 kms
Last Available Fuel: Licola – Petrol and Diesel.
Equipment:
Maps: N/A
Radio Channel: Channel 12
Trip Activities:
Sunday: Day trip through area. Sunday nite: Roast.
Monday: Day trip for those who wish to drive.
Otherwise relax and enjoy the extra day off.

2004 NAV RUN

Date: 13-14 November 2004
Trip Leader: John Partridge
Contact Nos: Mob: 0428 331 211, AH: 9789 6985
Destination:
Meeting Time/Place: Officer Weighbridge. Time TBC.
Vehicle Limit: *Min:* 5, *Max:*15
Grade: *Wet:* Medium *Dry:* Medium
Approx Distance: 160 kms
Last Available Fuel: Moe
Equipment: All basic recovery gear, GPS, compass and camping gear.
Maps: TBA
Radio Channel: Channel 12
Trip Activities: The event will be run using the notes from the ProComp NavRun held recently. You will be given a series of photos with GPS coordinates on them. You will have to find these and take an exact replica of the photo with the Polaroid camera supplied. You may take whatever tracks necessary so you can make it as easy or hard, driving wise, as you like. This is an untimed navigational event that promises to be a lot of fun. A GPS is not essential but will make it easier. You will need a navigator to assist.
We are hopeful of arranging accommodation at very cheap rates, but to do this will need an idea of numbers at the September meeting.

ANNUAL MAYFORD FISHING WEEKEND

Date: Friday 26th to Sunday 28th November 2004
Trip Leader: Ashley Martin
Contact Nos: Mob: 0438 600904 H: 9540 0007
Destination: Mayford
Meeting Time/Place: 7.30 am, Pakenham McDonalds.
For those who cannot make the early morning start:
5.00pm Friday, Pakenham McDonalds.
Vehicle Limit: *Min:* 3, *Max:* 10.
Grade: *Wet:* Medium *Dry:* Medium.

Equipment: As per new classifications.

Maps: N/A

Radio Channel: Channel 12

Trip Activities: The annual fishing trip is back. We will camp at Mayford which is approx 1.5 hrs from Dargo. You can choose to sit and relax or try your luck fishing. I will be leaving Friday morning, but will arrange an afternoon departure for those unable to leave earlier.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Date: Saturday, 4 December 2004
Trip Leader: Ashley Martin
Contact Nos: Mob: 0438 600904 H: 9540 0007
Destination: Gilwell Park, Launching Place Road, Gembrook.
Equipment: Chairs, eating utensils. Camping gear if you plan to stay overnight (\$6 p/night fee). Refer to flyer distributed last month.
NOTE: FINAL NUMBERS REQUIRED BY NOVEMBER MEETING.



CHRISTMAS TREE DELIVERIES



Saturday 11 December 2004
(Normally takes around half a day)

Oxfam needs details by the end of October, so please call Ashley on 9540 0007 to advise whether you wish to lend your support.

Pick-up point for the trees is the
Scout Hall in Pakenham Street, Blackburn
(Melway Map 47 H12)
before 11.00am.

With all the sadness and trauma going on in the world at the moment, it is worth reflecting on the death of a very important person which almost went unnoticed last week. Larry La Prise, the man who wrote "*The Hokey Pokey*" died peacefully at age 93. The most traumatic part for his family was getting him into the coffin. They put his left leg in. And then the trouble began...

😊 Thanks Barry L

TRIP REPORTS

POWERWORKS, MORWELL – 22-23 MAY 2004

Trip Leaders: David & Rosalie Hughes

Saturday 22nd May 2004

After a series of unexpected visitors, Neil and I left home at 4pm. The shadows were lengthening considerably and some trees appeared to have a golden glow in their autumn colours as we travelled towards Morwell.

We met up with Rosalie, Dave and almost all the gang at the Morwell Hotel/Motel at 5.40 pm. After quickly unpacking and catching up with long lost friends, we headed off to Powerworks at 6pm. By this time the moon was a blurry slither in the inky sky.

The Powerworks building was like a welcoming beacon in the black wintry night. After signing in (for security reasons), we enjoyed hot finger food and non-alcoholic drinks while we wandered around the large and informative displays.

Clark was our barman and guide, a thoroughly knowledgeable bloke who had the knack of herding us around in the kindest possible way. Moving into the theatre, Clark was obliged to take a digital group photo. He said it was for security reasons; but I think he couldn't believe that so many good-looking people could belong to one club.

He explained, using large three-dimensional maps, how Victoria has enough brown coal in the ground for hundreds of years. Although the coal is under a large area extending from Bacchus Marsh to Cann River, it is closest to the earth's surface in the Morwell area, and therefore most accessible. Over millions of years the forests of Kauri Pine and scrub, the natural vegetation of this area, became the poor quality brown coal of today. It is deemed poor quality because it is two-thirds water.

After watching a 10-minute video it was time to climb into the bus waiting near the back door of Powerworks. However, Clark had warned us that as we would be away for a couple of hours, a toilet break was advisable before we left. I think he may have regretted warning us, as there was quite a long queue with so few loos available, and so many customers.

After leaving handbags and cameras behind (once again for security reasons), we boarded that gutsy little Mitsubishi bus, wearing our warm coats, hats and scarves. Clark was our driver, with his assistant Michelle. Clark explained that he preferred not to use the kerosene heating on board, if he could avoid it, due to the fumes. Yes! Kerosene heating!! We thought he was joking!

The Mitsi took off into the still, cold, black night. Once we began our journey, the windows quickly fogged up. It didn't seem so cold any more in the cosy atmosphere, as everyone snuggled next to each other on the narrow double seats. Rebecca and Craig had the bench seat at the rear all to themselves.

We were bouncing along the road, rocking and rolling, wondering if the workmen's helmets lying in the racks above us were going to rain down over our heads. The diff made a noisy grinding sound to add interest to the

journey. Reaching Loy Yang, we saw the first bunker illuminated in the darkness. It holds enough coal to produce eighteen hours of power supply for Victoria.

Once we passed through security, we followed the road used by the workmen along the open cut. Looking into the blackness we saw what looked like a couple of small floating cities. The many bright lights were such a contrast to their surroundings. A long way below ground level, the dredges were working. They had rows of brilliant lights, like many short runways at an aerodrome.

Clark, our driver, illuminated some fossilised trees in the embankment using the Mitsi headlights while parked at an interesting angle on the gravel roadway. At this stage the cold was really getting to us, and the windows were badly fogged; so the kero heater was ignited with some difficulty. The odour was really something, but we appreciated the warmth.

We returned along the bumpy gravel track, which then became a made road, taking us past the huge cooling towers. The bus pulled up under an enormous cream coloured building. It was so brightly lit, with huge, and odd shaped steel forms crowding underneath. It was noticeably glary after the blackness we had become accustomed to. The atmosphere was quite surreal – as though we had arrived at a scene from a science fiction movie.

At this point, we disembarked from the bus. The atmosphere was very noisy and we felt dwarfed by our surroundings. Following strict instructions, we donned the regulation helmets, adjusting them as required, placed the safety glasses in position to protect our eyes, and inserted the mouldable ear-plugs which had been provided.

Clark, plus Michelle and twenty-three of us crowded into the lift, which was lined with silver chequer-plate. Rosalie almost disappeared behind Dave at the back of the lift. We could only hear her magic laughter and catch glimpses of her at times.

After travelling nineteen floors up, we were divided into two groups to look out at the single chimney located in the "paddock" nearby. We were at a level that was only one-third of its height. (The chimney is actually taller than the Rialto.) It was unsettling to be walking along the large expanse of steel mesh decking, and looking down through another eighteen floors of the same see-through decking.

Jumping back into the lift, we descended to level two. Talking was impossible as we walked around three enormous turbines. Each turbine was about double the length of a locomotive. Had a sticky nose through a window to the battery room. There were incredibly huge banks of batteries with thick black cables coming out. Perfect for duel battery systems!

It was so strange to think that although this was such an industrious workplace, we had not set eyes on one person who worked there. Apparently only twenty people are required at any time to operate our power system.

On our return to the bus the windows were wonderfully clear, giving good visibility; if there is such a thing on such a pitch-black night!

Arriving back at Powerworks at 9.45, we were offered alcoholic drinks this time as well as non-alcoholic. Brown

Bros, Wolf Blas etc were the order of the day. The brightly lit dining room was decked out for our arrival, with two lengthy sets of trestle tables covered in white cloths.

We enjoyed the hot, tasty homemade oxtail or potato soup followed by a beautiful smorgasbord of roast meats, numerous vegetables, and various salads. Desserts consisted of apple crumble, chocolate pudding, home made ice-cream, fruit salad, and bread and butter pudding. Who could ask for more! But more there was! Various cheeses, nuts, crackers etc. It was wasted on us though, we could eat no more! The home-cooked meal and service of the local country folk was truly memorable!

Returning to the motel around midnight, many of us made our way to the pokies room. Sandra had luck on her side that night with good winnings. I was lucky enough to double my money! I took \$6 home clear profit!

Thick fog had set in by the time we were heading towards our room around 1.30 am.

Sunday 23rd May

Fog was hanging around to begin with, and then the beautiful sunshine appeared. Most of the gang had departed earlier, leaving three vehicles only, but containing ten of us altogether. We set off at 10.30 looking for a place to eat. Rosalie found a café to have breakfast – not an easy task on a Sunday morning in Morwell. We enjoyed our cooked breakfasts and coffees decorated on top with spider web patterns. By midday it was overcast and time to move from the Qu Bah café.

After locating the local market further down the road, we payed 70 cents admission and wandered around. There was a lot of old junk at inflated prices, but some goodies to be found. Rosie discovered a large aluminium pan ideal for heating water on the campfire. You could almost sit in it and have a bath with your knees up under your chin!

Around 1.30pm it was time to say our goodbyes and make our separate ways home. Neil and I had enjoyed the weekend immensely, as I am certain everyone else did too.

Thankyou to Rosalie for all her efforts in organising the Powerhouse tour and the accommodation for the weekend. Thankyou to all who attended for your great company and many laughs along the way.

Neil and Norma Stephenson

RODNEY FOUNTAIN MEMORIAL CAR RALLY

Sunday, 12 September 2004

Trip Leader: James & Kathryn Holden

Participants: Anthony, Aline, Riley & Connor

Steve & Tania

Ray & Dean

Ashley & Lesley

Michael, Verrille, Liberty & Elizabeth

John & Leanne

David, Joanne & Michael

David, Rosalie and the Hughes Family

The 8:30am start for the Annual Car Rally required an early rise. On a bright sunny day that would have been

easy, but it wasn't a bright sunny day at all – it was cold and raining and had rained most of the night. Will the rally get washed out or will it go ahead rain, hail or shine.

By the time we arrived at the Officer meeting place the rain had stopped so it was all systems go. James requested a volunteer to be the first to leave, and not wanting to keep two children waiting longer than necessary to start, the Webbers volunteered. After receiving our instructions we were raring to go, but wait – we needed to read the questions first, then answer a couple and THEN we could go.

Out onto Starling Rd we were off. The questions had to be answered thick and fast – who lives at 112; what does Tony Mallia do; what's on a rope, and the list goes on. After concentrating on the questions for a while it suddenly occurred to us that we had to collect stuff as well - where will we find pine needles? Oh, just on this tree up ahead. Veer car to left of road, stop, wind down passenger window, passenger leans out and picks fresh (and wet) pine needles... and that was only the first item we collected !

But there were more questions. Sometimes the answers were not so obvious. Peering in through the windows of the Pine Grove Hotel in search of an ATM must have looked very suspicious (but who is out and about at **that** hour on a Sunday morning) and it wasn't even inside! Eventually we found the answer out the front on the sign (Cashcard ATM) – great! Next question and we're off again... without noticing the bunch of daffodils growing right underneath the sign! Never mind. We saved the daffodil find for the puzzlement of the passing traffic on Heatherton Rd – what did those drivers think when they saw that woman picking a daffodil from under the fence in the horse paddock? Couldn't she just buy a bunch, they might have thought? (True, but we only needed one !)

Down at the Kangaroo Flat Picnic Area (at Cardinia Reservoir) our feet got rather wet stomping around searching for clues. The Rota Loos were 'interesting' (looked just like a long drop toilet to me)... but we just had to use them. And there was another find – a kangaroo sheltering under the loos. Did you see that one?

We continued on our way using our keen powers of observation to answer questions and collect miscellaneous items. We even tried to enlist some younger assistance from the back seat, but the only response we got were the strains of Living End's '*Ain't Got No Reason*' through the personal CD players.

Eventually we arrived at our final destination – Churchill National Park. It had taken us a little bit over two hours of driving through the Shire of Cardinia and the City of Casey to end up only one minute from home, but we had lots of fun along the way! At least it wasn't a long trip home after lunch !

By that time the sun had appeared and we all enjoyed a relaxing lunch over entertaining tales of rally luck and innovation.

Congratulations to Dave and Rosalie Hughes on winning the coveted Car Rally Trophy.

ADVANCED TRAINING WEEKEND
25-26 September 2004

Trainers: Ashley Martin/John Partridge GU Patrol
Participants: Michael & Verylle Rodger Disco
Ian Webber Disco
Paul Ryan 80 Series
Carl Surtees GQ Patrol

Friday pm

I was looking forward to my first trip back to the high country since the Cape York trip, and what was to make it more relaxing was that I was being chauffeured by Johnno. We met at Officer weighbridge and made our way to Erica pub for a meal and few drinks (for the lucky passengers at least). From there we made our way through to Walhalla towards The Springs, stopping for some timber to keep us warm for the night.

Saturday

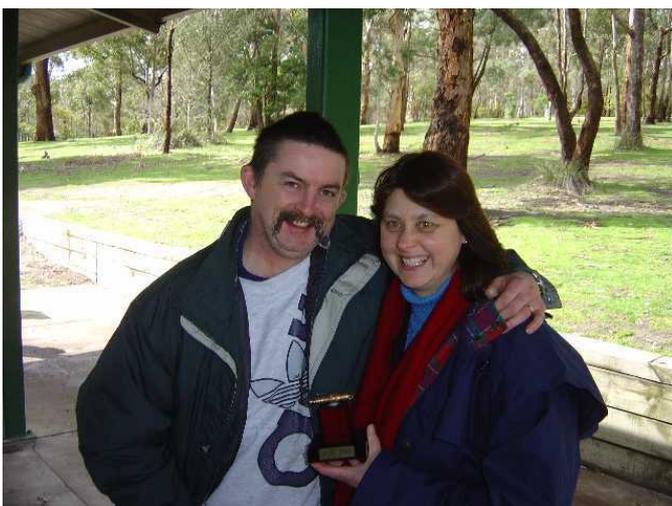
Everyone was up early and packed up ready for a theory review. This time we asked the trainees to discuss and explain certain topics to check their knowledge and also review certain winning techniques. Time had come to explore some more challenging tracks and we headed for the Deep Creek area. First was No.2 which presented no problems for the group. On to No.4 and as we were heading down several vehicles below were struggling to get up; they pulled aside and let us through. It was the time of day to do lunch, and also have the bonus of watching the other group tackle the track. The Cruiser Tray made it about halfway. After he had backed down we asked what his tyre pressure was, he said about 30 psi. Letting them down further he made no more progress from the previous attempt. As he came to a stop – and to our amazement – he jumped out of the vehicle, got under it and chocked the wheels. Obviously he has never completed a driver training course! He connected the winch and while winching the next vehicle made its way up; once he came to a stop they connected a strap to the winch vehicle and winched the two together. The lesson learnt by everyone watching was that the correct way of winching was to do exactly the opposite to these guys. As this was happening and not feeling safe at the bottom, we decided to move on, except that one GQ Nissan would not start.



John and Leanne came in second...



... and best wishes to Steve and Tania on improving their result next year – you can only go up from here !



Finally we'd like to heartily thank James and Kathryn for a very well organized car rally, and a fun-filled family event. Great effort – well done !!!

The Webber Family

[photographs AVB]

Some made their way up the other side while we tried to get the NISSAN going. The only way we could do this was to take out the priming pump and filter from Paul's TOYOTA. Carl drove up the other side while Paul and I waited in the hope that they would return with the pump to replace it in the vehicle. What else do you do to kill time, drink beer and talk four wheel drives of course.

The idea was to make our way to Merringtons, but we ended up stopping at the Aberfeldy Bridge for the night. After collecting some wood, out came Carl's log splitter with the fiberglass handle. He quickly inspected the handle and passed it over to the master destroyer of all axe handles, me! All was going well until the handle decided to completely depart from the head. After we all picked ourselves up off the ground from laughter, I gave Carl the bad news. For some reason he did not seem that suprised, but I appologised anyway. The message in this for everyone: *DO NOT LEND YOUR AXE TO ASHLEY!*

Sunday

We woke Sunday morning to find a fox had raided some of the vehicles, missing items were bread, rolls and it also took a liking to Carl's (Terri's) Tupperware containers. Everyone was up early and we were on the move at a reasonable time.



Ian tries the two step! (photograph ADM)

We made our way along Fultons, Dry Gully and Pheasant and by that stage it was time for a break. Stopping at Merringtons the gate was locked so it was fortunate we decided to stop earlier that night. Old Bridle had been graded and presented no problems, we then made our way to the Abberfeldy Cemetery were we had lunch. From there we headed down Pluto and up Spud tracks. Spud looked like it would test a few of the vehicles and drivers. Everyone managed ok, except for Ian. There were two motor bikes that had several attempts but were having problems so we left them to it. It was a good day of driving for everyone so we decided to make our way to the dam wall to pump up the tyres and head on home.

Hopefully everyone enjoyed the weekend and became more confident within themselves and their vehicles.

Ashley



Michael demonstrates that three-wheeling must be a Disco trait... [photograph ADM]

IMPROMPTU TRIP

Toolangi 13 October 2004

Attendees: Johnno GU Patrol
Steve 80 Series
Paul 80 Series

Grade: Bloody Hell!

Let's face it, one day trip in a week is never enough, so when John asked for volunteers to help him recce a few tracks for the upcoming proficiency training weekend there was really only one way to go. So after a quick phone call to work (to let them know that I'd been afflicted with a mysterious illness that would only last 24 hours and would render me completely incapable of answering the phone) it was best driving trousers on and off to Lilydale to meet up.

Forty-five minutes later I'm still sitting in traffic on the Burwood highway admiring the road works. Lots of burly blokes standing around holding shovels and displaying more crevasse than we'd see for the rest of the day – and believe me we saw plenty. Steve passed me on the way through Montrose, which left me wondering if the turbo really did function or whether somebody had just scribbled it on the engine block in texta. Anyway we got to Maccas only to find that John was running a bit late, which gave Steve and I plenty of time to swap make-up tips and tofu recipes.

We got to Toolangi in good time and found that John's GU works on autopilot whenever it gets to the turn off to Rocky Track. Being softer than an inflatable duckling, I decided that even with the new springs there was no way I was going to attempt it, so I took the chicken run. Besides, if I got to the top first then I could take photos of the real men as they came up the track. "Click", "Bing" flat battery. My future career as a photo journalist looks bleak. Anyway they made it up without any dramas and time was short so we got on with finding some suitable tracks for the training weekend.

John decided that we would take an unnamed track which looked interesting. I should probably know better by now, whenever those words hit the airwaves, but as usual I followed like a lamb to the kebab shop.

We found our first large bog hole not long after and John being the leader forged ahead like the true pioneer that he is. Just short of the exit and the GU has turned into the paddle steamer "The Saucy Sue" and is sitting there treading water, which is now halfway up the door panels. About now I'm thinking that the \$10.00 spent at Car Lovers on Sunday may have been wasted. Nothing for it but to winch out. No problems there, but Steve and I both think it would be a good idea to hook up the snatch straps first. Steve was next and got to about the same place as John before he had to be snatched out. Then it was my turn. To say I made considerably less progress would be an understatement. It wasn't until we went to snatch out that we discovered that the 80 wasn't actually in four wheel drive despite all indications to the contrary (i.e. transfer lever engaged, hubs locked, little green light on the dash saying 4WD etc). Disengage low range, re-engage low range. Ah! Forward motion. The remainder of this track had some interesting tight sections and alternate routes like the one that looped around before joining the main track at a 90 degree angle and 5 foot drop. We decided against that route and stuck to the more commonly trodden path. Anyway the rest of the track was negotiated with a bit of track building here and there, and a few nervous moments when door panels were in danger of becoming interior accessories. Fortunately someone before us had carved a path with their front diff so that made it that much easier. By now it's lunchtime and we decided that we should head to the Luke Creek campsite for a bite to eat before we continued with the recce.

After lunch we set off looking for something a little more suitable for the training weekend. I'd mentioned a track I knew of to John so we headed down Marginal Road in search of it. About five minutes later everyone's temperature gauge is higher than Robert Downey Jr so we all pull over to allow the cars to cool down a bit. Well that was the plan, but Steve's car was having none of it and his alternator started playing up as well so, discretion being the better part of valour, he decided to call it a day and head home.

John and I continued until we found the track I'd been thinking of, which turned out to be Mt Despair Road (or at least the part up to the gate which is closed). The last time I had done this track the ruts were fairly mild. The ruts are a bit deeper now (well actually a lot deeper) and the rain was just starting to make things interesting. Still, we got up without incident and then dropped back down on to Marginal Road again. OK, so maybe that one wasn't quite suitable for proficiency training after all. We headed back along Marginal Road before turning off onto Horseyard Track. Doesn't look like anyone has been up here for a while but at least the overgrowth is wiping the mud off the car. Some interesting angles through here as well.

Scratch another track for the weekend.

After an impromptu turn we are under the power lines so we head back along Pylon Tk which again looks promising. It is. Well at least it is in the dry. There's

some tricky sections along the fence line and easy or hard options into and out of the gully. But once again it's pretty tight and probably going to end a few relationships if attempted at the weekend. Number of tracks travelled so far: **7**. Number suitable for training: **Nil**.

A short stretch along Breakoday track (still a bit gnarly) then into Martins Road (hmm no good either) before turning into Campsite Track (well stone the crows, no joy). It's a winch job to get out of the creek. By now it's getting a bit late in the day so we headed down Kalatha Creek Tk and onto Marginal Road. Then it was Twin Hills Road and home. The temperature gauges were rising again so we stopped at Yarra Glen and relocated another sizeable portion of Toolangi in the car wash. That has to be the only car wash in Melbourne where you have to engage low range to get into the wash bays.

Anyway a big thanks to John and Steve for a great day out. Now to hit the medical books and see what I can come down with tomorrow...

Summary:

Tracks recce'd: 10

Tracks suitable: 0

Size of grin: so big I now have a flip top head.

Cheers, Paul

EDITOR'S NOTE

Re: Trip Reports

Please note the following important requirements regarding submission of trip reports:

- 1. It is the responsibility of the Trip Scribe to ensure that the trip date, trip leader's name, and names of all participants and their respective vehicles are included in the trip report.**
- 2. It is the Trip Leader's responsibility to ensure that the trip report is submitted to the editor by the required deadline, ie 15th of the month.**

Thank you for your co-operation.
