



Reg No A0002184F

December 2005

Free Wheeling

www.vfwdc.com

Official Newsletter of the Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club

"Bringing Four Wheel Drivers Together"

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*Your Committee Wishes all Club Members
a Safe and Happy Festive Season*

See you all safely back in 2006



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

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Vice President	Steve Boyle	0411 129 427
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Secretary	George Pledger	0427 547 402
Assistant Secretary	Paul Ryan	0438 121 148

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

New Member Contact	Ian Warburton	0409 797 675
Web Manager	Anthony Van Buiten	0413 784 074
Librarian	James Holden	9755 5790
Trip & Events Co-ordinator	Ian Webber	0428 518 552
Association Delegate	Roger Baird	9704 9045
Club Historian	Phil Alder	9754 8487
Training Officers	Mark Kochan	9763 2052
	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904
	John Partridge	0428 331 211
	Michael Rodger	0412 530 666
Newsletter Editors	Steve Utting	0408 576 171
	Annie Simpson	

Forward Articles and photos for the Newsletter to :-
anniesinternet1@iprimus.com.au

Help us get the magazine out on time by sending all contributions before the 20th of each month

CLUB DETAILS

Registered Name:	Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club Inc
Registration No:	A0002184F
All correspondence:	The Secretary VFWDC Inc P.O. Box 778 Dandenong Vic 3175
Web Site:	www.vfwdc.com
Email:	ognord@net2000.com.au
Meetings:	Held first Tuesday of each month excluding January (no meeting). November meeting is held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month due to Melbourne Cup public holiday.
Meetings 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.

Presidents Report December 2005

Ho Ho Ho, Welcome to everyone for the last Free Wheeling for 2005. That's right, it is that time of the year once again. May I take this opportunity to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

It has truly been a very interesting year, with an all new Committee, to which I thank everyone for adjusting to their new tasks and their commitment to running the Club. We have a long way to go in developing new ideas, and implementing them in the future, to give the Club a direction and set new goals. Four Wheel Driving and Camping is one of the greatest recreations for families. It also brings people of all walks of life together to explore the great outdoors, so we all need to work together to keep this recreation alive and prospering for years to come.

Last month there was a turn around in support for a Bush Dance, which is very encouraging, and we will do some investigation into how, when, and where for next year.

Many thanks to Ken Gracie for his informed talk on fuel and oil additives.

Please everybody do not forget that the next meeting (6th December) is to be held at **Aussie Disposals in Frankston.**

Also the Christmas Party is well on the way as far as the organisation goes, so now all we need is for everyone to turn up on the day (3rd December) to make it an even more memorable day.

The old tradition is still on the go for New Years Eve at Collins Hut, so all those who are going, please be prepared for a very interesting night, with some new surprises, and lots of fun in store. We are going to work along a theme of **Early Australia.**

So once again , everyone please have a very Merry Christmas, and take extra care out there as I want to see everyone back next year. So till then,,,,as always **over and out.!!!**

Daddio

Attendance Numbers are needed for Christmas Party

For those that will not be attending the November meeting, please contact Annie Simpson if you intend to be at the Chrissy Party.

**We need numbers for catering purposes....
See the attached flyer for exact details**

The Corner

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY AND SAFE NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL

BOMBE ALASKA

Box of Sponge Fingers, Swiss Jam Roll or stale cake
4=5 tablespoons of orange juice,
5 egg whites {at room temperature}
155gr. {5 oz} castor sugar
¼ teaspoon salt
1 litre block of vanilla ice cream
60gr {2 oz} flaked almonds, toasted
Pure icing sugar to dust meringue

Cover ovenproof serving dish with sponge fingers {or alternatives}. Drizzle with orange juice. Beat egg whites until stiff, add 1 tablespoon sugar and salt. Whisk remaining sugar into egg whites. Place ice cream on biscuits the flaked almonds to protect the ice cream from heat.

Using a forcer bag with a large star, cover all the ice cream with egg white mixture. Dust with pure icing sugar. Bake for 3 to 4 minutes in a very hot oven...475 deg.F (250 deg C.)

Serve immediately.

***** Can be prepared at least one and a half hours before serving...keep in freezer...Dust again with icing sugar before baking..*****

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 Reversible Vest	\$42.00 ea
New Club Caps	\$15.00 ea
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Four Wheel Drive Radio Show
"Talking Four Wheel Drive"
Saturdays at 10.00m

**Minutes of the General Meeting
08 November 2005**

MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING 08 NOV 2005

The meeting was held at the Dandenong Library and opened at 8.15pm by the president David Hughes.

PRESENT

42 members present as per attendance book.

APOLOGIES

Maxine Ryan, Paula Johnston, Yvonne Hempston, Grahan & Judy, Anne Pettigrew, Ian Warburton, Jill Boyle, Peter Petrou, Bryan West, Leslie Peters.

VISITORS

Ken Appleby, Gary Smith, Norm Barry, Steve & Tania Utting.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- Minutes of October meeting as per newsletter.
 - Accepted : Terry
- Seconded : Karl

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Nil

SUPPER

Annie & Gary

CORRESPONDENCE IN

- Membership renewal
 - Tickets for 4x4 show
 - Letter from National Library requesting May issue of Newsletter
 - Cheque for \$100 from Aussie Disposals
 - Emails from FWDVA re track clearing
 - Advertising material from Kalyna ski club, Happy Wanderer Caravan Park, Variety, Tallarook 4x4 roundup, Anaconda, ARB,
- Publications from; Eureka Echo, Trackwatch, Toyota Land Cruiser Club, Otway four Wheeler, Land Rover Owners Club, Cross Country Jeep Club.

CORRESPONDENCE OUT

Tickets to 4x4 show to 7 members.

TREASURERS REPORT

3 Month report August 2005—October 2005

- Receipts total \$2862.00
- Membership total \$1825.00
- Raffles total \$227.00
- Sales total \$170.00
- Social total \$ 540.00
- Advertising \$100.00

Accepted Roger
Seconded Joe

David introduced Ken & Sue; Ken then spoke on additives for petrol and diesel fuel systems and showed samples of the products which were then available for sale.

TRIPS REPORT

- Ashley spoke on upcoming King River weekend.
- Terry spoke of trip to Collins Hut 27/12—2/1 and jobs to be done..cleanup and maintenance.
- David told of recent trip to Collins Hut and of problems crossing river.
- Ashley gave a summary of the cup weekend trip to Dargo area, turned into a wet weekend, vehicles had problems with wet slippery tracks but all got out and home safely
- Terry raised the xmas tree delivery weekend and asked for more volunteers
- David mentioned the xmas party at Gembrook on 3 December names of members attending required.
- Next meeting to be held at Aussie Disposals, Frankston,

It was mentioned the large number of trees down across tracks, VFWDA have prepared track clearing roster for volunteers.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Membership was asked if they wanted a bush dance or rock and roll night. Require memership to support the event and assist to make it work. Numbers and payment to be made before event, dates to be looked at.

Ashley spoke on progress of 1st aid course, require a minimum of 8 and maximum of 16 to participate, will try to run the course in a bush environment. Cost is \$130 per person with a certificate issued on completion of course. Date to be advised.

John gave a brief report on VFWDA meeting. Closure of tracks under power lines at Bunyip. In N.S.W. vehicle modifications appear to be stopped by road authority.

RAFFLE

Tickets sold by Roger, won by; Karl.....tent
Michael...chair
Norm.....Picnic set

Ritchies benefit card and key rings available.

Liz visited Troopers Camp at the Grampians recently and described amenities available.

Meeting closed at 10.30pm

Next meeting at Aussie Disposals at Frankston 6/12/05.

Proposed National Code of Practice for vehicle modifications

Following a meeting today with senior NSW RTA people, the ministerial adviser and other industry people, the importance of the draft National Code of Practice for vehicle modifications is now patently clear.

To provide some background on the process that is currently underway, I provide the following explanation:

The federal department of transport & regional services has formed a working party to draft a national code of practice that describes what modifications are allowed, which ones do not require certification and those that do, the generally accepted methods, the applicable ADRs, the tests required and checklists for assessors, and other information related to vehicle modifications.

The draft document has been produced and is currently in the public comment phase which closes on December 9th. You can view/download the NCOP on the web at this address http://www.dotars.gov.au/transreg/vsb/vsb_ncop.aspx

When the comments have been collated, assessed and incorporated into the code, the working party will issue the code to state registration authorities for their implementation. At this point the national code will be accepted by all of the states.

Each of the state registration authorities will then need to draft an implementation plan that describes how they will be incorporating the code into their various regulations and processes. This will then be circulated for public comment and revised accordingly until it becomes the new state regulations.

What does this mean to us?

If we want to have any say in what are acceptable modifications and any related issues, or what details need to be clarified, or any proposals for "standard type" certifications such as off-the-shelf kits then we need to respond to the draft by making a submission.

The other important point to note is that this process is largely based on a political agenda where the authorities are looking to "clean up" the modified vehicle (read 4X4) situation on the public road network by making it very difficult to register highly lifted or monster trucks. This is being done by inserting a requirement into the certification process that means that the modifier has to justify why they need to have the vehicle lifted - there is currently no acceptance of the terms recreationalist, tourer, etc or similar terms as an acceptable justification!!

This means that if we want to be able to enhance our vehicles to be able to partake in our chosen recreation we will have to pay to get them certified and only to a certain degree.

IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE SOUND OF THIS THEN WE MUST PUT IN SUBMISSIONS

I believe that not only should the ANFWDC provide a submission but also ALL state associations and clubs. Remember the comment period closes on December 9th so we need to work together and we need to work quickly.

Other groups will be putting in submissions such as the Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association who also attended today.

You can also be assured that the unfriendlies (Scruby, Staysafe etc) will get their spoke in.

I will coordinate the national submission but I would like to get input from each state as to any ideas that they may have. Could you please let me know how you intend tackling this issue and who will be heading it up for your state by the end of this week.

Regards

Paul Warner

President

Australian National Four Wheel Drive Council Inc.

Club Calendar at a Glance

Date Of Trip	Destination (more detail in forthcoming trips)	Contact
3 December	Annual Christmas Party	Annie Simpson anniesinternet1@iprimus.com.au
6 December	Club Meeting—Dandenong Library	David Hughes
27 December to 2nd January 2006	Annual Dargo—Collins Hut Maintenance and Christmas Camp	Terry Johninke 0414 350 621
26 to 29 January 2006	Macalister River	Ashley Martin 0438 600 904
7 February	Club Meeting—Dandenong Library	David Hughes
15 and 18-19 February	Proficiency Training—Tallarook State Forest	John Partridge 0428 331 211
7 March	Club Meeting—Dandenong Library	David Hughes
11-13 March	Grampians	Aline & Anthony Van Buiten 0413 784 703 or 0413 784 074
Feb or Mar Exact Details TBA	Rock n Roll Dance	Ian Warburton



Upcoming Event

Collins Hut Maintenance and Christmas
Camp Dargo Tuesday Dec 27th — Monday Jan 2nd

- Trip Leader:** Terry Johninke
Contact No: Mob: 0414 350 621
Destination: Collins Hut
Meeting Time/Place: Officer Weigh Bridge
Vehicle Limit: *Min:* 3, *Max:* 20
Grade: *Wet:* Medium *Dry:* Easy/Medium
Approximate Kms: 400
Last Available Fuel: Petrol/Diesel available at Dargo
Equipment: Basic recovery gear
Maps: None
Radio Channel: Channel 12

This event will start with a lazy amble up to Dargo arriving in time to set up camp (after the ground has been cleared with brush cutters and the like). This will be followed by the usual campfire antics and evening frivolities. The ensuing days will be filled with lazing, then hut maintenance as needed then lazing and probably some more hut maintenance. Then for those sick of the lazing and maintenance there will probably be the occasional day trip to somewhere or a bit of water sport in the form of fighting the currents in the rock pools whilst sipping on a your favorite fluid.

A new years eve campfire cook up followed by a candle lit dinner will initiate the new years eve festivities...

Aaahhhh yessss... It promises to be a (put your own anecdote in here)

Oh yeah, there may be Flies.. But I am assured there will be but no dam cicadas

Trip Leaders - its your responsibility to nominate a member to write the trip report.



Upcoming Event

Macalister River Thursday 26th — Sunday 29th
January 2006

Trip Leader: Ashley Martin
Contact No: Mob: 0438 600 904
Destination: Macalister River
Meeting Time/Place: TBA
Vehicle Limit: *Min: 3, Max: 10*
Grade: *Wet: Medium Dry: Easy/Medium*
Approximate Kms: 250
Last Available Fuel: Petrol/Diesel available at Licola
Equipment: Basic recovery gear
Maps: None
Radio Channel: Channel 12

You know that phrase, if you don't succeed the first time (or second) try again; third time lucky etc. Well we will try to get to the Macalister this weekend.

In a way this can be classified as an Australia Day long weekend for those who are lucky enough to have the Friday off. If not, the distance isn't too far for a normal weekend.

Macalister River is a lovely spot approx 1½-2 hours from Licola. The camping spot we want is on the banks of the river and the journey in is fairly easy and suitable for camper trailers. There are a couple of drives from the camp that will take you to a great lookout and other interesting areas. The fishing can be good so don't forget the rod.

The weekend will be yours to do whatever you wish: sit, fish, drive or just recharge the batteries. As there are no close facilities, you will need to cater for food etc. for the whole weekend.



Upcoming Event

Tallarook State Forest 15th and 18th /19th
February 2006

Trip Leader: John Partridge
Contact No: Mob: 0428 331 211
Destination: Tallarook State Forest
Meeting Time/Place: Saturday Lilydale McDonalds 830am
Vehicle Limit: *Min: 3, Max: 10*
Grade: *Wet: Medium Dry: Easy/Medium*
Approximate Kms: 100
Last Available Fuel: Petrol/Diesel TBA
Equipment: Basic recovery gear
Maps: None
Radio Channel: Channel 12

This is a great introduction to 4 wheel driving for the new members (and existing if they wish). The theory will be held on the Wednesday night in Notting Hill and will cover the basics of 4 wheeling. Theory will be conducted from 7.30 to approx 10pm.

Saturday will consist of a morning review, vehicle check followed by practical driving. Sunday will a drive around the area to put all the learning into practice.

Due to the Sunday being cancelled on the last proficiency training trip I encourage all participants on that weekend to come along on the Saturday or Sunday drive. .



Upcoming Event

Grampians Labour Day weekend 11-13 March 2006

Trip Leader:	Aline & Anthony Van Buiten
Contact No:	Mob: 0413 784 073 or 0413 784 074
Destination:	Grampians
Meeting Time/Place:	Westgate Shell Service Station—time TBA
Vehicle Limit:	<i>Min: 3, Max: 10</i>
Grade:	<i>Wet: C Dry: C</i>
Approximate Kms:	100
Last Available Fuel:	Petrol/Diesel TBA
Equipment:	Basic recovery gear
Maps:	None
Radio Channel:	Channel 12

Easy relaxing weekend. For those who want to be adventurous we will be doing rock climbing/absailing in the beautiful Grampians, one of the most spectacular places to do this in Victoria. We will have expert guides to show us the ropes. The cost will be approx \$40 p/person but there is a discount if we get more than 10 people.

If this adventure is not your style, there are plenty of beautiful walks, waterfalls and nature reserves to discover. Halls Gap is a beautiful little tourist town that beckons the weary traveler stop for an ice cream or cappa.

Put your name down early to avoid disappointment.



Trip Report

Annual Car Rally

Sunday 23 October

Car Rally. Sunday 23 October.
Participants.

- * Barry and Yvonne.
- * Ian and Daff
- * David, Joanne and Family
- * Barry and Helen
- * James, Kathryn and Family
- * Ian and Norm
- * Andy and Isabel Riordon, with Daughter Angela.

The first car to leave left at 9am.

We left at 10am

This is the first car rally we have been on with the club..

We all met at Officer weigh bridge, and left here 10 minutes apart. The first car left at ten to nine, and we were the last to leave at ten to ten.

We went straight over the highway, then took the first turn to the right, got to the end of the road and missed the clues, so did a u`e and started again, there went our kms from the start.

We followed the directions and collected items along the way.

One of the items we had to collect was illama poo. We were driving along, then Angela said " There are those things back there, like what is in McLeods daughters with the sheep" so Andy proceeded to do another u`e and went back. As we got there Angela said" Dad it is having a shit, so you can collect it fresh". I then laughed my head off and Andy had a slight grin on his face, but the decent old bloke he is, got out and collected some days old illama poo.

We were following the clues and missed a turn, so we were slightly off track, with a lot more kms clocked up, another u`e, Andy needed a toilet stop, while Angela and I did the womanly thing and went and asked for directions, to put us back on the right track.

During the morning and afternoon, we had Rosalie ringing us to find out wkere we were. (Just secretly I think David and Rosalie thought that we would get lost, as we don` t know our way in the Melbourne area, as we are from the outsticks and country bumkins.)

We completed the course and arrived at the destination at approximately 2pm, the last ones to arrive. We were about 2 hours behind everybody else.

Continued...

We handed our sheets to Jackie and Rosalie, then awaited the outcome.

Rosalie read out the scores, starting with last and when it got to the last two, we nearly died because "Andy, Myself and Angela had won, " we couldn't bloody believe it.

Even Daddio was blown away.

The course was 82 kms long, and would you believe we did 105 kms, had 22 points deducted from our

score and still won. I still don't know how we bloody did it.

So we now have to organise next years rally, it will be rather funny, if we have to do it in Melbourne.

I would like to thank all the participants for par taking of the Rally, and hope you all enjoyed it as much as we did.

On a serious note I would like to thank Rosalie, David, Jackie and Glenn for organising the day, we had a fantastic time. Thank you all.

Isabel Riordon



Trip Report

Macalister River

Saturday 29—Monday 31th October

Sunday

Sunday morning was still looking a bit grey so a few of us decided to go for a drive into Dargo and to serve as escort for Craig and Marijke who were heading home. It was Michael & Verylle, Paul, Craig & Marijke, Derek & Janet, Carissa & Joe, Craig with Happy as Passenger and Aline and myself as tail. We decided to take Murdering Spur Track into Dargo so we could also check on its condition. All was fine until we came to a short steep section where Derek had a bit of trouble getting over a bit of a lump in the track. He had a few attempts and then it was decided that Joe would have a go and then snatch Derek over the difficult bit. Joe was also unsuccessful in his attempts so he also pulled off the track to allow Craig to have a go. Craig managed to get up without incident and he then proceeded to connect Derek's vehicle to the snatch strap. We heard from Paul and Michael that things only got worse a bit further up the track and they were spending a bit of time clearing the track. Paul managed to slip off the side of the track which required Michael to snatch him out. All I could think of was how Paul must wish he had his Baja Claws fitted and not left them at home. With the troubles that Paul and Michael had most were surprised to hear that Craig just skipped up to the top in the Suzuki. It is very close to becoming a "Zook". We were waiting for the all clear before we attempted

to snatch Derek's vehicle up but in the end decided to try a different route. We turned around and headed towards Dane track. Craig and Brian decided to keep heading back to camp so that only left Derek and Janet, Carissa and Joe and Aline and myself. We heard that Chris and Gavin were having problems on the same track as they had packed up and were heading home. By the time we got to where they were stuck they had already winched themselves out. It was a long slippery section but with enough right foot applied we got through OK. This section would come back to haunt Mark and Derek the next day.

It was a longer track that we took to Dargo so we arrived about 15mins after the other group. A few supplies were bought and a few orders filled for those back at camp. Of course most of us had an ice cream as well. Most people headed back to camp via Murdering Spur and some effort was made to clear the track as this was the quickest route and we would probably use this track again. We arrived back at camp just in time to sample some fondue that was made by Verylle. It was decided to save our roast dinners for the following night as we were still getting a few showers.

Trip Report Scribes - Great jobs being done by trip scribes, it is great to see greater involvement. Please help me work out which trip your report belongs to by including the trip details from the calendar and a list of participants at the beginning of your report. I think I have got these ones in the correct trip but I do apologise if I guessed wrong. Ed..

FOR SALE

2 x Solar Panels which can be folded together like a suit case for easier storage (comes in Bag). Output is around 4 amps which is large enough to run an Engel fridge continuously. \$650.00 ONO

Bill Harwood
0414 477 503



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

Monday

The rain overnight was enough to persuade Mark and Julie and Janet and I that it was time to leave.

We bade our farewells, wished everyone well and, with Mark and Julie in the lead, set off at 12.15 along Dane Track to the north.

I had driven along the track with Anthony and Aline and Carissa and Joe the day before and had experienced no real problems, so it was a bit of a surprise when at the first challenging stretch Mark came to a standstill, sliding off a greasy track to the right. This was a spot where Chris and Gavin had had a problem the day before and a further 24 hours of rain, including a big downpour overnight, had given the track a greasy surface and created the beginnings of a sludgy bog hole at the top.

Mark reversed and had another go, but didn't get as far as he did the first time. When he reversed down again, he slid off the track and into a wash-out on the right. Just like a golfer playing a short shot to get back on the fairway, we winched Mark across and lined him up back on the track. He didn't bother to try driving up the slope a third time because he would just have slipped off to the right again. So, we did a second winch, followed by a third.

Ashley had called over the radio while we doing this to see how we were getting on. I told him of Mark's problem and he said that he and a few others were coming up to check out the track to see if they would be able to get the trailers along it.

We had just started the fourth winch when Mark's electrics gave up the ghost. After several of his dashboard lights came on together, everything went off and Mark could not even crank the engine. So we stayed where we were – Mark sitting in his car in the middle of the track and Julie, Jan and I standing in the light rain awaiting the arrival of the team of experts.

I checked Mark's battery, which had plenty of charge, so it seemed the electrical problem was elsewhere. Just before the others arrived, I suggested trying the winch again. Mark gave it a short burst and it seemed to work OK, but when he tried to start the engine, there was just a tired groaning from the starter motor. We didn't want to risk it any more so waited for the cavalry and rescue.

The team arrived - Ashley, Michael and Craig accompanied by Graeme, Ron, Brian and Anthony. Ashley came slipping up the track on foot followed by the others. When he arrived, he said, "Try starting the engine." Of course, it started straight away. How does he do it?

We reset for winching and with Mark's electrics now

recovered, completed the fourth winch after which Mark was able to drive on up the track. I figured I wouldn't get much further than Mark and in case I need winching or snatching, Ashley drove up the slope. Well actually, slipping, sliding and zig-zagging across the full width of the track under full power as even he struggled to find grip on the greasy surface.

Now it was my turn. I had cleared the right hand side of the track of branches and other debris in case we needed to get a car alongside Mark to jump-start his engine. The recommendation was that I drive up the left hand side of the track and then switch to the right near the top. In the end, I had little choice as the slope on the track pushed me right anyway. I aimed for the area I'd cleared on the right hoping it wouldn't be so greasy. It helped a bit and I got to a point where Ashley could snatch me through.

It was now clear to everyone present that no trailers would be coming this way, at least as long as it remained wet.

Ashley and Graeme decided to accompany Mark and I up the track in case of further problems while the others set off to check out Dane Track to the east.

We were glad of the company. A little further on, Mark became stuck and had to be winched up. With my foot solidly on the floor, I managed to drive up.

It was mid afternoon but it was getting very dark and foggy. Sometimes the vehicle in front would disappear even though it was only 20 meters ahead. We reached another challenge. A long slippery section that wound up and around a hill. At the bottom, filled with a developing bog hole, was a sharp left hand turn. Accelerating through this made the back swing out and it was easy to slide off the track. So, getting enough momentum was tricky.

It took Mark two or three goes, but he made it through OK. It took me five or six attempts between which was a scary reverse down the slope without, it seemed, any traction. In the end we all got through.

Michael, Anthony and Ron came over the radio from across the valley. They reported that there were some slippery sections which, although not steep, were quite long and could present problems with the trailers. Ashley relayed the news to Lesley back at camp. Lesley at first thought, and probably hoped, he was joking. Ashley made it clear he was not and that they should set an expectation that they would not be leaving until Thursday – two days late. Lesley went off to collect phone numbers from those in camp. The plan was for Michael, who just had a phone signal at a helipad, to call people to let them know.

However, Michael found he could not make the calls, so someone suggested that Mark and I take phone

numbers out with us and make the calls when we arrived home.

At this stage, we fully expected we would be out quite soon, but the biggest challenge remained. While Mark was getting himself back on the track at yet another slippery section, Ashley radioed back that he was stuck and would have to winch. Mark and I cleared some debris from the track and, while we awaited news we had a trackside conference with Julie and Jan. If Ashley was stuck and needing to winch, how would we fare when we reached that section?

Finally, Ashley reported that he and Graeme were through. The bad news for Jan and I was that he thought Mark and Julie would make it through because they had a winch, but he didn't know how we would do.

Mark and Julie set off leaving Jan and I sitting disconsolately alone on the misty track contemplating a return to camp. The rain seemed to have stopped so we stood outside the car listening to the snippets of conversation over the radio as Mark repeatedly winched to get through the section.

Now it was our turn. Difficult, because I did not know what the track was like ahead. With Ashley's gloomy prediction ringing in our ears and a determination not to return to camp, I put my foot down and we leapt off up the track.

Ashley called out instructions as we bounced and slid along the track:

"You'll have to drive like you hate it," he said.

"What, the car or the track?" I asked.

"Both," was the terse reply.

"Look out for the whoopsidoo. It's big - you'll have to slow down."

"You must get over it."

"Keep over to the left. It's the only chance."

"You've got to get far enough up for us to winch."

"That's it. Now, give it all you've got."

We got over the whoopsidoo, but because I'd slowed, came to a standstill not much further on. Not far enough.

So, I backed down a bit for another go.

I put my foot down. Hard. And kept it there. We bounced over the whoopsidoo and were thrown to the left. When the wheels gripped we churned our way over to the right. We slipped and slid all over the track. Sometimes we even went off it before being

bounced back by the banks on either side. We inched our way up finally coming to a standstill in a cloud of steam from our spinning wheels.

We waited while Ashley came up the hill. We had no way of telling whether we had climbed far enough to be winched. All we could see were the silhouettes of tree trunks disappearing into the fog above us.

Ashley arrived puffing from the climb. We waited for him to say "Derek and Janet, you are in last place and have been eliminated. You must return to camp."

But instead he said, "You've done really well. We can winch you from here."

Through the fog, we watched the ghostly figures of Ashley, Graeme and Mark on the track ahead of us coming and going as they set up the winch cable, block and extension straps. It needed a winch to get us around a corner and to a spot where, after two false starts and another winch, we could drive out on to more level ground.

It proved to be the last problem and we drove on to the end of the track. We had covered 13.7 km and it had taken six and a half hours. We each handed over our roasts, vegetables and other supplies to help those back at camp get through the next few days. We wished Ashley and Graeme all the best and set off along Birregun Road for Dargo. Ashley and Graeme turned left at Murdering Spur Track to return to camp while we continued on to Jones Road and Dargo.

A little way down Jones Road Mark got himself out of shape on a greasy section, ending up a bit sideways on a curve with his left rear pointing into the bank. Jan and I waited while he slid his way down the ice-like surface in 4WD and low first. Forewarned, we fared a little better but it was like driving on wet glass.

That must be it, we thought. Until Mark radioed, "Oh, oh. I think we've got a bit of a problem here."

A big tree had come down across the track. Out came Mark's chainsaw, which ran out of fuel halfway through. I had to use a branch to lever up the tree to get the saw out. With no fuel for the saw, we chopped our way through it with my axe and cleared the track.

Eight hours after leaving camp, we reached Dargo at 8.15. Mark and Julie had to stop there anyway – their low fuel warning light had been on since we were on Birregun Road. Jan and I had decided that there was no point in going further so we decided to stay in the hotel as well.

There was one, very expensive room left at the inn. A dormitory type room with an upstairs and downstairs. We stayed despite the cost. We had arrived 15 minutes after the pub stopped serving dinner. They were running a Calcutta Night so would not re-open the kitchen. The four of us picknicked on the floor of

our room from bits of cheese, dips and chips plus some beer and wine. We were all pretty stuffed.

After we'd all had a welcome shower, Mark and Julie found renewed energy and went off to the bar just after midnight. Jan and I went to bed. We didn't hear Mark and Julie return.

We arrived home just before 2.00pm on Tuesday and after unpacking, Jan made the calls to let everyone

know that although stuck, everyone was safe and well and had plenty of food and water to last until Thursday.

We were really surprised to learn that everyone had driven out the next day.

Derek Hymas



Trip Report

King River Fishing Trip

18 – 20 Nov. 2005

Ashley Trip leader
 Brian
 Graeme & Sue
 George
 James & Wazza
 Mark & Chris
 Michael, Verylle & kids
 Paul & Robert
 Colin & Shane
 Phil
 Murray
 Peter & friends

So that this report doesn't become the usual belittling of members for the amusement of others the following subjects won't be mentioned:

- 1 - James falling in the river and getting water on the inside of his waders
- 2 - Mark leaving plastic on his meat (yes Joe, that mark)!
- 3 - Paul coming to the fire with a wet crutch and blaming it on his son
- 4 - Ashley's claim of catching 3 fish, corroborated by two shady characters, Colin & Shane. No fish were produced and they weren't for sale on Ebay Monday, I checked!

Mark and I arrived Friday evening to find Graeme, Sue, George, Paul, Robert and Brian ensconced around a cheery fire. After setting up camp and cooking dinner we settled in for the night. James and Wazza were already out fishing, without success.

Ashley, Michael and Verylle arrived around 9.00 and after setting up they too joined the session around the fire where good cheer and the usual lies were shared.

A few showers dampened the spirits on Friday night but Saturday saw us rising to a perfect day, sunny, a slight breeze but certainly no rain. The early birds went fishing with no luck while the smart people had a lie in, a leisurely breakfast and a pleasant afternoon chewing the cud, fishing, reading etc. Graeme and

Sue went to Craig's Hut for a wedding, of all things! In all a pleasant afternoon had by all.

Saturday also saw the arrival of Colin, Shane, Phil, Murray and Peter and friends.

That night found us gathering around the campfire again to cook bush tucker, whether it be snags and bread or chicken Kiev or everything in between. A great night had by all!

Sunday, another glorious day in the high country. The pack up began with some members going off for another fish, some heading straight for home and some intrepid souls following Ashley on a mystery tour down Weston's track to destinations unknown.

Not a lot of 4WDing on this trip but a lot of fishing, which was the aim.

Thanks to Ashley for organising another great trip away. Hopefully it will inspire other members to become involved in running trips we can all enjoy.

Special thanks to Craig for travelling up the weekend before and stashing a large pile of firewood. What a team player!

Chris Jennings

Yahoo Groups

Sign yourself up as a Yahoo user at
<http://groups.yahoo.com>

Then go to

<http://autos.groups.yahoo.com/group/vfwdc>

And click on "Join this group"

Saturday

Saturday started of slowly as some of us had been up until about 4 the night before just having a few drinks to try and relax after the trip in to the campground. The weather was good and most of us were thinking, "If it stays like this it will be a great weekend".

A few of us went for a walk up to the hut that is fairly near the camp. The kids enjoyed exploring but were kept close by due top the large number of hunters that were around. I must say that it was quite disconcerting to have people with dogs and guns walking through the camp with a look on their faces that said, "I want to kill something".

As the day passed Craig and Marika arrived with Derek, Janet and Craig Rea. Mark & Julie came a bit later with Chris and Gavin. The rest of the day was spent talking and enjoying the camp. Some of us finished setting up annexes before sitting down at the fire to enjoy the

weekend

I just want to finish by saying that although the trip wasn't quite what Ashley had in mind when he woke up on Friday morning and noting that there were a few hiccups along the way, it was great to get away with some friends and enjoy the bush. Thanks for organising it



Sunday

We woke to another bright blue sky, although some were nursing sore heads from the night before. Peter, Dale, and Jamie were up and at it earlier than most and their quest to catch a fish had begun. It was a leisurely pack up for all, I decided to explore a few tracks and camping areas that I have yet to visit and Phil, Happy, James and Colin decided to tag along. Michael and a few others took the opportunity of the great weather and visited Craigs Hut.

For those in the exploring group we headed back up King Basin Road towards Pineapple Flat and made our way along Westons Track and onto No.3 Road. Along this section the view was fabulous and the scenery was typical snow gums; I always admire this great land of ours. From there we stopped at Tomahawk Hut where we had lunch and a quick look around. Making our way along Evans Creek Track we came across what looked like a nasty bog hole. Doing the right thing we stopped and checked the depth – the water level was ok but the mud was deep. There was

a section to the right that had

been used and I decided to take this. Looks were deceiving and about one-third of the way through I was stuck; no locker was going to help this time. James came to the rescue and snatched me out. While this was happening Colin came across a bypass track which we took as a detour. We crossed Evans Creek where there were reported sightings of trout, although I'm not sure whether this was an hallucination from the lack of fish caught or just wishful thinking. Stopping at Evans Creek Hut, which had been recently rebuilt, the area was large but not one I would recommend as a camping area. Continuing along we eventually came out at Tolmie.

It was a good trip through this area which I had yet to visit – always good to have an idea of an area for future reference.

Thanks to everyone who attended the weekend and sorry for catching all the fish (not really J).

Ashley