



April 2008

# Free Wheeling

Official Newsletter of the Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club

Registration No A0002184F



SUNSET ON THE MURRAY – EASTER 2008



The Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club Inc is an affiliated club of  
the Victoria Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs Inc (VAFWDC)  
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## COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT 2007-2008

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President	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904	<a href="mailto:president@vfwdc.com">president@vfwdc.com</a>
Vice President	John Partridge	0428 331 211	<a href="mailto:vicepres@vfwdc.com">vicepres@vfwdc.com</a>
Treasurer	Craig Major	0432 876 699	<a href="mailto:treasurer@vfwdc.com">treasurer@vfwdc.com</a>
Secretary	Paul Ryan	0438 121 148	<a href="mailto:secretary@vfwdc.com">secretary@vfwdc.com</a>

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## GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Assistant Secretary	Lesley Peters		<a href="mailto:asstsec@vfwdc.com">asstsec@vfwdc.com</a>
Trip Co-ordinator	John Partridge	0428 331 211	<a href="mailto:trips@vfwdc.com">trips@vfwdc.com</a>
Training Co-ordinator	Michael Rodger	0412 530 666	<a href="mailto:training@vfwdc.com">training@vfwdc.com</a>
Newsletter Editor	Lesley Peters		<a href="mailto:editor@vfwdc.com">editor@vfwdc.com</a>

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Association Delegate	John Partridge	0428 331 211	<a href="mailto:trips@vfwdc.com">trips@vfwdc.com</a>
Training Officers	Mark Kochan	0412 544 668	
	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904	<a href="mailto:president@vfwdc.com">president@vfwdc.com</a>
	John Partridge	0428 331 211	<a href="mailto:trips@vfwdc.com">trips@vfwdc.com</a>
	Michael Rodger	0412 530 666	<a href="mailto:training@vfwdc.com">training@vfwdc.com</a>
New Member Contact	Paul Ryan	0438 121 148	<a href="mailto:secretary@vfwdc.com.au">secretary@vfwdc.com.au</a>
Web Manager	Paul Ryan		

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**Forward Articles & Photos for the Newsletter to:**

**[editor@vfwdc.com](mailto:editor@vfwdc.com)**

**All contributions to be submitted prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month**

## CLUB DETAILS

Registered Name:	Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club Inc
Registration No:	A002184F
All Correspondence:	The Secretary Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club Inc PO Box 778 Dandenong Vic 3173
Email:	<a href="mailto:secretary@vfwdc.com.au">secretary@vfwdc.com.au</a>
Web Site:	<a href="http://www.vfwdc.com">www.vfwdc.com</a>
Meetings:	Held first Tuesday of each month excluding January (no meeting). The November meeting is held on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> 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.*

## President's Report



Hello and welcome to another month of *Free Wheeling*.

Well it has been a busy month with work which looks like continuing for a little while yet. As the old saying goes if it doesn't rain it pours, but at least I am busy. Unfortunately, due to more work commitments I will be unable to attend the April meeting. Fortunately John is more than capable and will no doubt conduct the meeting with ease. With his past experience as President, he looks like a perfect candidate for the forthcoming elections.

There will be a guest speaker from Affinity Insurance Brokers visiting the April meeting. I was insured with Affinity for 12 months, but when the premium renewal was higher than my original company I changed back. After speaking to them at the Wandin show they reviewed my policy the following week and I was pleasantly surprised to see the premium is a lot more competitive and in fact cheaper. They also have many new benefits that cater specifically for four wheel drivers. As a result, I thought it would be a good idea to have a representative from Affinity to explain all the benefits.

The Easter period is well and truly over and two trips were run and enjoyed. Bob McKerrow led a trip to Top Crossing Hut and although it was short notice, managed to have several members attend. From their account it was a great trip and very well run. I look forward to reading their adventures in the next newsletter. The other trip was to the Murray at Hattah Kulkyne NP – one that is fast becoming an annual event. As usual it was a very relaxing time enjoyed by all who attended. Already there are murmurs about next year's trip.

I know I say it frequently in my report, but the calendar is looking very tidy indeed. The array of trips and trip leaders is fantastic to see and thanks to all those who involved. If weekends are not convenient for you, there are several day trips of different degrees of difficulty. There is a great walking trip to Moroka Gorge which the keen walker should enjoy. I hope you all get the chance to get out there and join at least one of the trips.

Hopefully by the May meeting my work commitments will have eased and I can return to normal President duties.

See you on the next trip – or at the next meeting.

**Ashley Martin**  
President

## Minutes of the General Meeting – 4 March 2008

The meeting was held at Dandenong Library and opened by Vice-President John Partridge who welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Present: There were 18 members present as per the attendance book.

### Apologies:

Ashley Martin, Lesley Peters, Michael and Verylle Rodger, Brian Martin, Maxine Ryan, Anne Pettigrew, Steve Pitcher, Steve and Jill Boyle, Ian Webber, Ian Warburton, Brian West, Bill Harwood.

Visitors: Jane & Andy Davis

Minutes of the October meeting:

Accepted: Ken Pitcher

Seconded: Tim Axtell

Matters Arising: Nil

### Correspondence In:

- ARB 4x4 Action
- Overland Cruising
- Cross Country Jeep Club
- Variety Club 2008 Newsletter
- Rays Outdoors
- VKS 737 Radio Network News
- TESSCO Ute Trays
- Australia Post Invoice for PO Box
- Engel 4WD Challenge Series Flyer
- Toyota LC Club Cruiser-Khana 08

### Correspondence Out:

- Newsletter

### Treasurer's Report:

Receipts:	\$ 75.00
Payments:	\$ 59.98
Term Deposit:	\$6076.35
Petty Cash:	\$ 113.18
Savings:	\$3285.79
Total	\$9475.32

Accepted: Tim Axtell

Seconded: Richard Piotrowski

### Trip Coordinator's Report:

John Partridge reported on the upcoming trips which include:

- MAR 7-10: O'Tooles John
- MAR 11: Mechanics Info Night John
- MAR 21-24: Easter on the Murray Ashley

- APR 2/5-6: Proficiency Training Michael
- APR 11-12: Big River Tim
- APR 20: Tallarook DT John
- APR 25-27: Rushworth SF Paul
- MAY 9-11: Otways/Dandos Ashley
- MAH 18: Toolangi Challenge Shane

### Trip Reports:

Warburton Day Trip: James gave the trip report for Craig's Warburton day trip. The damp weather made this a little more challenging than the recce had been in the dry. On the whole, a very enjoyable day.

Wandin 4WD Show: Paul gave the report on the Club's stand at the show. As in previous years, the numbers coming through in the morning far outweighed those still in attendance in the afternoon. Fortunately the weather was fairly pleasant and we had a good steady crowd all day. We will have to wait and see if this translates into new members. We will probably participate in this as a bi-annual event.

Noojee A Grade Trip: Carl gave the report for the A Grade trip. The day started out pretty wet but gradually dried as the day progressed. Lots of wet and deeply rutted tracks that provided plenty of entertainment. Paul rolled a tyre and Steve decided to do without a front sway bar. All in all a good day out.

### Association Report:

The Association appears to be considering a membership card scheme as a way of obtaining club member details. However this does not gel with our privacy policy.

The Association is proposing to upgrade its website and is in the middle of producing a members handbook.

The Jeep Environmental awards have been won by the Jeep Club.

The Mitta Mitta 4wd gathering is on over Easter.

The agenda looks good but the cost appears to be a little on the expensive side.

The Track Classification program is being signed off by Parks Victoria.

### General Business:

Gippsland Shire members were at the Wandin 4WD show and gave us a handout for the Wellington area. Tamboritha Road from Licola to Arbuckle Junction is now open (early) hence the trip to Horseyard Flat on Anzac weekend.

Affinity Insurance were also at the Wandin show and will be coming to speak to the club at the April meeting.

**Tea Duties:** Mark Kochan – thankyou.

**Raffle:** No Raffle this month due to the low numbers in attendance and because the dunce of a Secretary left the prizes at home.

**Meeting Closed** at 9.25pm.

**Next Meeting:**

8.00pm, Tuesday 1 April 2008 at Dandenong Library.

## VFWDC MERCHANDISE

### For Sale

Club Polo Shirts	\$25.00 ea
Club Polar Fleece ½ Zip Jumper	\$36.00 ea
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Club Sleeveless Reversible Vest	\$42.00 ea
Club Caps	\$15.00 ea
VFWDC Stickers (long)	\$ 6.00 ea
Stubbie Holders	\$ 6.00 ea

We encourage all members to purchase a Club Polo Shirt.

## 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@ctsmonash.com.au](mailto:anthony@ctsmonash.com.au)



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# CLUB CALENDER AT A GLANCE

## APRIL 2008

Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup>	General Meeting	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904
Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Proficiency Training Theory	Michael Rodger	0412 530 666
Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> to Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup>	Proficiency Training Practical	Michael Rodger	0412 530 666
Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> Saturday 12 <sup>th</sup>	Big River	Tim Axtell	0414 848 753
Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup>	Tallarook Day Trip	John Partridge	0438 331 211
Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Committee Meeting	Paul Ryan	0438 121 148
Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> to Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Anzac Long Weekend Horseyard Flat</b>	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904

## MAY 2008

Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup>	General Meeting	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904
Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> to Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Otways-Dandos	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904
Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup>	Toolangi Challenge	Shane Michelin	0417 784 599
Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup>	Committee Meeting	Craig Major	0432 876 699

## JUNE 2008

Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	General Meeting	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904
Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> to Monday 9 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Queen's Birthday Long Weekend - Rushworth</b>	Paul Ryan	0438 121 148
Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Committee Meeting	Michael Rodger	0412 530 666
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> to Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Avoca	TBC	

## JULY 2008

Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup>	General Meeting	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904
Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> to Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup>	Annual Snow Trip	Craig Major	0432 876 699
Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Committee Meeting	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904

## Forthcoming Trips

Destination	PROFICIENCY TRAINING ABERFELDY FOREST AREA
<b>Trip Leader</b>	MICHAEL RODGER
<b>Contact No</b>	0412 530 666
<b>Date</b>	THEORY: WEDNESDAY 2 APRIL PRAC: SAT 5 APRIL/SUN 6 APRIL
<b>Meeting Place:</b>	TBC
<b>Vehicle Limits</b>	MINIMUM: 4 MAXIMUM: 8
<b>Grade</b>	WET: Medium DRY: Medium
<b>Last Available Fuel</b>	Petrol: Moe Diesel: Moe
<b>Maps Required</b>	N/A
<b>Radio Channel</b>	12
<b>Trip Activity Details:</b>	
This is a must do trip for any club member who hasn't attended a training weekend in the past. We will be covering many of the basic aspects of 4WDing covering a varied terrain including steep rocky tracks and river crossings. There will be something for everyone in this trip – for new and old. The latest and most up to date recovery techniques will be discussed and tested. Discussions on vehicle setup, recovery gear, the Tread Lightly! principles and more.	

Destination	BIG RIVER
<b>Trip Leader</b>	TIM AXTELL
<b>Contact No</b>	0414 848 753 / 5629 4171
<b>Date</b>	11-12 APRIL
<b>Meeting Place:</b>	HEALESVILLE PUB
<b>Vehicle Limits</b>	MINIMUM: 3 MAXIMUM: 10
<b>Grade</b>	WET: Medium DRY: Medium
<b>Equipment Required</b>	Basic recovery equipment. All terrains.
<b>Last Available Fuel</b>	Petrol: Healesville Diesel: Healesville
<b>Maps Required</b>	N/A
<b>Radio Channel</b>	12
<b>Trip Activity Details:</b>	
Plan to meet up for a bar meal Friday evening. Then camp Friday night for an earliesh (9am) start Saturday. Will be driving medium tracks with some rocky parts and hopefully some gooey stuff. A good set of all terrain tyres required.	

Destination	ANZAC LONG WEEKEND HORSEYARD FLAT
<b>Trip Leader</b>	ASHLEY MARTIN
<b>Contact No</b>	0438 600 904
<b>Date</b>	25-27 APRIL
<b>Meeting Place</b>	BP Service Centre north of Pakenham. Time TBA
<b>Vehicle Limit</b>	MIN: 3 MAX: 10
<b>Grade</b>	WET: Easy DRY: Easy
<b>Equipment Required</b>	Basic recovery.
<b>Last Available Fuel</b>	Petrol: Traralgon Diesel: Traralgon
<b>Maps Required</b>	N/A
<b>Radio Channel</b>	12
<b>Trip Activity Details:</b>	
With the opening of the Tamboritha Road we will visit an area that has been shut off for some time. The main plan for the weekend is to walk into Maroka Gorge on the Sunday. This is a medium walk and will take most of the day at an easy pace. We will also tour around on the Saturday taking in the new fire tower built at The Pinnacles which is meant to be impressive. There will be plenty of alternatives for those not wanting to do the walk into the Gorge.	

Destination	OTWAYS – DANDOS
<b>Trip Leader</b>	ASHLEY MARTIN
<b>Contact No</b>	0438 600 904
<b>Date</b>	9-11 MAY
<b>Meeting Place:</b>	Shell Westgate
<b>Vehicle Limits</b>	MINIMUM: 3 MAXIMUM: 10
<b>Grade</b>	WET: Medium DRY: Easy/Medium
<b>Equipment Required</b>	Standard recovery equipment.
<b>Last Available Fuel</b>	Petrol: Diesel:
<b>Maps Required</b>	N/A
<b>Radio Channel</b>	12
<b>Trip Activity Details:</b>	
The weekend is to be an easy one exploring some of the many waterfalls throughout the region. Unfortunately the tracks around the area have diminished over time so there won't be a lot of driving. We will try to find a few to explore but I expect these will not be too difficult. Camping will be at Dando's which is near Beech Forrest, an easy drive from Melbourne. The drive in doesn't require any four wheeling. There are toilets facilities at the camping ground. I will distribute trip	

notes on how to get there closer to the date.

DESTINATION	"TOOLANGI CHALLENGE"
<b>Trip Leader</b>	SHANE MICHELON
<b>Contact No</b>	0417 784 599 / 9800 1105
<b>Date</b>	SUNDAY 18 MAY
<b>Meeting Place:</b>	9.00am Yarra Glen Bakery
<b>Vehicle Limits</b>	MIN: 2 MAX: 6
<b>Grade</b>	WET: HARD DRY: MEDIUM
<b>Equipment Required</b>	Because this is a Medium/Hard trip, MT tyres, full recovery pack (ie snatch, shackles etc), vehicle recovery points, some lift over standard, low range.
<b>Maps Required</b>	Rooftop Toolangi Map
<b>Radio Channel</b>	12
<b>Trip Activity Details</b>	Still tying down the tracks, but probably up Aeroplane, down Steep, west on Downies Spur. Other tracks to be determined. Further Information: Be aware that due to the nature of the tracks, there is possibility of minor panel damage or scrapes.

DESTINATION	HUTS OF THE HIGH COUNTRY
<b>Trip Leader</b>	BRUCE CREMONESI
<b>Contact No</b>	Tel: 9750 6215 Mob: 0400 425296
<b>Date</b>	FRIDAY 30 MAY-SUNDAY 1 JUNE
<b>Meeting Place:</b>	Lilydale McDonalds – FRI 6pm Sheepyard Flat – SAT for 9am departure
<b>Vehicle Limits</b>	MIN: 3 MAX: 6 <b>NO TRAILERS</b>
<b>Grade</b>	WET: Medium DRY: Easy – although there will be water crossings
<b>Approx Kms</b>	Lilydale to Sheepyard – 190kms Off-road – 100kms
<b>Last Fuel</b>	PETROL: Mansfield DIESEL: Mansfield
<b>Maps Required</b>	Rooftop Maps Bush Huts around Mansfield
<b>Radio Channel</b>	12
<b>Equipment:</b>	A 4wd. Recovery gear. A Blind or Snorkel fitted. UHF radio and handheld if you have one. Good warm clothing & boots and spare dry clothes - it can be wet and COLD (minus 8 last time!).

Camping Gear (tent, sleeping bags, pillows, tent, bog roll etc).

Cooking gear, drinks and food.

Food and drinks for Happy Hour.

Cameras, there is lots to photograph up there for those that haven't been before unless its raining and cloudy ☹.

A smile, sense of adventure and humor.

Any single blind girlfriends you may have

#### Trip Activity Details:

I am aiming for a casual fun easy weekend for my first trip with the club. This is a very easy fun trip to run, or travel along with. There will be some interesting sites thrown in for good measure.

Good ATs will be a distinct advantage as some of these areas can turn to slurry with 10mins of rain.

FRIDAY NIGHT: Camping at Sheepyard Flat, socialize with fire and drinks.

SATURDAY: 9.30am departure unless ready earlier.

The huts or site remains will be visited at this stage if possible.

1 - Frys Hut

2 - Tunnel Bend

3 - Upper Jamieson Hut

4 - Refrigerator Gap

5 - Lovicks Hut

6 - Bluff Hut (burnt out)

7 - Pikes Flat

8 - Bindaree Hut. Either camp there or another location nearby.

If we are traveling well, we can continue onto Kings for first night.

SUNDAY: 9.30 departure unless ready earlier.

1 - Bindaree Falls – Walk up the hill for those willing, and you can go in behind the falls and look back down the valley.

2 - Monument Track to Craig's Hut (burnt out).

3 - Kings Hut.

There are several water crossings beyond Kings Hut area, so Snorkels or Blinds are advisable, there will be water possibly deep and flowing fast.

4 - Razorback Hut

5 - Bus Hut (burnt out)

6 - Refuge Mt No 3 Hut (burnt out)

7 - Tomahawk Gap and Tomahawk Hut

To Buttercup Road then Mansfield for a coffee, dinner if you like, definitely a wee, and then home.

#### EDITOR'S NOTE:

We wish to apologise for the late delivery of the newsletter over the past few months.

Regrettably, due to my work commitments, including a trip to Singapore, and the Easter holiday period, it has been difficult to find the time to finalise the newsletter.

Your understanding is appreciated and we hope you continue to enjoy reading *Free Wheeling*.

Thank you, LP



**NOOJEE – “A” GRADE TRIP  
23 FEBRUARY 2008**

<b>Trip Leader:</b>	<b>John Partridge</b>	<b>GQ Patrol</b>
<b>Participants:</b>	<b>Ashley Martin</b>	<b>GU Patrol</b>
	<b>Paul Ryan</b>	<b>80 Series</b>
	<b>Carl Surtees</b>	<b>GQ Patrol</b>
	<b>&amp; Andy Davis</b>	
	<b>Steve &amp; Rob Boyle</b>	<b>80 Series</b>

We started the day at the BP roadhouse in Nar Nar Goon, a good spot to meet for future trips because you can have a coffee etc if you have to wait for the trip leader to arrive (if you get my drift).

Heading through Neerim South we passed through an area that had been burnt out by bushfire; the new growth was quite impressive and gives a different perspective of the bush. Light rain started as we were dropping the tyre pressures after which we headed along Patrol Rd until we found an unnamed track which twisted and turned but didn't lead anywhere. It at least held our attention because some of the trees got a bit too close for comfort. As you would appreciate, the last thing I want to do is scratch the duco!

Once back on Patrol Rd we followed Billstone Track where there is a nice camping area for three or four cars. The rain had stopped and sun was doing its best to poke through the clouds much to Rob's relief. We skirted the pine plantation until we reached Stoll Rd which is fairly straightforward with a short rocky section at the end before you cross a creek. We doubled back down Hard Up Haul Track which took us back to the creek. The track lived up to its name about 50 meters up the other side where there was a choice of taking a short heavily rutted section or the long way round which was a bit smarter. Needless to say Carl took the short cut to save time. He negotiated the hard part quite well but then had all sorts of trouble on the easy bit at the top. Anyway I decided to take the hard way because... well just because. About halfway up, when we were on what some might consider to be a bit of an angle, Rob said we came perilously close to a tree (he may not have used those exact words) I hadn't noticed because I was busy looking at the sky which was all I could see at the time. Further along the track Paul stopped to re-seat the bead on a front tyre. A little bit later Paul pumped up his tyre again.

The next interesting track didn't have a name, although I could think of a few. We spent a bit of time on this one, John got an assist from Ashley,



Carl got up and then snatched me up after I had a few goes, just couldn't get enough bite from the tyres (note for Jill). Paul got straight up without any trouble with his chunky tyres (Jill are you taking note?). At the top it was time for lunch and Paul finally had to change his tyre. It was the day for tyre problems as I discovered a leak as well but got away with just putting some extra air into it.



We made our way to Hawthorn Crossing; the bridge is gone but there is now a good crossing which gives the car a bath on the way across. The camping area near the crossing is a bit disappointing. The rest of the afternoon provided a few challenging tracks and some good fun. By the end of the day Paul had found a tree stump that had an affinity for his passenger side doors, my sway bar mount was ripped off and my brake master cylinder died. John had a stick come up and dent his sill. Other than that we came through unscathed and had a great day.

**Steve Boyle**

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## O'TOOLES

### LABOUR DAY WEEKEND – 7-10 MARCH 2007

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**Trip Leader:** John Partridge Nissan GQ Patrol

**Participants:**

Michael, Verylle, Liberty

& Elizabeth Rodger

Gary Smith

Tony & Kelly Richards

Nissan GU Patrol

Nissan GU Patrol

Toyota Prado

#### Friday

After leaving work early I made good time to Moe where I did some last minute shopping before heading up to Rawson General Store.

I had found out a few weeks prior that the Little O'Tooles camping ground had been closed since the fires as the toilet block had burnt down. A quick call to the Ranger in charge, Noel Lees, and before I knew it they were agreeing to have the key to the camping ground left in an envelope and left at the general store. This is a direct benefit to us from developing a close relationship with the rangers and helping out on a few different projects.

I managed to get to the camping ground by about 6.20pm and have camp set up only minutes later (The advantage of having a swag ☺). There was plenty of wood laying around to get the fire going which I used to cook my dinner. It was a fair wait until about midnight when the Rodgers finally turned up (after inadvertently heading up to Aberfeldy...)

#### Saturday

We woke up to some nice fine weather and soon after having breakfast Gary arrived.

Before long we were heading out, locking the gate behind us, and headed up Sullivan's Tk and onto Mt Selma and then down to the Mulholland Mine site. The track is steep in places and a little off camber which lifted some of our wheels.

There are a couple of tunnels that you can see as you come down the track, but these are in poor condition and should be avoided.

We soon reached the bottom of the track and had a bite to eat by the river before exploring the mine there. The tunnel here at the bottom is in a very sound condition and extends quite a distance into the mountain. The first 10 meters or so has a bit of water on the ground but after that it was all easy. I led them way in and the LED light made it very easy to navigate our way through. A short distance in there was a tunnel extending off to the left which we explored and ended up in a flooded section which split off into two levels. Previously I have explored both of these, with the upper section proving to be difficult to negotiate due to the angle it extends up at. This time we turned around and kept on heading further in along the main tunnel. A small distance further we turned off to the left again to explore another off chute. This one ended in a dead end. I convinced the girls that it is tradition for everyone to turn off their lights to experience the darkness of the mine. After the lights were extinguished, I counted to three, and when I turned

the light on I yelled out a roar which absolutely scared the girls! LOL.

It was an easy drive back, stopping briefly to have a look at Kitty Cane's grave along the roadside. Not long after getting back Tony and Kelly arrived with their very nicely set up Prado and camper trailer.

A very pleasant night was had by all by the campfire.

#### Sunday

We headed out in the morning for a bit of driving, heading up the steep S Track (old sections were unfortunately blocked) and then down the rocky Army track. Lunch was had at the hut at the bottom of Army Track.

Next we headed up Morning Star Track which had a nice rocky section further up and then we looped around on White Star and then onto Willoughby Spur Track and then back along Donnelly's Creek Track to the camping ground. It was still early afternoon and we had plenty of time to relax, have a swim and some even had a shower.

#### Monday

Time to pack up and start to head out. Gary and myself headed out and up Flats Track, down to the junction then up the steep Bridle Track. Gary then headed off to check out the Aberfeldy river further down stream while I headed down to Beardmore's crossing and then to the dam wall where I met the Rodgers for lunch. Whilst we were airing up, Tony arrived from his drive dragging his trailer up Flats Track and Gary also turned up. After dropping the gate key back to the general store, it was a leisurely drive back down the mountain and to our respective homes.



Thank you to all who attended and a very big thank you to the Noel and Kate of the Parkers Corner DSE for allowing us to have exclusive use of this camping ground.

*John Partridge*



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3<sup>rd</sup> March 2008

The Secretaries  
All member Associations

### NEWSLETTER FOR ALL CLUBS

Many club members are owners of emergency radio beacons operating on the 121.5 MHz frequency. An update presented at the AusSAR Forum held in Canberra recently, indicated that there will be a late rush for the new 406 MHz units which will be very difficult to satisfy.

The phasing out of 121.5 MHz radio beacons will be complete by 1 February 2009. Signals are received by four satellites which are operated by France & Canada. The latest news is that one of these four will be decommissioned four or five months earlier than the scheduled shut down.

The new units operating at 406MHz are in high demand and current waiting times for delivery is around six weeks from date of purchase. This is not going to improve in the short term, as demand must increase as the shutdown date gets closer because registered 121.5 MHz units number around 121,000. About 29,000 406 MHz units have been supplied so far, and are in the process of being registered by the owners with AMSA. Those who intend carrying a beacon on their outback travels during 2009 would be wise to order their 406 units now and complete their registration immediately upon receipt of the unit. For more information about registration go to <http://beacons.amsa.gov.au/>

Please note that because of the large amount of contained lithium, these beacons should never be tossed out in the garbage but should be handed in for recycling. 121.5 MHz beacon owners are strongly urged to dispose of the units responsibly and most good retailers will accept them for proper disposal at point of purchase of the new beacons.

Yours sincerely

*Rob Kelly*

President