



# FREE WHEELING

March 2020



Original photo by M Griffiths at  
Wombat State Forest

Official Newsletter of the  
Victorian Four Wheel  
Drive Club Inc

Registration No  
A0002184F





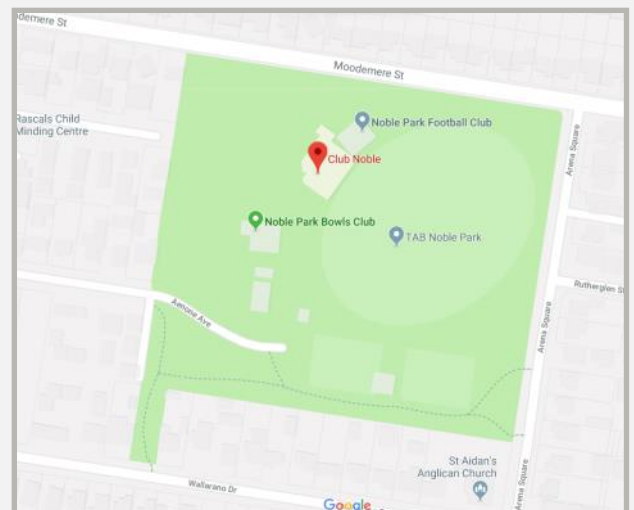
### VFWDC General Meeting Venue

The club meets on the first WEDNESDAY of each month at 8:00pm. With the following exceptions; No meeting in January. November meeting is at a selected location, watch the calendar.

#### Blue and Gold Room

Club Noble  
46-56 Moodemere Street  
Noble Park  
Melways ref: 89 D4

Members and guests are welcome to dine at the bistro before attending the meeting from 6:30pm.



### Aberfeldy Track

In association with [Westland Gippsland Relic, Mining and Heritage Protection Inc](#) , the club maintains a section of the Aberfeldy Track with working bees throughout the year. View the club calendar for the next upcoming working bee.

# COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

## 2019-2020

President	Steve Pitcher	<a href="mailto:president@vfwdc.com">president@vfwdc.com</a>
Vice President	David Bruinsma	<a href="mailto:vicepres@vfwdc.com">vicepres@vfwdc.com</a>
Secretary	Sally Higgs	<a href="mailto:secretary@vfwdc.com">secretary@vfwdc.com</a>
Treasurer	Ly Ho	<a href="mailto:treasurer@vfwdc.com">treasurer@vfwdc.com</a>

## General Committee

Trip Coordinator	Des Whall	<a href="mailto:trips@vfwdc.com">trips@vfwdc.com</a>
Magazine Editor	Mary Griffiths	<a href="mailto:editor@vfwdc.com">editor@vfwdc.com</a>
Association Delegate	David Bruinsma	<a href="mailto:delegate@vfwdc.com">delegate@vfwdc.com</a>
General Committee	Callum Brown Jeff Griffiths	

## Support Positions to Committee

Web Manager	Ben Whitworth	<a href="mailto:web@vfwdc.com">web@vfwdc.com</a>
Training officer	Phillip Griffith	
Training officer	Ashley Martin	
Merchandise	Des Whall	<a href="mailto:merchandise@vfwdc.com">merchandise@vfwdc.com</a>
Catering	Ann Crockett	

## Club Details

Registered Name	Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club
Registration No	A002184F
Correspondence	PO Box 778 Dandenong VIC 3174
Email	<a href="mailto:secretary@vfwdc.com">secretary@vfwdc.com</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.vfwdc.com">www.vfwdc.com</a>
The Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club is an affiliated club of <a href="http://www.fwdvictoria.org.au">Four Wheel Drive Victoria</a> - <a href="http://www.fwdvictoria.org.au">www.fwdvictoria.org.au</a>	

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Hi all,

I hope that you enjoy reading this month's edition of *Free Wheeling* magazine.

A big thank you to those that have recently put their hands up to run trips in support of recent bushfire relief efforts. And to those who are attending these trips, volunteering their time and supporting some of the affected communities.

Last general meeting, we discussed the prospect of the club also donating to one or more of the bushfire relief efforts. For anyone that was unable to attend, there was overwhelming support for this. I will put the Committee's recommendation forward at our March general meeting so, if you can make it, please do attend.

The Committee has also been busy working in the background, planning and arranging for guest speakers, presentations, etc. If you have a particular topic of interest, or if you know of a relevant industry contact that would be happy to attend one of our club meetings as a guest presenter, please get in touch.

We get to enjoy a long weekend this month. We have a couple of trips planned and in the pipeline but could always do with more trip leaders. If you have an idea for a possible trip that you'd like to run but feel that you could do with a bit of help getting it off the ground, please reach out to our Trip Coordinator (or any Committee member for that matter) as we'd be only too happy to help.

I am looking forward to seeing you all at the next general meeting or, if you can't make it, at one of our up-coming trips.

Take care, keep safe and remember to tread lightly.

Steve Pitcher  
President



CLUB MERCHANDISE



PRICING


Club Polo Shirt	\$28.00	Club Hoodie	\$50.00
Club Singlet and T-Shirt	\$15.00	Club Sleeveless Reversible Vest	\$50.00
Club Polar Fleece Full Zip Jacket	\$45.00	Club Bucket Hat	\$16.00
Club Caps	\$10.00	Club Beanie	\$10.00
Club Wide Brim Hat	\$18.00	VFWDC Windscreen stickers	
Club Drivers Jacket (Coat)	\$70.00	Small	\$6.00
		Large	\$8.00
Club Cloth Badges 120mm	\$8.00		

We encourage all members to purchase a Club Polo shirt.  
Email your order to [merchandise@vfwdc.com](mailto:merchandise@vfwdc.com). Please ensure you advise size required.

# CLUB NOBLE FORM

Did you know if you're a member of Club Noble (the sporting club next door to the meeting), you get discounts on your meal and drinks. And when it's your birthday, you get more than enough points for a feed and drink. \$10 per year—pretty good I reckon!

[Click here to download the form](#) and hand it to reception desk.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL

Membership Application (Please tick)

New ☐ Renewal ☐ Existing Member No: .....

Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Ms ☐ Other ☐

Given Name/s: ..... Male ☐ Female ☐ D.O.B: ...../...../.....

Last Name: .....

Postal Address: ..... Suburb: .....

State: ..... Postcode: ..... Mobile Number: ..... Home Phone: .....

Email Address: .....

Membership Fee (Please Tick) 1 Year \$10 ☐ 2 years \$20 ☐ 3 Years \$30 ☐

Payment Details (Please Tick) Cash ☐ Cheque ☐ C/C ☐

Card Holders Name: ..... Card Type: Visa ☐ M/card ☐

Card No: ...../...../...../..... Expiry Date: ...../...../.....

Signature: ..... Date: ...../...../.....

I hereby apply to become a member of the Noble Park Football Social Club Ltd and agree to observe the rules and by-laws. I verify that I am over the age of 18 and have received and carefully read and understood the Loyalty Membership terms. I agree to strictly abide by these Loyalty Membership Terms as amended from time to time and declare that the details in the application are true and correct.


I wish to receive communications including promotional material, third party offers that include alcohol or gaming related advertising (Please Tick) Yes ☐ No ☐

I agree to receive my Player Activity Statement in accordance with government legislation (Please tick one box only) Mail ☐ SMS ☐ Email ☐

I agree to accept the Annual Report and Financial Statement via: Please Circle one option

Members Section (Website) Email

Signature: ..... Date: ...../...../.....



YourPlay gives you the power to track how much money and time you are spending as you play. You can also use YourPlay to set limits on the money and time you spend on gaming machines and to see your playing history online at any time. YourPlay can be added to your loyalty membership card and used on any gaming machine in Victoria. You can register for YourPlay at [yourplay.com.au](http://yourplay.com.au) or ask a staff member for assistance

INTERNAL USE ONLY

Membership Number: ..... Customer ID Sighted: .....

Staff Member's Name: ..... Confirm Customer's over 18: .....

THANK YOU AND WELCOME TO CLUB NOBLE

## CLUB CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

### March

4th	Wed	General Meeting		
7th to 9th	Sat to Mon	Labour Day weekend Talbotville Base Camp	David Bruinsma	0417 747 860
16th	Mon	Committee Meeting		
21st	Sat	Bunyip Nightrun	Andre Van Der Walt	0404 191 949
21st to 22nd	Sat to Sun	Gippsland Relief Road Trip	Des Whall	0412 170 139

### April

1st	Wed	General Meeting	Guest Speaker – Tim Bates	
10th to 13th	Fri to Mon	Easter Weekend Talbotville Base Camp	David Bruinsma	0417 747 860
10th to 13th	Fri to Mon	Easter Weekend - Blaze Aid Working bee	Brett & Niki Buchanan	0407 878 970
20th	Mon	Committee Meeting		

### May

6th	Wed	General Meeting		
18th	Mon	Committee Meeting		
23rd to 24th	Sat to Sun	Hidden Huts Weekend	Steve Pitcher	0421 205 529

## IMPORTANT

- Club meeting venue has changed. The meeting is now held in the Blue and Gold Room, upstairs of Club Noble. You can enter via the front door or at the back where a member will show you up.
- Club merchandise has been reduced! Check out the new prices on page five and pick up some new gear for this warmer season.
- If you wish to join us for dinner before the General Meeting, please book a spot at [Club Noble](#). Phone 9546 0653 and ask to join “Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club” table. You must book **BEFORE** the Monday on the week of the meeting to avoid disappointment!
- **General Meeting Wednesday 1st April 2020**  
Special Guest Speaker—Tim Bates, 4WD Adventures  
*Come and join us for an interesting night listening to Tim Bates tell us about his adventures in the high country.*



# MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING

**February 5, 2020**

**Meeting Open: 20:05 Hours**

## **Attendees**

As per attendance sheet

## **Apologies**

As per attendance sheet

## **Minutes from Last Meeting**

Accepted by Jeff

Seconded by Ann

## **Matters arising from Last Meeting**

- Nil

## **Correspondence In/ Out:**

Emails In and out

- Various 4WD Victoria Emails relating to Fire support
- Half year affiliation tax invoice from 4WD Victoria

## **Mail**

- Bendigo Bank Statements - December 2019

## **Treasurer's Report:**

- As per treasurer's report for December and January

Accepted by: Andre

Second by: Stuart

## **Association Delegate Report**

- No formal report
- FWDV announced that they will be donating \$2,000 towards the bushfire appeal and accepting donations from affiliated clubs and/or their members until 31 March 2020

## **New Members/Guests and Prospective Members**

Visitors - as per attendance sheet

## **Driver Training**

- No report
- Proficiency Training and Advanced Training plan for the year to come.

## **Guest Speakers**

- No speaker tonight.

## **General Business**

Discussed how we can support areas impacted by fire. Options considered.

- Financial donations from the club to the bushfire appeal.
- Running club trips into fire affected area.
- Providing volunteers to support rebuild - Huts Association, Blazeaid.

Motion raised and passed for the club to undertake a financial contribution to the bushfire relief.

- Email to be sent out to members advising we want to contribute donations to bushfire relief and survey of the charity options for members to contribute to. Committee will take feedback and come back to the members at our next meeting with proposed organisations to donate to.

There is also interest from members to participate in volunteer activities supporting the rebuild.

- We have plenty of merchandise so please see Des if you want to buy something.
- Reminder: Trip leaders please ensure a trip report is lodged to the editor of the magazine before the 25th of the month so that they can create the magazine.
- Please email photos to the web manager to upload into the photo gallery on our website.
- As we get back into the trips please keep an eye out for the good on ya award nominees. Send nominations to Des at [trips@vfwdc.com](mailto:trips@vfwdc.com)



- It was raised that it is disappointing that we have a lack of trips coming up for the club. Need to get more people running trips. If you have a location that you want to go to please put up a trip and someone will be happy to help you run it.
- Discussion on number plate cloning and to be aware of photos of plates and issues if people use your number plates for criminal purposes.

### **Upcoming Trips**

- Wombat State Park Trip - 14th March - Trip Leader Stuart
- Wonnangatta - Labour Weekend - David B - to be confirmed based on access
- Lakes Entrance to Orbost trip - Des to send out a plan once he confirms dates.

### **Past Trips**

Trips completed since last general meeting:

- Tasmania (Stuart) - circumnavigation of Tasmania
- Strathbogie - Jeff - easy trip to have a look around the area - stayed at St James camping reserve - compact area so good for base camp
- Christmas Break-up (David) - Gilwell Park Scout Camp - 8 vehicles attended. Nice relaxing weekend with great weather
- Ulupna Island (Steve/David) - Australia Day Weekend. Relaxing weekend on the beach, went to strawberry farm

### **Raffle Prizes**

- Maps - Ian
- Winch Strap - Wayne
- Western Australia Map Book - Michael
- Club Hoodie - David
- Picnic Set - Steve P

Proceeds from the raffle will be held aside to potentially be contributed to fire relief fund donations.

Meeting Closed Hours 21.55.  
Next meeting March 4th 2020

Bringing Four Wheel Drivers Together



Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club Inc  
www.vfwdc.com

## Treasurer's Report January 2020

<u>Cheque A/C</u>	Opening Balance as at 01/01/2020		\$5,060.59
	Add:		
	<u>Less:</u>		
	Closing Balance as at 31/01/2020		\$5,060.59
<u>Term Deposit</u>	Opening Balance as at 01/01/2020	\$6,703.04	
	Closing Balance as at 31/01/2020		\$6,753.63
<u>Petty Cash</u>	Opening Balance as at 01/01/2020	\$50.00	
	Add:		
	Less:		
	Closing Balance as at 31/01/2020		<u>\$50.00</u>
	<b>Consolidated Closing Cash Position</b>		<b><u>\$11,864.22</u></b>

## UPCOMING TRIPS

**DESTINATION**  
**LEADER/CONTACT NO.**

Labour Day Weekend—Talbotville (base camp)

NAME: David Bruinsma

MOB: 0417 747 860

**DATE**

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> to Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2020

**MEETING PLACE / TIME**

BP outbound - Pakenham Bypass at Officer

Time: Saturday 7th at 6:30am for 7:00am departure

**GRADE**

WET: Medium / Hard

DRY: Easy

**TRIP ACTIVITY DETAILS**

Drive up highway to Sale/Stratford/Glenaladale/Dargo/Grant, then down into Talbotville Camping Area. Good idea top up with fuel at Sale or Stratford. Depending on stops, it will be approx. 4.5 / 5.0 hr drive to destination.

Set up base camp at approx. lunch time and relax for the remainder of the day. Saturday and Sunday - small, ½ day, or full day trips can be planned for exploring the surrounding district and the planning for these trips can be done around the camp fire the night before.

Excursions could include: Crooked River track - heaps of shallow river crossings, Basalt Track, Billy Goat Bluff Track, visit Kingswell Bridge etc.

Monday will be pack up and leave in your own time frame, it will be an easy drive out back to Dargo.

Sunday night will be the traditional camp roast off around the camp fire.

**VEHICLE LIMITS**

MINIMUM: 3

MAXIMUM: No maximum

**APPROX KMS MEETING PLACE  
TO DESTINATION**

Approx. 8 hour drive in—and 8 hours drive out.

Approx. 650 kms round trip (from Berwick and back to Berwick), plus any day excursions (allow 50/80km per day)

**LAST AVAILABLE FUEL**

PETROL: Sale / Dargo

DIESEL: Sale / Dargo

**DISTANCE BETWEEN SUPPLIES**

**EQUIPMENT REQUIRED**

All personal camping equipment, food and drinks, and basic recovery equipment and air compressor

**MAPS REQUIRED**

Dargo high country map is best

**RADIO CHANNEL CB / UHF**

UHF 12, or call me on mobile.

**GOOGLE MAPS**



DESTINATION	Bunyip
LEADER/CONTACT NO.	NAME: Andre Van Der Walt MOB: 0404 191 949
DATE	Saturday 21st March, 2020
MEETING PLACE / TIME	8.00 pm Caltex Longwarry (Eastbound) 341 Sand Rd, Cnr Princes Hwy, Longwarry
GRADE	WET: Hard (Won't run) DRY: Medium
TRIP ACTIVITY DETAILS	NIGHTRUN  Planning on doing Western track in Bunyip as a night run. Might do some other tracks in the area depending on time.
VEHICLE LIMITS	MINIMUM: 3 MAXIMUM: 10
APPROX KMS MEETING PLACE TO DESTINATION	30 kms
LAST AVAILABLE FUEL	PETROL: Caltex Longwarry (Eastbound) DIESEL: Caltex Longwarry (Eastbound)
DISTANCE BETWEEN SUPPLIES EQUIPMENT REQUIRED	Basic recovery gear  Flashlights might be a good idea
MAPS REQUIRED	Bunyip
RADIO CHANNEL CB / UHF	12
GOOGLE MAPS	<a href="#">See Map</a>

<b>DESTINATION</b>	Gippsland Relief Road Trip
<b>LEADER/CONTACT NO.</b>	NAME: Des Whall MOBILE: 0412 170 139
<b>DATE</b>	Saturday 21st– Sunday 22nd March, 2020
<b>MEETING PLACE / TIME</b>	BP Officer 7.30 am for 8.00 am departure
<b>GRADE</b>	WET: All bitumen apart from 12km Lake Tyers House Rd which is a maintained dirt road. DRY: -
<b>TRIP ACTIVITY DETAILS</b>	8am - BP Officer  Around 10am - Heyfield for morning tea  Around 12pm - Lakes Entrance for lunch and supplies  Camp in Lake Tyers State Park where we have 3 choices depending on numbers and site availability:  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Camerons Arm No: 1 Campground (Free, no toilets and firepits) - fishing</li> <li>2. Pettman Beach Campsite (Free, toilets and firepits) - fishing</li> <li>3. The Glasshouse Camp Area (Free, no toilets and firepits) - fishing</li> </ol> Late start for a cruisy drive to Orbost for lunch and a leisurely drive home with maybe afternoon tea at Stratford or Rosedale depending on time.
<b>VEHICLE LIMITS</b>	MINIMUM: No Limit MAXIMUM: No Limit
<b>APPROX KMS MEETING PLACE TO DESTINATION</b>	Approximately 700 kilometers return
<b>LAST AVAILABLE FUEL</b>	PETROL: All the way back DIESEL: All the way back
<b>DISTANCE BETWEEN SUPPLIES</b>	Purchase all supplies including fuel at Lake Entrance. Please retain receipts from all purchases.
<b>EQUIPMENT REQUIRED</b>	Humour, relaxed character and great attitude 1 X bag of firewood and port would be appreciated.
<b>MAPS REQUIRED</b>	Not required
<b>RADIO CHANNEL CB / UHF</b>	Channel 12
<b>GOOGLE MAPS</b>	

<b>DESTINATION</b>	Blaze Aid Working Bee
<b>LEADER/CONTACT NO.</b>	NAME: Brett & Niki Buchanan MOB: 0407 878 970
<b>DATE</b>	Friday 10th April to Monday 13th April 2020 - Easter Weekend
<b>MEETING PLACE / TIME</b>	TBA - Possibly BP Officer Bypass  Travel up on Friday Volunteer Saturday & Sunday Return home Monday
<b>GRADE</b>	WET: Medium / Easy  DRY: Easy
<b>TRIP ACTIVITY DETAILS</b>	Volunteer with Blaze Aid at one of their Eastern Victorian Work Camps (i.e. Buchan, Omeo or others that may be set up)  Refer to Blaze-Aid website for volunteer information.  <a href="https://blazeaid.com.au/">https://blazeaid.com.au/</a>  I have made contact with the Buchan Camp Controller. They have a huge amount of interest over this period and depending upon VFWDC member numbers, we may be directed to another camp. All forms of accommodation are welcomed (caravans, campers, tents, swags etc).  To maintain a sense of control and to assist administration of attendees over Easter could you direct all communication through myself please.
<b>VEHICLE LIMITS</b>	MINIMUM: 2 MAXIMUM: unlimited
<b>APPROX KMS MEETING PLACE TO DESTINATION</b>	6—700 kms
<b>LAST AVAILABLE FUEL</b>	PETROL: Bruthen/Omeo/Buchan? DIESEL: Bruthen/Omeo/Buchan?
<b>DISTANCE BETWEEN SUPPLIES</b>	Local as required
<b>EQUIPMENT REQUIRED</b>	Food is provided at camp (refer to Blaze-Aid website for detailed information). A sense of adventure and desire to volunteer and work hard. Riggers gloves and Sturdy Footwear
<b>MAPS REQUIRED</b>	Nil, leader will have maps
<b>RADIO CHANNEL CB / UHF</b>	12
<b>GOOGLE MAPS</b>	



**DESTINATION** Easter 2020 - Talbotville (base camp)

**LEADER/CONTACT NO.** NAME: David Bruinsma

MOB: 0417 747 860

**DATE** Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April to Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2020

**MEETING PLACE / TIME** BP outbound - Pakenham Bypass at Officer

Time: Friday 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30am for 7:00am departure

**GRADE** WET: Medium / Easy

DRY: Easy

**TRIP ACTIVITY DETAILS**

Drive up highway to Sale/Stratford/Glenaladale/Dargo/Grant, then down into Talbotville Camping Area. Good idea top up with fuel at Sale or Stratford. Depending on stops, it will be approx. 4.5 / 5.0 hr drive to destination.

Set up base camp at approx. lunch time and relax for the remainder of the day. Saturday and Sunday - small, ½ day, or full day trips can be planned for exploring the surrounding district and the planning for these trips can be done around the camp fire the night before.

Excursions could include: Crooked River track - heaps of shallow river crossings, Basalt Track, Billy Goat Bluff Track, visit Kingswell Bridge etc.

Monday will be pack up and leave in your own time frame, it will be an easy drive out back to Dargo.

Sunday night will be the traditional camp roast off around the camp fire.

Approx 8 hours drive in - and 8 hours drive out. Approx. 650 kms round trip (from Berwick and back to Berwick), plus any

**VEHICLE LIMITS** MINIMUM: 3

MAXIMUM: No maximum

**APPROX KMS MEETING PLACE  
TO DESTINATION**

650 kms round trip (from Berwick and back to Berwick), plus any day excursions (allow 50/80km per day)

**LAST AVAILABLE FUEL**

PETROL: Sale / Dargo

DIESEL: Sale / Dargo

**DISTANCE BETWEEN SUPPLIES**

**EQUIPMENT REQUIRED**

**MAPS REQUIRED**

Dargo high country map is best

**RADIO CHANNEL CB / UHF**

UHF 12, or call me on mobile.

**GOOGLE MAPS**

<b>DESTINATION</b>	Hidden Huts Weekend
<b>LEADER/CONTACT NO.</b>	NAME: Steve Pitcher MOB: 0421 205 529
<b>DATE</b>	Sat 23—Sun 24 May 2020
<b>MEETING PLACE / TIME</b>	BP Officer Bypass  Aiming for an 8am departure (arrive earlier if intending to grab some breakfast or a cuppa)
<b>GRADE</b>	WET: Hard  DRY: Medium
<b>TRIP ACTIVITY DETAILS</b>	Explore some of the known and not so well known huts beyond Licola region. Possibly spend the night at one of those huts or even down along the banks of the Goulburn River. Make our way back towards home on the Sunday, taking in any huts missed the day before or possibly doing a track or two on the way out.
<b>VEHICLE LIMITS</b>	MINIMUM: 2 MAXIMUM: 10
<b>APPROX KMS MEETING PLACE TO DESTINATION</b>	500 km round trip (approx.)
<b>LAST AVAILABLE FUEL</b>	PETROL: Licola General Store DIESEL: Licola General Store
<b>DISTANCE BETWEEN SUPPLIES</b>	100 kms
<b>EQUIPMENT REQUIRED</b>	Standard camping and recovering gear—must be self-sufficient.
<b>MAPS REQUIRED</b>	Nil (leader will have maps) but maps of the Licola/Jamieson/Woods Point areas would cover the area.
<b>RADIO CHANNEL CB / UHF</b>	UHF 12, or call me on mobile.
<b>GOOGLE MAPS</b>	

# Ulupna Island, Murray River

25 - 27 January 2020 (Australia Day Long Weekend)

### Participants:

Australia Day Long Weekend  
By Steve Pitcher

Steve Pitcher and kids: Toyota LandCruiser

David, Caroline and Samuel Bruinsma: Nissan Navara

Michael Scopel: Ford Ranger

Mark Felton (former member): Nissan Patrol

Tim & Christina Westhorpe and kids (Guests): Nissan X-Trail

I met up with Michael at our rendezvous point (the Shell servo near Donnybrook) and we were only about 10 minutes apart. A quick bite to eat and chat before we hit the road, aiming for Strathmerton by around lunchtime. We pulled into Strathmerton with the intention of spending some money while in town, only to find that the only servo around was now permanently closed and that the only general store in the main street didn't stock the type of products that Michael was after. We had a very quick look around to see what else had changed (which was not much) before making our way towards the island.

The trip in was pretty uneventful - we were soon crossing onto the island and, while I was explaining some of its history to Michael over the radio, another voice soon chirped into the conversation. It was Mark with Caroline riding shotgun and they were on the track just in front of us. Immediately behind was Tim and family so our convoy quickly went from just 2 vehicles to 4. As we made our way forward through the dust, we spread out a bit and before long, we had reached the turnoff to Long Beach on Ulupna Island. Much to my surprise, there were only a handful of others camped along the beach. The Bruinsmas had come up the night before and were already fully set up.

It was hot along the exposed beach but nothing unexpected for that time of year. We did have ourselves some natural shade, provided courtesy of some nearby river gums. We set about establishing our camp while the kids went down to the river for a dip. We were all done within an hour or two, following which some of the adults also went for a swim. It was a pleasant afternoon and it remained fairly warm throughout most of that evening.

Next day was a slowish start with some of us opting for a bacon and egg breakfast. We decided that it would be a good day to visit a nearby strawberry farm, aptly named 'The Big Strawberry'.





There, the children (5 in total) all went strawberry picking while some of the adults retreated to the on-premises café. All the kids had a great time picking (and occasionally sampling) fresh strawberries straight from the garden beds.



These were followed up by some cold drinks and ice creams to cool down before we headed back to camp. That evening, we watched the sun setting over the river which made for a great photo opportunity.



The next day was the final day. While the kids and I had another leisurely start, the others all decided to head off a little earlier. After saying our goodbyes, the early-starters made a break for it as I set about packing up some gear. We broke camp by about 10:30am before heading home ourselves. It was a great weekend spent relaxing on the sandy banks of the Murray River, all the while in great company. Thanks to everyone that came along.

**Steve Pitcher**



## TRIP REPORT

# Firth Park

14 - 16 February 2020

Participants:

Stuart & Maree Ute 79  
Tony & Lisa Ranger  
Ann & Alan Prado  
Michael Ranger  
Mary & Jeff BT 50  
Des Patrol  
Jenny & Shane Colorado



Firth Park by Maree Bowker

We arrived on Friday night at Firth Park Trentham and looking at the weather forecast it may be an interesting trip. Fire lit and the evening progressed with others joining us. Lucky the rain held off till camp was set up.



Saturday morning dawned with a night of solid rain. Where only five of the trips seven vehicles were brave enough to head out for the day. We headed down XL Track and found a few bog holes to test the driving capabilities of the group. Then just for something different we found more bog holes to negotiate. The rain was steady all day and the forest had a strange foggy feel to it. We all managed with sticks to work out the best track. There were trees in the way and other chicken tracks.

Wombat State Forest is a challenging environment that gives you a healthy respect for mud.

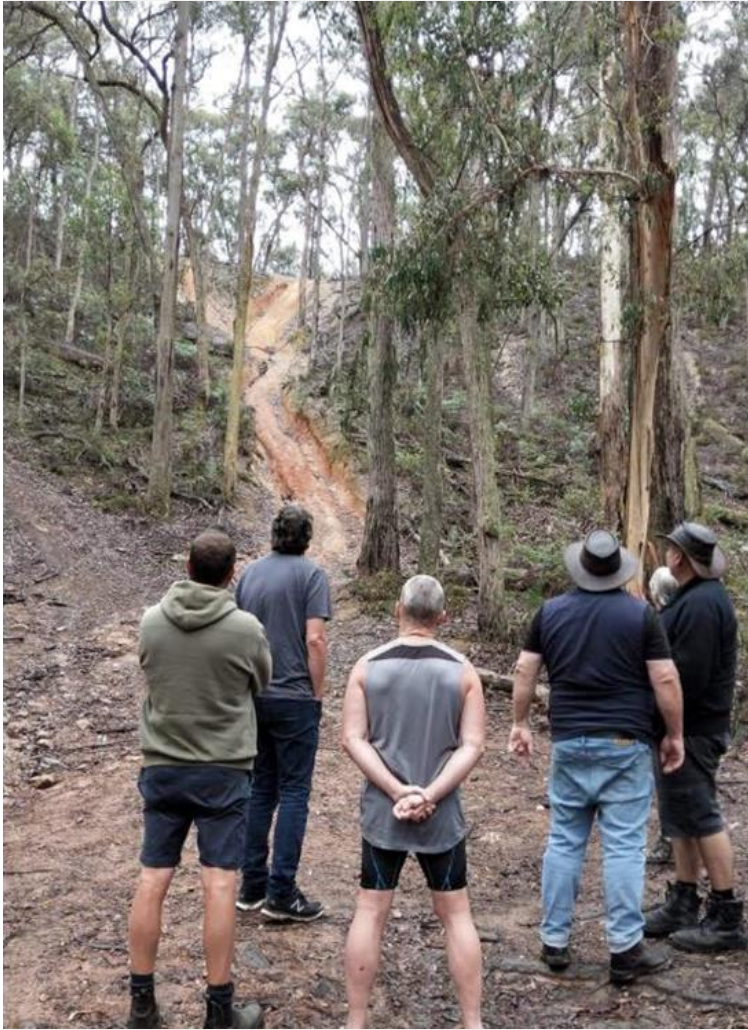
We headed to camp for a happy hour. The little bus from the Pig and Whistle pub arrived to take us to dinner. The meal was wonderful the company funny and the best bit I'm told was the sticky date pudding with all the trimmings. Returning back the fire was lit and the stories of the day's adventures revisited.

Overnight the rain did not ease up, and the pack up Sunday Morning was in the rain. A big thanks to Des for the big tarp and Shane for his help with the erection of the tarp.

Some headed straight back others enjoyed Trentham falls and its short walk. All things considered it was a fun trip even with the weather being a bit damp.



Thanks to all who joined us  
Maree & Stuart



The discussion on the track? It's wet and very steep, so even with his new twin lockers Jeff decided this is not for us. This just shows you need to be very careful this is a really difficult park.

Firth Park camping ground, where a flat piece of ground is hard to find.



Which is the worst of the ways around. Mud, mud and more mud. Slippery clay mud.