



FREE WHEELING

August 2026



Photo by: Sushant Aggarwal

Official Newsletter of the
Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club Inc

Registration No
A0002184F



VFWDC General Meeting Details & Venue

The club meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 7.30 PM with the following exceptions:

No meeting at Club Noble in January.

Club Noble Address

Blue and Gold Room
Club Noble
46-56 Moodemere Street
Noble Park



Next club meeting is AGM on 5th August (Wednesday) 7:30 pm at Club Noble.

Club Committee

2025 - 2026

President	Neville Van Leeuwen	president@vfwdc.com
Vice President	Ken Kilby	vicepres@vfwdc.com
Secretary	Steve Miller	secretary@vfwdc.com
Treasurer	Ly Ho	treasurer@vfwdc.com

General Committee

Trip Coordinator	Ken Kilby	trips@vfwdc.com
Magazine Editor	Sushant Aggarwal	editor@vfwdc.com
Association Delegate	Dennis Alphonsus	delegate@vfwdc.com
General Committee	Andy McCarthy	

Support Positions to Committee

Web Manager	Alec Downs	web@vfwdc.com
Training officer	Phillip Griffith	
Merchandise	Suzy Whitford	merchandise@vfwdc.com

Club Details

Registered Name	Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club
Registration Number	A002184F
Correspondence Address	PO Box 778 Dandenong VIC 3175
Email	secretary@vfwdc.com
Website	www.vfwdc.com

The Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club is an affiliated club of [Four Wheel Drive Victoria](http://www.fwdvictoria.org.au) - www.fwdvictoria.org.au

President's Report

Hi All,

It has been another busy and rewarding year for the Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club. We have welcomed several new members, which has been fantastic to see both in the meeting room and out on the tracks. To all our newcomers, we are glad to have you onboard and hope you enjoy forming new friendships and exploring this great country with us.

Being a smaller club means our social connections stay personal. The lively chatter around the fire, at the dinner table, or during coffee breaks at meetings continues to build strong friendships. This was also clear at our well supported social events, including Christmas in July, our end of year break ups, and our off site meeting at Adrenalain Off Road.

Club meetings have remained strong, and we were fortunate to host guest speaker Steve Hobbs, who delivered an informative session on suspension through his business AAA Suspension, along with insights into the Cliffhanger events. It was a great night.

We faced a few challenges this year, from the extensive fires across Victoria in Jan–Feb to the more recent fuel crisis that pushed prices at the bowser through the roof. Even so, we still managed to run many adventurous trips: our annual snow trips, Blue Rag and Crooked River, Cameron Corner for New Year's Eve, Portland Dune Buggy, Aberfeldy, and the epic Cape York trip, which is still underway. Several day trips around Woods Point and Noojee were also thoroughly enjoyed.

A big thank you to everyone who led trips and everyone who joined them. You made it a great year.

I would also like to thank the committee and all those who helped throughout the year. A special mention goes to Alec for developing and launching our much needed new website. And another big thanks to Sushant for getting our magazine out each month, and to all members who contributed trip reports and articles. Your efforts keep our magazine a standout.

Neville Van Leeuwen

VFWDC President

president@vfwdc.com

M: 0472 680 482

VFWDC General Meeting Minutes

Date: 6 August 2025

Time: 8:20 pm – 8:35 pm

Location: Club Noble

Next AGM: 7:30pm Wednesday 4th August 2027

Topic	Discussion and Outcomes	Speaker
Open Meeting	- Welcome - Announced programme for the night - Apologies: Daisy, Sally and Tristan, Nicola	Neville
Annual General Meeting Commenced	8:20 pm	
	Previous AGM Minutes Accepted: Andy Seconded: Neville No matters arising from the 2024 AGM Minutes	Steve Pitcher
Welcome to the 2024 AGM	Welcome to the 2025 AGM Nominees must be financial No multiple nominations observed. (A vote would be required if there were multiple nominations) Thanked Neville for his leadership for the past year.	Steve Pitcher
Presidents Report (1 st order of business):	Presidents Report (1 st order of business): Transcript in club magazine. Guest speakers 15 trips this year including several extended trips Offsite meeting Driver training thanks to Phil, Ashley and John Christmas in July End of year party at Ian and Audry's place. Trip Leader Training Map Reading Training Snow Trips Looking forward to the next year and exploring new places.	Neville
Treasurers Report (2 nd order of business):	Treasurers Report (2 nd order of business): Financial report for year ending June 30 th 2025: Copy in club magazine. Membership numbers stable. Significant one-off costs. Despite net loss of \$4,986.00, the club remains healthy financially. FWDV has increased affiliation fees. This was passed onto members. Please note the club is a not-for-profit organisation. Thankyou everyone for their support	Ly

VFWDC General Meeting Minutes

Date: 6 August 2025

Time: 8:20 pm – 8:35 pm

Location: Club Noble

Next AGM: 7:30pm Wednesday 4th August 2027

Topic	Discussion and Outcomes	Speaker
Trip Co-ordinator's Report (3 rd order of business):	Annual Trip Report (3rd order of business): Copy in the club magazine Summary of trips as follows: 50th Anniversary 15 trips for the year 10 individual trip leaders 136 participants in the trips 50th Anniversary at Merringtons 3 training events – Driver training, Trip Leader training Map Reading training 4 Day trips 1 Night trip 1 Snow trips 5 weekend trips 4 extended trips including some interstate. Award for most trips run goes to Sally and Tristan A great result for the past year. Look forward to the upcoming year. Particularly more day trips.	Andy
	That concludes the key presentations	Steve Pitcher
	All committee positions are now declared vacant.	Steve Pitcher
	Nominations are: Neville for Club President Ken Kilby for Vice President Ly Ho for Treasurer Steven Miller for Secretary Ken Kilby for Trips Coordinator All positions filled as nominated.	Steve Pitcher
	2025-2026 Support roles: Suzy for Merchandise Dennis for Club Delegate Sushant for Magazine Editor Alec for IT administrator Andy for General Committee Member Thanks to Ben for managing IT for over ten years.	Steve Pitcher
Annual General Meeting Concluded	Annual General Meeting closed at 8:35 pm	Steve Pitcher
	General Club Meeting Program resumed at 8:35pm	
Minutes taken by:		Steven Miller



VICTORIAN FOUR WHEEL DRIVE CLUB SPONSORS PAGE

ARB Pakenham

ARB Pakenham has generously donated some great prizes for us to use in our raffle:

Bushranger Tree Trunk Protector (Bridle)



Bushranger Soft Shackles



Bushranger Recovery Ring



VFWDC encourages members to support businesses that support our club, but please be aware that all due diligence for any purchases remains the sole responsibility of the individual member.

VFWDC General Meeting Minutes

Date: 1 July 2026

Time: 7:35 pm – 9:09 pm

Location: Club Noble

Next Meeting: 7:30pm Wednesday 5th August 2026

Topic	Discussion and Outcomes	Speaker
Open Meeting	- Welcome to the July 2026 club meeting - Apologies: Ken, Bruce	Neville
Minutes from previous months club meeting	- Minutes from previous meeting accepted: - Accepted: Ken - Seconded: Michael - Matters arising from previous minutes for the club meeting on the 01/07/2026: Nil	Neville
Guests	- Michael – Drives Dmax - Steve Hobbs – Guest speaker for tonight	Neville
Correspondence	Received email advising Licola Village is open for business	Steven M
Treasurer's Report	- As per written report from Ly Ho – Written report will be in next issue of the club's magazine. - Report for June 2026: - Closing cash position \$3,866.42 - Closing consolidated position \$12,740.25 - No matters arising from Financial Report. - Motion to accept June 2026 Treasurer's Report: - Accepted: Andre - Seconded: Sally - Club fees are remaining the same despite association fees rising to \$62 per head. - A reminder that everyone who ran trips in this financial year are entitled to a \$5 per trip discount on membership renewal up to a cap of \$20 per membership. - Club Fees are now due. - FYI ... to participate in the Mt Skene snow trips, participants must be fully paid up members.	Ly

VFWDC General Meeting Minutes

Date: 1 July 2026

Time: 7:35 pm – 9:09 pm

Location: Club Noble

Next Meeting: 7:30pm Wednesday 5th August 2026

Topic	Discussion and Outcomes	Speaker
	• Guest Speaker – Steve Hobbs • Met Sally and Tristan through Cliff Hanger • He has been doing Cliff Hanger for 20 years. • Worked with Rudy doing Nav Run • They then began also doing Cliff Hanger • Eventually it all got to much so Steve Hobbs stepped back from the Nav Run event and focussed on Cliff Hangert • Also started JTX lights which specializes in LED lights for traditional headlights. • Also started AAA Suspension. ○ Discussion of leaf spring suspensions. ○ Air suspension types for different situations. ○ Upsides and downsides of different air bag types. ○ Typically recommended 40psi. 60 psi is extreme and means you are probably overloaded. ○ Arranges GVM upgrades. Common and easy one is 10% upgrades which engineers will usually sign off with minimal upgrade works. ○ Weight distribution hitches – how they work. ○ Wheel alignment – incorrect toe in destroys tires, camber does not affect life of tyres, a suspension lift needs caster correction. ○ Discussed difference in vehicle set up for short course compared to long course off road racing. ○ Question and Answer ○ • Excellent talk. Thorough enjoyed and appreciated. Would love to have Steve Hobbs back in the future. Thank you Steve for indulging us tonight.	
Intermission	Intermission 8:30pm to 8:58pm	Intermission
Association News	• No news this week ... Dennis had to leave early.	Association News
Annual General Meeting	• The VFWDC Annual General Meeting will be held during the 5th August 2026 Club Meeting.	Annual General Meeting

VFWDC General Meeting Minutes

Date: 1 July 2026

Time: 7:35 pm – 9:09 pm

Location: Club Noble

Next Meeting: 7:30pm Wednesday 5th August 2026

Topic	Discussion and Outcomes	Speaker
Upcoming Trips	- Christmas in July - 3rd, 4th, 5th July at Upper Yarra Valley Reservoir. - Ken and Neville are going up on Friday 3rd July and are camping over the weekend. - Saturday 4th will be catered. - Camping sites with access to water and toilets are available through Parks Victoria \$17 per night per site and capped at 6 persons per site. - Dogs allowed. 08/08/2026 Mt Skene snow trip #1 – Trip Leader is Andre. (Dogs not permitted in National Park) 22/08/2026 Mt Skene snow trip #2 – Trip Leader is Neville. (Dogs not permitted in National Park) - Date TBA - Driver Training at Merringtons. - Date TBA - Trip Leader Training – Training by Sally - Date TBA - Trip to Portland - Date TBA – Buchan Caves 23rd & 24th August 2026 - 4x4 show Contact the Trip Co-ordinator for more information or to put forward proposals.	Neville
Merchandise	Usual items available.	Neville
Magazine	Invitation to everyone to submit anything of interest relating to camping/four-wheel driving/vehicles/trips ... Send through to Sushant, editor@vfwdc.com	Neville
Raffle	Prizes: - Snatch strap - Bag for off road recovery kit - Jumbuk Skewers	Neville
Next General Meeting	- Club Noble - Wednesday 05/08/2026 @ 7:30pm - Please note that the VFWDC AGM will be held during the club meeting on the 05/08/2026.	Neville
Meeting Close	9.09 pm	Neville
Minutes taken by:		Steven Miller

Bringing Four Wheel Drivers Together



Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club Inc
www.vfwdc.com

Treasurer's Report June 2026

<u>Cheque A/C`</u> Opening Balance as at 01/06/2026	\$2,650.15	
Add: Membership Fees	\$1,303.00	
Merchandise Sales	\$6.00	
Less: Catering Costs	-\$92.73	
Closing Balance as at 30/06/2026		\$3,866.42
<u>Term Deposit</u> Opening Balance as at 01/06/2026	\$8,736.23	
Add: Interest	\$87.60	
Closing Balance as at 30/06/2026		\$8,823.83
<u>Petty Cash</u> Opening Balance as at 01/06/2026	\$50.00	
Closing Balance as at 30/06/2026		\$50.00
Consolidated Closing Cash Position		<u>\$12,740.25</u>

1. **DRIVER TRAINING:** Driver training has been **postponed** due to certifications issues. **New date will be advised later.**

2. **CLUB RENEWAL FEE:** Club renewal fee will **remain unchanged** for the upcoming financial year (starts 1-Jul-2026).
 - a) Following are **membership fee, due** for the upcoming financial year:
 - **Single - \$87**
 - **Family/Couple - \$97**
 - **Silver - \$57**
 - b) **New Member Form:** <https://vfwdc.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Membership-Form-2025.pdf>
 - **Not sure about how to join the club?** Refer to this page:
<https://vfwdc.com/membership/#Join>
 - c) **Existing Member Renewal Form:** <https://vfwdc.com/membership-renew/>
 - d) **Payment details** are in the membership form (also mentioned on **next page in magazine**)
 - e) You must be a paid member to participate in the **snow trips**
 - f) **Discount Offer:** The club is offering a discount of **\$5 off your membership for each trip**. you have organized and run since **July 1st, 2025**, up to a maximum of \$20 per couple. Please mention any trips you have led when you reply.

Club Membership

Please visit our website at VFWDC.com to view all our current membership forms and club policies.

For all new and renewal of memberships, please complete [the online form here](#)

If you are looking for a Temporary Membership, please complete the online form, [which can be found here.](#)

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us via the Club Secretary on secretary@vfwdc.com

Payments:

Payment can be made via Bank Transfer. The details are as follows:

Account Name:	Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club Inc
BSB:	633108
Account No:	111761979

Please ensure your transfer includes your name as provided on the membership application and renewal form in the reference.

Once you have made your payment/transfer, please send your completed membership application and renewal form to treasurer@vfwdc.com or you can present it to the Treasurer at any general meeting.

Thank you for choosing the Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club

If you are interested in joining [Club Noble](#) where we hold our monthly meetings, their application form can be found [here](#).

President

The President's role is a voted committee position and it is the President's responsibility to be fully versed with the Club Rules.

- Lead General Meetings making sure they are held in accordance with the requirements as specified in the Constitution.
- Prepare Agenda and lead the meeting, keeping discussion relevant, decision making clear and encouraging member participation when required.
- Appoint General Committee roles and Delegate duties to the Committee Members.
- Prepare agenda and lead Committee Meetings are held in accordance with the requirements as specified in the Club Rules.
- Write monthly President's Report for the newsletter to report relevant information to members.
- Attend relevant Four Wheel Drive Victoria meetings when required.
- Welcoming new members or visitors at General Meetings.
- Before the election of new committee members at an annual general meeting, the President must present to the meeting the annual report of the Committee on the activities of the club during the last financial year.

Vice President

The Vice President's role is a voted committee position and it is the Vice President's responsibility to be fully versed with the Club Rules.

- To provide support and backup to the President in their relevant duties
- To convene and run orderly meetings in accordance to the Clubs Constitution in the event the President is absent.
- To organise guest speakers or external club visits for selected meetings and be responsible coordinating the attendance of the guest.

Secretary

The Secretary's role is a voted committee position and it is the Secretary's responsibility to be fully versed with the Club Rules.

- Collect the club mail from the club PO Box (778) at Dandenong Plaza Shopping Centre prior to the General Meeting
- Attend the General Meeting ensuring that the Attendance, Apologies and Visitors books are available for members / visitors to sign in
- Take the minutes of the General Meeting
- Present the incoming and outgoing correspondence at the General Meeting
- Type up the minutes noting number of attendees, apologies and visitors
- Attend the committee meeting
- File correspondence in and minutes of the general meeting
- Attend to any outgoing correspondence as determined by the committee
- Coordinate with treasurer to ensure a register of members is maintained in accordance with the rules.
- Liaise with Consumer Affairs Victoria to meet club obligations

Treasurer

The Treasurer's role is a voted committee position and it is the Treasurer's responsibility to be fully versed with the Club Rules.

- To receive all new member application, and member renewal forms and monies and issue receipts
- Deposit all monies received into the club bank account (from membership fees, club raffles, sales of merchandise etc.
- Keep a record of the accounts—which can be made available by request of any club member
- Prepare a monthly financial status report for the General Meetings
- Prepare the AGM report with full annual financials, which will also include president and trip coordinators reports
- Update 4WD Victoria for membership lists to ensure insurance compliance
- Maintain the membership list
- Print and distribute membership cards for current year.

Trip Coordinator

The Trip Coordinator's role is a voted committee position and it is the Trip Coordinator's responsibility to be fully versed with the Club Rules.

- Ensure attendance to each Club General Meeting fully prepared to present with relevant information of past and upcoming trips.
- If unable to attend it is the Trip Coordinator's duty to ensure another committee member has the up to date trip information for the Club Meeting
- Ensure all trip information is correctly recorded and stored
- Ensure the Trip Information Forms are up to date for each meeting
- Ensure copies of other relevant forms are available if or when needed (Track survey reports, Accident Survey Form, Trip Incident form, Personal Information forms, Trip rating information)
- Ensure all TDF (Trip Data Forms) are filled in correctly and a copy is passed onto the Newsletter Editor
- Liaise with the Newsletter Editor and follow up any trip reports that haven't been submitted.

Association Representative

The Association Representative's role is a voted committee position and it is the Association Representative's responsibility to be fully versed with the Club Rules.

- To attend all Association meetings, and to report back to committee and also the General meetings with all items pertaining to the Victorian Four Wheel Drive Association.
- External liaison with other affiliated groups

General Committee Member

- Attend and contribute to Committee Meetings
- Assist committee in running of club



Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club Inc.

ARBN A002184F PO Box 778 Dandenong Vic 3175

www.vfwdc.com

Nomination for Election to the Committee of Management 2026/2027

ISigned•

Nominate for the position of

☐ President

☐ Vice President

☐ Secretary

☐ Treasurer

☐ Trip Coordinator

☐ Association Representative

ISigned•

Second the nomination for election to the Committee of Management.

I Signed•

Of.....

Hereby accept the nomination for election to the Committee of Management of
the Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club Inc. position of

X.....

August 2026

Wednesday 5 th	AGM - General Club Meeting	7:30 pm
Saturday 8 th	Mt Skene Snow Trip #1	Andre
Wednesday 19 th	Committee Meeting	
Saturday 22 th	Mt Skene Snow Trip #2	Neville

September 2026

Wednesday 2 nd	General Club Meeting	7:30 pm
Wednesday 16 th	Committee Meeting	

More upcoming trips / events:

1. Driver's Training at Merringtons
2. Trip Leader Training – Training by Sally

Track Classification

[Four Wheel Drive Victoria](#) have a track grading classification scale which has been developed to assist in advising Trip Leaders and participants on 4WD trips of the type of tracks that they can expect to encounter. On most trips participants can expect that a variety of tracks will be traversed each with an appropriate rating. Trip Leaders should advise participants of the range of track ratings expected to be encountered on the planned route. The following classifications will assist in determining an overall Trip Rating:

Considerations	Easy	Medium	Difficult	Very Difficult
Overall Description	All Wheel Drive and High Range 4WD. Novice Drivers	Mainly High range 4WD but Low range required. Some 4WD experience recommended.	Significant Low range 4WD with standard 4WD ground clearance. Should have 4WD driver training.	Low range 4WD with High ground clearance. Experienced Drivers
Advisory Sign				
Expected terrain and track conditions	Mostly unsealed roads with no obstacles and minor gradients.	Tracks with some steep and/or rocky/slippery/sandy sections. May have shallow water crossings.	Tracks with frequent steep and/or rocky/slippery/sandy sections. Possible water crossings.	Tracks with frequent very steep and/or rocky/slippery/sandy sections. May have difficult river crossings.
Vehicle suitability	All wheel Drive and High Range 4WD. Can be low clearance with single range and road tyres.	Suitable for medium clearance vehicles with dual range and all terrain or road tyres.	Suitable for medium to high clearance vehicles with dual range and all terrain tyres.	Suitable for high clearance vehicles with dual range and tyres suitable for the terrain. (Mud Terrain tyres).
Recovery equipment			Recovery equipment required.	Winch / Recovery equipment required.
Driver Training / Experience	Suitable for novice drivers.	Recommended that drivers have experience or 4WD training. Recommended to be done in groups of vehicles.	Recommended for drivers with reasonable experience or 4WD training. To be done in groups of vehicles.	Drivers with extensive experience and advanced training should only attempt as there are several technical challenges. Recommended to be done in groups of four or more vehicles.
Weather	May be difficult in wet conditions.	Will be more difficult in wet conditions.	Will be more difficult in wet conditions.	Will be more difficult in wet conditions.

CHRISTMAS IN JULY 2026

- by Neville

Christmas in July 2026 - Trip Report

Our annual Christmas in July took place from 3-5 July, and this year we returned to Upper Yarra Reservoir for a second go at the site. Despite a few last-minute cancellations, we still had a solid group of 18, which made for a lively weekend.

Friday - Wet Ground, Fallen Trees, and Firewood Adventures

I headed off early with Lily, stopping to collect a very large chunk of meat on the way (and hoping everyone else would actually turn up). Thankfully, our usual campsite was free - just a lot wetter than last year. The outer ring was manageable, so I picked a spot and set up.

Soon after, Ian & Audrey, Ken, Alec, and Alister arrived. Once tents and caravan were set up, Ken, Ian, and I took my little blue trailer to hunt for firewood. Most tracks were locked, so we tried the same area as last year.

Ken barely made it 100 metres before finding a fallen tree blocking the track. Ian headed up to help, and once cleared, we continued - only to find another green tree across the track. Out came the chainsaw, and after clearing that one too, we finally reached some usable wood. The track was narrow, but we managed to load up the trailer and head back with a mix of dry and wet timber.

Back at camp, Alec had set up his gazebo and was coaxing the fire to life. With everyone's dry wood plus our questionable haul, the fire got going - just in time for the rain, which settled in for most of the day. We spent more time under the gazebos than around the fire.

At one point a soft-roader towing a caravan attempted the wet hill near us heading off the track - the kind of hill that's a proper 4WD job even in good weather. After churning up the hill, nearly jackknifing, and sliding toward us, he somehow managed to recover and retreat just as we were contemplating the best method to recover him.

Rain continued into the night, and a nearby group partied past 1 AM, but otherwise we slept well.

Saturday - Clear Skies and Christmas Dinner

The rain cleared in the morning, and the rest of the group arrived. After lunch we started planning dinner - and thankfully Ken remembered to thaw the veges this year.

One fire wasn't enough, so we lit a second metal pit. The charcoal rotisserie went on, and I pulled the meat from the esky... only to realise it was still very cold. We estimated dinner at 5 PM.

While waiting, Alec, Ken, and Vernon made the rounds with mulled wine, which warmed both stomach and spirit.

The meat took longer than expected, pushing dinner to 6 PM. Potatoes roasted in the fire, cauliflower baked in Audrey's oven, and broccoli, peas, and carrots cooked over the pits. Once the lamb and chicken finally came up to temperature, we served a proper Christmas feast.

Everyone piled their plates high - twice - and we reminded them to save room for dessert. Audrey brought Christmas pudding, custard, cream, ice-cream, and sticky date pudding. It was outstanding. Thanks Audrey!

Both fires burned strongly, and our huge pile of collected wood shrank fast. The bags of dry wood barely needed touching. After plenty of laughs and a few late showers, most people drifted off to bed with very full bellies.

Sunday - Pack Up and Head Home

Sunday arrived with clear skies again. People packed up at their own pace and headed home.

As always, it was a weekend of laughs, food, and friendship. Thanks everyone for coming.

Trip Report



We need your help on and off the tracks



**If you have some spare time
please consider joining the committee.
Your club needs you— do it for your club!**

Contact your Committee...



ROAD RESTRICTIONS

ROAD CONDITIONS PH 1300 361 033

TRAVEL ON CLOSED ROADS IS PROHIBITED
SEVERE PENALTIES APPLY

OODNADATTA TRACK

MARREE TO ROXBY DOWNS	NO
MARREE TO WILLIAM CREEK	NO
WILLIAM CREEK TO OODNADATTA	NO
WILLIAM CREEK TO COOBER PEDY	NO
MARREE TO MULOORINA	NO

4WD/HV 4x4 WHEEL DRIVE HEAVY VEHICLE
4WD 4x4 WHEEL DRIVE HEAVY VEHICLE