



NOVEMBER 2007

# Free Wheeling

Official Newsletter of the Victorian Four Wheel Drive Club

Registration No A0002184F



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](http://www.vafwdc.org.au)

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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)**

**Please forward all contributions 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 year of *Free Wheeling*.

To get into the Christmas mood don't forget this year's Oxfam Christmas tree deliveries. For those who are not familiar with this scheme, Oxfam sell the trees throughout the year to the public online and at shopping centers, the great incentive being that they are delivered to your door a few weeks prior to Christmas. When this was being set up many years ago, Oxfam approached 4WD Victoria requesting the assistance of the 4WD community to volunteer their time to deliver the trees. The response from the 4WD Clubs has been fantastic and continues to grow year after year. I have been participating for approximately 8 years and will continue to support this worthy cause. When you volunteer you are allocated an area to which you will deliver 14-16 trees. The volunteers at Oxfam collate all the addresses so that you have the Melway reference number, with this it's just a matter of plotting your route. If you have approx half a day spare on Saturday December 8 please give me a call to register your name.

Don't forget this year's Christmas party at Bimbimbie Wildlife Park, which will be a fantastic social day full of fun and activities for the whole family. The entry fee includes a wildlife talk that will take in a close-up interaction with the animals. The Club is providing all the Salads and condiments, so all you need to bring is your BBQ favourites. As we need numbers the week prior to the day, could you please ensure you contact me or one of the committee with your group numbers.

Remember the November meeting won't be held at the Dandenong Library; instead it will be Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> at the ARB manufacturing facilities in Kilsyth. The numbers are limited but there are a few spots remaining. This is a fantastic opportunity to see how the bull bars, lockers etc are manufactured and from past experience a real eye opener. For further information please call John Partridge.

There are numerous trips coming up towards the end of year that should appeal to everyone. John has finalised plans for his Christmas trip through the High Country and we are even looking into 2008 with an Australia Day destination. I am sure 2008 will boast a great range of trips and hopefully new trip leaders with new destinations. If you are thinking of running a trip or have any suggestions, please make sure you contact John.

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

*Ashley*

Ashley Martin  
President

## Minutes of the General Meeting – October 2007

The meeting was held at the Palm Plaza Meeting Room, Dandenong and opened by President Ashley Martin who welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### Present:

There were 28 members present as per the attendance book.

### Apologies:

Maxine Ryan, Graeme & Sue Lyne, Ian Warburton, Dave & Rosalie Hughes, Leigh & Anne Pettigrew, Maggie Melcher, Paula Johnston, Ray & Dawn Brown, Derek & Janet Hymas, Jill Boyle, Carl Surtees

**Visitors:** Nil

### Minutes of Previous Meeting

**Accepted:** Richard Piotrowski

**Seconded:** Ian Webber

**Matters Arising:** Nil

### Correspondence In:

- Cross Country Jeep Club.
- Pajero Club.
- Track Watch.
- National 4WD Show Special Offer.
- Association –
  - Notice of Presidents Meeting 18 Nov 07
  - Notice of AGM 26 Sept 07
  - Notice regarding mailout of Trackwatch
  - Notice regarding VEAC Proposal for Murray
- Dandenong Library Invoice.
- VKS737 Radio Network News.
- Bush Telegraph.

### Correspondence Out:

- Newsletter
- Letter to Association expressing disappointment at lack of communication.

### Treasurer's Report:

Opening Balance:	\$9013.17
Term Deposit	\$5905.44
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Receipts	\$1860.00
Payments	\$1290.00
Closing Balance:	
Cheque account	\$3190.53
Term Deposit	\$5905.40
Petty Cash	\$ 12.30
	-----
	\$9108.23

**Accepted:** Michael Rodger

**Seconded:** Tim Axtell

### Trip Reports:

- **Narbethong Day Trip** – Gary Johnston gave the trip report on Paul's Narbethong Day Trip. Met at Lilydale Macca's as usual and headed over the Black Spur to Narby. Did a couple of interesting tracks and stopped at Siberia Gap for morning tea. Did a few more tracks before stopping at Mt Tanglefoot for lunch. In the afternoon we went up Aeroplane track and then down another track to Marginal road. Unfortunately Brian did some damage to his car on the last track of the day and had to be trailered out.
- **Proficiency Training** – Nick Johnson gave the report on the Proficiency Training weekend. Nick met the others on Saturday morning and spent the day learning about recovery techniques, vehicle set up etc. They spent the weekend driving numerous tracks in the southern section of Tallarook. Everyone had a good time.
- **Pub to Pub** – Peter and Gary gave the trip report on the Pub to Pub. The group left Bacchus Marsh on Friday night after a meal at the pub. Friday night's accommodation was part of the old Olympic village accommodation for the Sydney Olympics. The group had an early start Saturday and a BBQ breaky. Lunch was at Stony Creek reservoir and Tea at Flanagan's Hotel. As it turned out Saturday night's destination was back where they had started on Friday. On Sunday some went to St Anne's winery and some headed home early. Another great Pub to Pub and many thanks to Dave and Rosalie.
- **Toolangi Challenge** – John gave the report on Shane's Toolangi Challenge trip. The group met at Yarra Glen bakery and stocked up on grub before heading off. They started on a track parallel to the highway which has some interesting bog holes. This provided plenty of chances to practice snatching Range Rovers. Another challenging track was attempted along by the power lines. The group then drove a couple of steep and loose tracks off marginal road before heading on to Aeroplane track and finally Cockpit Track. Shane runs a very well organized trip, so get your name on his next one if you get the chance.

- **Mt Disappointment Recce** – Ashley gave the report on the Mt Disappointment recce. This trip started on Grand Final afternoon at Ashley's. John and Paul headed up Saturday night and met Tim at Wallan. Ashley, Craig and Gary caught up with them on Sunday morning. First couple of tracks were a little greasy and challenging. Tim was the first to be on the end of the winch cable on account of not being in 4WD. Rest of the day provided a few challenges and was a fun day out.

**Trip Coordinator's Report:**

- Wine Trip – Whitfield: 13-14 Oct Ashley
- Mt Disappointment: Sun 21 Oct Paul
- National 4X4 Show: 25-28 Oct 4WDVic
- Buffalo River: Cup W/end 2-6 Nov Ashley
- November Gen Meeting – ARB Ashley
- High Country: 17-18 Nov Bruce
- Bushcraft: TBC Shane
- Goulburn River Fishing Trip: 23-25 Nov Ashley

**Event's Co-ordinator's Report:**

- Christmas Party – Bimbimbie: Sat 1 Dec Ashley
- Xmas Tree Delivery December Ashley

**Association Report:**

John gave a report on collaboration with DSE Heyfield and the effort to coordinate working bees in the aftermath of the fires and floods. It is proposed that Track classification will be undertaken in the Heyfield / Erica areas which will be a positive step. Parks Victoria is also having a public information night on 17 October. Noel Lees has been working on getting Donnelly's Creek Track repaired after the extensive damage it suffered during the floods. There is probably another 6-8 weeks worth of work but it is hoped it will be open by Cup weekend. There have been numerous problems with 4wd's creating their own tracks rather than turn around and go back if the track has become impassable. This isn't helping our cause and any such practice should be strongly discouraged.

**General Business:**

New Members – Nick Johnson.  
Warren and Linda Coutts.

**Tea Duties:** Verylle Rodger. Thanks.

**Raffle:** Tickets sold by Steve Varty:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Prize: Thermos won by Liz Beaton.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize: Toblerone won by Nick Johnson.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize: Sun Shade won by Tim Axtell.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Prize: Free Range Eggs won by Colin Armour and Murray Ogden .

**Meeting Closed** at 9.48pm.

**Next Meeting:**

Tuesday 13 November at ARB Kilsyth.

## VFWDC MERCHANDISE

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We encourage all members to purchase a Club Polo Shirt.



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## Yahoo Groups

Sign yourself up as a Yahoo user at  
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(There is no charge for this service.)  
Then go to  
<http://autos.groups.yahoo.com/group/vfwdc>  
and click on "Join this group".  
To keep non members out of the group, your membership will need to be approved.  
Any problems, email  
[anthony@ctsmoash.com.au](mailto:anthony@ctsmoash.com.au)



## 2008 AUSTRALIAN 4WD GATHERING

### TRIP LEADERS WANTED!

The 7th Australian 4WD Gathering will be held at Mitta Mitta over Easter 2008. A major part of the program is the opportunity to experience the high country 4WD tracks of the area, particularly for interstate 4WD club members and other recreational four wheel drivers.

Here is the chance to show off some of the best 4WD touring that Victoria has to offer to Gathering visitors. Several half day and day trips have been reconnoitred, timed to suit other Gathering activities, and visiting points of interest in the Mitta Mitta, Dartmouth and High Plains areas.

I am looking for volunteers from Victorian 4WD Clubs to lead these trips, at least one trip on one of the two days they will operate: Easter Saturday or Easter Sunday. Trek notes and mud maps will be provided and the trips are on tracks that vary from Green to Black, subject to prevailing weather conditions.

I also invite volunteers to develop and run trips leading into the Gathering, starting on either the Thursday before Easter or on Good Friday, and to arrive on Good Friday, from outlying towns such as Corryong, Bairnsdale, or Wangaratta for example, and traversing scenic 4WD tracks along the way.

Conversely, trips could be led away from the Gathering starting on Easter Monday and concluding in Gippsland, or northern or central Victoria.

I can't offer you any freebies for leading trips (I don't get any myself), simply the pleasure of doing what we enjoy most – four wheel driving – and showcasing our high country to others.

If you wish to help, or want to know more about the trips or the Gathering, contact me through the Gathering website or call me on 9723 4908 or 0407 896 263.

I would really welcome your participation.

Ian Lacey  
Trip Coordinator  
7<sup>th</sup> Australian 4WD Gathering  
Easter 2008

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## CLUB CALENDER AT A GLANCE

### NOVEMBER

Cup Weekend Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> to Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup>	Buffalo River	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904
Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting <b>ARB Factory Tour</b>	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904
Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup>	Committee Meeting	Michel Rodger	0412 530 666
Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> to Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup>	High Country Touring Trip <b>TRIP FULL</b>	Bruce Cremonesi	0400 425 296
Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> to Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup>	Fishing Trip – Goulburn River	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904

### DECEMBER

Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Christmas Party</b> Bimbimbie Wildlife Park	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904
Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904
Saturday 8 <sup>th</sup> /Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Oxfam Christmas Tree Deliveries</b>	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904
Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> to Monday 31 <sup>st</sup>	High Country Touring Trip Omeo	John Partridge	0438 331 211

### JANUARY 2008

Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Committee Meeting	Craig Major	0432 876 699
Friday 25 <sup>th</sup> to Monday 28 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Australia Day Weekend</b> Collins Hut	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904

### FEBRUARY 2008

Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup>	General Meeting	Ashley Martin	0438 600 904
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup>	Committee Meeting		



## Forthcoming Trips

<b>Destination</b>	<b>BUFFALO RIVER DANDONGADALE</b>
<b>Trip Leader</b>	Ashley Martin
<b>Contact No</b>	0438 600904
<b>Date</b>	Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November
<b>Time/Place</b>	Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> November TBA
<b>Vehicle Limits</b>	MINIMUM: 2 MAXIMUM: 12
<b>Equipment Required</b>	Basic Recovery,
<b>Last Available Fuel</b>	Petrol: Mansfield Diesel: Mansfield
<b>Maps Required</b>	N/A
<b>Radio Channel CB/UHF</b>	12
<b>Trip Activity Details:</b>	

This trip is to an area we have not visited for some time and will be a relaxing weekend to recharge the batteries. For those that do not know the area, Dandongadale is situated between Whitfield and Bright (approx) and access to the camping area is easy with no four wheeling required. The camping area we have chosen is Manna Gum Picnic Area and is well grassed and next to the river. The plan is like most long weekends where you have the choice of sitting around relaxing, talking, fishing, sleeping... We will no doubt do a day trip to explore the area for the more energetic. Sunday night will be the annual Cup Weekend roast night.

There are 2 routes to the camping area:

1. Mansfield to Whitfield then take the Rose River Rd. From Whitfield it is an easy dirt road taking approx 50 minutes.
2. Travel along the Hume Hwy and take the Snow Rd exit just after Glenrowan, follow this to Myrtelford. Turn right onto the Buffalo River Rd and continue along for approx 35-40km until you reach the camp site. The last 5 or so kms are dirt.

I will be leaving from Port Melbourne at approx 3pm on the Friday so anyone is welcome to join us. Depending on numbers and times people are leaving, there might be another meeting time but I will conform this as we get closer to the date.

<b>Destination</b>	<b>ANNUAL FISHING TRIP GOULBURN RIVER</b>
<b>Trip Leader</b>	Ashley Martin
<b>Contact No</b>	0438 600904
<b>Date</b>	Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> to Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> November
<b>Meeting Time/Place</b>	10.00am Friday Morning 6.00pm Friday Evening Lilydale Maccas
<b>Vehicle Limits</b>	MINIMUM: N/A MAXIMUM: 10
<b>Equipment Required</b>	Basic Recovery, fishing rods etc
<b>Last Available Fuel</b>	Petrol: Mansfield Diesel: Mansfield
<b>Maps Required</b>	N/A
<b>Radio Channel CB/UHF</b>	12

### Trip Activity Details:

On recent trips through Jamieson we came across 12 Mile Camping Reserve on the Goulburn River and thought it would make for another great fishing trip. It is well grassed (hopefully will still be), with easy access to the river and has drop toilets. The river is suitable for those wanting to wade upstream or, like most of us, just throw in a line from the side (if we even get that energetic). The camping area is an easy drive out of Jamieson along the Jamieson/Woods Point Road and is a well-maintained dirt road.

Two departure times have been set as some members will be leaving Friday morning and others on Friday evening. If you can't make either, let me know and I will advise directions (don't be afraid!).

Weather permitting – and the wellbeing of attendees – I will probably take a scenic drive home via a few tracks that I haven't been on for some time, but be too difficult.

<b>Function</b>	<b>CHRISTMAS PARTY</b>
<b>Trip Leader</b>	Ashley Martin
<b>Contact No</b>	0438 600904
<b>Date</b>	Saturday, 1 December 2007
<b>Time/Place</b>	1200-1700hrs Bimbimie Wildlife Park, Mount Burnett
<b>Vehicle Limits</b>	NIL
<b>Equipment Required</b>	BBQ food, seating/eating equipment
<b>Maps Required</b>	Melway – Map Ref 313 4K
<b>Radio Channel CB/UHF</b>	12
<b>Trip Activity Details:</b>	
Lunch, and games, and a wildlife tour for the children – and adults if they wish to participate! And of course, a visit from Santa. See details in attached flyer.	

<b>Destination</b>	<b>OMEQ WHEELERS HUT &amp; SURROUNDS</b>
<b>Trip Leader</b>	John Partridge
<b>Contact No</b>	0428 311 211
<b>Date</b>	26-31 December
<b>Meeting Place:</b>	Omeo Caravan Park
<b>Vehicle Limits</b>	MINIMUM: 2 MAXIMUM: 6
<b>Equipment Required</b>	You will need to be self sufficient with all camping and cooking gear. Bring own water.
<b>Last Available Fuel</b>	Petrol: Omeo Diesel: Omeo
<b>Maps Required</b>	TBA
<b>Radio Channel CB/UHF</b>	12
<b>Trip Activity Details:</b> Most of us will be heading up on 26 <sup>th</sup> or 27 <sup>th</sup> and staying at Omeo for a day or two. From there it's a couple of hours drive to Wheelers Hut where, conditions dependant, we will stay for a couple of days. Not far from here are some great drives including Mt Pinnibar, Mt Sassafrass and Tom Groggin, where we may stay for a night of two.	
<b>Further information:</b> This trip is going to be flexible, the duration of where we stay will be dependent on conditions and how many other people are nearby.	



## MT DISAPPOINTMENT RECCE TRIP 29-30 SEPTEMBER

<i>Trip Leader:</i>	Paul Ryan	80 Series LC
<i>Participants:</i>	John Partridge	GQ Patrol
	Tim Axtell	60 Series LC
	Ashley Martin	GU Coil Cab
	Craig Major	GU Patrol
	Gary Smith	GU Patrol

After an easy run across town I met up with John and Paul just off the Hume and we cruised into Andersons campgrounds for the night. Fire lit, swags rolled out, billy boiling for the bedtime cocoa! A relatively early night was had.

Having been woken up by the light pitter patter of rain falling, I crawled out of the swag, reboiled the unused billy from the night before. Waited for the others to surface.

Around 9ish the day trippers arrived. Having aired down we headed off for the first track.

Ladder Track, important to pick wheel placement up this one. All bar one had a relative easy climb up. One picked the wrong line and gave Gary and



Paul a good and what seemed like forever view of the underbelly of a 60 Series Landcruiser – thankfully the front returned to earth eventually!

Craig's heart was pumping well at this point waiting for his turn in the new truck that he had been warned not to scratch or bend on its first

outing. With nobody else having dramas I should have guessed I was in for a bad day!!

A gentle cruise across to Pipeline Track which was a fairly steep downhill drop, sticking well clear of the car swallowing ruts on the left side and sliding around a protruding tree, all arrived unscathed at the bottom.

Now for the Three Sisters. I should have gone home at this point with the good name of Landcruisers still intact. Traveling the ridge line enjoying the views off to our left we reached a short steep drop to the gully floor with the choice of 4 tracks up the other side, and having watched Paul attempt the rather deep rutted one with a rock ledge thrown in just for fun it was decided we would take the right hand easy option.



Gary climbing The Sisters

Watching both Paul and Gary reach the top with no problems I thought we needed a winching exercise. So having got stuck in some loose stuff and not going any further up or down, Ashley (thank you your leg of lamb will be ready soon,) and Mr Warn came to the rescue. Now for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sister (cant wait!) sorry have no idea what she was like having heard Paul on the radio saying about the 2ft ledge needing to prop off. Craig (new car) Gary (does not like panel damage) and myself (already had enough excitement for one day) took the very chicken track around. From there we headed to Quarry Rd, what looked like a short but steep little climb took some of us (me) 4 attempts. It was a lot easier when 4 wheel drive was engaged!



Robert watching Tim...

Lunch time.

After lunch we headed to Nylander Spur Rd and a few more tracks only to find our way back at back at the base of Quarry Rd. Only took 2 attempts this time – I'm getting better! From there we aired up headed for the black top and cruised home.

**Tim**

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**WINE TRIP – WHITFIELD/KING VALLEY**  
**12-14 OCTOBER**

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**Trip Leader:** Ashley & Lesley  
**Participants:** Derek & Janet  
Brian (Happy)  
Peter & Janine  
John & Stephanie  
Michael, Verylle, Liberty & Elizabeth  
Paul, Max, Robert & Madeleine  
Maggie  
Colin & Katie  
Warren & Linda  
Lauren & Dan  
Kelly, Randall & Jake

**Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October**  
**Wednesday**

We set off a couple of days early with our caravan. I spoke to Ashley on the phone from the McKenzie Reserve and he was quick to point at that we were two days early for meeting up with most of the trip members.

We stayed Wednesday night in Toolangi State Park at the campground at the junction of Marginal Road and Luke Creek Tracks No 1 and No 2. After making the mistake of going in along Marginal Road we found a tree across the track and had to cut it away with the chainsaw. It was all pretty dry in there, although there were some small bogholes leading into the campground that were full of water. No doubt they will soon be much bigger after others have "played" there.

We had the place to ourselves and enjoyed a quiet night around the campfire.

**Thursday**

We went back to the Melba Highway via Two Hills Road and stopped at Yea for a bit of shopping and some coffee which we drank in a rest area outside Yea. Then on to Whitfield via Bonnie Doon and Mansfield. The hilly, winding road between Mansfield and Whitfield proved a long haul with the van on the back. The dozens of motorbikes coming in the opposite direction on their way to the MotoGP at Phillip Island didn't help much either. Apparently, the road is one of the top routes for bikers in Victoria.

The processions of bikers continued through Whitfield after we had set up camp in the Valley View Caravan Park. The Park is right beside the road and we amused ourselves by counting the numbers of bikers in each passing group. The largest was 33.

We learned a huge amount from the Park owners Ann and Barry, including a day by day account of a recent cruise to Alaska, Canada and Hawaii; how long it took to renovate their house, and the intriguing solutions found by Barry to a number of very significant challenges; various ailments and illnesses; career disappointments for Barry and the eight and a half years they spent living in a caravan behind Reception while Barry was sent off

every day with a packed lunch and told not to come back until all the renovation work was finished.

I was keen to try out the new TV tuner I have bought for my laptop so late in the afternoon we started the Caravanner's Antenna Waltz. This involves turning the antenna in a slow, rhythmic pattern stopping at regular intervals to shout at your partner inside, "Is that better? Can you see anything yet?" I had noticed some seriously large antennas on the houses opposite. My small plastic version looked a bit feeble in comparison and when no signal resulted my worst fears were confirmed by Barry.

"I spent hundreds of dollars on an antenna up on my roof", he told me. "All I get most of the time is a flock of parrots." I didn't ask him what he meant. I had too much information already.

**Friday**

We walked around Whitfield in the morning and then spent a lazy morning and lunchtime until Ashley and Lesley arrived just after 1.00pm. Before setting up, Ashley decided to book in at Reception. Half an hour later, I went to rescue him.

"Ashley", I called from outside the door, taking care not to cross the threshold. "You need to get set up if we're going to have time to get over to Buffalo River to check out campsites for Cup Weekend." I had chosen the words carefully to give him the opportunity to extricate himself from Ann and Barry. However, Ash must have been really interested in the cruise.

"I'm just hearing about Alaska", he said. I made a quick getaway and left him to it.

Ten minutes later, Ashley returned and after he and Lesley had set up the camp, we drove over to Buffalo River via Cheshunt and Rose River Road. The journey to Dandongadale passed uneventfully until we reached Upper Rose River Road.

"Go straight on. To the left", came the instructions from the trip leader.

"Here we go", I thought but we made it safely, turning right at Dandongadale on to Abbeyards Road.

We drove about 20km south stopping to look at a series of campsites situated on the narrow strip between the road and the Buffalo River. We looked at Blades, Tea Tree, Manna Gum, Abbeyards and McIver before deciding that Manna Gum, with its grassed areas and shallow access to the river would be best for Cup Weekend.

We returned to Whitfield and went to the pub for dinner. The evening had cooled and the open fire was welcoming. We had left a note saying where we were and it was not long before others began to arrive and our group grew larger.

**Janet and Derek Hymas**

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We had finished dinner at the pub and were relaxing with an ale when Brian and Maggie arrived. Dad advised there was a van behind us at

the caravan park but didn't know who it was. I thought it was Warren and Linda so I headed back to meet them. I thought the others would not be long behind me but how wrong I was. Waiting back at the park Peter and Janine arrived and as Brian had the keys to their van they went to the pub with instructions to send everyone back. After time ticked by, the radio crackled and John and Paul were making their way into Whitfield. As the others hadn't returned I asked Paul to drop by the pub and send the crew home, but what a mistake that was, no one was to return. Colin and Katie arrived and as I learnt from my previous mistakes there was no way I was sending them to the pub only for them never to be seen again! Eventually the happy pub crew returned. The group was soon joined by Anthony, Michael and Verylle, and a pleasant evening was enjoyed around the fire.

### Ashley

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A weekend in mid October saw nine vehicles set out for one of Australia's most diverse wine regions, the King Valley.

Some of the crew arrived on the Friday afternoon to sample the culinary delights of the Whitfield pub (well, a fat parma at least). A couple of our esteemed members sampled a little too much of the fine fare. As the Friday arrivals nursed their hangovers, Saturday morning brought a few more willing participants from Melbourne who were ready and raring to get straight to it (tasting that is). We set out from our little caravan park just before the sun went over the yard-arm and arrived at Station Creek Winery in a matter of minutes. They didn't know what hit them when our rowdy crew set upon the small tasting bar. As the wine mingled with the toothpaste, most people opted to save their credit cards for later in the day.

Next up was Chrismont, a particular favourite of ours and the darling of several of Melbourne's finest restaurants with its La Zona range. This was most people's first opportunity to try some new varieties of wine, including the Arneis, Sangiovese and the Marzemino Frizzante (that's fizzy red to the uninitiated).



The gang holed up at Chrismont Winery

Pizzini was next on the list before we stopped for lunch. The couple that we had scared off at Chrismont got the same treatment at Pizzini and the tasting room was full to bursting. As the early morning excess started to go to a few people's heads, a "pour it yourself" policy was adopted (by Michael) and the Riesling flowed. Lovely wines and a few more purchases and we were off to lunch.



Peter, Janine and Verylle contemplate the Pizzini lineup!

The Avalon winery lawn was the perfect setting for a late lunch and we did it in style. Making sandwiches on the back of a truck never looked so good.

After a few cases were hauled out of the tasting shed and sandwiches and snags unwrapped, most people lay back in the sunshine or kicked a ball with the kids. Bliss.

[Ashley and Dan should give a special mention to Rosa, Avalon's wonderful hostess, for providing them with an extremely generous tasting to go with lunch!]

After lunch we stopped at La Cantina,



where the wines started to stick in the throat and obviously had an effect on Ashley's directions, as he led the troops down a muddy dead end. [What do Derek & Jan think?] Eventually, after a few U-turns and a red face or two, we arrived at the last winery, Boggy Creek, where the Audi brigade eyed the trucks with suspicion and the owner

ran out of glasses. This brought us (via Dal Zotto winery for some) to happy hour, which saw us scoff down some delicious treats from home washed down with a few lovely wines from the region.



A couple of hours later and it was on for young and old. Dinner was served to the great delight of all the punters, what a feast. Chicken curry(s), chilli con carne, beef curry, gourmet salads, lamb curry, pasta bake, Greek lamb, (thanks Anthony, that was mouth watering) and pappadums to boot and the bellies were full.

The fire was in full force and the kids were hounding us to play spotlight and we partied into the late hours.

The next thing we knew, the sun was shining and the birds were singing and then came the breakfast to end all breakfasts. Ashley, Peter and Dan cooked up Mount Bacon... wait for it!



And all that was left to do was pack up and meander back home with slightly heavier vehicles than before....

While the crew packed up, we went to Politini with the Ryan's. Another tasting session and a few more cases and we were back in no time to say goodbye.

That wraps up our first winery weekend tour with the club. Thanks to everyone, we had such a great time and look forward to seeing you next year.

**Lauren & Dan**



## VFWDC

### TRIP CLASSIFICATIONS

**Scenic/  
Social:**

Sealed roads and some good unsealed roads or tracks.  
No four wheel driving experience required.

**Easy:**

Road tyres are acceptable.  
Little or no Four Wheel Driving experience required.  
Road tyres are acceptable.  
Front and rear recovery points at Trip Leader's discretion.  
Expected track classification to be encountered = **GREEN**.

**Medium:**

Low range may be needed with a snatch strap recovery possible.  
All-terrain tyres preferred.  
Front and rear recover points (rated), basic recovery gear (snatch strap, 2 rated shackles and gloves), Driver Training Certificate for new members.  
Expected track classification to be encountered = **GREEN** and **BLUE**.

**Hard:**

Steep terrain or rutted tracks.  
Snatch strap and/or winching recovery may be required.  
All-terrain tyres acceptable, mud terrain tyres preferred, road tyres are NOT acceptable.  
Front and rear recovery points (rated), basic recovery gear gear (snatch strap, 2 rated shackles and gloves), Driver Training Certificate.  
Winch and full recovery gear an advantage.  
Expected track classification to be encountered = mostly **BLUE** or **BLACK**.

**Extreme:**

Very steep, deeply rutted tracks or rock hopping will be encountered.  
Front and rear recovery points (rated), full recovery gear (snatch strap, rated shackles, tree trunk protector, winch extension, drag chain, gloves), Advanced Driver Training Certificate.  
Winching will be expected and a hand, electric, or motorised winch is compulsory on all vehicles. Mud terrain or swamper style tyres essential.  
Warning: Vehicle damage may occur.  
Expected track classification to be encountered = **BLACK** and **RED**.



# Christmas Party



Saturday, 1 December 2007

at

**Bimbimbie**

**Wildlife & Picnic Park**

**523 Paternoster Road, Mount Burnett**

(Melway Map Reference 313 K4)



❖ **Wildlife Tour**

❖ **Games**

❖ **Visit from Santa**

**Costs:**

<b>Adult</b>	<b>\$10.00</b>
<b>Child</b>	<b>\$ 7.00</b>
<b>Family</b>	<b>\$30.00</b>

**BYO Meat, Beverages**

**Club will provide salads, and the soft drinks for the kids.**

**Join us for this year's festivities and have a great time.**

**Contact Ashley on 0438 600 904 for further information.**