

- Kerry O'Conner - refusing to reinact the head lock she uses on Damo when he misbehaves
- and many many more followed.

A big round of applause to Nev for completing his training after 31 years in the club, and Kyle Patton for being the club's second 'L' PLate driver to partake in the training weekend

Lastly big thank you's to the trainers Burkey, Kate, Bruce, Noel and all the other club members who helped out throughout the weekend.

See you out on the tracks,

Tom



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Jamieson/Mt Terrible Trip Report 19 & 20 April 2014

A small contingent of Wangaratta 4x4 members, consisting of Damian O'Connor in his 80 Series, Keith Holland in his Mitsubishi Challenger, Lisa and Chris Penniceard and myself in our Hiluxes, met at the Glenrowan service station on the Saturday morning. We were meant to have another member on our trip, but after a gruelling night drive the young Mr. Tim Meeks had pulled out- even though Keith had done the same drive and was bursting with energy and raring to go. After a few of us had our fill of Bacon and Egg McMuffins we hit the road, had a quick fuel stop at Mansfield and drove on to Jamieson.

(The team...)

We aired down at the entrance to Sappers Track (which starts just the other side of the river from the town centre of Jamieson) and hit the dirt tracks- nothing too difficult, but some great views of the region.

After a bit of a drive we exited Sappers Track and took Sappers Link Track down to the river. Sappers link had a few stepper descents and gave the group an indication of the tracks to come over the rest of the trip.



A quick river crossing (which washed some of the dirt that was on Keith's Challenger from the night before), we were back on the tar for a quick stint and headed on to the start of Flourbag Track.

Flourbag was an easy drive, with only a few quick stops made along the way to take pictures. From there we turned onto Moonlight Spur Track, and right from the outset you could see the change in the track. There were lots of fun climbs, with the rocky firm ground providing plenty of traction. There was also a significant increase in Radio banter between the group at this stage- mostly at the expense of poor Keith and his Mitsubishi. At the end of Moonlight Spur Track we stopped for a very chilly lunch.

After lunch headed along Ryan's Spur Track, stopped quickly at the hut beside the track and then headed along to Big River Road via Boundary Track. There was a mix of black humus to orange clay tracks in this

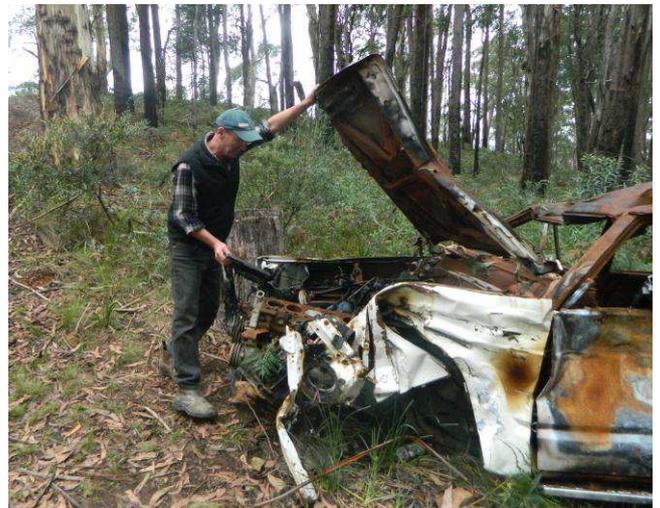
area which kept everyone on their toes. Once on Big River Road, we stopped off to collect some firewood for the night, and proceeded to find a campsite. This proved to be the hardest thing to do on the trip. Being Easter there were lots of dirt bike rider and other drivers in the area, so it was on our 8th entry to the designated campsites that we finally found a space of our own to call home for the night.

Now while I like the drive but what I love most about these trips is the camaraderie that occurs around the campfire. Keith took charge with the campfire (so much so that he became known as ‘The Fire Warden’), Damo set up his sleeping cot as a lounge for everyone to use, Chris told us jokes (ask him about the Irishman with three sons), and Lisa sat there shaking her head at us all. After we’d all eaten (including some “Zoe Booksby Specials”- if you don’t know what they are, you are really missing out), and had a few laughs we hit the sack.

We awoke to find that the Easter Bunny had not forgotten us on our adventure and there were Easter Eggs on each of our vehicles for us to enjoy on our days drive. With breakfast done we packed up the camp, collected all our rubbish (and some that others who had come before us had left behind) and took Frenchman’s Spur Track back, before turning onto Frenchman’s Creek Track and then Two Mile Track. The scenery change from open sclerophyll forest to dense temperate rainforest was amazing. Turning back on to the tracks from the day before we stopped at an old GQ that had been dumped beside a track- and Damo proudly proclaimed “see what happens to Patrols up here? This is Cruiser country.”

Seen better days...

Temperate rainforest



We eventually hit Mt. Terrible track (which was surprisingly quiet given it was Easter Sunday), which had a number of steep climbs on it- with the group only electing to take the ‘chicken track’ on one section. One particular rutted and rocky section proved especially challenging for the Penniceard’s Hilux (now known as ‘Big Red’), which had to do a hill stall and try a different angle thanks to a lack of an LSD. The UHF banter continued throughout the day; Damo kept a tally of how many meat pies Keith owed him, everyone picked on Damo’s fear of heights when driving along a section of the track that had a steep drop off on one side, and Keith was joking challenged to drive up a very steep track in reverse.

When we arrived at the top of Mt. Terrible we were met with a very view- a few photos were taken, and lollies and Easter eggs shared and then we continued back down the mountain to Jamieson. This was a fantastic weekend, with the small group (who had never really travelled together before) all becoming firm friends. I think a section from Shakespeare’s Henry V sums it up well.... “*From this day to the ending of the world, But we in it shall be remembered- We few, we happy few, we band of brothers*”.

Steve



Big climb...



Team pic...

Strathbogie Night Run

Friday 19th April saw club members meeting up at the Swanpool Sports Oval prior to the night drive. Burkey and Kate met up with Keith Holland and cooked some dinner on the BBQ. Whilst eating, the rest of the gang arrived to have a total of 8 vehicles and 12 club members. Members present were Burkey and Kate, Tom and Zoe, Tim, Dj and little Tom (well, not little anymore so am going to rename him "Tall Tom"), Keith Holland, Tony Miller, John and Kyle Patton and Steve and Tracey Twomey.

We started with airing down our tyres and travelling to the first track at Lightning Ridge at 7.00pm. This was a fairly long track but as it was dry it was not long before we came upon the next track. With Burkey in the lead and Steve as TEC, it was a tidy trip travelling through the 'Bogies'. Suffice to say Tim had no mishaps, Tom didn't break anything whilst trialling the new gear he installed in his vehicle and Dj travelled admirably well. We stopped for a little practice on some dirt mounds with hill climbing techniques. Keith even had a go and got some skills honed for his other trip with Steve Fuller later that weekend.

Unfortunately the rain we had earlier that day did not reach the Bogies so it was fairly dry making the trip a lot easier however, there were still some tracks with challenging sections where wheel placement and manoeuvrability was essential to negotiate rough areas, deep ruts, downed trees and with the darkness it made it all the more tricky. But, as I said, unfortunately it didn't rain enough...sigh.