

“Responsible Four Wheel Driving And Family Touring”



APRIL 2021

Newsletter



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www.wangaratta4x4club.org.au



WANGARATTA 4X4 CLUB

Wangaratta Four Wheel Drive Club

Committee Members

Executive-

President	Neville Sonogo
Vice President	Mick Maher
Secretary	Sue Abotomey
Treasurer	Mick Maher

Other Committee Members-

Newsletter editor	Bev Maher
Property Officer	Neville French
Publicity Officer	Bev Maher
Trip Coordinator	Damian O'Connor

Graham Abotomey
Neville French
Manfred Wagner

Non-Committee Positions-

Training Coordinator	Dave van Zanten
FWDV Representative	Dave Van Zanten
Web Master	Andrew Brown

WEBSITE:

www.wangaratta4x4club.org.au

The Wangaratta 4WD Club has evolved from a few members in 1983, to our current membership of over 30 families. The Club is made up of individuals and families who are interested in responsible Four-Wheel Driving.

There is no restriction on the make or type of four-wheel drive vehicle, and there is always plenty of variety and camaraderie amongst members.

Where we live: Members live all over the North East and beyond, including from Benalla, Beechworth, Corowa, Howlong Glenrowan, Milawa, Albury, Wodonga, Wangaratta, Goorambat, Tatong, Langwarrin, Molyullah, Myrtleford, Mount Beauty, Mulwala, Yarrawonga, Stanhope, Violet Town, Melbourne, Rosebud and Overseas (England).



Wangaratta Four Wheel Drive Club is affiliated with Four Wheel Drive Victoria.

Members of our club are proud to be part of the Adopt a Hut Program and work with Parks Victoria to look after Top Crossing and Lake Cobbler huts.

Membership: Single or family \$100.00 p.a. **Temporary Membership:** \$15.00 (Three trips)

General Meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, generally at the North East Car Club Rooms, Tarrawingee Recreation Reserve, commencing 8.00pm. There is no meeting in January. Please refer to the club calendar. **Visitors are always most welcome.**

TRACK TORQUE: Newsletter Contributions may be forwarded to ...

Editor: Bev Maher - editor@wangaratta4x4club.org.au

This is your newsletter so be part of it and send in any articles of interest, comments, trips, birthdays etc.

Editorial Deadline: - 1st of the month

Advertising: \$100/yr. Please contact the editor for further details.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in the articles in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor or of Wangaratta Four Wheel Drive Club Inc. The editor reserves the right to delete any section of any article, or reject any article, which has been sent in for publication in the Newsletter

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - APRIL 2021.

Autumn is well and truly with us now bringing the beautiful days and good nights for sleeping. Chris and I plan to do a recce that should then be on the calendar later in the year. It is a great feeling to be able to move around the country again. Lets hope it continues.

A couple of dates to keep free on the calendar. The 11th of April our general meeting will be held at the showrooms of Ironman in Wangaratta. The 11th May we will celebrate another birthday of the club. The Wangaratta Club has been booked for this evening. See Track Torque for details.

Hope everyone has had an enjoyable and safe Easter and see you at the next gathering.

PRESIDENT.

Neville Sonogo.

Club Contact Details

Name and Position Held	Mobile Number	Email Address
Neville Sonogo (President)	0427 251 576	nsonogo1@yahoo.com
Sue Abotomey (Secretary)	0424914200	susieabotomey@hotmail.com
Mick Maher (Treasurer)	0419 533 898	mick@maher.net.au
Damian O'Connor (Trip Coordinator)	0417 526 175	damnkez@people.net.au
Bev Maher (Editor Track Torque)	0419 533 898	editor@wangaratta4x4club.org.au



**WANGARATTA FOUR WHEEL DRIVE CLUB Inc.
General Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday 9th March 2021, 8:00pm
at The Nth East Car Club Rooms, Tarrawingee**

- **Present:** Neville & Monica French, Neville & Chris Sonego, Sue & Graham Abotomey and Damien O'Connor, Bev & Mick Maher, Manfred Wagner, Sydes, Ron Grant, Irene Jones, Gary Jordan, Barry Richardson, John & Beryl Strang, Allan & Jeanette Wallace.

- **Apologies:** David Blore, David & Fiona van Zanten and Mark Schirmer & Penelope.

- **Minutes of Previous Meeting:**

Motion:

The Minutes of previous meeting as circulated be accepted.”

Moved: Jeanette Wallace Seconded: Monica French Carried

- **Business Arising:**

- New home for Club Trailer? - to General Business
- Website – Andrew Brown is happy to continue.

President, Neville Sonego thanked Andrew Brown for his continued great work with the Club's Website which was endorsed by all attending members. Thank you Andrew

- **Correspondence:**

Inwards

- Dave van Zanten new date for Driver Training (has been advertised)
- Vic High Country Huts Assoc – Echo from the Mountains
- WAW, bank statements
- Aust Post – PO Box Account
- 4WDVic:
 - Notice of AGM and Proxy Vote forms
 - Half yearly affiliation Form (returned with 3 new members)

Outwards

- Emails sent to Club members advising:
 - New Driver Training weekend confirmation
 - Email sent to all members regarding Hacking and Scam messages.
 - Stone's Throw IT re possible Website hacking.

Motion:

“Correspondence be accepted.”

Moved: Sue Abotomey Seconded: Chris Sonego Carried

- **Treasurer's Report 28th February 2021**

Motion:

The Treasurer's report be accepted and accounts passed for payment."

Moved: Mick Maher Seconded: Neville French Carried

- **Memberships** - Manfred Wagner presented Gary Jordan with his name badge and he was formally welcomed into our Club.
- **Trip Reports**
 - **Gastronomical Tour** – Jeanette gave a verbal report (refer this month's Track Torque).
 - **Mallacoota via Eden** – Graham & Sue escaped the last lockdown.
 - **Phillip Island** – Neville & Monica recently spent a relaxing weekend taking in the local sights.
 - **Top Crossing Hut** – Neville & Monica visited this area over the long weekend and reported all free campsites and the Whitfield Caravan Park packed and about 1,000 at Lake William Hovell!
 - **Jeanette & Allan Wallace** are to visit the Flinders Ranges in May and looking for information on best campsites and places to go.
- **Club Calendar**
 - **Club Driver Training rescheduled to this coming weekend** – Friday evening 12th Theory at Nth East Car Club rooms followed by driving on Saturday 13th March 2021. Contact Dave van Zanten if you are interested. 5 members booked in.
 - **4x4 High Country mid-week – Monday 15th to 18th March Graham Abotomey trip leader.**
 - **Eldorado Day Trip – Sunday 21 March 2021. 10am Meet Damo at Apex Park, Wangaratta**
 - **The Man From Snowy River Festival** – 8th to 11th April 2021 (some members are travelling to Corryong on 6th April)
 - **April Committee Meeting** – Tuesday 6th at The Wangaratta Club. 6:00pm for meal followed by meeting.
 - **April General Meeting** – Tuesday 12th **to be held at Iron Man**, 6:30pm for BBQ followed by meeting. (Nos req'd for catering)
 - **Riverina Day Trip** – Sunday 17th April. Contact Damo
 - **Albury/Wodonga 4x4 Camping & Fishing Show** – Friday 30th April to Sunday 2nd May 2021 at Albury Show Grounds.
 - **May Committee Meeting** – Tuesday 4th at The Wangaratta Club. 6:00pm for meal followed by meeting.
 - **May Birthday Dinner Meeting – Tuesday 11th** to be held at The Old Plough Inn, Tarrawingee or Everton Pub or Wang Club (TBC)
 - **Craig's Hut** – Saturday 29th May. Contact Damo

Proposed 2021 Trips (Watch this space!)

- Bev & Mick Maher are planning a trip to Hattah Kulkyne NP in the autumn.
- Chris Sonogo is planning a 'Wimmera Wander' hopefully taking in the Harrow Light and Sound Show.
- David Blore is planning to run his Hahn's Track WA desert run in July 2021 after having to cancel this year due to COVID.
- Neville French – Winter Day run to Murmungee area
- 2022 Possible Tassie trip in autumn – Sonogo's

• **General Business**

1. **Club Trailer:**

The Club Trailer storage at Tarrawingee has been offered by Neville & Chris Sonogo's Committee to purchase tarp to cover.

Motion:

The Club Trailer to be stored at Neville & Chris Sonogo's, Tarrawingee and will be covered by a tarp purchased by the Club."

Moved: Allan Wallace

2nd: Mick Maher

Carried

2. **Scam Emails & Text Messages from Members** - Sue emailed all members advising them to delete, do not open! (I need your help or contact me urgently, etc.)
3. **Delivery of Newsletters and Brochures** – Neville & Monica French happy to continue. Thank you Neville & Monica
4. **Current Membership List** – printed copies are available to members at Club meetings.
5. **Website** – Reply to email from 'Stone's Throw It' after asking if our Website has been hacked? STI have scanned our Website every which way and it is currently clear. Andrew Brown (Webmaster) has the info from STI and will make continue to monitor. Thanks Andrew!
6. **Free Vehicle** – Ron Grant has a friend who has an old 3 door Pajero free to anyone. Needs much work. Enquiries to Ron before 31st March.
7. Other General Business – NIL

Meeting closed: 8:45pm

**WANGARATTA FOUR WHEEL DRIVE CLUB Inc.
AGM Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday 9th March 2021, 8:50pm
at the North East Car Club Rooms, Tarrawingee**

- **Present:** Neville & Monica French, Neville & Chris Sonego, Sue & Graham Abotomey and Damien O'Connor, Bev & Mick Maher, Manfred Wagner, Gill Sydes, Ron Grant, Irene Jones, Gary Jordan, Barry Richardson, John & Beryl Strang and Allan & Jeanette Wallace.
- **Apologies:** David Blore, David & Fiona van Zanten and Mark Schirmer & Penelope.

- **Confirmation of Minutes of Previous AGM:**

Motion:

The Minutes of previous AGM of 10th March 2020 as circulated be accepted.”

Moved: Monica French Seconded: Chris Sonego Carried

- **Business Arising:** NIL

- **President's Report** – Neville Sonego gave a verbal report.
Not a lot happened in 2020 due to COVID. Welcome to new members. Hopefully 2021 will see us on the tracks!

Motion:

“President's report as presented accepted”.

Moved: Bev Maher Seconded: Monica French Carried

- **Treasurer's Report 28th February 2021 (see attached)**

Motion:

The Treasurer's report be accepted as presented.”

Moved: Mick Maher Seconded: Damo O'Connor Carried

Motion:

“Wangaratta Four Wheel Drive Club Inc. Membership fees for 2021/2022 Club Fees be set at \$80.00 for current members and an additional \$20 Joining Fee for new members”.

Moved: Mick Maher Seconded: Graham Abotomey Carried

#A reminder to all members that:

Memberships need to be received before 30th June 2021

- **Election of Office Bearers**

Sue Abotomey took the chair to conduct the election of office bearers. All positions were declared vacant and nominations called for:

President:

Neville Sonogo Nom:Bev Maher 2nd Neville French Elected

Vice President:

Irene Jones Nom:Jeanette Wallace 2nd Bev Maher Elected

Secretary:

Beryl Strang Nom: John Strang 2nd Dave van Zanten Elected

Treasurer:

Mick Maher Nom: Chris Sonogo 2nd Monica French Elected

Committee Members:

Bev Maher - Editor

Manfred Wagner - Membership

Damo O'Connor - Trip Coordinator

Graham Abotomey

Sue Abotomey

Non Committee Positions:

Driver Training Coordinator - David van Zanten

Webmaster - Andrew Brown

President, Neville Sonogo took the Chair for the completion of the AGM and thanked Irene Jones and Beryl Strang for taking on executive roles.

Neville also thanked:

- Sue Abotomey for her excellent work and support as secretary over the last few years
- Neville French for his contribution to the Committee over the years
- Bev Maher for her continued roll as editor of Track Torque and her tireless work in keeping the members informed during COVID.

- **General Business**

- Signatories to WAW a/c

Motion:

“Beryl Strang to be added to the current signatories (Michael Maher, Sue Abotomey and Bev Maher) to the Wangaratta Four Wheel Drive Club Inc. WAW accounts.”

Moved: Neville French 2nd: Jeanette Wallace Carried

AGM closed at 9:05pm

CLUB NEWS-

All Trips will continue to be under the strict COVID-19 guidelines as per Government regulations for our region at that current time.

COVID PROTOCOLS



**Everyone has a role to play
in slowing the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19)**

Before you attend any Trips or Attendance Meetings:

- If you are feeling unwell you should stay at home. If you have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), however mild, you should get tested.

While you are out with the Wangaratta Four Wheel Drive Club Inc.:

- Provide your contact details to the Club and Venue to assist should contract tracing be required.
- In shared spaces and when moving about be aware of maintaining your physical distance and wear a face mask when unable to maintain adequate social distancing.
- Wash/Sanitise your hands regularly
- Don't share cutlery, plates or glasses
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.

When you get home:

- Dispose of Masks correctly and Wash your hands

Please Note:

Activities with the Wangaratta Four Wheel Drive Club Inc. will only go ahead in strict accordance with the Victorian Government's COVID regulations at that time and as such may be cancelled or changed at short notice.

APRIL CLUB MEETING -TUESDAY APRIL 13th

1-3 Norton Street, Wangaratta

Time: **6:30pm**

BBQ Tea: Supplied by Wangaratta OFF-ROAD and Caravan

BYO: **Chair + Drinks and plates & cutlery**

If you have not already replied please let me know if you will be attending by Thursday 8th April for catering purposes.

susieabotomey@hotmail.com / 0424914200

Come along and make this a memorable night provided by one of our Major Sponsors.

TRIP UPDATES – PROPOSED HANNS TRACK - ? JULY 2021

from David Blore-

UPDATE NO 1

I've been reviewing the information on access to Aboriginal Communities in WA under the current Covid restrictions in trying to progress my thinking on the possible Hanns Track trip later this year. On my reading of the most recent details, it seems that Warburton on the Great Central Road and Ilkurka on the Anne Beadell Hwy are both open under restricted access rules. This means that we would be able to enter these two communities to obtain fuel and other small necessities while traversing the region, providing that things don't change in the meantime (crystal ball anyone?)

On the other hand, Kunawaritji on the Canning Stock Route/Gary Junction Road, Parnngur and many others are not accessible, which takes out of contention any thoughts I might have had of continuing on from Warburton and doing the southern part of the Canning back to Laverton for example.

Nonetheless it seems that our trip might indeed be possible, so I thought I'd just give you a heads-up for planning your year. Timing for such a trip would be a departure date from Laverton of 1 July, returning to Laverton (to pick up caravans for those taking them) in about 10-15 days. Before and after the actual trip will be as you desire; the actual Club trip will only be the Hanns Track portion.

I hope this helps in your planning for the rest of 2021!

UPDATE NO 2-

My optimism last week about a likelihood of travelling in the desert this year after scanning the net for information was sadly misplaced. The advice below is that no travel (other than on the Great Central Road) is permitted through the Ngaanyatjarra Reserve at present, although permits may be issued in the second half of the year. Unfortunately, even if they were to open in July and not September or October, it would probably leave us too little time to plan a trip. I will keep a watching brief on any possibility arising, but at this stage I think Plan B, C or D (whatever you may have in mind) needs to be enacted!

Regards

David Blore

CLUB MEMBERSHIP FEES

Membership fees are due BY June 30th 2021

This year they are set at \$80 per family

Payable via Direct Debit-

Wangaratta 4x4 Club

Wangaratta Credit Union (WAW)

BSB 803-070

Account - 29894



Manfred welcomes new member Gary Jordan with his Club badge.

Looking forward to you sharing many great trips with the Club Gary.

CLUB APPAREL – AVAILABLE FROM



PRE - TRIP REPORTS



TRIP 1 - APRIL 17th 2021

RIVERINA NSW DAY TRIP

TRIP LEADER: Damian and Kerry O'connor

CONTACT DETAILS: 0417526175 or damnkez@people.net.au

If interested in this trip, please let us know prior to attending the trip

START DATE: SATURDAY APRIL 17TH 2021

MEETING TIME AND PLACE: Apex Park Wangaratta 7:15am to leave at 7:30 am sharp!! (We will be travelling through Howlong going through there approx 8.30am if anyone needs to meet there)

TRIP RATING: Easy road touring

FUEL: Full tank ex Wangaratta, it will roughly be 400ks round trip

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT: Bring your lunch, drinks snacks and camera, (we will be stopping at Henty Bakery hopefully before it shuts at 12), bring lunch in-case we get there too late.

MAX VEHICLES: Unlimited

RECOVER GEAR: Each vehicle to have a UHF radio tuned to **channel 14** club channel

TRIP DETAILS: We will head off from Wangaratta and head towards the other side of Walbundrie to have a look at Morgans Lookout.

Morgans lookout is a big granite rock lookout, over looking the riverina area where Known 1860's bushranger Dan "Mad Dog" Morgan used to hide out and use as a vantage point to watch for approaching victims and police, it has great 380 degree views from the country side below.

We will then continue onto Henty where hopefully we will make it to the bakery in time before it shuts at noon, then continue on to Milbrulong, which has a water tank with Rosella's painted on it, then continue on to Lockhart, which we will have a look at numerous metal sculptures around the town as well as its painted water tower, before heading home via Urana, stopping and checking out the "big spider" on Urana's water tower.

We should be back home in Wangaratta around 5.30/6.00ish in the evening

WHAT EVER COVID 19 RULES WILL APPLY AT THE TIME OF THE TRIP.

TRIP 2 - MAY 29th 2021

CRAIGS HUT TRIP 2021

TRIP LEADER: Damian O'connor

CONTACT DETAILS: 0417526175 or damnkez@people.net.au
Please let me know if you are interested in going on this trip before the trip.

START DATE: Saturday 29th May 2021

MEETING PLACE AND TIME: McDonalds Wangaratta 8am

TRIP RATING: Medium (hopefully there might be some snow by then)

TYPE OF TREAD: Good All terrains or Mud terrains NO ROAD TREADS!! as tracks wont be suitable for road treads

FUEL: Full tank ex Wangaratta

RECOVERY GEAR: Your usual recover gear, UHF radio tuned to **channel 14** and recovery points front and back of each vehicle

PERSONAL EQUIPEMENT: Bring your lunch, drinks, snacks and clothing for all seasons for this trip

MAX NUMBER OF VEHICLES: 6 vehicles plus my own vehicle this will be capped at, first in bested dressed

WHAT EVER COVID 19 RULES AT TIME WILL APPLY TO THIS TR



TRIP REPORTS

1. HIGH COUNTRY TRIP – MARCH 2021

words and photos by Jeanette Wallace

We Wallaces, left home (Echuca) 3.30pm Sunday 14/3/21 and parked our 79 series ute and Trayon in the hospitable Abotomey's back yard at Oxley for the night. They prepared a scrumptious meal for us and of course with a few drinks we had a great night in preparation for our exciting trip.

The next morning (Monday) we met up with Gill and her Prado and Ron and his brand-new Prado at the Oxley parking area. Of course, Graham was driving his new Ranger. After the initial pleasantries we headed off towards Myrtleford to meet up with Manfred and his 70 series wagon and his passenger Howard. On the way out of Myrtleford Graham pointed out the fire fighting helicopters parked ready for duty.

Turning left we headed towards Bright. We could see the beautiful mountains in sight and Graham had ordered brilliantly clear blue skies for us.

A nature stop at Harrietville was in order as was an obligatory coffee. Ron was dismayed to find the toilets locked. What he hadn't realised was that Graham had beaten him to the one male toilet. On leaving Harrietville we started the curves and climbs. Of course, most in our club take these for granted but we from the VERY flat flood plains of the Murray River noticed the difference. Before reaching Hotham, we turned right onto the Dargo Rd and found a spot to put our hubs in, as the bitumen turned to gravel almost immediately. Allan was initially taken back by the new rims which had covers over the hubs and therefore had to be removed to access the hubs.

Further on we came to the Blue Rag Range Track entrance and all aired down. We immediately turned right onto the track and we as TEC got lots of great views of the other vehicles as they headed up, up and further up the track. Thank goodness there were lots of "woopsie doos" to wait and ensure the vehicle ahead had cleared. We were straight away into low range gear. We did meet a bit of traffic on this obviously popular track. At one stage as TEC we were held up by a mob of motorbikes crossing the track at a speed.

We made Trig Point for lunch and so unfortunately did the mob of Honda motorbikes. It was also a good point to catch up with those at home via phone as we had reception.

I was pleased to have the locals who could point out landmarks, such as the Hotham Village in the distance. Turning around we descended back on the Dargo Rd and headed towards Grant. As we passed a mob of Herefords contentedly grazing Graham explained it was freehold country. The road was certainly easy to travel on and we appreciated the beautiful trees lining the road. And there was no evidence of the recent fires. Further on we headed off to the right and started our climb up towards Grant Township. We stopped at the cemetery and the reality of the remoteness of these townships and their hardships was brought home to us.

For afternoon tea we all munched on some ice creams compliments of the Wallace's Trayon freezer. Again heading off we turned right again towards the old town site with nothing really left but a sign. Of course we checked out the hut close to there.

Back on the track we headed into our camp spot at Talbotville. Lots of space and sites to choose from. I saw the biggest goanna I have ever seen (unfortunately not quick enough for a photo) while mermaid Gill decided on a swim in the lovely and cold Crooked River. Of course, it wasn't too long before out came the pre-dinner drinks in the shade and then the campfire as soon as the sun started setting below the hills.

It was a leisurely rise on Tuesday morning. While preparing his breakfast Graham had to fight off a friendly bird who had intended to confiscate his bread roll. We decided to leave chairs and a few items out to point out our intention to return to the same camp area for the night. Then out came the maps to discuss routes. We found that many of our maps appeared to contradict each other because of the change of names (and sometimes tracks) over the years. Eventually success was declared at last with a route decided on.

The first river crossing was a doozie. I went across with Graham to take a couple of photos of the others crossing. All went fine until Allan chose his path. His back wheel went down, his front passenger wheel went up and Graham and I cupped our heads in our hands and watched as the Trayon fell to the side. Somehow the old ute didn't want to end our day so early and Allan drove out. Did I get a photo? Well yes but it was of the water because I was too busy yelling, "Oh sh..!"

We had creek crossing after creek crossing. Most were relatively easy and the scenery was spectacular. We had heard there were 27 crossings and we certainly wouldn't doubt that.

We took a turn off to the short New Good Hope Mine Track. There wasn't much to view but there was information and an invite to walk up further to see more evidence of the mine. Thank goodness someone had written that there actually was NO evidence of the mine left and the walk was far from short or easy so we collected some firewood instead.

After heading down again to the main track we found a flat spot for morning tea and shared our delicacies. Heading off again through more creek crossings we headed left onto McMillans Track and further on right on to Collingwood Spur Track. Amazingly we got reception and received an important phone call from a close friend. Further on again we turned left onto Bull Oak Spur Track.

At the heli-pad we stopped for a breather (although there was a smoky haze from burn offs). Down below we got glimpses of Eaglevale and again people were on phones because we had reception. Back on the track were lots and lots of "woopys doos" and ruts where we had to carefully pick our tracks.

Lunch was at the old town site of Winchester. It was a great spot by a creek and in a clearing with Hereford mums and their bubs grazing or lazing in the sun (yes another delightful sky).

Although today there is little evidence of these little towns it's interesting to note how many of them there were up here.

Back on the track we turned up the Crooked River Rd where we could see the possibilities for some great camp spots. As we headed back into camp I breathed a sigh of relief as we did not have to do the return trip through the eventful morning entrance/exit into the Crooked River.

At camp it was time to relax. Gill, Graham and Howard decided for a "refreshing" dip in the river. Allan and I decided we were old wimps and would have a warm shower at the back of the Trayon. Some even had attempts at naps. Again it was very warm and we looked for shade to gather but the temperature soon dropped with the sun and the campfire was appreciated.

Dinner was a mixture for all of us but Gill managed a gourmet meal of chicken with spices and mango. Then Manfred treated us to a very successful first attempt at damper. Ron declared it was even better than his 3 minute noodles!

Wednesday morning meant that a few of us had the lovely camp bacon and eggs. Again it was a leisurely start and we managed a group photo before we left the Talbotville camp ground.

We turned right on to the Brewery Creek Rd but realised further up, up, and up, that it was the wrong track. Eventually Graham found a spot we could turn around and as we headed down we became the lead briefly while Graham had his turn at TEC. Nearly back at our camp spot we again got into formation and took the Crooked River Track. After some debate re the route we turned right on to the Cynthia Range Track. This one quickly climbed as we headed into the Alpine National Park. When we got to the communication tower we realised we again taken a wrong track as the road below the tower was closed. Unfortunately there had been no sign indicating it was a no through track. Not deterred we had a cuppa, turned around again and re joined the Cynthia Range Track. It was very slow going but the views helped compensate.

We eventually turned right onto the Wombat Range Track. At the base of one of the many 'woopsy doos' was a dead black snake. There was lots of discussion as to whether it should be collected for Manfred to try a different flavour for his damper. A left turn saw us head down the very steep Herne Spur Track. At the first river crossing on this track there was a stop to allow some overheated brake pads cool off. Some of us were a little concerned when we saw Manfred turn up with a can of beer in his hand. After all it was not that long after lunch and we still had a lot of driving to do. Thankfully he was just doing what we should do as responsible 4W drivers and cleaning up someone else's rubbish.

Next saw us doing many easy river crossings. We took the low river track into Wonnangatta and it was severely rutted. Gill took a fancy to a couple of blokes blackberry spraying and stopped to chat with them. We stayed behind to "chaperone". It turned out that she had heard that a "connection of the family" was employed down here and one of the chaps was a son of the family who owned the property where Gill and her family used to camp.

Arrival and set up was just before 3pm and we had done about 58 kms for the day. I was really amused to hear two of our group setting up their beds and discussing whether they were going to "top and tail" their sleeping arrangements or not. I'm sure I heard something about the inconvenience of one person farting and the other continually wriggling. I went for an interesting walk to the Wonnangatta homestead and cemetery. Manfred made another delicious damper after dinner and this time we had beautifully thick cream and jam to add to the delicacy.

Thursday morning Graham told us horrific stories of the Herne Spur Track. Thank goodness he told us these after the track trip and not before attempting it and that we had gone downhill and not uphill. It's those uphill climbs that makes us think how handy it is to have automatics in case you do miss a gear. It

certainly was the coldest morning too with a very heavy dew. So the left over damper was toasted and went down very well.

As we packed up Gill appreciated the fine ash in the air as a result of the campfire being put out. It went everywhere in her direction!

Coming out of Wonnangatta we passed where the couple who had gone missing 12 months ago had camped. The first part of our track was relatively windy and steep and when Ron explained he had towed a small 14 foot non off-road van in and out of Wonnangatta we were flabbergasted. We took a right turn on to Rileys Track and noted the towering beautiful Mountain Ash gums alongside the track.

At a junction we stopped for smoko and another discussion as to our route. The road signs didn't particularly match our maps or GPSs. We decided on what looked like the major road and marked as East Riley Rd. It turned out a great road. We passed Rileys Hut. There was a very quick descent after passing the Buffalo Track turn off as we continued on the East Buffalo Track. By this we could change out of 4WD and we started noticing lots of fire damage. Before heading into Abbeyard we stopped to air up. Lunch was at Mclvor picnic area where we noticed lots of native trees/bushes have been planted.

Further down the road at the start of the bitumen we farewelled Manfred and Howard. They took the Myrtleford turn and we took the Cheshunt turn for a farewell ice cream. Ron headed off first as he was on a "promise". Graham noted his GPS informed him that he had done 390 kms, 17 hours of driving, and had used 15.9 L/100. We had recorded 108 kms that day. We took the Benalla bypass while Gill headed into Benalla after we exchanged farewells over the UHF.

We arrived home around 5 pm after a total of 742 kms and a very exciting trip with fantastic company and spectacular scenery. Thanks so much Graham for organising the trip and to all the participants who were always so accommodating. Congratulations Gill on a superb effort with so much challenging driving.



The Group



The Wallace's least favourite water crossing



What happens when the “Group” gets together to discuss routes – all going every which-way A variety of opinions.



Photo time



Beautiful Scenery



The “Wonnangatta Mermaid”



Manfred’s delicious Damper

2. OUR TVAN LONG WEEKEND TRIP- MARCH 2021

words and photos by Dave Van Zanten

On the Victorian Labour Day long weekend we joined a group of fellow Tvan owners for a trip into Wonnangatta. The quick summary of the trip is: Great time, perfect weather, fantastic company and awesome scenery.

For those wanting a little more detail... We were asked by the trip organiser to come along and provide some assistance. People were coming from all over and with the trip officially starting from Myrtleford on Saturday morning many decided to arrive the night before. We did the same and chose Nug Nug Reserve as an easy to get to central location to spend the night. I've not been there since I was in Primary School, a few too many years ago to remember details but it was nothing like I remembered. Powered sites, toilets, etc and very well maintained. The \$5 fee wasn't an issue but I'm glad one of our fellow Tvanners made it there early as it was packed. We squashed in on one side of where they were and we ended up with 4 Tvals in the one spot. Packed it may have been but it remained nice and quiet and we had a great night.

On Saturday we joined on to the convoy leaving from Myrtleford and we made our way south, stopping to air down at the one of the campgrounds south of Lake Buffalo then stopping for lunch at Riley's Hut. The roads were dusty and that meant our convoy of nine spread out a fair distance. We made it in to Wonnangatta mid afternoon and commenced setup. Being Tvals, even with awnings, en-suites and so on we were all set up and sitting around the fire in no time getting to know each other including the others who had driven in via Zeka Spur Track.

It was great to see how others camped and configured their Tvals, they are so versatile. We used the Baby Q for a roast that night but others used the open fire, one couple had an OzPig, there were camp ovens and there were pie warmers in use as well as the Tvan kitchens.



Sunday was a beautiful day, cool in the morning and as the sun rose the temperature hit a maximum that was just right for T shirts.



After taking a few sunrise photos then a walk around the historic sights of the valley we departed with a convoy of 10 vehicles for a day drive. There was dust, there were plenty of oncoming vehicles creating a few delays but that is what happens on a long weekend. All that was outweighed by awesome scenery, what better place to have to spend a bit of time? We headed east out of Wonnangatta on the low road, turned up Wombat Range Tk up to Cynthia Range Tk then turned down Herne Spur Tk (probably the two steepest tracks in the area with Hart Spur and Water Spur Tracks a bit further to the north being the easier options if leaving the valley via the eastern end), back on to Wonnangatta Tk and followed the high road back to the old homestead site and back to camp.



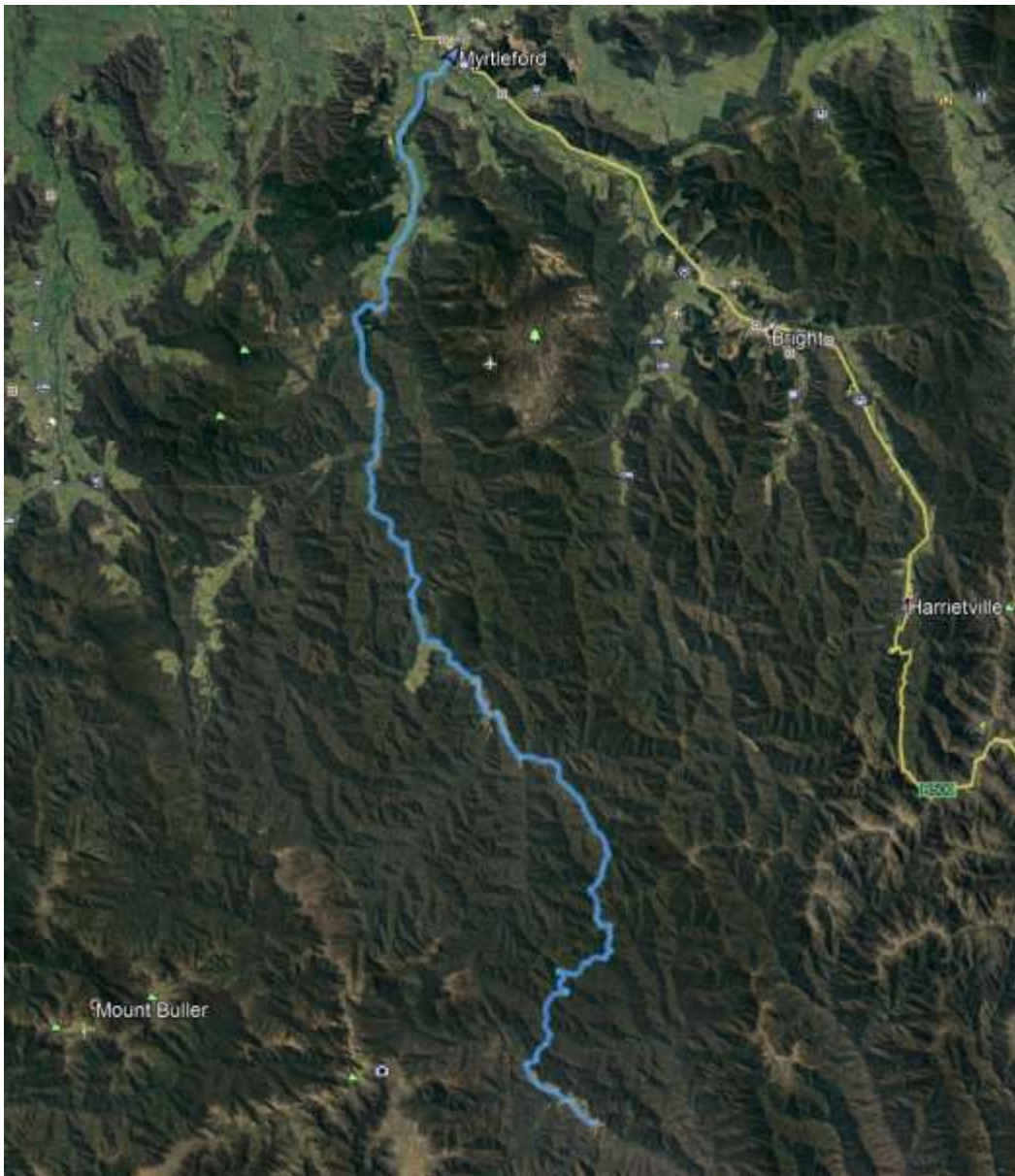
We had another leisurely afternoon at camp before a 3 course pot luck dinner which was delicious. I'd rather eat there than at most restaurants I've ever been to (and no, fast food places don't count as restaurants).

It rained just enough on Sunday night to remove some of the dust from the cars and settle the dust on the tracks a bit without making the tracks slippery or raising the river height.



The drive back to civilisation on Monday was uneventful, just very slow for us as somehow I ended up with a broken brake line, no brake fluid and only the electric brakes on the camper functioning.

We drove in low range, selecting low gears all the way back to Lake Buffalo and crawled into Myrtleford from there, where thanks to our awesome Nissan dealer, we were delivered a loan car while they took ours back to Walla for repairs. We drove home, washed the Tvan and sat back to reflect on what was a really great weekend away, probably the best out of many we have done to Wonnangatta.



If there was a downside to the weekend it wasn't that I broke a brake line and had to drive out of the valley with no brakes, it was the number of people that had total disregard for the National Park in which they were camped. It is illegal to fly a drone in a National Park but we saw a few, it is illegal to have dogs in a National Park but there were some, even running loose. To top it off our fellow Tvaners extinguished more than one campfire after people just packed up and left.

2020 – Trip & Event Calendar

APRIL 2021

TUESDAY April 6th	Committee Meeting	Wangaratta Club			6.00pm start
TUESDAY April 13th	General Meeting	IRONMAN WANGARATTA		BBQ meal/ BYO drinks Please advise numbers by April 6th to- susieabotomey@hotmail.com 0424914200 See more info in Club News	6.30pm start
SATURDAY April 17th	RIVERINA NSW DAY TRIP	Apex Park Wangaratta		Damian O'Connor 0417526175 or damnkez@people.net.au as per Pre- Trip Reports	7.15am
Friday 30 th April to Sunday 2 nd May	Albury/Wodonga 4x4 Camping & Fishing Show -.	Albury Show Grounds.			.

MAY 2021

TUESDAY May 4th	Committee Meeting	Wangaratta Club			6.00pm start
TUESDAY May 11th	General Meeting BIRTHDAY DINNER	Wangaratta Club			8.00pm start
SATURDAY May 29th	CRAIGS HUT TRIP	Meet at McDonalds Wangaratta		Damian O'Connor 0417526175 or damnkez@people.net.au as per Pre- Trip Reports	8.00am

JUNE 2021

TUESDAY June 1st	Committee Meeting	Wangaratta Club			6.00pm start
TUESDAY June 8th	General Meeting	Tarrawingee Car Club Rooms			8.00pm start



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