

Trip Reports:

Top Crossing Maintenance Day

Parks Victoria in conjunction with the Wangaratta Four Wheel Drive Club ran a Top Crossing Hut maintenance day on Saturday the 16th of Jan 2016.

Everyone had a fantastic day, put in a huge amount of effort. We managed to repair everything that required fixing and even managed to give the hut a coat of paint. The morning tea provided by Chris Clark was most appreciated.

Photo: *The whole team standing in front of the freshly painted hut*



Photo: *The heritage restoration experts, the wall frame being repaired and the tin being replaced with matching second hand corrugated iron.*



Photo: *The door being repaired and the tin being re-attached*



Photo: *The fire place being mortared back together*



Photo: *Tin being cut to size*

Photo: *The master painter*



Photo: *The apprentice painters*



Photo: *The site supervisor*



Photo: *And a very dirty Ranger...*



An awesome job (Ed.)... Report by Ranger Simeon Buckley

TRIP REPORT: TOP CROSSING HUT

Twelve members from the Wangaratta 4wd club, Glenn 'PUD' Norton and wife Robyn, Neville and Monica French, Graham and Sue Abotomey, John and Beryl Strang, David 'ROBBO' Robinson, Dean Goodsell, Kerry and myself, Damian O'Connor, with two, extra little helpers in Thomas O'Connor and Callum Halliday "Pud and Robyn's grandson", in conjunction with a member of Parks Victoria, Ranger Simeon "SIMM" Buckley, headed up to Top Crossing Hut on Saturday 16th of January to refurbish the hut back to a good and useable condition.

In negotiation with Chris Clarke, the team leader Ranger in Charge for the Whitfield area, we came up with a plan of attack of what needed to be done to the hut, unfortunately Chris couldn't be there on the day, but made his way up to say a quick hello and dropped us off some morning tea, in the way of a couple of cakes. Mmmm, mud cake!

The Hut needed a few panels of mini corrugated iron that needed to be replaced.

Thankyou to "Pud" for organising and bringing the replacement mini 'corri' along.

When the old mini 'corri' was taken off along one side of the hut, we took off a long wooden support beam that also had to be replaced. We cut and fitted another one to go in its place to secure the new sheets of mini corrugated iron on the side wall. (See photoss above...)

While that job was being done, the door was in need of repair and had to be strengthened. The hut needed a good cleanout inside, the fire place had a few holes from where its mortar had crumbled and had lost a few rocks that surrounded it. This was the job Sue planned on doing, fixing the fire place up and re-mortaring it to bring it back up to new again.

Back on the outside, other members were scraping the old peeling paint off the walls with wire brushes, getting it ready for a new lick of paint.

Nearly every inch of the hut received a new coat of paint. Being a worksite, the young fellas Thomas and Callum had to keep a distance away until it was ready for painting. As discussed with Chris Clarke and Simm, we couldn't not let the young fellas that were eager to help, not too, so we thought it was a good idea to get them involved and to help with the painting. When the paint tins and brushes were brought out, the eyes of both Thomas and Callum lit up and they were eager to start painting, I reckon they nearly painted half the hut between the two of them, with the guidance of the rest of the fellow members.

Finally late in the arvo when the hut was completed, we had Kerry and Simm take a couple of photos as a group in front of the finished hut, before saying our goodbyes to Graham, Sue and Robbo as well as Simm. The rest of us decided it was time to walk down to the river, find a nice little bit of water between the rocks and relax with a beverage or two, to unwind and watch the young fellas try to skim some rocks in the river before starting the fire to cook our dinners on.

Sunday morning saw only four vehicles ready for an adventure. The plan was to go from Top Crossing Hut, up Buckland Spur to Tomahawk hut and back down Evans Creek track. Pud asked me the question, "How far is it to Craigs Hut?" Pud and Robyn hadn't been there, neither had John, Beryl and Dean, so me and Kerry said, "Change of plans, we might head up and show you Craigs Hut". We also, took in some other huts on the way, including Tomahawk hut, where we stopped for morning tea, No 3 refuge hut, and Razorback hut for a late lunch, then onto Craigs Hut. Then we made our way to Mansfield to the BP servo to air up our tyres and have a coffee before we all said our goodbyes and parted ways.

It was a great weekend, and another good trip up through the hills.

Thank you to all the members who helped on the weekend.

It was a top effort by all getting the hut back up to good condition to see a few more years of weather

Cheers,

Damo

Ed: Thanks for your effort Damo to get the job done and writing such a great report. Till next time.