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MAY 2025



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# ON THE HORIZON

## MAY

**2 - 4**  
**MOONAMBEL RECCY #1**

**14**  
**GENERAL MEETING**  
Clubrooms @ 7:30pm

**18**  
**4WD MYSTERY ADVENTURE**

**23 - 25**  
**MOONAMBEL RECCY #2**

**28**  
**COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Clubrooms @ 7:30pm

## JUNE

**6 - 9**  
**MOONAMBEL MUSTER**

**11**  
**GENERAL MEETING**  
Clubrooms @ 7:30pm

**25**  
**COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Clubrooms @ 7:30pm

## JULY

**9**  
**GENERAL MEETING**  
Clubrooms @ 7:30pm

**23**  
**COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Clubrooms @ 7:30pm

**MONTHLY GENERAL MEETINGS** are held at the clubrooms on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7.30 pm.

Abe Wood Reserve, Edgerton Rd, Lovely Banks

Visitors and new members welcome. During daylight savings a BBQ precedes the meeting at 6.30 pm.

For more information email: [info@geelong4wdclub.org.au](mailto:info@geelong4wdclub.org.au)

Postal Address: Geelong Four Wheel Drive Club  
PO Box 976  
Geelong Vic 3220

If you have any trips or events you want to include please send an email to the Trip Co-Ordinator two weeks before the next General Meeting.

If you have any trip reports (past or present) please send them through to the Editor for inclusion in the magazine.

For further info about upcoming Club Trips check the website: [www.geelong4wdclub.org.au](http://www.geelong4wdclub.org.au)

The opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Geelong Four Wheel Drive Club and/or the Editor and any article tendered for publication will be at the discretion of the Committee.





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REGIONAL REPS  
MEETING





## 2024-25 COMMITTEE

### PRESIDENT

Geoff Davey  
president@geelong4wdclub.org.au

### VICE PRESIDENT

Sophie Brocks  
vice.president@geelong4wdclub.org.au

### SECRETARY

Jenny Carpentier  
secretary@geelong4wdclub.org.au

### TREASURER

Graeme Jeffrey  
treasurer@geelong4wdclub.org.au

### TRIP COORDINATOR

Tim Neville  
trips@geelong4wdclub.org.au

### EDITOR

Danny Sparks-Cousins  
editor@geelong4wdclub.org.au

### WEBMASTER

Danny Sparks-Cousins  
webmaster@geelong4wdclub.org.au

### REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Mark Mensch  
region.rep@geelong4wdclub.org.au

### ORDINARY MEMBERS

Jemma Brocks  
Jimmy Halikias  
Mark Mensch  
Juanita Mountjoy  
Daniel Murdoch  
Keith Murdoch  
Kelvin Rogers  
Alanna Stratford

Cover Photo: Rebecca Fitzpatrick



## THE PRES SAYS

G'day all,

Easter has now come and gone. The main Club event at Easter is the Mountjoy's Beachport trip. I have it on good authority that this was well attended, and yes there were a few boggings, but those stories can be told later. All went well apart from a big wind event which caused considerable havoc in the camp! A full report can be found in the magazine.

Club membership invoices have now been sent out for next year. This has been done using the new Xero accounting software which will make the process much simpler in the future. Graeme Jeffrey and Danny Sparks-Cousins have put in a lot of time and effort in the background to set this up, so a big thank you goes out to them.

Moonambel is the next big event on the calendar. Bookings can now be made through Graeme Jeffrey as advertised. This has now been set up in the Xero software which we hope will streamline the process. Don't forget that Moonambel clothing can be ordered through Hip Pocket. This process has also become more efficient through their website, but get in early so it's ready before the event! There are also 2 reccy runs to Moonambel in May if you can make it.

Please make sure you have paid your membership which is a requirement to attend Moonambel.

See you at the Muster,  
Geoff

A handwritten signature of Geoff Davey in a cursive, black ink style.



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# GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Meeting	General Meeting
Location	Clubrooms - 80 Edgerton Road, Lovelybanks
Date	Wednesday 9th April 2025
Chair	Geoff Davey
Minutes taken by	Geoff Davey

Agenda	
Meeting opened at	7.32 pm
Welcome to everyone present	Welcome all.
New members	Ian Scott
Visitors	Jessica Chakir, Stephen Love.
Present	Dirk Agenbag, Ross Barry, Darcy Brocks, Sophie Brocks, Justin Brocks, Levi Brocks, Trevor Brocks, Geoffrey Connors, Geoff Davey, David Dixon, Colin Hatton, PJ Jayathilake, Graeme Jeffrey, Ken Mellross, Mark Mensch, Juanita Mountjoy, Daniel Murdoch, Tim Neville, John Prowse, Kelvin Rogers, Danny Sparks-Cousins.
Apologies	Jennifer Carpentier, Byron Willey, Geoff Van Ingen, Sharon Van Ingen, John Goodall, Karen Goodall, Jimmy Halikias, Alanna Stratford, Jack Stratford, Beth Rogers, Nathan Mudge, Dave Hamann, Keith Murdoch, Jemma Brocks

Acceptance of the previous General Meeting Minutes	
Moved	Ken Mellross
Seconded	Graeme Jeffrey
Business arising from the previous General Meeting Minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Moonambel Muster</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clothing is now available at Hip Pocket. See the flyer.</li> <li>Food / coffee vans will be operating.</li> <li>If willing to lead a trip, contact Tim.</li> <li>Bookings with Graeme (sorted soon).</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>ABN and Tax update</b> - We need to Lodge our Tax return by 15th May.</li> <li><b>Presentation Night</b> - 16th August 2025.</li> <li><b>AGM</b> - 10th September 2025.</li> <li><b>By-laws update</b> - Updated By Laws will be posted for comment soon.</li> <li><b>Expressions of Interest for Abe Wood Reserve</b> - Closed 8<sup>th</sup> April. No news on this at present.</li> </ol>

Correspondence	
In	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>FWDV</b> - Ridge and Ruts CEO Update.</li> <li><b>FWDV</b> - has partnered with VW.</li> <li><b>Dance School</b> - email from Dance School asking about the COGG Expression of interest for Abe Wood Reserve.</li> </ol>
Out	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Driveline Magazine.</b></li> <li><b>Response to Dance School.</b></li> </ol>



## Regular Reports

Treasurer	Presented by Graeme Jeffrey.
Association Rep	Nothing to report.
Regional Rep	The Regional Representatives Meeting is to be held on 3-4 May at Gellibrand.
Trip Co-Ordinator	<b>Trips Out</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Winery Tour 2025</b> - Winery Tour 2025 -29th March. Keith and Belinda Murdoch, and Juanita Mountjoy.</li> </ul> <b>Upcoming Trips</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Easter 2025 @ Beachport</b> - Juanita Mountjoy.</li> <li><b>Moonambel Reccy Run #1</b> - 2nd - 4th May. Tim Neville.</li> <li><b>4WD Mystery Adventure</b> - 18th May. Contact Juanita Mountjoy.</li> <li><b>Moonambel Reccy Run #2</b> - 23rd - 25th May. Geoff Davey.</li> <li><b>Moonambel Muster</b> - Kings Birthday weekend June 6th - 9th 2025.</li> <li><b>Snow Trip #1</b> - July - TBC. Mountjoys.</li> <li><b>Snow Trip #2</b> - 1st - 2nd August. Tim Neville.</li> <li><b>Great Australia Bight</b> - September 20th - October 12th. Contact Juanita Mountjoy. Medium / hard trip, tents / swags only and 8 cars max.</li> <li><b>Track Clearing</b> - 25th - 26th October. Danny Sparks-Cousins.</li> <li>Anyone interesting in leading trips please speak with Tim.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reminder club funds available @ \$10 per car to cover eats &amp; drinks.</b></p>
Editor	Nothing to report.
Webmaster	Nothing to report.
Club Permit Scheme	Nothing to report.
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Barefoot Bowls</b> - Spring - TBC - Keith Murdoch.</li> </ul>
Fines	Danny Sparks-Cousins x 1.
Pist 'n' Broke	Danny Sparks-Cousins
Members Draw	Kelvin Rogers

## Other Business

	1. <b>Hall Lease</b> - We have finally receive an updated lease from COGG. This will be executed when approved by the Committee.
Meeting closed at	8.02 pm
Next General Meeting	Wednesday 14th May 2025 - 7.30pm @ Clubrooms.

# AGENDA

## Agenda Items for next meeting—Wednesday 14th May 2025

	Moonambel Muster update. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bookings through Graeme</li> <li>Clothing through Hip Pocket</li> </ul>
	Membership renewals.
	Tax update.
	Clubrooms lease update.
	Presentation night 16th August.
	AGM 10th September.
	General business.



# PIST'N BROKE

## APRIL 2025



**DANNY SPARKS-COUSINS**



# GEE LONG 4-WHEEL DRIVE CLUB



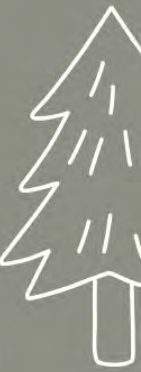
## MOONAMBEL MUSTER 2025

FRIDAY 6TH TO MONDAY 9TH JUNE  
MOONAMBEL RECREATION RESERVE

CAMP SITE (UNPOWERED) \$20/NIGHT

CAMP SITE (POWERED) \$30/NIGHT

Registration and site bookings contact - Graeme Jeffrey  
[treasurer@geelong4wdclub.org.au](mailto:treasurer@geelong4wdclub.org.au) - 0407 371 808



**MONSTER RAFFLE  
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**TRIPS EACH DAY**



**GROUP CAMPFIRE  
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### ADDITIONAL FEES FOR NON CLUB MEMBERS

\$45 for the weekend if driving, \$15 for passengers (includes FWDV insurance)

No additional fees for members of clubs affiliated with Four Wheel Drive Victoria

**NO dogs, firearms or motorbikes permitted**



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POLO \$40

TEE \$35



BEANIE \$15



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# UPCOMING TRIPS

## MOONAMBEL RECCY #1

**Date:** Friday 2nd - Sunday 4th May

**Trip Leader:** Tim Neville | **Tail End Charlie:** TBA

**Trip Classification:** Hard | **Vehicle Limit:** N/A

**Meeting:** TBA

**Notes:** First reccy run for the Moonambel Muster this year. We will try to clear some tracks and cover decent ground. Will also look for an old track that has been inaccessible for a number of years to see the odds of reopening it.

Contact Tim on 0478 065 716 if you would like to attend.

## 4WD MYSTERY ADVENTURE

**Date:** Sunday 18th May

**Trip Leader:** Juanita Mountjoy

**Meeting:** Geelong Waterfront, Cunningham Pier - 9am

**Notes:** Back in 1975, a Geelong 4WD convoy vanished while transporting valuable cargo. Their final transmissions hinted at rough terrain, sabotage, and betrayal—but the convoy was never seen again. Now, it's your turn to retrace their journey, solve the mystery, and complete the challenges they faced along the way.

Navigate an off-road route inspired by the convoy's last known path. Decode cryptic clues and uncover the truth piece by piece. Face a mix of driving challenges, problem-solving tasks, and hidden messages. Work as a team to outsmart the saboteur and reveal what happened to the Lost Convoy. Are you ready to test your driving, problem-solving, and survival skills? Will you make it to the final destination in time, or will history repeat itself? This is a half-day event, finishing with lunch and a convoy debrief. Prizes for the quickest and cleverest team to participate. Contact Juanita Mountjoy or indicate your attendance via the Facebook event.

## MOONAMBEL RECCY #2

**Date:** Friday 23rd - Sunday 25th May

**Trip Leader:** Geoff Davey | **Tail End Charlie:** TBA

**Trip Classification:** Varies | **Vehicle Limit:** N/A

**Meeting:** 9am Friday 23rd @ Batesford Roadhouse

**Requirements:** Standard recovery gear, rated recovery points, UHF radio. Self recovery if driving more difficult tracks.

**Notes:** Camping at the Moonambel Recreation Reserve. Run a variety of tracks in the Pyrenees, clear and scout trips by trip leaders as required. We may split into smaller groups to cover more tracks and different degrees of difficulty as required. Geoff will leave Friday morning but the option is to travel up Friday evening or Saturday morning if that suits better. For more information contact Geoff on 0499 905 975.







## MOONAMBEL MUSTER 2025

**Date:** Friday 6th - Monday 9th June (Kings Birthday Weekend)

**Trip Leader:** Various | **Tail End Charlie:** Various

**Trip Classification:** Varies | **Vehicle Limit:** N/A

**Notes:** Come and join us at the club's biggest event of the year! Support your club in what is always a fun social weekend with a variety of 4WD trip & track options to suit everyone.

Social evenings around the campfire, food & coffee vans, mega raffle and lots of fun.

If you're interested in leading a trip (even if you have never led a trip before) this is the perfect opportunity. Anything from easy to extreme can be catered for. Get in touch with Tim on 0478 065 716 if you are keen.



## HARD SNOW TRIP

**Date:** Friday 1st - Sunday 3rd August

**Trip Leader:** Tim Neville | **Tail End Charlie:** TBA

**Trip Classification:** Hard | **Vehicle Limit:** 10

**Notes:** Leaving Geelong 8am Friday morning from BP Little River.

Staying at the Jamison caravan park. Please confirm position on trip with Tim before calling and booking a cabin under your name.

Saturday - Mt Skene plus tracks, pub dinner. Sunday - Mt Terrible onto Woods Point before heading home.

Mud tires highly recommended or very, very good quality all terrains. Snorkel and winch required as we will be attempting hard tracks.

Contact Tim on 0478 065 716 if you would like to attend.



## CLUB AWARDS NIGHT DINNER

**Date:** Saturday 16th August

Book it in your diary and come along for dinner to celebrate members who have won the various annual club awards. Venue to be confirmed soon.

We'd love to see a huge turnout for this fun social night out. Please register your interest on Facebook in the event page. More info coming soon.



Make sure you keep an eye on the website and our Facebook page for more information on upcoming trips and social events.





# UPCOMING TRIPS

## GREAT AUSTRALIAN BIGHT

**Date:** Saturday 20th September - Sunday 12th October

**Trip Leader:** Matthew & Juanita Mountjoy | **Tail End Charlie:** TBA

**Trip Classification:** Medium / Hard | **Vehicle Limit:** 8

**Meeting:** *Option 1:* Ampol, Bannockburn. Saturday 20th September, 6.15am.

*Option 2:* Tourist Info Centre, Port Augusta. Sunday 21st September, 9am.

*Option 3:* Esperance, WA. No later than the night of Thursday 25th September.



**Trip Details:** We will begin our trip by crossing the Nullarbor along the Eyre Highway, followed by a few days of rest in Esperance, WA. From there, we'll make our way back across The Great Australian Bight, exploring beaches and coastal tracks.

This trip has been rated as medium to hard, as the beach driving becomes increasingly challenging the further east we go. The return leg across the Bight, from Esperance to Ceduna, spans approximately 1,400 km. We'll aim to cover about 100 km per day in the more difficult terrain, which, while it may not sound like much, will involve slow and demanding driving.

We've allocated 15 days to complete the crossing, finishing in Ceduna, SA. Should we finish ahead of schedule, an optional trip up Googs Track will be available for those interested.

**Requirements:** Participants must have the following - A reliable set of recovery tracks (e.g. MaxTrax), front and rear recovery points, spare tyres and a tyre repair kit, long Handled Shovel, basic recovery gear, including a snatch strap, sufficient fuel, water, and food to last the duration of this remote trip.

Our first opportunity to refuel will be on Day 7, and the first water resupply will be on Day 9, likely from a bore water source. This trip will be strictly tents and swags only—no campers. For those interested, fishing and surfing opportunities may be available along the way.

For further details, or to register your interest, please contact: Juanita Mountjoy on 0467 809 040 or Matthew Mountjoy on 0400 389 230.

**Note:** If you are new to beach driving, you'll be required to attend the Beachport trip being run over the Easter school holidays as a prerequisite.

## TRACK CLEARING WEEKEND

**Date:** Saturday 25th to Sunday 26th October

**Trip Leader:** Danny Sparks-Cousins | **Tail End Charlie:** TBA

**Trip Classification:** Easy / Medium

**Departing:** TBA

**Note:** We will need a couple of ticketed chainsaw operators, and a few helpers to clear logs. Camping at Big Hill Campground.



If you're available to help please get in touch with Danny - email, messenger or on 0426 256 030





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# BEACHPORT EASTER TRIP

18TH - 27TH APRIL 2025

WORDS: REBECCA FITZPATRICK - PHOTOS: VARIOUS



## Day 1 (Good Friday)

Five vehicles took to the beach for a day drive from Beachport to Carpenter Rocks, roughly 80kms.

Although fun, the beach was super soft and the tide was relatively high, even though it was low tide. This caused quite a few stops making great use of shovels and Maxtrax.

Around lunch time, we headed off the beach for a bite to eat, then took the inland tracks through the dunes of Canunda National Park to Carpenter Rocks. Airing up after exiting the dunes, we followed the bitumen back to Beachport. The sun was shining, and we had a great day.

## Day 2 (Easter Saturday)

Most of us spent an hour or so up the main street of Beachport this morning for the annual Easter market. I note a few sweet treats were bought and for many, a sneaky

Lions Club hot cinnamon donut was had.

The plan for today was Beachport to Robe, however, it turned out to be Beachport and barely beyond! We were no more than 10 minutes off the bitumen when our first beach run was stopped short by a Pajero well and truly stuck.

We did have the option to go inland and access the beach a little further up, however, this family was not getting out of their situation without help. With our entire crew down on the beach with shovels and Maxtrax, we still couldn't move him. Matthew attempted to winch him out, breaking his winch strap in the process. Adam, in his 79 series, then drove onto the beach to help, only finding himself getting stuck in very similar fashion. With the Pajero still stuck and water coming incredibly close to Adams vehicle, all hands

were on deck to get Adam out safely.

Once Adam was out and safe, the Pajero's mate attempted to winch him out. This resulted in a second winch rope breaking. It was then James' turn. With the beach incredibly soft and the water rising, James went over the dune, rather than via the beach and winched the Pajero up and out. Two hours later, we were on the move!

At a guess, only 15 minutes later, we again got held up on the beach. Another 4WD Club were having their own challenges getting their crew up and over a notoriously challenging beach exit. We waited for some time, even making the call to make this a lunch break while held up on the beach.

Once the other club had all exited the beach, it was our turn. Adam very proudly made it up first go, the





rest of us, not so lucky. All 6 vehicles needing a friendly tow up and over the dune. Thanks Adam! We had a little comp happening who could make it up the furthest before coming to a stop ... I'm claiming the win!

After all that we made the decision to stay local and spend a little bit of time having fun playing in the dunes around Beachport before heading back to camp.

It was the day that just kept on giving! Once back at camp, the winds picked up, and although little rain, it did make for a less than solid night's sleep.



### Day 3 (Easter Sunday)

Beachport to Robe ... take 2. After leaving camp around 9am to beat the peak hour traffic, we hit the beach once again. We avoided the beach run where we knew at least a few of us would likely get stuck again exiting the beach.

The weather wasn't on our side today with plenty of rain and gusty winds. Lucky for us we didn't have too many challenges today and enjoyed the drive to Robe and were there by lunchtime. Most of us enjoyed a warm bite to eat in Robe and having a wander around the town before heading back to Beachport via the main road.





Upon arrival in Beachport, we quickly learnt of the fun day (tongue in cheek!) that Derek, Carolyn & Xavier had. They had stayed behind for the day and while we were gone, the winds tore through Beachport. There was carnage throughout the caravan park with many gazebos, tents and caravan awnings bearing the brunt. Derek and Carolyn, with a little help from a few familiar faces, helped batten down the hatches to all our campsites. We can't thank them enough for this.

With tents and awnings packed away, everyone welcomed our own private room at the Beachport Tavern where we enjoyed a delicious dinner and a few drinks for our last night all together.

#### Day 4 (Easter Monday)

We said goody-bye to PJ & Co., the Smiths and Nathan this morning. Adam and Jo headed to Mount Gambier for a visit to the hospital, with the Mountjoy's, Fitzpatrick's and Wielens heading on a random adventure.

The plan was to not do any 4WDing today ... however, after a picturesque drive through the local pine forests, Matthew and Juanita had other ideas. The tracks were so muddy from yesterday's rain that we did a little sideways sliding down hills. Carolyn and I weren't







brave enough to be in the car for this part and took a walk down the hills instead.

After the heart had calmed down, we headed to Glencoe Woolshed for a look around and a lunch stop. With Adam & Jo joining us at the Woolshed, we then drove to the nearby town of Kalangadoo on a search for local apples, and the final stop for the day being a visit to Wynns Coonawarra Estate for some wine tasting.

### Day 5

After saying goodbye to Derek & Carolyn this morning, the Mountjoy's x 2 and Fitzpatrick's took a beach drive to Southend. It's a fun stretch of beach but there is one area that is always extra fun!

The Fitzpatrick's (we won't name who was driving) got bogged and with Matthew winching us out, got himself in a bit of bother. With all on shovels and Maxtrax artistry, we got moving again and had fun cruising up and down the beach. We headed back to Beachport for lunch then back out to the dunes for a bit of a play in the afternoon.

### Day 6

We headed to Kingston this morning, took obligatory photos at The Big Lobster, and hit the beach again for a drive up the Coorong.





We did our good deed for the day by helping a young lady in a Mazda 3 out of the sand at the entrance to the beach.

The Coorong is a beautiful long stretch of beach. We spent a few hours on the beach and found the most amazing conch shells along the way. On the way home we stopped in at Cape Jaffa Wines and Loophole Brewery, soaking up the sun while enjoying a few beverages.

#### Days 7 -10

Adam & Jo left on Thursday with the Mountjoy's and Fitzpatrick's staying for a few more days. The weather turned on a treat for the remainder of the holiday and we spent our time just relaxing, with the boys sneaking in a bit of fishing too.

We attended the dawn service on Anzac Day followed by a bacon & eggs breakfast put on by the Lions Club. We enjoyed a delicious meal at the Beachport Hotel for our last night and to celebrate James' birthday.

A fabulous trip. Many thanks to Matthew & Juanita for organising.

*Rebecca*





# MOONAMBEL RECCY #1

1ST - 4TH MAY 2025

WORDS & PHOTOS: TIM NEVILLE

## Thursday

I made my way to the oval, set up the camper and then went for a quick drive into the mountains to collect some fire wood.

Returning to camp, just after dark Daniel arrived followed by John in the Prado an hour or so later. It was a relatively quiet night at camp with a small fire to keep warm.

## Friday

The three of us ventured into the forest to scout out a few tracks for Daniel. Unfortunately some that

were marked on maps ended up at a dead end. We did however cover good ground, having lunch at Camerons Track Hut, and then venturing towards camp. We collected a fair amount of fire wood ready for the rest of the crew arriving later.

To our surprise, the only time the chainsaw came out of the cars was to cut the firewood. No trees needed to be cleared off the tracks including off the well-known Morries Track. We then travelled into Avoca for a pub meal for dinner, meeting up with

Corie, Harry, Jimmy, Levi, Justin and Scott. After a feed we went back to camp and enjoyed a few drinks.

## Saturday

Due to my absence from the Muster this year, I lead the crew around some of the tracks I lead my day trips on with Justin taking pin points so he can lead the crew on these tracks this year for me.

We started the morning going to the top of the lookout opposite camp and Donkey Hill lookout, with a few of my special linkup tracks in





between. We then ended up on the infamous Old Bluff Track, with a few of the bigger cars having fun on some of the harder lines on the bottom hard sections.

Unfortunately, we came across a rolled car on the top hard line. The car had already been pulled onto its wheels. We stuck around as they got the car running again and out of the way, where most of us then had a little fun on the harder line.

Being so dry at the moment track conditions were not that difficult, with plenty of traction available. We returned to camp where most of the crew packed up and left late afternoon as they had commitments in Geelong that night. Tim, Jimmy, John, Ross and Daniel had a good night around camp with a few too many red wines consumed.

### Sunday

We all packed up camp and made our donation to the oval for camping and made out way back to Geelong.

Thank you to all who came and put in the effort for planning their trips for the event. Also keep in mind if you can we are still looking for trip leaders for Moonambel. Please reach out if you can assist!

Tim





# REGIONAL REPS MEETING

3RD - 4TH MAY 2025

WORDS: GEOFF DAVEY - PHOTOS: DANNY SPARKS-COUSINS & GEOFF DAVEY

The Regional Representatives Meeting for Four Wheel Drive Victoria was hosted by the Bellarine FWD Club on behalf of the Otways Liaison Group. Appropriately this was held at Gellibrand in the Otways.

The group met at the Otways Tourist

Park on Saturday morning and set off for a tour, led by Gary Filbay from the Bellarine club. Gary led us first to Stevensons Falls where there has been considerable work done on the campground and the access track to the falls itself. The final stage to create a new parking area near the

falls is still in progress.

From there it was on to Dandos Camp Ground where some preliminary work has been done. The main problem at Dandos is drainage in both the campground and for the toilets. The goal is to improve this





but currently funding remains a problem.

The lunch stop was at the Californian Redwood tourist attraction. This stand of enormous trees was planted in 1936 as an experiment. They are currently over 60 meters tall and are still said to be in their "growth phase". They may yet double their height and potentially become the tallest trees in the world, given the near perfect growth conditions.

After lunch we went past Hopetoun and Congram Falls and stopped to inspect the upgrade works at Beauchamp Falls Campground. The return from there was along the Colac-Lavers Hill Road and on to Delaneys Track which has recently reopened. Delaneys Track and the nearby tracks demonstrate the variability of the region; there are wet sections, dusty sections and sandy parts, all potentially alternating. This section also highlighted the problem of Phytophthora dieback, especially visible in the grass trees which are particularly susceptible. This is a soil born organism that attacks the roots of susceptible plants.

Overall the trip was an excellent demonstration of the geography and diversity of the region and of the works that have been undertaken by Parks Victoria and DEECA with input from the Otways Liaison Group. Thanks go to Gary for planning a fantastic tour!

Saturday evening commenced around a fire at the caravan park. From there it was off to the Gellibrand River Hotel for a meal, socialisation and not inconsiderable networking! As might be expected it was then back to the fire for the rest on the evening and more of the above.

The formal meeting was held on Sunday at the Gellibrand Community Hall. FWDV was represented by Craig Ryan (CEO),







Simon van den Berg (President) and Daniel Whitby (RTO, Operations and Compliance). Craig and Simon were also there on Saturday which gave plenty of opportunity for interaction with them by all members of the group.

Craig highlighted the current revision of the FWDV strategic plan. The top 4 priorities identified is this are:

1. Track and network accessibility for 4WDing
2. Relationships and partnerships with agency bodies
3. Increase / maintain volunteering opportunities for Clubs / members and the 4WD community
4. Provide enhanced support for Clubs, training, safety and education

The final report will be released soon.

Parks Victoria was represented by Michael Schoen (Programs and Performance, Divisional Operations) and Talia Holloway-Roden (Statewide Volunteer Manager). Talia in particular spoke of the difficulties with volunteering through the Park Connect website system. She is working on plans to make this easier to use and reduce the need to input potentially unnecessary information.

DEECA was represented by Richard Wadsworth (Recreation and Assets).

An ongoing problem which has been discussed at previous meetings relates to accessing information on track closures as an amalgamated document or map (e.g. mapshare) in one place. Currently there are different reporting systems by different agencies including Parks, DEECA, VicRoads and local government.

The Regional Representatives from each area reported on their activities and issues.





Gary Filbay reported on behalf of the Otways Liaison group which incorporates the Bellarine, Geelong, Warrnambool and Otways (Colac) Clubs in association with the Parks Victoria Rangers based in Colac and DEECA. He highlighted the upgrade works that have been completed, planned or required in the future, some of which were visited on the tour the previous day.

He also noted the recent reopening of Coopers No. 2 and Delaneys tracks. Curtis Track and Halls Ridge Road remain closed. There is work underway on Halls Ridge Road to repair some bog holes which have created the need for many recoveries. Part of the problem is that due to it being called a "Road" tourists have been led there by Google maps, etc in the belief that is a through road rather than a true 4WD track! There was general agreement that it should be renamed and we were alerted to the mechanism to achieve this.

Craig Ryan and Simon van den Berg both commended the Otway Liaison Group for its activities and achievements and recognized the regional model as one they would like to roll out in other areas. There are currently efforts to initiate a similar group which has been called the Western Liaison Group. This is work in progress.

I would like to acknowledge the work that Gary (and Nick Albers) in particular has put into this group over many years; he has been the driving force for the group which has been important in its longevity. Thanks Gary, Nick and the Bellarine Club for organising a successful meeting.

Geoff





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