

**October
2011**



Editor: Geoff Davis

Yubalia Hut with Rob Howie

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On the short notice available quite a good group met at “Stonehenge” on a cloudy and cool Sunday morning, which soon gave way to a sunny and cloudless day. Our trip guide (Steve Gibbs) gave us a small talk before getting in our vehicles on how Calperum/Taylorville had evolved into Commonwealth controlled Biosphere Reserve which is also partly owned by the Chicago Zoological Society.

Steve is a paddock manager for the area where Yubalia Hut is located, and was very knowledgeable of the local area including the flora and fauna. He described many of the native shrubs and plants and the role they played in the lives of past and current Indigenous people, as well as how to propagate many of those plants for home gardens. He also described how the fox baiting program works to control feral foxes and their young.



Vehicles on the track

The drive out to the hut was a little further than usual as we had to bypass part of the shot line, due to the fact it was still covered in water from the flooding and the rains.

We were fortunate enough to see a bearded dragon lizard that Steve caught and shared with our international exchange student “daughters” to hold and touch. Caroline was even brave enough to have the lizard placed on her head for photos!

A stop just short of the hut was for lunch and Rob fired up the drum fireplace and a great BBQ was enjoyed.



Exchange students get a better view

Yubalia Hut was restored by the Riverland 4X4 Club in 1996, and the surrounds which are a part of Calperum, is a place that makes us realise some of the hardships early pastoralists had to endure just to survive on the arid land that makes up the Yubalia Historic Area. From the 120 foot deep hand-dug well lined with local hand-cut black oak to the disappointment after finally finding water that it was actually too salty to drink,

these people knew hardship at its best. After discovering that their newly discovered water was not potable, they then built a desalination plant at the well site again using hand-cut timber and hand-made nails.

Meeting Dates

Committee
7.30pm on Tuesday 1st November at Santos's.

General Meeting
7.30pm on Tuesday 8th November at Cobdogla Club

Committee

	<u>Office Bearers</u>		<u>Committee Members</u>	
President	Steve Scholefield	0421 648 957	Rod Jones	8582 3306
Vice President	Paul Pfennig	8584 1280	Trevor Loxton	8595 3286
Secretary	Helen Hall	8595 1288	Rob Howie	8595 3070
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Events Officer	Andrew Eerden	8584 1365	Charlene Santos	0407 374 172
Newsletter Editor	Geoff Davis	8583 5500	Peter Jones	8584 1221

From the President

Greetings all.

There was a good attendance at the Monash Club for our October meeting, with guest speaker, Richard Fewster from Ruston's Roses, giving an interesting insight into how the company has progressed since 2003 – including survival through the drought and changes to irrigation and growing practices. Richard also spoke about his other love – his car collection.

I spoke at the meeting about the Department of Environment and Natural Resources plan to ban wood fires in the Witjira National Park – this park includes Mount Dare, Dalhousie Springs and a large section of the French Line in the Simpson Desert. The ban includes taking wood into and through the park. With the Simpson being closed between December and April, this will mean that anyone travelling will not be able to have a fire for cooking or warmth. Four Wheel Drive South Australia, our Association, has responded by requesting some changes to the plan including fires being allowed for cooking and heating purposes using sustainably sourced fuel and for wood to be allowed to be carried through the park. If the plan is introduced, it will have a major effect on the ability of travellers to use this iconic route through the Simpson Desert. Hopefully, common sense will prevail

and this plan will be changed.

The Club has decided to hold a display day in 2012. At this stage, we will be holding the event in conjunction with the Monash Monster Market on the 28th of May 2012. Planning is in the early stages, but progressing well. We will be looking for members to display their vehicles, including camping setups, on the day. Further information will be advised when it is available.

Driver training will commence later this month with 5 members taking up the challenge of vying for their certificate. It is great to see interested members and I am sure they will all benefit from the course.

The Christmas party is fast approaching – November 27th at Berri Senior Citizens Club. Final details will be sorted at the November 1st Committee meeting, but if anyone has any ideas or suggestions for the party, please let one of the Committee members know.

A special thank you to Joy and John Sweet, Kaye and Ian Campbell and Carmel and Trevor

Steve Scholefield, President



Wuttke for preparing and serving morning tea on behalf of the Club at the Police Remembrance Day Service at Banrock Station on September 28th. Once again, a job well done.

The November general meeting will be held at the Cobdogla Club. All members are encouraged to gather for tea prior to the meeting, but please be aware that the meeting will commence at the usual time of 7.30 p.m. Guest speaker will be former member Dean Lines who will speak on his recent trip across the Simpson and his photography.

Steve Scholefield

Yubalia Hut (contd.)

with Rob Howie



Yubalia Hut

In addition to the hut, there are the remains of the shearing shed and “the dugout” which is an earth covered underground room constructed of timber slab walls and a stone gable wall, which allowed for some ventilation into the cool, dirt floored room with its pitched roof formed of timber rounds, pug filled and earth covered.

We left the hut and headed back towards the main road via a different track that was further East of the property, and while on this we stopped to see a tree that had been split by lightning, this had thrown pieces of timber over a 200 metre area.

From here we just headed back down to the Old Wentworth Road and home after a great day enjoyed by Glenn and Sadie Pascoe with Caroline, Sofie and Iida, Peter and Pat Jones with Carol Dyer, Rod Bradtke with Ron Wingate, Gatehouse’s, Dent’s who would all like to thank Rob and Judith Howie for organising the trip and big thanks to Steve Gibbs for the informative narration during the day.

Glenn Pascoe



Sofie the Jillaroo



Police Remembrance Day



Thank You



Bendleby Ranges with Phil and Alison

Friday Sept 30th 2011. (October long weekend)

Alison & Phil Haines, Rob McLean, Warren & Judith Hennig and son Shaun met at the Pit Stop in Barmera. Shaun had come over as he had bought W&J's previous ute, so it was very timely that Bendleby's was on to give him a fantastic opportunity to tackle 4WD driving.

We travelled via Cadell as Alison was talking too much and distracted Phil hence he missed the Cobby turnoff! We had smoko at Burra, windy as heck and lunch at the Lion's Park in Peterborough.

We arrived at the camp spot to be greeted by the brave souls who had ventured up earlier. They'd had a very windy and dusty day, but that was OK because it poured like mad before we even set up and settled the dust nicely. We still had a great campfire meet and greet. Some went to bed early but some were still up to welcome the Howies when they arrived.

Warren & Judith



Saturday Oct 1st 2011.

Departed camp at 9.30am. Cool winds, patchy cloudy skies and not so warm weather followed us, as all vehicles led by Rob and Judith with Phil and Ali as T.E.C, headed for the quick challenge make-shift 4 wheel drive track prior to departing. With appetites whet for a day of off-roading, we headed towards the North South Ridge.

Interesting country though, surprisingly dry. Emerging areas of scattered Native Pines, some young and thriving others leaf bare and lifeless, soon attracted comments from us all. Patches of Eucalyptus Gum trees invaded the vista as we headed towards the north south ridge.

Great views of the Bendleby Ranges rewarded our endeavours as we climbed higher along the ridge. All experienced the buzz emanating through the group as we drove the Kokoda track, the Springs and Quarry Springs trails (not necessarily in that order).



The usual morning tea stop. With lunch surprise! surprise! at Dinner Time Springs. Well named as you arrive right on meal time. Great timing Rob!

We drove most of the tracks that day. challenging our way back to camp just in time for Happy hour .Well timed again Rob!!!!

Carol

Sunday Oct 2nd 2011.

We all headed off at 9am to drive the Hungry Ranges 4wd tracks. After leaving "The Springs" where we were all camped, Rob and Judith Howie led us down the low to medium skill level track heading east. This track continued for about 2km, then was transformed into a medium skill level track for about 1km. As we climbed into the mountain ridges

it changed and we were now driving on the Ridge Top Track of which was a medium-high skill level. This was then starting to get very rocky and steep. A few pictures were taken, as this landscape was just gorgeous.

After travelling for about 2.5km we stopped high on top of the last ridge. We had to stop on top in stages about three vehicles at a time, that's all that could safely sit on the ridge. What spectacular views 360 degrees. We all travelled down safely and had some morning tea down below at a stop called Sandy Bore. We didn't stay too long as the next 4wd group was not far away.

Bendleby Ranges (contd)

with Phil and Alison



After heading down the East Fence Track for a while we turned south-west onto the Billy Goat Ridge, which was a combination of medium and high skill level driving. About $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way up on the main steep ridge, (we all were taking it very cautiously) Ken Jachmann's Holden slipped, as he straddled to go up and around some large rocks, the 4wd got a bit too close to the edge. Jim Finn, who was in front of Ken, pulled the vehicle up over the rocks to a safer spot. As each one of us carefully conquered the Ridge we parked up the top to watch a few of the next group of 4wd's coming up. We had lunch at the bottom of the Ridge and let the next group of cars pass us.

Turning east onto the Back Track we had a scenic drive for a few km's, then we went east onto Quartz Gorge track. At the end of the Gorge there was a really steep hill that we proceeded to slowly drive down, and then went back up again, otherwise it was going to be too late to get back to our campsite. Going along the North Fence Track we headed back to the campsite making it back at around 4pm.

Commencing happy hour at around 5pm, we had a chat about the day's events and then we had some tea. That night we had a lady singing at the camp kitchen whilst we sat around the large campfire. Quite a few people from all the campsites turned up, which cost each one of us a gold coin, which was to go towards the Royal Flying Doctors Service.

A good sing-a-long was had by all. We all retired eventually, ready for another day.

Michelle Page

Monday Oct 3rd 2011

After breakfast we all packed up and made our own way home. Thanks to all for another great trip.

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4WD Matters Newsletter

October 2011
- 14/10/2011

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Goodbye Witjira Campfires ????

In SA Outback Parks (and perhaps in NT & Qld too!) NO CAMPFIRES is what we could be left with.

This is thanks to some 4WD visitors - not just from SA but many from other States - who are enjoying the privilege of the great Outback - who somehow think that ownership of a 4WD, and an axe or a chainsaw, gives them the right to act with arrogant disregard for authority, the environment, and the majority of people who do the right thing.



Will Electronic Campfires Be Our Future ?

A primeval instinct which survives in modern man is the necessity for shelter, food and warmth. The nightly fire unites the 4WD clan around a common point to bond and build memorable experiences. Remove the fire from the equation and along with being cold, a core part of our 4WD group activity of relating with the land disappears.

You can have the LED Fire but maybe you won't be allowed to have the sticks to hold it up.

The Proposal - No Campfires & No Wood?

No one would dispute the fact that there is a minority using firewood irresponsibly, including pulling down standing dead and live wood, and failing to observe Park guidelines for wood collection.

Park Rangers have tried to educate users for years. Despite signs and physical presence, as soon as their back was turned out came the chain saws, breaking limbs etc.

Now Four Wheel Drive SA (FWDSA) has been advised that the Witjira (National Park) Co-management Board, has made proposals to phase out wood fires - this includes wood fires for both cooking and heating purposes.

To add to our dilemma, under the proposals **no wood**

of any kind could be brought in from outside the park whether it was used or not - **or presumably being transported through the Park to other destinations.**

This is to ensure that diseases and weeds are not carried into the park by native wood, fenceposts, old railway sleepers etc.

Campfires are banned in Coongie Lakes NP, Lake Eyre NP, and Wabma Kadarbu Mound Springs CP. The Witjira plan is the tip of the iceberg - this proposed ban could spread to many other parks

Currently firewood collection is banned in the Simpson Desert Park and Innamincka Regional Reserve but campfires are allowed subject to Fire Danger proclamations.

What Has FWDSA Done About It ?

To present the views of the many decent people who enjoy the privilege of visiting our parks, the FWDSA Natural Resources Advisory Unit (NRAU) has responded strongly with a letter questioning the need for such extreme measures.

FWDSA acknowledges that while the Witjira Co-management Board has identified a significant issue, it does not support blanket bans on the use of fire in Witjira or the carriage of firewood through the park. FWDSA does however support the proposed ban on collecting wood, as this type of ban in place in other Parks appears to operate satisfactorily.

Clearly the use of clearly identifiable foreign sourced

wood (eg mallee stumps or sawn red gum) or plantation wood is the sustainable option together with "Ekologs" or similar products. While the logistics might be a challenge the option should be allowed.

The proposed ban on carriage of firewood through the park is considered excessive and will have a significant, and potentially adverse, impact on activities beyond Witjira (eg the Simpson Desert Regional Reserve or the Hay River Track). It also submits that the risks associated with such a practice are minimal and have not been found necessary in other parks.

This letter can be downloaded from the Four Wheel Drive Australia website at <http://www.anfwdc.asn.au/>

Detail: District Ranger Desert Parks Tony Magor DENR; FWDSA Natural Resources Advisory Unit; FWDA website
Edited: by 4WD Adventurers Club of SA Inc- Direct all correspondence to Editor FWDSA email:- saafwdc@saafwdc.asn.au

4WD Matters October 2011 - 14/11/2011 : Disclaimer: Whilst every endeavour is made to ensure the accuracy of the material in this publication, Four Wheel Drive South Australia shall not be held responsible for any errors, omissions or inaccuracies.



Events Calendar



November		
1 st	Committee Meeting	Charlene Santos
5 th – 6 th	Mystery Trip	Rodger and Pauline Hunt
5 th – 26 th	Gippsland extended trip	Trevor and Carmel Wuttke
8 th	General Meeting	Cobby
27 th	Christmas Party	Steve and Anita Scholefield
December		
6 th	Committee Meeting	Alpaca
Happy New Year	2012	Happy New Year
January		
3 rd	Committee Meeting	TBA
10 th	General Meeting	TBA
February		
7 th	Committee Meeting	TBA
14 th	General Meeting	TBA
March		
6 th	Committee Meeting	TBA
13 th	General Meeting	TBA

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Trip Information

Mystery Trip 5th and 6th November

Leaders Rodger and Pauline Hunt



Leave 8.00am Saturday 5th from the Loxton Club. BYO everything for a bush camping weekend which includes sand driving. Toilets will be available. Bring sand flags and recovery equipment (snatch straps etc). Suitable for all styles of camping. Cost will be \$25 per vehicle for the weekend. Home by 4.00pm Sunday.

Gippsland 5th November - 26th November

Leaders Trevor & Carmel Wuttke

The route will go East via. the Pink Lakes, Swan Hill , Shepparton, Wodonga, Thredbo, Jindabyne, Bega and Merimbula. Then South to East Gippsland following the coast as much as possible taking in the Ben Boyd NP, the Nadgee Nature Reserve and Croajingolong NP. Then back to two wheel driving we'll head for Orbost, Lakes Entrance, Sale, the Wilsons Promontory NP, and Phillip Island. Come home via The Great Ocean Road, Portland and Mt. Gambier..

For anyone interested in joining the trip, the final arrangements will be decided at a trip meeting in October. For more information phone Trevor on 0418 839 571



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