

# Subaru 4WD News



March 2021

## New mikes and a web cam to improve online Club meetings

With the added benefits to having our monthly general meeting run concurrently on Zoom we have purchased our own Zoom meeting kit. This includes a wide angle web camera (so you can see more of the members who are attending in person), two wireless microphones (so one can be passed around to speakers attending in person) and a Bluetooth speaker (so the members attending in person can hear what is said on Zoom). Hopefully this will make the Zoom meetings even better for all of us.

### President's Report

The committee had a discussion about how some members are missing out on trips, as we often have to place limits on the number of cars that can attend. This is usually due to the physical limits imposed by where we are going. It's a lot harder trying to find a shady lunch spot, campsite etc. for twelve cars than it is for six. Places like Lancelin dunes and the beach runs are easier and we can have a greater number. Something we are trying is to run a couple of trips at the

same time, like at Easter with the trips to Woolibar and Murchison House Station. We frequently get to the stage where we don't have enough trip leaders to run so many trips and we desperately need more. There are plenty of experienced members who can help you do it the first few times. So, please put your hand up to lead a trip.

Thanks to the club members who represented our club at the launch of the new model Outback at Subaru Wangara.

**David Peck**

**SUBARU 4WD CLUB of WESTERN AUSTRALIA INC.**

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## Club member of the Year 2019-2020

**Joanne Norton**

**Life members**

Fred Offer, Keith Anderson, Jonel Householder, Ray Stewart, Ian Johnson,  
Peter Andruszkiw, Ron Counce, Jim Wilcox and Tony Richards

## National Park for Aurora and Helena Ranges now a bit closer

Creation of the proposed Helena and Aurora Ranges National Park is one step closer, with the recent upgrading of the Mount Manning Range nature reserve to a Class A national park. When arrangements have been finalised for land use by the Marlinyu Ghoorlie people (who have a native title claim in the area) two separate Mount Manning

areas (including the one noted above) will be combined into the new Helena and Aurora Ranges national park.

The Helena and Aurora Ranges are a very special part of the Great Western Woodlands, and a place well known to the Club. The woodlands make up the largest remaining area of intact Mediterranean-climate woodland left on Earth, and contain about 3,000 species



of flowering plants, about a fifth of all known flora in Australia.

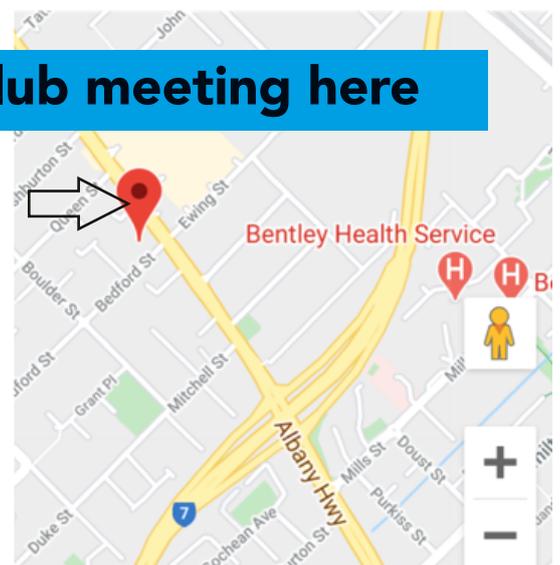


The Club meeting this month is at Ranger Outdoors

1163 Albany Highway Bentley at 7pm.

The shop will be open from 6pm for special Club-only shopping. Please install the SAFEWA app and use it on the night

Club meeting here



## Inside your magazine this month

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## New club joins Association - and a problem is solved

The February meeting of the 4WD Association of WA heard that its new Constitution has been formally approved by the State Government, and that a long-running issue with power bills at the Kaarakin meeting rooms has been resolved. The problem was found to be a hot water system running unnecessarily.

The Isuzu 4WD Club has now been accepted into the Association, bringing the numbers back to 30.

The Association is also seeking a new Treasurer following the resignation of Graeme Marks. He leaves a healthy set of books, with more than \$50,000 in funds available.

A new Association website, is due to be released this month.

Member clubs have been asked to provide video material for showing at the 4WD Show later this year.

The National 4WD Association also met in February and work continues to resolve issues that have been plaguing the group.



## Small convoy finds a sweet way to a south coast getaway

### Esperance – Day 1 – Saturday, 23 January

I arrived at the meeting point (Getaway Kelmscott) about 6.50, 10 minutes before the appointed meeting time. Jo and Stephen were already there and Mark and his daughter Evie arrived after me, with camper, right on time. Alison and her sons, Tylar and Brodie, were meeting us at Esperance as were Phil and his son Tim. So we were a 4 car convoy heading to the coast! After a short briefing we were underway, with Mark and Evie as tail-end Charlie. We were taking Brookton Highway to start with and then as directed by Mr Google Maps for the shortest route! This would

take us through Brookton, Pingelly, Popanyinning, Cuballing, Narrogin, Toolibin, Harrismith, Tarin Rock, Lake Grace, Newdegate, Lake King, Ravensthorpe and from there to Esperance! Apparently, this route is some 10 minutes shorter than going via Hyden.

At Narrogin we stopped at the Allen Shepherd Memorial Park and had morning tea. Unfortunately however, the toilets were locked, so Jo and Mark headed off to the closest servo, where Mark filled up with diesel and got a free copy for his trouble. We arrived at Narrogin at about 9.45 and left at 10.05.

Our next stop was at Newdegate, for lunch. We went into the Newdegate IGA  
**Cont. p. 6**





## ... a bit of rain and a cooler evening

**From p.4**  
café and all bought something to eat, which we ate at tables on the premises. I fuelled up as did one or two others. We left at noon. The weather was pretty good. It had been warm to start with in the morning, but it certainly got warmer after we left Newdegate. Not far down the highway on our way to our next stop at Ravensthorpe, the outside temperature gauge in my car was reading 41/42, so I was absolutely happy to be in my air-conditioned car, at a comfortable 23 degrees. We arrived in Ravensthorpe just before 2pm and stopped for another leg stretch. We found the Yummylicious Candy Shack (and café) (and chocolate shop). (Further) ice-creams were had by all. [By the way the photos used

in this report were taken by Jo and posted to Facebook as we went, keeping up a stream of social media. Good on you Jo!].

Unfortunately, I managed to leave my hat at Yummylicious and not remember that I had done so until we reached Esperance! Fortunately however, I was able to collect it on the way back. In the meantime, I ended up buying a new hat because, despite the cooler conditions (days were in the low 20s), the sun still had plenty of bite in it and I ended up getting badly burnt on the face the following day before I bought the new hat!

As we were leaving Ravensthorpe, a few spots of rain actually began to fall, despite the extremely hot weather we had experienced on the way there. Further

east, we got some proper showers; enough to wash down the cars and the windscreen. And, in a short space of time, the temperature had gone from 41/42 outside down to the 25 degree mark and stayed there until we arrived at Esperance! Thankfully though we did not get any more rain.

At Esperance, we set up camp on adjacent sites. The camp ground was as I remembered it from our last Club trip, 3 years ago. This time however, we were on the road side of the park and I expected we would get a bit more road noise. Thankfully, there was not much noise at all and I managed to get good night's sleep after a long day.

My thanks to Jo for leading the trip, which I enjoyed enormously.

**Tony Richards**

# A walk to town, a snooze and some amazing views of the coast

## Esperance Trip Report Sunday 24 January

After a long day of driving we decided Sunday would be a cruisey day of minimal driving.

I messed up thinking the markets would be on in the morning so Mark, Evie, Brodie and I started walking into town. Brodie and Evie piked out part way there. Of course, as the markets were going to be on for the Australia Day festivities they weren't on that morning so we stopped for a

coffee. The Gills and Evie found us at the café and, thankfully, after dropping the teenagers back Ali came back to pick up Mark and I part of the walk home.

Tony and Mark both had a snooze in their chairs as they waited for the afternoon departure.

Phil and Tim joined us around lunchtime having not been able to get into the caravan park the same day as the rest of us and then we decided to do the tourist drive around



the beaches near town. The view from the Rotary Look out

**Cont. p. 8**

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**Richard's Tyrepower**  
Osborne Park Belmont Claremont



### From p.7

was amazing, there was Wind Turbines both old and decommissioned and new, the beaches were pretty stunning and we stopped for a paddle at Twilight Beach and the Pink Lake – which was not pink.

Every club trip needs an afternoon ice cream so we found the main place in town for this.

There was a really annoying bird in the tree behind our sites. Tony entertained us as he made weird noises to try to get it to move on. That evening Mark, Evie and I went down to the beach to capture some pictures of the sunset.

### Jo Norton



## Stonehenge, the Frenchman's peak, Hellfire and azure skies over pristine beaches

### Esperance – Day 3

Today, we departed the caravan park at 8am for a quick trip to Stonehenge, which is a full size replica of the original as it would have looked in 1950BC. It uses local Esperance Pink Granite with individual stones weighing up to 50 tonnes – the 18 tonne lintels sit at least 8m in the air. The structure is aligned with the Esperance summer solstice sunrise (and winter solstice sunset) so the sunrays pass onto the Altar stone. Our host explained the history of a failed tourist venture to have it built in Margaret River where transport costs alone would have been over

\$200,000, so some locals who wanted to see the local stone stay in Esperance rescued the project and these massive stones didn't go to waste.

Our next stop at 9:30am was the Frenchman Peak car park in Cape Le Grand National Park. It was busier than usual as cars were parked on the side of the entrance road. Not everyone wanted to take the 3km Grade 5 hike to the 262m summit, supposedly between 1-3hrs return. Brodie accepted the challenge and was able to get there in 16 minutes ! It was steep but the view from the top and the massive cave through the middle were amazing.

**Cont. p. 10**



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## Magic views, a mountain goat and seaweed, but no roos

### From p. 8

We slowly made our way down for an early lunch at Lucky Bay (11:30am) where we caught up with Tim and Phil. Lucky Bay was not looking it's best with some seaweed about and none of the friendly kangaroos. There were however plenty of

people/vehicles so parking near the beach access was limited. After an hour of lounging about, photographing birds (Tony) and paddling we moved on for a look at Hellfire Bay that we were hoping would be a bit quieter – it was, but again parking was along the entrance road. I left to walk

to the other end of the beach in search of a good beach photograph of the azure blue water and pristine sand, of which the Esperance area has plenty.

After an hour, we travelled down to Le Grand Beach where we met some ex-club members (Andy and Karen Tasker) who tagged along for the 20km beach drive to Wylie Bay. Andy suggested letting the tyres down to 20psi as he had come along this way and there were a few patches of soft sand. It was magic, blue sky, cool weather, windows down, relaxing music. Pretty soon we got to the other end but there's always one in every crowd, so Tony 'mountain goat' Richards decided to tackle the rock climb at Wylie Bay – backwards. He reversed up the rock while we snapped away.



The beach drive only took an hour so with some time up our sleeve and the 'ice-cream hour' approaching we went to the Lucky Bay Brewery and forewent the ice cream for a refreshing beverage. A fitting end to what was a very magical day.

**Mark Smithers**

# Images from the Esperance coast

By Mark Smithers



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## March 13 Subaru 4WD club World Championship of Finska

It's on again. Finska. Hopefully not postponed this time. With the Championships co-winners Adrian and Covid-19 taking out the championship, we are on again for 2021. This is for members only to play. If you are not a member you can come down and have a laugh, so come down. Bring lunch and drinks. Chairs and sunscreen are a good idea too. There are BBQ facilities there so you can cook up steaks and snags.

Like last year I'll be videoing the games, to keep people honest, and to work out who will get the prestigious 'bung chuck' (the most spectacular near-miss). If you have a camera and maybe a tripod that can be used on the day we would appreciate it.

As for previous events in the series, the championship will take place at the Tranby Reserve. Located at the corner of Hardey and Clarkson Roads Maylands. Be there for 10.30 for the warm up matches.

## 2-5 April Murchison Station refresher

We're marching north with the masses this Easter, but

## Forthcoming Club trips

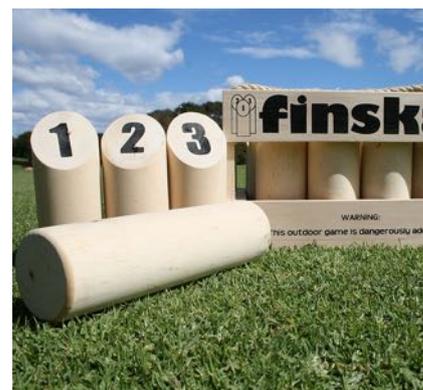
hiding away at Murchison House Station which is on the Murchison River just out of Kalbarri. This presents some bush camping at its finest.

With what seems an endless property, Murchison House Station is bordered by the river, ocean, national park and the distant highway. We will be camping there as a group over the Easter break. It's completely self-sufficient camping but conveniently a 10min drive to town so easy to top up on supplies if required. We will bring in our own toilet and shower setups and be off the grid for three nights. You will need to be fairly self-sufficient as there's no power, flushing toilets or running showers.

It will cost you \$50 entry and then \$12.50 p/person per night. Basic 4WD gear is suggested (air compressor/ deflator and recovery tracks if you have them) caravans and camper trailers welcome  
<http://www.murchisonhousestation.com.au/>

## 2-5 April Trek around Woolibar

Join us as we explore a station the club has not been to before. Woolibar station is



privately owned and has plenty ground to cover. We'll be based at a bush camp on the property east of Coolgardie. We may also do a trip into Kalgoorlie or Coolgardie to have a mooch around some of the museums and sites.

## 24-26 April Silo Art Trail

We'll explore the Wheatbelt following a large part of this new trail which has brought world class murals by local and international artists to transform grain silos, public walls and transformer boxes artworks in a number of country towns.

This is a social event suitable for caravans and camper trailers. We will be driving along main roads and some maintained local gravel roads to view the new public art in Northam, Katanning, Pingrup, Newdegate, and Ravensthorpe. Because of limited time, we will leave out the part of the trail that passes through Merredin –

**do** more of the  
fun stuff



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## Forthcoming trips

but if you are travelling toward Coolgardie on any of our trips, make a point of asking the leader to stop at the Merredin silos.

Each overnight stop will be in a town with a choice of camping or B&B or hotel/ motel rooms. Eating out each night and on the final day in Katanning is also on the cards.

### Bush cooking 15-16 May

We've planned a full weekend of camping and cooking demonstrations for May. During this weekend you'll learn from experienced cooks and campers among the Club's members, get to know people better and learn from them how they camp, how they set up their vehicles, and what equipment to buy – or avoid.

This is a family-friendly event that will cover types of camping equipment that best suit our cars and preferences. We have organised to camp at Moore River Ranch, a new bush camp with the river running through. It will be completely self-sufficient camping including bringing our own portaloos. If you don't think you have what you need to be self-sufficient, please talk to one of the



committee as there is plenty of good equipment that can be lent.

We'll arrive early on Saturday to get a fire going for some lunch time cooking and to build a great set of coals for an array of cooking skills that night. Make sure to taste everything you can at this wonderful bush 'pot luck' dinner.

We'll also show how to build, light and maintain a cooking fire, how to care for cast iron camp cookware, and how to set up and pack up various sorts of tents and trailers. There will be lots of equipment on show, so do come along for a fun, tasty weekend.

### First aid training May: date tbc.

Put your name down on the trip list (if you are interested in updating your first aid skills. We need a minimum number of members to attend. If you plan to go on trips of

more than a day, it is important to be up to date with first aid.

### Karjini, Millstream and Exmouth 14-28 August

This trip takes in some of the most beautiful sites in the Murchison. It will involve self-sufficient camping, including in National Parks campsites. It is worth buying an annual Parks Pass before you go as it covers all park entry fees. Camping fees are extra. The passes are available online. If you are an RAC WA member you can get a good discount on the pass.

#### From the Editor

Please get your trip reports in on time.

Send photos separately if possible. Image sizes up to 4Mb are OK. If you include photos in the report document keep the images large. Quality suffers a lot if files are too small.

I have been helping out with BlazeAid – an organisation that is actively helping people affected by the Wooroloo bush fire which started on February 1 and destroyed 86 homes. The organisation helps mainly by repairing or replacing stock fences for farms that have lost fences in a bushfire. To help those affected by the Wooroloo fire, they have set up a base camp at the State Equestrian Centre <https://blazeaid.com.au/wooroloo-wa/> in Brigadoon and teams go out from there.

I have helped out a couple of times and was worried that my lack of experience and fitness may have made it difficult, but there are experienced people to show you what to do and it's not hard work. You need to be at the camp before the 7am briefing and the day finishes around 3pm.

It's usually a team of four that goes out in the team leader's vehicle, which tows a purpose-built trailer with all the fencing gear in it – along with safety gear, first aid kits, drinking water and hand washing water.

The main jobs I have done is to patch up some perimeter fences to keep stock in and removing fences by cutting the supporting wire and rolling up the wire in



## I've been helping to mend fences burnt in the recent Perth bush fires



preparation for a new fence. I will be giving a presentation on BlazeAid at a forthcoming Club meeting and asked for some help with materials, so I got the facts straight. **Melissa Jones, from BlazeAid, sent an article she wrote for the Men's Shed Magazine and gave permission for the Club to re-print in our magazine**

Cheers

**David Peck**



***Black Saturday, 2009. February 7th, a power line 500 metres from my parent's property snapped and began to lash around in the 130 kilometre winds. It touched the dry, brown grass and on that 46-degree day, a spark became a raging fire.***

I am sure you have heard about the horrors in the aftermath of Black Saturday. 173 people died, thousands of homes and other dwellings were destroyed and over 400,000 hectares were burnt. More than 78 communities across Victoria were directly affected, many of those farming communities, with stock, fences, machinery and livelihoods destroyed. Our parents survived and their home was untouched, but they had lost 3 kilometres of farm fencing. Stock that weren't burnt, were running rampant on roads, getting in the way of fire trucks and creating a hazard for motorists.

After the initial danger had passed, Mum and Dad were left with 3 months of work ahead of them to rebuild fences, so they could contain stock and once again start producing an income. I recall the gratitude (and guilt) they felt, that they had been so



**By Melissa Jones,  
from BlazeAid**

lucky, but I also saw the anguish in their faces at the job ahead.

But a farmer doesn't stop working. They are pragmatic and find ways to get the job done. Dad put an ad in the local paper and asked for volunteers to help rebuild his fences. He had a group of 25 willing volunteers answer his call to arms, made up of

members of the local community, friends and family. The job was completed within a week and my parents were back in action and back on the road to recovery.

It was Mum's idea to pay the favour forward, saying "Kev, you have your fences done, now you need to help the neighbours". This was the beginning of Blazeaid, the notion of a hand up, not a hand out and the idea of working shoulder to shoulder so that the spirits of all involved are uplifted – pride and satisfaction of giving back to someone in great need,

**Cont. pp 16, 17**

### From p 15

and for the recipient to feel they are not alone, that there is hope.

Since then, that small army of volunteers has grown to over 31,000 people helping farmers and rural communities across Australia rebuild after natural disasters. At the time of writing, BlazeAid has established a total of 113 Basecamps across seven of our eight states and territories, including in excess of 30 of those in Queensland alone.

Farmers are generally a very proud bunch, and the idea of asking for help can be excruciating. In many cases we have, people on their behalf ring for them - it might be the neighbour, uncles, nieces or case managers.

Those who do call in, describe situations of farming families unable to sleep at night, with the sounds of dying animals in their paddocks, knowing they have to shoot the last of their burnt or flood affected stock, or haunted by the task trying to chase stock off roads and get them back onto their properties – often their animals are found kilometres away.

A visit to farm in Victoria after the 2020 fires - the farmer had spent his whole working life breeding sheep with



superfine wool and lost 800 of them. Normally, a sheep at market sells for around \$120, but his were worth \$2000 each. He then had to bury those sheep and ask his neighbours to mind the remainder of the flock while he faced the massive task of clearing and rebuilding his boundary fences. A difficult thing to request, when there was so little grass around to feed animals.

There are other stories too, where parents who, defending their home from the approaching blaze, were using a pump to move water from dam to shower their house, and sent their son to get fuel for the pump and watched him be incinerated on his return up the driveway.

Or the farmer's wife whose husband was killed whilst he was fighting the fires in January 2020. She was unable to bring him home from the morgue for 3 weeks due to road closures, unable to comprehend the first steps in getting her stock back and contained. Tragic and traumatic.

Our BlazeAid volunteers play

such a vital role in helping farmers to come to terms with such devastation and loss. Some farmers are in shock and don't know where to start. Others paralysed by depression and find it hard to hang onto the hope that things will get better. I recall on one occasion, BlazeAiders had arranged to arrive at 7am at farmer's house to begin work on his property. His wife, a nurse, had left for work. The volunteers knocked at the door. No answer. Eventually, they found the farmer on the floor of his bedroom, overdosed on sleeping pills. The ambulance was called and, gratefully, the gentleman survived.

Unfortunately, this is not an uncommon scenario. Sometimes, BlazeAiders are the only reason a farmer will get out of bed in the morning. Many of our camp coordinators have divulged their fears about sending teams out to a property, only to find the farmer hanging from a noose in a tree. This is why BlazeAid work is not just about building fences. The fences are, in some way, a metaphor for a deeper and

most important solution to hurting farmers. This has particularly been a concern over the last year, given such unprecedented times.

The mega fires of 2019/20 saw the BlazeAid organisation grow by 800-900%, such was the extent of devastation across our Wide Brown Land. Coupled with that, Covid-19 had a profound impact on our Volunteer numbers, many being 'grey nomads' and in the higher risk category for complications if infected. Determine to stay focussed on our commitment to 'get the job done', BlazeAid faced challenges around keeping our much needed camps open and working.

Opportunity came in the way of Working Holiday Applicants – many were out of work due to the shutdown of the hospitality industry, and in need of food and housing, as well as a way of completing their 88 days of approved work to secure their second and third year visas. BlazeAid was able to rally the Federal Government, and successfully the laws were changed so that these wonderful people could help in BlazeAid's recovery efforts.

Our volunteers travel from all parts of Australia and the world. They work in teams, shoulder to shoulder with needy property owners, so that they too, can feel the



healing benefits from the clear and rebuild. Day one on the job is always about a shared understanding of what the farmers have been through. They walk around the property with the farmer, talk, hear their stories and share a tear together if need be. On day 2, our volunteers start clearing fences, working together with the land owner, reconstruct new ones until the very end to get the job done. This dedication instils a sense of hope and that one day things will be more manageable and better again.

Where possible, all food to feed our volunteer army – three meals day – and materials needed to run the camp, are purchased within the local town. This pours up to \$500,000 into the local community economy. Camps cost around \$5000 per week to run, with 100% of monetary donations going directly towards helping communities rebuild - in purchase and fit

out of our combat ready trailers, running and maintaining camps, purchase fencing materials and to support the new GRAFFI initiative – where seeds and native trees are purchased to restock disaster devastated lands.

Many volunteers are grey nomads, average age 65 years. However, we welcome people from all walks of life. Our insurance covers anyone from 12-85 years and when we put out the 'Call to Arms', many seasoned volunteers come back for more hard yakka. BlazeAid has had quiet few farmers who have been recipients of help, return the favour, putting our founder's vision of 'Paying it Forward' into action.

Every day, I feel grateful and honoured to be a part of a world where I get to see the very best of people. The way our donors and volunteers give so much of themselves to help others is overwhelming. I am constantly filled to the brim with pride and inspiration. It's absolutely beautiful.

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