



Let's Go for Broke!

Maria Deyoung

We all met up for the trip debrief at Baldivis BP. Despite a slightly late start because I somehow managed to sleep through two alarms, we hit the highway southbound by 8:40 am.

I was somewhat nervous about this trip because highway drives during the long weekend are probably in my top ten least favourite activities. With Ross as trip leader, I should never have worried as he also doesn't like travelling on crowded roads. To achieve this and see some new country, we took a unique route that wandered slowly south and avoided traffic until we landed right in Denmark.

See inside for more details

MAY 2024 This issue:

LET'S GO FOR BROKE

WEDGE ISLAND

HOW TO:
CAMPER TRAILER BUILD
PART I

UPCOMING TRIPS
& MORE!





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President's Report

Deborah Thyne



Thank you to Jason Peck who gave a very interesting and informative talk at the April General Meeting. It is good to know an aircraft crewed with experienced people can help find those who are lost or in difficulty, providing support and assistance where necessary and dropping items such as a satellite phone and, in some instances, fuel.

With Easter and Anzac Day behind us it is time to look forward to other upcoming trips you might like to join.

Jo's Jaunt is fast approaching with a trip through the Murchison and Goldfields. Hopefully we may have had a drop of rain by then to bring out some contrasting green in the beautiful red landscape. This is a particularly interesting area of the state with a lot of mining and pastoral history. Keep your eyes down, you may find a gold nugget!

Led by Adrian, the **Moore River Paddle and 4WD trip** on 5 May offers various options for the day. You can join the group at the start of the day for the drive up and enjoy a paddle up Moore River stopping for morning tea along the way. Or arrive in time to join everyone for a barbecue lunch where morning paddlers can either head home or enjoy some 4WDing from Guilderton to Seabird as an option to return home.

Thank you to Jim and Chris for once again hosting **Fiddles and Nibbles** on 11 May. This day offers an opportunity to do some small jobs on your vehicles with support and assistance from experienced club members. A hoist is available for those may require it. Give a brief description of what you would like to do when you put your name down for the trip on the website, please.

The **Camping Cooking and Demo weekend** promises to be an informative couple of days. If you are still new to the club or camping this is an ideal opportunity to check out vehicle set ups with the added benefit of exploring and learning campfire or camp oven cooking. Check out the trip on the website to see what this trip can offer you – apart from yummy food! Ross' **Karara Kapers** still has plenty of room for members to sign up. There will be much to explore on this trip and Ross always shares well researched information and history on the areas you travel through.

Please check out the website for all planned trips later in the year. If you have an idea for a trip let us know and we can see if we can make it happen. See you out there in your Subaru!

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RICHARD'S TYREPOWER - PREMIUM SUV OFF ROAD TRAINING - GREENSTONE

First Aid

Deborah Thyne

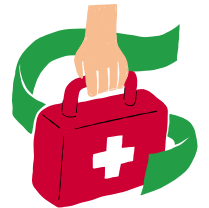
On 13 April four club members and Joy's granddaughter Jasmine attended the Royal Life Saving Society of WA to undertake the practical component of the three units required to obtain a 'First Aid Certificate'. The units successfully completed were Provide First Aid, Provide Basic Emergency Life Support and Provide Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

For those who have done this before you will know that as a part of the assessment you are required to successfully complete online training prior to attending the practical training day. We had a great trainer who, at the beginning went around the room of about fifteen people and, in order to remember our names, asked us to say our name and what one of our hobbies was. I was amazed that he remembered everyone's name throughout the day!

The day was made up of the usual practical activities of assessing the 'wounded' applying slings and bandages and 'sending for help' if required. This was made more interesting with fake wounds to 'wear' and some good acting. There was the usual CPR practice and assessment with adult and baby mannequins. As we left mid-afternoon the mannequins had been cleaned and put out in the sun on the lawn to dry. It looked a bit confronting.

I was pleased to come away with a new resuscitation mask and additional triangular bandages. My old mask is a bit 'sticky' from being in the heat of the car and, I have discovered you can never have too many triangular bandages.

For those who haven't already completed a First Aid Certificate I encourage you to consider it. Having learning and skills gives you more confidence to do the best you can if you come across anyone who may be injured either in the home or when travelling.



For all your 4WD Subaru tyre and wheel needs, see our friendly sales teams at the following locations:

Belmont
9277 5418

www.belmonttyrepower.com.au

Claremont
9286 2299

www.claremonttyrepower.com.au

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Richard's Tyrepower

Osborne Park Belmont Claremont



Let's Go for Broke

Day One - Friday 29 March 2024

Maria Deyoung

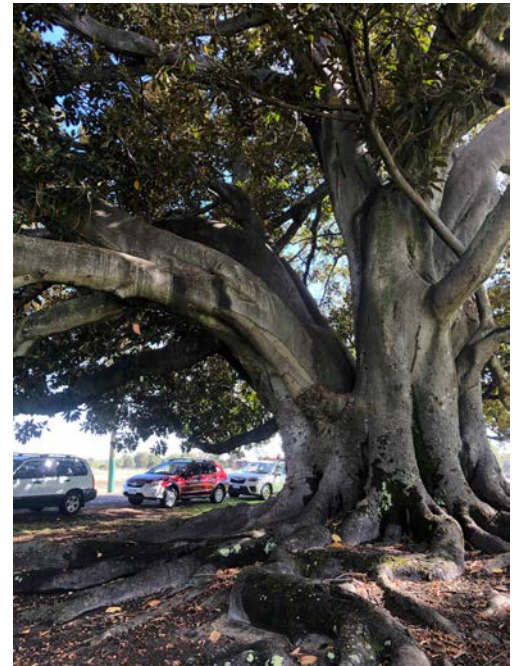


The journey really began when we turned off the highway near Preston Beach onto Johnson Rd towards **Yarloop**. We stopped here for a quick toilet break and morning tea under a beautiful Morton Bay Fig Tree. Hitting the road again, the convoy travelled south along the South West Highway through Harvey to Wokalup. From here, we turned east on Mornington Road and wound our way up the Scarp and then through the jarrah forest towards Collie. From Collie it was south along Preston Road past a very dry Glen Mervyn Dam, eventually hitting Donnybrook-Boyup Brook Road at Mumballup. After passing through the township of Boyup Brook and crossing the Blackwood River, the road name changed to become Boyup Brook-Kojonup Road.



Yarloop morning tea

Continuing our travels through farming country, at Mayanup (about 14 km past Boyup Brook), we turned south onto the Boyup Brook-Cranbrook Road. The farmers had been busy in this part of the world getting ready for the next seeding season (hopefully they will eventually get rain). This involved a lot of raking up and burning of stubble from the previous crop. After crossing the Tone River, we continued along the two-lane bitumen road which was now called Wingebellup Road. After another 40-odd kilometres of driving through farmland we eventually arrived in the township of Frankland River for lunch. A tidy little stopping spot with toilets, shade, picnic tables and a playground.



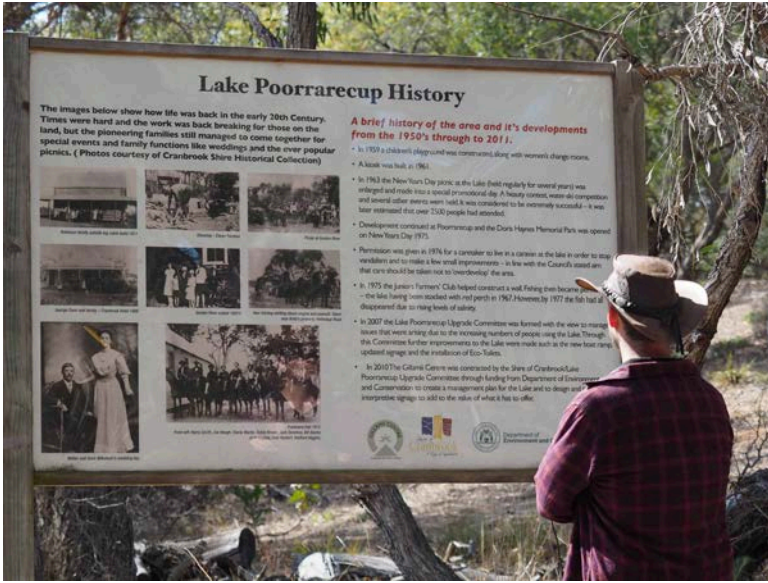
Yarloop fig tree



Frankland lunch

(Story continues over page)

After lunch Ross led us onto dirt roads for a little exploring to check out a campground called **Poorrarecup Lake**. What we discovered was a sandy beach style camp spot with toilets and particularly a lake big enough for people to take their jet skis and speed boats out on. Quiet camping with sunny beach and warm fresh water, what's not to like? Definitely a place I would like to come back to.



Lake Poorrarecup history



Lake Poorrarecup



Lake Poorrarecup

But we had places to be, so we all got back on the road making it to the Muir Highway, and then south onto the Denmark-Mount Barker Road. After a quick fuel stop in Denmark to prepare us for the days of beach driving ahead, we continued west along the South Coast Highway to our camping spot at **Boat Harbour Campground**.

Here we were greeted by the owners Chris and Tine who showed us to our campsite. It was a nice quiet spot next to the karri trees and not far from the amenities. Everyone rapidly got into camping mode, setting up camp late into the afternoon before sharing a few drinks and nibbles, cooking our dinners and socialising a bit before heading to bed.

We all commented that the drive down had definitely been quieter and easier than following the crowd down the main highways.



Club corner at Boat Harbour Camp

SUBARU 4WD CLUB OF W.A. INC.

CLUB MERCHANDISE – buy items at meetings



Bisley khaki 100% cotton long sleeve shirts (Mens and Women's sizes) are available at a subsidised cost of \$40 with logo (but no name) and \$45 with logo and name.

If you buy a shirt from Club stock with no name, you can have your name added later by taking the shirt to Hip Pocket in Balcatta and having it embroidered (on the spot if you ring first) at a cost of \$9.



Royal blue & white ("Contrast") polyester/cotton polo shirts (with pocket) are available at a subsidised cost of \$15



JBsWear Full Zip Polar Jackets (in Mens and Women's sizes) with logo (to be added) are available for \$36.

Details: 100% polyester for durability; 290gsm low pill polar fleece; 2 front pockets; and adjustable elastic hem with toggles.



Cap – royal blue and white. Logo to be added. \$15



Royal blue and white ("Podium Bold") 100% polyester polo shirts (with pocket) are available at a subsidised cost of \$15.



Club stickers \$3



Embroidered Badges \$5



Broad Brimmed Khaki Hat \$20



Navy blue beanies – \$12

The supplier of all Club clothing items is Hip Pocket Workwear & Safety, Balcatta.



Flat pack neoprene can coolers – \$5

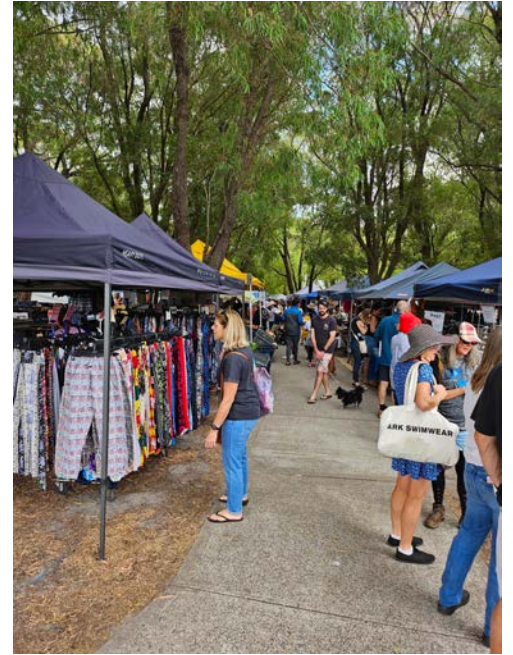
Let's Go for Broke

Day Two - Saturday 30 March 2024

Alec Duncan

OK, this is it, Easter Saturday - the big day! At the 9 am briefing Ross confesses that, despite the many years he has spent in the southwest, he has never made it to the mouth of the Broke Inlet, so today's objective has been on his bucket list for some time.

While we are heading west towards Walpole, Ross radios the convoy to ask if anyone needs to stop. Robert requests a stop to buy a pair of thongs, so we wedge our vehicles in wherever we can find a spot in the very crowded carparks (the Saturday markets were on). Robert heads off in search of thongs and there is a general exodus in the direction of the bakery and to check out the market stalls. How come nobody mentioned that requirement on the radio? The resumption of the journey was delayed by Ross running into an old friend in the markets and having a chat – an occupational hazard for him in that part of the world.



Walpole Markets

Back on the highway, we take the Mandalay Beach turn off – a mildly corrugated dirt road. Before long there is a call from Joy to say that the latch on her spare wheel carrier has failed, and she needs to stop to jury-rig a repair. This trip is continuing to be a good test of her gear prior to the big trip up north! The head of the convoy carries on slowly and the tail has caught up again by the time we stop to deflate our tyres before heading onto the 4WD track towards Broke Inlet.



Investigating options for latch repair



Airing down



(Story continues over page)

Ross might not have been to the mouth of the inlet before, but he's done his homework and there is no hesitation as we weave our way through a maze of turnoffs. The track is mostly straightforward to negotiate but there are a few oncoming vehicles and some tricky, soft bits to keep everyone interested. It is not real smooth either.

Our next stop is by the side of the inlet near where the narrow channel that leads towards the mouth branches off. There's still about 3 km to go to reach the ocean and it looks enticing with some big dunes and cliffs beckoning. Another halt is called half way there and we have lunch in a delightful sheltered spot beside the channel. Then it's onwards to the ocean beach and the compulsory photo shoot to prove we made it! It is a very scenic spot and well worth the effort of getting there. Being Easter, there are plenty of people camping – the sensible ones tucked in behind the dunes while the brave (or perhaps foolish) are in more scenic but exposed positions near the channel.



The trip back to Mandalay Beach Road is similar to the trip in. It takes us about 1.5 hrs to do the 23 km. Everyone makes it without getting stuck, although several vehicles require “back-up and have another go” manoeuvres along the way. There are more oncoming vehicles to negotiate and Joy seems to have discovered all the weak points in her setup and makes it without breaking anything else.

Tyres reinflated, and back on the highway the group splits up – Marta and Barry stop in Walpole (the siren call of the bakery?), Antonia and Robin head for Peaceful Bay for a swim, and Maria decides that it’s worth a bit more driving to have her swim at Green’s Pool – a bit beyond the campsite. The rest of us head back to camp at a perfect time for a quiet drink (or two) and a chance to reflect on another extremely enjoyable day.



Boat Harbour Camp is situated just off the South West Highway west of Denmark and can be accessed by all vehicles. Boat Harbour Beach is 5 kms from the campsite and only accessible by 4WD. The campsite is pet and family friendly with 17 powered sites and 27 unpowered sites. The camp caters mainly for campers in tents & swags, camper trailers, and caravans. The campsite’s amenities include flushing toilets and hot showers, and a bush style camp kitchen. <https://boatharbourcamp.com.au/>

SNATCH STRAP DEALS

Trade In & Save \$60



4 TON KINETIC SNATCH ROPE
 SABER OFFROAD \$126.50 rrp
 Min GVM: 1.3Ton
 Max GVM: 2.0Ton
\$67



5 TON KINETIC SNATCH ROPE
 GEORGE 4X4 [RED] \$129 rrp
 Min GVM: 1.6Ton
 Max GVM: 2.5Ton
\$69



6 TON KINETIC SNATCH ROPE
 GEORGE 4X4 [PINK] \$159 rrp
 Min GVM: 2.0Ton
 Max GVM: 3.0Ton
\$99



7 TON KINETIC SNATCH ROPE
 GEORGE 4X4 PURP/SILV \$159 rrp
 Min GVM: 2.3Ton
 Max GVM: 3.5Ton
\$99



8.6 TON KINETIC SNATCH ROPE
 GEORGE 4X4 [BLUE] \$159 rrp
 Min GVM: 2.9Ton
 Max GVM: 4.3Ton
\$99



11 TON KINETIC SNATCH ROPE
 GEORGE 4X4 [GREEN] \$159 rrp
 Min GVM: 3.6Ton
 Max GVM: 5.5Ton
\$99

4WD	GVM
'23 Jimny	1.43T
'07 Forester	1.96T
'18 Outback	2.08T
'10 Gnd Vitara	2.10T
'15 X-Trail	2.10T
FJ Cruiser	2.52T
LR Disco 1	2.72T
'23 Paj Sport	2.72T
'15 MU-X	2.75T
'10 Hilux 150ser	2.78T
'23 MU-X	2.80T
'23 Fortuner	2.80T
Patrol Y60 Wgn	2.80T
Navara D40	2.86T
Navara D22	2.88T
LR Disco 2	2.88T
Triton MR GLX	2.90T
Navara D23 DC	2.91T
'10 Pajero	2.92T
Triton MN GLX	2.93T
'16 D-Max	2.95T
Lnd Cru 80ser	2.98T
'23 Hilux SR	2.98T
LCPrado 150ser	2.99T
'23 D-Max	3.00T
Patrol Y61 Wgn	3.03T
'23 Hilux Sport	3.05T
Everest	3.10T
Mahindra Ute	3.15T
Navara Pro 4X	3.15T
F150	3.17T
LR Disco 3	3.25T
LR Disco 4	3.24T
Lnd Cru 100ser	3.26T
Lnd Cru 300ser	3.28T
Lnd Cru 200ser	3.35T
Patrol Y62 Wgn	3.50T
Grenadier	3.55T
'15 F250 SD XLT	4.49T

GVM's listed above are accurate however may vary between models. Refer VIN Plate for your vehicles exact GVM.



***Snatch Strap Trade in Offer: Valid for WA4WDA Associated Clubs.**
 Any Snatch Strap/Rope in "one piece" can be traded in. Any age. Any condition. Strap must be complete. Damaged/cut/torn is okay.
 Offer expires 30th June 2024. Perth/Metro Pickup/Drop Off only.

Let's Go for Broke

Day Three - Sunday 31 March 2024

Marta & Barry

What a nice way to start the day with Easter Bunny (Joy) delivering Easter Eggs around the camp. The weather was cool and overcast with a couple of light rain showers overnight just to freshen up the bush. The Kookaburras were certainly enjoying the morning calling out to each other.

After breakfast it was time for a morning briefing on the days planned activities which included visits to Boat Harbour followed by the tingle forest. Convoy duties were divided up with ourselves on trip notes duty and Alec being "Tail End Charlie."



We hit the road at about 09:00 am, turning left out of camp down Boat Harbour Road. The road was sandy and soft in parts, but we reached **Boat Harbour** half an hour later without difficulty. Joy had to let some air out of her tyres to make it easier for her car.

There was a bit of confusion when we arrived at Boat Harbour as Ross headed off to check out a track by himself. He returned to let us know that the track ahead was a bit rough so we should park where we were and walk the short distance down to the beach.

What a beautiful spot. The water was quite calm and well protected within the small bay. By now, the sun was starting to peak through the clouds so a few of us more adventurous trippers decided to have a swim. Refreshing to say the least. The older (wiser!) trippers decided against the swim. We all explored the bay with Barry deciding to do a short (5 km) run along the Bibbulmun Track. At 11:00 am, after morning tea, chats, swims, runs and exploring were completed, we headed off to the next part of the day's activities, reinflating our tyres once back on the firm road.



(Story continues over page)

Next on our itinerary was a visit to Monastery Landing on the Frankland River. Unfortunately, Maria had to leave our trip and head home to care for a sick dog. Along the way we stopped for lunch in a park next to the Frankland River at Nornalup. Nornalup is an aboriginal name for “place of the Tiger snake”. Fortunately, we didn’t spot any.



Resting at Monastery Landing



Monastery Landing

After lunch it was on the road again turning off the highway and heading north up Monastery Rd. What a great track. It winds its way through beautiful karri and tingle forest up the west side of the Frankland River. By now, the sun was shining through the trees and onto the river. Along the way, Joy provided handy tips on how to avoid car damage from the small limbs on the road.

We stopped at **Monastery Landing** –so named by early European surveyors who landed here when looking for land to settle. Apparently one of them commented that “it was as quiet as a monastery” and the name stuck. A careful check of the new boat landing was made. All ready for launching a kayak or canoe. Might need to bring one next visit.

From here, Ross led us over a bridge across the river and then down various tracks south along the east side of the Frankland. We ended up back at another picturesque river landing. It is now known as “Blue Swimmer Crab Landing” as Greg and Joy spotted a couple of crabs at the bottom of the steps. This was surprising as we were quite a distance up the river from the Nornalup Inlet.

Along the way, Ross shared his knowledge of the forest including how to use “Soap Bush” for creating a lather for washing your hands. He also talked about fire management in the karri and tingle forests. The karri trees are certainly tall with Ross explaining that they were the third tallest tree in the world. The tallest is the Californian Sequoia followed by the Victorian Mountain Ash with Karri next on the list.

Unfortunately, we had to leave with no fresh crabs for dinner. The group split up at this point with Barry and Marta heading back to camp, Robin and Antonia heading off to Denmark and the rest continuing on to visit the Tingle “Ancient Empire” walk in the “Valley of the Giants”.



Crab spotting

Getting to the “Valley of the Giants” was easy but finding a parking spot was not. There were people everywhere. Finally found a spot so grabbed our cameras and walking gear and headed for the start of the walk. The huge tingle trees are spectacular in their own way. You don’t realise how big they are until you stand next to them. They also have a lot of “character” with hollow butts big enough to shelter in and assorted bumps and hollows which allowed your imagination to create all sorts of shapes.

Just as we arrived back near the gift shop, a rustling in the leaves under the raised boardwalk caught our attention. A careful peer under the path identified the culprit as a Quenda. It was obviously working on scrounging some food from the tourists in exchange for a photo opportunity. Some of us could not resist the lure of the gift shop before getting back into our Subarus for the trip back to camp via the back roads and Bow Bridge.

Arriving back in camp by 4:00 pm allowed us time for drinks, nibbles and a chat about the day to wind up our adventures.



Alec leading the way through the Ancient Empire



Tingle tree with character



Hollowbutt



King Tingle

The ancient, huge karri and tingle trees with their giant buttresses, hollow butts, and burls are still very impressive even if you’ve seen them before. Ross, our resident font of knowledge for all things Forestry, explained how karri got the *Eucalyptus diversicolor* botanical name. Not, as you might think, because the karri bark is multicoloured grey, orange & cream. When formally described in 1863 by the botanist Ferdinand von Mueller, it was noted that the top of the karri leaf was dark green and the bottom of the leaf was a pale green colour, hence “diversicolour”. We were lucky enough to spot a Quenda or Western Brown Bandicoot (*Isodon obesulus fusciventer*) foraging under the boardwalk, unconcerned about all the people around.

Joy Unno - Environmental Officer

Let's Go for Broke

Day Four- Monday 1 April

Ross Mead



Everyone was up and about in good time this morning busily packing up and getting prepared for the trip home. I must confess that some were more enthusiastic than others with myself in the less enthusiastic category as it was hard having to leave this picturesque camp amongst the karri trees. Unfortunately, duty called.

There was no formal trip home planned with members of the group free to travel home however their fancy took them. Given that, the consensus was that no one was looking forward to the traffic and would try and avoid heading up the Forrest Hwy and Freeways. Some decided to head home following the same route used to come down as it had been pretty much traffic free. We said our goodbyes to our hosts Chris and Tine and were all on the road by 9:00 am.

I headed home via Walpole and the South West Hwy stopping in Manjimup to visit my brother. Surprisingly, the traffic on the South West Highway was relatively quiet with everyone travelling along at a good pace and being well behaved. Other trip members made similar comments about their trip home down the Albany Hwy.

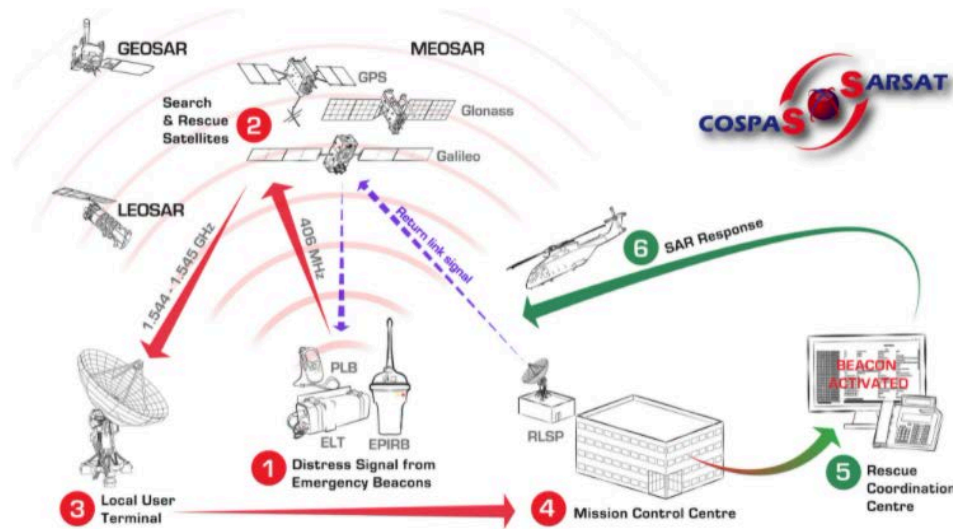
A stop at Pinjarra for coffee and then home by about 5:00 pm. As with all trips, the next job was unpacking and getting everything squared away for the next one.



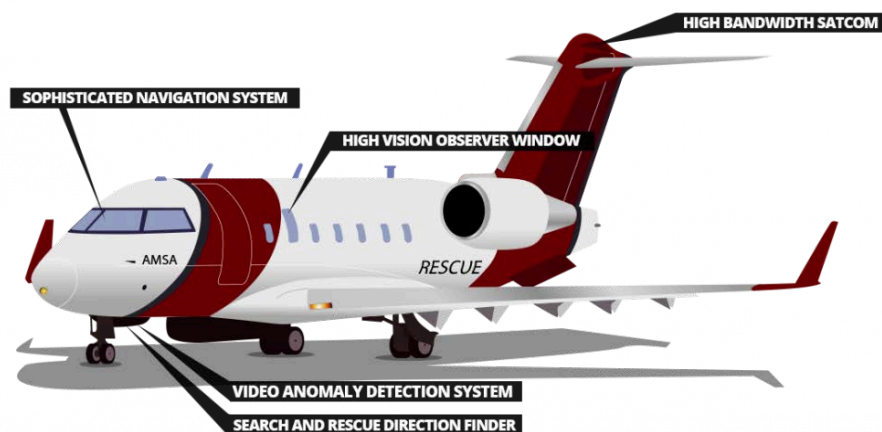
**Scenes from our picturesque camp
amongst the karri trees**

WHO YOU GONNA CALL? AMSA SEARCH AND RESCUE, THAT'S WHO

Ever wonder what would happen if you press the emergency SOS button on one of the Club Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs) during a remote Club trip?



Before the helicopter arrives at sea to winch you to safety, or the local police arrive on land to save you, a Challenger Search and Rescue (SAR) jet comes to locate your position. At the April General Meeting, Jason Peck (yes, son of our David Peck), gave a fascinating presentation on the operations of the SAR service operated by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), a Federal Government agency. Jason is an Observer on the Challenger 604 SAR Jet based in Perth. Three Bombardier Challenger CL-604 special mission jet aircraft are based in Perth, Essendon (Melbourne), and Cairns, providing a search and rescue capability over land and sea. The aircraft are available for search and rescue tasking at short notice, 24 hours a day, seven days a week



The SAR jets fly at commercial airliner speeds, have a flight range of 5,517 km, and have, as well as human visual observers, a suite of electronic navigation, direction finding, and observational devices such as Visual Detection And Ranging - Sentient ViDAR maritime anomaly detection software with fixed staring three-camera array. Besides his visual observing duties, Jason also assists with Delivery - the parachute dropping of life-sustaining stores and communications equipment to those in distress through an air operable door at the rear of the jet. At sea, they deploy 400m long ropes with the package, dropping them in front of vessels so that the people can get hold of the ropes and drag the package in.

[\(Story continues over page\)](#)



Although he is fine now, Jason relayed how badly he was airsick when he first started as an Observer.

The jets can't land of course so they fly in big circles around the beacon location until they find the distressed people.

Very unsettling to see the land or seascape whizzing by!

While AMSA's original focus was sea rescues, the proliferation of tourism and 4WD driving in remote outback areas (and associated emergencies), in conjunction with improved satellite coverage, GPS systems, and emergency location devices, has led to more land searches. Jason described some of the emergency devices especially the PLB - mostly for individuals on land, and the Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) - mostly for maritime use but can be used on land.

Jason said that AMSA has reciprocal agreements with countries to the north of Australia and related a story of how the jet went to assist China with the search for a Chinese fishing trawler missing to the south of India. The search crew left Perth, refuelled at Christmas Island, and started searching. At the end of the day, they stopped for fuel at the Maldives, and spent the night there in the very nice touristy bungalows on stilts over the ocean. Jason sadly wasn't on that trip but has done searches for a man overboard from an Indonesian fishing boat about 1000km west of the WA coast, which was the area that he said was popular fishing area.

According to Jason, you can make yourself more visible to SAR by having a campfire at night (extremely bright in night vision goggles) or using a heliograph (mirror) during the day.

There were lots of questions for Jason from the members e.g. Is the SAR service free? Yes, it is. Sometimes people don't want to use the satellite phone that is dropped to them because they are worried about the charges! What happens if you accidentally press the SOS button? Well, says Jason, if you turn it off immediately, the satellites may not have time to pick it up. If a signal goes to the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) in Canberra and then turns off immediately the Centre will contact the beacon registrants, or local police, or Sea Rescue to determine if there is an emergency. In any event you should try to contact the JRCC or Sea Rescue to alert them of a mis-activation as, if they cannot establish an accidental activation, a SAR resource will be activated.



***Thanks, Jason for a very entertaining and educational presentation.
I have rarely seen the club members so lively and interactive and interactive
with a Guest Speaker!***

Joy Unno

Wedge Island Day Trip - Escaping the Heat

Sunday 18 February

Ian Griffiths



We all met up at the designated meeting point at Alkimos IGA at 7:45 am and there were approximately 12 Cars and about 20 people in total who attended this trip. Nice to see quite a few new faces who were on their first trip with the club.

Due to fire restrictions and heat of the day (43 degrees!) our planned route was slightly changed to be only on the beach. At 8:00 am we headed off on a leisurely drive where trip leader Adrian explained the finer points of driving in a convoy and what all the myriad of buttons in our cars are for when on/off road driving.

At 9:30 am we arrived at Wedge but we didn't need to let down our tyres as the beach sand was quite compact. We found a great spot to round up the convoy and enjoyed a few hours trying to cool off. Adrian brought his paddle board which everyone seemed to enjoy. At about 11:30 am the sea breeze came in which was a welcome relief.

At about midday we headed off for a drive going north on the beach for about 15 minutes but didn't get far as one of the cars got bogged, easy recovery and we were off again. We then came back down the beach and kept going around the point to as far as we could go.

We returned back to the starting point, and this is where we all separated, and some people went for another swim to cool off.

Overall, a great day to spend at the beach trying to escape the heat with some really nice people.



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How To: Camper Trailer Build – Part 1 - Planning the Design

Mark Smithers shares some insights into a small camper trailer that he recently built.

Perhaps you'll be inspired to build your own?

You have the option to create something unique and to use your imagination for a fraction of the price of an off-the-shelf item. To start with, you probably need to ask yourself a few questions, like **what do you want, how do you want to use it, how much stuff do you want to carry** etc. This build is my second, but first time starting from scratch so there were some things I wanted to change from the previous one such as weight and width. More about that later. I had intended to treat this as a 'retirement project' but the more I researched the more I thought why not do it now – plus retirement seems a long way off. The timeframe to complete was about four months from delivery of the chassis to registration with most work completed in my spare time.

It might seem daunting to build and register a trailer (I'm not the best at welding) but there are plenty of online resources available as well as people willing to advise/help. Approximately eight months before I started to build I joined a Facebook Group – Aussie Teardrop Campers - and started collecting ideas. The group is a collective wealth of knowledge and although they like 'teardrops' – think the small rounded ones from the 1950's shaped like a teardrop – I wanted to make my life easy by not having to bend/curve the frame or lining/cladding. So, it's called a 'squaredrop' camper for obvious reasons.

There are plenty of Australian Design Rules (ADR's) that need to be complied with but most of the basic requirements are all wrapped up in a Vehicle Standards Bulletin – VSB1. It will cover a variety of 'trailers' from box to caravan to horse float and road train. I wanted to keep my trailer light (ie. under 400 kgs) so the TA classification was followed, it also meant I didn't need brakes.

Weight and size were key factors in the design I chose. I wanted to travel lightly so that meant I was happy to forgo a full kitchen set-up so it's just sleeping quarters and storage – that's what a pub/roadhouse/camp kitchen is for. I also wanted to use some standard size components such as leaf springs and axle length. It has 5x100 PCD Subaru hubs to enable flexibility with carrying spare wheels. The width (4ft) of the design meant it could still 'track' behind the car without me absent mindedly dropping off the road edge or cutting across the centre line. It's cozy for two but knowing it will only be used by one.

Another factor in the design of its length (just over 7ft) was the availability of cladding sizes and where they can be sourced. I didn't want the unnecessary expense of trying to source and freight oversize sheeting or to have to install sheet jointers where there's a chance for water ingress. No kitchen meant it could be clad with the standard length 2440 mm alucobond sheets. Considering I would be towing it, I figured my fridge will already be in the car, along with whatever else I also carry – water jerry cans behind the driver/passenger seats etc.

So armed with a myriad of ideas, Internet screenshots of shapes/accessories/fit-outs/colours etc. it needed to start with a chassis design. I'm unlikely to be taking this off-road in the sense of rutted out tracks etc. so with that in mind I sketched up a basic chassis design and approached a local trailer manufacturer with my idea. The forum yielded a real mixed bag of results where similar people had no luck with 'busy' trailer manufacturers. My experience was totally different and I only chose this one because he was nearby in Welshpool. After a few iterations with axle placement (not too far forward so I could fit a door), steel sizes and mudguard designs I was able to 'draw' a basic design using PowerPoint. Initially I was going to fit mudguards after it was built but the concept that was used allowed for a 4mm gap whereby the cladding could be inserted between the guard and the chassis, supported by the mudguard gusset – a lifesaver when trying to glue it on and support it and with no willing 'assistants.'

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1. Subaru Outback AWD Sport XT and Outback AWD Touring XT feature a 2.4-litre turbocharged Boxer engine. 2. Towing capacity is subject to regulatory requirements, tow bar and vehicle design and towing equipment limitations. If the towing mass is greater than 2,000kgs, an Electric Brake Controller must be fitted and is only capable of towing a trailer with a maximum of 2 axles. Requires fitment of optional tow bar accessory. Refer to Owner's Manual for towing instructions. For further information, ask your local Subaru Retailer. 3. Compatible Apple[®] or Android[™] device required. 4. Nappa Leather seat trim only available on Subaru Outback AWD Touring XT only.



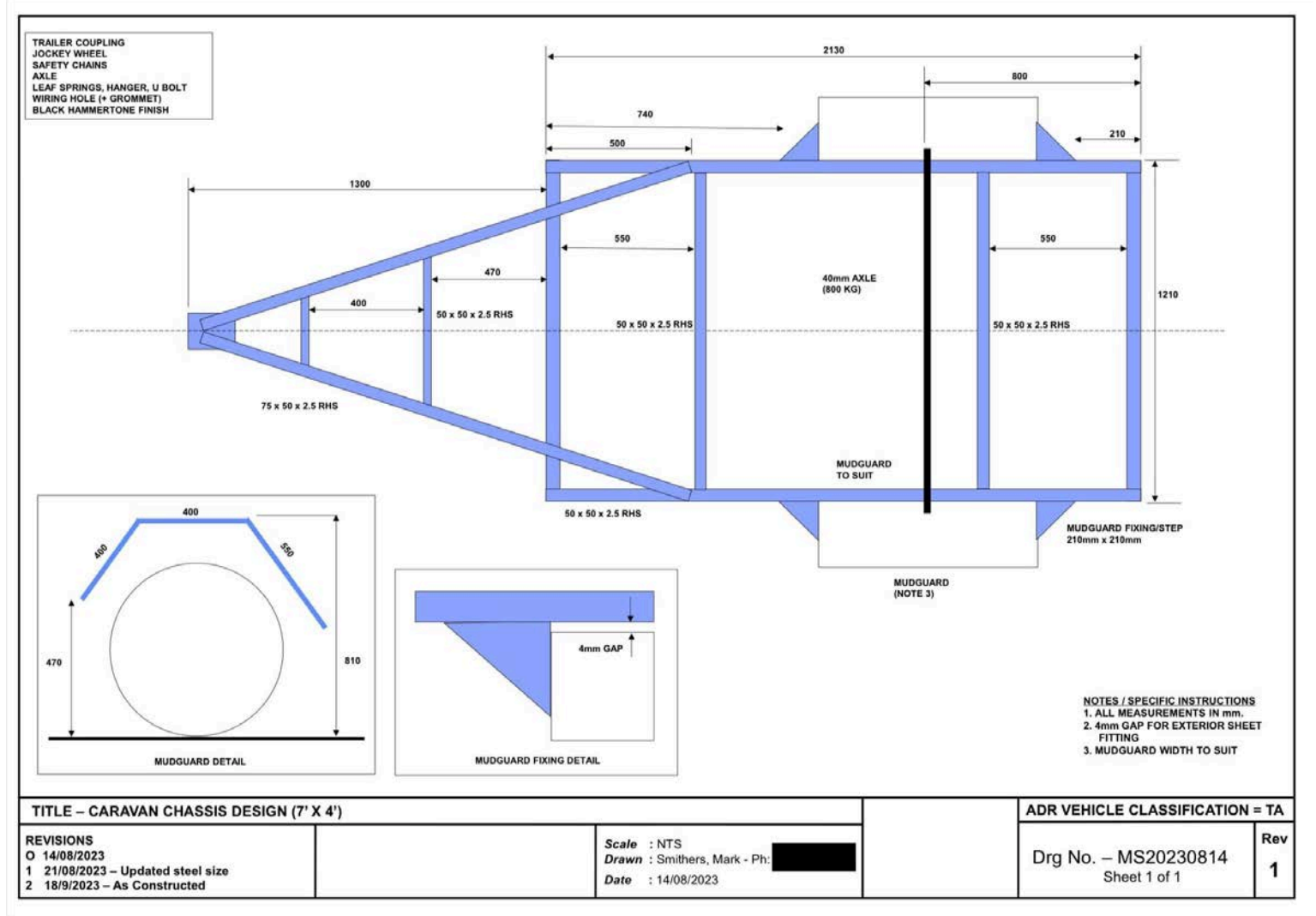
The added bonus of using a trailer manufacturer is that the trailer registration requirements across Australia changed on 1 July 2023 and this one was happy to help (for a fee) to get it registered once the build was done. No longer go to DoT for a VIN but create an account and have a presence in the national vehicle register (ROVER), demonstrate ADR's were met etc. etc.

Next time I'll cover the various steps of building, some of the issues I faced and how it's important to think a few steps ahead.



Mark I

Mark II



Chassis Design

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Trips & Socials

Please refer to the club website for all dates & details

 <https://www.subaru4wdclubwa.au/>

UHF radios are required for all club trips. They can be hired from the club by indicating on the website when you put your name down for a trip or by contacting trips co-ordinator Adrian on 0424 723 558 or email trips@subaru4wdclubwa.au

MAY 2024

JO'S JAUNT
4 - 12 MAY

 **MOORE RIVER ESTUARY PADDLE**
05 MAY



FIDDLES & NIBBLES
11 MAY

CAMPING, COOKING & DEMO WEEKEND
18 -19 MAY

KARARA KAPERS
31 MAY - 3 JUNE

JUNE 2024

GIBB RIVER ROAD & BEYOND
16 JUNE ONWARDS

KAARAKIN CLEAN UP
16 JUNE

JULY 2024

TRIP TO THE TOP
6 JULY ONWARDS

THERE BE GIANTS THERE NO 2
21 July

SEPTEMBER 2024

QUAALUP QUEST II
20 -23 SEPTEMBER LWE



The Club is running trips for members in accordance with the latest advice issued by the WA State Government COVID-19 Guidelines.



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