TRACK CARE

The Newsletter of Track Care WA (Inc.)
PO Box 8338 Perth Business Centre, Perth WA 6849
Website: www.trackcare.com.au

December 2016

Chairman's Report

Our partnerships have registered extraordinary achievements since the publication of our last newsletter. These include the:

- Commencement of the Damperwah rangeland project near Perenjori that now appears to be leading towards additional activities on the Karara block managed by DPaW. This project is reported more fully below.
- A very successful busy-bee was organised by Graham Cawley (Motor Traders Association of WA) at the Wandoo National Park on Earth Day in April. This achievement resulted in 4x4 Australia publishing an article in their November 2016 issue, which detailed the project achievements thus far. The story detailed how the automotive industry, Government and the 4WD community are working together to achieve a shared vision to see sustainable practices put in place to preserve and protect our conservation estate. Our simple message is: *"Help us to keep tracks open by respecting the areas you love to use".*
- Following on from the stalled rangelands reform process, Track Care is supporting the ***"The Create Ranger Parks Proposal"*** that recommends 66 Outback properties purchased twenty years ago by the Western Australian Government, be used to create an extensive network of protected parks, managed by indigenous rangers, to create real jobs and provide all Western Australians with new camping and tourism experiences in some of our most beautiful landscapes. These former pastoral leases were specially selected and purchased with a positive and visionary goal of helping to diversify and strengthen regional economies, improve the lives of Outback families and to protect the State's most remarkable Outback landscapes for future generations. I believe that engagement with this proposal demonstrates four-wheel drive recreationalists are concerned about the outback and that we are working hard to ensure our form of recreation is adequately considered by Government and that our recreational opportunities can be expanded with new access opportunities into the future.

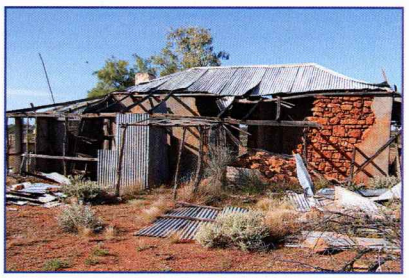
The case study below was first published in the "The Create Ranger Parks Proposal" and as Track Care is now heading into our twentieth year it also serves to highlight some of our many project achievements. The coming year will include further reminiscence of our successes and I would encourage you to forward images or anecdotes to Steve for inclusion on our Facebook pages.

TCWA Case Study

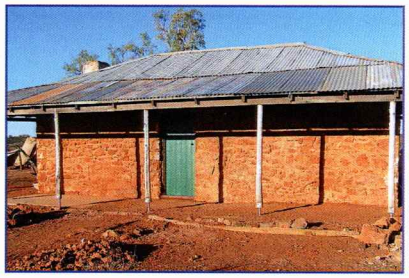
Create Ranger Parks: A proposal to change the lives and protect nature for all Western Australians

The Track Care Case Study, Page 24. CreateRangerParks@outbackwa.org.au

Track Care WA Incorporated was formed in 1997 by four-wheel drive recreationalists concerned that the tracks they loved using were at risk of being loved to death. Track Care's primary objective is to "maintain access for the future" so that off-road vehicle bush-tracks will remain accessible for four-wheel drive recreational purposes. As well as helping to protect the environment and maintain tracks, Track Care members assist in conserving relics of Western Australia's pastoral heritage. Members use four-wheel drive vehicles to transport construction material to remote Outback areas and undertake work such as repairing dilapidated homesteads and other buildings.



Woolgorong Station before and three years after project commencement. Volunteers blended the old with the new, installing new windows and doors alongside the original mud bricks, and reconstructing the existing walls and roof. Photo – Track Care WA



One of Track Care's recent projects was restoration work on the former Woolgorong Station, 170 kilometres north-east of Geraldton. Taken up by Michael Morrissey in 1873, Woolgorong was one of the earliest pastoral leases in the Midwest. The homestead was built in 1912 and housed the Murchison Roads Board from 1919 to 1921. The property is now one of the proposed Ranger Parks, having been purchased by the Western Australian Government. Track Care members also work to maintain a balance between four-wheel drive recreation and conservation by working with non-government Outback land managers to achieve shared goals. The Canning Stock Route provides many such examples. In 2014, with guidance from the leaseholder of Cunyu Station, electrified fencing was erected to protect Well 4B from large feral animals and water control bunds were installed to mitigate soil erosion along the track. In 2015, in conjunction with Birriliburu Rangers, a walk trail, fence and interpretive sign shelter was installed at Windich Springs together with a shelter and other signage on the track to Well 9. More cooperative work is planned for the area near Well 49 on the Canning Stock Route in conjunction with Ngurrara Rangers who are based in the small community of Djugerari (also known as Cherrabun) south-east of Fitzroy Crossing.

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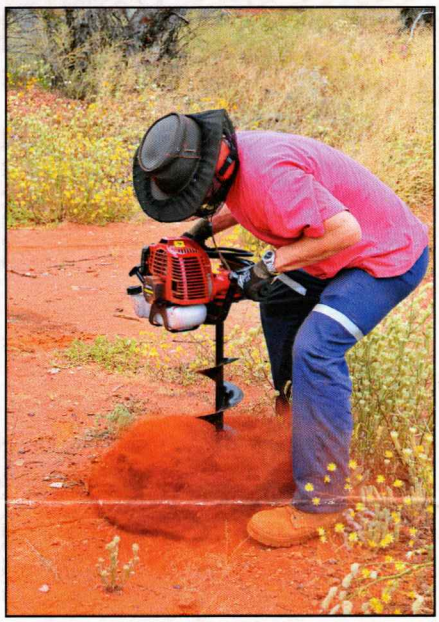
Damperwah State Farm Project

The fencing and clean-up of the historic Damperwah State Farm turned out to be a very successful project – there were 13 participants, and between us we worked a total of 540 volunteer hours over a six-day period!



Making it look easy.

Graham and Peter spent a lot of time in the pre-trip planning, and that certainly paid off. The plan was to remove all the old fallen fences and rubbish from around the farm buildings; then construct new pedestrian fences around the three ruins using salvaged fence posts, wire, etc.

Sadly, these historic buildings are in a sorry state, mainly due to the fact that some young yahoos set them on fire a few years ago, causing the roofs to collapse. But the fact remains that they were a very important part of developing the successful wheat industry that we see in Western Australia today.

Graham, Andy & Nigel drove up on the Thursday afternoon, so had started clearing up by the time the rest of us arrived on Friday. We were divided into two teams – not Teams 1 & 2, but Team Wheat & Team Barley! One team went out to salvage fence posts & wire, while the other team started cleaning-up the area around the old buildings. This involved clearing the old fences – chicken wire topped with nasty barbed wire – helped by John Collins' Unimog truck dragging them to the rubbish pit that had been dug by the caretaker from Karara Homestead. As well as all the wire that was lying around, a huge amount of other rubbish including lots of broken glass bottles was deposited in the rubbish hole. It soon became obvious that the hole would not be big enough to accommodate all the old fences & rubbish, so all the corrugated iron from the roofs was left in a big pile for DPaW to deal with later. Quite a lot of spent bullets were also found, plus one live .44 calibre bullet that was safely disposed of!

Collecting fence posts on that first day, really was a case of trial and error to find out the best way of getting them out of the ground ... not an easy task, let me tell you! Eventually, we found the easiest way was to use the new auger to drill down beside each post to help loosen the compacted soil, and then with much pulling & lifting they would eventually come out. We also collected all the fencing wire from these fences, and this was rolled up to be re-used around the farm buildings.

The wind and rain arrived with a vengeance on Saturday afternoon, so it was decided that we'd take the afternoon off. A few of us ventured into Perenjori for a spot of sightseeing. First stop was the Perenjori Visitors Centre which has an amazing museum attached to it – well worth a visit if you are ever passing through. Then we visited the church, another of the ones built by Monsieur Hawes in the mid-west. We then headed to the pub for a drink and dinner, and to chat to the locals ... they all seemed very interested in the work being done at Damperwah by TCWA.

Luckily the weather improved for the rest of our time at Damperwah, and we were able to complete the fencing around two of the houses. We were very fortunate to have three people on the project with considerable fencing experience – Andrew, Des and John – without whose knowledge and skills it would have taken much longer. The new auger made life much easier too – digging holes for the fence posts was a breeze (at least Andy made it look like it was)! The only reason we didn't manage to complete the third house was that the caretaker from Karara wasn't able to find us enough old fence posts to recycle.

Most of the team.

Nick and John from DPaW in Geraldton visited the site on Monday, and were delighted with the progress. They were very impressed with the fences that had been erected, and the quality of our work. Damperwah is just one part of their plans for the Karara Block which will hopefully open up this beautiful part of WA to more people in the future.

The plan is to complete this project in early June 2017, so mark that in your diaries if you would like to help!

Joy Mack-Heaven

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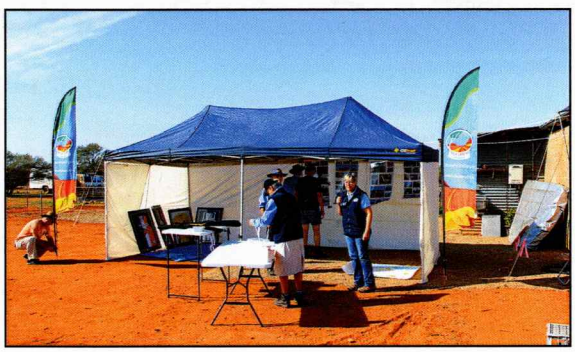
Melangata Wanderings

The Melangata weekend started off with a gathering at the Bindoon Bakery. The trip up started with the gloom of a mild winters day and progressively improved into a terrific day that saw us arriving at Malangata Station around 1600 h. After setting up camp we had enough time to have a chat with the rest of the team before Joy started rounding everyone up for a short meeting to delegate tasks and for Nick to set the scene for the weekend's celebrations. To add a bit of spice we were in good company with the cast and crew producing a movie "The Decadent and Depraved"; things were looking up. With the impromptu meeting out of the way, everyone settled down for the night around the fire with a few yarns, a brew or two and ready to douse the lights at the call of the film crew.

Meet & greet.

Friday started off with a terrific morning and a good outlook for the day ahead. With little fanfare, the Track Care team organised itself and started setting up. By mid-morning, the crowds started to turn up, not too fast, but more of a trickle that kept up until the last car dragged itself in around 22.30 h. The rest of Friday was an ongoing process of sorting out arrivals into their various areas. Friday night was an easy event with everyone relaxing by a camp fire and brewing up.

Saturday morning was a day of exploring the neighbourhood. To make things a bit easier for some, Nick Underwood provided trip notes to assist in getting to some landmark points such as Dalgaranga Station, Dalgaranga Meteorite Crater and Walga Rock. While Jo Clews provided a couple of tracks for those seeking a bit of exercise to view wildflowers and bush tucker plants around the property. Saturday afternoon brought on the celebration activities. Nick introduced his team of writers and a Q&A session ensued. It was terrific to hear the stories and experiences from his team and their contribution to provide all of us 4x4ers' with terrific locations to visit. The Q&A continued until about 5pm then the auction started. It was great to see the range and number of donations from the Western 4wheel Driver's advertisers. The crowd proved to be a hard audience, with the going slow and the bids low, but our Elders Auctioneer, Gary Preston, brought his experience to the fore and managed to keep the crowd going until everything was gone.



Getting ready for business.

At the end of the auction $11,279 was raised to assist Track Care in our future endeavours. With the auction out of the way, it was time for the evening's entertainment to take the stand, and we were not disappointed. The Suntones took the stage with a mix of rock-a-billy, Americana and country. From there on it was just sit back, relax and enjoy the show. Overall it was a great weekend, and as with every event Sunday brought it to an end. As usual the team pulled together and began to pack up. In short order, all was packed, stacked and ready to be carted off in different directions. A big thank you to Jo Clews, Nick Underwood and all the Track Care members who helped with the weekend.

Darryl & Anne Welsby

Thank you

At the recent AGM, a couple of new faces were welcomed to the list of Office Bearers with Darryl and Anne Welsby taking on Fundraising and Social and Nigel Headlam putting his hand up to coordinate the website.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank several people who are stepping aside after many years of dedication to Track Care WA. Geoff Couper has held several positions over many years, including 3 years as the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Track & Area Adoptions for 6 years and for the last 4 years building the website and leaving it in a good position for Nigel to continue from.

Terry Wilson, has also held several positions in the many years that he has been a member, including Special Projects – the precursor to CSR and Rangelands, Grants, Minute Secretary and more recently, Property as this portfolio grew to include 3 trailers and lots of equipment. Elizabeth Bradshaw, along with Merv's assistance has competently produced the minutes for the last 5 years. Travelling up from Benger for every meeting is a commitment in itself. Joy Mack-Heaven has taken Fundraising to a new level and it shows on the balance sheet. Big shoes for Darryl and Anne to fill, but they appear very capable.

These members have all been very active, volunteering for nearly all the projects either on the CSR, in the Rangelands or closer to Perth and I'm sure this will continue.

Thank you and well done.

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Perth 4WD Adventure Show

Well it was that time again for the Perth 4WD Adventure Show at McCallum Park. This year the Track Care team shared two marquees; with the Department of Parks and Wildlife and the WA 4wd Association Inc., and the MTA and Outback Graves. These shared ventures aided in increasing our profile and promoting the work conducted by not only Track Care, but also those who share a common interest in maintaining access for the future and responsible 4W driving.

Over the three days of the show, we had quite a bit of interest in the work that we do, both on the Canning Stock Route and in the Rangelands. The posters that Peter and Joy arranged with DPaW were terrific and certainly caught the interest of those who visited the marquee. In addition, we handed out lots of the 'Don't Be A Tosser' stickers provided by Western 4WDriver and 150 of the Keep Australia Beautiful packs with the reusable rubbish bags and rubbish tongs. These were a hit with our visitors and gave us a great way to interact with passers-by and get the Track Care name out there.

Thanks to everyone who volunteered over the weekend, particularly Peter & Joy and Ben for organising the posters, setting up the "CSR Dunny" and packing it all away again.

Darryl & Anne Welsby

MEETINGS & MEMBERSHIP

Meetings:

Track Care WA (Inc) holds a monthly meeting on the last Wednesday of each month at 7.15 pm at Star Street Uniting Church, corner Star and Archer Streets, Carlisle. All members are welcome to attend and encouraged to contribute. Visitors are most welcome.

Membership:

Membership fees are for 12 months and renewable annually from 30th June.

Full Membership with voting	$80.00
Associate Membership no Voting	$40.00

2016 meeting dates for Track Care WA are:

27 January
24 February
30 March
27 April
25 May
29 June
27 July
31 August
September 28th (AGM), 6pm start with meal.
October 26th
November 30th – no meeting in December.
All meetings commence at 7.15pm except September (6pm).

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