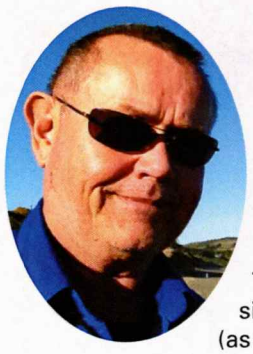
TRACK CARE

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

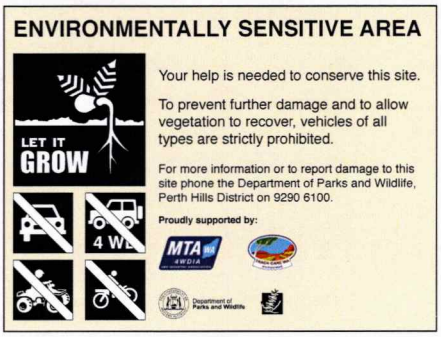
March 2016



Chairman's Report

While there has been a number of achievements and projects completed since the last newsletter, there has also been frustration with some projects needing to be rejigged multiple times due to circumstances beyond project leader's control. Well done project leaders for your dedication and perseverance working to get projects "over the line."

The Wandoo National Park project is nearing fruition with signage sponsorship agreed and sign design now approved (as shown here), which is largely due to the efforts of Graham Cawley (Divisional Manager, Motor Traders Association). It is anticipated that once the final approvals have been arranged, the 4WDIA Division will arrange a busy-bee to commence the project. Graham will be calling for assistance with project implementation. Steve Wilke (Vice Chairman), Roger Masters (WA 4WD Association Representative), Graham Cawley (MTAWA) and I attended the Sustainable Economic Development in Western Australia's Rangelands Conference held in Perth on 1 March. Approximately 250 delegates attended including politicians, pastoralists, Traditional Owners and representatives of other interest groups. Speakers presented papers that addressed topics such as "Unlocking the Potential of the Rangelands", "Diversification in the Rangelands", "Creation of a new Rangelands Lease" (as distinct from a Pastoral Lease), and "Opportunities to Work with Traditional Owners" and "Aboriginal Economic Development". I was disappointed that four-wheel drive recreation was not more fully acknowledged despite rangeland tourism generating two dollars to every one dollar earned by pastoral production within the Australian rangelands. While the economic contribution of four-wheel drive recreation in the rangelands is currently unknown, as one of the speakers said: *The Outback belongs to all Western Australians and we all have a stake in its future.* For these reasons, I believe it is important that we engage with the current rangelands reform process to ensure the interests of four-wheel drive recreation are adequately considered and protected.



Dr John Collins

4WD Show in Bunbury - November 2015

Track Care was invited to share a site with DPaW, who generously directed us to set our display in front of theirs, thereby ensuring they benefitted from our gazebo's shade but gave us front position beside the thoroughfare. The model CSR well caught the eye of many people, some who had travelled the CSR, others wanting to know its meaning. All were interested in the great photo display and hearing about Track Care's endeavours and adventures. Having the map open on the table enabled us to show the site of the ex-stations we work on in co-operation with DPaW. Apart from a lot of general interest in our work, there were some who were genuinely interested in joining our organisation. One man gave us directions to some breakaways worth seeing just north of the old Warriedar town site. Another man who was very interested and would like to be part of the Durack homestead restoration, spent his working life restoring stone buildings in Fremantle. Yet another man told us that his mother was sent from a mission at the age of 14 to work at Thundelarra homestead. Since the Thundelarra people now live 2kms from our home, I will pass on this information (with his permission) and he was thrilled to have this seeming 'contact' with his mother's past.

Other people are amazed that we do this work voluntarily, carrying all our own expenses. Their appreciation of our efforts is visibly increased at this revelation, especially those who have seen the work that has been done on the CSR.

Many thanks to Gerry, Ben, Peter & Joy who travelled to Bunbury to man the stand on Saturday and Sunday, and to Eric for the model well and photo display.

Merv and Elizabeth Bradshaw

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Keeping Yeagarup Clean - November 2015

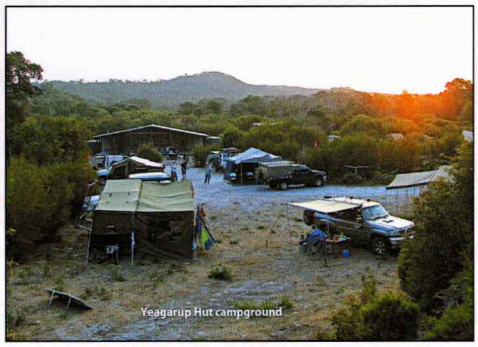
Once again a group of volunteers from Track Care, including members from three 4WD Clubs (a total of 24 adults and 1 child) made their way down to Yeagarup. This included a family of three generations which was wonderful.

A few of us met at the Miami Bakery (any excuse) for morning tea, before meandering our way through our picturesque south to Pemberton, lunching at Bridgetown.

When entering Pemberton we found that the feature movie "Jasper Jones" was being filmed. It was fascinating to see the town's main street transformed into a streetscape from the 1940's. Look out for Toni, Graeme and their kids from the Pemberton Discovery Centre who managed to score roles in the movie.

After the essential paperwork, directions and instructions were completed, (including a request to look out for any aircraft debris), we all headed out into the extraordinary D'Entrecasteaux National Park to the Yeagarup Beach Hut.

The inland dunes proved to be challenging to say the least and Toni's advice to put the tyres down to 10-12 PSI proved to be spot on. Due to lack of rain the sand on the inland dunes was very soft. It was a great exercise in 4 Wheel Driving, teamwork and snatch straps that got everybody through.

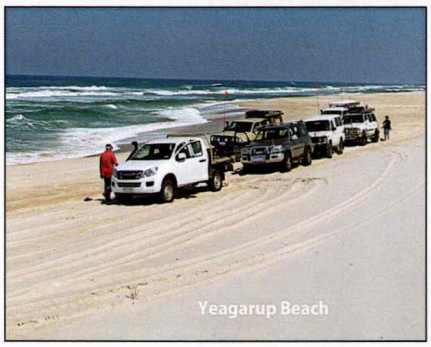

Yeagarup Hut campground

The camp site at Yeagarup Hut has plenty of room (for up to 40 people) and the facilities include 2 toilets, BBQ fire pit and a covered communal area which housed a camp kitchen and a shower with HOT WATER!

On Saturday people headed down to the beach - some to explore the bush, others the beach and some started the clean-up. As we came over the crest of the dunes we were rewarded with breathtaking views of the Southern Ocean. The long sand dune going down to the beach proved quite challenging on the way back for some of us.

Sunday was the official clean up day. We split into two groups with one group driving along Yeagarup Beach towards Donnelly River and the other group driving down goat tracks, appreciating the scenery, to the Warren Beach and Malimup Beach. To get to the beach we drove down Callcup Dunes. Thankfully we didn't have to go back up – exiting on the Summertime Track and seeing the absolute devastation of the Northcliffe fire. It was pleasing to note that there was much less rubbish on the track and in camping areas.

Over two days we collected several trailers full of rubbish. Some of the unusual items found were – oxygen cylinder, arrow, lots of foreign bottles with Asian style writing, a complete large light globe, an awning/pergola frame, a full can of beer (with stubby holder), remains of a smelly Pilot Whale, (we left that there and let DPaW know), plastic drums, a large piece of carpet and a swag. The swag had been reported missing by a young distressed boy from Manjimup. Thankfully we were able to re-unite him with his swag.


Yeagarup Beach

Each night the group came together around the fire pit. Apart from chatting and exchanging stories, we amused ourselves by trying to kill as many March flies as we could, as they were in epidemic proportions, watching as the ants carried them off for dinner. One of our group seemed to be the main attraction and left the weekend battered and bruised after being slapped nearly senseless by those sitting close to him. Disturbingly though, he seemed to have enjoyed it.

It is sad to see how some people treat ours and their environment. So it is wonderful to be associated with people who combine their love of the outdoors, 4 Wheel Driving and meeting like minded people with their love of our country and who combine that with finding ways to help keep our country beautiful. As the saying goes" The standard you walk past is the standard you accept". Thanks to all the participants who took part, with special thanks to Joy, Pete and Barry, all of whose commitment and energy is inspirational.

Peta Roberts

Are you Well able to assist? – CSR 2016

Come and join the CSR Team leaving Perth on **7 May 2016**, proceeding via Newman to Well 18 to replace the lining and top of the well (mini excavator supplied), then install a new windlass. Enjoy the beautiful CSR as you head south to Blue Hills, Tommy Ninegbong's station, where the well requires new lining, top platform and hand pump. Hopefully the exit is through the magnificent Carnarvon Ranges and then via Ned's Creek to civilisation. Please contact Ben csr@trackcare.com.au if you are able to join his team.

Ben Blomfield

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Our volunteers assist BlazeAid

BlazeAid. What's that? 7th February 2009 was the day of the terrible Victorian bushfires which destroyed some 1800 homes, took 173 lives, and left many fire affected people traumatized and not knowing where or how to start re-building. One farmer, realizing he needed help, placed a request in his local paper – basically "Is there anyone out there who could volunteer some time to assist in erecting boundary fences on fire affected property?" Within a week his fences were up and people were still offering to help. So began BlazeAid.

Originally to assist those farmers who were affected by that fire alone, BlazeAid now assists with other catastrophic events all over Australia.
At present they have 6 camps, 2 in WA – 1 at Grasspatch to assist farmers affected by the Esperance fire, and 1 in Waroona for those affected by the Waroona/Yarloop fire.

Recently 14 members from Track Care, Armadale 4WD Club and Toyota Landcruiser Club gave time to help our southern farmers. Operating out of the Grasspatch Camp, personnel were slotted into teams of 3 – 5 and allotted a property on which to work. Most teams are still removing burned fencing, but some new fencing is also being erected. The BlazeAid co-ordinators (all voluntary) made it very clear that our role is as much an emotional recovery work as that of our physical efforts. For example, one lady was unable to return to her house, which was saved from the inferno, because her 12 pet geese had been killed as the fire roared through the property. A work party was despatched to bury the geese.

All meals are supplied by BlazeAid and prepared by volunteers. Each Saturday night the farmers are invited to join us for dinner. This allows the volunteers to get to know the families, and it is an opportunity for the farmers to meet up as well.

The first farm Merv & I worked on had lost many acres of crop but also the family home. The son, who now works the farm, lives in Esperance with his family. He had only 15 minutes ahead of the fire to evacuate his elderly parents from the homestead. They then watched from up the road as the fire destroyed nearly everything as it swept through. We were told that our farmer had grabbed a dresser containing family treasures and thrown it onto the ute. When unloading it at his house later he was unable to move it. Adrenalin must have been pumping. He showed us the photos on his phone, taken at 40 second intervals. They were horrific and brought home to us the speed at which the fire travelled.

The farming families are so appreciative of what is being done that it is not unusual to have them insist that you join them for smoko. Smoko and lunches are generously supplied from the Camp kitchen but we were also recipients of hot scones or fresh baked muffins and freshly brewed coffee and tea from the farmer's wife. One family whose home was fire affected but saved by the volunteer fire-fighters, came out and escorted us back to their oasis of a back garden (the front garden was destroyed, as was their pine plantation which was to be their superannuation) so they could give us morning tea. Some 80 days after the fire, their home, that had inches of ash forced inside, is ALMOST free of the smell. They haven't looked in the roof cavity yet. A neighbour is going to have the layers of ash vacuumed from their ceiling. Our farmer family attended the Saturday night dinner some time ago. On arriving home their cat was unwell and died soon after – bitten by a snake. They have had a number of snakes in the garden because there is nothing left in the paddocks, but the snakes survived the fire!!

The Camp co-ordinator was losing sleep over the lack of work gloves. A farmer donated the $5,000 so they could be purchased. Then the courier wanted $1,200 to transport them from Perth. A request was emailed to all volunteers. Track Care answered and became the New Best Friend when our members were able to pick up and deliver boxes of gloves.

Townspeople and businesses have been so supportive of Blaze Aid and the volunteers. Donation of fuel from fuel companies, generators from Coates Hire, pellets for sheep and dog food. A fisherman had a good day catching red snapper and came out and cooked fish & chips for the whole Camp. One farmer's wife not only made lasagnes but came into camp with them and made dinner for everyone. Cakes, biscuits, fruit, home grown vegies, "2 dead sheep" – all brought in. Positive stories kept flooding in.

The day we arrived the total of fences removed was 696 kms, fences rebuilt 94 kms. In a straight line that would almost reach Perth. The average age that week was 62. I'm afraid we lifted that average age somewhat!

The whole adventure was very uplifting. Our lives have been enriched by the people we met and the experiences we had. We laughed a lot every day. One farmer told Merv that as he drives out of his gateway each day he stops and looks at the new fence and it makes him feel good. What a wonderful thing to be part of.

Merv and Elizabeth Bradshaw

Thank you all!

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Trailers are new again

The TCWA trailers have served us well over the last five years and it is time they had a facelift. In 2015 the remoteness of some of the projects and the logistics to get the equipment and materials to site took its toll on the trailers.

In mid 2015 some repairs were made to ensure the final projects could be serviced. The trailers returned with further damage. A consultative working party was established to guide the next stage of refurbishment and to make recommendations to the Committee of Management. The recommendations were accepted and included in a review of the policy and procedures. A budget was established and the process commenced.

Brian Roberts made his workshop available for the small restoration team. As a result the three trailers have been upgraded with new springs (slippers replaced), hydraulic brakes, clearance lights, new paint and rubber matting stone deflectors below the draw bar to prevent undercarriage damage. Other enhancements were also completed.

The Policy and Procedure policy should reduce the amount of maintenance in the future. However, all projects will require a repair budget as part of the planning.

The trailers have been weighed and processed through a licensing centre due to the upgrade. The photos speak for themselves as we begin the 2016 season.

Many thanks to the Executive for their support in approving the additional costs required to meet the standard. Brian Roberts coordinated the process which cost approximately $7500 and required 438 man/woman hours up to 4 March 2016 with further effort required.

Terry Wilson

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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