



TORQUE

April
2026





IN THIS ISSUE

Cover Image taken by Iwan.
Driver Awareness Turon River trip.

Presidents Message	Page 3
Minutes of General Meeting	Page 4
Treasurers Report	Page 6
Association Update	Page 7
Web Masters Update	Page 8
Driver Awareness	Page 9
Trip Convenor Report	Page 10
Easter Trip Report	Page 12
Driver Awareness Turon River Trip Report	Page 20

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<u>President:</u>	Stephen Bennett president@subaru4wdclub.com.au
<u>Vice President:</u>	Michael R Hamilton vice_president@subaru4wdclub.com.au
<u>Secretary:</u>	Stephen Pinnington secretary@subaru4wdclub.com.au
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Brett Hampson treasurer@subaru4wdclub.com.au
<u>Membership:</u>	Stephen Bennett membership@subaru4wdclub.com.au
<u>Trip Convenor:</u>	Jo Quinn, Bill Twyman trip_convenor@subaru4wdclub.com.au
<u>Driver Awareness:</u>	David Wellham, Michael R Hamilton, Bill Twyman, Alex Gatward driver_awareness@subaru4wdclub.com.au
<u>NSW 4WD Assn Delegates:</u>	David Wellham, Bill Twyman delegates@subaru4wdclub.com.au
<u>Webmaster:</u>	Kevin McCormack webmaster@subaru4wdclub.com.au
<u>Social & Public Relations Officer:</u>	Jo Quinn publicity@subaru4wdclub.com.au
<u>Editor:</u>	Stephen Bennett editor@subaru4wdclub.com.au
<u>Merchandise Officer:</u>	Alex Gatward merchandise@subaru4wdclub.com.au
<u>Serjeant-at-arms:</u>	Bill Twyman
<u>General Members:</u>	Dave Cook, Daniel Sorrasson. Iwan Sujono

Presidents Message

Hello everyone

In this months eNews you will only find the calendar for May in the Trip Convenor Report. Unfortunately there are no trips posted for June. I am encouraging members to run a trip, we have 64 members, if each member ran a trip be it a day or weekend trip, we would have over a year of weekends taken up with a club function. Lets see if we can get the weekends on the calendar full of trips.

If any member has a trip or event they would like to do, but does not know where to start to organise/run. Talk to the trip convenors, I am sure they will help you get started and guide you in the running of it.

I would like to welcome a new member, Robert Davies, to the club. I am sure all members will make him feel welcomed when they first meet at a General Meeting or on a club trip.

April General Meeting will be held at the Rosehill Bowling Club 12th May 2026, Tramway Ave off James Ruse Drive, Rosehill. Dinner & catch up 6:00pm. Meeting 7:30pm. New members are encouraged to attend as a get to know you. Everyone is welcome.

Stephen B

SUBARU & RECREATIONAL 4WD CLUB
GENERAL MEETING

Date: 14th April 2026

Venue: Crossroads Hotel

Meeting open at 7.40pm

Attendees: Steve P, Karolyn H, Iwan S & Eve, Jeffy C, Chris & Kelly M,
Stephen B, Jo Q, Brett H.

Apologies: Dave C, Daniel S, Kevin Mc, Michael C, Michael R H, Craig F, Bill T, Steve E,
David W

Minutes of previous meeting read

Accepted by Jo Q

Seconded by Chris M

Presidents Report

Called for more trips

Treasurer's Report

\$5975.20

Membership Secretary Report

One new member. Robert Davies

Web Report

Same as in last Drive Torque eNews

Trip Convenor Report

Brett H gave a rundown on the Easter Camping trip to West Kunderang.
Six (6) vehicles. Nine (9) people. Heaps of 4WDing. Great fun. HUGE thanks to Mark H
for running this trip, while very ill with the flu.

Looking at the possibility of putting on the same trip / event next Easter.

Full report in the next magazine.

Batlow Ciderfest 16th May

Driver Awareness to Stockton Beach 30th May

Oktoberfest at Olinda 2nd October

Register for any of these activities via the website.

PR Report

Reminder that volunteers will be needed for the club stand at the 4WD show. If there are not enough volunteers then we will not have a stand.

Equipment & Merchandising Report

Still awaiting a response from Subaru Australia regarding the request for them to sponsor a couple of marques for the club.

General Business

It was suggested that we get more Subaru photos to put on the club's Facebook group

General Meeting closed 8.10pm

SUBARU & RECREATIONAL 4WD CLUB INC.

Treasurers Report

Mar-26

Cash Book Balance Brought Forward	\$5,829.71
Plus Income	\$222.00
Less Expenditure	\$76.51
Closing Balance	<u><u>\$5,975.20</u></u>

<u>Income</u> -	Memberships	\$150.00
	Clothing	\$72.00

<u>Expenditure</u> -	Paypal fees	\$5.83
	Delegate Expenses - D Wellham	\$70.68

Bank Reconciliation

Bank Account Balance as at 31/3/2026	ANZ	\$4,977.40
<u>Plus</u>	Funds held in Pay Pal as at 31/3/2026	\$703.05
	Cash on Hand	\$294.75
Available Funds as at 31/3/2026		<u><u>\$5,975.20</u></u>

ASSOCIATION UPDATE

At this point in the calendar, we would normally be providing you with all the final details for Emberfest and encouraging you to grab your tickets for a wonderful weekend. That said, we've had to make the choice to cancel this year's Emberfest.

As you would be aware, world events have put significant pressure on fuel supply and affordability. This means that not only is it far more expensive for members to drive to Mudgee and back, but it also puts pressure on local fuel supplies once we get there and fuel up to get home. We feel that it would put an unfair amount of pressure on the Mudgee community.

It is our intention that Emberfest 2027 will go ahead as normal, so put it in your calendars now – 14th, 15th and 16th May, 2027.

To reduce scheduling conflicts, we are going ahead with the quarterly meeting on Sunday 17th at 9am as planned. The only change to the meeting is that it will be ZOOM ONLY. Keep an eye out for more meeting info closer to the date.

Driver Training Unit (DTU) Update.

In 2026 the DTU will shift to focus more on assessment only.

Since 2021 DTU has been running workshops for the Driver Awareness Facilitators (DAF's) with the aim to build skills and knowledge within the clubs.

For 2026 the intention is the DAF's will educate and Facilitate Awareness for members within their clubs, to prepare them before they attend the DTU assessments.

DAF's will need to verify their members have the skills and knowledge to complete the assessment, This will allow the DTU to assess more members.

For clubs that do not have a DAF we will try to link those clubs with clubs who have a driver awareness program and are willing to accept members of other clubs on their driver awareness events.

The following events are ALL OPEN on the website for booking

May 9th - Basic assessment - Wallaroo SF

July 4th - DAF Workshop – Wollongong

Sept 27th /28th Non Accredited Complex - Wallaroo SF

October 24th – DAF workshop – Lithgow

Webmaster Update April 2026.

Currently there are 152 valid registrations on the website consisting of 78 individual Club Members, 41 registered Visitors and 33 past members.

We've had 13 new registrations on the website since January 1st with four becoming club members. Commencing April 1st new membership / membership renewals for financial year 2027 is available.

Events Manager has been upgraded to 2.3.10. Events Manager 2.3.10 is a major modernization update focused on long-term compatibility, stability, and future development. It includes a refreshed FullCalendar v6 design, improved mobile responsiveness, better locale support, more reliable event date auto-adjust behaviour, a new RSVP participant visibility option and category-level moderator edit permissions. For the complete list of changes please see the full changelog on our website:

<https://subaru4wdclub.com.au/threads/events-manager-upgrades.73/#post-744>

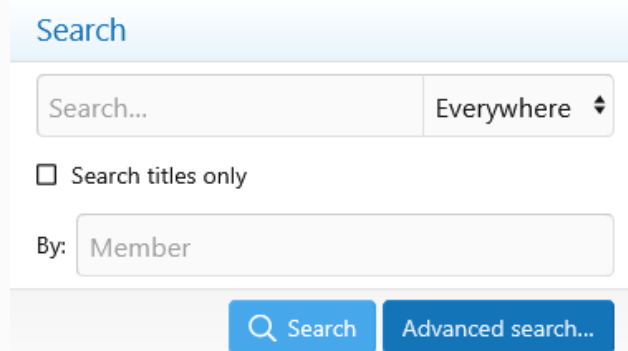
I'm pleased to report that the host organisation hardware upgrades Saturday 28th March were successful.

Did you know?

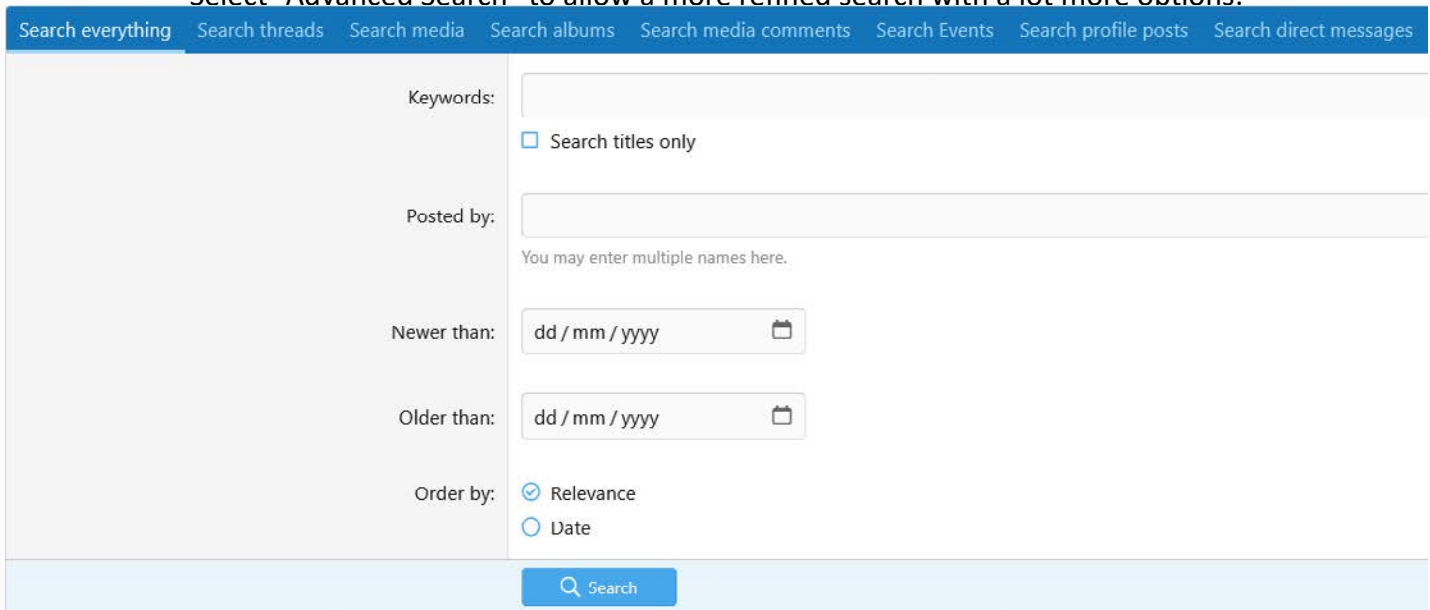
That "Search" provides access to a simple as well as an advanced search? Select "Search" from the navigation bar:



You will then see [this search](#) where you have various basic options to limit the search:



Select "Advanced Search" to allow a more refined search with a lot more options:



Website Feedback & Support.

Feedback is welcome and assistance is readily available by contacting me:

webmaster@subaru4wdclub.com.au

Cheers Kevin



THE 4WD *Hierarchy of* RECOVERY

When a vehicle is stuck, always start with the safest, least stressful method

to move the vehicle with the minimum force necessary. This reduces the risk of equipment failure and injury to those involved.



Level

5

Kinetic (Snatch) Recovery (High-Energy Recovery)

Only used as a last resort due to extreme levels of stored energy. This method requires a “run-up” with an elastic snatch strap or kinetic rope to yank the vehicle free. Because of the potential for gear to break and fly off at high speed, very strict safety protocols must be put in place.

Level

4

Controlled Winching (High-Energy Recovery)

Used for heavy bogs or steep obstacles where a gentle tow does not provide sufficient assistance. It provides immense mechanical power in a slow, precise manner.

Level

3

Gentle Tow

The first assisted step involves a slow, constant pull. The recovery vehicle moves forward slowly to take up the slack in the line (strap, rope, or even rated chain) until it is taut. Once tension is felt, the driver applies steady power to pull the bogged vehicle to firmer ground. This method is relatively low-energy and highly predictable.

Level

2

Recovery Boards

When digging isn't enough, recovery boards provide a high-grip surface. Wedged under the tyres, they lift the vehicle out of ruts and provide the necessary friction to regain momentum in soft terrain.

Level

1

Vehicle Set-up and Track Building

Stop wheel spin immediately to avoid digging deeper. Check that the vehicle is set up correctly. Verify you have engaged 4WD, low range, traction modes and differential locks (if available). Lower tyre pressures. Use a shovel to clear build-up from under the vehicle and use rocks to fill holes.

Critical Safety & Training:

- **Driver Coordination:** Establish clear communication (via UHF Radio or hand signals) before any movement begins.
- **Training Requirement:** High-energy recoveries (Levels 4 and 5) involve significant risk and should only be performed by personnel who have completed a Nationally Recognised 4WD Course.



Bystander Safety: In any recovery situation, ensure all bystanders are at a safe distance (at least 1.5 times the length of the recovery line). No one should be in the path of any possible projectiles.

Trip Convener Report

Club Meeting – Rosehill Bowling Club

12th May 2026

Batlow Cider Fest

16th May 2026

May Be Broke

22nd May 2026

Driver Awareness Day Trip – Stockton Beach

30th May 2026

OKTOBERFEST 2026 at Olinda

2nd to 6th October 2026

Details for all trips and meetings can be found on the club website. Bill Twyman

MAY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
31					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 General Meeting Rosehill Bowling Club	13	14	15 Batlow Cider Festival 2026	16 Batlow Cider Festival 2026
17 Batlow Cider Festival 2026	18 Batlow Cider Festival 2026	19	20	21	22 MayBe Broke	23 MayBe Broke
24 MayBe Broke	25	26	27	28	29	30 Driver Awareness Day Trip Stockton Beach

Important Information

Driver Awareness Day Trip (30th May 2026)

Stockton Beach

Beach Permit Required

Worimi Conservation Lands beach vehicle permit

Permit Type

3 day - 4WD ⓘ

\$33

1 year - 4WD ⓘ

\$88

1 year - RVA ⓘ

\$88

1 year - Pension/Veteran card holder ⓘ

\$44

WCL Registered Traditional Owner ⓘ

Apply

Worimi LALC member ⓘ

Apply

You can apply online using the below link

<https://account.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/worimipermit>

Easter 2026 Trip to West Kunderang

As everyone would be aware, there was quite a lot happening in the world leading up to this trip, and with that came some uncertainty around fuel availability. Thankfully we were assured there would be no issues in Armidale, so with the cars packed and a sense of adventure, six vehicles and nine people headed north on the Thursday before Good Friday.

Given the distance to reach the campsite, we decided to break the trip up, with the official meetup set for Thursday night at the Willow Tree free camp, about an hour south of Tamworth. A few arrived earlier in the afternoon, but by around 7:30pm all but one person had made it in. With the local bowlo right next to the campground, we decided it was the perfect spot for dinner.

The food was great, and they also had a chocolate wheel running, with the chance to win trays of fish, prawns, or chocolates. It would be nice to say the chocolate wheel was as enjoyable as the meal, but unfortunately it wasn't to be. They'd sell a hundred tickets, spin the wheel once, announce a winner... and then nothing until another hundred tickets were sold. Hmmm... lucky half of Willow Tree was in the club, because after a few spins we'd had enough and pulled the pin on that little competition.

Once we'd had our fill of the wheel spinning, we left the locals behind and headed back through the gate to light the fire in Mark's fire pit and wait for Jeffy to arrive. He joined us not long after, and everyone settled in for the usual fireside chats before turning in for the night.

Now, if you've never stayed at Willow Tree campground, it's a great spot — flat camping, showers and toilets, and even power if you need it for a small charge. But it's also known for one other thing... the coal trains that roll through. Sometimes you only get a couple during the night, but they must've been filling plenty of ships in Newcastle because there were quite a few that came through that night. It doesn't bother me, but if you ever camp there, just be aware.

Good Friday dawned clear, and we were packed up and ready to roll by 8:30am. One thing Jo wanted to do was getting a selfie in front of the Golden Guitar in Tamworth. Now, this should've been a quick stop... but once we got there, we all decided to jump out and join her. Then a few of us thought it was the perfect time to hunt down a coffee. So what Mark was hoping would be a short stop turned into about half an hour. Sorry Mark... haha.

Later that morning we passed through Armidale and topped up with fuel before heading east along The Waterfall Way for around 45km, then turning onto Kempsey Road. Not long after, the bitumen gave way to dirt, and we aired down the tyres before tackling the final stretch into West Kunderang. We made a quick stop at a lookout, then continued on through the last steep 5km descent down to the property, arriving at around 2:30pm.

Camp was soon set up and lunches sorted, and then Mark suggested we take a short drive upstream to explore a bit more of the property. With the river running fairly shallow, we were able to travel further than we had on some previous visits. Only four vehicles joined this little run, and Jo finally got to put her new Kia Tasman into low range and get the wheels wet for the first time. Shallow crossings, river stones, a bit of sand, and some tight turns between the trees kept things interesting, before we eventually reached the turnaround point — which also looked like it would make a great swimming spot.

After that it was back to camp to rest and relax for the afternoon, and of course get the fire going.

That night was a beauty. It wasn't too cold, the fire was perfect, and with a full moon overhead the whole valley was lit up in moonlight.

Saturday dawned fairly clear, although the clouds were already starting to build. The forecast said Sunday might bring rain, but the sky looked like it was planning to deliver it a little earlier.

After breakfast we fired up the cars and headed further upstream than we'd gone the day before. I jumped in with Jo to check out the Tasman and was impressed it was so quiet and comfortable. Figuring out what all the buttons and lights do is another story though, and when Jo mentioned the owner's manual was over 700 pages long, I wondered if anyone has ever actually read the whole thing.



Once we reached the furthest point we were allowed to travel, we took the obligatory photos and then turned around. On the way back we took the turn-off onto the Raspberry Trail, which climbs uphill for around 12km to a locked gate. Before long the branches were creeping a bit too far into the track, so Mark jumped out and started clearing the track. But as we climbed higher it became obvious it was getting too tight and overgrown to continue so we found a small open section that allowed us to turn around.

Stephen's transmission was starting to get a bit hot on the climb, and we realised he'd been using high range. Mark suggested using low range for that slower uphill driving, and after that he had no further issues.

The descent back down was trouble-free and we were soon back at camp for lunch. Not long after, the rain showers rolled in. Everyone retreated under various awnings to wait it out, solve the world's problems, and of course have a look through Jo's printed-out car manual. Sheesh...what a read... over 700 pages. It earned the nickname *the Kia Funk & Wagnalls*.

Thankfully the rain wasn't enough to dampen Nathan's fire-making abilities, and he managed to get it going well enough to get some good coals. That meant Jo could bake damper, and Jeffy could cook up lamb and veggies. The fire burned well into the night thanks to Jo asking 'shoud I put another log on?' and and before anyone answered she had about 3 new pieces burning. We sat around it for hours and although the cloud cover meant the moon was hidden, every now and then a break would open up and a few stars would appear.

Sunday was set to be the main fun driving day. We'd all organised our passes for the Halls Peak trail and campground, as it's part of the National Park and the trail runs from the top of the range down to the Chandler River and is said to be one of the steepest tracks in NSW, dropping over more than 2km. It's definitely low range all the way, and Jo found the Tasman didn't really want to stay in first gear on the descent. Nathan suggested using the downhill descent button, which we quickly renamed the "machine gun button" thanks to the noises it makes — and that turned out to be what she needed. After that the car behaved itself and held a slow speed down the hill.

At the bottom we were surprised to find nobody camped there. For Easter it was pretty unusual, but then again only a certain type of person is willing to drive down there and set up camp. It's certainly not a track you'd want to tow anything down... or back up.

We parked beside the river and had some snacks while Jeffy, Nathan and I braved the water for a quick swim. Mark tried his luck fishing, but that didn't last long as the shallow water seemed to have no fish, unless the 3 bodies swimming in it frightened them away.. We'd planned to have lunch down there, but decided instead to head back up. All the cars handled the climb with ease, and once we were back at the top it was back to camp for a lazy afternoon.

That night was clear again and the fire roared. Damper was cooked in the coals while others prepared dinner over the flames. Cindy, who owns the property, came down and joined us by the fire and shared some of the history of her family and the land. She also spoke about the ongoing issue with wild pigs and explained she'd be closing the property during winter to try and eradicate them. The damage they've been doing to the campground — digging divots and holes everywhere — is pretty severe and needs to be dealt with. Hopefully they can get on top of it.

Monday was sunny again, and we left our campers set up for a while to dry out the morning dew before packing away. The hill out of the property needs low range when towing, so it was a slow crawl up, and once we reached the top it was a steady run along the tracks until we stopped to air up our tyres. This was also where we said our farewells, as everyone was heading off in different directions.

Jeffy, Mark and I left first, but not long down the road we heard Nathan over the UHF:

"What's that noise?"

followed immediately by Jo:

"That's from my car."



Mark and I turned around and found the Kia jacked up with the rear driver's side wheel off while they tried to work out where the noise was coming from. Spinning the wheel by hand revealed nothing. The wheel went back on, Jo drove forward, and the screeching noise returned. "It's coming from the other side," we decided, so back up on the jack again. A quick look was all it took — a small stone fell out from the brake area. Problem solved, and we were finally on our way home.

I headed back to Sydney, while Mark, who hadn't been well all weekend, decided to rest in Tamworth. Jeffy made his way to the coast, and Nathan, Cherie, Stephen, Sue and Jo went chasing waterfalls — which seems fitting, considering it's called *The Waterfall Way* — before finding somewhere to camp for the night.

All in all it was a fantastic weekend with great people, plenty of laughs, and some memorable driving. Special mention has to go to Mark, who ran the trip despite his health telling him he probably should've stayed home.

Attendees:

Mark and Karolyn – Nissan Patrol & camper trailer

Nathan and Cherie – Toyota Landcruiser & camper trailer

Stephen and Sue – Mazda BT50 & camper trailer

Jo – Kia Tasman & tent

Jeffy – Izuzu DMAX & trayback camper

Brett – Toyota Landcruiser & camper trailer









As a first-time participant in the Driver Awareness Day with my Subaru Forester, I wasn't quite sure what to expect—but it turned out to be an incredibly valuable and enjoyable experience. Our convoy of 10 vehicles was a great mix, and it was especially good to see more Subarus taking part in the training.

Day one focused on building knowledge, skills, and confidence. The training led by David was both informative and safety-focused, ensuring everyone felt comfortable while learning the fundamentals of off-road driving. We covered a wide range of topics including what to bring on trips, convoy procedures, trip etiquette, tyre pressures, driving on different surfaces, recovery techniques, and how to assess both terrain and our own driving ability to proceed safely.

The practical driving component was a highlight. After a thorough briefing and vehicle preparation, we headed off down the mountain to our first stop, where we explored vehicle angles and positioning. From there, we tackled several creek crossings and stopped for morning tea, we then proceeded back to where the river was where we learned the correct techniques for safe river crossings. It was a great hands-on way to put theory into practice.

We paused for lunch, followed by an engaging presentation on vehicle capabilities and driving techniques. The session then moved into practical application, where we put our recovery skills to the test—successfully recovering Michael's Grenadier—and practised effective vehicle positioning.

Meanwhile, other members of the group took the opportunity to explore additional trails while we continued with the training session.

Day two began with a smaller group of seven who had stayed overnight, meeting at Lithgow McDonald's before heading out. Our first stop was Hassan's Wall lookout—an incredible spot with spectacular views that I hadn't even known existed. It's definitely somewhere I'll return to explore further.

From there, we made a quick stop at The Lolly Bug to stock up on treats before continuing along Coxs River Road towards the campground for lunch. The journey then took us towards Jenolan Caves Road, navigating a series of trails—some quite challenging. However, thanks to the previous day's training, everyone approached these sections with confidence, and all vehicles completed the tracks successfully.

cont.



Our final stop was the Hampton Halfway Hotel, where we relaxed with a drink and some hot chips before heading home.

A big thank you to David and the Driver Awareness Team for organising such a well-run and enjoyable event. For newer members, I highly recommend getting involved in these driver awareness days—they're a fantastic way to build skills, confidence, and connect with others in the club.

Michael Carney (Big Mick)

Driver Awareness Weekend - Turon NP

28th - 29th March 2026

Trip Leader: David Wellham

Attendees: John Hocking, Michael Carney, Rocky Rozario, Zied Melham, Chris Brown, Iwan & Evie Sujono, Johnny Lauder, Alex Gatward, David Wellham, Michael Hamilton, Bill Twyman.

Report by - Bill Twyman

When we had all deflated our tyres and after our pre trip talk, the convoy left the Capertee car park pretty well on time.

The track into the National Park which had been graded recently was a surprisingly pleasant drive unlike how it had been in the past. We got to the bottom of the Lochaber Road hill, parked up where David spoke about our vehicles and what was going to happen throughout the day. After a quick chat we headed back up the Lochaber hill only to come back down the (steep one way track) Steep Rd into Lochaber Creek. We did about 15 creek crossings finally arriving at a picnic ground for the morning tea stop.

Of the 10 vehicles in the convoy we had 6 Subaru's all stock except for Johnny's Outback. They all handled the Lochaber Creek and Turon River crossings without trouble. After a quick toilet stop at the Diggings Campground we headed for the Woolshed Flat Campground (crossing the wide section of the Turon River at River Ron's crossing) where we called it lunch. While Iwan, Evie, Johnny and myself

headed for the Pinnacle Firetrail David, Alex and Michael took the rest of the group through the theoretical side of the training at the Woolshed campground.

We all departed the Woolshed around 3.00pm in search of River Ron's old cabin site. Then it was back into Lithgow, our accommodation and dinner.

Sunday morning's meeting point was Macca's in Lithgow where we headed up to Hassans Walls spectacular lookout. Next was off to the Lolly Bug in Little Hartley to support a local company. Then it was off to the Six Foot Track via Cox's River Rd and lunch stop at the Cox's River Campground. Chris was the only one keen to enough to venture to the Bowtells Swing Bridge for the obligatory photo op. We headed back up the Glen Chee Rd track to Black Range Trail where we had some challenging moments with the smaller vehicles. Eventually we got back onto the asphalt on the Jenolan Caves Rd and headed to the Hampton Hotel for a quick one to talk about our weekend.

With the closure of Mt Victoria it meant we had to head back into Lithgow and tackle the traffic up the steep "Scienic Hill" and the Bells Line of Road and our way back home.

It was a great weekend for me as I enjoyed the rather technical drive up and down the Pinnacle Fire Trail. My passenger on that trail was Mark Hocking- John Hocking's son, where he claimed that the Pinnacle Track was the world's worst ever road.





HAPPY BIRTHDAY

To those celebrating their Birthdays in April

Deanna Blamire

Heidi Ploeg

Michael R Hamilton

Michael Minny

Iwan Sujono



“Ooo, I just felt the good cholesterol
kick the bad cholesterol.”

Until Next Time

STAY SAFE