



The AULROVIAN



Special points of interest:

- Ever wanted to build a car computer?
Never fear—HangOver is here !.
- New Editor wanted.

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Edition Nineteen

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Editor's Report

Hello again, fellow Land Rover lovers. It's been a while between drinks (though mostly you've only yourselves to blame!:

Our country has recently endured (and is still) some of the largest scale natural disasters in living memory. The tragic bushfires in Victoria and, by cruel and ironic contrast, severe floods in the far north.

I hope that you have all come through unscathed and that your family and friends are safe. There is an article on the bushfires in this issue, so I'll say no more here.

This magazine is only as strong as those who are prepared to contribute. I'd like to acknowledge all who have sent articles and photos for this, and previous, issues—as well as entered competitions and so on.

I'd urge you to go back through previous editions for inspiration as to what you can contribute. If you have a collection (of anything) then "Collector's Corner" is for you. Been on a trip? Of course you have! Write a trip report and send a few photos. Heard any LR gossip? Here's the place! Also some info on yourself and a photo or two and we can make up a member profile. Send any contributions you may have to the editor, simply ensure it contains your AULRO username so you can be identified.



Of course, all good things must come to an end. Don't Panic! The AULROvian will continue but I, as Editor, feel I have to step down. Due to work commitments and other issues I don't have the time to publish an issue as often as I'd like. If you feel you'd make a good Editor then send me (VladTepes) a PM or email me and we can discuss it. I'm happy to assist the next editor to get up and running —of course. (Please note that award of the office of Editor is subject to agreement by forum admins and mods).

Thank You all !
Anyway, enough editorial guff.... On with the show !

- VladTepes



Popular Threads
It seems that the "Counting with Pictures" thread (467 posts) is quite popular. While not rivalling the "I can see... stars!" thread (6,644 posts) numerically—it certainly makes a heck of a lot more sense!



Note: Submissions have generally been run unedited.

Merriment Corner.

A "true" story from Mount Isa in Queensland.

Recently a police car parked outside a local neighbourhood pub. Late in the evening the officer noticed a man leaving the pub so intoxicated that he could barely walk.



The man stumbled around the car park for a few minutes, with the officer quietly observing. After what seemed an eternity and trying his keys on five Land Cruisers, the man managed to find his car, which he fell into.

He was there for a few minutes as a number of other patrons left the pub and drove off. Finally he started the 'cruiser, switched the wipers on and off (it was a fine dry night), flicked the indicators on, then off, tooted the horn and then switched on the lights.



He moved the vehicle forward a few inches, reversed a little and then remained stationary for a few more minutes as some more utes left. At last he pulled out of the car park and started to drive slowly down the road.



The Police officer, having patiently waited all this time, now started up the police car, put on the flashing lights, promptly pulled the man over and carried out a "random" breathalyser test.

To his amazement the breathalyser indicated no evidence of the man's intoxication.



The Police officer said "I'll have to ask you to accompany me to the Police station - this breathalyser equipment must be broken."

"I doubt it," said the man, "tonight I'm the designated decoy".

*"To Err is Human,
but
To Arr is Pirate"*



“Car-puter” project: –by HangOver

This article commences with HangOver’s initial thoughts on what he wanted in a car-puter and how he would go about it. Later in the article we see a build of the (now finished) product. This is a fantastic project and a great article

—Thanks HangOver ! Now I’ll let loose the reins and leave it to HangOver to take up the tale:

Genesis:

What I want:

A “carputer” that can be used for GPS and also play mp3’s. But mostly for GPS. As always at a minimal cost. Before you say, “just go buy a laptop”, I have one but I do not want a new laptop exposed to the sort of environment an off roader is exposed to.

Spec and Uses:

Low wattage as possible to spare the batteries.

As rugged as possible to cope with the dust and knocks a carputer in an off roader will get.

The main components I will need are:

Donor computer, (Motherboard & CPU, video, audio, ram, hard drive,, cd / dvd drive, Mouse & Keyboard), Suitable power supply, LCD screen, GPS receiver, Case.

Motherboard selection:

The donor computer was the easiest to sort out I had a couple of spares in the garage. The one I selected was is an Intel motherboard with onboard Video and an 800-900 PIII processor. The motherboard while not exactly a power house will be ample for playing MP3’s and a GPS system. These applications aren’t exactly CPU intensive. Also the slower CPU speed means less cooling will be required and thus less wattage is used. Also a cooler CPU is needed for the back of a Rangie on a 35+ day.

I wanted a motherboard with as much “onboard” as I could get to keep the size small. This one has onboard audio and video, network port and USB, so that was lucky. I don’t want to use any PCI cards so the overall height of the case will only be the height of the motherboard plus the CPU + heat-sink + fan. That’s the theory anyway.

Video

Shared onboard video, not a lot to say really other than I will need an LCD monitor that will accept a 15pin VGA input. I could have beefed up the video but at the cost of increasing the case size and internal heat. That and it’s really not necessary for the applications it will run.

Audio

The onboard sound is stereo and other than it possibly needing a bit of amplification before it gets to the existing Rangie speakers it should suffice. Once it’s finished I’ll try it out and if it needs it I’ll install a small amp.

Ram

The motherboard has x4 SDRam slots so I put in x1 512MB module.

I selected 512mb of ram as this should be more than sufficient ram for the task and two 256 modules would draw approximately twice the power of one 512MB module. I know we are only talking about a few watts here and there but they will all add up.

Continued....

HangOver's Car-puter (continued)

Hard Drive

In trying to keep the case as small as I can, (and I just happened to have one) I decided to use a HDD from a laptop. The internals of a laptop are designed slightly differently to desktop drives and will stand up to more knocks and bumps. I bought a laptop to desktop IDE adapter from ebay which on connection didn't work ! After testing the drive at work I found it was the actual drive that was bugged not the adapter. Oh well I would have to use a standard 3.5 HDD. I didn't really want to use the desktop HDD but as I only had one laptop HDD I will have to, (what do you mean I'm too tight to buy a new one!). I will mount the HDD horizontally above the motherboard as close as I can without danger of shorting circuits. This will make the case long and wide but not very deep. I intend to mount the case in the Rangie vertically but not too sure where yet. When the case is mounted vertically this inturn will make the HDD vertical as well. This will help to prevent the HDD heads smashing on the platter while it is reading/writing data if there are any hard bumps. I am also going to try and mount the drive on some sort of padding or spring to dampen any knocks as, excluding fans this is the only moving part in my carputer.

CD/DVD drive

I haven't really decided whether to install a CD/DVD drive or not as yet, while it would be handy it will increase the case size and wattage used and it's something I would only use once in a while as I can always copy files onto it by USB.

Keyboard & Mouse

I will probably take a keyboard and mouse along for the ride but not connected. Eventually I may get one of those foldable rubber keyboards I have a small wireless mouse if I find I need to use them often but hopefully not.

Power supply

I have a 300w inverter that would power the computer and any suitable monitor without any problems. An inverter has it's advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages: Easy to install and you can run any other appliances from it you need.

Disadvantages: Mostly the thought of having a live 240v power supply in your vehicle and probably under one of the seats hmm. The other is that, (I have heard) an inverter constantly draws power whether used or not and is not as efficient in it's use of power. I would be converting 12DC via the inverter to 240vAC, then a transformer from 240v to something more suitable for the carputer or use it's existing PSU which would increase the size and temperature of the carputer case dramatically. These conversions would decrease the available battery power. The alternatives would be to find suitable 12v transformer from a laptop and do some surgery on it or buy, (yes, buy) a purpose made 12v PSU for a motherboard.

I checked out ebay and bought a small 12v PSU for about \$45. Damn I had to spend money on it! When I bought the PSU and tested it I found that the motherboard components fouled the components on the PSU. Not a good thing! I bought an ATX motherboard socket extension cable. Money again ! \$8 This moved the PSU away from the motherboard and possible shorts, (not mine, I mean the electrical type). I have just thought that the mini-psu I bought will have a maximum watts out so I will have to ensure I don't exceed it. I have been thinking that I could run just the motherboard/CPU from the mini-psu and doctor the other innards to run straight from the battery. I'm not sure how reliable that would make it but I might give it a go.

Continued....

HangOver's Car-puter (continued)

LCD Screen

There are loads of LCD screens available. They seem to be vastly cheaper on ebay than local suppliers. I want one that has a minimum of 800x600 resolution and about 7" to 8" screen. The optimum screen for me would be a 1024x768 resolution on an 8" or more touch screen that natively runs on 12volts and has a backing plate for fitting to the dash, but I'll just have to wait and see what the E-bay gods throw my way.

GPS receiver

There seems to be two different connection wired and blue tooth. As I don't know where yet I am going to mount the carputer or the GPS receiver in the Rangie or in relation to each other I don't know which to get. The longer a USB cable is the crappier the connection gets especially if your device is USB powered.

More thinking, I don't know how sensitive the receiver will be so I bought a wireless USB blue-tooth receiver and bluetooth GPS unit from ebay so it can be mounted wherever is best on the day. The GPS unit has a magnetic base which isn't a lot of use but it may stop it sliding around too much. I will hardwire the USB receiver directly to a USB port on the motherboard inside the case as I don't want it sticking out from the back of the case. It's quite small, about the size of your little finger.

The GPS receiver (\$100, more money argrggghhhh) is 12v powered but has a built in battery and is also solar powered, I hope it will last a full day without a recharge. I tested the receiver for sensitivity in the house with my laptop. It works great. I took the receiver in another room inside the house and it still worked. It doesn't look like sensitivity was going to be a problem after all.

Case

I am trying to decide to either build a custom case, (more hassle) or just buy the smallest case I can find and mod it to fit the stuff I want to cram into it.
Still thinking.....

The above was written ages ago when I was just thinking / planning to build the carputer, Its all finished now and have changed my mind lots during the build. Girls are allowed to so why shouldn't I ?

The Build

There's heaps of pics of the build so I'll explain stuff as I go along. Oh and I am not an electrician or cabinet maker so excuse any stuff ups ;)

I decided to build a case after all. I bought a small computer case initially (\$5) but it was just too much hassle. So I built one from wood. I did intend to mount the case maybe in the foot well or under/behind a seat; but as I wanted somewhere to mount my UHF I went for an overhead console type build.

Continued....

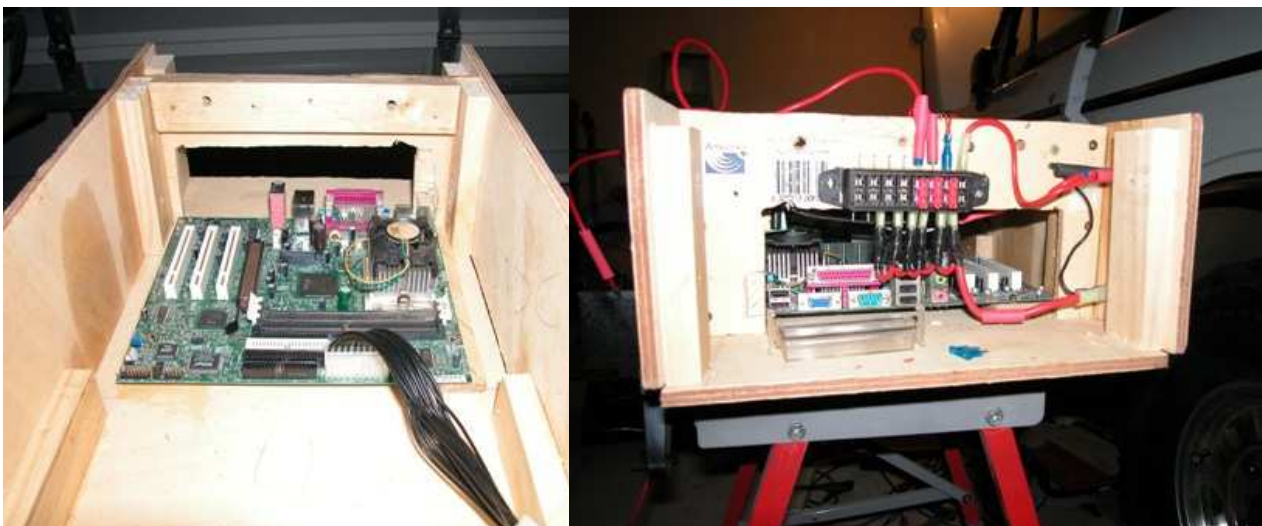
HangOver's Car-Puter (continued)

First off I made a case from cardboard so I could use that as a template. I know very BluePeter, (joke for the pomms). I did want to keep the case very small but as it was going overhead that's not such a priority. After a couple of cardboard mocks I came up with this humungous thing. It had to be really though, you'll see why later. That's my little boys legs in the background, he was supervising!



After I got the basic box built I tried a rough test fit for components in the box. They fit with room to spare. A couple of things were changed after the test fit. The AM CB was removed, in the 4 years I have owned it I have never actually needed to use it. Also I was going to fit an external USB port to the case but as the USB port is easily accessible from the rear of the case I didn't bother.

The first part installed is the motherboard (below left) You can see from this later picture (below right) that I left about 10mm under the board to assist with cooling. If you have ever put your hand on the back of a running motherboard you'll know it gets pretty warm. Also added in this picture is the console fuse box and power switches.



Continued....

HangOver's Car-puter (continued)

Next in is the RAM and hard drive, (managed to scrounge another freebie laptop drive and some ram) you can see here the 2.5 to 3.5 IDE converter board.



What you cant see is that the drive is hot glued to a 25mm thick base of foam then that's hot glued to the case to assist with shock absorption. I found many uses for hot glue during this build and the good thing is if you stuff up you can just peel it off again.

If you look at the bottom of the picture at left you can see a connector block. I ran the battery negative straight to the block. As you know wood doesn't make a great conductor so all grounds go to the connector block.

Here you can see the PSU temporarily mounted (top left of picture) for testing it remains in this position and orientation horizontally over the motherboard. You can also see the foam under the hard drive.



Continued....

HangOver's Car-puter (continued)

Next was to connect a standard mouse, keyboard and monitor and using a spare 12v battery, fire up the computer for the first time.



Miracles do happen and here it is booting for the first time from a 12v source.

I should mention that before I started I installed the computer parts in a standard case with a standard 240v PSU. Then I installed windows and configured all the settings before I installed it in the console so I could take my time doing it instead of running from battery. The internals were then swapped over to the console case. That's how it fired up first time.

As an XP install can take 30-40 minutes (ish) then the other software to install and setup its worth doing it first. It also helps in testing your components.

A good tip I learned years ago about older system is to hot glue all the connections so they don't pop out when it gets warm and the components expand slightly. This doesn't seem to happen to newer systems but as I'm using a PIII I hot glued in the RAM and 20pin ATX connector and IDE cable. I always used to get glue in video cards too they were a pain.

So that's the basic PC part of things up and running so what's next?

Dual Battery system and Battery monitors

As part of the overall install I installed a 2nd battery to run the carputer from. I haven't put in any pictures of the aux battery install as there are quite a few to see on AULRO.

I checked the power draw and according to manuals it will draw, 55W for the PC, 10W monitor, 5W UHF, I believe a max of 5W for USB stuff, a Watt or two for the tyre monitor. So maybe 85W, certainly under 100W. The second battery should last a while.

The dual battery system is nothing more than a few bloody thick battery cables and a solenoid connected to an idiot switch. Anyhow.....

I wanted a way of monitoring the batteries charge so being the cheapskate I am for the grand total of \$10 ea. and a few meters of wire. I came up with the idea of using a couple of digital multimeters. Yes I know this has limitations like no low voltage warning or cut off for starters but \$20 what do you want ?

Continued....

HangOver's Car-Puter (continued)

So, remove the back and remove the battery.

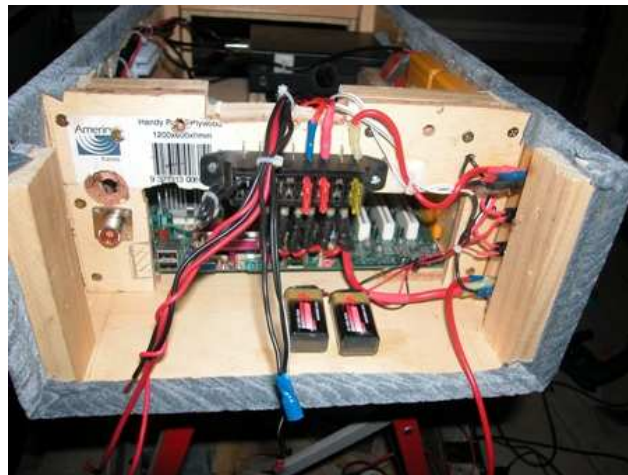
Connect the probes into the rear of the original probe sockets and solder a length of cable to the existing battery connector terminals



I found the back would not fit back on so I cut a hole in the back of the multimeter and screwed the back on. After the back went on I pumped a bit of hot glue in and around the new opening to make sure nothing comes loose.

I repeated the process with another meter for the second battery. The power for the meters is still the 9v batteries but they have been moved to the rear of the console case so I can change them without pulling them back out the overhead console when its fitted.

This is the nearly finished console and the battery location. They are secured with Velcro strips.

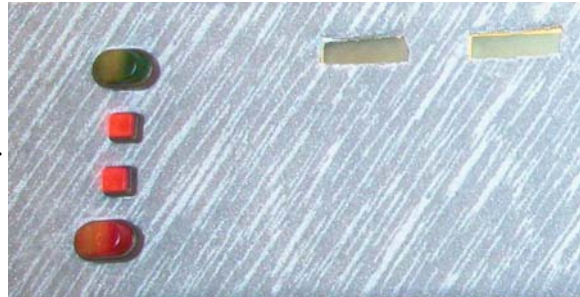


One other small issue was the selector dial on the front of the meter stood slightly proud of the meter casing. I tried filing it down but that took ages. To speed up the process I just scraped the front of the meter case across the garage floor until the dial was worn flush. I then hot glued the dial at 20v DC so it wouldn't move. With the aid of the hot glue gun, again (told you it got a good work out) they are then glued into position.

Continued....

HangOver's Car-Puter (continued)

Here is what it looks like from the outside of the console case now its finished. The two square buttons switch on the meters independently, they are still not labelled. I should have sprayed the meters back before I started as you can see a bit of yellow through the view holes in the console.



Fitting the UHF

This was very straight forward.

I cut a hole in the side and slid the UHF into the hole.



The case after I cut slots for the other bits and pieces.

Hey stop laughing! Its not supposed to be straight, honest.

The rear of the UHF is supported at the back and the UHF is (you guessed it) hot glued into place.

The space under the UHF is handy to locate the hard drive.

The power for the UHF as with everything else in the console is run to the common ground terminal connector



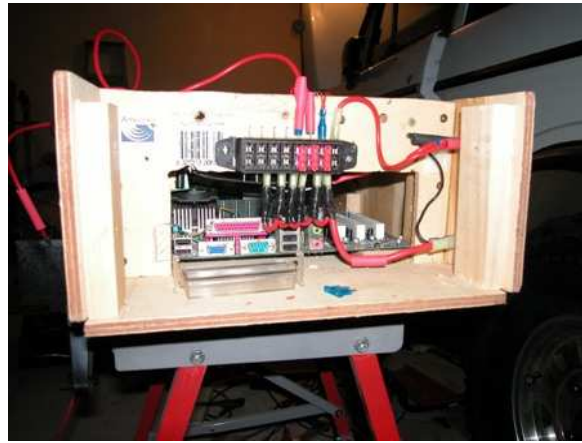
HangOver's Car-puter (continued)

...and the positive from the fuse box at the rear of the console.

The Coax cable for the UHF I soldered onto a socket which is mounted on the rear of the console. The hole above the socket was going to be for the AM CB coax socket before I decided not to install it.



And that's it for the UHF.



Tyre Monitor

This was even easier than the UHF.

The tyre monitor is self contained and just need power to operate. It picks up the temperature and pressure of each tyre from a device that is installed onto the inside rim of each wheel.

All I needed to do for the tyre monitor was mount it in the console and provide power. Not a lot to see, that's the back of the monitor.



That's all the bits n pieces in the box, now to make it look a little more presentable by hiding all my rough wood-work.

I covered the box with some upholstery fabric I happen to have lying around, (don't ask).

Pegs come in handy here, and no hot glue!
(Lots of PVA though).

Continued....

HangOver's Car-puter (continued)

Once its dry I cut the holes out and stapled the edges down.



Refit all the odds and ends:



Then added a Velcro strap to hold the UHF microphone cable out the way. So here it is the console finished.



Outside view

All I need to do now is fit it into the Range Rover !

The illuminated power switches you can see are for the main power to the console, (red) and the other is to turn on the computer, (green).

Inside view (below). All finished.



Continued....

HangOver's Car-puter (continued)

Fitting.

The power for the console is direct from the AUX battery via a circuit breaker which feeds into the fuse box at the back of the console. The other cables Coax, positive and negative from the batteries, extension speaker for the UHF and audio from the computer. All run out of the back of the console under the roof lining and down the window pillar. The cabling and location of the console was finalised as soon as I made part of the console case. I used the empty case to test fit and find the best location for cables etc.



Here you can see the rear of the console the single L bracket was cut in two to make two smaller brackets so the cables were less restricted going into the lining.

The rear L bracket is screwed into the roof brace. If you ever do this in a RRC note that the space between the brace and the actual roof is only about 15mm. I used a few butterfly screws into the brace but I had to trim the spring T piece both sides. All the cables are connected with plugs of one description or another so I can unplug the console reasonably quickly if needed.

Below shows the front L bracket.



The interior light fitting has been removed and the bracket is screwed into the existing bolts. I wasn't sure this would be strong enough but seems to be OK.

I might add the interior light to the base of the console one day if I can happen across a cheap flush mount light fitting.

Continued....

HangOver's Car-puter (continued)

You have read quite a bit so here it is the finished console. Ta,dah



Before you say it looks a bit, well, DIY its because it is !

Works fine though and solves to where to put the PC and UHF issues.

The ends of the console are just pieces of covered ply Velcro'd into position.
I thought the Velcro would be easier if I need access to the innards at anytime.

One little stuff up I think I made was making the front end panel a little shorter in height, (about 20mm) than it needs to be. I thought this would help with at bit of air circulation around the inside of the console. I probably does help but it looks a bit stupid as it looks like I just made it too small. Hence no pictures of that!

I might make a new end panel and add some sort of vent or maybe even a small fan if the PC gets hot, but it's a PIII how hot is it going to get !

But wait... there's more !!!!

Continued....

HangOver's Car-Puter (continued)



This is the monitor.

I was going to mount it on the dash somehow but there's a few reasons it's good where it is.

It's not quite as noticeable from outside the cab.

No glare that you sometimes get with some dash mounted monitors.

Ok so that's only two reasons, but who's counting?
What, you counted? Your taking this far too seriously ;)

The monitor is mounted using the supplied ball joint type mount that's screwed to the gearbox tunnel as you can see. All the cables from behind the dash for the monitor are velcro'd into place so I can remove the screen if parking in some dodgy area. Also I'm not sure this will be the monitors final mounting place so I didn't want to make the location too permanent. I plan to make a new centre cubby one day so I might have to move the screen again anyhow.

Although the monitor stated it would run up to 1024x768 in practice it can run a resolution heaps higher 2048x whatever, but it makes it way too small to use the icons on the touch screen. I have it running at 800x600 instead which is just about right.

Software

Well that's the hardware stuff over with what about software?

The computer is running XP, better native driver support than windows 2000 and much less resource hungry than vista. The GPS software is OziExplorer. It seems to be the defacto software for off road. The interface is a little cluttered and its not the most user friendly software in the world but its very comprehensive and has heaps of features. I managed to scrounge maps for the Perth area and larger scale maps for the rest of Australia. The only drawback to OziExplorer is, unlike TomTom it cant give turn by turn directions that are very handy around town. Actually it can, but it doesn't out of the box it needs other software and a lot of stuffing around to do so. I also have TomTom running on a PDA. TomTom is less than useless on non-gazetted roads but hard to beat on road. I have the best of both worlds.

To help with the touch screen I found a free front end program to make using the touch computer while driving a little easier, just adjusting volume etc.

Continued....

HangOver's Car-Puter (continued)

Heres a few pics; its called media engine if you want to download a copy:

Main menu, selecting music.



Now select track or album:

(This must definitely be the bit where I have a go at you for your musical taste! - Ed)

Same thing for the GPS or any other application you want to add to the menu, select that option and it fires up, here's OziExplorer in action:



Continued...

HangOver's Car-puter (continued)

The first trial

.The first time it was used off road was down at Harvey on the last AULRO trip. It worked OK for the first hour or so after getting it to work with a bit of fiddling. It rebooted a few times for no reason during the day which was really annoying after all the time I spent on it. Most times if a computer reboots for no apparent reason its usually the power supply or dodgy RAM. I was lucky and it was just a bad stick of RAM which has been replaced. During the day it also dropped the GPS connection several times again for no apparent reason. Turns out, and I still don't know why, if the GPS receiver is placed on the far left of the dash it drops the bluetooth connection every now and then. I put it on the far right and next time out it all worked flawlessly. If you have any suggestions about that it would be interesting.

Changes since the initial fit.

The extension speaker for the UHF has been disconnected. The UHF is loud enough without it. The computer audio was supposed to be routed via the newly installed amp under the passenger seat . For some reason it never worked. Works OK out of the RR but once installed nothing. I gave up on that.

As the radio in the RRC died sometime ago I bought a new radio/mp3/CD/DVD player for \$100 from ebay. Its installed now and works a treat. It has the advantage that when the nipper is grown up a bit he can watch DVDs on the monitor. Apart from that it also plays mp3s direct from USB drive and SD memory card and wont be as big a battery drain as the amp. I have bought a 12v FM audio transmitter, (not yet installed) that can send the audio signal from the audio out on the PC direct to the newly installed radio. The amp is still under the seat J

I also forgot to install a reset switch for the PC so that has now been added.

What would I change if I done it again?

I could have possibly made the console a little smaller but I can live with it the way it is. Its not that low it interferes with visibility and I don't really need to conserve space on the roof.

The GPS receiver I would have bought USB cable connection rather than bluetooth. It would have been less troublesome with a straight USB connection. Its fine now but it was initially a bit of a bugger to set up. Especially with the "English" manual. I specifically wanted the bluetooth GPS though so I can use it in my RRC & with a PDA in my daily driver. If your GPS stuff is in your daily driver go for the USB cable.

Future add ons?

In the future sometime I plan to add a USB camera for reversing.

Continued....

HangOver's Car-Puter (continued)

Conclusion

It was a good project for me to do and pretty much does what I want it to although it looks a bit like a wooden box with buttons instead of a sudo-factory fit system.

I'm pretty impressed with those that have the time and patience to make their system look integrated but I 'm just not that patient.

Although I didn't keep count I'm guessing that it cost me about \$350-ish to make. I could buy a cheapo GPS which would be "OK" but I wouldn't be a getting GPS system that can run on non-gazetted roads, store files, manuals, music, copy camera pictures to play movies, a bright 8"screen, remote control, etc

On the whole its way more versatile, expandable and cheaper than an off the shelf option. So yes it was worth it. It works and I'm very pleased with the result.

- HangOver



Previous Caption Competition

Page 19



Over the last few issues we asked you to put your thinking caps on and come up with a caption for this picture. A prize of fantastical wonderment was offered. And so... drum roll please....

Honourable Mentions:

"When the fire station chief's kids said they took the Land Rover and did a burn out... I thought they were joking!" - **dm td5**

"Hurry Darling! Park out front he suspects nothing." - **LesDef**

"Yep, that's the problem, you've got the engine bay set on very hot, the Exhaust manifold chicken recipe says medium heat".- **Blknight.aus**

One 'brother' to another, "Damn dat car is HOT !"
One 'brother' to another, "SMOKIN !!" - **HangOver**

But the WINNER is.....

"I dunno how the cat managed to get into the engine bay from the cabin...but it's okay....we'll smoke him out!!!" - **numpty's missus**

Congratulations numpty's missus !

PM me and Inc with your details and we'll get a prize of some sort out to you. If you're lucky.

A big thanks to everyone who entered.



"We asked you to insert your own amazingly creative caption here !"

You really wanted to win a prize?

At least a few people bothered to enter.

We had originally thought...

a "global time pocket calculator"

I have no idea what one is. Heck Inc may not even have one now, that was a while ago!

Never mind numpty's missus. Something is on the way.

Or will be—when details are forthcoming.

Cheers !



New Caption Competition

Page 20



I will start a thread entitled "Edition 19 Caption Competition" in the AULRO Magazine forum. You may post your captions there. No limit to the number of entries. I will NOT accept entries by PM or email. Thank You.

"Insert your own amazingly creative caption here !"

You really want a prize, do you ?

Well perhaps we can throw something together.

How about a Land-Rover branded LED torch ? How about a kick in the teeth ? One of the above is currently up for grabs!

If yours is the winning entry you can probably decide for yourself.

If it turns up it may be accompanied by some stickers, or maybe just the stamp. Or maybe it won't turn up at all.

Play at your own risk.

Disclaimer

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are the opinions of the individual authors of the articles, not of AULRO as a whole.

We are not mechanics, but merely enthusiasts, so if you are unsure of anything, please seek professional advice.

Contents may settle during shipment.
Colours may fade with time.

Batteries not included.

If symptoms persist, consult your doctor.

No animals were harmed in the testing of this product.
(unless you count that lion).



I would like a Kelly Kettle because....

A long, long time ago, Weeds rana Kelly Kettle Competition, for which I had promised to publish some entries. Adopting the philosophy of "better late than never" I here present some of the wonderfully creative entries:

Drover81: "I would like a kelly kettle because, as much as I love surfing www.aulro.com and sampling the witty and informative posts, there is burning need for me to get out there and enjoy the great outdoors with my landrover... and what better to take with me than a kelly kettle!!!"

Blknight.aus: "I'd like a kelly kettle because on a quiet evening as the AULRO.com convoy's engines tick quietly in the cooling night not much beats a Jaffle with a coffee. Friendships are easy made cooking on the flue of a kelly and the memories are nicer when the gear is free".

CraigE I would like to win a Kelly Kettle, because a coffee made with the Kelly Kettle will settle the Dragon down nicely and allow me to peruse AULRO.com. After her mandatory coffee the dragon turns into a beautiful princess as my co driver.

Tank: "The Kelly Kettle first came to my attention on the Australian Land Rover Owners Forum at www.aulro.com I was fascinated by it's simplicity and the compact, rugged design. When I seen how it worked and the ease of operation I was sold. My gas cooker that I take camping is a pain to set-up if you just want a quick cuppa while on the road and if it's windy, forget it. Kelley Kettle has overcome the above problems of a gas setup and will become an essential part of my camping equipment. So if I don't win this amazing bit of kit, I will have to convince SWMBO, (who is also the Minister of Finances and War) to grant me leave to purchase a Kelly Kettle,"

Beforethevision: "I would love a Kelly Kettle from www.aulro.com simply because i drive a Freelander, and am expecting long cold nights camped out by the side of a mud bog in the middle of nowhere. Waiting for a Defender. With a tow rope... :P "

Mick-Kelly: "I've got to seriously enter this competition and i s'pose i should mention www.aulro.com as requested.. My reason for needing to win is because this venerable beverage creator is named after me".

Chosen: "Am selling my Land Rover and would like something in my life that will still survive the outback trips. My non www.aulro.com mates have the latest and greatest camping gear and lord it over me when I pull out my simple set up – none of them have a Kelly kettle".

But the winner was

Vnx205: "I would like a Kelly Kettle because as readers of the www.aulro.com forums know it is important to keep your spouse happy on long trips. My wife needs tea or coffee more often than the Defender needs diesel. With a Kelly Kettle I could save time and the environment".

Congratulations !!!!

Now before anyone points out how long ago this competition was, and wonders why this magazine doesn't appear more frequently.. Stop and think "Would I make a good AULROvian editor or contributor?" Of course you would ! Let me know via PM to VladTepes or e-mail me gayundah@optusnet.com.au



**"the memories
are nicer when
the gear is
free"**



**"I drive a
Freelander, and
am expecting
long cold nights
camped out by
the side of a
mud bog in the
middle of
nowhere"**

A Land Rover Lament — by “Sleepy”

(With apologies to Banjo Paterson)

'Twas Solihull in Eng-a-land that started the landy craze;
They based it on the good ol' jeep that served in darker days;
They dressed her up in ex war paint, a splash of cockpit green;
They connected ploughs and welders to their shiny new machine;
And as they drove it out the door, with air of lordly pride,
A grinning English farmer said, 'Can I take it for a drive?'

'See, here, young man,' said Solihull, 'from Worcester to the sea,
From Stoke-on-Trent to Exeter, there's none can drive like she.
She's good all round at everything, as soon you all will know,
Although with all that gear on board – She is a little slow

Her seats were trimmed in elephant hide.
She's made of ally mixed with steel,
There's even a little ring to pull for driving all four wheels,
He had a sit, held the wheel, but before he drove from sight.
A little man called Lucas yelled – “Please don't drive at night!”

From Solihull in Eng-a-land, he drove his eighty-inch
He drove across a swollen creek, then up a steepish pinch.
He drove her down slippery hill – ‘ been raining all the day
A smile had stretched across his face as wide as Plymouth Bay.
He found a track, with lots of trees, so steep he nearly laughed
Bounced his way on up the road then – CRACK – he broke a shaft.

So think about that farmer when you're feeling blue
Or when the door wont open 'cos you've blown your ECU
That rusty project vehicle that's sitting in the yard.
Or the pile of money spent that's making life so hard
Don't think of driving to a cliff and giving her a shove
Your Land Rovers will always be a labour of love!



**“good all
round at
everything”**



**“a smile ...
across his
face”**



Trip Report: Australia Day Fraser Island Cleanup 2009

This is a trip report of a *Land Rover Owners' Club of Brisbane* trip, however as many of our members are AULRO inhabitants, and the cause is good....

FRIDAY

The group met up at the BP Forest Glenn on Friday Morning. Present were "bigmac" (Trip Leader) and Mrs "bigmac"; "discotek" and son Angus; "kayem8" and Mr "kayem8"; Mr and Mrs "tineapedis" (with Paul also in their vehicle); "pohm66"; and myself and Mrs Vlad. After a bit of brekky we headed off to Rainbow Beach, via Gympie.

In Rainbow Beach we topped up on fuel at the Shell garage, where a bloke was selling ferry tickets. He maintained that they were valid on either of the ferries, and that the rest of our club had bought tickets from him. Ordinarily I simply purchase a ticket when I get on the barge but this time I fell for the "pitch". We drove on to Inskip Point where we aired down our tyres and headed onto the sand and across to the ferries. Those of you who have been there before will be aware that there is very keen competition between the two barges that do the Inskip Point to Hook Point (Fraser Island) run. There were men waving wildly encouraging drivers onto their respective barges. The kayem8's and ourselves ended up on the Fraser Venture (for whom, as it turned out, the tickets were valid) while the others ended up on the Manta Ray barge. Only after it was loaded did the Manta Ray people look at the tickets and the ones we were sold were not valid for the Manta Ray. However – since they were all loaded up it would have taken too long to disgorge them – so they took them across anyway. Lucky.



Arrival at Hook Point coincided with a low-ish tide so access around the point was easy, and allowed us a trip up the Eastern Beach – a much preferable alternative to the horrible Hook Point Road (the inland road) which must be taken at high tide.

So we drove up the beach, mindful of the various 50kph "shared" zones, crossing a number of creeks running across the beach into the sea, until we reached the "Govi" beach camping area, just north of Dili Village. (The clean-up or-

Continued....

Written by:

VladTepes

*"if you shake
my hand make
sure I'm not
wearing a pair
of yellow
riggers gloves"*

*"The girls had
some kind of
Australia Day
Fruit Tingle"*

Trip Report: Australia Day Fraser Island Cleanup 2009

ganisers had allocated our campsite for us, convenient to the area we had been allocated for the clean up. It was in behind a wide, high dune which shielded the camp from offshore breezes. Although the weather had, to this point, been fairly ordinary (read intermittently raining) it stopped raining at just the right time for us to set up camp. I hate setting up camp in the rain, so this was certainly welcome! The club banner was duly erected atop the dune, announcing our presence (and allegiance) to all who passed (and pretty much everyone had to pass!) We shared stories and nibbles at discotek's camp until dinner time and then had an early night.

SATURDAY

We had the day to ourselves, as the formal clean-up occurs on the Sunday. As we would see several lakes on the Sunday (we had been allocated to clean up around a few), bigmac led us on a trip north along the beach, so we could all enjoy the various spots along the way. This was the kayem8's first trip to Fraser so we hoped they'd have the chance to see what all the fuss is about! Heading north from our camp we went first at Eurong for a toilet & shopping stop. On the road into the township we crossed the much vaunted electric dingo-proof cattle grids. Nobody took up my suggestion that they test them. There is a side gate for pedestrians so that they are not electrified! Do the grids work? Time will tell. Mr kayem8 had not brought any beers (obviously not a proper Aussie yet!) and so was lingering around the convenience store come bottle-shop until 10am when the liquor licence started. Ultimately in his persistence he was triumphant! We then drove back onto the beach and north to the registration point for the clean up.

Being sponsored by Toyota (and good on them for doing so) the registration tent was covered with and surrounded by Toyota signs. We promptly surrounded all that with Land Rovers. Predictably about the first thing out of the mouth of the rep was "Oh the Landys.... How long did it take you to get here? 2 days?" kayem8 responded "Three actually and we had to be towed" or words to that effect. The situation thus defused (or was it inflamed?) we then received our gear. This was a supply of garbage bags, a stubby cooler and a hat emblazoned with, yep, "Toyota". All bar one of these hats never got worn. More on this later.



Our next stop was at Eli Creek. To our surprise Eli has once again changed direction – where last time we visited it (12 months ago) it had a decent size swimming hole on the beach and emptied to the South – the creek is now narrower, shallower at the mouth and empties to the north. kayem8 played up her English roots and donned her galoshes for a walk in the shallow part of the creek. She and I were initially the only ones out of the cars, for at this time it was bucketing down with rain, which was falling at about a 45 degree angle! Anyway we figured "wet is wet" so decided to do the traditional Eli Creek ritual – wade up and float back down with the (strong) current. Fortunately kayem8 abandoned her galoshes. The floating back down part wasn't as easy as last time as the creek was shallower than I had ever seen it. But the job was done. Others had also ventured out to be

Continued....

Trip Report: Australia Day Fraser Island Cleanup 2009

part of the fun – Mrs Vlad, discotek, Angus, Mr kayem8 and I think a few others (my memory is ordinary!). Once we'd had our fill of Eli (this time anyway) we were back in the vehicles and heading north again.

We drove past the wreck of the *Maheno* and the Pinnacles, deciding we'd stop at those places on the way back and went on to Indian Head, where we formed the wagons into a circle (well, OK, a line) and had lunch. It was very relaxing there watching the ocean, and sharing it with friends.



After lunch we drove past Indian Head (unlike other trips the sand was not difficult this time) and on to the next headland (wherein lie Champagne Pools. Again we would not let a little rain worry us. The Champagne pools are a series (well, three) natural rock pools, right beside the surf and into which waves break thus forming the “champagne” spa effect. The water here is very clear and there were a few fish swimming around, trapped until probably the next high tide. Possibly due to the weather there were not too many

backpackers, however there was one group drinking from glass stubbies in one of the pools. It seems that the anti-4WD'er reputation is generally undeserved except for some of these “backpackers”. The champagne pools are a great place to while away the time and again the cares of the world fall away while you bathe in them and chat with mates. It was with some difficulty that we eventually dragged ourselves away. Of note in the car park here – a brand new Range Rover Sport! Good to see them being used off-road!

We continued on to Orchid Beach Resort where diesel was in the \$1.70's (elected not to purchase!) and through to the beach again. We drove north a little while and stopped for a break, deciding it was time to turn back again. And the way back, and just before the road back up toward Orchid Beach,



Continued...

Trip Report: Australia Day Fraser Island Cleanup 2009

we came across a group of various 4wd's including a Classic Range Rover which had suffered a coolant bottle failure which evidently blew the bonnet clean open due to the force!

So we now drove south along pretty much the same route by which we had come up. Stopping first for a quick look at the Pinnacles – a formation of coloured sands – we were disappointed to find that much of the area is fenced off, limiting exploration. Returning to the cars,



we drove further south, to the wreck of the S.S. *Maheno*. This passenger liner was driven ashore during a cyclone, while under tow in 1935. It was used as a bombing target during WW II, and the ravages of time have since done what man hadn't finished. Just the skeleton of this grand old vessel remains. Driving here can be a nightmare as backpackers cross in front of you either totally oblivious to the presence of a vehicle or, more likely, arrogantly assuming that you'll stop for them. Of course, you do stop, but one day the result might not go their way if they are not more careful! We had a good look around the wreck and took plenty of photos before returning to the Landys and progressing on past Eli Creek to Happy Valley where, at the insistence of several of the party, we stopped for a "refreshment". The girls had some kind of Australia Day Fruit Tingle cocktail (horribly expensive even at half price), the lads had beer, I had a coffee and rum'n'rasin ice cream... because I could!



We then drove back to our camp site where we set up the chairs atop the dune – to catch the lovely breeze, chow down on more nibblies, swap yarns, and watch the beachside goings-on. pohm66 flew his kite, tineapedis, Paul and Angus did some fishing and a good time was had by all. The weather for the day had been "mostly rainy" but with a "mostly fine" afternoon.

SUNDAY

After breakfast, and significant levels of moaning regarding the stifling heat and lack of breeze

Continued...

Trip Report: Australia Day Fraser Island Cleanup 2009

(from all of us I might add) we drove south to access the inland tracks. These tracks took us to our designated clean up areas – the shores of several lakes. The first of which was Lake Boomanjin. This is a brown lake (from tannins in the water) but is a nice place for a swim and generally much less crowded than the more popular blue lakes. The group split up, each doing a different area – some (like myself and Mrs Vlad) did the car park area while others went and covered the lake shore. Common rubbish was Chuppa Chup sticks, aluminium ring pulls from soft drink cans, and the tear-off foil tops from drink bottles. I picked up what I thought was a paper towel but it turned out to be some wet material of some sort, full of, well let's just say it was less than pleasant and that if you shake my hand make sure I'm not wearing a pair of yellow riggers gloves at the time!

Our next stop... Lake Benaroon. Or it would have been had we found it! (bigmac and I may or may not have done so later). We continued on to Lake Birrabeen, which is a beautiful blue lake, rivalling the more famous Lake Mackenzie with its blue waters and white sand. Again we split up to do various areas around the shore and given the sun was out and the sand was very reflective, those of us without sunglasses (that would be me) really suffered and I was doing a lot of walking around with my eyes as slits and then shut entirely with just an occasional check to see what direction I was headed. bigmac tells me he did much the same before we were forced to go back to the car to recover his sunnies. All in all from our allocated areas we got I think 5 or 6 bags of rubbish (and various Toyota and Ford vehicle parts) and with everyone chipping in, it wasn't too great an effort and well worthwhile. The time of day had then come for us to have a swim to cool off (a well deserved one I might add) and the cooling waters of Lake Birrabeen hit the spot nicely. While some of us loitered there a while, some others went for a drive on some of the other inland tracks, agreeing to meet us back at camp later. We (bigmac, kayem8, myself and our partners) drove to Central Station (the headquarters of the old timber getting industry which sustained Fraser Island's economy for many years) for a quick look around and also to show the kayem8's the stunningly clear, peaceful and picturesque Wanggoolba Creek, flowing nearby.



We then returned to camp and changed for the night's festivities. We knew that there would be a great many vehicles up at the Clean-Up Function so we car pooled, which also allowed the rest of us to have a tippie. A big thanks to the designated drivers – pohm66, Mr kayem8 and bigmac (or was it Mrs bigmac?).

We carried out eskies into the site of the function, narrowly avoiding being run down by a wayward troopie of backpackers. Having claimed an area of grass in the

Continued....

Trip Report: Australia Day Fraser Island Cleanup 2009

name of Solihull, we sat down to a drink and some nibbles (hmm, this is becoming a habit!). One of the first things noticed by the Toyota rep doing the rounds was kayem8's sewing efforts with her hat. That morning she had been struck by inspiration which allied with her natural talent and some string, saw her change the embroidery on her hat from Toyota to "Ta Ta" (a reference to the new owners). The logo was replaced with the traditional Land Rover oval logo as well. On the back where it had previously just had "Oh what a feeling" – it now read "Go Beyond 'Oh what a Feeling' – Buy a Land Rover" Genius.

The organisers (this year the host club was River City Four Wheel Drive Club) asked that we help out with the cooking so bigmac and I headed over and flipped burgers for a half hour or so, before being relieved by others in the group. We then joined the back of the line (and a long one it was at that!) for the food. No cooks

privilege here! The food was good too – some bread, potato salad, coleslaw, a hamburger patty, two sausages and sauce. Plenty of food to feed a growing fella like me (outwards not upwards). As the night went on there were occa-

sional brief showers which scared some people away, but served to cool the atmosphere a bit (it was hot, again) and the showers never lasted for long. There was a concert with the support act being a country duo "Toucan Twango" and the headliner being Tanya Kernigan. Great fun and the kids down the front certainly loved it. At one stage Angus and kayem8 were dancing up a storm as well. kayem8 managed to get Tanya Kernigan to sign her unique hat as well as a Toyota mud flap we'd found along the way!). The MC of the event took these into his safekeeping and eventually made a bit of a deal about them – having a bit of a laugh at their (Toyotas) own expense as well. Very good natured.



Continued....

Trip Report: Australia Day Fraser Island Cleanup 2009

We stretched the friendship immediately after however when a prize draw was conducted and I won an Eva-kool esky and I was there next to the stage so jumped up to claim it! As the night wound down we headed back to another stifling night at camp, having thoroughly enjoyed the function and vowing to return.

MONDAY

Australia Day. The Aussie flags had been flying on vehicles all weekend (my Defender no exception) because today is our National Day – and what a way to spend it. After packing up we headed off but due to tidal conditions were forced to use the inland Hook Point road. It's horrible. Just how horrible can't be truly appreciated until you try it yourself, but bigmac seemed to be a lot more comfortable in his D3 than we were bouncing around in my rattly Defender. At least he let me get in front of him so I didn't have to taste his dust! We got straight onto a barge at Hook Point and were across at Inskip in no time. pohm66 had to wait a while longer but we were all at Inskip before long. Rather than return by the boring old highway, and since the tide was in our favour, bigmac took us down Rainbow Beach, Tee-wah Beach, Cooloolah beach and back onto bitumen at Noosa North Shore.



It was a very pleasant way to spend an afternoon and really had us relaxed into the Australia Day Mood.



Highlights / Lowlights (all depending on your point of view)

- The Toyota Rep bogging has new 200 series Land Cruiser on the way into the function.
- Me winning an Esky.
- kayem8's hat.
- The satisfaction of making a difference.

When we dropped off our rubbish there were 2 x 40 foot container bins full of general refuse, 1 of recycling and another huge pile of timber collected from the beach (which had obviously come from boats offshore). A great effort by ALL involved.

Continued....

Trip Report: Australia Day Fraser Island Cleanup 2009

- discotek earning himself a “golden gumboot” nomination for backing his Disco into kayem8’s new Defender. discotek seems to be making a habit of this – you backed over an MG at MR Automotive too, didn’t you champ?
- The weather. Definitely more a lowlight. While it provided some entertainment it wasn’t ideal for showing Fraser in its true beauty. Worse than the rain was the stifling heat and lack of breeze as we were (too well) sheltered behind the dune at our designated camping area.

Would I do it all again? You bet!. Come along next year – you won’t regret it!

- VladTepes



Continued....

Trip Report: Australia Day Fraser Island Cleanup 2009



24.01.2009 15:31

Continued....

Trip Report: Australia Day Fraser Island Cleanup 2009



Ellard's ex-Army Series IIA Fire Tender

Well a little about myself, my name is Wayne Ellard I reside in the Flinders Rangers of South Australia. I work as an Emergency Services Officer in the Mining Industry.

We also run a small farm – where my wife and kids have a more expensive hobby than Land Rovers being “Horses”

Farm web site: <http://www.freewebs.com/jessingtonfarm/>

Cooma 2008

I made the bold statement at a BBQ one evening after consuming a few too many “why don't we drive the old series vehicles to Cooma for the 60th Celebrations”. Well driving 50 year old vehicle 3000km - this was a huge event in itself.

There were many stories on the way over – changing a water pump at Echuca caravan park, driving the remaining 100km into Cooma on the front tail shaft etc – but that's just Land Rovers.....

The main highlights for me at Cooma were:

as many of us finally put names to faces

Consumed a few ales with fellow members of AULRO site & enthusiasts.

The amount of Land Rover Fire Engines/Trucks on display

I was impressed with the quality of vehicles on display at Cooma

To top it all off – to win “**Best Military on Display**”



Ex Army Series IIA Fire Tender

I purchased the vehicle in 2000 where after its was decommissioned from the Military it was used in a small outback community of Kingoonya for Fire Protection – it was in a very poor state with major chassis and Bulkhead rust and pump damage from using salty bore water.

The Land Rover was stripped back to the chassis and many hours was spend making sure all the mechanical parts are up to scratch. Like all restorations they take time, money and a lot of patients. As many of us can vouch with these sorts of restorations there are many people we need to thanks along the way.

The main problem with the rebuilt was the extent of corrosive damage to the Coventry Climax Pump – with so few made parts were just not available. It took several months to eventually

Ellard's fire tender (continued)

get the pump apart as it was seized solid – and then to adapt parts for the rebuild.

There wasn't a lot of these built but from current records we only know of 5 remaining – and most of them are within museums or private collectors.

The reason for this is because they achieved very low km when in service – and records show many of these were rejuvenated and converted back into General Service Military vehicles.

More information available on the REMLR web site: <http://www.remlr.com>

It has been 6 years since this vehicle has been restored – and its over due for a big birthday.



Extract from the Australian Army Manual:

"The TRUCK, FIRE FIGHTING, $\frac{3}{4}$ Ton, GS, Fire Engine is basically a standard TRUCK, UTILITY, $\frac{3}{4}$ Ton, GS, Land-Rover, Series 2A, 109 WB, modified, and equipped with a high capacity water pump, water tank, boom spray and miscellaneous fire fighting equipment permitting the employment of pumped water and hand extinguishers to combat fires. The vehicle is capable of highway and cross-country operation. It has a range of approximately 250 miles on first class roads at a GVW of 5859lb. fully equipped; it is capable of towing a trailer of 6732lb GVW (2244lb cross-country)."

Ellard's fire tender (continued)



Make	Land-Rover (Rover Aus-	Model	LWB 109" Series 2A
Production	February 1964	Production	CKD RHD export
Army Census	6381	Engine	Petrol 2286cc
Nomenclature	TRUCK, FIRE FIGHTING, ¾ TON GS LAND-ROVER SERIES 2A	Contract	number C112317
Chassis	25301098A	ARN	112-176

Primarily, the truck, Fire Fighting, ¾ ton, GS Fire Engine is designed for complete mobility of operation to counter outbreaks of all types of fires. It is capable of moving to a fire at up to 50mph on first class roads, and up to 15mph in four wheel drive in an off pavement role. It is manned by a crew of three fire fighters.

Ellard's fire tender (continued)

The Pump which the vehicle is equipped is a Self Priming, 2 ½ inch, single stage, centrifugal, "Coventry Climax" model FWBPS (AS) with a rated capacity in excess of 500 gallons per minute. It is mounted in the vehicle chassis on a special designed bracket. All controls and instruments are grouped on a pump control panel which is located on the left side front of the Fire Tender Body.

The pump will operate from the 50 gallon water tank, a hydrant, or an open water source such as a reservoir.

The self priming of the pump is afforded by a trinity water ring primer which is mounted on the pump. The primer is friction-drive by the pump through a pulley mounted on the pump shaft and driven by fibre disc mounted on the primer shaft.

- ellard

Wayne's earlier, but no less impressive, Series I fire vehicle:



The Victorian Bushfires.

“Black Saturday” 2009 to date.

Where to start? As we all know, Black Saturday (as it has become known) the 7th of February 2009 signified a day of intense bushfire activity in Victoria. In that and subsequent days there was a huge and tragic loss of life, property, and animals. There are still several fires yet to be brought fully under control as I write this article, and the threat is by no means over.

There is some good background information on the disaster on Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2009_Victorian_bushfires well worth a read.

A review of the Vic Bushfires thread on AULRO seems to indicate that, as far as we know, none of our members have lost their lives or loved ones. I hope and pray for that to be true. What is evident is the groundswell of support from not only AULRO members but the Australian public at large with massive cash and goods donations being made—especially in a time of economic doom and gloom. The way Australians, despite our difference, come together as one in such times makes me so proud of my country.

Sadly at least one fire-fighter—David Balfour—has already lost his life in fighting these conflagrations. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/02/24/2500103.htm>

I'd like to pay tribute to all the fire-fighters on this forum (where volunteer or otherwise) including Bushie, Treads and roversmith. These are the ones I know of but there are no doubt many others. Well done one and all, and thank you.

I know (from posts they have made) that numerous members here have friends and family affected by these fires. They are many and posts indicate that property loss is the main issue. I have read no reports of loss of life among our members or their families, however it remains a possibility so my (and I'm sure I speak for all of us—our) thoughts and prayers are with them at this time.



The Vic Bushfires thread can be read in it's entirety here: <http://www.aulro.com/afvb/general-chat/72829-vic-bushfires.html>

however there are a number of posts which I think worthy of reproduction here, as they sum up many comments made by numerous members on the issues.

Quote from Willem: ***"I find myself at a loss for words. 108 confirmed deaths so far. 750 homes destroyed.***

I stand in awe at what the CFA guys do, but even they were powerless many times. Marysville is gone, only three houses remain. Kinglake is gone, nothing remains standing. And the loss of human life, and the human suffering. The guy with burns to 50% of his body who has lost his wife and child. And it just goes on and on. My prayers are with those who are left behind, who are grieving.

How long before those in authority learn that cool control burns to lower the fuel level in the bush saves lives? And that leaving four wheel drive tracks open gives better access?"

Quote from Treads: ***"The fire authorities already know it, but the greens and some other land management departments block their attempts....."***

The Victorian Bushfires

Quote from UncleHo: *"I would hope that after this disaster the honourable Mr Brumby, Mr Rees and the Prime Minister tell the city dwelling "Green Movement" to pull their collective heads in, and let the ...4wd tracks be re-opened, it might not be much help in disasters of this scale but it may help in lesser fires and give greater access. It's alright to have these "National Parks" but if the Govt Depts responsible don't have the resources to maintain them CORRECTLY then leave them open to the public "*

Quote from 87County: *"I do wonder how and when we will learn to live more in tune with an environment that has repeatedly demonstrated a propensity for severe bushfires every 30 + or - (or so) years....and I wonder if emphasis will ever be placed on achieving engineering and design solutions to fireproof property (or to at least mitigate the effects of such a firestorm).... I really hope so."*



Above: A beautiful and yet ominous sight.

Quote from Numpty: *"We have learned from disasters in the past, probably the most striking example would be Darwin after Tracy. The whole place was virtually rebuilt in a much more cyclone safe way. Hopefully different building practices will be followed with the rebuilding of these devastated areas.*

No matter what.....it is a tragedy of mammoth proportions/"

The Victorian Bushfires

Quote from Fraser130: *“I've just got back from Kinglake, drove in with a relief convoy and a load of water/food/clothes/bedding. I'm not sure I can describe the scene on the way in from Whittlesea, some of it is like a moonscape, but with tree skeletons, some of it is completely untouched. It looks like a lot of people either were taken by surprise on the road, or left it too late to leave, or just plain had no warning and left when the fire hit. there were a lot of cars on the road, some had run into fallen trees (not small trees, one was over 1m in diameter!) others had run into other cars, some had run off the road. It was truly horrific.”*



Above: A NASA photograph of the fire activity and smoke plume.

Quote from Disco300Tdi (on Whittlesea): *“There was a line up of cars approx 400m long all loaded with toys, clothes, food etc waiting to unload. Food companys vehicles were everywhere, their staff walking around handing out rolls, sandwiches, drinks, fruit, even Krispy-Kreme donuts. Outside the centre television crews filming and interviewing people, even a NZ team were there Radio stations doing live broadcasts, ABC & 3AW*

Centrelink were setup doing the paperwork for people, Telstra handing out mobile phones and chargers to people who had flat phone batteries. Doctors writing scripts to people who had left without medication.

I took my mum down to the main street to grab a coffee and get her out of the relief centre as it was such a sad place to be at and practically every business was giving away goods or services at cost or free,,free haircuts, free bread and milk etc ...

Today I was so happy to firstly see that mum was ok and secondly to feel so proud to be an Australian in times like this ”



The now famous photo of CFA fire-fighter David Tree coming to the aid of a koala. While seemingly trivial, this image went all around the world's media focusing much needed attention on the plight of Victorians affected by the fires. (left)

The Victorian Bushfires

Quote from JDNSW: *“...it is possible that the scale of this disaster will sway some (enough) of the urban greenies or the politicians that court them.*”

I would add that the effects of the urban greenies and those who court them are not only seen in the care of forests, but in the state and local council rules that prevent homeowners from making their homes safer by removing dangerous trees. Look for attempts at legal action by people who have lost their homes after being refused permits to remove trees. There are certain to be some in this situation, but far more who did not even look for a permit because they knew it was a waste of time and money to try.”

Quote from JDNSW: *“ in the council area most affected by the fires, and in fact in most if not all of Victoria, if not the rest of the country, you will be heavily fined if you cut down as much as one native tree and do not replace it.*

The bureaucracy you have to go through in most places to get permission to clear this zone would put most people off, and in almost all cases permission would be refused anyway. This divides the people affected into two groups - those that just give up and take the risk, and those that just give up and clear the zone anyway - and hope the neighbours don't dob them in.”

Quote from EchiDna: *“Actually John, it is worse than that - it applies to all trees, native and exotic... “*

Quote from George130: *“Yep the tree thing is out of control. 5 years and still waiting for permission to remove dead trees at our place. Those who have seen our yard will agree it is a fire waiting to happen. 1/4 an acre 3-5 foot deep with pine needles when we mooved in. Most of that has gone but still that 1/4 acre is covered with pine trees only a couple of metres apart and so big I have no idea how they will be removed when the time comes.*

We have cleared shrubs from a lot of the rest of the block but still.

We have at least 3 times as many trees and any other block around us and nearly all the nature strip ones are dead.”



Marysville devastation



Unknown tale behind this burned Landy.

The Victorian Bushfires

Quote from dickyjoe: *“Just a quick note to say thankyou for everyone for there support and good will over the past two weeks. My family was directly impacted by the fires started in the Beechworth area. Mum and Dad own a property in Glen Creek which is near Mudgegonga and Dederang. They are lucky and were affected in a minor way. They have lost about 2km of fencing and about 10acres of there property. The house and sheds still stand.....*

some pics from the week of chasing fires in the farm truck:”



Above Left:
Back-burning Mt. Jack.



Above Right:
Fire in Novak Hills

Below Left:
Barwidgee Creek



Below Right:
Property fenceline



Wondering how YOU can help the victims of this terrible tragedy?
Please read this thread from RMP.

<http://www.aulro.com/afvb/general-chat/72991-4wd-victoria-bushfire-rural-response-group-how-you-can-help.html>

The Victorian Bushfires

There is a Royal Commission pending which will have a tough job in processing the vast amount of information and issue to be dealt with. The fight or flee debate will continue, as will the question of who shares the blame. We can only hope that, unlike many previous “committees” their findings are actually acted upon. If you wish to familiarise yourself with some of the issues, there are many reports, articles and opinion pieces worth reading. Perhaps start with these:

Victoria Bushfires stoked by Green Vote

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,25031389-7583,00.html>

Council ignored warning over trees before Victoria bushfires

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,25038717-5018722,00.html>

People died doing exactly what they were told to do

<http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/people-died-doing-exactly-what-they-were-told-to-do-20090210-83nz.html?page=2>

Green ideas must take blame for deaths

<http://www.smh.com.au/environment/green-ideas-must-take-blame-for-deaths-20090211-84mk.html?page=-1>

Fined for illegal clearing, family now feel vindicated

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/fined-for-illegal-clearing-family-now-feel-vindicated-20090212-85bd.html?page=-1>

Burnoffs following Victoria bushfires a 'threat to biodiversity'

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,25042644-5018722,00.html>

Six years on in Victoria, little action on warning for bushfires

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,25042636-5018722,00.html>

Bushfires, Prescribed Burning and Global Warming

<http://www.tca.org.au/reportsubmissions/docs/Bushfires%20Prescribed%20Burning%20and%20Global%20warming.pdf>

Will we ever learn? (following the 2003 SCT fires)

<http://www.ipa.org.au/library/IPAbackgrounder16-2.pdf>

AULRO member Willem has posted a piece on his website:

<http://www.thisisaustralia.com.au/> which is worth a read.

Right: The burnt out and unrecognizable township of Kinglake.



The Queensland Floods

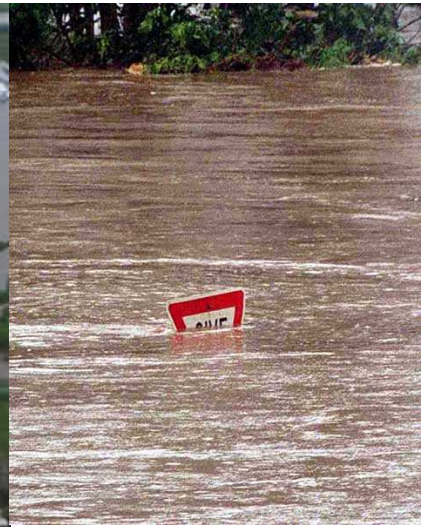
While the bushfires raged in Victoria, Far North Queensland continues to be affected by massive flooding. Aside from a few people stranded on roads and unable to get anywhere I haven't heard of anyone on AULRO directly affected. Again, I may be wrong.

Fortunately very few people have lost their lives and while geographically (and probably economically) it's on a greater scale than the Victorian fires, the general consensus among Queenslanders up in the north who I have spoken to is "We'll be right mate—look after those poor buggers down there". Having said that, there will be need for financial assistance for many people and I would urge you not to forget them. As with the fires, donations can be made via the Salvation Army as well as through several other appeals.

Here are some images from the recent events which may give you some idea of the scale of the flooding.



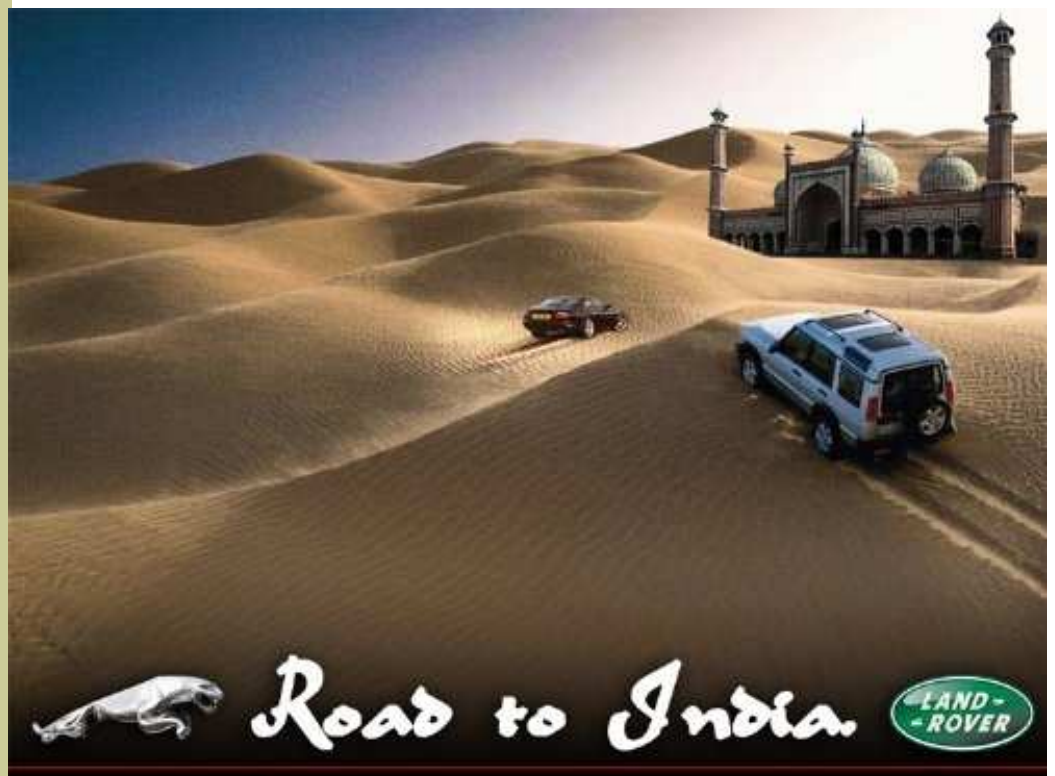
The Queensland Floods



Probably going further than they'd ever believe.....



GO BEYOND



Vol. XIX
The End