

LAND ROVER OWNERS' CLUB

OF GIPPSLAND

MARCH 2021 NEWSLETTER



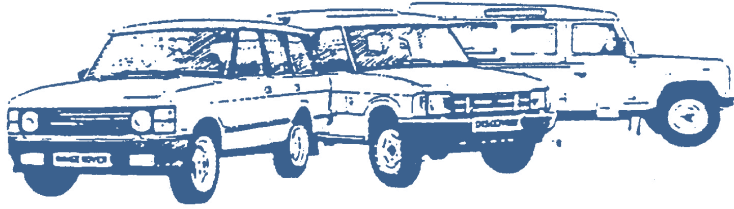
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LAND ROVER OWNERS' CLUB OF GIPPSLAND

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Presidents Report

It's been an interesting month with Covid waning but refusing to let us go. Many of us have taken the opportunity to travel again which has been enjoyable and I know many members have plans to get away for an extended time, so I hope you're able to do so. The outbreak in Queensland shows how easy it is to be back in lockdown and have your plans thrown into disarray.

The club navigation trip was held in March with 6 cars and based on the feedback lots of fun, so there is a chance there will be another in 2022. Well done to Shaun and Siobhan. No one got lost but a few went the wrong way but still managed to get to the end in good time.

On the sad side we lost a long time member in Don Little. He will be missed and we extend our condolences to Shirley, Sue and Ken. Further in the news letter there is a brief history of Don's membership.

As winter approaches tracks will be closed and the snow will fall so take the opportunity to get out there and enjoy the bush and your Land Rover.

A small group of members assisted PV to erect a table and chair setting at McMichaels Hut. It was a new design which presented some interesting challenges but as always we achieved perfection, well close to perfection. The over night camp also was not without its issues as the rain came down early and caused the campfire circle to break early. But rain on canvas was a pleasant way to fall asleep. If you're looking for a day trip with a low level of difficulty McMichael's would make a great family day out.

Our next meeting will be on the second Monday in April to allow for the Easter break. I hope to see you all and don't forget the pre meeting meal at the Morwell Australian Italian Club at 6pm.

Regards

Alan Harlow



This month's cover; Shaun Johnson's "All new" Defender

Land Rover Owners Club of Gippsland 2020-- 2021 Committee

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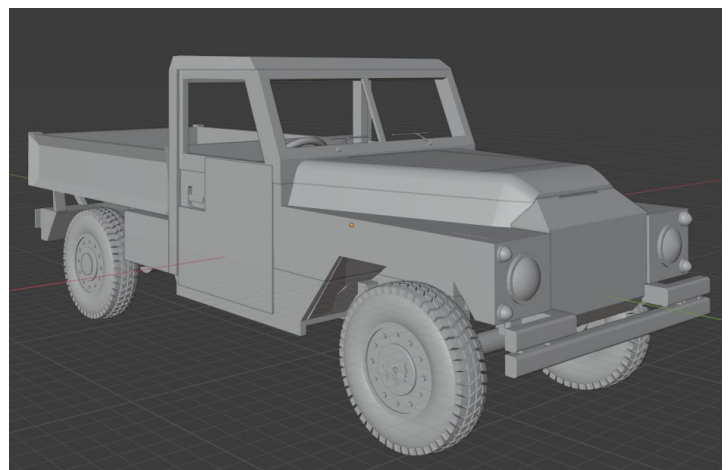
Life Member's Ray Massaro, Greg & Lois Rose.

Change of date for April General Meeting

Due to Easter, our LROCG General Meeting for April will be held a week later. We will now meet on Monday April the 12th, at Gippsland Land Rover in Traralgon at 8.00pm.

Guest Speaker at our April LROCG General Meeting

We will be having a guest speaker at our April meeting. Luke Townsend will be visiting us. Luke oversees 15 very remote National Parks in Africa, as well as overseeing anti-poaching. All of this, you would think, would take up a lot of his time, but no. Luke has come up with a design/idea for a basic 4 wheel drive vehicle. Project GIPPSLANDER is a 4X4 utility Vehicle that is designed for use by Rangers in very remote African Parks. As such it will be affordable, very simple to repair and robust. And Luke is planning to build it right here in the Valley.



Project Gippslander

Don Little 4WD Farewell

The friendship with Land Rovers began with a "Fire-engine red" Discovery. Flowers and a bottle of wine complemented the sale. The car was good, but the friendships developed from that purchase were lifelong.

The association with the Land Rover Owners Club of Gippsland allowed Don to understand what the Land Rover was capable of. Over the next twenty years, Shirl and Don joined the team to exciting places. Discovering our own backyard – Gippsland, and the wonders that were on offer.

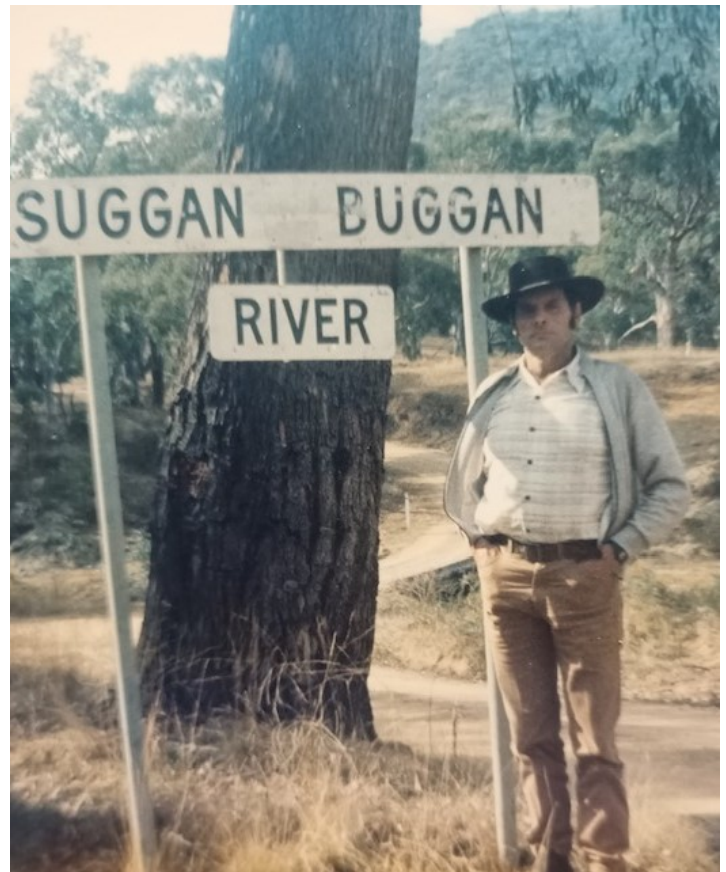
Ron Cook led the first trip into the Gippsland wilderness. Greg Rose led them down the path, literally, down Billy Goat Bluff Track. Taking in the breathtaking views across the valleys from lookouts, trig points and ridges. A memorable trip was run by Stephen Dempsey in January 2000. The usual clearing of No.21 track with handsaw to clear fallen trees to Mitchell's flat. We developed a respect for the road drain "whoops", that would catch the sliding car in slippery conditions when clay roads turned to slides. The party explored The Howqua Hills track, Tunnel Bend and the old-world charms of Fry's Hut, Upper Jamison Hut and the Howqua Valley splendours. The exciting days coming to an end listening to yarns around the campfires at night.

In March that year was Don's first Blue Rag Range trip into the roof of Victoria. The wildflowers were prolific that year. A carpet of colour across the alps. Don and Shirl enjoyed three Blue Rag Range trips with the last one being a Gastronomist delight. Don tried food combinations he'd never eaten before. The trio of good food, good company and great locations always prevail with this 4WD club.

A memorable early trip to the Omeo region at the Blue Duck Inn still brings a smile to Shirl's face as they shared a room with Dot and Ron Prince. Ron suggested to Don and Shirl that they take the double bed and Dot and Ron take the bunk beds as he was "Younger than Don". Ron jumped on the top bunk. This relationship blossomed into a deep and lasting friendship between the couples that Shirl and Don cherished.

The membership to the LROC-Gippsland allowed friends to meet in different corners of Australia. Don and Shirl joined Alan McCrae, Ian Blake and his son Stephen to Blinman South Australia for the Land Rover Jamboree one year. Poor Stephen had to put up with "4 snorers" according to Shirl. The Cooma Land Rover celebrations eluded them with the Discovery breaking down one year near Cann River. There were many other memorable trips. The Deddick trail, Little River camps which we nicknamed: "Fly Central" due to the mass of flies that joined us for roast Pork one evening. The Christmas and Melbourne Cup weekends scattered across Victoria, and beyond. Travels to Colac Colac, Malacoota, Walkerville, Little Annie, where the largest hamburgers were devoured. A weekend at Buchan Caves that turned out to be one continuous coffee, cake and talk days. Many cuppa's and yarns were spent around fires, pub tables and along the water's edge. All trips were fondly remembered, there was never a trip that Don said he didn't enjoy. Don will be missed from the fireside, the level-headed talker at meetings and his quiet strength he presented to those around him.

Farewell, Don



Jaguar Land Rover kills COVID with climate control

Jaguar Land Rover has been working on an in-car air purification system it claims inhibits up to 97 per cent of viruses and bacteria, including novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2). Still in its prototype phase, the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system utilises Panasonic's nanoe X technology.

According to Jaguar, the new nanoe X technology "uses a high voltage to create trillions of Hydroxyl (OH) Radicals enveloped in nano-sized water molecules. These OH Radicals denature the virus and bacteria proteins, helping inhibit their growth. "The OH Radicals deodorise and inhibit allergens in a similar way to create a cleaner air environment for customers."

"This technology is a great example of being able to harness the power of nature and puts Jaguar Land Rover right at the forefront of this cabin technology," Alexander Owen, research engineer at Jaguar Land Rover, said.

"Hydroxyl Radicals are one of the most important natural oxidants in chemistry and have been helping to clean our atmosphere for millennia, removing pollutants and other harmful substances. "The creation of this technology and our advanced research, is the first step in deploying this scientific phenomenon within vehicle cabins of the future."

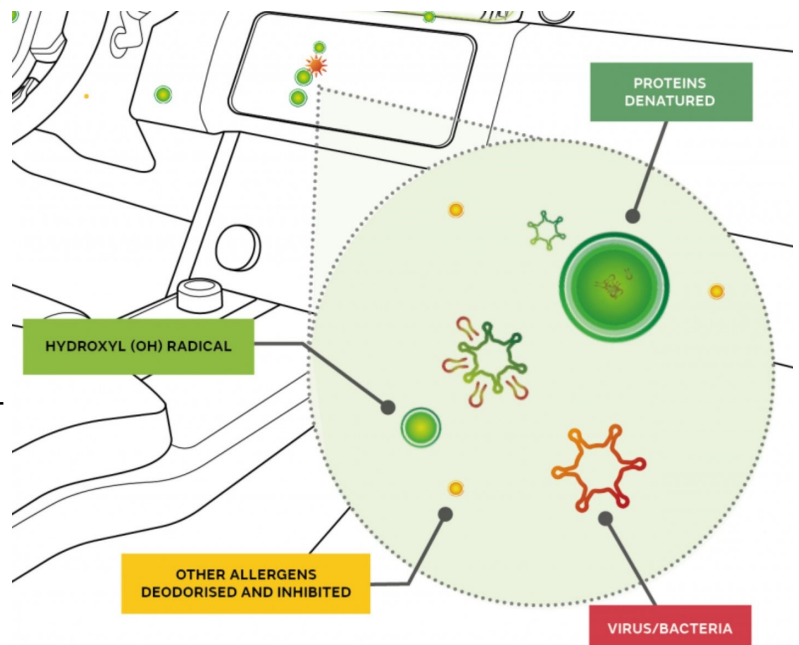
JLR hopes the new cabin air purification system will one day be implemented in all of its vehicles, and currently, models such as Jaguar's I-Pace and Land Rover's Evoque and Discovery already offer nanoe technology and PM2.5 filtration.

Cars will also be fitted with a pioneering pre-conditioning feature that will allow owners to pre-sterilise the vehicle before getting in.

The British automaker has partnered with Perfectus Biomed Ltd, a microbiology and virology laboratory, to assess the ingenious tech by conducting novel laboratory-based, sealed-chamber testing, which has been designed to simulate a vehicle's ventilation system recirculating over a 30-minute cycle.

"Our customers' well being is of paramount importance to us – and now, more than ever, we are all looking for technological solutions that can help take care of our loved ones," Dr Steve Iley, Jaguar Land Rover's chief medical officer, said.

"The independent research, developed and commissioned by our expert engineers, is just one of the ways we are working to assure our customers that harmful pathogens are being minimised, providing a cleaner environment for passengers inside the cabin and setting new standards in the ownership experience."



Why your SUV could be worthless if it comes from Europe with Land Rover, Jaguar sales plunging

Sales of European four-wheel drives big and small have plunged even though Australians have embraced off-road vehicles like never before. The Toyota LandCruiser, RAV4 and Mazda CX-5 have dominated the sales charts during the pandemic as overseas holiday travel was banned and Australians looked to explore their nation instead.

Demand is so strong that secondhand models from Japan are often fetching higher prices than brand new ones.

In 2020, for the first time ever, SUVs with higher ground clearance comprised the majority of cars sold in Australia and continue to do so.

Sales of European four-wheel drives big and small have plunged even as Australians have embraced SUVs with the ability to go off road. Land Rover Discovery sales plummeted by 85 per cent with just 17 leaving showrooms in February compared with 112 in February 2020 - before a pandemic was declared,

European SUV sales plunge;

Land Rover Discovery: down 85 per cent to 17 sales

Jaguar F-Pace: down 81 per cent to 8

Land Rover Discovery Sport: down 71 per cent to 38

Volkswagen Tiguan: down 75 per cent to 118

Volkswagen Alltrack: down 100 per cent to zero

Source: Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries sales data comparing February 2021 with February 2020

However, despite that move, sales of some European-designed SUVs have defied the market trend and actually fallen.

British four-wheel drives in particular were unpopular, despite having strong heritage value and name recognition.

Land Rover Discovery sales plummeted by 85 per cent - with just 17 leaving showrooms in February - compared with 112 in February 2020 before the pandemic was declared.

The four-wheel went from having one third of the prestige large SUV market to just winning less than 6 per cent of buyers.

While the new Land Rover Defender had cannibalised sales of the Discovery, EV Central editor Toby Hagon said reliability issues were a factor in Land Rover struggling to have traction in Australia.

'They're incredible off-road machines but where they lack is in a reputation for reliability and longevity,' he told Daily Mail Australia. The number of smaller Land Rover Discovery Sport four-wheel drives dropped by 71 per cent in just one year, with sales falling to 38 from 133. Range Rover Velar sales have halved, falling by 55 per cent to 25 from 55, when monthly sales

in 2021 were compared with last year. Jaguar F-Pace sales plummeted to just eight, from 41 a year earlier - a fall of 81 per cent, as prestige buyers overwhelmingly preferred SUVs from BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Audi and Volvo.

'Just in terms of branding, they're up against some powerhouses,' Mr Hagon said.

Another British SUV slid too with MINI Countryman sales falling 34 per cent from 102 to 67. German car giant Volkswagen faltered too with of the Tiguan falling by 75 per cent to 118, from 481 a year earlier as it struggled to supply enough of the volume-selling 110TSI model. Golf Alltrack sales have plunged by 100 per cent, from 51 to nothing. The French also went backwards with Peugeot 3008 sales plunging by 72 per cent from 60 to 17. Sales of the Renault Koleos, based on the Nissan X-Trail, halved by 58 per cent falling from 88 to just 37. European four-wheel drives, with a few exceptions, have lost significant ground even as SUV sales surged on the new and used car markets.

The top-selling SUVs

Toyota RAV4: down 18.5 per cent to 2,750 sales

Toyota Land Cruiser: up 37.1 per cent to 2,521

Mazda CX-5: up 4 per cent to 2,048

Mitsubishi ASX: up 10.2 per cent 1,489

The only British brands to see a sales surge with every SUV model was MG, a former UK sports car brand that is now a Chinese-owned budget brand. MG ZS sales more than tripled from 359 to 1,302, with the small SUV priced from \$21,990 drive-away. MG HS, a slightly larger SUV, saw its sales double from 184 to 402.

Mr Hagon said the Covid downturn had encouraged more value-conscious buyers - a phenomenon that also occurred during the Global Financial Crisis a decade ago. Datium Insights, an arm of US credit ratings agency Moody's, noted global car production in 2020 was 23 per cent down on 2019 levels.

Covid restrictions have been more brutal in Europe than Asia with car production levels in the UK falling by 34 per cent compared with 33 per cent in Germany.

Car export volumes in both the UK and Germany had fallen by 26 per cent over the year. Global supply shortages for new cars has seen secondhand prices surge for Japanese-designed four-wheel drives and utes, but not European cars.

Unless a car is particularly rare, weak demand on the new market can be a pointer to faster depreciation.

Electric conversions: ECD unveils world's first Tesla-powered Range Rover

ECD Automotive Design, a leader in custom and restored Land Rovers and Defenders, has unveiled the first Electric Range Rover Classic, a conversion powered by a Tesla electric motor.

The Electric Range Rover Classic is the result of collaboration between ECD and Electric Classic Cars (ECC), the UK's leader in electric conversions of classic vehicles, which secured the Tesla motor for the customisation.

What followed is a 2,200-hour luxury design process with the client which included countless customisation options, the creation of a 3D rendering, and then completely stripping down, transforming, and modernising the client's Range Rover Classic.

The resulting conversion included electronic upgrades to the audio and in-dash navigation systems, cosmetic changes, and even a polished finish and installation of a drinks cabinet. Of slightly more importance, however, is the Tesla motor and 100kWh battery pack installed in the Range Rover, which has a range of approximately 350-kilometres and acceleration from 0-100 in 5.2 seconds. "Being leaders in the luxury custom car industry, it was important to us to expand our offerings into the electric market," said Tom Humble, founder of E.C.D. Automotive. "Now that we have finished the Electric Range Rover Classic we're going to continue to innovate and electrify Defenders and other Land Rovers. We offer our clients world class customization, and we are excited to add this new electric option to our truck builds."



Land Rover LifeFlight Special Mission chopper called in to assist Moree flood crisis

The Land Rover LifeFlight Special Mission helicopter is en route to Moree to aid emergency services in their response to the unfolding flood crisis. The highly advanced, specially configured helicopter is equipped with two pilots, a winch operator and a LifeFlight Critical Care Flight Paramedic. The crew is ready to respond to emergency evacuations, as required. "The Land Rover LifeFlight Special Mission helicopter is designed specifically for this type of work," LifeFlight Head of Flying Operations and pilot David Bashir said. "It's a very capable machine, it's able to fly in all weather basically, day and night.

"The helicopter is currently configured for search and rescue, but we are also able to take a patient on board, to be treated by our paramedic." The helicopter was tasked by Fire and Rescue NSW shortly before 5pm and was due to touch down in Moree around 7.30pm (March 23). "LifeFlight is proud to be assisting NSW emergency services in their response," Mr Bashir said. "We're happy to go over the border and help anyone in need."



Jaguar Land Rover faces claims over emissions

Law firm Leigh Day has announced that they are investigating Jaguar Land Rover over claims that their vehicles have been fitted with emissions cheat devices. There are believed to be 365,000 Jaguar and Land Rover vehicles potentially affected by emissions cheat devices. The potentially affected models, all diesel, identified so far are:

Jaguar XE

Jaguar XF

Land Rover Discovery Sport

Land Rover Discovery

Range Rover Sport

Land Rover Evoque

Other Jaguar and Land Rover diesel vehicles may also be affected.

In 2016, a Jaguar XE 2.0 was found by the German VW Commission Enquiry to be producing nitrogen oxide (NOX) pollution at nine times the threshold value in an on the road test. In the same report, a Range Rover 3.0 produced 11 times the threshold value during on the road testing.

A White Paper published in 2017 by the International Council on Clean Transportation ('ICCT') also found that Land Rover was the worst-performing manufacturer. Leigh Day is the first law firm to include the British luxury brand in its portfolio of group claims against motor manufacturers. Leigh Day partner Oliver Holland is leading the group claim against Jaguar Land Rover vehicles, said: 'Evidence in the public domain clearly shows that diesel engines in some Jaguar Land Rover models were fitted with emissions cheat devices so that customers have not been driving around in the low-emissions vehicles they thought they were. 'Instead, these owners have been cheated, and Britain's roads and surrounding areas have been polluted with NOx emissions way beyond the levels that motor manufacturers have stated, to maintain profit and avoid regulation essential to our health and the health of the planet.'

Jaguar Land Rover denies allegations it used diesel emissions cheat devices

Jaguar Land Rover has issued an emphatic denial of allegations it used emissions cheat devices in its vehicles and said it will "strongly contest" any legal claims to the contrary. The Coventry car maker has spoken out after London law firm Leigh Day announced that it is investigating allegations regarding the use of emissions cheat devices against the company as part of a wider action targeting global car makers. Leigh Day is the first law firm to include Jaguar Land Rover in its portfolio of group claims against motor manufacturers, who are being accused of using cheat devices to pass emissions tests.

The action follows the Volkswagen 'Dieselgate' scandal which rocked the automotive industry. The German car giant has since paid out more than €30 billion in fines, compensation and buyback schemes worldwide since the scandal first broke in 2015. The company disclosed at the time that it had used illegal software to manipulate the results of diesel emissions tests. The "defeat devices" which alerted diesel engines when they were being tested. The engine would then change its performance in order to improve the result of the test. Volkswagen has faced a flurry of legal action worldwide, including the UK. Leigh Day is currently representing nearly 40,000 drivers of Mercedes-Benz, Volkswagen, Nissan, Renault, Porsche, Vauxhall, Citroen and Peugeot vehicles.

Leigh Day says the allegations relate to a number of Jaguar and Land Rover diesel vehicles. The Leigh Day claim is being run on a no win-no fee basis. However Jaguar Land Rover has rebutted the allegations and denied it uses emissions cheat devices or software in any of its vehicles. The company has also pledged to "strongly contest" any such legal claims.

In a statement it said: "Jaguar Land Rover does not use emissions cheat devices or software in any of its products.

"We have not yet seen any technical evidence in relation to this matter and will strongly contest any claims made by the no win-no fee legal firm."

Jaguar Land Rover also rubbished test results referred to by Leigh Day.

Leigh Day referred to a 2016 UK Department of Transport report, which it says found higher than permitted NOx (nitrous oxide) emissions in hot track testing for the Jaguar XE, the Land Rover Freelander and Range Rover Sport.

However Jaguar Land Rover has drawn attention to the same report which states: "Importantly our testing has found no evidence that other manufacturers are using software of the type used by Volkswagen."

Leigh Day has said it believes there are 365,000 Jaguar and Land Rover vehicles potentially affected, whose owners could be eligible to join the group claim.

Leigh Day has pointed to a number of tests conducted by regulators, including one by the German VW Commission Enquiry in April 2016, in which it says a Jaguar XE 2.0 was found to be producing NOx at nine times the threshold value in an on the road test. It said in the same report a Range Rover 3.0 produced 11 times the threshold value during on the road testing.

Next-Gen Rang Rover Spotted Testing With PHEV Powertrain

It looks like an evolution of the current model's design and underneath it is related to the cancelled Jaguar XJ electric sedan. We're expecting to see an all-new Range Rover debut in either late 2021 or early 2022 and, just like the model it will replace, there will be ICE and electrified powertrains to choose from. Our spies recently snapped the plug-in hybrid version of the next big Range, but we don't know if the manufacturer is planning a fully-electric variant, even though the platform it's built on does, in theory, support it.

Regarding the look of the next Range Rover, the camouflage reveals that it will be an evolution of the current model, with a little bit of Velar flair sprinkled on top. The rear flanks are also different to what we see on the current model, and they look a lot like those of the Rolls-Royce Cullinan, hinting that Range Rover may go after that more expensive model with its most

luxurious variants.

Inside, the Range Rover already had plenty of screens (digital gauge cluster, infotainment and climate control) and it looks as if the new model will continue in that direction. Just like the current plug-in hybrid model, the new one will still pair a 2-liter four-cylinder turbocharged gasoline engine with an electric motor and a battery pack, but we don't know how much power it will make, how big the battery will be or anything about its electric-only range.

The current Range Rover P400e makes 398 horsepower and it draws from a 13.1 kWh battery pack that gives it an estimated EPA electric-only range of 19 miles (30 km). It currently can only charge at 7.4 kW, the new model will most likely support DC fast charging at up to 50 kW, like the new Land Rover Defender P400e PHEV (that also has a bigger 19.2 kWh battery).

There are currently no confirmed plans that we know of to also make the next-gen Range Rover fully-electric. However, we have heard rumors that the manufacturer is indeed going to launch a Range Rover BEV, in 2024; we don't know if it's going to be a version of the ICE model or an entirely different one.



Project Cars: 1971 Land Rover Series IIA update – The road to (conditional) registration

The CarAdvice team reveals what's hidden away in their sheds and backyards awaiting some TLC. It's been a long road, but I'm getting closer and closer to finally driving my 1971 Land Rover on the road. After years of languishing against laziness, ineptitude and a lack of time, I've recently hit a purple patch of progress with my little green Land Rover.

After finding a massive tear in the head gasket recently, I was able to fix it with some new parts, a bit of good luck, and some new skills learned along the way. I took my time with a scalpel on the head and deck, making for as clean and flat a surface as I could. At least being all cast iron, it's more forgiving than modern engines.

I also learned about lapping valves, and cleaning the crud off them with a drill and some kitchen scourers. And with a new copper head gasket and fresh valve seals, I methodically reinstalled everything to as high a standard I could. I don't think I'll be getting a call from Alan Butler any time soon, but hopefully it will do the job. And it did! I reinstalled the front timing cover and sump, and had trouble figuring out how to mount the alternator and brackets in the right fashion. But we got there, and the engine runs much smoother than it has for a long time. I threw in some new spark plugs and engine oil, and I'm proud of how bad this job isn't. So far.

I have to say, if you're keen to do this kind of work, but you're put off by not knowing what you're doing, don't. A few hundred dollars' worth of tools and other consumables, a small workshop and a good dose of perseverance are all you need. There is so much content online to help out aspiring spanner swingers when you get in a pinch, and these old cars are mechanically very simple. Doing this has helped me learn so much along the way about how stuff works.

Next in line was the handbrake and Power Take Off (PTO) on the back of the transfer case, both swimming in years of crud and oil from hardened seals. At least any bolts weren't seized... These were removed, disassembled and cleaned in a haze of petrol fumes, before being reinstalled. And as a bonus, the handbrake now seems to work.

So after tidying up a few smaller details, replacing the clutch slave cylinder and re-bleeding the brakes, this old battler will be ready to face its final exam over the pits. This is a new experience for me: joining a car club, and the historic vehicle registration scheme. Wish me luck.



Ineos founder's Land Rover rival faces launch delay due to Covid lockdowns

The Land Rover-rival being built by the billionaire Sir Jim Ratcliffe may be delayed by up to six months amid difficulties caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Ineos, the chemicals company founded by Ratcliffe, had planned to deliver the first of the new Grenadier vehicles in early 2022, but is now considering a new launch date around September 2022, the Guardian understands. The boxy 4x4 is modelled on the classic Land Rover Defender. Ratcliffe, a car enthusiast and one of Britain's richest men with a £12bn fortune, chose the name Grenadier in honour of the London pub in which he first had the idea of creating a successor, after Jaguar Land Rover stopped production of the rugged, old-style Defender in 2016. Ineos has never before built cars. Ineos Automotive said the company was "on track" with the Grenadier but "still talking about time-lines" because of difficulties sourcing some parts during the pandemic. The spokesperson said: "Like many automotive manufacturers, we are continually assessing the ongoing impact of these unprecedented times and will share any updates in due course. In the meantime, we don't comment on speculation or rumour."

Carmakers around the world have struggled with supply chain issues for more than a year as the pandemic has forced factories to close temporarily, caused delivery delays, and disrupted the usual timetables for manufacturing products.

Shortages of computer chips used to power cars' onboard computers have caused particular problems, forcing companies including Ford, Toyota and Volkswagen to pause production. Ineos declined to comment on whether semiconductors were an issue.

A source with knowledge of the plans said the company was aiming for pre-production of the first testing models of the Grenadier in autumn 2021, followed by a market launch that could come in autumn 2022. Ineos is building the Grenadier at a plant in Hambach, eastern France. Ratcliffe, a vocal proponent of the UK leaving the EU who is resident in Monaco for tax purposes, had previously planned to "retain the Britishness" and build the car in Bridgend, south Wales. However, Ineos then snapped up the Hambach factory, which previously made Smart city cars, when the Mercedes-Benz owner Daimler put it up for sale. The company had previously said: "Manufacturing at Hambach ensures that Ineos remains on track to meet its plans to deliver the Grenadier to customers in early 2022."

The Grenadier will be available at first in petrol and diesel variants, using engines from the German carmaker BMW, with plans for a hydrogen fuel cell version in collaboration with South Korea's Hyundai.



Matchbox Releases Best of Europe Car Assortments

The new die-cast line pays homage to car manufacturers including Land Rover, Audi, Mercedes and Porsche. Mattel, owner of Matchbox, is launching an all-new toy line which pays homage to car manufacturers in Europe across the U.K., Germany, France, Italy and Russia. The new European line features licensed vehicles with details from car manufacturers including Land Rover, Audi, Mercedes and Porsche, among others.

"As long-standing partners of Mattel, it's fantastic to have some of our most iconic vehicles feature in this new special edition Matchbox die cast range," says Joe Sinclair, branded goods and licensing director, Jaguar Land Rover. "Forming part of the star line up of the new Matchbox 'Best of the U.K.' series will be the Land Rover Defender, Land Rover Series II, Jaguar E-Type Coupe and Jaguar F-Type Coupe."



Australia's ugliest car trend could be on track for a revival

The sport utility vehicle – or the SUV for short – is one of the most divisive car body styles ever made. Previously only a niche offering in a market dominated by sedans and hatchbacks, the 80s and 90s saw a dramatic increase in their popularity. In the 21st century, SUVs have come to dominate the global car market – in both Australia and the US, SUV sales now account for almost half of all vehicle sales.

Yet many drivers despise the SUV, seeing them as rolling monuments to consumerism and responsible for dumbing down the public's taste and perception of cars. But money talks – and as much as SUV haters would hate to admit it, there's something compelling about the high ride height and versatility of an SUV.

SUVs have also precipitated the rise of similar body styles, such as crossovers and sport utility trucks, which have also become wildly successful. There's one type of SUV, however, that has failed to capture the public's imagination – and is reviled even by SUV fans. That, of course, is the convertible SUV: the worst car trend to ever hit Australia's shores.

The argument goes like this: the point of a convertible is to be light, sporty and playful. SUVs are heavy, slow and practical. It's like pineapple and pizza: both are great, but shouldn't belong together... Yet some people think it's a good idea to

combine the two.

The most famous object of ridicule is the Range Rover Evoque Convertible. For a long time, it was the only convertible SUV on sale in Australia and garnered criticism for being underpowered, unaffordable and just plain ugly. (It did sell alright, however).

Other convertible SUVs that made their way Down Under include the Suzuki X-90 (widely regarded as one of the ugliest cars of all time) and the Daihatsu Feroza (another obscure Japanese import). Hyundai Australia even teased a Santa Fe Cabriolet, the world's first seven-seater convertible... But thankfully it was just a one-off prototype. The United States got it even worse. The un-



gainly Nissan Murano CrossCabriolet was only sold in North America, despite being made in Japan. Let's not even talk about the bizarre GMC Envoy XUV, which had a bizarre retractable rear roof that made it the worst of both worlds. Let's not feel too sympathetic for America, though – they did curse us with the Chrysler PT Cruiser Cabrio...

But there's a degree of cognitive dissonance among convertible SUV haters. Automotive journalists and the public alike turn up their noses at Evoques or Muranos with a drop-top but some of the most critically acclaimed SUVs of all time are convertibles. Take the Jeep Wrangler – which is always a convertible – or other favourites like the Land Rover Defender, Mercedes-Benz G Class or Toyota RAV-4. These are cars that are absolutely beloved by gearheads – so what's the difference?

It seems as if auto makers still have faith in the concept, too. Volkswagen produces a drop-top version of their T-Roc crossover – which honestly looks pretty cool – and VW Australia has expressed an interest in bringing it Down Under, CarAdvice relates. Maybe even more convertible SUVs will follow it.

Maybe we skeptics need to have a more open mind. Just because we've had some bad pineapple pizza in our time doesn't mean we should write the concept off entirely. Or something like that.

Besides, let's reserve our wrath for the drivers, not the cars...

Land Rover Discovery 2021 Review

Minor styling changes mask major updates under the bonnet and inside Land Rover's facelifted Disco. The fifth-generation Land Rover Discovery that arrived in 2017 won plenty of plaudits, including the Carsales Car of the Year accolade.

Declaring it a "real game-changer", the Discovery won praise for its performance, packaging, refinement, safety, innovation and unrivalled capability off-road. We said it "perfectly matched the needs and wants of many Australian buyers".

Fast-forward four years and the Disco 5 has reached middle age, prompting Land Rover to introduce a significant update for the 2021 model year. While the exterior carries only the mildest of nip and tucks, the cabin now includes a faster and better-connected infotainment system, and under the bonnet there's two all-new engines.

One of these is a 3.0-litre inline six-cylinder petrol engine with mild-hybrid tech, replacing the old supercharged V6 and even older V8. The other is an electrified version of the British car-maker's 3.0-litre diesel.

So far, so good. But with the 2.0-litre four-cylinder turbo-diesel also now removed from the range, the price of entry to the 2021 Land Rover Discovery range increases by more than \$27,000 to a pinch under \$100K. That's no small jump, and puts additional focus on whether the MY21 Disco remains king of the hill in its seven-seat large luxury SUV class.

Movin' on up

Where once the Disco range kicked off at \$66,000, today the cheapest version of the 2021 Land Rover Discovery costs \$99,900 plus on-road costs. But once you get over the fact that the 2.0-litre SD4 has been deleted, and compare like-for-like with the remaining range – including the D300's advanced new 221kW 3.0-litre inline diesel six – the latest Discovery is less than \$15K more expensive than the previous 225kW SDV6.

Better still, Land Rover claims the Discovery S D300 is fitted with more than \$32,000 worth of additional features compared with the SDV6 it replaces. Speaking of standard kit, this entry-level S D300 is fitted with 20-inch wheels, a full-length panoramic roof, LED headlights and tail-lights, active dampers, a wade sensor, seven-seat capacity, 14-way electric front seat adjustment, leather upholstery for the front positions, and the 11.4-inch Pivi Pro infotainment system with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto smartphone connectivity.

There's also DAB+ digital radio, seven USB (or USB-C) charging points, a virtual instrument cluster, powered tailgate and driver assist safety features that include blind spot assist, active cruise control, high-speed autonomous emergency braking (AEB) and rear traffic monitor.



With all that on board, this most basic S version arguably offers most buyers all they'll ever need – unless you regularly venture off-road. In that case, you'll want to spend another \$2110 for the dual-range transfer case (standard on P360 R-Dynamic) and the most advanced Terrain Response 2 electronics. We'd also be tempted by the \$1100 locking rear differential. Other options include roof rails (from \$840), a solar attenuating windscreen (\$560), Matrix LED headlights (\$1261, standard on HSE/R-Dynamic HSE), electric-folding third row seats (\$900, standard on HSE/R-Dynamic HSE), four-zone climate control (\$1820) and a new cabin air purifier (\$470).

It's also a shame that both a wireless phone charger (\$455) and head-up display (\$2420) remain an option on whatever model you choose, while Land Rover also makes you fork out \$104 for locking wheel nuts and \$210 for tyre pressure monitoring. There's also a Cold Climate Pack (\$2550), Hot Climate Pack (\$3145), Family Pack (\$3515), Towing Pack (\$3910) and advanced Off-Road Capability Pack (\$3970) that all bundle individual options for better value.

Closest rivals for the Discovery remain the Audi Q7 (from \$103,300), BMW X5 (from \$104,900) and Mercedes GLE (from \$107,100) and Volvo XC90 (from \$89,990).

All 2021 Land Rover Discovery variants come with a full-size spare wheel. Service intervals remain dependent on driving style and use, while the vehicle is covered by Land Rover's average three-year/100,000km warranty.

Even higher tech

Based on a full aluminium monocoque, rather than the unusual monocoque and ladder-frame hybrid architecture employed for the Discovery 3 and 4, the latest-generation Land Rover Discovery took a huge leap forward in terms of safety when it was introduced in 2017.

When tested by ANCAP back then, the independent safety body awarded the Land Rover a very respectable 90 per cent score for adult occupant protection and 88 per cent for child occupant protection.

Both ANCAP and Euro NCAP have rated the Discovery a five-star vehicle, although the crash testing protocols are tougher now than they were in 2017.

As well as a full complement of airbags and the aforementioned driver assist tech, there's a driver fatigue monitor plus a new Clear Exit Monitor which alerts both front and rear occupants to the presence of an approaching car or cyclist when climbing out of the vehicle.

JLR's new 3D Surround Camera tech has also been introduced that not only assists parking but offers a junction view and other angles to boost vision and safety.

Like the recently-introduced MY2021 Jaguar F-PACE, one of the biggest hidden changes of the new updated Discovery is it has adopted Jaguar Land Rover's latest EVA2 hardware. This has allowed the car-maker to not only introduce its state-of-the-art Pivi Pro infotainment system that's operated through a large 11.4-inch screen, but allows for over-the-air updates which means it will remain cutting-edge even while the model ages.

A new Wi-Fi internet hub now allows for up to eight devices to be connected, while each seat gets access to a USB charger. An updated multifunction steering wheel is part of the package, while there's now a customisable 12.3-inch digital instrument panel. Other fresh tech includes JLR's air filtration system that traps superfine particles and purifies the atmosphere within the cabin.

Stroke of Ingenuity

Both the previous 2.0-litre turbo-diesel (177kW/500Nm) and 3.0-litre V6 turbo-diesel (225kW/700Nm) engines in the Land Rover Discovery have been pensioned off and replaced by JLR's latest electrified 3.0-litre inline six-cylinder units that benefit from the car-maker's new 48-volt mild-hybrid tech.

It's thought most Australians will opt for the D300 diesel that pumps out 221kW/650Nm, which is enough to haul the 2021 Land Rover Discovery from rest to 100km/h in just 6.8 seconds before topping out at 209km/h.

At the pumps, Land Rover says its latest inline-six diesel can average a decent 8.9L/100km while emitting around 232g/km of CO₂.

For those who tow, the Discovery can still tug a class-leading 3500kg, whether it's the diesel or the new P360 petrol.

Featuring twin turbos and an electric motor-driven supercharger, the new P360 3.0-litre musters more power than the diesel (265kW) but significantly less torque, peaking at 500Nm. But that peak is delivered low in the



rev range at 1750rpm.

Against the clock, the petrol-fed Disco launches to 100km/h in 6.5sec, topping out at 209km/h. That doesn't feel appreciably quicker than the diesel, but the biggest gain is felt mid-gears, when the P360 can punch its way from 80-120km/h in 4.1sec – 0.8sec faster than the D300.

Whether diesel or petrol, both engines combine with an excellent smooth-and-quick eight-speed automatic transmission and come with JLR's intelligent all-wheel drive.

In Comfort or Auto mode, both engines feel well up to the task of shrugging off a near 2.4-tonne kerb weight.

The diesel's torquier, more relaxing character will appeal to most people who currently drive large SUVs, but we can imagine the new petrol engine's significant refinement gain could find plenty of favour.

Sit back and relax

With the reintroduction of a petrol engine, JLR engineers might have been tempted to dial-up the sportiness on the 2021 Land Rover Discovery. But they've resisted.

Instead, they've worked on increasing comfort across the board, even on the new optional 22-inch rims.

We're already mentioned how refined the smooth-spinning the petrol engine is beside the ever-so-slightly gruff diesel, but if you're looking for a sonorous soundtrack that will have you chasing the redline in the family chariot, you'll be disappointed. Instead, it's best to sit back and focus on the effortless pace both variants deliver in space and be impressed at how silent the petrol 3.0-litre turbo is while cruising on the highway.

As part of the MY21 revisions, JLR has improved both steering and body control of the already-impressive Discovery yet further. Yet without any trick active anti-roll bars, there's still plenty of body movement in tight corners.

As part of the updates, the second-row seats have been redesigned for better support over long distances, while the third row remains class-leading for the space it offers.

Like before, where the Discovery really edges out its rivals is in blending its impeccable road manners with genuine off-road capability. We've driven the pre-facelifted Discovery in truly treacherous conditions that include wading right up to (if not beyond) its 900mm wading limit and tackled obstacles and tracks that would strand a BMW X5 or Audi Q7, so it should be business as usual for the MY21 series. And, indeed, over a short off-road course the air suspension raised its body away from any harm, while lockable diffs and advanced electronics meant traction and its abilities were never questioned.

Back on the highway, the Discovery remains a civilised place to soak up the kilometres. It misses out on the recently-revised F-PACE's trick noise cancellation tech but the sound of the wind buffeting and tyre roar is well suppressed.

Older but wiser

A pair of fancy new LED headlights and reprofiled front and rear bumpers do little to hide the fact the 2021 Land Rover Discovery isn't the freshest in its segment. But that said, the qualities that helped it clinch the 2017 Carsales Car of the Year crown still shine through.

The new Pivi Pro infotainment system is now as good as any of its rivals, while the six-cylinder petrol and diesel engines give it a competitive edge over four-cylinder rivals like the Volvo XC90.

Throw in its decent drive and exceptional comfort, and the Discovery remains a compelling proposition.

Indeed, arguably its biggest rival is not from Germany or elsewhere in Europe but from within the British brand's own stable, where former Disco owners are sure to be migrating into the closely-priced and bigger new Land Rover Defender – which was Highly Commended in the just-announced 2020 Carsales Car of the Year.

Pricing:

Since announcing pricing for the facelifted MY21 Discovery last November, Jaguar Land Rover Australia has increased pricing across the board for MY22. The MY22 Land Rover Discovery R-Dynamic HSE P360 is priced from \$120,575 plus ORCs. The entry-level S D300 ticks over \$100K at \$101,875 plus ORCs. How much does the 2021 Land Rover Discovery R-Dynamic HSE P360 cost? Price: \$118,600 (plus on-road costs) Available: April 2021

Engine: 3.0-litre six-cylinder turbo-petrol

Output: 265kW/500Nm

Transmission: Eight-speed automatic

Fuel: 10.6L/100km

CO2: 254g/km

Safety rating: Five-star (ANCAP 2017)



Illegal trail bike riding and four-wheel driving on the rise in Victoria

Victoria's parks, forests and reserves have become more popular than ever for trail bike riding and four-wheel-driving over the last 12 months, and while there is an extensive network of roads and tracks open to the public, illegal off-road activity is increasing. The Conservation Regulator has issued more than 100 infringements for off-road vehicle use by trail bike riders and four-wheel-drivers since January 1. Riding and driving off-road can cause soil erosion and damage native vegetation. The ecosystems in our forests are fragile and vehicles can destroy wildlife habitat.

Authorised officers are patrolling key locations across the state, targeting illegal trail bike and four-wheel driving activity, and on the spot fines of \$165 apply. The maximum fine for riding or driving on closed roads is \$3300, while damaging wildlife habitat can result in a fine of more than \$8000.

Most riders and drivers do the right thing by following normal road rules that apply on public land. The Conservation Regulator works closely with recreational groups and asks them to consider these key points:

- All vehicles including trail bikes must be registered, trail bike riders must hold a current motor bike licence.
- Stay on the formed roads and vehicle tracks – do not ride on natural terrain, in streams, or on informal single tracks
- For your own safety, always ride with others and wear full personal protective equipment (PPE), including a helmet
- Always carry a first aid kit, as well as a reliable means of communication. We know that the first hour after injury is critical to good recovery outcomes - make sure you are prepared
- Unload and start your trail bike away from residents adjoining state forests (you value your riding, they value their peace and quiet)
- Keep your speed and noise down when in, or near, camping and picnic areas, or approaching other forest users

For more information on the rules and regulations please visit: www.ffm.vic.gov.au/recreational-activities/trail-bike-riding

Remember to check for up-to-date COVIDSafe information at <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/>

Quotes attributable to Acting Director Regulatory Operations, Brian Hamer

"If you take a vehicle off-road to drive through our forests, you're not only risking your own safety, but that of others who are hiking and bushwalking through the landscape, and you can cause significant environmental damage." "Our officers conduct frequent patrols in state forests and use advanced surveillance technology to identify illegal off-road driving and riding."

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Land Rover Owners' Club of Gippsland Ordinary Meeting

Minutes for meeting held on Monday 1st March 2021.

Meeting held at Gippsland Land Rover, the Meeting started at 8:00 pm.

Welcome & thanks by Alan Harlow.

Present; Ian Blake, Charlie Calafiore, Loris Catchpole, Rod Catchpole, Tonee Harlow, Alan Harlow, Terry Heskey, Sue Howell, Ross Howell, Graham Shaw, Brian Johnson, Siobahn Walker, Shaun Johnson, Heather Kerr, John Kerr, Helen MacRae, Alan MacRae, Annette Fleming, Bob McKee, John Jennings, David Murray, Colette Parniak, Jan Parniak, Dot Prince, Ron Prince, Lois Rose, Greg Rose, Eric Shingles, Les Warburton, Ian Webb, Liz Trimnell, Neville Trimnell,

Apologies; Shirley Allchin, Ted Allchin, Shannon Brill, Ashley Brill, Philip Croft, Christine Croft,

Visitor; Fred Smith

Confirmation of Dec Meeting Minutes:

Moved by Greg Rose, That the February club minutes be accepted as true and correct, Seconded by Bob McKee
Passed

Business arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

The motion dealing with a battery replacement for the defibrillator and new snake bite kits to be purchased has been acted on with the purchase of two snake bite kits and a battery for the defibrillator.

Correspondence:

Out:

Emails to club members re location of February meeting.

Emails to club members re the re-scheduling Kelly Lane PV work party.

Email to FWDV requesting information on camp hosting.

Email to members on dates and locations for camp hosting.

In:

Email re information documents pertaining to a valid nomination received for a 2021 FWDV Board positions.

FWDV Ordinary Board member – Adam Risborg, Doug Mitchell for Treasurer and Eric Bishop for Secretary.

Treasurer's Report: John Kerr

Moved by John Kerr, that the Treasurer's report be received and approved, Seconded by Rod Catchpole, Passed.

Questions of Treasurer, Nil.

Publicity Officer's Report: Charlie Calafiore.

The new Defender is currently the star of the show. Currently have one registered and one demo. Delivered 2 last week (both 6 cylinder diesels). Just announced a very bespoke V8, considered much better than the Merc which it is going up against in the market. Only problem is supply, with still a 5 to 6 month wait on new vehicles.

Editor's Report: Eric Shingles.

Hope you liked the Newsletter, always looking for more stuff.

Webmaster's Report: Alan Harlow.

The web site is up to date.

	Dec	Jan	Feb
Visitors	18	12	17
Pages	37	23	36

FWDV Delegate's Report: Greg Rose

AGM coming up soon. Nothing else to report at this point.

FWDVP Regional Representatives Greg Rose

Nil

Property officer Report; Ross Howell

Nil

Events Coordinator's Report: David Murray.

Past Events.

* Coffee meeting Morwell. Alan Harlow

Held at Black Stump, Darnum. 10 attended and lots of laughter and stories.

* Eaglevale 27th and 28th of March. Greg Rose attended a meeting with Parks Victoria Ranger Rebecca Gannon and Acting Dargo Ranger Team Leader Sam Bradley in Dargo on February the 10th. Area Chief Ranger, Foothills and Southern Alps, Mike Dower was also at the Dargo office. Club volunteers were to install table and seat sets, removed from Talbotville as part of an upgrade to facilities. The club had originally built the tables at Talbotville. Unfortunately, the contract for work at Talbotville had not been let and there was no chance of the tables being removed for us to work with. It was not practical for Dargo PV staff to find other work for the club to do at this stage.

Future Events.

* Camp Hosting available over the long weekend coming up.

Let Alan Harlow know if interested. Places available in Gippsland area.

* Camping with Craig Murray over the long weekend coming up.

Craig Murray is heading into the Licola area, camping over the March long weekend and would welcome anyone interested in joining them.

* February Coffee Get Together

Friday 12th March at 10am, at Raw Harvest, Rutherglen Rd Newborough

* 11-12th March, PV working at Kelly's Lane, McMichael's Hut, Greg Rose.

Wayne Foon, Parks Victoria Ranger Heyfield, has managed to fit a second attempt at getting the new style table built at McMichaels Hut on Thursday the 11th and Friday the 12th of March. These dates had to fit in with PV work schedules and rosters. LROCG members can come up for the Thursday or stay overnight to complete work on the Friday. The event is subject to weather and public health advice. Activity will be conducted under PVs COVID Safe procedures.

Meeting at Licola Store at 9am on the Thursday morning. Bring your own food, and vehicle (or travel diagonally, to social distance). Please let Greg know as soon as possible if able to participate.

* 13th March, Saturday, Navigation trip. Toney & Alan Harlow

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