



4WD CLUB

King River Hut Maintenance ANZAC Weekend 2008

Dates	ANZAC Weekend. 25,26 and 27, April, 2008
Event Organiser	Andy Kass

Attendances Visitors *	Andy Kass Paul and Maxine Burke Kevin and Liz Burke * Michael and Candice Richards * Matt Ahern David and Cheryl Sidebottom Brian and Helen Watson Vince and Sue Bosua *Visitors
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As a part of the CFA4WD Club's involvement with the Victorian High Country Huts Association, we have the wonderful opportunity of being involved with the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the huts of the Victorian High Country. With several of our huts being lost to fires over the past few years it is imperative to maintain the huts that still exist, in the best possible condition.

With this in mind, I recently asked for some funding to perform repairs to a deteriorating King River Hut.

Over the Easter weekend a trip was organized and run by Paul, to perform a reconnaissance mission, to determine the finer details of materials and equipment required for the repairs.

I began by requesting assistance from the relevant staff at Parks Victoria. The initial feeling was I hadn't given enough notice, as several other working bees were being planned for the same weekend.

Chris Clarke, a Parks Victorian Ranger working out of Mansfield jumped to the rescue. After receiving the shopping list from myself, Chris organized the hardware to be collected from various retailers in Mansfield, collected some bush poles for the veranda and chimney supports, organized the loan of a Parks Vic generator as well as loaning out his private trailer to cart the goods in to the hut. Chris was formerly a Hut Maintenance Officer for VHCHA before being employed by Parks Victoria. He is currently responsible for the upkeep of the Huts in National Parks and was a fantastic resource for us.



Thursday afternoon saw me picking up some of the goods from the drop off point at Dave Blundens house in Mansfield and making my way to the hut. I set up camp, lit a fire and had a relaxing evening waiting for the rest of the crew. The Burke families arrived to a chilly night but a warm fire and with the addition of some BYO timber and dried up compressed saw dust pellets, the fire became even warmer. After a few night caps it was off to bed.

As the ANZAC bugles were sounding around the country, we were preparing for an honest day's work. Bacon and eggs (some scrambled) were had all round.

The morning saw the arrival of Matt and a visit by Chris from Parks Vic. and Gavin Powell who is the Huts Maintenance Officer Coordinator from VHCHA. They brought the generator and provided a few words of instructions and encouragement. We also saw a brief visit from Steve the Parks Vic. ranger from Whitfield as well as the arrival from David and Brian with all the equipment.

The work began in earnest, with the replacement of the damaged wall boards inside the hut, the complete repair of the front veranda, and the repair of the window frames. Vince and Sue arrived early afternoon just in time to assist with some painting. Michael and Candice also arrived during the afternoon. Brian and David left us to return to the lodge for a cozy evening whilst the remaining team stayed to cook up several roast dinners on the open fire. After a pleasant evening of food, drinks and great company, everyone retired in preparation for day two.

On Saturday, the chimney posts were replaced, a new front door was fabricated and hung, the painting was finished and a post was mounted for the post and rail fence. The work was finished early in the afternoon with some mandatory group photos taken after lunch. The working party subsequently split up, with some heading home and some to the lodge whilst others enjoyed sight-seeing and playing on the staircase.

After several phone reports, I can add that Saturday evening was cold and wet with 2 inches of snow at the Bluff Hut. The working party finished of the post and rail fence before themselves being forced to drive through snow to reach the bitumen for the trip home.

I would like to thank Kevin for his wonderful work and supervision of brother Paul, Brian and David for their great work as well as being the pack horses and collecting extra supplies as needed (apologies for the misleading information about trailer size), Dave Blunden for the use of his yard as a drop-off point, Chris Clarke for organizing and gathering all the materials and all the other participants involved who attended and made the weekend a complete success with wonderful scones to top it all off.

Andy Kass.

