



JANUARY 2015 NEWSLETTER



Rob gets a helping hand at Santa's Hangover Challenge

Editor's Corner

Happy New Year! Welcome to the first newsletter of 2015.

It's been a busy month for the club with the Boxing Day run and Santa's Hangover Challenge along with the well attended club AGM.

In this month's newsletter we have a full report on the Boxing Day run on Novar estate and a short piece on Santa's Challenge at Inverarnie.

The first event of the year is this Sunday (25th Jan) at Dores. A full list of this year's events will be published in February's newsletter.

Thank you to those who contributed to this newsletter and for those of you who haven't, why not?! ☺

As always, please send all articles for inclusion to the address below:

highland4wheeldriveclub@gmail.com

Cheers Pete

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NEXT EVENT!! **SUNDAY 25TH January** **Dores Trial**

Directions; leave Inverness on the B862. Pass Scaniport, after 2.5 miles turn left at a staggered cross roads. If you reach the old school or Dores you've gone too far. Follow the road up the hill, after just over a mile a track crosses the road, turn right into the track and it'll take you in to the site.

Grid ref NH 613 355

TRIAL VENUES AND EVENTS 2015

Please Note: All trial venues to be confirmed

| Date | Event | Clerk of course/ Contact | Assistant Clerk of course |
|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Sunday 25th Jan | Dores Trial | Andrew MacLean | |
| Sunday 22nd Feb | Belivat Trial | | |

**A full list of 2015 Venues and events will be published in next month's
newsletter!**



These are not the latest stars of Crimewatch, these are some of the 2014 prize winners who were at the AGM in Fairways 21/01/15

BOXING DAY RUN 2014 - NOVAR **ESTATE**

A bright, dry morning saw 32 vehicles in convoy eventually leave Skiach on the short journey to Novar. Due to numerous tracks on this large estate, we and myself in particular, were very privileged to be accompanied by Roland, the Head Keeper of Novar who travelled in the lead vehicle with myself. Entering the estate we progressed along forest tracks gradually gaining height through old Scot's Pine Woods. After several miles travelling generally west on interesting tracks, Roland, having fortunately brought his chainsaw, cut and removed a blown tree lying across the track. Once out on more open ground, we passed the abandoned crofts of Auchnagaul and Balnarge. Further on came upon an excellent view point between Meall an Tuirc and Meall Mór overlooking Loch Glass towards Ben Wyvis. On the other side we could see Culzie Lodge and in the distance, at the head of the loch, Wyvis Lodge.

By this point the group had broken up twice and with no reception on the 2-way radio, Roland had had to walk back to check on the problem! Once regrouped we progressed ever upwards, then yours truly 'bottomed out' in deep tracks requiring a tug from the '90' behind! Further up we came upon a steep ice covered track including two sharp bends leading up to the Wind Farm! Roland had said that he hoped to include something testing for us in this outing. This was it – part of a past test track for a new Range Rover!

I had three attempts to get round the first acute bend and up to the second with Roland's shout of 'boot it' ringing in my ears. With some difficulty I reversed at the second corner onto a heather area and Roland once more set off on foot down the 'no escape' narrow track to see how the others were doing. At this point we had two options – for the vehicles to reverse down the icy track or to continue. The decision was taken to continue as reversing down an icy track was deemed more dangerous!

The vehicles were then sent off one at a time with varying results! Many had problems at the first bend before eventually making it up to the second, some requiring a final push! This improved when team Maclennan made it up with Ryan's 'chopped' V8 RR Classic complete with a good winch! Parked on the heather with front wheels chocked, in front of my RR, they helped many a struggling vehicle up the last stretch. This enabled them and others who made it under their own steam to reverse alongside my vehicle giving them a straight run at the final icy stage up to the Wind Farm. This they mostly accomplished with one set of wheels again on the edge of the heather bank. Peter Lawton's very tidy Series 2A impressed us all! Though not having the power of the more modern vehicles, it made it fairly easily to the top!

A few vehicles having more power and momentum, managed to make it to the top without stopping at the second corner! Andrew MacLean was one who comes to mind, in a new light green LR90 with all the toys whose owner was only on his second off-road trip and asked Andrew if he would take it up! While all this was going on we had news that Charlie Munro, in his American Army 6 Wheeler Reo Truck, who was taking up the rear, had broken down. A panhard rod location had given way, allowing an axle to move out of position. Having to leave it blocking the track, he was given a lift by the vehicle in front.

With the vehicles that had already gone up the icy track throwing debris from the verges about, this gave more grip for those still to come and eventually everyone was up at the Wind Farm admiring a spectacular vista over Kildermorie and Loch More. With snow cover on the top, the group set off again. At one point the hard snow crust had weakened allowing a wheel or wheels to break through into the soft snow. Fortunately still able to reverse out, the escape route, obviously taken by many up front, was via a short run along the banking before progressing on the deeply rutted snow! A casual run down on semi surfaced Wind Farm roads saw us arrive at the public road as darkness for falling. "The Best Club Run ever" had come to an end! This statement was made by many of the longer serving members, including myself. I am sure many of the newer ones thoroughly enjoyed it too!

It was only made possible by the vast experience, enthusiasm and interest of Roland and of course the granting of entry to the estate by Mr R Macdonald-Forbes, the Land Owner - our sincere thanks to you both.

Many thanks also to Charlie Munro, who with not inconsiderable patience and time, arranged access to Novar. Thanks also to Elaine for collecting the money and for signing on new members, £500 has been donated to the Highland Hospice with the balance going towards Club Funds.

On the following Sunday, Charlie, with the help of two friends, one a retired mechanic, and the loan of Roland's Hilux to get back up the hill, made a temporary repair to locate the Reo axle which enabled him to get it home! He was very impressed with the handling of the Hilux and the ease with which it climbed the hill. We might yet see him drive a lighter, more nimble machine on our outings.

Stuart



Looking over Loch Glass - Boxing Day Run 2014

Santa's Hangover Challenge 2014 **Inverarnie**

A total of 25 crews turned out for Santa's Hangover Challenge on the 28th of December.

20 canes were spread out across the area each with a few words or phrase written on them. The idea was that the crews were to arrange the words and phrases to make a paragraph. However they had to find the canes first. The canes were positioned on the site a week previous to the trial and had developed a lovely layre of frost, camouflaging them to their background- perfect, we can't make things too easy now, can we?!

After a long day of searching in every corner of the site, a total 4 crews found all the canes and filled their answer sheet. These crews were rewarded with boxes of c
The day took its toll mechanically on a few members with Andrew Maclean breaking a halfshaft on his Discovery 2 and Rob Hellet Snapping a swivel hub on his Bobtailed Discovery 1, requiring the assistance of a tractor to get him off site.

All in all, a fun day was had by all!

Thanks to Elaine for looking after the signing on and to Alisdair Munro for the use of his land at Inverarnie.

Cheers Pete



Discovery 3 proves that anything can be used at an H4WDC Event!



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