

November-December 2017

top  *gear*

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THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE
OF THE THOROUGHbred
SPORTS CAR CLUB



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(Fairly) Regular Columns

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...and



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Nothing else!



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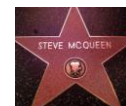


You can't be serious Page 59

The deadline for copy for the
January-February issue of Top Gear
will be 28th February.



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Priced Car Page 61



The End Page 62

I decided to
change calling
the toilet the
John and
renamed it the
Jim. I feel so
much better
saying I went
to the Jim this
morning.

About our Club



Calender

The [Official Calender](#) is published on our web site. Print a copy to keep in your historic log booked vehicle.

Club Meetings

[Club meetings](#) are held on the 2nd Wednesday of every month except December and January at Carlingford Bowling Club.

Club Objectives

- To foster a better acquaintance and social spirit between the various owners of Thoroughbred Sports Cars in Australia
- To help and advance Thoroughbred Sports Cars in Australia
- To establish and maintain, by example, a high Standard of Conduct and a Respect of the Laws of the Road

Club Shoppe

Visit the [Club Shoppe](#) and make sure you are dressed appropriately for the next event.

Correspondence

All correspondence to The Secretary, TSCC
P.O. Box 3006, Dural, NSW 2158.
Email: secretary@thoroughbredssportscarclub.asn.au

Incorporation

TSCC is incorporated as an association; Registered No. Y15083-35

Affiliation

TSCC is affiliated with CAMS Limited

Committee

The contact details of the [Committee](#) are published on the Website.

Other Information:

[Administration](#)
[Annual Awards](#)
[CAMS](#)
[Club History](#)
[Club Plates](#)
[Membership Forms](#)
[Pointscore](#)
[Sporting](#)

Disclaimer:

Any opinions published in the Newsletter should not be regarded as being the opinion of the Club, of the Committee, or of the Editor. No responsibility is accepted for the accuracy of any information in the Newsletter, which has been published in good faith as supplied to the Editor.

Articles are invited and should be mailed to the Editor for publication showing the name and address of the author

Membership Forms

[Membership Forms](#) can be downloaded from our web site.
All new members must be proposed and seconded by financial members

Website

www.thoroughbredssportscarclub.asn.au
Contributions to the Webmaster:
webmaster@thoroughbredssportscarclub.asn.au

Top Gear

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Current and previous editions may be downloaded [here](#).

All contributions to:

Stephen Knox

M: 0427 705500 Email:

editor@thoroughbredssportscarclub.asn.au

Guest Editors

Alfa Editor: [Barry Farr](#)

Aston Martin Editor: [Les Johnson](#)

Jaguar Editor: [Terry Daly](#)

Lotus Editor: [Roger Morgan](#)

Other Information:

[Administration](#)
[Annual Awards](#)
[CAMS](#)
[Club History](#)
[Club Plates](#)
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[Sporting](#)

Top Gear has been continuously published since September 1981.

Office of the President

Barry Farr

From the Minutes of the AGM distributed early November, members would be aware that your Committee for 2018 remains the same except for Geoff Lane replacing Mark Beckett in the role of Treasurer/Membership Secretary. Many thanks go to Mark for his efforts over the last two years and for his thorough handover to Geoff. Thanks also to the fifty members who attended the AGM.

The AGM was actually brought forward a week to accommodate the Lap of NSW which began on 4 November and concluded on 18 November, in which 21 couples participated. It was a fun fortnight which is reported on over 40 pages in this issue of Top Gear. All were most appreciative of Julie Braithwaite's organisational skills.

A few days after having safely traversed the 4,000kms Lap of NSW I read an article in the Classic & Sports Car magazine about the inaugural Baltic Classic Rally. They travelled 4,000 kms as well having started in Copenhagen and ventured through Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, finishing up in Berlin. Really brings home the 'tyranny of distance' adage in Australia. Also a few days after passing through Tumut at the conclusion of our Lap of NSW it was reported that David Warby had just tested the 10,000hp Spirit of Australia II on Tumut's Blowering Dam. He wants to break the still standing world water speed record of 511kmh set by his father 40 years ago but this time in a very sophisticated craft not like the one Ken put together with just three tools –

a drill, a belt sander and a circular saw - in making the first Spirit of Australia.

Twenty-nine members and partners enjoyed a lunch time cruise on the Hawkesbury organised by Barry and Carole-Anne Lunn for which good weather was guaranteed by the presence of weather god Vern Kelly. A great relaxing day out accompanied by expansive and informative commentary by the local resident Captain.



Traditionally, the club's Christmas/Presentation Dinner takes place on the first Saturday in December and this year was no exception. Eighty-three members and partners attended and were treated to some fun and frivolity when Greg and Chee Mai Gibbons presided over a Kris Kringle with a twist, with 'twist' being the operative word in trying to prise away gifts that some members had taken a particular liking to. All thanks to Terry Daly for organising the event and congratulations to the trophy winners, they being :

Car of the Year - Peter Dowrick's 2015 HSV VF GTS

Sporting Trophy - A tie between Lionel Walker and Grant Liddell

Citizen Kane Award - Barry Farr's Top Gear article on 'Gentleman' Jim Kimberly

Donald McDonald Memorial Trophy - Jack Jones in recognition of his active organisation of and participation in club events over the longer term and being Club Shop Manager for the past 4 years

Borrani Wheels Award - Colin Allerdice in recognition of his active organisation of and participation in club events particularly the Le Mans themed Shannons display and subsequent 'book' on the event as well as having been Vice President/Social Secretary for 3 years

Clubman's Trophy - Terry Daly for the 8th time but still very well deserved

Lucky Door Prize - Jennifer Jones

On other matters, Don Dimitriades resigned in November surrendering a spot that he believes can be better enjoyed by the next waitlist candidate who is Allana Flynn-O'Neile.

You may have noticed recently the NRMA announced it will roll out Australia's largest electric vehicle network that will be fast, conveniently located, easy to use and safe and suitable for all types of electric vehicles and it will be free to NRMA members. Initial sites will include Sydney, Blue Mountains, ACT, Illawarra, mid-north coast and Newcastle. Talking of Newcastle, did you see that hundreds and thousands turned up for the

inaugural V8 Supercars round and what a beautiful sight the topography displayed to the extensive TV viewing audience?

From the latest CMC Preserve, it seems a few participants thought they were V8 Supercar drivers in undertaking the track tours on the Shannons Display Day which has resulted in the CMC intending to introduce changes for next year's event. All vehicles entering the event must be owned and driven/ridden by a member of a CMC affiliated club and must have some form of registration to take part on the track. Dropping back from the vehicles in front to get a fast run, burn outs and drifting will be forbidden.

Finally, to all members Merry Christmas and a safe and happy holiday season. Apart from the Australia Day activities the first club event will be a breakfast run on Sunday 11 February followed by our club meeting on 14 February.

Ciao for now.

Barry Farr



Two-finger Typing

Stephen Knox

I enjoy thumbing through a book in my collection titled 'Motoring Through Punch 1900-1970'. It was edited by Russell Brockbank who in my humble opinion was the greatest motoring cartoonist of all. Others were (sometimes) just as funny but very few ever achieved his standard of drawing, making his subjects – almost always cars – instantly recognisable. His cartoons were characterised by a high degree of draughtsmanship and he often went to great lengths to ensure that the cars and aircraft in his cartoons were as true-to-life as possible.

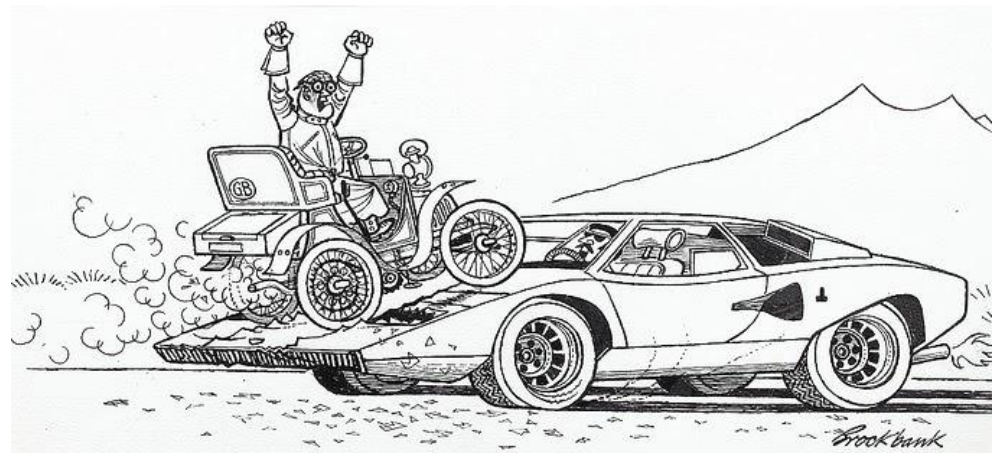
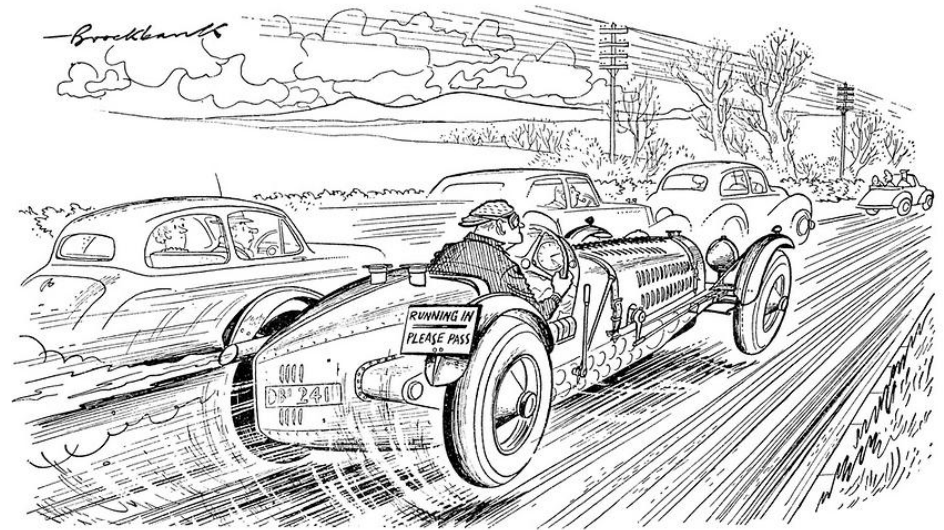
I was surprised to read that this man who seemed to be the essential Englishman, was born in Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. I was not surprised to read that he moved to England at the age of 16.

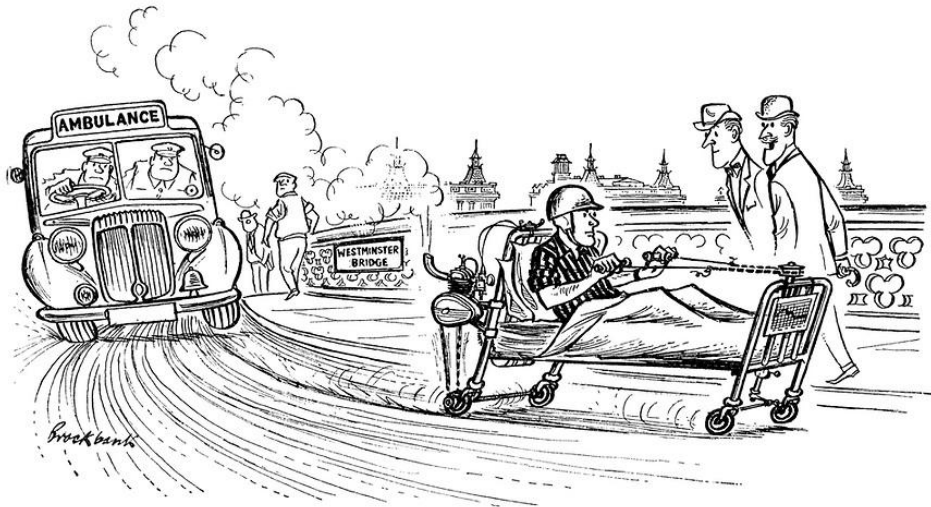
Brockbank was best known for his motoring, motor racing and aviation cartoons. His work was published in numerous magazines and journals, including Motor and Punch. So accurate were his drawings that during World War II his cartoon technique was published in the British training journal Aircraft Recognition.

His association with Punch lasted over 30 years, and he was Art Editor from 1949 to 1960. He died in 1979.

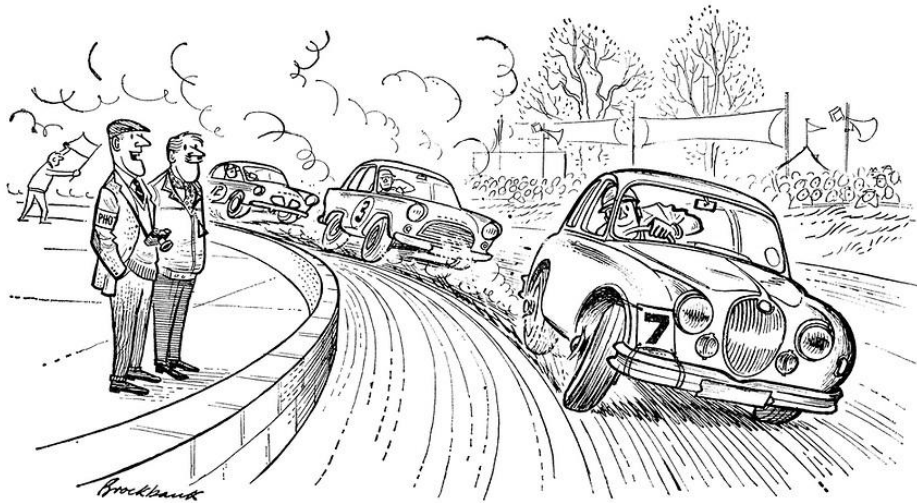
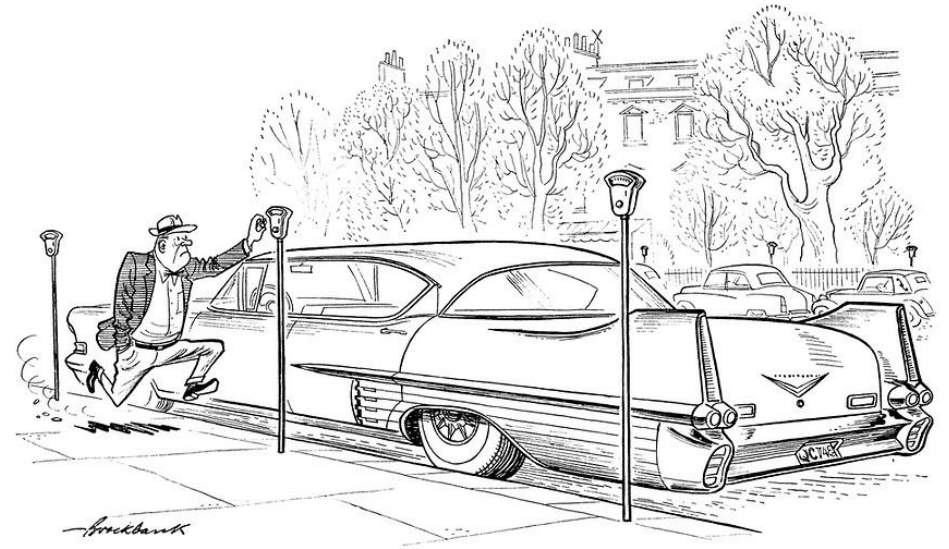
Here are some favourites including a cameo from his favourite anti-hero, Major Upsett.

- Ed

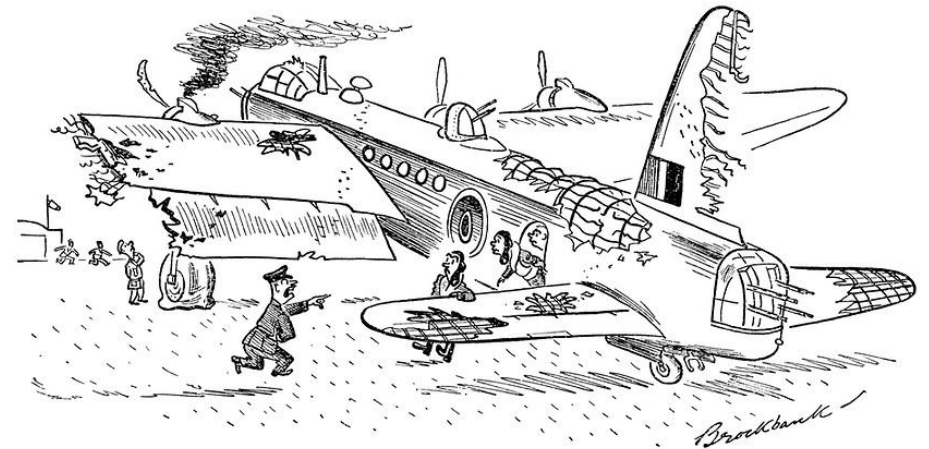




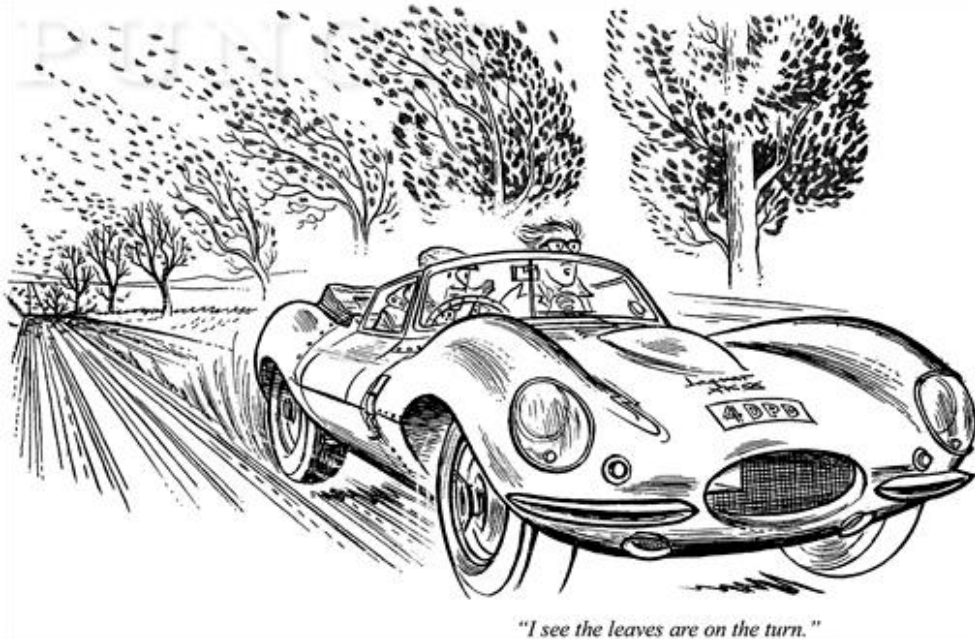
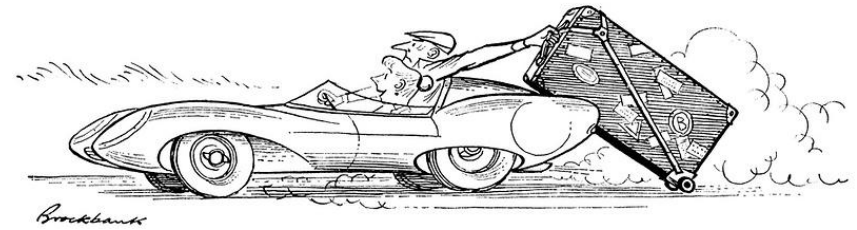
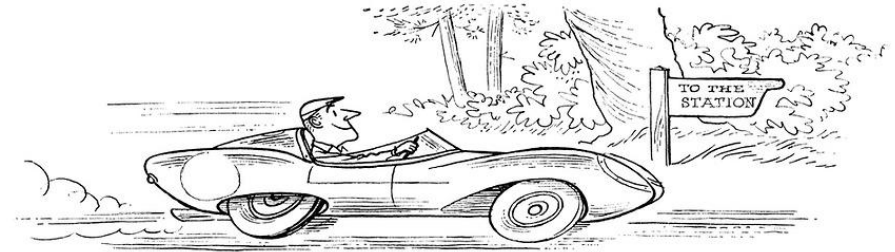
"I see young Stirling's broken out."



"Good show—considering he only hired it for the day from Self-Drive Ltd."



"Late again, Parkinson."



"I see the leaves are on the turn."



Coming Events



Draft Calendar for 2018

(Events marked with an * are non-point score events; names in *italics* are the event's organiser; shaded entries indicate a flyer following.)

January

- | | | |
|-------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| 26 | Australia Day @ Parramatta Park | <i>Colin Allerdice</i> |
| 27/28 | CARnivale/ Supercar D'Elegance | |

February

- | | | |
|-------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| 11 | Breakfast run to Grey Gum Café | <i>Terry Daly</i> |
| 14 | Club Meeting | |
| 17 | Code Clean | <i>Terry Daly</i> |
| 23/26 | Beechworth | <i>Terry Daly</i> |

March

- | | | |
|----|-----------------|----------------------|
| 10 | Shed Tour | <i>Terry Daly</i> |
| 14 | Club Meeting | |
| 21 | Wednesday Run * | <i>Liz Kornhaber</i> |

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 25 | Run to Shed/ Lunch Bowral | <i>Terry Daly</i> |
|----|---------------------------|-------------------|

April

- | | | |
|-------|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 11 | Club Meeting | |
| 18 | Wednesday Run * | <i>Vic Clarke</i> |
| 28/29 | Overnight run via Thunderbolts Way | <i>Tom Aczel</i> |

May

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| 6 | Wings over Illawarra | <i>Stephen Knox</i> |
| 9 | Club Meeting | |
| 16 | Wednesday Run to Riverside Oaks * | <i>Roger Morgan</i> |
| 20 | National Heritage Motoring Day | <i>Colin Allerdice</i> |
| 27 | Breakfast run to Colo | <i>Peter Van Dyk</i> |

June

- | | | |
|-------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| 13 | Club Meeting | |
| 20/21 | Wednesday run/ Overnight * | <i>Jack Jones</i> |

24	Run to Collitts Inn	<i>Terry Daly</i>
28/29	Gershwin SSO ^o	<i>Colin Piper</i>
July		
11	Club Meeting	
12/13	Funny Girl ^o	<i>Colin Piper</i>
15	Christmas in July	
18	Wednesday Run *	<i>Gary Maher</i>
28/29	Mystery Weekend	<i>Stephen Knox</i>
August		
8	Club Meeting	
15	Wednesday overnight run/ Jenolan Caves *	<i>Rob Clare</i>
19	SMSP Shannons	<i>Colin Allerdice</i>
September		
02/15	Big Trip	<i>Barry Farr</i>
12	Club Meeting	
19	Wednesday run *	<i>Robyn Wards</i>
23	All British Day	<i>Terry Daly</i>
October		
10	Club Meeting	
14	POO Day	<i>Terry Daly</i>

17	Wednesday run *	<i>Ian Norman</i>
21	POLO	<i>Derek Scott</i>
28	Run to Wyong	<i>Terry Daly</i>
November		
4	Lunch run to Hunter Valley	<i>Ross Brackenbury</i>
14	Club Meeting / AGM	
21	Wednesday run *	<i>Colin Allerdice</i>
December		
1	Christmas Party / Presentation dinner	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ^o One SSO /CP Performance to be eliminated 	
	Other ideas that have come through from members or need discussing	
1	Restaurant night...Italian	
2	Pies in Bowral	
3	Gosford Car Museum	
4	Go Karting	
5	Butterfly Farm	
6	Pangallo Estate Hunter Valley	
7	Tea Gardens 10 th March.....Clash with Shed Tour I	
8	Tug Boat trip	
9	Mooney Mooney Workers Club	



EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST BEAUTIFUL BEECHWORTH WEEKEND FRIDAY 23RD TO MONDAY 26TH FEBRUARY 2018



Expressions of interest called from members for a 4 day 3 night trip to Beechworth Victoria ... a 6 hour drive from Sydney:

- Leaving Friday 23rd Feb 2018
- Staying 3 nights in Beechworth at the Carriage Motor Inn@ \$129/room/night. 27 double rooms booked.
- Dinners organised on Friday and Saturday nights. Bus organised for the Amulet Vineyard.
- Sunday night plenty of recommendations.
- A 2½ hr drive on Saturday via Bright & Mt Beauty with lunch at the Red Stag Deer and Emu farm
- Sunday plenty of free time to visit Rutherglen, Glenrowan, Milawa and Beechworth itself
- Full program will be out later in the year but book with Terry Daly now so he can organise the final pieces of the agenda.
- Casual drive back on the Monday 26th February 2018 ... or spend a few more days in this lovely part of the country

Please RSVP to Terry Daly
by 31st October on
0418 675 253
Or
terry.daly@live.com.au



THE 2017 BIG TRIP

Saturday 4th to Sunday 19th November

A LAP OF NEW SOUTH WALES



An epic journey to introduce or reacquaint members with some of the treasures this state can offer, away from most people's beaten tracks. It was brilliantly organised by Julie Braithwaite, ably assisted by Jeremy of the same name.

Daily reports have been written by the participants as stated on each day.

Photographs have also been provided by those whose names appear at the end of the report.

Day 1 – Saturday 4th November

Colo to Gunnedah

Colin & Maria Allerdice

The first day of a TSCC “tour” can sometimes set the scene for every day that follows .. much like the first day of the first test in an Ashes Cricket Series. You know – the bouncers, the sledging, the challenge of it all - the “test” of man.

Last year’s TSCC tour of New Zealand’s South Island was a case in point as Mascot Airport was awash with “Have you heard about the earthquake?” on day one, our travel day. And that was neither a bouncer, a sledge nor anything underarm, but it did bring a certain focus to bear on the first few days of that tour.

Packing for the **Lap of NSW** was not a problem – yes, dear, you can take your computer. The issue was packing all the desirables into a sports car. It was something that we would get a lot of practice on during the tour, as did many others.

The expertly prepared Julie Braithwaite publication “Lap of NSW – Road Book & Instructions” had become a compulsory read for me in the days leading up to departure. Indeed, our copy was marked up with so much yellow texta that it looked like a HSC student’s exam notes. Now Mrs A is a ‘trooper’. With just one previous TSCC tour under her belt and all the confidence of a politician in a safe seat, we set off after breakfast without her having once opened the “study guide”. That was to be done en-route.

We had not gone 400 metres when, to initiate conversation, I said quietly “The Kelly’s aren’t coming”. “I know,” came the prompt but softly spoken reply. How could she know? That’s impossible. She hasn’t looked at Julie’s book. She hasn’t sighted the page listing all the participants. She hasn’t discussed the trip with anyone. Then just as these thoughts were being

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transferred from my brain to my mouth, she added.. “It’s raining!” Yes, we knew that we were being thrown to the wolves here. But then rain is hardly earthquake stuff!

Most met at the Colo Riverside Cafe, Colo River and from there we made our way to Gunnedah, our overnight destination. The rain retreated to drizzle and then turned to sunshine. The “starting grid” was heavily “M” influenced – it appeared that only Mercedes, Mustangs and M BMW’s had been invited but Rick and Lisa Johnson were the clear exception arriving in a red 1964 Ford Fairlane 500 Coupe with rear spats and their three children taking up the back seat.



The day's journey took us through some old & historic townships – Jerry's Plains, Muswellbrook, Scone and Quirindi – before the finishing flag was sighted.

En-route Maria and I visited three of the four Julie Braithwaite recommended "things to see". **BOB'S SHED** was both a tribute to Peter Brock and an example of how one man's Holden treasure can be another man's collection of junk. I totally enjoyed it but I can appreciate why others on the trip didn't go there. Both the **WHO'D A THOUGHT IT LOOKOUT** and **PENSIONERS' HILL LOOKOUT** were excellent and gave good views of the Gunnedah Township and its district.



The first "5.30pm Pre Dinner Drinks" session of the tour was a rollicking affair dimmed only by the news that Rick and Lisa had had car problems. Whilst I have no desire to steal Ross & Sandra Brackenbury's Day Two story, one must realise that Rick has both the skill to fix a car and the wherewithal to come up with a Plan B if necessary. On Day One his skills were tested and he and Lisa arrived at Gunnedah a tad late – just before dinner, but on Day Two the alternate plan needed implementation.

If this was the "day one bouncer", Rick capably ducked under it. Indeed his Plan B ensured that not only Lisa and he had the rest of the tour trouble-free, but also Emily, Ryan and Sophie got to enjoy an old fashioned road trip holiday that all too few families seem to do these days. 438.6km for the day. The car, the driver and the navigator all slept well.



Day 2 – Sunday 5th November

Gunnedah to Lightning Ridge

Sandra and Ross Brackenbury.

After a noisy but enjoyable breakfast it was off to Lightning Ridge. Easy touring across the fertile Liverpool Plains. The distant blue hills created a wonderful backdrop to the farms and grazing cattle. Stands of gum and flowering native bushes and also the single gum create a different scene wherever you looked.

Passing through Boggabri we were amazed at the size of the town with a population of less than 1000. It is really quite big.

Travelling across the plains it brings home the isolation that the farmers endure. The distances they have to tackle to get the basics of food and even medical care. Self sufficiency is a priority and you would have to enjoy your own company!



Travelling into Narrabri the cemetery on the right was a blaze of colour. It seemed every grave had bunches of flowers. We took the side trip out to Mt Kaputar. The distant mountains looked a bit hazy, fingers crossed that we could see the promised 10% of NSW from the top. Good wide roads welcomed us into the Kaputa National Park. Then we hit the dirt! 20 klms of winding road. In the Jag it was slow going. Phew, only 5 klms of dirt, but

from the road the spectacular views of the sheer cliffs and the Mesa were fantastic. Stopped at a few lookouts on the way up, none disappointed with the views offered. Nature is amazing. From the summit of Mt Kaputa we we're privileged to see spectacular views in all directions. Really worth the trip up even though we got a very dusty car. Hopefully car washing facilities will be available in Lightning Ridge!

From Narrabri easy cruising along the Kamilaroi Hwy. Soil colour has started to change from the rich dark brown of the Liverpool plains to the classic red/brown earth of the outback. More great touring roads. Entering Wee Waa the constabulary we're cruising the highway. We took a cruise through a couple of the back roads just to see what is in the town.....not much. Interesting to see small neat aboriginal settlements on the outskirts of the town though.

The flat plains are green with young crops being irrigated from the many bores. Had to slow for cattle on the highway at one point. Lots of big mummies and puppas crossing to the waterhole. Just as well we had warning. Next we were under attack from a metre diameter tumbleweed. Interesting driving. Many kilometres between homesteads. Many dead roos and a few live emus as we traversed the long flat straight road towards Lightning Ridge. A few clouds looked like threatening rain, the farmers will be praying.



Lightning Ridge welcomed us with rusty wrecks, some green grass and lots of red earth. Many piles of white clay showed the numerous diggings surrounding the town. After a very happy 'happy hour' on the grassed area of the resort it was off to the bowling club for dinner.



An enjoyable touring day was had by all.



Day 3 – Monday 6th November

Lightning Ridge

Vic & Jane Clarke



The day started with the obligatory group photo - under a flying combi van at the front of the Lightning Ridge Outback Resort before we headed off on our morning tour of Lightning Ridge attractions.

Our tour guide, Harry, gave us an introduction to the local area and information all about opals;

- Made from silica combined with water
- Occur in the clay levels, between sandstone, which can vary in thickness and contain pockets of nobbies or seam opal
- 95% of world's Black Opals are mined in Lightning Ridge. Have vibrant colours and are the most valuable @ \$2,000 - \$3,000 per carat.

Our first stop was the Walk in Opal Mine at 35feet below ground. The early miners didn't have the luxury of being able to stand up and their equipment was only a pick and a candle. The original owner, Sandy Randall, in 1961 moved 2,000 yards of dirt by hand. He quickly learnt to supplement his income by encouraging tourists to visit his mine.

We then went to 3 Mile Opal Field, a distance of, yes you guessed it, 3 miles out of town from the GPO, and Lunatic Hill. Many opal miners live on their claims in a range of houses and shacks and not in the town; eight out of ten miners are born outside Australia and are motivated by a chance of rich pickings as well as the lifestyle.

Lunatic Hill Open Cut was developed as an open cut mine after the shafts and tunnels that had been dug collapsed due to taking out too much rock and not propping the roof! This is no longer mined and is now a large hole in the ground.



We travelled back to the Opal Bin shop in town, for an informative demonstration of opal cutting and polishing by Justine. Needless to say another visit was required after lunch to actually spend money on her beautiful opal gemstone jewellery.



Our final port of call was the unique Amigos Castle built by hand by local miner Vittorio Stefanato. He gathered so many rocks for his project that local authorities accused him of stealing from Crown Land. His defence in court was that he was just relocating the rocks from one area of Crown Land to another! The judge agreed and acquitted him.

In the afternoon the sky blackened and we thought Lightning Ridge was going to live up to its name - the hailstorm occurred 5km away and we just had a few drops of rain in town, so fortunately no panic to protect the cars.

To end off this busy day - a relaxing soak in the Lightning Ridge artesian bore. Gazing at the moon and stars in water naturally heated to 38 degrees. It's a hard life in the outback!!



Day 4 – Tuesday 7th November

Lightning Ridge to Bourke

Joe & Bev di Francesco

Being good participants we followed the instructions as given and the day pretty well followed as Julie and Jeremy had planned. However not all did as instructed (sorry suggested) and some notable events did occur. As we were leaving Lightning Ridge we came upon our first navigational decision. Not being certain we pulled over to consult Tom Tom but just then a blue pony whizzed past immediately we took chase figuring that following the event organisers would be the best sat nav available. So it proved, we were given notice of hazards, road kill, grazing livestock and grazing wildlife (emu) not to mention being relieved of the stress normally associated with any marital navigation. The pony took a bullet for us, a boulder hurled at Jeremy's windscreen by an oncoming truck left a nasty chip which quickly developed into a nasty crack which by Bourke had spread half way across the screen , I thought there but for the grace of Jeremy go I. (little did I know).



Upon arriving at Brewarrina, and inspecting the fish traps, we came upon a council work gang. It was refreshing to see that councils have standardised on their work ethic and SPPs. The gang consisted of 2 workers, one holding a pole and the other holding a shovel and possibly an additional 13 supervisors all splendidly attired in their hi-viz vests and spf 110 shirts, trousers and hats. We decided that a coffee was more important but just as we were about to go in, along came Kevin .He breezed in, did a 180 in front of the café and deposited a large amount of road dust as he came to a standstill. His car was covered in dust; he had come a different way to the rest of us, I think he was hoping that no one would notice. However after a little careful and diplomatic interrogation the truth evolved. Kevin, on reaching that same juncture whilst exiting Lightning Ridge, says he consulted his sat nav and its instructions were clear –turn right. As I listened intently I realised that this could also have been our fate. After crossing the Queensland border Kevin and Robyn disagreed on who was responsible but agreed that they were going in the wrong direction. Kevin decided that the German Tom Tom was unreliable and resorted to the proven method of maps. Surprisingly the end result was remarkable; he arrived maybe 5-10 minutes after us and had navigated a rally course in the process. I understand that Kevin, Robyn and German Tom Tom are the only participants to have done a lap of NSW that included QLD and VIC.

Coffee was taken and off we went to Bourke. What a lovely surprise, a nice town a glorious motel and, just enough time to prepare for our



Melbourne cup luncheon. Walking to the pub it became obvious that some of us had put some real effort into our attire. After lunch or maybe it was before, Colin Piper was appointed the judge for the afternoon's events and fortunately for the writer he had the foresight to record the results and pass them to me, however the same cannot be said for the sweeps organiser our golden Greek, (I probably should have asked Eve);, no matter, as best I can recall somebody got first place and I think someone came in second and third place was taken by a nobody.



The dress competition was the more hotly contested event

Best men's hat – most appropriate for Melbourne cup day - easily won by Ryan Johnson, sporting a hat that Tommy Smith would have been proud of.



Most inappropriate hat (gentleman) – a hotly contested event and probably won by a nose- Colin Allerdice

Ladies' Fascinator – Andra Pike- a beautiful yellow on black number worn with much grace.

Ladies' Hat – ML Howard – I believe that ML had planned to go to the cup and this was part of her apparel for the event - how could she not win, lovely. (previous page)



Special prize for constructing a fascinator in Lightning Ridge from found objects – Linda Slater – I don't know where she dug them up but she did.

Special prize for elegant dressing- Eve Stefan- Eve should have been at Flemington with ML.

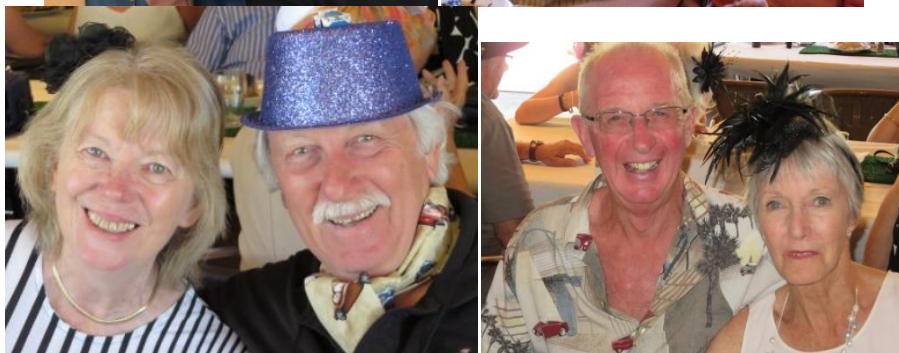
Special prize for plate breaking-



Peter Stefan- easily taken out by Peter having had years of experience at family gatherings where Hellenes consider it cool to break their hosts plates. And somebody said that Italians (maybe Aussies) are a weird mob.



Lunch was followed by a nanny nap in preparation for the happy hour and a half and then to dinner at the Diggers' Club, curfew was 9.00 for 9.30 at which point the Dobermans would be let loose in the compound to protect our treasured steeds.



So the day ends with all put to bed by 10.00 to be refreshed and ready for tomorrow's adventure

Think I've probably already gone beyond the attention span of most of us but there is an important detail that you should know. The big event of the day, we all missed as our thorough organisers would not have been aware and it was by sheer good luck that we discovered it.

I don't know how I can keep it short but here goes

As we were checking out of the motel at Lightning Ridge, Beverley noticed a cage with a few guinea pigs doing busy things. Bev asked the receptionist what are the guinea pigs doing here, no they are not guinea pigs they are hamsters was the reply (an unknown lady in reception) she then proceeded to explain . "They are some of the entrants in the Lightning Ridge hamster handicap. The race is held once a year on Melbourne Cup day and inclusion is by strict invitation. It is limited to locals regarding attendance, competitors, trainers, jockeys and owners".

The field consists of 27 and although the race is nominated as a handicap event, in fact, it is not. Entrants can be of all sexes, sizes, weights and temperaments. Nominations are accepted no later than 6 months before the event at which time the race committee takes over and the sup regs are put into effect. I think at this point she saw the interest in our eyes and proceeded to tell us that the event was not publicised in print or on the web and that results were pretty simple to remember as there was only one place getter, it was considered by the committee long ago that there was only one winner and the rest of the field were not winners. In other words she said, "nearly winning was not a trait that Ridgers (Lightening Ridge people) considered worthy of any accolades" I guess this comes from living and working in such harsh conditions. She then proceeded to tell us of some of the regulations that she considered would be of interest. Whilst training or during racing, hamsters are in no way physically or mentally abused. Performance can only be encouraged by reward or compliments (what a revolutionary idea for other forms of animal racing) the race

committee is charged with enforcement, and any evidence of abuse leads to instant dismissal and future prevention of any involvement in the race. Devices such as treadmills are banned as all training must be free range, hamsters must want to race, is the doctrine.

By now I had started to understand the mindset behind these rules .65 years ago when the race was first held animals were trusted and vital friends, partners in the miners' lives. They were providers of food, extra muscle and great companionship so no wonder they treat even small cute mammals with such respect. Our story teller then continued, "Last year's winner was a 6 month old filly named Handsome. She was an albino and although there was some concern at her ability to compete, the committee was satisfied that all rules had been followed and she showed no signs of weakness or ill health .She beat the field by a country mile showing great heart, a performance that will never be forgotten, but as she crossed the line, she stumbled, her little legs racing to keep up with the momentum of her body. It was not a stumble - her heart had stopped and she passed away on the track. The emotion that welled in the crowd was overwhelming." The story teller said her children still pray for that little giant. As she told this story my mind started to wonder on animal related topics. I have never understood why God thought it was a good idea that animals should need to kill other animals in order to survive. When I hear of tragedy, of unnecessary or untimely death I will always think of Handsome .This year's race has a new regulation and a veterinary consultation for all participants will be mandatory .Whilst realising this would not eliminate the possibility of a reoccurrence, it would limit it. At the committee's post-race deliberations the emotion was so intense that there was a motion to discontinue the event.

I was saddened to realise that I would never be a part of this event but heartened by the knowledge that even under the harshest conditions Aussies were still able to have fun and be mindful of even the most insignificant of our furry friends. Flemington can have its pomp and whipping; my vote goes to Lightning Ridge and the Hamster Handicap an

event where enjoyment belongs to both entrants and observers. This is the kind of event that should stop a nation.

PS: betting is absolutely prohibited



I wish to thank our fellow travellers, our dedicated organisers, Peter Van Dyk for his diplomatic handling of all complaints and Kevin Leggett for his contribution in raising the bar for sartorial elegance on the run.

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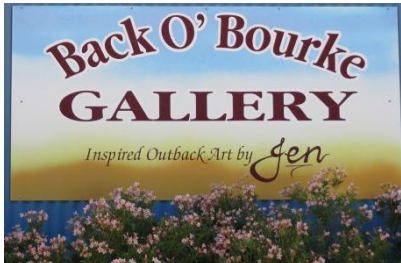
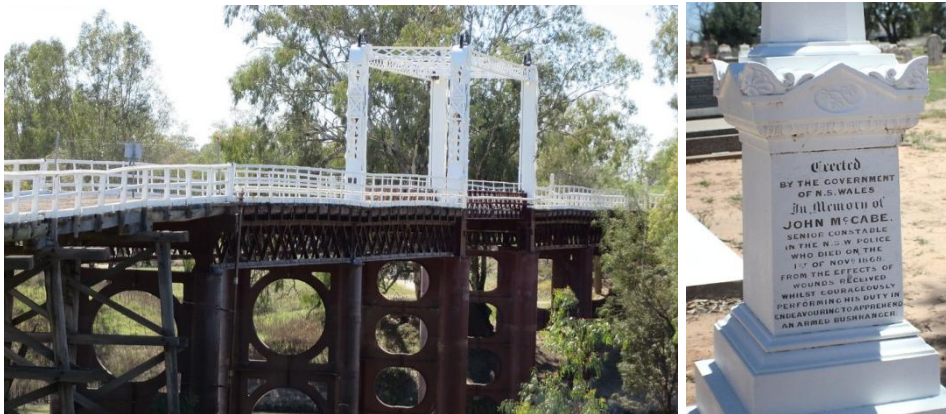
Day 5 – Wednesday 8th November

Bourke to Cobar

James & Janina Elphick

After coffee with our fellow travellers and a short walking tour around town, we headed off to see the BACK OF BOURKE EXHIBITION CENTRE. It was only going to be for a short while but ended up being for two hours. It could have been a full day affair. The walls were covered with the town's history plus the surrounding area, lots of visual and audio displays. Stories of local heroes, bushrangers, poets and ordinary people who pioneered the harsh land and made it what it became - A COMMUNITY.

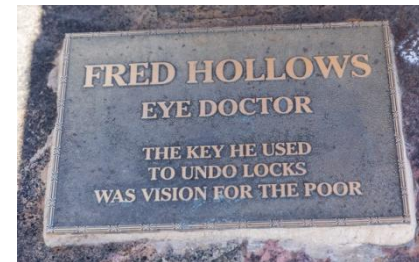
Then it was on to the old bridge, much prettier than the new one which is A SLAB OF CONCRETE, over the Darling River.



We visited the OUTBACK GALLERY, where Jenny welcomed us. Jenny is a local artist who paints the local landscapes and nature in watercolours. She is very talented; the colours were true to what you saw around you.

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We had lunch with the local truckies at the roadhouse. The lass who works there is keen on photography and had prints of her photos all over the walls. Some of the shots were outstanding.



Then it was on to the local cemetery to see the memorial for Fred Hollows plus the old part where the pioneers were buried, lots of them children.

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Then we headed for Cobar, 162 kilometres through red earth on both sides of the road, contrasting with the silver scrub and gums. There were lots of wild goats on the road; just a bit of trivia, they fetch \$5 Kilo. We saw emus, too fast to take photos, SPEEDY GONZALES was driving.



We arrived at our accommodation, First Class, in time for drinks and nibbles, then to the local golf club for a Chinese banquet.



GOSSIP!

One of our group had a flat tyre.

A bit of red wine was spilled, just a bit left in the bottle for a refill, what a relief!



Day 6 – Thursday 9th November

Cobar to Broken Hill

ML Howard & Dick Brown



The drive started with perfect conditions - sunny skies and cool temp at 20°C. The wind was light and it felt cool compared to yesterday.

The road seemed to relatively new with freshly groomed shoulders. This made the drive rather boring during the straight, level sections because the rework left the shoulders lacking the grasses and scrub to interest the kangaroos. The goats and sheep however seem to like the roadway and were seen in large numbers.



A stop at Wilcannia provided a chance to observe the Darling River. It was hard to imagine

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that little stream flooding the road way where we had been driving.



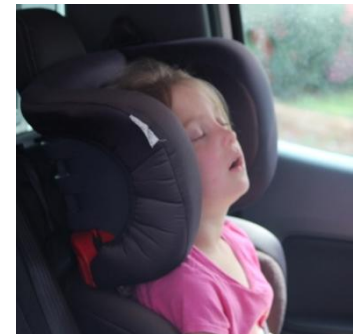
Shortly before arriving in Broken Hill the farm land took on a different appearance. The fields turned green but there was no evidence of irrigation equipment, like we had seen on previous trips through the outback.

Our first impression of Broken Hill was quite favourable. The city's effort to preserve and restore the old buildings and architecture has been well done. The residents are deservedly



proud of the results.

The city overall is very friendly and the residents anxious to help visitors in any way they can.





One wonders where the people are. The size of the businesses and downtown areas and wide streets and roads should have more people.

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A tour around the city reveals lots of empty businesses and houses up for sale.



A couple of our members have family ties to Broken Hill:

Andra Pike's mother was born here.

Robyn Leggett's father was born and raised through high school.

Day 7 – Friday 10th November

Broken Hill

Jack & Alan Jones



Started the day at the Silly Goat Café (an appropriate name for those that were there) for coffee and breakfast.

Had a look around town and dropped into the Silver City Mint & Art Centre where they have the longest hanging painting by one artist (100 metres long x 30 metres high).



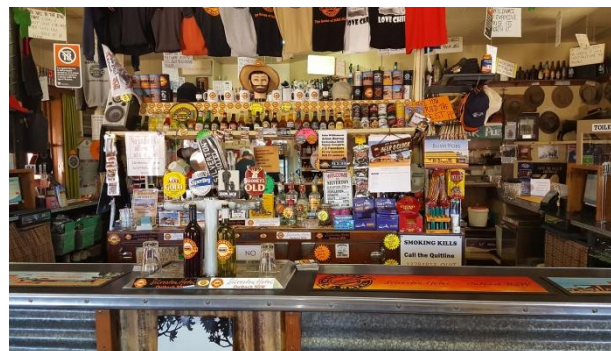
Drove out of town to visit the Day Dream Mine on the way to Silverton where you can go into the mine and really get a sense of the harsh life the miners had back in the 1800s.



Then on to Silverton, the ghost mining town famous for movies and advertisements, most notably the Mad Max movie. Had a good laugh at the Beyond 39 Dips Art Gallery at

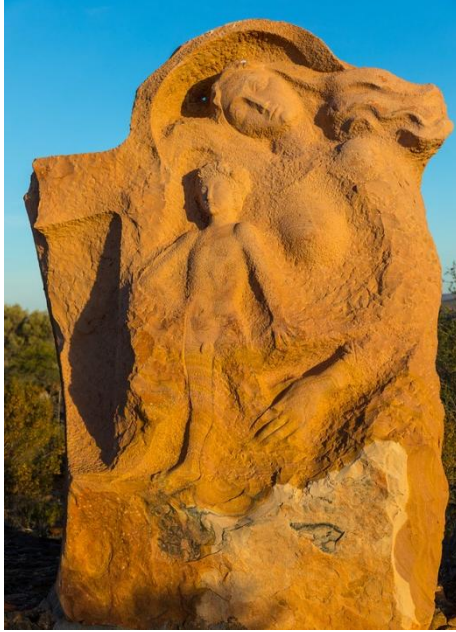
the very humorous paintings. Also visited the Old Goal and Museum which
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is surprisingly large and filled with relics of the history of Silverton and its mining community from its harsh beginnings to a substantial mining town and then into decline and its ghost town appearance today.



In the late afternoon drove back out to the Sculptures in the Living Desert Reserve and lookout to watch the sun go down over the desert hills.





On return to Broken Hill we went to the Demo club to listen to a rock and roll tribute band called Rock Around the World with very funny skits of rock and roll hits.

Day 8 – Saturday 11th November

Broken Hill

Darryl & Andra Pike

Saturday was a Lay-Day in Broken Hill so sleeping in was an option, especially after a late night at the Demo Club with entertainment provided by Dave alias Dolly Parton / Tina Turner.

Andra was still asleep so I tried to determine what the meaning of LAY Day was. Does it mean what I think it does, could I get lucky? So I Googled it, and no unfortunately that's not what it means.



So up early and I was off to the supermarket on the hill. As we had taken the Terra-Tory we had room for the Nutra Bullet, car fridge and lots of goodies, so I stocked up with a week's supply of fruit - brownie points for this load. Punnets of fresh strawberries, blueberries, bananas, pineapples, apples, oranges and mangoes.



This was a great idea until the very next day our conscience kicked in and we had to stop at the fruit fly sign just Nth. of Mildura. Ever tried to eat a full punnet of strawberries followed by a pear banana, and an apple? We then fed some backpackers but the rest, sadly was emptied into the bin.



What a great place Broken Hill is; great cafes, pubs and galleries. We visited most. Pro Hart was everywhere, but the real surprise was Silverton, with the pub owner taken there in a horse and dray in 1948, voted Miss Silverton in 1968, now owning not only the pub but the Catholic church and a beautiful modern home built over massive concrete tanks on the only hill around. Donkeys wandered the streets and of course Mad Max stuff everywhere, including the VW hot rod



permanently parked on the red dirt in front of the pub. Andra had fond memories of her teaching years with a visit to the old Silverton school, once housing 100s of kids, now a museum. Desks with china ink wells the type I used to fill with powdered ink mixed with water; that was the '50s.

On the way back to Broken Hill we visited the sandstone sculptures in the Living Desert Reserve, a must to see, then on to the hospital where Andra's mum was born 100 years ago.

After all that I looked at Andra and said, "Remember last Thursday?"

"Yes "

"Well fancy me remembering and you not; it was our 49th wedding anniversary."

Well I saved on a present.

Broken Hill a great place to visit.





Day 9 – Sunday 12th November

Broken Hill to Mildura

Derek & Maggie Scott

We, along with several others, left Broken Hill at about 8.30 am in clear 31°C weather. We were a little nervous about the 294km trip through uninhabited countryside due to having 2 punctures in the previous 3 days. This used up the spare tyre that we thankfully chose to pack and its replacement that we had ordered for delivery to Broken Hill after the first puncture just 20 km out of Bourke on our way to Broken Hill. We



we were enjoying the changing scenery and driving conditions until about 100km out of Broken Hill a dashboard warning “Check Tyre Pressures” came up. After inspection and checking, we somewhat nervously resumed our journey with just the

supplied Spacesaver spare wheel as back-up.

The countryside varied so much and changed from rather barren and flat to red, treed and undulating. A huge area of wheat that looked nearly ready to be harvested was a wonderful sight. There was very little traffic, with most of it being caravans, Winnebagos and road trains. A much bigger road risk is the prevalence of feral goats (which do have some road sense), kangaroos (which don't) and sheep and cattle, and carcasses and crows etc feeding on those that haven't been removed from the road.

It was with some relief that we arrived in Wentworth, which is like an oasis with its green trees, lawns and flowers. We enjoyed an overdue coffee at Wentworth before viewing the point where the mighty Murray and Darling rivers meet.



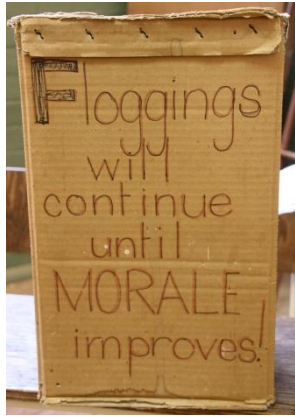
We enjoyed the short journey to Mildura, driving through lush irrigated paddocks of orange trees, grape vines and green grass. After a quick light lunch near our hotel and freshening up, we joined the Sunset Mungo Lake Tour with Peter and Jelly van Dyk and Ross and Sandra Brackenbury plus 2 other couples. It was a 7-hour (3pm - 10pm) experience that was well worthwhile even considering a long 250km round trip (200 on gravel). Lake Mungo is one of the oldest places outside of Africa to have been occupied by modern humans since ancient times. Artefacts have been discovered that date back over 50,000 years across the expanses of the last ice age. It is a World Heritage Site and human fossils were uncovered in

2003. They were from a female now named Mungo Woman and date back 20,000 years. Mungo Man's remains have since been found.



Before we went to the Walls of China, we enjoyed a nice cold salad and sweet that were provided as part of the tour. On our walk over and along the Walls of China, we saw lots of animal and reptile tracks, bones of long deceased (and extinct?) creatures, fascinating geology and colours, especially as the sun set. The journey home in the dark was slower in an effort, successful as it happens, to avoid the many kangaroos, cows, rabbits and sheep. The weather was hot, the flies were sticky and many, but a wonderful time was had by all.





Day 10 – Monday 13th November

Mildura

Julie Braithwaite

Today was a free activity day – people making their own arrangements and doing as they pleased.

Quite a large group enjoyed a morning cruise on the paddle-boat – by all accounts a pleasant way to spend a few hours before the day got too hot.



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A few brave souls did a day trip to Lake Mungo, which was very enjoyable, if in sweltering heat. Others had booked a tour the day before. A lady on



the trip (not one of our group, thank goodness) had a nasty turn in the heat and luckily Maria Allerdice was wearing a loose dress and was able to shade the poor woman until the tour guide organised to get

her to the bus. It is thought all turned out well, but it could have been very nasty.



Others visited the Mildura Art Gallery which is housed adjacent to a beautiful old house called Rio Vista. The house was built by the Chaffey family which founded Mildura and the irrigation area that surrounds the town.

The Art Vault was also a popular spot just up the road from the Mercure where we were staying.



Lunch was enjoyed in a number of cafes, while some ventured to the pub at Gol Gol, others to the Trenthan Winery, the Brewery and Stefano's Cafe.

Some of the girls took to retail

therapy in the afternoon!



Bob Smith spent a while with the local constabulary. Unfortunately during the night some yob decided to key the driver's side of Bob and Jeni's BMW. The likely culprit was

hopefully identified on CCTV and will be arrested.

The majority of the group enjoyed a five course degustation at Stefano's Restaurant. Many thanks to Colin and Jan Piper for organising this memorable dinner and convincing Stefano to open specially for us. We had the whole place to ourselves.

Many will remember Stefano de Pieri for his TV show Gondola on the Murray. You can refresh your memory here: <https://abccommercial.com/contentsales/program/gondola-murray>



He retains his sense of humour and huge enthusiasm for the produce of the region. After the meal he came through to our group and told us a bit about himself. He also told a great joke which for sure Terry can retell at a club meeting!



Day 11 – Tuesday 14th November

Mildura to Barham

Peter & Eve Stefan

We started our day with many of our fellow travellers with a coffee and other Greek goodies at the Greek Caffeneo (café). We then backtracked a couple kilometres to visit Orange World where we learned the three P's of growing oranges and citrus fruit. 1. Throw the discarded Peel from the fruit around the base of the tree. 2. Use chook Poo for fertilizer. 3. Most importantly Pee on your orange tree. Interestingly their freshly squeezed orange juice was very nice.

Also heard that when Cottee's made their TV jingle at Orange World "My dad picks the fruit that goes to Cottee's, to make the cordial, that I like best" they told the owners of Orange World that their oranges weren't orange enough and the trees not green enough. So they used plastic oranges on one of their Avocado trees instead. Peter found a new occupation operating the sorting machine.



Next stop was Swan Hill where we drove around this more modern town looking at the few older buildings and churches and bottle trees up the centre of the main street. More coffee at Boos café then down to the Settlers' Village where you can find all the old circa 1830s missing

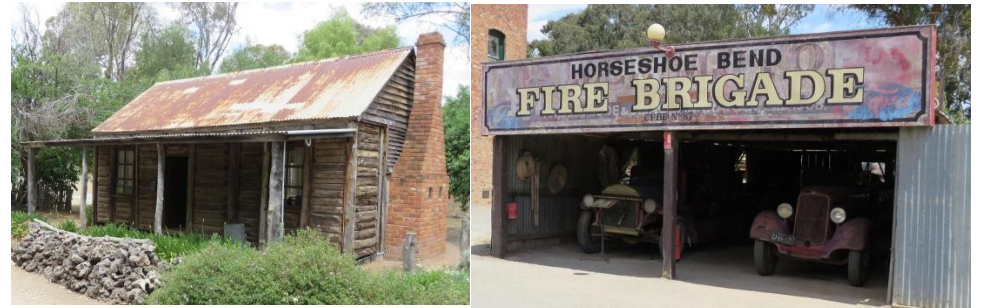
buildings like the school house, coach house, stables, saddlery, blacksmith's shop, bank, P.O, bakery and shearing shed.

It is really worth a visit there is so much to see like the D3 Steam locomotive, steam workshop and working paddle steamer to ride on. Also many interesting,

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historical stories and information like the machinery used to make the original corrugated iron. In the evenings they have an amazing laser light show.





The last highlight for the drive to Barham was the Boga Flying Boat Museum but unfortunately time was running out for us so we didn't get to see the museum but it received glowing reports from all who did. The restored Catalina Flying Boat was the main highlight but there were many more artefacts and wonderful stories.



It was a beautiful drive from Mildura to Barham winding through fields with crops about ready for harvest, pretty green vineyards and beautiful little country towns along the Murray River.

Barham was one of these beautiful little towns on the river. Dinner was at the local Services and Golf club in the enchantingly named Myst Room. Great food, great company, great day.



Day 12 – Wednesday 15th November

Barham to Mulwala

Barry Farr & Dott Forester

Another blue sky warm morning punctuated by an al fresco breakfast. CluBarham Motel's hosts of just 10 weeks provided a hot spread of assorted juices, cereals, sausages, eggs and bacon. Our final day destination today would be

Mulwala. Once on the road we first passed through Cohuna, a small town supported by the surrounding dairy industry with the Murray River a stone's throw away and a unique golf course carved out of the red gum forest, the home course of Stuart Appleby and the Pro-Am named in his



honour each September. The town also hosts the Big Cohuna Festival each Melbourne Cup week. In Leitchville, where the town's motto is 'Dairying is our Craft', we passed by the Murray-Goulburn Co-operative which at one stage was the largest organisation of its type in the world.

In Gunbower we diverted to view Gunbower Island, the largest inland island in Australia and home to turtles, platypus, catfish, goanna and migrant water and woodland bird species from Asia. Gunbower derives from the aboriginal word 'Kambowro' which means crooked, which aptly describes the twists and turns of the Gunbower Creek anabranch.

Next, it was on to Echuca, a very pretty town beside the river where a drive around the streets revealed some beautiful cottages and rose gardens. We weren't able to direct Peter Stefan to a good coffee shop but did direct

Darryl, Bob and Jack (sorry Jenny) to a model shop, then made the mistake of parking outside The Echuca Emporium where the merchandise suited Dott to a tee. Before leaving town, we tried to secure accommodation for next July's Echuca/Moana Winter Blues Festival, but all booked out.



Nathalia's only claim to fame was a Strawberry Festival a fortnight hence but Cobram had an old bridge opened in 1902 with a lift-up span last opened in 1974. It's no longer in use as a new bridge replaced the old in 2006. Cobram is named after the aboriginal word meaning 'Head Station' as Cobram was the head pastoral station in the district.



The previous night Derek had suggested two worthwhile stops before reaching Yarrawonga. Many took the dirt road to the Boosey Cheese Factory and were not disappointed whilst others, including Dott & I, visited Rich Glen Olives housed in a beautifully presented 100 year old homestead just off the highway. The Elphicks detoured to Bendigo to view Edith Head's exhibition of 1940/50s designer costumes whilst the Braithwaites visited the Shepparton Motor Museum and immediately reported the presence of an Overland to Les Johnson and marvelled at the 'Moonshine Buick'. The Dixons visited John's sister on the way and M-L and Dick

travelled directly to Mulwala providing time to undertake a one and half hour boat cruise on the man-made lake. Mulwala means large lagoon or big black water and the lake was made in 1939 by damming the Murray to create an inland aquatic paradise. Our accommodation at Club Mulwala was right on the foreshores, however, drinks on the 'duck poo' lawn were cut short by a thunderstorm.



Dinner that night was multi choice in the Club Mulwala. The majority chose the fine dining Stone Grill, a handful chose the Orient and the rest Diggers Bistro, which from my point of view, provided a great choice of delicious desserts. Dott and I thoroughly enjoyed the day and have discussed returning to the Echuca area to visit the other 13 farm gate trail fresh produce offerings and to hopefully acquire suitable accommodation for the 2019 Blues Festival.



Day 13 – Thursday 16th November

Mulwala to Tumbarumba

Rick & Lisa Johnson

Day 13 starts off as a wet and miserable, our first day of rain on the trip.

It was a slow start for our camp and member sightings were limited given the weather, so we packed the tribe into the car and headed to Wodonga, with a brief stop in Rutherglen to get some sticky tape to stop dirt getting in to our 10cm stone chip in the windscreen kindly given to us by a passing truck along the way.



After getting a BBQ Chicken and some bread roll for lunch in Wodonga we punched our co-ordinates into the sat-nav in the car, which confused us somewhat with two options, so checked with Mr Google on our phones offering us a 3rd option, not assisting in our in-car politics. This confusion however got us to Bellbridge where we ate our lunch on Lake Hume. A very picturesque place.



Ryan spotted the roaring red rocket of Colin and Jan as they drove past us at Bellbridge sharing a friendly wave.



We enjoyed our drive along the Murray River Road following Lake Hume, where Rick repeatedly mentioned to Lisa that we were in the wrong car for these amazing roads. I think he wished he was in the DBR2, not the Ford Ranger!

Despite the weather it really was a very amazing drive, seeing the dead trees in the lake looked quite eerie, but beautiful. The countryside was a far cry from the red dirt and vastness of the Outback.

Yet again we were lucky enough to share a beer in the public bar of a pub in Tumbarumba with Colin and Maria, as we have done on this trip before whilst the kids shared a game of pool.

A brief walk around the town, learning about its gold mining history was done. We learnt that Tumbarumba in Aboriginal means “hollow sounding ground”.



Day 14 – Friday 17th November

Tumbarumba to Thredbo

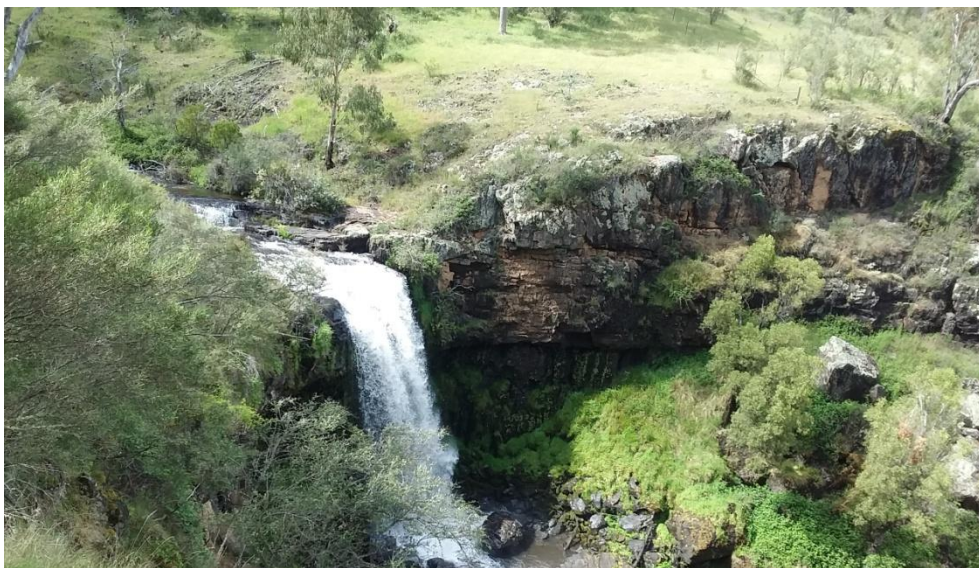
Kevin & Robyn Leggott



We woke up to a lovely, bright sunny day at Tumbarumba. Lots of us went into the town centre to have breakfast and look around the town. Then off on our trip to Thredbo.

Our first stop was at Paddys Falls – spectacular sight helped by overnight rain. Several Club members were there to view the Falls. Then off again to be confronted by major roadworks on the way.....after a short wait an escort car led us through a maze of graders, road rollers

and compacters over sometimes rough uneven rocky surface for 2 to 3 km when finally we could continue our journey.



Our next stop was at the Southern Cloud Memorial site. The Southern Cloud left Mascot Airport, Sydney on March 21, 1931 to fly to Essendon Airport, Melbourne with pilot, co-pilot and 6 passengers. It disappeared in heavy rain with a forecast of unsettled weather and never reached its destination. After 18 days of searching nothing was found. On October 16, 1958 Tom Sonter set out to photograph mountain scenery and discovered the Southern Cloud near deep creek nearly 3 decades later. On October 26, 2008, the 50th anniversary of the Southern Cloud discovery Tom Sonter and relatives of passengers and crew and people of the district gathered at the crash site to remember. So glad we stopped to look at this memorial and view the scenery around it.



On the road again and a stopover in Khancoban for some refreshments. On leaving we came across a young couple, Steve and Amelia, on a KTM motorbike who were off to Jindabyne and then on an adventure around the world.

Our journey to Thredbo was beautiful, very windy road through the mountains and wonderful scenery. At Thredbo we found our accommodation and had another major trek to take our luggage to the 2nd floor. The weather was good but a thunderstorm came during the afternoon.



We had our drinks in the hotel lounge with lots of comfy chairs and a fire blazing in the centre of the room. Then on to dinner for all. It was an unplanned dinner with an assortment of options. Lots of fun, talk, food and drinks before finally heading off to bed.

Day 15 – Saturday 18th November

Thredbo

Colin & Jan Piper



Jan and I had left Lane Cove exactly 2 weeks earlier in pretty much the same weather that greeted us on this Saturday, Day 15 of the Lap of NSW, the date Jeremy had allotted to us for the write-up in Top Gear. Thredbo presented a bleak outlook from our hotel window and after the magnificent day of driving the previous day from Tumbarumba, it seemed likely to us that none of the cars, several of which were tucked safely away in undercover parking, were likely to turn a wheel on this wet and miserable day. The exception was the Dalys who had to return to Sydney so that Terry could chauffeur various famous golfers around in preparation for the Australian Golf Open. We heard the Mustang fire up as he and Robyn left after an early breakfast.

An excellent breakfast buffet was had in the “Cascades Restaurant” and judging by the clothing in evidence, it immediately became obvious that we had arrived into the cool climate of the mountains and had left the heat of the west well behind us. That said, there were still 2 pairs of shorts on display at breakfast, Peter van Dyk and Ross Brackenbury getting another day of wear out of theirs, otherwise, no knees made an appearance as far as we saw.

At breakfast, Peter announced to all that the parking ranger was roaming around checking that we all had the Kosciuszko National Park permit on display on our cars. Those of us who had arrived after the Thredbo Information Centre had closed the previous day immediately went down there to make things right. We, and several others had a “reminder notice” under our wiper but that was quickly converted into the correct documentation before any fines were issued. I am not sure that would happen in Lane Cove!

The rain and mist seemed to be set in and after breakfast and a stroll around the compact Thredbo Village, many settled in the lounge area of the hotel with the Saturday papers and the crosswords. The log fire (artificial but very comforting) made for a perfect ambience. Oh yes...8 down was SEXTON.

A few hardy souls went for a walk and I understand some did get caught in the frequent rain showers that swept across Thredbo. The chair lift up to the top station was running, but it disappeared into the mist, the top of the run not being visible from the village. The Johnson family made the trip (there was some snow still on the ground much to the delight of Sophie, Ryan and Emily), as did Janina Elphick. There may have been

others and if so I apologise for missing them. I was well into my SMH at that time.



Mid morning, "Central Road", the coffee shop was visited by most of us, the weather still not conducive to outdoor activity. Clever how in Thredbo one can get from place to place without actually going outside, though maybe Jan and I haven't visited enough ski resorts to realise this is the norm.

More reading in the lounge followed, which by now had the atmosphere of a library or an English Gentleman's Club. Anyone who ventured near with a raised (normal that is) voice was shushed in true librarian style but I should add that the only people who did come along were TSCC members. The staff then told us that "Amanda and Daniel" were to be married in that

lounge at 3:30PM because of the shocking weather outside, so we would have to vacate by 1:30. Bugger.

Jan and I then went for a light lunch, again at "Central Road" which was more than half full with Club members. During lunch the Scotts came by and mentioned to us that they were about to go up the chair lift. We said we would join them after we had finished our meal. They thanked us profusely later because had they gone straight away, they would have been soaked in the very heavy rain showers that came over. Fortunately, when we went together an hour or so later, (I confess to a few misgivings) we stayed dry and even had a brief glimpse of the sun.

At the "Eagles Nest", the bar at the top, we were greeted with the devastating news that they had just closed. We protested (in good spirit) that we had braved the weather to come, so we were invited in and offered complimentary schnapps, a gesture that was both appreciated and enjoyed by the 4 of us. It goes without saying that the view out of the window was a whiteout of cloud and mist.





This particular weekend coincided with the opening of the mountain bike season at Thredbo so the chair lift was well used by the riders with their bikes being shuttled to the top with these clever racks for the bikes hung at the back of the chairs. After several runs down the specially made tracks, these riders were well



and truly covered in mud so that they looked like characters right out of "Mad Max", what with their filthy brown totally mud-soaked clothing and the full-face mud splattered helmets with the goggles

instead of a visor. We witnessed a couple, upon our return to ground level actually being hosed down in order to remove the caked-on mud. We secretly hoped that it was with warm and not cold water. This was the same treatment that the very sophisticated bikes received; fore and aft suspension, disc brakes, more gears than an F1 car. We spoke to one guy at length and he was not so happy about the thick mud because he said he

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had to actually pedal through some of the heavy stuff instead of having the forces of gravity on his side all the way down.

When Derek and Maggie, and Jan and I eventually returned to the hotel, thankfully missing any rain that would have soaked us, (it is amazing how vulnerable one feels on a chair lift when totally surrounded my mist and knowing that there are unseen threatening black clouds all around you) and also avoiding the VERY muddy chairs on the chair lift, the result of the mountain biker's continual use, we repaired to our rooms for a rest before meeting again in the Cascades Restaurant for our final drinks and dinner.

Speeches were made, all of which rightly praised the Braithwaites for the wonderful organization of the trip. Jeremy graciously credited Julie with most of it...but it takes two as we all know. Everyone made a few comments about the 15 days...one of the best which should have deserved a prize I reckon, was when Kevin Leggott mentioned the fact that he and Robyn were the only people on the trip to visit Queensland...having turned right instead of left when leaving Lightning Ridge. It brought the house down. I must also mention the brilliant poem that was penned by Eve Stefan on the card presented to the Braithwaites; I hope it is recorded elsewhere in this

issue of Top Gear (See Day 16 notes that follow – Ed). May I nominate her for the position of 'Poet Laureate'? Barry Farr spoke eloquently as he



always does and Jeremy and Julie were presented with gifts of appreciation from us all. He also hinted at the Big Trip for 2018 being in September, the destination, SE Queensland.



Cascades Restaurant in readiness for our last meal of the trip together. It was an excellent night.



A POSTSCRIPT:

On Sunday morning the TSCC members began making their way back home. Jan and I were intending to visit Tumut and Gundagai for family matters so didn't head home immediately. I understand a few others may have stayed in Canberra too. The roads to Gundagai were magnificent. No traffic to speak of and passing the Blowering Dam we even caught sight of some preparations being made by Dave Warby for his attempt to break his father Ken's world water speed record of 511.58kph set in 1978. I understand this latest jet powered craft has to be lowered in and out of the water by crane, with the driver/pilot sealed inside. No thanks!

<http://warbymotorsport.com>

The Scotts too made this same trip to Gundagai so that Derek could collect another car for his collection (you'll have to ask him). We stayed the night in Yass at a superb B & B called "The Globe Inn", our second but not our last visit, before arriving home on Monday afternoon having covered 3965 very enjoyable kilometres in the little red car.



Day 16 – Sunday 19th November

Thredbo to home

David & Linda Slater

The day had finally arrived to say farewell to our fellow travellers and return home. For the past two weeks we had experienced contrasts in temperatures (6°- 38°) as well as contrasting landscapes from red dirt edging never ending straight roads to the Murray River valley with flowing rice and green pastures alongside winding roads. This trip had indeed opened our eyes to the harsh conditions of the Australian outback.

From Thredbo we were heading home. Home to our loved ones, our pets, our grandkids, our man caves, our gardens and the many things that make home special in our lives. We leave with wonderful memories and great friendships. We are extremely grateful to Julie and Jeremy for their amazing efforts in organising this trip, and I finish by sharing the wonderful poem from Eve Stefan expressed in the Thank You card given to Julie at the last dinner in Thredbo:

*And we're doing the Big Lap of NSW
So Jeremy and Julie
Lead us down the beaten track
To see the sights and hear the outback tales.*

*From Gunnedah to Lightning Ridge
And on to the 'Back 'o Bourke'
Then on to Cobar, Broken Hill
With mines still hard at work.*

*Then left and down to Wentworth town
Where two great rivers meet
The Darling and the Murray,*

L

What an awesome sight to see.

*Next on the sweet Mildura
With oranges and vines
Loved the food at Greek Stefano's
And enjoyed some lovely wines.*

*The Barham and Mulwala
Tumbarumba to Thredbo
Great times and fun adventures
We're so glad we got to go.*

*So we'd like to thank you Julie
All the work that you have done
And we'd like to thank you Jeremy
For this fantastic run.*

-Eve & Peter XX



THE WRAP

Julie Braithwaite

Quite a few in the group had never travelled in outback NSW and I think many of the towns came as a pleasant revelation. While some outback towns do have social problems, we found them all to be neat and trouble free. In fact, the only incident of a malicious nature on the whole trip was in Mildura (hardly an outback town) where Bob and Jeni Smith's car was keyed in the hotel carpark.

Many people commented on the beautiful colonial buildings, particularly in Bourke and Wilcannia – both towns people originally thought were no-go zones!

The group all got on well and there was much laughter at the group dinners....as well as the consumption of good food. Again, the quality of the food was a pleasant surprise to many.

At the final dinner at Thredbo people were asked to share their favourite memory of the trip. Many commented on the good company and great driving roads, and the pleasure of having Rick and Lisa's three (exceptionally well behaved) kids with us on the trip. Some other specifics include (and I'm sorry if I missed some comments):

David and Linda Slater: the pace of the trip and Bourke.

Jelly Van Dyk: Silverton with its feeling of the outback.

Peter Van Dyk: managed to cook his own steak at the Stonegrill at Mulwala (those who know Peter will be aware he does not cook...in fact he bought Jelly a BBQ for her to use!)

Jim Elphick: seeing parts of NSW never seen before, especially Lake Mungo

Janina Elphick: Priscilla Queen of the Desert in Broken Hill.

Colin Allerdice: for nature Lake Mungo; for man-made Pioneer Village at Swan Hill.

Maria Allerdice: the colours of the landscapes. In her next life she is considering being a duck on the Murray!

Ross and Sandra Brackenbury: this was their first long tour in the Jaguar and both love the car. Unfortunately it was head-butted by a deer on the road out of Thredbo, so some repairs are in order and it will be home for Christmas. The big eye-opener were the towns visited.

Joe and Bev Di Francesco: enjoyed the car. The rock band at The Demo Club at Broken Hill. The drive from Khancoban to Thredbo.

Jack Jones: liked the whole trip but was annoyed Peter Van Dyk always beat him away in the mornings. (BTW: Jack had his portable air horn with him, so we always knew when he and Alan were departing).

John Dixon: the people made the trip for them – and they got to know a lot of members better.

Val Dixon: felt comfortable in Bourke and Wilcannia – we can stay there!

Peter and Eve Stefan: loved the outback and visited towns never been to before, especially Bourke. BTW – Peter insists it is Stefanos, the Greek, not Stefanos, the Italian.

Rick and Lisa Johnson: had a challenging start, but Val and John Dixon saved them near Gunnedah towing the Fairlane back to town. Thanked the group for taking to the kids – it was a true family holiday.

Derek and Maggie Scott: Lake Mungo was the highlight. They did the tour with 3 other TSCC couples, plus 2 other couples (Swiss and Norwegian). The Europeans were the only ones with fly nets! Maggie ate a fly and there

were something like 75 million flies on each person's back. Broken Hill was fantastic – epitomised the outback. Loved the Pro Hart gallery.

Bob and Jeni Smith: surprised by the outback, thought it would be boring, but the landscape rolls around in front of you. Totally unexpected, and no tourists. Especially liked the 40,000 year old shifting sand dunes outside Wentworth. Bob did however question Jeni's ability to judge the height of the roadkill...Jeni thought the car was higher than it was! BTW: Bob's new nickname could be 'The Iceman' because no matter where we stayed for the night he managed to secure bagged ice for the gin and tonic.

Barry Farr: seeing everything in one trip – the outback, followed by the food bowl then the alpine region.

Dott Forrester: the rolling hills between Khancoban and Thredbo. The rock and roll band at The Demo Club in Broken Hill.

Andra Pike: Lighting Ridge was on Andra's bucket list and it met expectations. Highlights were Harry, the guide on the bus tour, down the mine and Amigos Castle.

Darryl Pike: the change from Broken Hill to Wentworth – sparse to green. The paddle boat at Mildura. They left Mildura via the Industrial area and the town has so much variety. Last in Mildura in 1972 visiting a friend, Geoff, with a pharmacy. Geoff moved to Perth about 10 years ago and they fell out of touch. Went to visit the site where Ramsay Pharmacy had been and at that precise moment Geoff phoned – they had not spoken for 10 years!!!!

Dick Brown and ML Howard: a wonderful tour – Dick made a comment about Canada having lakes with water in them while many of ours are dry!

Kevin and Robyn Leggott: it was back to Broken Hill for Robyn as her Dad had been born there and lived there until 10. The Demo Club. A (slight) navigational error between Walgett and Brewarrina meant they almost ended up in Queensland!

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Vic Clark: got to go to places they had never heard of! From Broken Hill they made the trip to Menindee and visited the Kinchega Woolshed. Most didn't see it as the road through the National Park was definitely not sports car friendly but this is a 26 stand *woolshed*, built in 1875 and in operation for a total of 97 years. The *woolshed* was large enough for 64 shearers to work. For this trip the Toureg was the right vehicle, not the S2000.

Jane Clark: Euclea. Found the first licensed brothel in Victoria! Then she found the dress shop.....

Colin Piper: thanked Vic and Jane for carrying their spare...and Jan for saying bring the Mazda!

Robert Clare: enjoyed travelling through the Murray Valley....and thanked the NRMA for trucking the Mercedes back from Broken Hill to Sydney and organising the hire car.

Sue Clare: Lake Boga. Sue's Dad worked on Catalinas at Rose Bay before the war and then QANTAS.

Robyn Daly: Broken Hill. Pro Hart Gallery. Sculptures in the Desert.

Terry Daly: the drive Broken Hill to Wentworth. The barren landscape was inspiring.

Jeremy Braithwaite: the countryside around Cabramurra and the drives from Hume Weir to Tumbarumba and then from Tumbarumba to Thredbo. Rio Vista in Mildura. The opal carver at Lightning Ridge. Stefanos cooking – delicious. But the best part was enjoying the Mustang on the open roads.

Julie Braithwaite: Whites Minerals and Mining Museum, Broken Hill. Driving the Mustang. Dinner at Stefanos – even though my heart did sink when I was presented with tapioca for dessert. It was a very pleasant surprise with each bite an explosion of taste.

So, in summary, my aim was to share our love of the outback with those on the trip and to introduce the outback to people who had never been there. In some instances people had pre-conceived ideas about the towns and landscapes and I think everyone now has a much better appreciation of the country we live in and the hardships farmers can face. Next time there is a flood at Lightning Ridge instead of just going to the next news article people will have a mental image of the consequences for the people who live there.

The camaraderie within the group was fantastic. During our two week lap of NSW people built new friendships and the positive comments from one and all were very much appreciated!!



The photographs used have been provided by Barry Farr & Dott Forester, Colin & Jan Piper, Colin & Maria Allerdice, Peter & Jelly Van Dyk, Bob & Jeni Smith, David & Linda Slater, Derek & Maggie Scott, Jim & Janina Elphick, Joe & Bev di Francesco, John & Val Dixon, Kevin & Robyn Leggott, Les & Roselee Johnson, Rick & Lisa Johnson, Dick Brown & ML Howard, Peter & Eve Stefan, Robert & Sue Clare, Terry & Robyn Daly, Ross and Sandra Brackenbury, Vic & Jane Clarke and, of course, Jeremy & Julie Braithwaite.

Seven Islands Hawkesbury Cruise – THURSDAY 23rd November

Words by Vern Kelly, photos by Carole-Anne Lunn & Bruce Richardson

WHEN IS A WEDNESDAY RUN NOT A WEDNESDAY RUN ?

- WHEN IT'S ON A THURSDAY!

Barry & Carole-Anne Lunn needed to move to a Thursday for this month's "Wednesday" Run to meet the timing of a wonderful three hour cruise with lunch on the Hawkesbury River.

We met at our traditional "northern" run starting point at Maccas Mt Colah for the usual meeting, greeting & coffee.

The happy attendees on the day were:

Barry & Carole-Anne Lunn (hosts)
Lorraine & Adrian Walker
Graham & Carol Edds
Barry Farr, Dott Forrester & Dott's sister, Meg
Carolyn & Keith Reynolds
Jeff Breen
Robert Harrison
Vic & Jane Clark
Marie-Louise Howard & Dick Brown
Barry & Judith Thew
Colin Allerdice
Lionel & Gael Walker
Bruce & Virginia Richardson

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John & Colleen Pymble
Vern & Wendy Kelly

Our run took us from Maccas up the Old Pacific Highway to near Brooklyn, where we joined our cruise boat at the Kangaroo Point Wharf, just below the Estuary Restaurant, known to several of us. There we joined the MV Emily Melvey, named after the daughter of prior resident settlers in the area who were previous owners of the boat's skipper's current residence (more about this later).

The boat was a perfect size for the accommodation of the 28 of us, with long table seating downstairs all set up for the lunch to follow later, & a wonderful full-length upper deck for perfect viewing & enjoying the sunshine & lovely river breeze as the boat cruised initially up river from our embarkation point.

The boat is also the Post Boat for delivery of mail to the many businesses & residences along the river & its tributaries, & I recalled that we did a



Wednesday Run cruise on the prior Post Boat (a previous owner & business) in July 2002, followed by a seafood lunch at Brooklyn.



Our skipper & tour guide introduced himself at the start of the cruise, & it was immediately clear that he was the tour guide from “central casting”. He was witty, charismatic & a great raconteur, & had an immense knowledge of the history of the area. It soon became clear why. He was a resident of one of the houses on the river with no road access (more later) but had “only” been there for 39 years & was still considered a “blow in” by the locals, with 40 years residence being the benchmark for being considered a local. He said they’d probably “move the goalposts” on him in 12 months time to keep him from being called a local to stir him up!!!

Apart from the fact that a cruise on the Hawkesbury River on a lovely day was a pleasure in itself, we encountered many interesting sights. These are the main ones:

Seven Islands – the seven islands of the Hawkesbury, hence the name of the cruise, were Lion, Dangar, Spectacle, Long, Peat, Milson & Bar Islands. These were of course spread out along the river & seen at various points on our cruise.



Bar Point & Fisherman’s Point – on the north & south shores of the river respectively, are these two areas, home to a few hundred people with river-only access. The homes virtually all cling to the water’s edge at the bottom of steep hillsides that most will be familiar with along the Hawkesbury, with the odd house set back from the river where the topography in that spot allowed, or built on slopes with the use of long stilt foundations. There is no town water, & all use rainwater tanks. When rainfall is low, water needs to be shipped in at relatively large cost.

The skipper pointed out his house at Fisherman’s Point & then said he’d tell us a story about Prince Philip being his favourite royal family member. This left us wondering what was to follow. Prince Philip visited Fisherman’s Point for 5 nights in 1962. He is Patron of the Outward Bound movement, which had a facility located in the bush there. Prior to arriving, the Prince ascertained that there was no electricity there. So, telling the people there that he wanted to read books at night & couldn’t do so without electricity,



he insisted that the Fisherman's Point area be linked to electricity, which did happen. The skipper is forever grateful to Prince Philip, without whose insistence the area may still be without electricity.

HMAS Parramatta – the rusting hulk of the original ship of this name from WW1, Australia's first warship, was seen on the bank of the river. It was decommissioned from the Navy in 1928 &, after initially being used to house prisoners, was sold locally & used to transport material to Milson Island. Some parts were later stripped from the ship & used as memorabilia in Naval installations, including Garden Island in Sydney.

"Wedgie" – during our cruise, as if perfectly choreographed as our boat passed, a wedgetail eagle rose from a tree &, after soaring majestically around for a while, landed again as our boat pulled away. Great organising by the skipper!!



George Peat – the skipper told us of an early settler in the area, George Peat, whose name will be known to all & lives on in various places – Peats Ridge (village), Peats Ridge Rd, Peats Ferry Rd, Peat Island (one of the seven

islands seen) & Peats Bite, the renowned restaurant with river-only access.

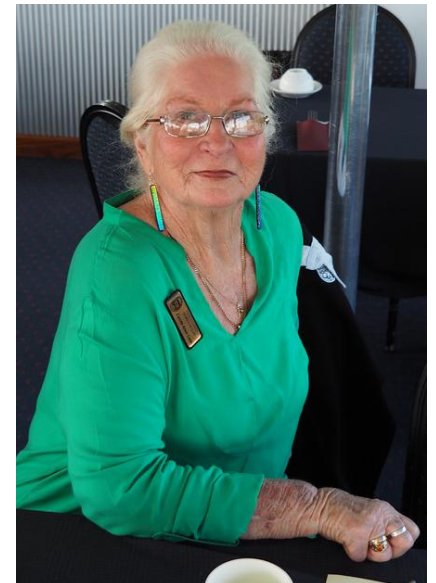
Aboriginal Rock Carvings – these were seen at Eagle Rock near Broken Bay, just above the water's edge.

After cruising initially up river as mentioned earlier, we turned & headed back down river, stopping briefly at Brooklyn where, in a very slick & well-arranged operation, our fish & chip lunch was brought on board. The fish & salad were already on the plates, with separate bowls of chips. The lunch was beautiful & nice & hot, & the slick organisation very impressive. Lunch was a very convivial affair, with glasses of wine (available on board) on many tables making for fun & merriment.

Continuing down river from Brooklyn for the rest of our cruise, we sailed into Broken Bay where we viewed Lion Island, before turning around once again to head back to Kangaroo Point to regretfully leave our home of the past 3 hours & so much fun & sightseeing. The cruise is highly recommended if anyone wishes to do this with friends, family etc.

Second lastly, the weather was absolutely superb & I, as "weather whisperer" (as Colin Allerdice once dubbed me), was pleased to "deliver" such weather. If you had to fill out a form to arrange a perfect day's weather, you would have requested this day.

Lastly, many, many thanks, on all attendees' behalf, to Barry & Carole-Anne Lunn, who delivered a wonderful run with a difference, which everybody very clearly appreciated.



Christmas Party and Presentation Night – 2nd December

Words by Terry Daly, pictures by Jeremy Braithwaite & Bruno Ferro



This was TSCC's last event of the year with a roll up of 83 members and partners.



The event started in normal fashion with drinks on the terrace, with just one small snag. It was raining so the area allocated was quickly revised. This didn't defuse the conversation and by quarter past seven we were already quarter of an hour behind schedule.

Following the normal welcome and housekeeping instructions (i.e. where the toilets are) all participated in a beautiful banquet of prawns / oysters /

ham / plum pudding etc etc. However, by the completion of dinner we were now half an hour behind schedule and President Barry Farr set about hurrying up the proceedings by cutting short some of the commentary around the prize giving.



First up were the many Gold Award winners from the October Pride of Ownership day , followed by the announcement of Car of the Year , that being Peter Dowrick with his near perfect Holden HSV .



Next were the annual award winners and those were

- Clubman , Terry Daly
- Citizen Kane (best written article) Barry Farr.
- Don MacDonald , Jack Jones
- Borrani wheels award, Colin Allerdice.



Dott then drew the lucky door prize, a great Christmas Hamper, and the winner was

- Jenny Jones.



Santa (in the form of Keith Reynolds) with his helper (Lionel Walker) handed out the Kris Kringle presents with a request. "Not to open until advised"



The Gibbons then took over the new styled present opening arrangements whereby you could request a previously opened present from another party prior to you opening your allocated present. Bad luck if you had ticket number 1, but good fortune if you had ticket 83. You see, ticket 83

could swap his/her present for any of the other 82 opened presents. However, with the noise and the layout it was difficult to keep everyone's attention so many failed to improve their present situation.

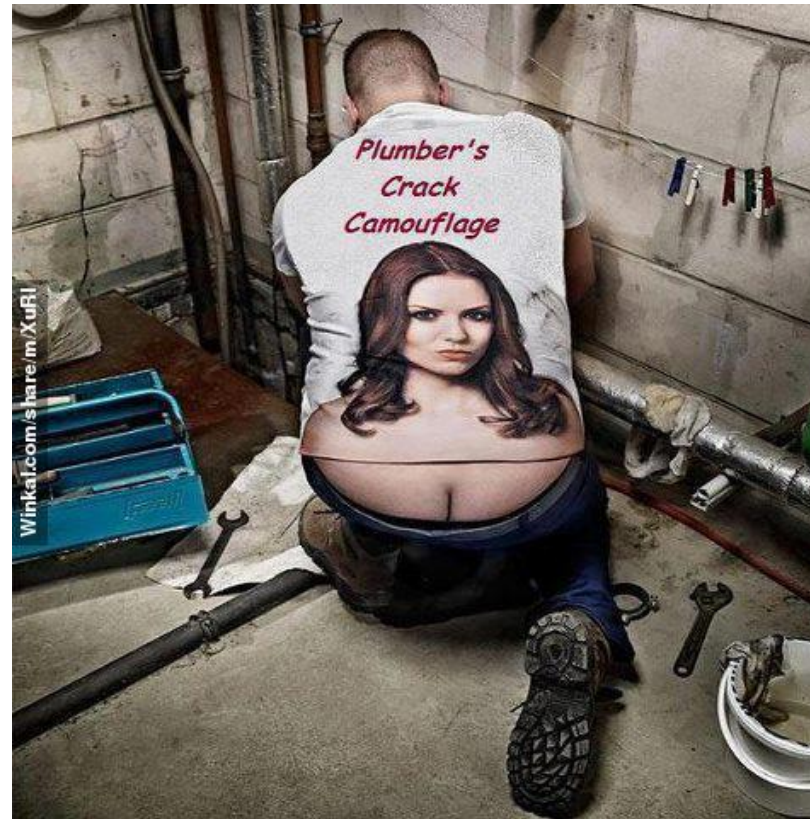
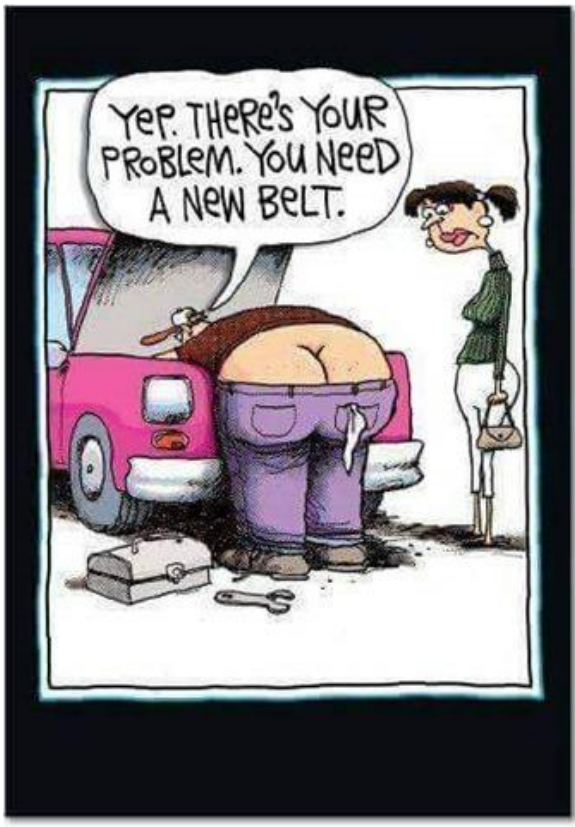


By now we were running about an hour behind schedule but no one really cared as they started dancing the night away.

Thus came to an end both the 2017 Christmas party and the event calendar for the year.



You can't be serious!



A police officer jumps into his car and calls the station.

"I have an interesting case here," he says. "A woman shot her husband for stepping on the floor she just mopped."

"Have you arrested her?" asks the sergeant.

"No, not yet. The floor's still wet."



Tesla Unveils New Roadster

Elon Musk has communicated a remarkable performance at the presentation of the new Tesla Roadster. The base model already completed the sprint from 0-60 mph (0-97 km / h) in just 1.9 seconds.

This would make the Roadster the world's fastest production vehicle in the world, in terms of acceleration. The maximum speed should be at 400 kmh. However, this is possible only for a limited period of time. At "highway speeds" (100 – 130 kmh) the Roadster should be able to cover distances of up to 1000 km with only one loading unit. As early as 2015, Musk announced that Tesla's vehicles will crack the 1000-km range in 2020. To achieve these impressive values, the original roadster's 53 kWh battery was replaced by a 250 kWh battery. With a front electric motor and two others in the rear, the Tesla Roadster provides 10,000 Newton metres.



Star in an Unreasonably Priced Car

(An occasional feature)



James Cagney with his 1935 Duesenberg Model J

The End

