

BUICKS IN THE FERGUSON VALLEY

Even Western Australian people ask "Where is the Ferguson Valley?" It must be a well kept secret as it is only about two hours south-west of Perth, peeling off the South-West Highway near Waterloo. Those on the National Tour of 2004 will remember the Valley as being the home of Hewick the Buick Gnome.

On Saturday 8 April, the following Buicks and members met at the Old Narrogin Inne at Armadale for the convoy down the highway:

Michael Monaghan	1950 56R Coupe
Alan & Ros Hunt	1955 Century
Tony & Marny Howe	1971 Boattail
Alan & Lois Haime	1972 Boattail
Andy & Ann Giglia	Mercedes
Scott, Sherrin, Sara and Luke Barker	4-Wheel drive
Nic & Joan Nicoli	Modern



Morning tea was at a favourite Buick waterhole, the Edenvale Homestead at Pinjarra. From there the convoy formed and drove through Waroona, Harvey and Brunswick Junction to the turn-off at Coalfields Highway to Collie. Lunch was taken under big Morton Bay fig trees on the old railway reserve. We had a visit from the local police sergeant, who is our son, and was on his way to play rugby at Dunsborough.

From Collie we drove down to Mumballup, Lowden and onto the Wellington Mills area. This is a gorgeous drive through this area and was very pleasant and easy on a lovely warm day.

Gnomesville was the next stop to check on Hewick, the Buick Gnome as it had been sometime since anyone had clapped eyes on him. After some searching, he was found looking resplendent with his Buick National badge looking like new. Gnomesville is a growing area and there were new bridges across the creek. The

gnomes had spread across the creek and some were even up trees. One party visiting was a 50th birthday party for a bloke. A large gnome with his friends' names on it was being placed in position and sprinkled with champagne. Luckily it was not close to Hewick because he wouldn't want some drunken bum gnome next to him.



Hewick - still in good shape!



Buicks parked on the outskirts of Gnomesville

It was now late afternoon and time for Buicks to be heading towards Eveden Park Bush Resort and rest and relaxation. Everyone checked in and then headed out the front

of their two-storey timber units to lakeside. Michael Monaghan was already in swimming and Sara and Luke Barker were paddling a canoe across the lake. The rest of us took chairs, drinks and nibblies and discussed the events of the day.



Sara and Luke chilling out

A fire was lit, purely because it was there, not because it was cold. However as the evening set in it was nice to poke at the fire and watch the lights of Bunbury on the coast start to twinkle.

Dinner was a delicious three-course meal with the main course being butt of beef with accompanying vegetables. Doing nothing all day gives one an appetite and the wine was soon flowing to accompany the meal.



Wine fueled talk-a-thon

Morning saw Sara and Luke back on the lake with mist rising from it. Brekkie and a walk around the lake and then it was time to check out and hit the road.

We drove through farming country to Dardanup Heritage Park where we could “travel back in time with one of Australia’s finest collections of heritage items from our pioneering past.” The advertising certainly lived up to its name. Members were seen disappearing into and coming out of the many first rate sheds and displays scattered throughout the grounds.



At one shed an 80-something year old bloke offered to start the two Tange engines which were over 100 years old and had been shipped from Birmingham for use in the York Flour Mills in 1893. These engines had been replaced in later years and had fallen into disuse. The old chap and his brother had restored the engines and were obviously proud to start them up for visitors.

One massive shed housed an incredible display of International tractors, bulldozers and other implements.



A few hours went by very quickly and it was agreed by all that it was a most worthwhile collection to see.

The town of Dardanup was close by so we headed to the grounds of an old church in town and on the lawn under big shady trees, a sausage sizzle was soon under way with the usual munching and chatting and a beer or two to settle the dust.

The cars pulled out of Dardanup early afternoon and we kept leap frogging each other along the South-West Highway back to Perth. The run was organised by Tony and Marny Howe and all credit and thanks to them for a most enjoyable weekend. Thanks also to Scott Barker for the photos.

L M Haime (WA Buicks)