

WA SPRING RUN TO KUKERIN

Some time ago when a venue for the Spring Run was discussed, Kaye and Johnno Cook from Kukerin in Western Australia, offered their property in the wheatbelt as a base for the run. The weekend of 2 – 3 October 2009 was the date for the Cambinata Festival at Kukerin. The festival involves a super-doooper dinner in a woolshed complete with candelabra and string quartet. The dinner showcases the local produce in the area such as yabbies, olives, cheese, beef, lamb, ham etc and is accompanied by the local wines.

Seven Buicks and their owners gathered at the meeting spot at Armadale for the about four-hour drive to Kukerin. They were:

Phil & Kerry Taylor	1937 40 Series
Ian & Margaret Baxter	1946 Special Sedan
Harold & Gail Hitchcock	1951 8/50 Sedan
Murray & Teresa Lizatovich	1963 Skylark Convertible
Peter & Bev Nicholson	1967 Riviera
Jim & Beryl Donis	1970 Estate Wagon
Alan & Lois Haime	1972 Boattail.



Morning the stop at the Wandering Brook Estate winery

The group proceeded down the Albany Highway and turned off at North Bannister towards Wandering. Events Coordinator Harold Hitchcock had done his homework and we pulled into the Wandering Brook Estate winery for morning tea. This was a pretty impressive rammed earth building and fresh scones, tea and coffee awaited us. Some tasting and buying took place and then the cars were rounded up and headed to Narrogin.

Because of very good rains in the area, the paddocks were lush and green, dams were full, canola crops were in golden blossom and lambs were leaping around.

Lunch was had at a little park in Narrogin with some shopkeepers mentioning that they knew the Buicks were heading for Kukerin. Word gets around.



Lunch in the park at Narrogin

Later on that afternoon all the cars pulled into "Dingo Dell", the Cooks' lovely property at the end of seven kilometres of well graded gravel. The main homestead was built of stone with two other houses nearby. Beer o'clock was declared and the dust of the road was settled.



The main house at Dingo Dell

Kaye and Johnno run some horses and there were a few young foals who were a delight to watch as they all scarpred and raced around in the early evening light.

Kaye & John and helpers provided a great BBQ tea as well as prawns with pavlova to follow. Most people did this meal justice. A bonfire in a firepit out the front of the house was a nice place to sit and marvel at the stars which always look wonderful this far away from any towns or cities.



Matching cars and house at Dingo Dell

A tour of the farm and outbuildings in the morning was especially interesting, also to comprehend how expensive modern farming must be and the equipment needed. John Deere must be doing extremely well.

The local school bus was provided for us and Johnno drove us across to Lake Dumbleyung which is reputed to be the largest lake in the southern hemisphere. This was where in 1964 Donald Campbell broke the world speed water record.



The school bus at Lake Dumbleyung

Back to the homestead for lunch, an arvo rest and then everyone clambered into their dinner suits and finery for the bus trip to the Cambinata.

A quick tour of the yabbie production shed was had and by then there was a decided nip in the air. It was nice to see that people had appreciated the function and had dressed accordingly in dinner suits and evening wear.

The Buick group took up a couple of tables and the music from the string quartet was drowned out by the conviviality of the evening. Suffice to say, no-one went home hungry or thirsty.



The Buick Clan in their finery!

By about 2 a.m. the last bods had been dragged onto the bus (you know who you are) and ignition took place. That worked but the bus headlights did not. Various blokes tinkered and mucked around. By now we were the only vehicle in the parking area. A unanimous decision was made to drive off anyway, guided by a huge full moon. As Johnno knows the back farm roads like the back of his hand, we felt quite safe.

We must have looked quite eerie travelling down the back roads with no lights. Perhaps in the country folklore at Kukerin in the future, there might be a tale of a ghostly school bus that travels the back roads on the night of a full moon with no lights on, the only sound being a drunken voice from the rear of the bus singing "and the wheels of the bus go round and round"

We pulled into “Dingo Dell” at 3 a.m. and I would estimate everyone was in bed by 3.05 am.

Surprisingly most people were up by 9 a.m. and tucking into bacon and eggs, courtesy of Kaye.

Once again we piled into the school bus and headed to a nearby emu farm. As a chick emus have definite stripes. Some were just pecking their way through shells to get out and older ones were racing around. A huge array of products are derived from the emu.

From there we drove to the Kukerin Pistol Club where Johnno and Kaye are members. This was a first for most of us, using a hand gun. Johnno made it all look easy as he is a champion shot but some of us struggled a bit trying to remember six things at once. Kerry Taylor was the Annie Oakley of the females and Johnno naturally was the best of the blokes. The gun we were using was a Browning 38 with a laser sight and this was great fun.



High Noon at the Kukerin Corral

Lunch at the clubrooms and then we had to head back to the farm, pack up and thank our hosts for providing us with a wonderful weekend.

Leaving around 3.30 p.m. meant that most of us would be driving through the State Forrest at dusk which is not a good time for kangaroos. However everyone arrived back home safely, all in agreement that the weekend had certainly been unique memorable. It was pleasing to note that all Buicks behaved themselves as well.

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