

WEST AUSTRALIAN 2008 SPRING RUN

This event was held a couple of weeks later in the year but the same thing happened again! It pelted with rain on the Friday.

Those attending were:

John & Lorraine Padgett	34 Buick
Phil & Kerry Taylor	1947 8/40
Stuart Syme	1950 Jetback Coupe
Harold & Gail Hitchcock	1951 8/50
Ken & Jill Churchman)	
Colin & Caroline Howe)	1954 Roadmaster
Scott, Sherren, Sara & Luke Barker	1957 43 Sedan
Jim, Beryl & Reece Donis	1970 Estate Wagon
John & Kaye Cook	1971 Riviera
Tony & Marny Howe	1971 Riviera
Alan & Lois Haime	1972 Riviera
John & Sue Bell	1980 Skylark

While heading towards the meeting spot in the hills at Mundaring, we had a ring from John Padgett to say that he had trouble with his water pump while coming up Greenmount and would have to have the car trucked back home. However, indomitable John said he would pick up his four-wheel drive and meet us along the track. This turned out to be a fortuitous decision.

Turning left off the Gt Eastern Highway past the Lakes Turnoff gave us an unobstructed run through scenic farming country into Toodyay. Cars were parked, umbrellas unfurled and the group gathered for hot coffee and chocolate at the Coca-Cola Cafe.



The Hitchcock's cruising by Connor's Cottage, Toodyay

Leaving Toodyay we headed down the Goomalling Road. About 15 kilometres along the road disaster struck Stuart Symes' 50. Again, water pump trouble but of a more serious nature. Most of the group gathered along the roadside as you do in situations like this to chat and give advice. A container of water was obtained from a farmer's dam to cool things off but it was decided that the car would have to be left in a farm nearby known to one of the group. This was where John Padgett's vehicle came in handy, together with a very business-like thick canvas towrope. Fortunately the tow was only a couple of kilometres and the car was tucked away in the farm property. Also it was fortunate that the rain held off while all this was undertaken.



Serious roadside consultation!

We reached Dowerin for lunch at the park in the main street. Had a chat to some of the locals regarding the cars, including some Queensland tourists.

As time was getting on we decided to head for Merredin, leaving Stuart behind to wait for Delys to come and pick him up. Some headed off to Gt Eastern Highway and then motored east to Merredin, and some headed to Merredin via Trayning and Kununoppin.

The Merredin Plaza was very comfortable on a wet, overcast day. Young Reece Donis spotted the plasma TV in our unit and offered to swap with us but we declined his offer.

The labour shortage was making itself felt in Merredin with our motel having a nice restaurant but no cook, similarly with the motel down the street. Even the BP Roadhouse did not have a cook.

A few phone calls earlier in the week had determined that the Commercial Hotel did indeed have a cook and yes, they would be happy to arrange a large table for us in their dining room. We could all walk to the Commercial from our motel and once inside the front door the place was jumping. Friday night in Merredin seemed to be a big night at the pub.

The bloke at the front bar exclaimed "The Buick Club" and showed us to our large table in the dining room away from the noise and music of the front bar. A smaller table was set up for the kids. This worked out very well with everyone able to order anything from a hamburger through to a steak dinner. This makes a good car run with the members grouping together to discuss the day's run and just socialise. About 11 pm the last of the stragglers headed out of the pub and back to the motel.



The Bells and the Cooks at Merredin

Alan had woken up and looked at the bedside clock and raced into the shower before realising that it wasn't nearly 9 am as the clock said, but was actually 6.10 am. Expletives about the mongrel who had altered the clock. Anyhow because we were up we headed off to the BP Roadhouse for a restorative coffee and a toasted sandwich.

The cars regrouped at 10.30 am and headed out of Merredin to Totadgin Rock Conservation Park. This is a very well laid out park centered around a huge granite rock perhaps about a kilometre long. Luckily we hadn't planned to visit it on Friday as the rock has lichen covering in many places which is very slippery when wet.

On one side of the rock was a mini-Wave Rock feature with lots of interesting verticordias in the bush here.

Some of us had lunch at Bruce Rock and inspected the old farm machinery museum at the park. Of interest was a 1924 Buick roadster sitting in all its glory.



1924 Buick at Bruce Rock

Wickepin was celebrating its centenary and was buzzing. Parking was at a premium and everyone in the district seemed to be in town. Albert Facey's cottage (of "A Fortunate Life" fame) had been brought into Wickepin and was especially popular.

There was an art exhibition on at the Town Hall and the most magnificent afternoon tea provided no doubt by the CWA. This could be had for the cost of a gold coin and as one platter was emptied on the tables, another was there to take its place. The locals all seemed to be catching up with one another and there was a great atmosphere.

Not far out of Narrogin, Harold Hitchcock's 51 was experiencing hiccups. This car had belonged to Brian Copley who recently sold it to Harold. The usual crew of Buicks had stopped before and after Harold's car. Luckily Alan was carrying some 1972 Buick points which fitted Harold's car and Robert was your father's brother!



Another gathering of experts

One by one the cars pulled into the Albert Facey Motel at Narrogin. Narrogin was also very busy with the Narrogin Spring Festival and Art Exhibition on this weekend.

The usual sundowner was had with drinks and nibbles from a pretty vantage spot at the motel overlooking the town.

Those who chose to eat at the motel restaurant weren't disappointed. The quality of the meals was good as was the help yourself salad and vegetables bar. Some local wine was broached and the noise levels began to rise.

Another late night followed by a buffet breakfast in the morning. At last a lovely fine day. Cars headed off in different directions making their way back to Perth. John and Kaye Cook from Kukerin were only a hop, step and jump

from their property. We followed Harold and Gail back through Wandering just in case there were any more hiccups along the way.

At North Bannister we stopped for a coffee before heading north to Perth, the '51 behaving itself ahead of us. As we approached our turn off, Harold gave us a thumbs up and we parted company.

We had covered a lot of ground over the weekend but the roads were ones that the Buicks like - not much traffic and they could really stretch their legs. Nice to see that dams were full and the farm country was looking good. Thanks to Stuart Syme for his help with the route and Ken Churchman who provided the maps and route directions.

L M Haime (WA Buicks)