

Our Trip to the Buick National N.S.W. 2016

Peter & Bev Nicholson, Jim & Beryl Donis, Stuart & Delys Syme, John & Sue Bell and Harold & Gail Hitchcock



Notice came through our Buick's that we had shipped from Perth to Adelaide had arrived in Adelaide.

Unfortunately Harold's had sustained a little damage to the left hand side, suspected rubbing on the side of the container.

The morning of the 15th August 2016.

All bright and eager to go we arrived at the Perth Airport for our flight to Adelaide. We all proceeded to the lounge for that cup of coffee, unfortunately John had a mishap with one of his drinks sending it flying across the table, but with the help from Delys and Sue it didn't take long to have it all cleared away.



Our flight to Adelaide was smooth and on arrival to Adelaide while waiting for our Taxi Bus we all compared which movie we had watched on the plane and surprising enough we had all watched a different movie.

Arriving at the Ibis Hotel in Adelaide there was Peter & Bev Nicholson waiting to greet us, as they had flown in the day before.

An interesting afternoon meandering through the centre mall of the city, most returning with more packing for the already full suitcases.

That evening we all met for Happy Hour followed with an enjoyable meal.

Day 1.

16th August we had ordered the same taxi bus to collect us to take us to the CEVA Depot to collect our cars.



Jim and Beryl now lead the way Out of Adelaide, a couple of u turns made it interesting, nothing unusual for this trip.

A very scenic drive through the Adelaide Hills with perfect weather, and stopping at Birdwood for lunch. The name Birdwood comes from Sir William Birdwood, an Australian General during World War 1 who lead the Anzac s at Gallipoli. His name was an obvious choice when the World War I place names committee decided to replace the town's original name of Blumberg.

Our first night stay was at **Renmark** this is a town in South Australia's rural Riverland area, and is located 254km north-east of Adelaide, on the banks of the River Murray. It is also home to the region's only restored paddle steamer, wine companies and the rose industry.



Delys had suggested we take a look at the possums that arrive each evening at dusk on the lawns of the Renmark River front. We decided to have a meal across the road and have a look for the possums after dinner, which proved the way to go, as there they were.



Day 2. Sun shining weather perfect. Stuart started with a short briefing of the days options. Leaving around 8.30am first stop was The Lookout Tower at Heading's Cliffs near Renmark and Paringa in South Australia you can admire the marvellous view of the Murray River and magnificent Golden Limestone Cliffs. The Heading's Cliff Lookout Tower is named in honour of the 4 generations of the Heading Families who lived on section 17, Hundred of Murtho adjacent to this site. The re-dedication of the tower took place on the 2nd July 1991 by the then Governor General of South Australia, Her Excellency the Honourable Dame Roma Mitchell, AC, OBE.



The antique shop, next stop proved a winner with some purchases to make sure our cars were full to the brim.



The Black Stump Across the road, located on Murtho Road this huge root system for a 600 year old red river gum measures over 8 metres across. It may be one of the largest extant tree root systems in Australia but it doesn't really have a claim to being the real black stump.

There is an interesting plaque beside the black stump which explains "It has been at this location since 4 July, 1984 when Frank Turton and his wife Diane sighted it while on a houseboat holiday near Chowilla Station 56 km



upstream from Renmark. The 600 year old River Red Gum root system of the massive tree trunk hung over a three metre clay bank. It had fallen into the river in the 1917 flood and later positioned onto the bank because it was a navigational hazard. Frank, a wood carver by trade was at the time creating natural wood signs and souvenirs and had dreams of developing a tourist attraction at his workshop in Paringa. The intricate design created by nature captured Frank's imagination and he set about planning on how the stump could be relocated as the show piece of his Paringa premises." It then explains how a special chain saw had to be hired from Queensland to cut the root system; how 12-44 gallon drums were attached so it would float; how it took five days to float it down the river and how it had to be removed by a crane located near Paringa Bridge.

Now moving on to Merbein to a well renowned Bakery, for vanilla slices where most of us took the time to indulge in a vanilla slice or two. Proceeding onwards to Mildura and then Euston for an overnight stay. Euston was named after a mansion in



Suffolk, England. Euston is a small service centre on the banks of the Murray River. Typical of the prevailing agriculture of the Riverina, it is completely surrounded by vineyards. Its primary appeal is its location on the Murray River. One of the best motels we stayed at The Euston Motel a most impressive motel situated on the banks of the Murray between Mildura and Swan Hill in south-western New South Wales, Euston and Robinvale are nestled on opposite banks of the Murray River.

Day 3. Destination today is Echuca, Our first stop was, The Windmill was originally owned by the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission and was used to supply water for the town of Robinvale. It is reportedly the largest windmill in the southern hemisphere. It was erected in 1948 and is built on a 60 foot (18.3 metres) stand and wheel is 30 foot (9.1 metres) in diameter. When no longer required by the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission it was purchased by William (Bill) McGinty in 1961 as he wished to construct a motel on the site. However, approval for a motel was not obtained so Bill built a new home instead. In 1989 Bill donated the windmill to the Robinvale and District Lions Club.



Travelling towards Swan Hill the fields of flowering almond trees make an impressive sight from the car.



Pulling into Echuca around 3.00pm we took the opportunity for a walk around town to stretch legs and explore the town a little more.

Day 4.

Morning the first day of rain wind and that chill in the air. We were all still in very good spirits cars running well. Stuart has mapped out an interesting run for today, taking in some of the back roads and picture scenery. The fields of canola make for some great photos. The Big Strawberry made an interesting stop for morning tea. In 1969, Michael and Lorraine Hayes began growing strawberries on their hobby farm, Torgannah Road, Koonoomoo with Michael's main trade being a mechanic. In 1984, with one of their three sons, Darren, Scenic Drive Farm was developed on four hectares, with one acre being used for strawberries. Strawberry wine, jam and liquors were produced on the farm site and sold from an on-site small cellar door. Since then has expanded into a thriving business. We all found it easy to indulge in scones, jam and cream and a hot drink.



Rain seems to have set in for the day, it didn't dampen our spirits at all, we continued on stopping at Chrystie's Classics and Collectables Museum in Tocumwal the era of the classic cars, trucks, caravans, tractors and a host of other memorabilia and collectables.

Highlights include working vintage cars, an old logging truck and one of a kind tractors.



A stop at Mulwala Lake was an eerie sight with all the dead trees protruding from the grey water.



Arriving in Albury we settled in and then meet for an evening meal exchanging stories of the days events, past events and what was to come.

Day 5.

Weather cold today we have broken out our woollies and jackets. Lovely scenery once again, stopping at Gundagai. First discovered by European explorers in the 1820s, Gundagai has a proud history, and more than any other Australian town, Gundagai has proved an irresistible subject for poets and songwriters. Even the likes of Banjo Patterson were inspired by stories of drovers, bullock teams and bush travellers in the Gundagai area.

Our first stop was at the The **Prince Alfred Bridge** is a *wrought iron* truss and timber beam road bridge over the Murrumbidgee River and its floodplain at Gundagai, New South Wales. The bridge was named for the then reigning Queen Victoria's son, Prince Alfred, and was built to carry the Great Southern Road (now the Hume Highway) across the Murrumbidgee. It has existed in three forms, with only the main spans across the river itself being common to all three.



As opened in 1865 the bridge had a total length of 314m, consisting of three wrought iron truss spans each of 31.4m across the river, two timber southern approach spans each of 9.14m, and twenty-three timber northern approach spans each of 9.14m, rising on a gradient of 1 in 30 from the level of the floodplain.



It was the first iron truss bridge to be built in New South Wales, and was designed by William Bennett, Engineer and Commissioner for Roads and constructed by Francis Bell. The trusses were assembled from iron work imported from England and the cast-iron cylinders for the main piers were cast at the Fitzroy Iron Works at Mittagong. The pin-jointed Warren truss section is the second-oldest metal truss bridge in Australia.

The town Gundagai is immortalised through poems and songs such as *Where the Dog Sits on the Tuckerbox*, and *Along the Road to Gundagai* and is perhaps most famous for its monument to the early pioneers, the iconic Dog on the Tuckerbox, situated on the Hume Highway, 5 miles (8kms) north of Gundagai.



Arriving in Yass, booking into the motel and unwinding, with a few beers for the men. They started by standing by Jim's car and within 10min Stuart and Jim were sitting in the car out of that chilly wind soon after joined by Harold and John certainly a funny sight four grown men in that little Buick Skylark. Around 6.00pm we were collected from the motel by a courtesy bus from the Yass Soldiers Club where we had our evening meal, and returned to our accommodation for the evening.

Day 6.

Last day on the road to complete our trip to the N.S.W. Buick National, and what a great trip, good company and lots of fun times along the way. Thanks must go to Delys and Stuart. Delys for organising all the accommodation and sussing out interesting places to visit along the way, and Stuart for his knack of finding alternate routes to make the trip interesting instead of sticking just to the highways.

Arriving in Wollongong around 1-00pm our accommodation for the next week of the Buick National 2016. Registering and settling in for the days ahead. Also meeting up with Steve & Jenny McLennan who had driven from the west some weeks ahead.

Congratulations must go to the Committee from NSW for their excellent organisation of The Buick National 2016 meet.

Article by Beryl Donis

