

2006 Christmas in July at the top of the Range Tea Rooms on Mt Macedon

Some time ago, Rhonda Aspinall and I volunteered to organise the Christmas in July outing. We must be crazy!! Something which initially sounds so simple (book a venue and let everyone know) becomes complex, time-consuming and fraught with angst. Find and book the venue (guess the numbers), agree a menu and settle on a price per head, prepare the ads and flyers, put together raffle prizes and presents for the children (with spares for unexpected extras). Invite other clubs, try to firm up the numbers, write the trivia quiz and print out lots of copies plus answers and spare pens. Collect monies, make lists, cross people off the list and add others. Phew! So why do we do it? Because it's fun!

There's a great sense of achievement when everything comes together on the day and everyone who comes along has a good time catching up with old friends and making new ones.



Preparations began in earnest in April. The Top of the Range Café/Restaurant was booked for a tentative 60 revellers, and the first flyer went out in May. The initial lack of response made us just a tad nervous, but we trusted that all would be well - and it was.

Unfortunately Ray had to change his weekend work roster at the local hardware store in order to get the following week off for a family celebration. Horrors - I would have to brave the trip to the top of Mount Macedon BY MYSELF!

Sunday 30 July 2006 dawned drizzly, grey, foggy and bitterly cold. Would it snow? It felt cold enough! Fortunately it held off, as it has been known to close the access roads.

I packed the car, hoping that I hadn't forgotten anything vital and headed off in good time for the journey, expecting to take less than an hour driving from Castlemaine. As I can't drive MM4 (Mighty Mark IV), I drove our modern 'Humber' Civic with the CD player and the heater both going full blast. I only got lost once on the way there, and it took me an hour and a half - not bad!

Top of the Range had done a great job setting up for us, including a Christmas tree and twinkling lights around the ceiling. Tables were set for 70 people (fingers crossed - I had confirmed 69 attendees a few days earlier).

We had a lovely day! Astonishingly, exactly 69 people turned up: 34 from the Singer Car Club, 2 from the Sunbeam Car Club, 6 from the Rootes Group Car Club, and 27 from the Humber Car Club. Rhonda bought gorgeous Christmas bonbons, with the obligatory coloured hats and groan-making jokes. The Singer Car Club brought along song sheets and organised some loud & lively carol singing - with prizes! The trivia quiz generated some lively discussion, but luckily we had outright winners. The raffle prizes were well received with the major prize of a magnificent Christmas Hamper going to the Egglestones. Food was lovely, staff and service were brilliant, and the clouds eventually lifted to show the magnificent views from the top of the mountain.

Some hardy souls made the trek up to the views and the memorial cross, while the rest of us packed up and made our farewells.

And I only got lost twice driving home.....

