

41st Begonia Rally - Ballarat 17th—19th February

JOHN'S REPORT

Having decided to take part in this Rally with our vintage 14/40 Humber we hired a trailer for the Humber and set off with it on the back of our modern car. So we had a quick and uneventful trip up thank goodness.

It was a full weekend with lots to do and plenty to see. Saturday afternoon was taken up with a short walking tour of Ballarat visiting the Art Gallery built in 1884 and is the oldest and largest regional gallery in Australia. It houses some really splendid art works from the early Colonial period to the present day. It also holds the original Eureka Flag as the centrepiece of a special Ballarat display. I loved seeing the art works of the well known artists such as Tom Roberts as well as some of the more contemporary pieces. The larger than life size seated man sculpted from rope was rather eye catching I thought.



We had a vague idea of where we should head to but got rather lost amongst the maze of Ballarat's streets. Mobile phone reception was intermittent and with our relatively noisy car it was almost impossible to hear anyway. No GPS to help us and we had a rather vague map. So we toured around heading, hopefully in the general direction of Lake Wendouree and from there went westwards. Unfortunately, not the scenic route which would have been lovely, but straight down the highway to try to make up for lost time after a bit of fuss and a number of U turns we eventually made it to the morning tea location just in time for some refreshment and a quick look at the gardens so everything was alright in the end.

All in all we had a wonderful time, our old 1927 Humber didn't miss a beat and it enjoyed the run along the country roads without the hustle and bustle of city traffic. Our thanks to Merv and Maree Sherlock in inviting us to stay with them and making us very welcome and thanks also to Les Lindorff in arranging for the Humber Car Club to join in the Ballarat Vintage and Classic Car Club's 41st Begonia Rally.



We also visited the Mechanics Institute that dates from 1859. The subscription library housed within its walls has operated continuously for 140 years and is still has 500 members to day. This Institute also has a nationally significant collection of 19th century material including many sets of newspapers dating from 1850. I would have liked to spend more time looking through some of the ancient tomes but perhaps next time. We were fortunate that a guided tour had been arranged so we saw many of the other rooms in this rather lovely building. Many Ballarat club members fondly remembered attending the picture theatre that used to be held in one of the large upstairs rooms. Sunday morning was scheduled as a country drive, stopping for morning tea in the extensive attractive gardens of the historic Mt Mitchell Estate homestead then on to Waubra for lunch and prize presentations. The country drive started off very well and would have been a lovely relaxed and pleasant run following the route the various marshals were pointing out as we went along. Unfortunately we totally lost the route, the other rally members and our cool when one marshal (who will remain unnamed) inadvertently had the arrow sign pointing the wrong way. By the time we realised we were alone on the road everyone else had disappeared and were miles away.



LOTTE'S REPORT

41st Begonia Rally - Ballarat

Hosted by the Vintage & Classic Car Club Ballarat Inc (VCCC)
17 - 19 February 2012

Ray and I attended the Ballarat Begonia Rally this year, hosted by the VCCC Ballarat, along with several other members of the HCCV: and we had an absolute ball!

An incredibly well run rally given the logistics - some 200 people and around 130 beautiful, strange, old, classic, veteran and vintage vehicles - restored or original, rare and not-so-rare, what an amazing mix!

The club organised, fed and entertained us for the whole weekend and rarely missed a beat. Because we live fairly close, less than an hour away in Castlemaine, we opted to arrive on Saturday morning and just stay for Saturday night, while the others registered on Friday night for the welcome BBQ.

Following the registration we were presented with what must be one of the best and most lavish Rally Packs we have ever seen! It was packed with goodies too numerous to mention, including some lovely hand-made items, so much that they had to give us two bags to hold it all. After the magnificent vehicle display at the Ballarat Greyhound Complex, and with a substantial lunch under our belts, we headed off for an organised walking tour around historic Ballarat. My favourite was the wonderful Ballarat Gallery which I have never had the good fortune to visit before, and which I now want to visit again.

The dinner/dance held that night was excellent, with live music and great food. The VCCC arranged bus pick-up from the hotels/motels where people were staying so that we could relax and have a drink without worry. I even persuaded Ray to get up and dance with me, a rare event! A slight hiccup - the return bus wasn't announced so we missed it! After asking one of the organisers about the bus and with effusive apologies, we were driven straight back to our motel by one of the hard-working VCCC members.



Sunday morning saw us back at the complex so that we could head off to the beautiful historic Mt Mitchell Estate homestead for more displays and morning tea. After that we drove to Waubra Recreation Reserve for lunch, trophy presentation and the drawing of raffles. No prizes for us this time, but wonderful memories and lovely people.

Prizes:

Best Pre-1931: 1929 Triumph Super 7

1931- 1942: 1934 Singer

1945 - 1955: 1950 Lea Francis

1956 - 1965: 1960 Messerschmitt KT200

1966 - 1975: 1969 Aston Martin

Post 1975: 1977 Triumph Stag

Vehicle that most would like to own: 1953 Ford Victoria

Rally Committee - Most Original Unrestored: 1930 Model A Ford Sports Coupe

Rally Director's Choice: 1964 Austin Healy MKIII

President's Choice: 1946 Ford Mercury Soft Top

Humber Car Club Attendees:

Merv & Maree Sherlock in their 1968 Ser VA Humber (also members of VCCC, Merv was one of the marshals for the weekend);

Les & Bev Lindorff in their 1957 MKIVA Humber (also members of the VCCC);

Colin & Anne Anderson in their 1956 MKVI Humber Hawk;

John Washbourne & Judy Lewis in their 1927 Humber;

Ray & Lotte Linden in the MM4 - 1956 Humber Super Snipe MKIVB

