

Picnic at Hanging Rack—2012

Sunday 12th February: weather prediction was a perfect 25° with patchy cloud and a slight breeze.

Time for another test run for the MM4, this time to the Macedon Ranges Picnic at Hanging Rock Display day. I have been once or twice before but not for some time. A flurry of emails between myself and the events coordinator for the Rootes Group Car Club (RGCC) Heather Witmore, and all was in place for a top day. After some small difficulties leading up to this event, I was pretty keen to give the MM4 a good hard run along the freeway. 8:00am start, no problems



All was going well cruising along at 110kph, passing various vehicles (uphill) when I heard the unmistakable sound of a metallic item bouncing off the freeway, and out of the corner of my eye, saw one Humber hub cap keeping pace with me along the central median strip. It took a while to sink in but eventually I slowed, did a U- turn across the strip, returned to where I thought the troubles began and began the long walk. I took the extreme right edge of the freeway and Lotte walked up the centre. We walked and walked and walked. We each found a hubcap but not the right one. Eventually, we gave up. The MM4 was a fair way down the hill, so I went back to get it while Lotte continued looking. About another 20 steps away she found the missing item, completely undamaged thank goodness. This is the first time I have lost a hubcap but will still have to find a way of securing them before the Tamworth Trek.



We phoned Heather to warn her that we would be late to the designated meeting point in Woodend, and were informed that she too was running late (petrol problems). We met within a couple of minutes of each other at the Woodend Information Centre and after a quick chat, we set off. We seemed to be the total HCCV and RGCC contingent for the day - did everyone else know something we didn't?

The beauty of arriving early soon became clear when we were directed into a lovely area and parked under the shade of a massive gum tree. You could not have found a better place to set up. Time for the first foray looking at the vehicles on display.



I could not believe how much the content had changed. There was a sea of red, orange, yellow and lime-green, all the colours of the 60s, 70s and 80s Australian and American muscle cars. My rough estimate was that they represented about 75% of the vehicles on display.

The challenge then was to find the British contingent, and anything else that was unusual or rare. They were there but you had to look for them. There was one other Humber, a Mark III, and a Hillman Hunter hidden away. That made a grand total of four Rootes Group vehicles in a sea of approximately 3500 cars. We were "special"!

Back for morning tea break and then out for more, followed by a picnic lunch under the trees .

The display area is spread out quite a bit, a lot if it amongst the trees, so a lot of walking was needed to find everything. We came across a display of Purvis Eureka's, obviously an active social club as they had a presence at Cerberus as well. There were about 25 Toyota Celicas and Corollas in another corner of the paddock, along with a string of VW Combi/campervans. A few Alfa Romeos, a sprinkling of Mercedes, a couple of Austin Healeys and the occasional 30s 40s and 50s classic car. And one Kieft DeSoto: a stunning looking sports car that begged more research when we got home.

We left about 2:30 and were home by 3:30. A very pleasant day but I probably won't need to go again for another few years, and then only when the weather is once again perfect.

Thank goodness Heather and Chris turned up to share the day with us.

Ray and Lotte

