

## HCCV Echuca Swap Meet Getaway Report - 12 to 14 April 2019

Ray and I had a wonderful time at the HCCV Echuca Swap Meet Getaway. As we were feeling a bit elderly we left MM4 at home and drove our recently acquired 2011 Toyota Rukus Halo.

We set off around lunchtime on Friday, and after a leisurely 3 hour drive checked in to our Quest apartment. We had a walk around town followed by a superb dinner at Port 53 Restaurant at Radcliffe's. Some veteran club members will remember that we had our celebration dinner at Radcliffe's for the Humber National Rally in 2003 so it was a nice trip down memory lane, but the shallow water feature set in the floor was no longer in evidence. From memory, it claimed one attendee at the time who was forced to spend the rest of the evening in soaking wet trousers.

The next morning, after a leisurely breakfast on our private balcony (posh!), we arrived at the Swap Meet at about 9.30am. There were around 200 sites, and a Show and Shine with around 50 different classic vehicles on display. I've put a few photos on the next page.

I managed to find some reasonably priced old motoring magazines and a motoring book dating from around 1929 - "Motors of Today" Vol IV, fortunately FAR-LAN so happily it's the volume with Humber in it. I also picked up this intriguing little metal plate, only 5.5cm x 3.7cm, for a couple of dollars. Ray thinks it might be from an old tractor, but we're open to correction.



Ray found some headlights perfect for the Humber Hearse but being Ray he couldn't bring himself to buy them and then later regretted it. So back we went after lunch and fortunately they were still there.

As an added bonus, there was a magnificent 1955 Humber Super Snipe belonging to club member Chris Fields which hadn't been there earlier. Chris currently lives in the UK and the Humber resides at the Lockington Heritage Complex, so its outings are rare. Fortunately Chris had arranged for his father Robert

(pictured here at the wheel) to bring the Humber to the Show & Shine at the Swap. If we hadn't gone back, we wouldn't have had a chance to chat to Robert and see this wonderful Humber.



We then headed off to the Great Aussie Beer Shed. On arrival, I had a glass of local shiraz and Ray had a beer, and we were each given a stubby holder with our purchase. Yes I know - it was a bit early but it was delicious! I think I would need to add another ten pages just to show you a fraction of the displays at this astonishing place. It's much, much more than just empty beer cans: (*deep breath...*) there are 18,000 beer cans, beer steins, petrol bowlers, classic cars, restored carts, whole buildings, toy cars, matchbooks, old poker machines, bottles, glasses, costumes, dolls, car memorabilia, farm machinery, old stoves, kitchenalia, a replica Statue of Liberty, soda syphons, road signs, and a magnificent fully restored Carlton Draught Clydesdales wagon and harnesses - to name just a few! Neil is a genial, informative and entertaining host. The collections are all his and he has a story to accompany every one of them.

On our way back into town we passed Raverty's Motor Museum so called in for a look. It was lovely to meet Norm and Elma, and Norm very kindly gave us a guided tour of the museum and told us about his substantial collection, and the projects that he has underway.

After what turned out to be a very busy day, we went back to our apartment for a drink on our private balcony (did I mention that we had a private balcony? The views were lovely!) before heading off to The American Hotel for dinner. The restaurant in The American is the Oscar W, which used to be on the Echuca wharfside before the building was undermined by rising floodwaters in 2016.

Sunday morning, after coffee on our private balcony (hmm, I may have already mentioned that...) we walked down to the wharf and booked a Devonshire morning tea on the 1924 diesel-powered "Pride of The Murray" riverboat. Loved the leisurely 1 hour cruise with expert commentary, friendly staff and delicious scones, jam and cream with coffee.

After the cruise we visited the Port of Echuca Discovery Centre and were just in time to join the guided tour along the waterfront and under the wharf. Our guide was dressed in period costume, born and bred in Echuca and passionate

and very knowledgeable about Echuca and the Murray River. An unexpected highlight was a tour of The Star Hotel's hidden illicit underground bar with its secret passageway to escape from the police, through which we all appeared in the main restaurant to the astonishment of the lunching patrons.

Heading home, we called in to Lockington to visit the Living Heritage Complex for a tour, a chat and a cup of tea. A fascinating place, and the usual home to Chris's Humber - which had only just made it back to the fold at that point!

We were amazed at how much we managed to pack into just two days. We loved every minute of it - there were no downsides whatsoever. The weather was perfect, our accommodation was beautiful (did I mention that we had a private balcony??), and we got to see things and visit places that we haven't before.

Lotte and Ray

### *Echuca Swap Meet - Show and Shine*





The Great Aussie Beer Shed





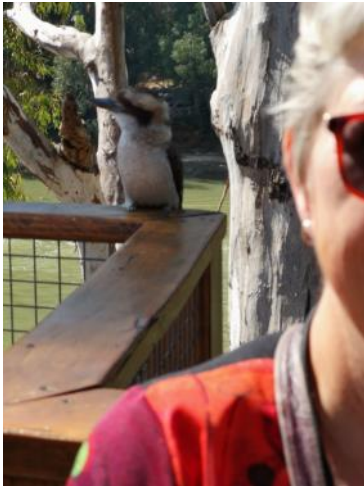


Raverty's Motor Museum





## Murray Riverboat Cruise



## Lockington Living Heritage Complex





