

The Linden Report

16th National Rally – Cootamundra – Part 2

14-17 April 2006

Last month, we brought you the story of the 2006 National Rally, hosted by NSW. We had a fabulous time meeting up with old friends and making new ones, and seeing country we hadn't seen before.

We left on the Wednesday before Easter so that we could take our time. That section between Yarrowonga and Rutherglen took us all day Thursday – gosh, it's all of 45km, and has all those very tempting wineries along the way....

We are so very fortunate in knowing the full history of the Mighty Mark IVB Super Snipe (MM4), and on this trip we were able to travel back to its Aussie roots. MM4 was purchased new in England in 1956 by Cootamundra grazier Harold McClintock, and shipped back to Australia after the obligatory UK/Continental Tour. In 1961 it was purchased by the Lloyd family of Cootamundra who later moved to Canberra, where we purchased it from John Lloyd in 1983.

Sadly Harold and his wife Marie died in a car accident in 1990, but we were able to contact his nephew Bob McClintock, who with his wife Noeline now lives in Harold and Marie's magnificent 1912 homestead "Culver", and we arranged to visit him and his family to show off MM4 and take some photos for the record.



On Saturday we drove into Junee just before lunch, parked while we checked out a second-hand store, and on our return were greeted by Martina and Bob O'Sullivan who had driven from Tumut in their wonderful 1955 Humber Super Snipe Mark IV. We were delighted to see them and impressed that they had tracked us down, and arranged for them to join the rest of the rally group to show off their treasure at the magnificent restored mansion Monte Cristo for lunch and a tour.

The work which has gone into this car has to be seen to be believed, and if they had been part of the rally we reckon they would have won all the awards hands down! Well, maybe not ALL the awards, but it is a truly excellent car!! Well done guys, you've done a fantastic job on the restoration.



On Saturday, we had lunch in Temora and found one of those delightful country cafés with original booths and décor dating from the fifties which suited MM4 perfectly. It was crowded so we offered to share with a couple who had nowhere to sit - turns out they were from NZ, and in Cootamundra for the National Leyland P76 Rally. Eight of their NZ club members travelled to Australia for their rally, borrowing and renting cars for the tour. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with them, as we once owned a wonderful near-new dark-red P76 ourselves back in the seventies – and we wish we still had it now. Great car, sadly much maligned and much of it undeserved.

I don't know if you can imagine our surprise, but there were two magnificent Leyland P76 Force 7V Coupes at the P76 Rally. There are only 10 of these coupes in existence, and to see two was a bonus not anticipated. Ray managed to persuade the owners to park together for what was for us a photographic opportunity of a lifetime. The last time we saw one of these was a pre-release demo model in Canberra in 1974. We were stunned to discover that he also owned that one!



Monday morning we had a farewell breakfast at the very welcoming Railway Station Café with the remaining Rally participants. We then headed off on a local lads' tour of the town. Our old friend John Lloyd, the previous owner of MM4, grew up in Cootamundra so we had a tour of schools attended, houses lived in, aunties residences (see photo on left) etc., before leaving at about 11:30am to wend our way home.

Tuesday morning it was back to Rutherglen, as we remembered missing a few wineries on the way up, and surprisingly there was still some room to spare in MM4. We can't remember exactly how many wineries we covered, but we managed to have lunch in Benalla, found Tahbilk winery at Nagambie, and still got home at dusk. Tahbilk was definitely on the wish-list as it is one of the oldest and best in Victoria, although it's not easy to get to as it is well off the beaten track. It has a magnificent café overlooking extensive wetlands, and they were kind enough to serve us delicious coffee and cake only minutes before closing time.

Poor old MM4 has been locked in the garage since with not even a wash, but we'll remedy that before Christmas in July on the top of Mt Macedon. Don't miss it, it will be great fun!

See you all on Sunday 30th July!

Lotte and Ray