

Wellington Vintage Fair, March 5-8

Further to John Ballard's Central West Region report, here is a first-timer's take on this year's Wellington Vintage Fair.

My good lady and I had planned to go to Wellington two years ago but life threw up a roadblock, and I won't even mention 2020. So it was with a high degree of anticipation that we looked forward to the Wellington weekend that we had heard so many good stories about.

Meeting at Blaxland on the Friday morning for breakfast and the essential caffeine fix, we then convoyed to Lithgow for juice, and onto our lunch stop at the *2 Fat Ladies* cafe at Lucknow. A brief leg stretch at *Sweetness Cafe* Molong, owned by club members Michael and Cheryn Johnson, then on to Wellington Caves Caravan Park.



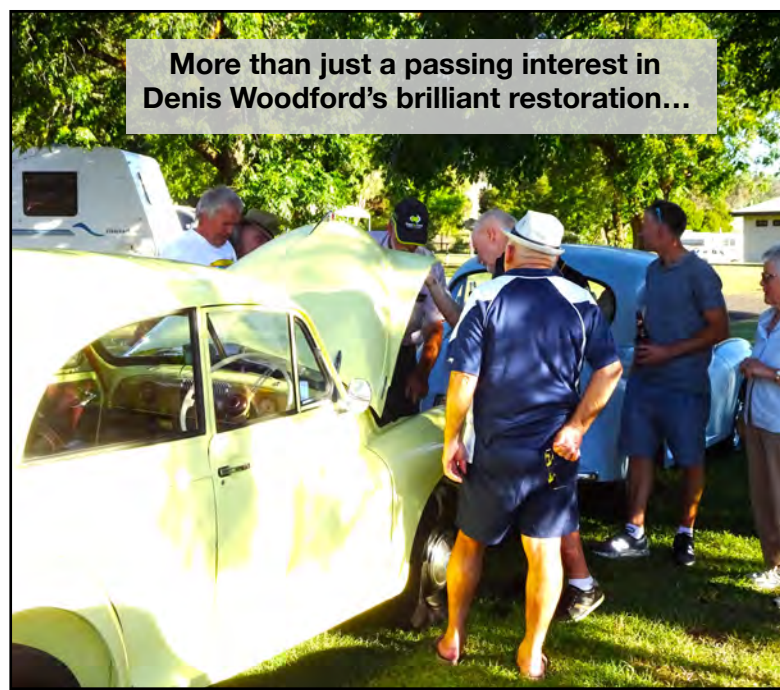
Wellington Caves: a really mice place to stay!



Sweetness Cafe, Molong, with some life lessons



Most of us voted with our heads for an afternoon siesta while one fool/hardy sole chose the swimming pool instead. Then it was what we had all come here for - joining our Morrie friends from all over NSW (every region was represented: Central West of course, plus Mid North Coast, Southern Tablelands, Wollongong/Illawarra, and Sydney) for convivial conversation, checking out the cars (with more than just a passing interest in Denis Woodford's brilliant restoration), a drink or two and a BBQ dinner.





First night in Wellington: many hands...



Photo: Les Whale

What happened to the
frog that parked in an illegal
parking space?

He Got TOAD away.

Some humour on the dining room wall



Tom and Maureen Dèveigne receive their 10 Year
MMCCNSW membership certificate from John Ballard



First night in Wellington - what a welcome!



Saturday, in the park

In the cool of the evening, a few members sat outside the motel block and, fuelled by a glass or three of port, entered into deep conversation, talking all things Morris Minor, having a good laugh and solving the world's problems too. In the interests of consistency, this process was repeated on Saturday and Sunday nights.

Saturday, in the park, central Wellington was the location for breakfast. It was so relaxing, talking to Morrie folk and watching the unofficial 'parade' of steam



Plenty of classics in Wellington



engines and various classic cars, most notably Mini Mokes. The only down side of the weekend was the cancelled street parade due to you-know-what virus.

John and Sue had everything organised, so next stop was Burrendong Dam for lunch, just 30 minutes out of town.





Cue perfect location. Cue magazine cover shot possibility. Cue the strangest game... What a big surprise, right before my very eyes: Finska (alias Klop) (no, I don't understand the names either) it is just the best game, fun for participants and audience alike - you won't believe this until you play it. And the scoring! Win or lose, this game is way too much fun. Sue Ballard, take a bow for this most enjoyable of events!

Finska! With one point to win, Stuart nailed the shot, and was congratulated by John. He even had a town named in his honour.



On return to our Wellington Caves accommodation, some were not sure of the evening's dinner arrangements. Someone asked "Does anybody really know what time it is?" to which one wag answered "25 or 6 to 4"; at least we had some rest time.

Car pooling to dinner proved squashy for a few (have you sat in the back seat of a Morrie recently?) but the trip was very much worth it. Hermitage Hill Function Centre (the old Wellington hospital) was the stunning venue (dating from 1910) for more fun and excellent food, including an impromptu tour of the old place. John performed the formalities, announcing the answers to his quiz - and Les Whale as the winner.

Returning to the Caves, most went to bed, except for the port brothers, who solved even more of the planet's problems; it was a hard habit to break.





Dinner venue was superb (photos: Les Whale)



Mention should be made of the accommodation at the Caves. It was great - up to a point. Considering there was a mouse plague out west, seeing mice scurrying around after dark wasn't unusual. However, the little buggers found their way into some of the rooms and did their best to keep people awake; those who towed their own vans had no problem. The worst example was in Stuart Treuer's room, when he was awoken by one cheeky rodent that was sitting on his mobile phone (illuminating the phone and the mouse) - sitting there staring at Stuart! Nevertheless, the Caves is a really mice place to stay.

Sunday... Friday and Saturday had proven to be so busy that one of us had forgotten that Sunday was indeed the reason for being here - the Wellington Vintage Fair and Swap Meet. John had organised the MMCCNSW into the premier location of all car clubs.

So a swap meet? Acres of stalls selling a vast array of almost everything



Les won the quiz.
John Borg enjoyed himself...





Colour my world
(Photo: David Bursill)



imaginable, a lot of it car-related, to whoever wants to part with their hard-earned - swapping stuff for money basically. I spent 50c on an old car magazine, plus \$20 on a 1:63 scale Morris J Van that I had wanted for my model car collection, so I was happy. You should have seen the size of some of the spanners for sale!

Three pergolas had been erected (towed, along with the Club's BBQ and trailer, by Stuart and Ann, all the way from Sydney) to provide shelter from the sun on what had become a hot early autumn day. We arranged our chairs under the cover, then sat on any chair that was available. Who cared? It was the camaraderie that mattered most. We found our own chairs in

Swap meet - acres of people selling just about everything



the end. Before the end of the Fair, the MMCCNSW scored some good news - an award for 'Best Presented Car, Peoples Choice' - congratulations Stuart.



Life was pretty easy under the pergolas (left) and (above) Stuart had a winning weekend - except his sleep deprivation.



MORRIS MINOR CAR CLUB

Indra and I were due to leave Sunday afternoon as the slab for our new house was being poured on Monday morning and I wanted to be there. John said if you leave me now, you should get home at a reasonable time and avoid the roadside obstacles like roos and wombats. Then, out of the blue, an sms from the builder - the pour will happen on Tuesday! We had cancelled our room for Sunday night but now some quick phoning and fast talking had us at the Caves for another evening. It would have been a long drive after a long day, so we were pleased with the one-day delay.

We said our farewells and thanks to John and Sue at the Fair and headed back to Wellington Caves - via the shops for food and essential supplies (food, port) for the evening. Although the camp kitchen was technically shut, the mostly-Sydneysiders who were left thoroughly enjoyed another evening together. Oh, and the nightly global problem solving group grew in number too.

Monday and we had the whole day to get home. Retracing our steps from Friday, we convoyed through Molong and Orange, lunched at Lucknow, before we bid farewell to our weekend companions at Lithgow.

All credit to John and Sue Ballard; the whole weekend was so well planned, even down to what could be the most engrossing and strangely scored game ever. You're the inspiration that keeps our unique club going with weekends like this. Yes, we were kept busy and entertained all the time. The



weather, too, was organised perfectly. Thank you, too, to the Central West members for your hospitality and warm welcome.

So, as a first-timer to Wellington, would I recommend it to other club members? Hmmm, let me think about that for two seconds... absolutely! Take time off work, do whatever you can - but get yourself (+/- your other half), and organise to get to Wellington in 2022. And, like me, try to get to Gnoo Blas 2022 too, the MMCCNSW Central West's 'other' classic car show.

Owen Sinden

Postcard from Wellington Caves



The Sue Ballard Page

Kinska (or Klop): the game they play in Wellington.

Scoring? You'll have to ask Sue. No-one questioned her calculations, and everyone had a great time!



Sue Ballard's scoring sheet - she's a mathematical genius!



Stuart's winning form



Bob stands and delivers



Brian shows his style



Indra - don't get in her way



Here it comes



Look out !!!



Not so bad...

The pressure was on: 12 points will win the game...



Classics everywhere you looked at Wellington Vintage Fair



And in the end...



**Lake Burrendong, Wellington,
in all its Morris Minor glory.**

