

Berry - May 16

National Motoring Heritage Day

Coronavirus, like most bad things, feels better when it's over. In NSW at least, it's *nearly* over - so Berry was the first major outing for classic car owners in well over 12 months. No wonder, then, that over 800 vehicles filled the Berry Showground, with another 150 cars around the outside.

Nungary Rest Stop was the place to meet at a rather chilly 7.30am on a cold but fine autumn morning. President Bob then led the convoy to Berry; that's when some 'fun' started at the entrance gate...

The guy at the gate was blunt: "Club?" "Morris Minor Car Club of NSW." "No, you're not on my list." "What???" "Oh, OK, just drive over there." Great, they didn't even know we were coming! This was despite a phone call to the organiser named on the flyer, on April 8 at 9.05am, then confirming the numbers on 9 May at 9.00pm. Someone started singing the Big O's (or Roy Orbison's) classic song *Communication Breakdown*...

In the end... we landed a prime position almost in the middle of the oval: perfect. Not so perfect was a lame-looking Toyota Corolla parked in the middle of our Morrisies. Some 'smooth' talking from Jim Bowen and the Toyota owner soon saw the error of his ways and moved his car to a less adversarial place.

David Bursill had towed the club's trailer with our club gazebos - in ten minutes the club had erected the gazebos and staked its claim - and we were set for an enjoyable day. Interestingly, we were the only club to have erected gazebos, which proved very helpful when finding our way back 'home' after checking out the other cars/machinery.

Some members chose to abandon our newly-established headquarters and headed off to town (two blocks) to breakfast with friends and family. And who could blame them? With an hour to the official opening, and some finger-tlingling low temperatures, a serving of hot eggs with lashings of bacon, plus hot coffee, would tempt the most ardent of car owner's hearts.





Cold mornings and coffee go together like... cold mornings and coffee!



Meanwhile, back at the camp... The theme of the show was 'Australian Manufactured Vehicles', in whatever vague meaning that took on. So it was Holdens, Fords, Chryslers, BMC/Morris, etc that took central stage on the oval at Berry. Literally, there were hundreds of cars in all configurations - and they were just the Australian-made variants.



Everyone loves a Morrie: a minor in a Minor!

Every other car marque was represented, of course, as this was, after all, a representation of Australia's motoring history, not just the Australian-manufactured or assembled part. 800 cars filled the inner area, with another 150 cars outside the oval - amazing!

The really surprising thing about Berry was the unbelievable variety of vehicles. So many Australian cars but so many of everything else, including a Ferrari F40 (whose owner was selling T shirts). What is rarer than a Ford GT40 in *Gulf* livery of pale blue and orange? Two of them, a definite rare-as-rocking-horse-droppings moment.



Grand view from the grandstand, classics everywhere you looked



All set for the day: club trailer and gazebos

It was with some surprise, therefore, that the otherwise unused section of green grass behind our Morris (remember: cars had to be parked by 9.00am) was left unfilled up till 12.00am. Why? This must be an influx of rare Australian-made memorabilia, surely! Nothing of the sort - it was the Porsche Club's arrival, to the astonishment of all around - mainly because there weren't too many Australian-made Porsches! Someone knew someone in the organising committee, and it wasn't from the MMCCNSW. It made a bit of a joke of the day.

Our club boasted one of the largest contingents of any club on the day: 18 cars plus one modern, making the MMCCNSW one of the best-attending clubs.



John Bowmer doing some running repairs - old screw jack, and adjusting the front LH brake.



Later in the day, the award winners were announced. One enthusiastic club member parked himself next to the announcer's tent in the hope of photographing one of our club's winners. Alas, Graeme Gould wasn't there, so we had little chance. Still, it was a remarkable break-out car show that COVID-19 didn't get a chance to ruin - and what a remarkable and entertaining show it ended up being!





Unfortunately, the return drive north was marred by incredible traffic through Albion Park Rail; the by-pass can't be finished soon enough.

A most sincere 'thank you' to everyone from the MMCCNSW, who showed what a relatively small club can do on the huge NSW historical/classical vehicle stage.

Would I recommend 'Berry' to the MMCCNSW community for a visit/show in 2022? Definitely! 'National Motoring Heritage Day' - it's our heritage, and isn't that what it's all about? This has to be one of the premier shows on the NSW historic/classic car circuit, so whatever you do, book your ticket early for the 2022 Berry extravaganza; 1st Sunday after Mothers Day.

Owen Sinden

Photos: Les Whale and Owen Sinden





President Bob Gilliland leads the way to the promised land of Berry Showground



Police were on hand, just in case



Scenery en route was excellent and included this immaculate EJ Holden



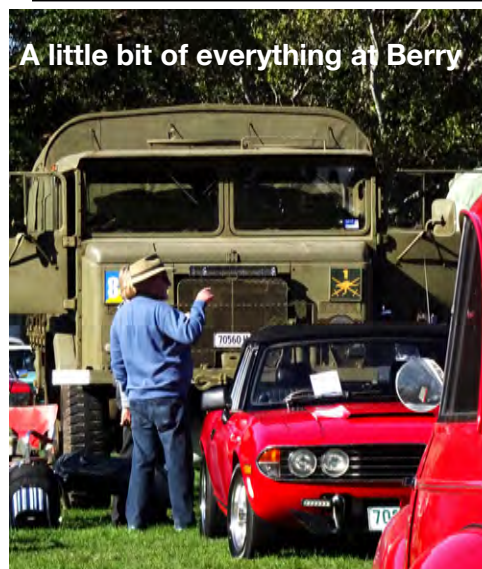
The number plate read HOT 40A) - and it was, with a Holden V6 engine tucked under the bonnet!



Andy Draper's woody interior - spacious



XK Falcon



A little bit of everything at Berry



These 2 shots are centuries apart, or should that be poles apart, or planets apart? Whatever, Berry had the lot.



Sheer elegance - Jaguar XKSS



The army was called in



And what comments can you add to this Model T Ford beast? The pics say it all!



(How low is too low?)



Beautifully restored Morris Marina, rare 6 cylinder (only about 1000 made). Owner has had the car from 6 months old in 1975 if I remembers correctly - no problems ever, now with twin SU carbs fitted.



The Shannons G-o-g-g-o Dart did some 'hot' (read: 'luke warm') laps of Berry Showground at the end of the day.

The delightful variety of Berry

