

Mudgee Weekend - Sept 23-26

Blue sky! For those who live east of the Blue Mountains (and lately almost everyone in eastern states) blue sky has been a rarity. Check out the cover photo - Mudgee certainly made it a pleasant change to the drenching we've had.

Preparing the car meant a dose of Rain-X and don't-worry-too-much-about-the-paintwork as the usual wet weather prevailed. Meeting the other Sydneysiders at Blaxland saw a clearing of the weather a little, and by the time we hit Lithgow for our usual pit stop and refuel, it was almost fine.



The long and winding road, that leads, to Mudgee...

This Mudgee weekend, arranged so well by John and Sue Ballard, was supposed to be held in 2021 (and has now become an annual event - Sept 15-18 2023) but due to the COVID-19 disruptions, it was postponed till this year. The wait was worth it.

John and Sue met us on the outskirts of town and guided us to our accommodation (BIG4 Mudgee Holiday Park), excellent service, great cabins, group cooking facilities - and a games room with a TV to watch the various football semi finals).

Dinner was cook-you-own cuisine in the camp kitchen, a very social event, followed by football and port o'clock.

Saturday morning we lined up outside the park, now with boosted numbers from the Central West Region. John had the idea



Friday night dinner at Big4 Mudgee



of a parade down the main street of Mudgee, giving the locals a good look at some good cars, then onto the promised land of Gulgong.



Saturday morning line-up, with ever-improving skies!



John Ballard led us through Mudgee (above) then onto Gulgong



Gulgong! If you haven't been there, put it on your to-do list. What a beautiful old town. We met more of the Central West members for a late-ish breakfast and a much needed coffee or two. During peak tourist season it was surprising that some shops were not open, but the ones that were did a roaring trade. Lucky that some

of us only had Morris Minors so a spouse or two were reminded of the lack of available space.

One shop stood out more than the others: 'Stacks Discount Variety', with emphasis on 'variety' and 'discount' - other members will back me up when I say it is physically impossible to walk in and not spend some money. If you can't find something you need/want, then you need to go to Specsavers. If Stacks doesn't have it then it probably doesn't exist.

Flirtation Hill just out of town offered panoramic views of Gulgong and the surrounding countryside.



Flirtation Hill.
John Ballard and Bob Gilliland were also there
(Photo: Sue Ballard)



Most made their own way back to Mudgee, where the order of the afternoon was either relax or watch the AFL Grand Final. Victorian police are still helping their NSW counterparts searching for 22 swans that went missing from the MCG...

Dinner at the Orient Hotel, which was packed, provided excellent food at reasonable prices. What wasn't excellent was the hour wait for a maxi-taxi to take us back, but luckily it arrived just in time for port o'clock.



Colourful line-up (Photo: David Nunn)



The highlight of the weekend for most of us was the car display at the (now disused) Mudgee Railway Station, with several Minors from our new friends from Cudegong Valley Pioneer Vehicle Club in attendance. Just when we thought it couldn't get any better, it did, thanks to breakfast provided (at minimal cost) by the Mudgee and Districts Vietnam Veterans Federation. A delicious breakfast at a car show featuring Morris Minors - does it get any better?

To spread our tourist dollars around, we divided into smaller groups and went hunting for places for a late lunch. Luckily,



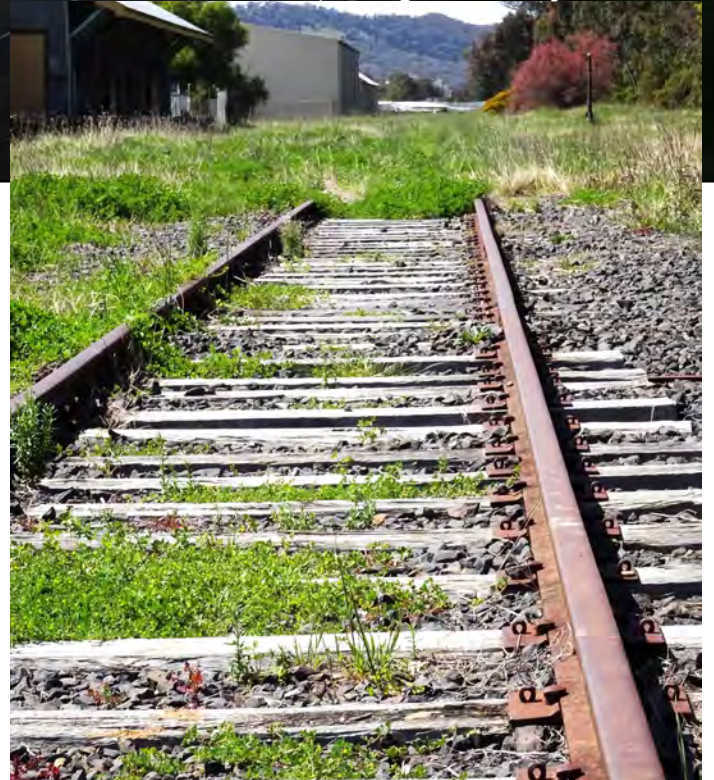
14-1, a decisive victory for Morris Minors v Morgans at Mudgee Railway Station



Immaculate Honda 400



The end of the line, Mudgee Railway Station



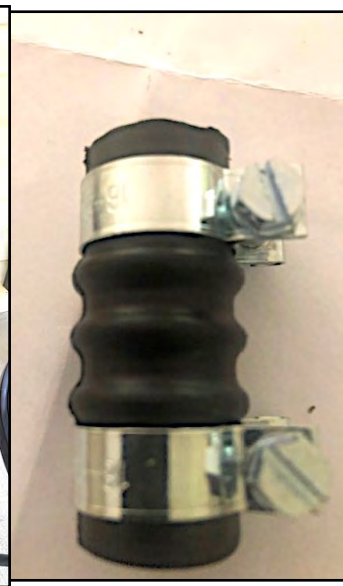
Young people in Morris/Austins - always welcome!



We were not alone...



I'll have 6 of those, and a half dozen of the others, thanks!



All's well that ends well... Rob Keen with his unserviceable bypass hose (above) and (below) John Ballard and David Nunn to the rescue

some finished up at the 'Three Tails Brewery', where not only did we savour the food but also the beer. Some partook in a four-pack tasting and of course several purchases of essential fluids were made.

Another BBQ dinner at the Big4 saw us finish a most enjoyable weekend, thanks mostly to the thorough organisation of John Ballard and his number one supporter and encourager, Sue.

Some left early on the Monday morning, the rest of us convoyed back to the big smoke. One car turned off and took a road less travelled, but that's another story. Thanks to all who made this such an enjoyable weekend.

Oh, and here's a tip: the Mudgee weekend is on again in 2023, so if you think you might like to have just a little fun with like-minded car people, then pencil it into next year's calendar.

Owen Sinden

For essential tasting purposes of course...



Mudgee Memorabilia

Photos from Les Whale



Weekend organisers John and Sue Ballard enjoy a well-earned meal on Friday night. Good camaraderie was the order of the evening (below)



Left: it might look like a prayer meeting, but BBQing was much more serious than that!

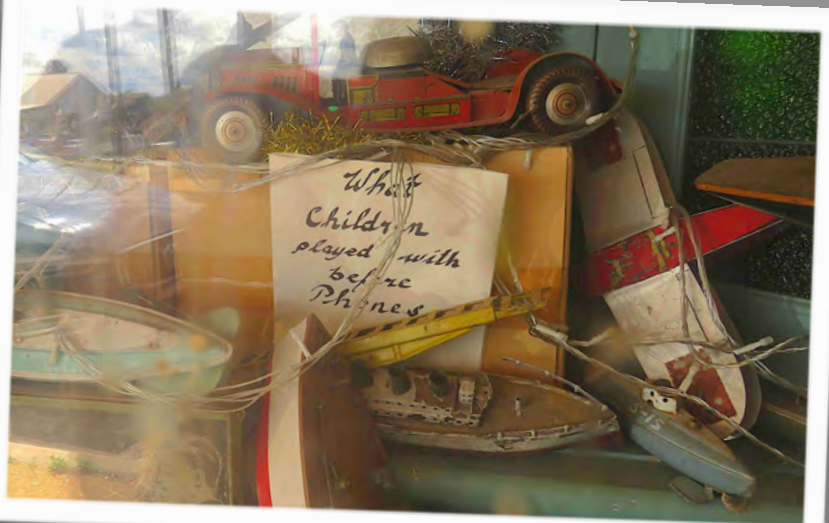
Mayne St,
Gulgong's
main street



Commercial Travellers House, Gulgong



A mecca for anything old (including cars), Gulgong has a variety of shops, including 'Toys and Curios' (left), complete with water trough. The shop included a sign to remind us of the times...



(left) John with the Holtermann Nugget (the largest single piece of reef gold ever discovered in the world) in Gulgong (Sue Ballard)



The main event for the weekend - breakfast and a Morris Minor show at Mudgee Station

