

A30 to Adelaide – 2019 Bay to Birdwood

At 8.00 a.m., on Saturday the 21st. of September 2019, a rather unlikely combination of a 1957 Austin A30 and a 1990 Cadillac headed off from Knight Street, Shepparton to rendezvous with other Members of the Goulburn Valley Motor Vehicle Drivers Club at Elmore. The Cadillac contained my good friends, Kevin Lee and Craig Rickards. Your humble author was in the A30. Our cunning plan was to drive over to Adelaide, park the A30 at the Motel in Glenelg and only use it for the “Bay to Birdwood” and use the Cadillac for the other activities. It would be an understatement to say that I had been looking forward to this Tour. Since the demise, of the “Fly the Flag Tours” last year, this was the first time in eighteen months that we had been off on a Tour. I saw this Tour as a great chance to learn more about my fellow Club members and their respective cars, participate in the Motorfest events, and, of course, the “Bay to Birdwood.” I can say at the outset that all of my expectations were well and truly achieved, and in most cases, well and truly exceeded.



The “Odd Couple” prepare to depart.



A30 and Morris Minor - travelling companions.

As the A30 is not really suited to sitting at highway speeds, I teamed up with Neil and Liz, in their Morris Minor, and together we travelled off in convoy towards our overnight destination at Nhill. Heavy rain fell during part of this trip, and I was happy to report that there were no longer any water leaks from the windscreen of the A30 since its last major adventure in 2014. At Maldon we stopped at a Railway Level Crossing to allow a steam train to pass, and what a spectacular sight it was. Unfortunately I wasn't quick enough to unpack the camera to capture the moment.



Bev and Rob Asquith with Helen and Dennis Paul. Austin at Nhill. Note excellent w/screen protection.

At Nhill, I had a close look at Rob and Bev Asquith’s Wolseley. I also had a close look at Dennis and Helen Paul’s immaculate XY Falcon Fairmont. Both are in absolutely perfect condition.



Dennis and Helen’s XY Fairmont.

Graham Sinclair’s BMW X3 (similar to an A30!)



Leigh and Lynne’s AP5 Valiant Regal.

Hughie and Robyn MacFadyen’s Dodge Coupe.



Exceptionally clean Wolseley motor.



Rob and Bev Asquith's very original Wolseley.

The next morning, it was off to Glenelg. Along the way at a petrol stop I pushed the A30 forward to take a photo with Neil's Morris, when I noticed a lot of oil on the driveway, where I had been parked. A look under the A30 revealed where the oil had come from. As any owner of an English car can attest, they all come with their own in built anti corrosion system, particularly in the vicinity of the engine bay and transmission tunnel. My anti corrosion system, had suddenly started to work overtime. The dipstick level seemed ok, so there was nothing for it, but to keep going. At this fuel stop we also encountered an Austin A30 Countryman, complete with trailer. The owners were heading off to the Barossa Valley for the "Austin's Over Australia" gathering being held in the week prior to the Bay to Birdwood. We were also passed along the way by a few A30's on trailer's also heading to the same event.



A30 Countryman complete with trailer.



A30 two door.

Upon arrival at our Motel in Glenelg, I acquired some drip trays of ply wood to put under the Austin. I thought that my trip to the Bay to Birdwood was about to come to an abrupt halt, with a trip home on the back of a flatbed truck. That would have been very disappointing, as the car had been running so well. Luckily, in discussion with Russell, he advised to keep checking the oil level and that it should make it home. After dropping our luggage, we headed off for a walk down to the Glenelg Pier. The Museum at the visitor information centre is well worth visiting, particularly if you are interested in the history of the area.

Our accommodation was excellent for our purposes, and the staff were very friendly and exceptionally helpful, although the Chef did describe the A30 as a “clown car!” By the end of the week, the owner’s son, Chris, himself a car and bike enthusiast, knew most of us by our first names.

The following Monday, saw the commencement of the Motorfest activities. We did have a slight issue, when we got a bit lost and missed the start point at the Motorfest Classic Headquarters, in Clark Ave., Glandore, (for which I was suitably later admonished and fined), so we drove direct to the destination at Mount Barker in the Adelaide Hills.



The Morrison Wolseley on the way to Mt. Barker. The Lavis BMW on the way to Mt. Barker.

A great morning tea was followed by a trip to what is known as the “chook shed” where a number of projects were under renovation. It was here that we first saw the 1963 Imperial and what a story there is behind this vehicle! It was first purchased by the Emir of Kuwait, who used it briefly, before being imported into Australia and converted to RHD in 1964, by a resident of Perth. The current owner, as a young eighteen year old, working in the bank, admired this vehicle when the owner drove it to the bank to do her banking. Understandably this car made quite an impression on him, and when he saw it advertised for sale in 2010, he purchased the vehicle for an undisclosed amount, which I think could be summed up as “lots!” It is powered by a 413 V8. According to the owner there were 531 made in total, and he knows of two others in W.A. It has done an original, and genuine, 70,000 kilometres (not miles.)



Imperial Dash.

Imperial headlight treatment.

Although the Bay to Birdwood would end at the museum on the coming Sunday, we reasoned, correctly as it transpired, that you would not be able to properly view the exhibits on the Sunday, so we then detoured to the Museum. We had a most enjoyable afternoon, walking around and viewing the exhibits. There were no crowds, and we could watch the DVD's on the famous outback mailman, Tom Kruse, and the DVD of the first Holden being tested on the GM Detroit proving ground, without any interruption. If you are a car enthusiast, then you should add this Museum to your list of places to visit.



The truck of the "Outback Mailman" Tom Kruse.

Ford's first ute.



48/215 or FX Holden.



Yes, a real Bugatti Veyron.



London to Sydney Mini Moke.



Leyland Force 7.



Drive In display.



Diplomatic Statesman with special features.

Tuesday saw us first having a casual drive to the top of Mount Lofty and enjoying the view of Adelaide and surrounds. It was here that Ron Stanbrook, managed to “photo bomb” a group of cyclists who had just pedaled to the summit. It was then off to “the Cedars,” which was the home of the famous Australian painter, Hans Heysen. The home is carefully preserved, as to how it was when occupied by Heysen. There is no photography permitted, of any type, inside the home. There are numerous art works exhibited on the walls, and our guide was exceptionally knowledgeable. The grounds are vast, with a number of out buildings. Photography was permitted inside his studio. He was also somewhat of a pioneer when it comes to caravanning, and an A Model Ford, and period caravan are proudly displayed in the garage. The afternoon saw us walking around the village of Hahndorf.



Ron Stanbrook and new friends at Mt. Lofty.



“A” Model and van used by Hans Heysen.



Heysen Art Studio.



Studio interior.

Wednesday was the trip to the Yorke Peninsula Field Days, which was some two hour’s drive from Adelaide. We had a stop at Kulpara for the biggest morning tea, and it really was “the Biggest Morning Tea!” There were tables laden with sandwiches, slices, cakes, sponges, etc. at this little country hall.



Morning tea at Kulpara.



Pristine FE at morning tea stop.

On the way to the Field Day, as we passed through Paskeville, I saw in the distance in a yard, three rusted out A30s that I thought we should investigate on our return journey. More about that later. The Yorke Peninsula Field Days are the longest running Field Days in Australia. I am reliably informed that they are bigger than Elmore, but not as big as Henty. The surprise of the day was the sheep dog trials. We all found this totally absorbing and we were disappointed when they stopped for the day. We became familiarized with some of the rules: if a sheep happens to jump a fence and escape, you are disqualified; if the dog crosses an imaginary line between the owner and the sheep, you are disqualified; and if your dog happens to start working before the start siren, you are disqualified. The last rule was particularly entertaining. This particular owner and his dog were patiently waiting at the start point. The three sheep were released from their pen at the other end of the field. The dog wasn't waiting for any siren. As soon, as he saw the sheep released, he was off! The owner was doing his best to call the dog back, but the dog was having none of it. This is what he was trained to do! The owner walked towards the dog and threw his hat on the ground in disgust. We felt sorry for the dog, who was probably thinking, "But boss, there's no siren at home!"



Rare 1928 Singer Delivery Van.



Rear engine tractor.



Sheep Dog Trials in progress.

The Field Days also has its own museum with some items of agricultural equipment I have never seen before, including a rear engine tractor.

On our way out from the field day, we came across a selection of vintage and classic vehicles. Among them was a 1928 Singer Delivery Van. This van is the only one in Australia and one of three in the world.

On our way home, we did stop in Paskeville. We were taking some photos of the three A30's in the front yard of an old homestead, when we were approached by the owner Carlo, who lived on an adjoining property. Carlo, is what you would call, a real collector. He showed us through the old home that he was renovating and then showed us his collections. He had collections of just about everything.



Trio of Austin A30's.



Garden Art centrepiece.



Archaeological find – Howard tractor.



Neatly arranged horse shoe collection.



Wooden dray.



Part of the lawn mower collection.



Carlo has a network of associates, who go around and purchase items from deceased estates, auctions and in fact, just about anywhere. He proudly told us about the Howard tractor that he had dug out from a farm. All that was sticking out from the sand was part of the radiator. Carlo and a mate, kept digging, until they had uncovered the entire tractor. He told us he had a real problem with pigeons, who he described as “flying rats.” He was struggling with trying to reduce their numbers. The roof on the old homestead he was renovating had recently been replaced, but he said there were a lot of dead pigeons in the ceiling that he still had to remove. He has tried shooting at them with a shotgun, but that hasn’t worked, and judging by the pellet marks in the new spouting, I would think that it could prove to be somewhat counterproductive. Carlo opened a few of his locked sheds to show us more of his collection, and of course, several pigeons flew out.

The thing that really impressed me about Carlo's collections, was that everything was so neatly laid out. Carlo showed us more of his collection inside his home, and again, everything was neatly displayed, clean and dusted. Carlo was a very friendly man and invited us all back for a back yard "cook out" on the coming weekend. Unfortunately we couldn't accept, as we would be participating in the "Bay to Birdwood." The A30's had been collected from around the District. He had one in his front yard that was going to be used as "garden art" and filled with plants. It was just fantastic to meet up with Carlo and view his collection.

On Thursday it was off to the "The Bend" motorsport complex at Tailem Bend. The recently opened facilities here would appear to be world class. For a small fee, our Members were invited to do some laps of the circuit. Several of our Members took up this challenge and I am sure that it was an experience that they will never forget. On the way back to Glenelg, we made a detour to "Collectible Classics" in Strathalbyn. We also took the opportunity to explore the antique shops in this picturesque part of Adelaide. In a park, there is a stunning statue made out of scrap steel items, to the memory of a local well known motor cycle racer, Ken Blake.



Exotic vehicles at "the Bend."



Torana on display.



Ken Stone statue at Strathalbyn.



HG Monaro for sale at \$99,999.



On Friday it was off to the home of Jeremy Cordeaux, to view his collection of vehicles. I must admit that I, along with most of the other Victorians in our group, had never heard of Jeremy Cordeaux, but he is apparently the equivalent of John Laws, and a household name in South Australia. In any event, he was just a fantastic host. He allowed a number of total strangers into his garage, which housed something like sixteen classic cars, ranging from a Morris Minor convertible (his first car had been a Morry!) through to the last Rolls Royce made at Crewe in England, with everything from Ferraris and Jaguars in between. His Rolls Royce had a very interesting story. He knew Rolls Royce were having problems when he ordered his car, and he was told that they only planned to make something like another 54.

He told them that he wanted number 45 as that was the year he was born. After a two year wait it was delivered. At a later time he received a phone call advising him that his Rolls, was, in fact, the last made at the Crewe factory. He also had some interesting views on death. He commented that why would he want to be put in a cemetery, surrounded by people that he didn't know? He suggested that he should be placed at the bottom of the service pit in his garage with a glass, no a bottle, of red wine and his mobile phone. If he was still there a week later, then the pit should be concreted over and that would be his final resting place. There was also countless memorabilia displayed on the walls of the garage, from the entertainment industry and from his career in radio. Altogether I consider that we were very fortunate to view the collection of such a gracious and welcoming identity.



Rolls Royce.



Ferrari.



Mustang.



'E' Type Jaguar.

The next port of call was to the Sporting Car Club of South Australia for lunch. Their clubrooms are actually a mansion that has been renovated inside for their purposes. These would be, by far, the best car clubrooms that I have ever seen. On stage they had displayed a BMW 2002, and a 1930 Chrysler 66 that had been immaculately restored.



The Sporting Car Club of South Australia.



1930 Chrysler model 66.



BMW2002i.

The next morning, it was up very early to leave the Motel at 5.45 a.m., to travel to one of the start points. I don't think I have seen so many classic cars in the one place at the one time. There were over 120 Minis lined up, along with several Mokes, to celebrate sixty years of the Mini. There was also a collection of Haflinger vehicles celebrating sixty years of that particular type. It was a great atmosphere, walking around and chatting to other enthusiasts. Leigh and Lynne Johnston had entered their AP5 Valiant Regal in the Preservation category. The Valiant was exceptionally well prepared and had been pampered during its stay at the Motel. Both Leigh and Lynne looked the part in their 1960's outfits. At 8.30 a.m. we were off on the cruise to Birdwood. It was unbelievable. There were crowds of people on both sides of the road waving and enjoying the procession. There were also numerous classic cars parked on the sides of the road. We couldn't stop laughing, and the air horns on the A30 got a real work out. All along the route there were photographers strategically placed, taking photos of the cars. (These images were available a few days after the event, on line. All that was required was to type in your cars registration number and all images taken of your car were immediately displayed. The image displayed here was duly purchased.)



A30 on the route.



Leigh and Lynne in the early light.



Collection of Haflingers.



One of several Bowell's at South Beach.

The weather on the day was fine, clear and sunny. Leigh and Lynne made it into the finalists list in their category which, I would think, was a real achievement. The concours winner, was a 1957 three wheel BMW Isetta 300, and the preservation winner was a 1973 Mercedes Benz 280E owned by John McConville. Although there were Austin's of other models at Birdwood, I suspected that our A30 was the only one in the cruise. This was later confirmed by checking through the entry list back at the Motel.

Our Monday trip, after meeting at the Motorfest Headquarters in Clark Ave., Glandore, for the last time, was off to the Military Museum at Edinburgh Park.

We were met at the Military Museum, by several Members of the Military Vehicle Preservation Society of South Australia, including their president, David Carmen and their P.R. representative, Jeff Pinney. The buildings they occupy have their own interesting history, being used to manufacture explosives during WWII. Post war, they were used for missile and atomic research. We split into groups and were escorted around the displays. Our group was led by Jeff, who made a particular point of highlighting the role played by horses in WWI, and the role of women during WWII in the manufacture of explosives and ordnance at the premises. Then it was time to fire off a few rounds from their 25 pounder field gun. It was very impressive and loud! As a finishing touch the gun crew turned to the audience and saluted! The Stuart tank was fired up and after a smoky start, it was on the move. The tank is powered by a seven cylinder air cooled radial aircraft engine. Then, we were shown to an open area where they had driven the Stuart Tank, the half track and the Bren Gun Carrier. Everyone was invited to ride in the vehicles, and they were duly put through their paces around the field. On the coming weekend they were offering rides in the tank for \$50.00, and rides in the Bren Gun Carrier and half track for \$10.00. According to David Carmen, on past occasions there have been queues of people ready to hand over their money. And here we were, getting it for free. The Stuart tank even fired off a few rounds (hopefully blanks!) for extra effect. The lunch provided was excellent, and if you are a military enthusiast, then this is one place that you really want to see.



Smoky start for the Stuart tank.



Stuart tank on the proving ground – note “L” plate!



Half Track on the proving ground.



President David Carmen with Bren Gun Carrier .

The next morning it was off to Ouyen for an overnight stay. The Motel owner, Craig, had stashed away in his shed a ZD Fairlane, that belonged originally to his grandfather. It was powered by a 351 and was overall in very original condition. Craig hopes to restore it in the future.



Jenny and Lynne in the “Mighty Morry!”



Motel owner Craig and Grandfather’s Fairlane.

After breakfast at the Ouyen bakery it was off to Lascelles and the silo art. We then made a slight diversion to Woomelang, where I paid a surprise visit to my cousin John Steele. John is a third

generation Mallee wheat farmer and he has a great sense of history. He has retained nearly all of the tractors and trucks that have been used on the property, including a war surplus International Truck. He recently acquired at a clearing sale, a tractor that was destined to be garden art. John brought the tractor home, where he carefully and patiently removed all the water that had been acquired internally. After further patient work, he managed to get the tractor to run, and to prove the point, he started it up for our benefit. Life on a farm of this type is a huge gamble, so I hope John has a bumper season this year. Luckily, Woomelang received a lot of rain around Christmas time, so the crops there, in sharp contrast to other sections of the Mallee, are looking pretty good. At Woomelang we also caught up with the local Policeman, Mark Keenan, who is originally from Yarrawonga. He is heavily involved in the local community organizations, such as the Lions Club and the Progress Association. The Lions Club have several unique fundraisers, included digging the graves at the local cemetery! Woomelang may be a shadow of its former self compared to the highly successful farming days of the 60's and 70's, when it had two banks and several businesses, but even though the school has now been closed, and the football club has been disbanded, it is still surviving.



John Steele – Mallee farmer. Recently acquired, and now running, 1951 Massey Harris Model 744.



Sheep Hills – Hotel now privately owned.



Sheep Hills silo art.

We continued on the trail to Roseberry, Brim, Sheep Hills and Rupanyup.

That night it was the final night at Ararat. We walked down to the RSL Club for dinner, and so came drawing to a close, just the best Tour ever!

We did a few calculations as to our fuel expenses: The total cost for the A30 fuel bill was \$145.42 with mileage around 40 m.p.g. The fuel bill for the Cadillac? Well it was a fair bit more than that! But we did use the Cadillac a lot more than the A30! In the interests of fairness the combined fuel bill was divided into three equal shares.

A big “thank you” must go to the Motorfest Classic 2019 organizing committee, and all the South Australian Motoring Clubs that were individually responsible for the respective daily events. Well done!

So, in conclusion, a huge, tremendous “thank you,” to Robyn and Hughie MacFadyen, and their helpers, for putting this Tour together. The degree of planning involved was obviously a major task. The compilation of the Rally Booklet, with the detailed directions (which we should have read a little more closely on the first day in Adelaide!) was obviously another huge task. Again “thank you” to you both.



The “dynamic duo” of Hughie and Robyn MacFadyen.

The quote of the Tour came from Hughie on the morning of the second day on the departure from Nhill. I commented to Hughie that Robyn had done an outstanding job, in relation to organizing the Tour, to which Hughie replied, and I quote, "So she should! She's had plenty of practice! She's been organizing me for the last fifty years!"

Ken O'Connor