

Vauxhall Register Rally

David Stuart.

Warwick Nicholson organised a weekend in the Southern Highlands on Saturday and Sunday 30th and 31st July for the Vauxhall Register to celebrate with them the 90th birthday of Vic's 30-98 Vauxhall OE282.

In attendance were the following members of the Register in their respective cars:

Neil and Maria Heilbrunn 30-98 E366

Richard and Emi Walton 30-98 OE53

Peter Weir 30-98 OE169

Vic and Warwick Nicholson OE282

Gary and Carol Rickard 23-60 OD30

David and Mary Stuart 23-60 OD494

Euan and Wilga Coutts 23-60 OD793

Peter and Margaret Ward 23-60 OD1107

Reg and Annette Wade 14-40 LM4786

We left Camden for the trip to the Highlands about 9am on Saturday and travelled via back roads through Mount Hunter and Mowbray Park to stop for an hour for coffee and cakes at Thirlmere. It was here we met up with Vic and Warwick in OE282. We then continued on, still on back roads through Balmoral, Hilltop and Colo Vale to join the Old South Road via the Mittagong Air Strip to Bowral and to our lunch stop provided by Greg and Gillian Roberts at their home in rural Burradoo.



Greg's D Type in chassis form

Prior to lunch we were invited into Greg's workshop to inspect the progress on the restoration of Greg's 1922 D Type Vauxhall D3688. The restoration of the chassis, front and back axles together with the engine and gear box are now complete and the car is again back up on its wheels. The radiator was restored with a new core by V.S.C.C.A. member Lester Thearle from Gunnedah and looked pride of place on the front of the car. As you can see from the photo Greg has now started on re-building the body and has so far built a new bottom platform section as the original was beyond repair. Rear guards have been repaired and the front ones are still away being redone. Greg's plan is to have the car finished for the 2018 National Vauxhall Register Rally in Merimbula N.S.W....so we wish him well with the completion of the restoration. I am sure it will be a crowd pleaser.

Gill Roberts provided a lovely lunch of pulled pork and fresh cold slaw on a crusty bun which was preceded by a nice cup of hot pumpkin soup whilst we earlier inspected the D Type.

Following lunch it was only a short journey around the corner to Greg and Veronica Mackies house "Marlo" to view Greg's great collection of vintage, post vintage and classic cars. Pride of place for me was Greg's vintage Minerva tourer (ex Brian Blacker) now complete with engine rebuild and standing on 23" wheels looking more elegant than it did on the cut down wheels it was shod with when Greg bought it from Brian. Greg showed us all his cars with selected engine starts when requested.

We then travelled to Vic and Warwick's house in Charlotte Street also at Burradoo to there be invited into their workshop for a show and tell. Warwick announced their latest project which is the fitting of a Laycock De Normanville overdrive unit to the gear box of their 30-98. Warwick and Vic both feel with the added power the engine is now developing with the recent fitting of the Irving head, the engine could now pull the overdrive unit and with a reduction in revs it will no doubt give rise to better fuel economy. We understand this will be the first fitment of an overdrive unit to a 30-98 though it is now fairly common practice with Bentleys and Rolls Royces. They will no doubt advise us in due course the results of this modification.



Vic's 30-98 OE285 and Richard Walton's 30-98 OE53

Vic and Warwick provided afternoon coffee and cake for us as we explored the workshop to inspect their other project being the long term restoration of a Morgan. As our navigators had decamped after lunch and were driven by Wilga Coutts and Jenny Suttie to the historic village of Berrima for some retail therapy, a phone call was made to have them return direct to Burradoo as the cold evening was setting in. Soon after we departed for our motels and warm showers.



Vauxhalls wait for their owners in Vic and Warwick's gardens at Burradoo

That night we all met in the dining room of the Mittagong Services Club and a room had been booked for us where we enjoyed a nice dinner to be followed by more Vauxhall talk amongst the drivers and things girls talk about amongst the navigators.

It was a fairly early night and on advice from those who must be obeyed, the drivers retired without the assistance of their medicinal toddy of port...You know I've always believed a port or two following dinner on rallies was a must, however a clear head the following morning I now enjoy more.....I am sure there is a moral to the story.

The following morning the Vauxhalls were to join the Southern Highlands members of the V.S.C.C.A. for their end of month breakfast run. This entailed driving to Moss Vale and meeting them in the car park behind the R.S.L. Club. There was a great collection of cars gathered waiting for us and in total some 83 members for the breakfast. Warwick had organised an hour's drive through wonderful back roads of the Highlands which took us out through Sutton Forrest, Exeter, Fitzroy Falls and Wildes Meadow before we completed our run at the Don Bradman Museum in Bowral. An area had been set aside in the grounds for our cars where Winterfest was also being held.



Vauxhalls on display at the Don Bradman Museum

Inside the museum a room had been set aside for us and it seemed that in no time at all we were all seated having our scrambled eggs and bacon with an endless supply of coffee. The breakfast completed our events in the Highlands for the weekend and whilst some enjoyed the Winterfest activities being held near our cars, others went off to do other things before returning home to Sydney.

Our thanks to Wilga and Jenny for looking after the girls while the boys went on the garage crawl. Jenny also for baking a cake for OE282's birthday. Also Greg and Gillian for providing the Saturday's lunch and opening their house and garage to the participants. Greg Mackie as well for opening up his garage for us. And of course our thanks to Vic and Warwick who prepared the road events and instructions for the weekend as well as inviting us to their house to help celebrate OE282 reaching it 90th year with the car still on the road and doing what it was built for.