

# CORVETTE NATIONALS

## Living the Dream (or was it just a dream?)

Our journey to the Corvette Nationals began at 9.30am at Taillem Bend on the Tuesday before Easter. John and Jenny (C5), Dave and Karen (C5), Dale (C3) and Peter B (C3) were the four cars going across to Sydney. Our trip captain (unofficially) was John and he led the convoy as he and Jenny had planned the route. Our first days travel was to be to Hay via Pinnaroo, Ouyen, Tooleybuc and Balranald about 650km. Our lunch stop was at Ouyen at one of the many bakeries John has visited on his travels. We had a rather uneventful trip and arrived at Hay at about 4.30pm. Tea was at the local pub and then everyone retired for an early night.



Wednesday's trip was to be from Hay to Young via Narrandera a distance of 387km. Dave and Karen left us to go on to Canberra to visit family and would meet us in Sydney. One of the highlights was a stop off at Temora to visit the aviation museum. The aircraft are fantastic and are all restored to flying condition, I would recommend you visit if you get a chance. We continued on to Young and after settling in to the Motel we headed for the local RSL Club to get a meal.



Thursday and our plan for today was to get to Bathurst a distance of 172km via Cowra. At Cowra there is a Japanese garden that was begun by the POW's during the second world war. We called in to see it and have lunch. This is a beautiful garden and a must see if you are passing through Cowra. From Cowra we motored on to Bathurst, arriving early in the afternoon. John had previously made enquiries to see if we would be able to drive around Mt Panorama, but was told the roads would be closed off due to the 6 hour race on the Easter Weekend. So we decided to see how close we could get to the track.



To our surprise we drove straight in the main gate following race cars on trailers and service vehicles and on to pit straight, under the bridge past the pits and over the start line and around "Hell Corner" until we got to the road block on mountain straight just past the pit paddock entrance. Ok this is not looking good. We had an executive meeting and decided to play the Adelaide tourist card – John and I went over to the security guard at the road block and put on our sad faces and asked if there was any possibility of cruising around the track to take a few pictures as we had come ALL the way from Adelaide! "No, no one is allowed up there as they are setting up for the race" was the reply. So we walked back to the cars and were just about to do a u-turn when another security guard came over from the paddock entrance. He wanted a picture of the Corvettes, so we let him take some and then Dale explained how disappointed we were at not being able to drive around the track. The security guard said that we should go wine tasting at the winery just up the mountain straight. We said we didn't want to taste wine! He said, "you tell the other security guard you are going wine tasting and he will let you through". Ahhhh we get it – can't stop us from going on the track if we are going to the winery because it is a public road! We had the track to ourselves as you can see by the photos.



If nothing else this alone made the trip worthwhile as I have not been around Bathurst for about 25 years. So it was off to the motel and after settling in once again we were off to the RSL for tea.

Our Friday drive was to be a short trip into western Sydney about 170km through the Blue Mountains. We arrived at the Rooty Hill Novatel (very nice) before lunch and unloaded the cars, then off to the car wash area that had been provided by the NSW club. Parking was the top three levels of the car park for Corvettes only with security and plenty of room to spread out.

Saturday and we were off to the Fire Museum at Penrith for the show and shine. After a drive of about 40 minutes (and getting lost – thank god for Sat-Nav) we made it to the museum and put our cars on display. I counted close to 100 cars on display.

John and I volunteered to judge for S.A. John was paired with someone from another club to do interiors.

While I was paired with Garth from NSW to judge engine bays. Interiors, engine bays and exteriors were judged by two pairs of judges (so 4 pairs of eyes). The overall standard of the cars was very good and it was a tough job scoring some of the top cars.

Last minute polishing - entrants will try anything to get extra points - Yes Dave the exhaust is clean on the inside!!!

This must be a first – just managed to catch Karen dusting and cleaning the C5 gear knob for Dave!!





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The show and shine wrapped up at about 2.30pm, so it was back to the motel to get ready for our bus ride to Sydney Harbour for our evening cruise. We left Rooty Hill at 4.30pm and were in at Darling harbour in about 45 minutes. It was the on to Captain Cook Cruise and we were off on Sydney Harbour. What a great night – the weather was perfect and the city lights and fireworks were just fantastic.

Sunday morning and there was a choice of two events – motoring events at Eastern Creek or a drive to Tobruk sheep station. We all opted for the drive and it was very scenic and enjoyable. On arrival at Tobruk we were introduced to our host who was a very funny bloke and given billy tea or coffee and damper with golden syrup for morning tea. This was followed by whip cracking and boomerang throwing demonstrations. Then we had a blue healer sheep dog show rounding up ducks and then sheep. This was followed by a sheep shearing demonstration.

Don't move and keep your eyes shut!!!

A fantastic BBQ lunch was provided and then we were able to try whip cracking and boomerang throwing.

I got this pic of John whipping his leg - ouch!

The rest of the afternoon was free after driving back to Rooty Hill.

The presentation Dinner started at 6.30pm and the NSW club did an exceptional job of decorating the room. There was a silent auction for memorabilia and a real auction during the night for special one off items.

A quilt specially made with all of the club logos was purchased for \$1500.00. On each table there was a collector's edition clock with the Live the Dream logo on the dial for a silent auction only for those at that table.

Our club won two trophies – congratulations :

**\* Most distance travelled to get to the Nationals – Dale Goldsmith. \* C5 unmodified class – 1<sup>st</sup> John and Jenny.**

We all had a great time and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. John and Jenny stayed in Sydney to visit family. Dave and Karen, Dale and I played tourists for a few days after and continued down the south coast of NSW and into Victoria before returning home on the Friday after Easter a total of 3,600kms. If you missed out on the nationals, you missed a great time. Half the fun is getting there and getting home. Please join us for the next one to be held in Fremantle W.A. in 2018.

Article by Peter Bartlett.

