

Healesville Steam Fest



The Healesville Steam Festival is in its second year and again we decided to support the event.

With the pressure of steam gaining interest with some of the members it was not difficult to find a hard core of interest.

The 12/50s of Northeys, Higgins and McKaiges were present and the Caldwell's 3½ litre and the Hetherington's TE21. And, when it was not zapping around the town, the buggy of McDougalls, masquerading as an Alvis under an Alvis umbrella.

The rain in the last few months had certainly added another



interest to the event. On the Saturday we watched one of the steam trucks bogged and not going anywhere, however it was easily unbogged with the grunt of one of the traction engines present.

Richard Newell was present with his Foden steam truck (the brown one) and happily gave rides around the town. Seems funny to drive a couple of kilometres and have to stop under a tree to get steam enough to continue on the journey.

Its progress down the main street of Healesville brought out the worst in the modern drivers, with cars dashing across double white lines so that they could get ahead, only to be stopped at the next intersection. Seems that the simplicity of driving a modern car addles the brains of some drivers. However, there was no tailgating!

Stuart, Claire and Duncan MacDonald were at the Friday night club meeting and it was a pleasant surprise to be with them again on the Sunday.

Stuart was annoyed at the offer of a set of steps to get up into the cab of the Foden, but he and I are past leaping tall buildings in

a single bound. We now need two!

Once again hats off to Chris Higgins who drove the 12/50 from Rosebud on the morning Peninsula to Healesville and back. He had to make a repair to the clutch linkage at Healesville and again on the way home.

I must talk to him about his approach to Melbourne traffic and its drivers, he is obviously laid back once behind the wheel of his 12/50.

Had Andrew McDougall had a taxi drivers licence he could have made a fortune and paid for his weekend. Was certainly doing more business than the helicopter!

The buggy is surprising agile. Its ungainly wheels and horse buggy construction certainly belies its abilities on the road. Each time it left the steam park and out onto the road I marvelled at its ability to for a turn of speed and not hold up the traffic.

3 litre horizontally opposed 2 cylinder.

David and Margaret Caldwell had a trouble free trip to Healesville as did the 12/50s of the Northeys and Chester. (Sally chose Honda power for the day). And the Hetherington TE21 looked good as always and drove faultlessly between Shepparton



and Healesville.

Frank Mornane is having some health problems at the moment and it was great to see he and Doug Stewart at the event.

Dale and Maritta Parsell were with us having had a diff episode on the way to Healesville and a trip on a flat top.

One of the heartening things to see at Healesville was the

kids active in their interest. There were kids driving huge machines, stoking wood boxes, oiling joints, cleaning paint work. Fabulous father and son bonding. I saw no harsh words or cautions. The kids were obviously well disciplined in the dangers



of the result of 20 tons of machinery passing over the human body. The photograph below demonstrates what it can do to the misplaced oil can.

At one stage a couple of the kids were playing the whistles like duelling banjos in Deliverance.

Big Red is having new bearings in its gearbox and didn't make the outing and the Langs were GM powered. You would reckon Marg Lang would get off her butt and spend more time on the Speed 20 and less in the kitchen! On second thoughts, she is a brilliant cook, maybe I should leave her in the kitchen, otherwise I will get sick of baked beans on toast.



All in all a fun weekend for all.

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Many thanks to Frances McDougall, John Hetherington and Dale Parsell for their photography and Chester for organising the outing.

