

September Meeting Hard Hill Reserve Wedderburn

The venue chosen for our meeting on the 17th of September was Hard Hill Reserve Wedderburn. The weekend started early for some who arrived on the Thursday, as per usual we were late on the Friday night though not as late as we have been on some occasions.

We had some activities planned for the Saturday. The first one was a visit to the Spanner Man at Boort. We had to be there by 10.00am on the Saturday morning so Maurice thought it would be good to leave between 8.00 & 8.15 most rose to the challenge but there was one couple that did not quite make that deadline but caught up very quickly.

We arrived a bit early but there was hot water on for tea and coffee provided so we were soon settled in to listen to John Piccoli's very interesting address. John Piccoli welds giant sculptures out of spanners — earning him the nickname the Spanner Man. In his garden there are lots of larger-than-life sculptures of mermaids, marlin, a full size bench seat and even a horse and wagon. It all started when he leased out his mixed grain and stock farm after running it for three decades, from his wheelchair. Among John's numerous interests are his Macaws. Apart from the Macaws that John bought he has also bred some as well. We got to go with John on a tour of his garden where we were able to see his birds and all the sculptures on display. It is a very interesting display and John is an inspirational man.

After we left there we headed into Boort for lunch, some of us had our lunch with us and others bought some or headed back to Wedderburn for their lunch. The lake at Boort was a pretty spot for lunch but the wind was bitterly cold. Maurice almost never goes straight back to camp; he is always on the lookout for adventure. Dave along with his passengers John, Jim and Peter were brave enough to follow. We eventually found our way to a patch of granite rocks that Maurice could see but not get to. Maurice, John, David and Peter went exploring but Jim and I had to cut their adventure short because we had to be back at Wedderburn by 3.30 for a Eucalyptus demonstration.

The Eucalyptus Oil Demonstration was our next activity for the day. The demonstration takes place on the Hard Hill Reserve so it was in easy walking distance of our camp. Robbie Collins and a team of volunteers turn eucalyptus leaves into oil using a Eucalyptus Stew pot. This was a very entertaining demonstration. Mrs. Collins opens the shop on site which stocks and sells the Eucalyptus oil that has been produced and some other products made from the oil.

After the demonstration we headed back to camp and got ourselves ready to go to the Wedderburn Hotel for dinner. Wayne and Lyn had to go to Melbourne for the day but they arrived back in time to go to dinner with us. A courtesy bus picked up those who were not driving and delivered them back after dinner. It was a nice night out and a very enjoyable meal. Back at camp most of us sat around the camp fire for a while.

The meeting was held at 11.00 and after that was over some of us had lunch and packed up and some just left for home. We left the others all settled around the camp fire and headed for home. Not sure what the others did after we left, that is their story to tell.

The Hard Hill Reserve was a great place to stay and Robbie Collins certainly did everything he could to make it enjoyable for us. Thank you to everyone who came and helped to make it a great weekend.

Kate Thomas



"The plan is I will weld up until the day I die, that's the plan," he said.

"I don't intend to waste away in a nursing home for the last 10 years of my life.

"I'd love to die in the workshop while I am welding. That would be the ultimate."



https://www.tripadvisor.com.au/ShowUserReviews-g552141-d8093801-r363733421-Piccoli_s_Spanner_Sculptures-Boort_Victoria.html

There are an additional 39 photos at the link I have provided and if you have not seen this man's work previously I do recommend that you access the photos. His sculptures are not for sale and are only viewable on his property.

The fact that he has been prepared to sacrifice his spanners in the name of art, clearly indicates he does not own an IH Scout, with or without a resident Gremlin.

Photos, left & below, Kate Thomas.

