

## News from Millmerran 2011

The 10<sup>th</sup> Millmerran Open Rendezvous began with much excitement within the ranks for those preparing to attend again – or indeed for the first time, particularly from Victoria.

This year the Victorians who made the trek included ourselves, Graeme & Debra Forbes, Bob Ellis, John Moreland, Barry Macfarlane, Johnny Gio, Des, Harry Psarras (Greek guy), Alex Psarras son of Greek guy, Ronny Davis, Gordon and Helen Ancona and Allan & Brenda Clegg. Sadly Marree Macfarlane passed away last year and her presence was sorely missed by all, most of all by Barry of course. Our hearts go out to him.



Again the trip up was not without challenges, some may remember last time Graeme hitting a kangaroo at Coonabarabran and nearly causing himself, Barry and Johnny Gio to miss the whole event but for a very kind Motel owner who lent his vehicle to Graeme to track down the needed parts just in time.

This year it was all about the new caravan we had purchased after suffering the Bacteria Bug we'd hired from Toowoomba last time, they were just awful and we couldn't do that again. So this was the 'vans first serious outing.

Being new to caravanning would suggest we should have practiced a bit before a two week venture such without services as this would not have been out of the question – well anyone who knows Forbesy would know that was never going to happen. The first set back was me nearly running the van and us off the road when it started to fishtail near Coonabarabran.

Onward to Millmerran, we had made an agreement between ourselves that we would stop at the Green Room when we arrived as it would be after dark, and wait until morning to forge our way into the camping area in light. Great plans are not always followed. Graeme's juices were flowing and he just had to go straight in, it was around 7pm. I knew we were in trouble the moment he said "I don't know which road to take" but with a 21 foot 'van dutifully following we were committed.

Following the dam wall road around we found the trees getting thicker and suddenly there was Norm Dean waving frantically – ahead the road had been washed away with the Queensland floods earlier in the year and there was no way forward. However as I alighted from the truck it was obvious we were not proceeding regardless as Graeme had managed to get us tightly stuck between the trees. The 'van was bound as tight as an 18<sup>th</sup> century whale boner on a well rounded woman. Nothing to do but the sleep there the night and hope for help in the morning.

The morning found Johnny Gio and Harry Greek guy brandishing chainsaws and enthusiasm, they chain sawed down the troublesome trees and took over the driving and swung the 'van out of its imprisonment

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and finally positioning us in Traders row comfortably for our stay. Other problems kept arising, blowing fuses, air in the water lines, batteries that are inadequate, but by the end of the two weeks we were consummate caravanners and out of water,

After all wood was procured, campsites set-up, water in place the attendees could look forward to the beginning of the Rendezvous.

The first event held on the Saturday was a Queensland demi-cannon shoot. We entered a team with Graeme and young Alex hereafter dubbed Alex "short guy", a 12 year old from Seymour club and his first trip away. The town criers couldn't pronounce his Greek family name and hence forth just named him "Alex short guy". The cannon is a stainless steel ¾ inch barrel ships cannon and very accurate. Alex and Graeme managed to get to an equal first position which required a shoot-off! Amazing stuff for a first time junior attendee to be in the finals in a major league competition. They subsequently won the event and no smiles could have been bigger than Alex's at being part of this winning event. Second place went to Shane & Glen Barnsley, third Dylan & Richard Hailis.



The next event was a long range cannon shoot; this was won by Barry Macfarlane and Johnny Gio with Barry's newly sculptured cannon made by Bob Seip in Victoria. We think this cannon is going places and look out for it more in the future. Bob Seip is a master in many ways with the shooting irons and this will just prove another notch to his belt. Second place went to John Phillips & Peter Robertson, third place Karl Slade & Al Naumann.



The Coehorn Mortar was held over to Wednesday due to large numbers of cannons crowding the firing line.



Sunday was dedicated to the long range cartridge event, which was subsequently won by John Faull, second Samuel Robinson, third is a mystery.

Monday was the official welcome to all attendees; I particularly liked the emphasis on safety by Don Robertson and the mandatory requirement to Sledge! There was a volley fire and a minutes silence for those that we have lost



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to the last rendezvous since the first Millmerran Open in 1999. A very nice tribute without a doubt.

Thereafter the events rolled on. Rendezvous events every day, club sponsored events which added particular excitement. Fraser Coast ran the Hunt proudly won by our Graeme with a score of 24 out of 25, very well done.



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Seymour ran a Feather Shoot won by Tony O'Dell.

Nowra ran a 5 shot balloon shoot won by Jonny Gio . Brisbane Belmont ran a Christmas in July event (shooting Christmas trinkets) won by Vanessa Fitzgerald.

Taree/Wingham ran a card on edge shoot, won by Ron Evans.

Early Settlers ran a pistol and revolver shoot won by Neil and Dallas Fluerty (respectively). Ripley ran a shotgun event won by Tony O'Dell.

Other Rendezvous event results are gloriously listed below.

Rendezvous Events:	Winner	Club	State
Rifle Gongs Percussion;	Adam Greinke	Ipswich	Qld
Rifle Gongs Flintlock;	Ron Evans	Ipswich	Qld
Musket Gongs;	Neil Fluerty	Fraser Coast	Qld
Pop-Up Turkey Percussion	Neil Fluerty	Fraser Coast	Qld
Pop-Up Turkey Flintlock	Alan Clegg	Seymour	Vic
Shotgun Percussion	Graeme Forbes	Seymour	Vic
Shotgun Flintlock	Wayne Atkins	Ipswich	Qld
Ladies Shoot	Karen cross	Taree/Wingham	NSW
Junior Shoot	Ryan Young	ESSA	Qld
Pistol Percussion	Angus Young	ESSA	Qld
Pistol Flintlock	Ron Evans	Ipswich	Qld
Revolver	Neil Fluerty	Fraser Coast	Qld
Flying Fox Percussion	Ray Fluerty	Fraser Coast	Qld
Flying Fox Flintlock	Alan Clegg	Seymour	Vic
Flintlock V Shoot	Jonathan Zorzetto	Brisbane	Qld
Keyhole Percussion	Richard Beck	Nowra	NSW
Keyhole Flintlock	Alan Cleg	Seymour	Vic
Flag Shoot	Ripley Rangers - Wayne Atkins - Peter Boorman - Chris Richardsen - Ben Schloss	Ipswich	(Qld)
Competitor Draw	Tony O' Dell	ESSA	(Qld)
<b>Camp Oven Cooking</b>			
• Meat Dish	Brenden Bliss	ESSA	(Qld)
• Bread, Scones, Damper	Emma Robinson	Ipswich	(Qld)
• Sweet or Dessert	Catherine Young	ESSA	(Qld)
<b>Craft Competition</b>	Gordon Ancona	Seymour	(Vic)
<b>Seneca Walk-thru:</b>			
• Mixed	Jim & Karen Cross	Taree/Wingham	(NSW)
• Men's	Bruce & Angus Young	ESSA	(Qld)

The street parade didn't happen this year. The reasons are multiple and we are hoping this will return to the agenda again in future years. It was disappointing in many ways, being able to display our dress-up finery to

the public and parade our cannons and guns is quite unique in Australia. The volley with cannon and arms down the main street with blank charges is amazing and the guy's just love that they line their firearms in the pool cue stalls at the pub on full display without anyone giving a tinkers damn is warming to the shooters heart.

## Gossip Time



We had the cooking competition on Tuesday. I did an Afghani Lamb curry, a bad choice in retrospect, whilst curry lovers loved it – not a traditional meal. If curry isn't the judges flavour of delight it will never win a comp and let's face it we were in outback Queensland. I was running late to make the entry but suddenly the dish came together with genuine saffron rice and I was running along the sandy path to get the entry in with friends urging me to slow down. It seems one dear soul who was also running to enter, as I was, dropped the lot in the sand and the whole audience felt his pain. Probably nothing like what he felt!

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The knife & hawk was held on the Wednesday – we were in Oakey fixing the afore mentioned battery problems and did not make it back in time, from all reports the block was made of A grade solid cast steel designed to withstand any attempts on its person – according to the complaints committees that magically and multiplying appeared. Still the winners were

Knife & Hawk:	Winner	Club	State
Knife Senior	Pascal Carre	ESSA	Qld
Knife Junior	Nathan Fisher	ESSA	(Qld
Hawk Senior	Peter Service	Brisbane	(Qld
Hawk Junior	Lyndon Kelly	Ipswich	Qld)



And the Firelighting:			
Firelighting Senior	Taylor Clarke	Brisbane	Qld)
Firelighting Junior	Emma Robinson	Ipswich	(Qld

The Rendezvous Shotgun Event consisted of 20 extremely difficult targets thrown between trees or behind logs in the case of the rabbit target. Many competitors found themselves shooting the trees instead of the

targets as the time for a clear shot was very short. Graeme much to his surprise won it with a score or 13 as he didn't feel a score of 13 would beat the hot competition from the other shooters.



The culmination of the entire event was the bush dance and the presentations on the Saturday night, this year the usual bush band found themselves double booked and we had an equally comparable band – save the fact it seemed a very short time that they played. I am sure the previous event I danced for many hours and went back to the Bacteria Bug with very sore feet. This year I got one dance and then the kids had a go – one more round then it was finished. I think we were in bed by 9pm! That was sad, my dance card had been booked out and no music to complete my obligations.

We left early on Sunday having had the help of Ron Evans and his 4WD to move the van to the Green Room area on the Saturday afternoon as our truck was not capable of getting through the sand bogs. We had an uneventful return other than arguing with the GPS about directions and nearly running out of fuel 3 times – that is 3 times

This event is the pinnacle of everything that Rendezvous should aspire to. The culture, the collaboration, the mixing of people, the variety of events, the meeting of like minded people, it always amazing to me what we learn and love from this particular event.

So many to thank, Don & Jan Robinson and their team of amazing people. Without their extraordinary efforts and diligent we would never get to this point. This is not only an important event but something monumental in muzzle loading in Australia, we cannot afford to lose this under any circumstances.

Below is a small photo gallery of parts of the event for your enjoyment.

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*Special Thanks to Duncan who was at Millmerran 2011 who provided the photographs in this article.*