

# Bowls, Blues and Cruise

## by Laird Darren Gallagher

I'm forever trying to convince many of you that your life is here to be enjoyed. So this month, after a few quiet ales and some discussion with my esteemed colleagues, I decided that I would organise a weekend event to prove that I'm not just saying it, but rather, am doing it. With my mother having grown up in Coolamon in NSW, it seemed like as good a place as any to have an event, because a family element is always a nice ingredient to any good recipe.

But what to do there? Having recently had some exposure to the ADF lawn bowling community (see the *dfm* Winter edition), it seemed like a natural thing that a lawn bowls competition might be in order. I contacted Will McCann, who is President of the Wombats Lawn Bowls Collective, a former Coolamon resident, an ADF representative bowler (winning an award in 2007, as I understand), and one heck of a nice guy, who agreed to coordinate the activity with the friendly folks down there in the Riverina.

I then contacted the members of the Old Mates Classic Cruisers, to see if we could arrange some kind of car meet and bowls match all in one. The guys were very receptive – with some members travelling over 1,000kms, from every direction, just to be part of the day. Now THAT, my fellow adventurers, is a long way to drive in an early model car!

All that remained was to arrange entertainment, a trophy, prizes and some refreshments. Not wanting to put all my eggs in one basket, I wanted to get a generic trophy, so that, should the weather turn bad, we could play an alternative sport. My good friend Karl Zappa, from Bayhawk Brewing in California, was kind enough to

donate a ceramic beer tap handle that was fashioned into a trophy, and master brewer Colin Marshall came to town with some prizes and refreshments. The entertainment came in the form of a Bluesman from Adelaide known as T-Mac who was kind enough to strap on his Cole Clark and play a few sets.

Now you will see from the photo that all of this happened. What I marvelled at was the overwhelming response from the locals. You can't have a group of classic cars roll into town without people taking note. As such, before we knew it, the representative from the local paper was there looking for a story. It's different from the city, because everyone knows our business in Coolamon without us having to tell them – it just made our trip better.

The only message that I want any of you to take away from this is that: life can sometimes be puzzling, however, with a little careful planning and jiggling a few pieces, every now and then some of it will go together nicely. 🍀

## So you want to host something? Here's five top tips.

1. Send invitations: People love getting invited to things. The written invite (not the email) carries with it that old-time feel, and, as such, reminds them of when they were younger, and the thrill of actually being invited to something.
2. Make it user friendly: If you break out the football or a sporting activity that not everyone can play, then it makes it harder for group involvement. That's why things like bowls, boules, etc have taken off in the BBQ games sense – people young and old can have a go.
3. Be selective with your crowd: Inviting a bad mix of people to something can often spoil it. If you are having a 'host a murder' party or something similar, you only need one person to say, 'This is stupid' and you lose everyone. That isn't to say that that person wouldn't be appropriate at something else – just pick your mark.
4. Don't run out of food or drink: This is self-explanatory (that is; it explains itself)
5. The host must have the most: If it is fancy dress, the host must have the best, most over-the-top costume. Because, if someone arrives that is too overdressed, they will feel bad. If you make it formal, fancy or informal, you set the benchmark for your guests. 🍀

Classic Car: \$2,000  
Fuel to get there: \$400

The feeling you get from putting smiles on the faces of random strangers by just being in their town: Priceless.



The ceramic beer handle trophy passes hands