

Longford Revival 2011

The Goodwood Revival and Festival of Speed is renowned worldwide and there are many motorsports followers who have it on their "lifetime to do" lists. Several people from within the MG car club of Queensland have made sure that their European trip coincides with a trip to Goodwood.

Not to be outdone by this event, Octagon, who organise the Targa Tasmania and other Targa Road Rallies in this part of the world, decided this year to create the inaugural Longford Revival Festival.

For those not aware, and I was one of those until reading the Sir Jack Brabham story, Longford held a race track from 1953 to 1968 with the equivalent of formula 1 races and it attracted participants from all over the world – Jack Brabham, Bruce McLaren, Graham Hill and Jim Clark to name but a few.

So, I hear most of you asking, where is Longford? It is a small town in the northern part of Tasmania to the south of Launceston where the Targa Tasmania is based, and also hosts a street stage for that Rally.

Anyway, the event was designed to celebrate an important chapter in Tasmania's history and a vital part of the history of Longford and its surrounding region. Importantly and for the local economy it was not just a showcase to celebrate the motor sports history of the area but was also an event to showcase the food and wine of the north of the island which has now become a major feature of the economy of the island.

Unfortunately most of the circuit has now been amalgamated into the local road network, is overgrown or inaccessible to the public but importantly what does remain is a section of what was known as the "Flying Mile", which even by its name suggests that it was a straight section of road where cars could be max'd out on. Certainly it was straight, but was far from flat or smooth. Many of the current single seater racing cars would be grounding on the track/road

The event was heavily supported by Porsche who are celebrating 60 years in Australia and to mark the occasion shipped out several exotic race cars from their Stuttgart museum including Le Mans winners and European championship winning cars from the '60's and 70's.

The Targa Tasmania drivers had an opportunity to enter their cars into the event, an opportunity which we decided not to take.

The speed demonstration consisted of up to a dozen cars at a time being led out of the pits, driven down past the "grandstand" towards the end or start of the flying mile. Here they were turned round and one at a time returned at maximum speed. Some were fast, some loud and some pretty slow.

The grandstand was a field located behind a temporary Armco barrier on our side. The other side of the track consisted of a few bushes and bits of hedge with a field beyond. Luckily there were no accidents!

Visibility for spectators was not good. That Armco barrier was in the way, but all of the catering was excellent with wine tasting opportunities, locally produced food and beers.

There was also a park and polish area for all of the local car enthusiasts, so lots to see and do – once. It would need to be a substantial improvement to return next year.



1934 Jaguar SS Special



Walter Rohl's 1981 911 San Remo winning car



The "flying mile" grandstand" with the Martini Porsche 43, competing and returned to the display above.



A fast Porsche



1960 Porsche 356 GS GT



and another 1960 Porsche – a 718 RS 60



A Ford GT40



An ex UK registered corvette (FCE 7C)



McLaren Mercedes and erm... a Rothmans Porsche



Jim Richards (multiple Targa winner) and 2011 GT3



Greg Garwoods ex Jim Richards 2010 GT3 (it crashed)