Dedicated machinery enthusiasts disregard the rain to check out the exhibits.
Allora Heritage Weekend.
Good day fellow members, hope you all had a good break over Christmas.

We already have a few displays lined up for the year the main one being the Far North Queensland Field Day in May. All those going should have their hand up so that we have numbers. Should also have your accommodation booked.

We have had a few inquiries about the Hornsby at the Venus Battery so Pat O’Brien kindly elected to bring us up to date on it’s history.

Last month two of our members, made the trip to display at the Allora Heritage Weekend. Glen drove down from Townsville while his farther Alan made the journey up from NSW. Unfortunately the trip coincided with ex tropical cyclone Oswald, they were both lucky to make it home, there would have only be hours in it. Anyway Glen was able to send me some wet looking photo’s.

Please note that my email address is keithfh1@bigpond.com when I took back the newsletter I used the old template and missed the change of address, confused a few people, sorry for that.

Input into this newsletter has some what dried up, consequently I am struggling to get Tired Iron printed. I urgently need support from all the members so that we keep this newsletter going.

Keith.
Richard Hornsby
No.50741 70HP Suction Gas
By Pat O’Brien

The engine left the Lincoln England Ruston-Hornsby factory about 1914/15.

This engine left Melbourne on the 27 February 1920 after being in storage for over 5 years awaiting a buyer. Because this type of engine was old technology and replaced by other brands of much more vertical efficiency they were hard to sell. Old stock held for long periods were heavily discounted.

The engine was consigned to Kidston and replaced a steam engine at the Kidston gold crushing battery. It operated up until pre-war (1930/40).

The engine was then procured by the Venus Battery and people were sent to dismantle and remove the engine from the Kidston Battery and cart the Hornsby to Charters Towers. On the way to the Towers the brass fittings and bronze bearing were stolen, rendering the engine useless. This was a pre-war period when scrap metal was expensive and why lots more engines were left the same way. This information came from Henry Weare (deceased) who was born and died on Broughton Road and within sight of the Venus Battery. Henry was a great historian and gold mining identity.

We have no knowledge of what happened to the suction gas plant, but the last time I visited the Kidston (1982) area the 2 spare pistons and 1 sleeve were in the dirt in front of the battery.

There was much forward planning to the manufacturing of Hornsby horizontal engines as the casting were removed from the casting house, then acclimatised in the open for over a year before any machining took place. The engine was not mass produced, but built by one team and every part was serial numbered for this particular job. Test run, painted and them partly dismantled and packed in wooden cases for export.

For those Ruston-Hornsby freaks I still have the register to 2003 with over 150 pages of facts on a CD. Anyone wanting to learn more can have a copy free.

Pat O’Brien 47739751 or pcobe@bigpond.com

A sad end for a once majestic engine.
Above. A nice line up of Listers.

Below. A tidy set up with a Ronnie.

Allora Heritage Weekend.