Our first display on our new lease, At the Train Park.
Standing. Gary Blyth, Tony Binder, Andy Nicholson and Glen Harris.
Sitting. Keith Hendrick, Alan Murray, Ian Williams and Shane O’Carroll.
Hi all, the new year is under way again. They seem to be getting faster.

The Train Park display was a success with about 25 items of machinery on display from 8 members, Gary, Tony, Andy, Glen, Alan, Ian, Jacko, and myself.

At the same time we signed for the lease on land at the park. This month will see us apply for the first grant on offer this year.

Tony, Ian W, Jacko and I went and picked up the lathe from Roman Splawinski, it now resides in Tony's car port. I hope that Roman will join our club.

The Christmas BBQ was a great success and anyone who didn't come missed on the best food ever, thanks to Tony and Vikki.

We met up again with Gary and Nikki’s daughter Little Annie, well a bit bigger Annie. You remember she made her NQMP debut at the Mareeba Field Day when she was a few weeks old and nobody heard her cry the whole time, well she hasn't changed she is a perfect baby.

Keith.

Left. Annie and mum Nikki.

Below. We load Roman’s lathe on to the trailer. From left to right. Keith, Roman, Ian W, Jacko and Tony.
A Grasshopper and a Platypus.
By Graham Gow.

During the demolition of the old Caltex Star service station in Rossriver road Aitkenvale. I discovered a Grasshopper lurking inside.

It’s antique look, coupled with a 4 blade fan fitted to the mower blade shaft, on top of the drive pulley to cool the motor, appealed to me.

An so in 1984, after a bit of TLC I displayed it as part of the NQMP exhibit at the Bush Children’s Fete at Rowes Bay.

It has an unusual rectangular metal frame (most rotary mowers used a circular frame) on which the JAP air cooled 2 stroke motor was mounted.

It proved popular with viewers, so much so that people began to give me their old mowers, some of which I had never heard of before. Rota Chief, Hurricane, Crowe, Villager and Platypus. I later found that there were over 100 brands made in Australia.

It became clear to me that they were part of our manufacturing history and therefore worthy of preservation.

Ron Tate, a draughtsman, from Kurrajong NSW established the Grasshopper Mower works in 1948, initially making 240V rotary electric mowers.

In 1949 the Villiers 89cc petrol engine versions were marketed in 12”, 14”16” and sold to retailers, Nock and Kirby, David Jones and Anthony Hordens. Later JAP and Clinton engines were fitted.
and in 1955-56 a new model, 18” with one lever height adjustment was released. However, by this time, Victa dominated the market and production ceased in 1958. 
I eventually located 3 different examples, one in Innisfail, one in Charters Towers, another in Cairns and finally an electric model that I rescued from a Scrap Yard in Innisfail. They are now on show as part of the extensive mower collection at the Caboolture Historical Village. 

Graham.

Above An Electric Platypus.

Below. The old Lathe at Tony’s place.