



SUNDAY DRIVE

Tulip Time

Photography by me



Bowral

I visited Tulip Time last year, somewhat by accident. I took Magneto for a drive to the Southern Highlands just for something to do on a Sunday. We got to Bowral and I realised, "Oh yeah, it's Tulip Time."

Tulip Time had its beginnings in 1958, when a group of community minded citizens met to organise a festival to publicise the town of Bowral. This year marks the 49th anniversary of the official Bowral Tulip Time - one of Australia's largest floral garden festivals.

In 1961, the Rotary Club of Bowral adopted a project of beautification for Bowral by donating thousands more tulip bulbs for Corbett Gardens (provided by Rotary and other donors, planted by Bowral Council). In the same year the festival officially changed its name to Bowral Tulip Time. Since then, an annual festival has been held in spring (September to October).

Now the festival incorporates a variety of other activities like dancing, musical recitals in the band rotunda and street theatre in Corbett Gardens, street markets, art and craft exhibitions, to horticultural displays, and heaps more.

Yes there is small entry fee charged to enter Corbett Gardens. It is used to cover the cost of staging the festival each year. Once overheads have been covered, excess funds are donated to local charities.

Corbett Gardens is a beautiful spectacle you really must try to get there one year. Bowral's retailers add to the attraction of making the drive to The Southern Highlands. The main street provides plenty of wander around and browse time. I know most of you blokes will

be tempted right now to rip this page out before the wife reads it. I don't mind it actually. I think it's a state of mind. There are good pubs too and you know you will end up there for lunch so be patient Grashopper - You can only go halfway into the darkest forest; then you are coming out the other side.

There are fantastic homewares stores with bits and pieces from all over the world. Nick Nacks is the technical term apparently. Women like to look at these for hours... and consider. Consider what I am not sure yet. But I too am quite entertained in this environment - Slightly gay.

We found a Christmas shop and Magneto went crazy. She looooves Christmas! We bought heaps of decorations. A few she unknowingly pinched out of their amazing display which didn't go down too well. Magneto has a serious problem with Christmas decorations. We have enough for three or four trees and none of them are from GO-LO... trust me.

We ended up at the Bowral Hotel for lunch. It was a bit late by this stage and the eating area of the pub was quiet. Just a light lunch and a glass of wine each. Another wander around down that end of town and it was time to head home.

It really was a lovely day down at Bowral. It is a very strong memory for both of us. Maybe there was touch of serendipity about the whole day. We really did just decide to drive to the southern highlands for the day... the rest just fell into place.