



55 years in the making...
**The OLD BP
Rally
May 9-11**

Ross Runnalls updates us on
plans for this years OLD BP Rally

1969 - Colin Bond on the finish ramp at Chadstone Shopping Centre in 2nd place.

A survey trip of most of the planned route has just been completed. Ian Ellis and Geoff Boyd got to ride in a \$750,000 wheat harvester, while I sweet talked the owner, so we are now experts on wheat harvesting and associated technology.

We can report that the roads are excellent, with sand not a great concern. Navigation is more early 60's style BP with most crews only likely to lose points on 1 or 2 sections per division.

While the basic format is similar to previous events, there is little of the course that was used in those events. It will be less tiring though with each division being of approximately six hours duration. The 1900km course has been assiduously researched and selected and will be full of interest for driver and navigator, visiting locations from mountains to deserts made famous by past BPs and creating a few new infamous locations along the way.

The event will start on Thursday 9 May at 7.00pm from the RACV Country Club at Healesville. Dinner snacks will be made available to crews following book in while plotting the first Division.

The overnight breaks will be at Benalla on Thursday and Mildura on Friday and finish in Ballarat on Saturday night. Supp Regs will be available in early February and will contain details of accommodation close to the Division end and start Controls in those towns.

The post event lunch will again be held at the Ballarat Turf Club at Miners Rest in the midst of their Mother's Day race meeting. Those attending the lunch get into the races for free. The fine fleet of finisher cars will be a display feature of the meeting. So combine the BP with Mothers' Day and treat Mum to a day out at the races. *Remind her to bring her fascinator.*

The entry fee has had to be increased to \$575 to cover three additional supplied meals. It is still the best value \$/km event on the calendar. Just to make it more attractive and not to be missed, a discount of \$100.00 applies if both crew members did not compete in the 2008 or 2010 HRA BP Ultimate Rallies or for each crew member that is under the age of 35 years of age the time of the event, except for a third crew member.

We would like to see more interstate crews. Graham Thompson and Winton Brocklebank from Canberra have been great and enthusiastic patrons of Old BPs but have not been successful so far in persuading more from north of the border to make the trip south. Dan White vowed though to fire up his 120Y after following the 2010 event, and Dave Johnson has been studying previous BPs in preparation to take on our simpler navigation. He has even purchased a proven car from Bob Watson to enter in. It appears that the car came with driver.

We would also like to see younger competitors come and join the elderly, and see what cheap fun it can be, hence the age entry fee discount incentive.

If you would like to participate in the event as a control official then contact me by phone; Ph 0408609968, or e-mail; rossrunnalls@bigpond.com.



Discounted entry fee for each crew member under 35 or those crews where both did not do the 2008 or 2010 BP.

Clockwise from top left 1964 - Director Don Thompson does the control duties. 1966 Watson and McAuliffe HD Holden - a broken steering arm caused a DNF, but not after trying to drive with only 1 wheel steering! 1967 Ron Phillips and Jim McAuliffe - HR Holden. 1969 Mal McPherson and Robin Sharpley - Waltons Rally Team Renault 16TS finished 8th.

If you would like to compete but cannot find a driver or navigator, contact the organisers and we will see if we can match you up suitably.

So, look on **e-bay**, find a pre 1985 car, remember that roll cage and logbook are not required, and then find someone who finds maps interesting, preferably young or new to the event, and have a go.

It will be another memorable epic.

- *Ross Runnalls*

The BP Rally was first run in 1958, 55 years ago. Its origins go back to the Sun Rally (sponsored by the Sun newspaper) which first ran in 1953, 60 years ago. It ran every year until 1973.

It was revived as "Ye Olde BP Rally" in 1979 by Peter Haas and Bob Watson, it ran again in 1984, 1989, 1998, 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2010. Together with The Experts Trial and the Alpine Rally, it forms the so called "Triple Crown" of rally events in Victoria. Very few have won all 3.

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