



17,000 flock to festival

THE Old Bar Beach Festival showed just why it's regarded as one of Australia's best regional events over the weekend, with more than 17,000 people making their way to the small seaside village for a spot of shopping, live entertainment, delicious wine and food sampling, arts and cultural displays, fantastic rides and, of course, to celebrate the 60th birthday of the iconic Kombi van.

The Kombi is synonymous with the Old Bar Beach Festival after the annual display, parade and national record attempts over the past six years. This year's event attracted 218 Kombi vans to the festival and ensuring that the record is upheld.

The festival continues to grow each year with the addition of several new events in 2010 proving popular with the crowds.

The inaugural Old Bar Classic Car Show saw between 50 and 60 specialty and classic cars brave the wet conditions to impress the visitors with a great variety of vehicles from a crazy Volkswagen Beetle to an attractive vintage Mustang.

More than 250 market stalls with a range of goods available kept the crowds busy and the wallets open as thousands sauntered the aisles to grab some bargains and one-off items.

Entries in the Beach Fun Run were notable considering the imperfect conditions.

About 79 people dared to enter the four kilometre race and 29 people braved the eight kilometre run with Michael Wiersma and Jessica Kane taking out the male and female 4km respectively and Kurt Saddler and Kirran Mowbray winning the 8km events.

Festival goers showed their appreciation for artistic talent with about 100 people enjoying the very first festival art exhibition every hour, inquiring about artistic processes and purchasing some pieces.

But the highlight of the weekend was the amazing aerobatic display performed by pilot Paul Bennett in conjunction with the Old Bar Beach Heritage Listed Airstrip.

Paul wowed the crowd with his death defying tricks on both days,

swooping low, flying upside down and performing a number of amazing turns and flips, ensuring everyone's eyes were focused on the sky.

Festival co-ordinator and president, Cozette Leonard said it was another huge success and great to see numbers increase again from last year.

Cozette and her team of volunteers spend many months and countless hours organising the massive event for so many to enjoy.

"A special thankyou must go to the volunteers who helped," she said.

"They did a great job and without these volunteers we would not be able to run this event."

As the festival continues to grow, the committee is always on the lookout for some much needed extra volunteers to help put this fantastic weekend together.

Anyone who would like to be a part of this special, national event should contact the Old Bar Beach Festival Committee on 6553 3833 or 6553 8445.



More than 200 Kombi vans headed to Old Bar at the weekend, taking part in the annual display and parade and also marking the 60th anniversary of the Kombi. Photo courtesy of Casella Wines.