

# BACKFIRE



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PO Box 200 Newcomb VIC 3219  
[www.wdhvcgeelong.com](http://www.wdhvcgeelong.com)



Club meetings: 7.30pm 2<sup>nd</sup> Tues each month. Clubroom: Geelong Showgrounds, 79 Breakwater Rd East Geelong.



*Datsun*



*Empire*



*Packard*

*Iver Johnson*

*Merz*

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## President's Piece

Hello members,

I can still vaguely remember what you all look like. The current situation has gone from inconvenient to worrying and now downright scary.

We are obviously worse off now than we were when this kicked off in February with so many cases in our region. It would seem staying at home and tinkering with your vehicles is a really good idea. So that means when this virus cloud is finally lifted, we will be getting some amazing numbers turn out to events.

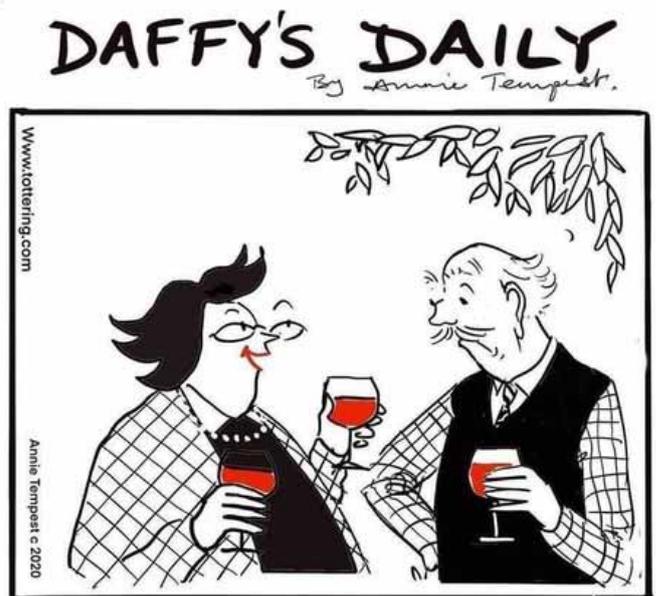
My shed therapy has seen the Buchanan chassis finally painted and back on its wheels. All the suspension and steering is fitted and operational. On to brake lines now and other smaller components to fit up to the chassis. Once it is rolling, I start the engine teardown. Fingers crossed that it is pretty good internally and will only need freshening up and some go fast goodies and dress up bits.

The committee got together last month on ZOOM to discuss club matters that needed addressing. The meeting was short as there isn't much happening apart from paying bills and red plate stuff. Just so you know, the club is still going OK, we are still in a good place financially and it is clear that we're just missing the social aspect that we all enjoy so much.

I haven't got a lot to write about this month so I won't try to drivel on needlessly. (Yes I know!) My sincere hope is that you are all coping OK with the situation we find ourselves in. Thank you to those who have been getting articles to Jon for the *Backfire*. This has been a wonderful sustaining link for us all. Vote Jon for editor of the year!

It's time to get out in the shed, make sure the water and oils are all topped up (mostly the oils if you have an English car) and be ready for the end of this and the beginning of club activities. Whenever that might be.

Dallas



"It's just that I find that having two glasses of wine at once stops me touching my face..."



# Gary's Giggles

## Tall Tales from our Legendary Librarian

A police officer pulls over a speeding car. The officer says: "I clocked you at 120 mph sir."

The driver says: "Gee officer, I had it on cruise control at 100. Perhaps your radar gun needs calibrating?"

Not looking up from her knitting the wife says: "Don't be silly dear, you know this car doesn't have cruise control."

As the officer writes out the ticket, the driver looks over at his wife and growls: "Can you please keep your mouth shut for once?"

The wife smiles and says: "You should be thankful your radar detector went off when it did."

As the officer writes out the second ticket for the illegal radar detector unit, the man says through clenched teeth: "Hells bells Vera, stop making it worse."

The officer frowns and says: "And I notice you're not wearing your seat belts either. That's an automatic \$75 fine."

The driver says: "Yeah, well you see officer, I had it on but took it off when you pulled me over so that I could get my licence out of my back pocket."

The wife says: "Now dear, you know you never wear your seatbelt when you're driving."

And as the police officer is writing out the third ticket, the driver turns to his wife and barks: "Please just shut up!"

The officer looks over at the woman and asks: "Does your husband always talk to you this way mam?"

"Only when he's drunk."

\*\*\*\*\*

A novice went to a monastery where the monks were allowed to speak just two words every five years. At this time, they could address their words to the Abbott and were expected to say something along the lines of: "Jesus loves" or "Faith heals".

But at the end of his first five years the novice told the Abbott: "Bed hard." The Abbott frowned, but nothing changed.

After 10 years the novice tried again with: "Food bad" but again he was ignored.

After 15 years the novice's two words were: "I quit".

The Abbott replied: "I'm not surprised. You've done nothing but whinge since you got here."

## COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

The Committee met on Tuesday 21 July via Zoom.

### Matters discussed:

Not a lot to report this month due to all the cancellations and lack of activities.

- ◇ 9 new members are currently on the waiting list. The Committee has approved these members to join the Club and to attend the next available meeting.
- ◇ The AGM is no longer re-scheduled for September (due to the current lockdown situation in Victoria). There was discussion about other options (eg Zoom) but this was thought to be difficult for a lot of members. The Committee agreed to a wait and see position with a date for the AGM tbd.
- ◇ The long distance rally has been cancelled

## CORRESPONDENCE JULY 2020

### LETTERS IN

- ◇ Smiths Bookbinding
- ◇ Allsure Insurance
- ◇ Bendigo Bank - statement

### LETTERS OUT

- ◇ Raelene Pretlove - to inform Vic Roads that she is a financial member of the WDHVC.
- ◇ Judith Matthews - get well card for our thoughts on her recent injuries.
- ◇ Veronica Anderson - get well card for our thoughts on her recent operation.

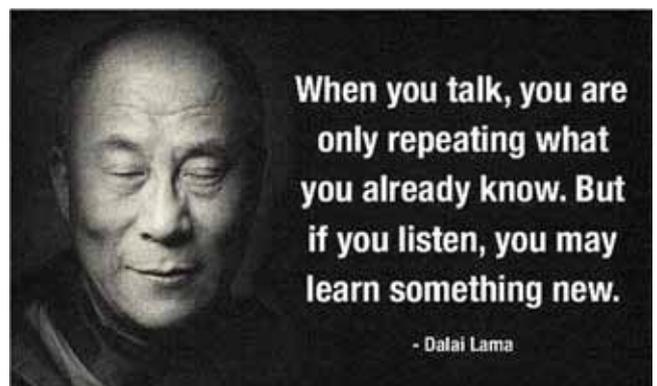
### EMAILS IN

- ◇ Federation - cancellation of Marong picnic and Bendigo Swap for 2020.

### EMAILS OUT

Nil

- David Mitchell & Fred Harris



## Club Activities

All WDHVC activities remain cancelled until further notice. The committee continues to monitor the situation.

### Annual General Meeting

The 2020 Annual General Meeting is no longer re-scheduled for September (due to the current lockdown situation in Victoria). The Committee agreed to a wait and see position with a date for the AGM. Members will be notified when further details are available. Your current Committee will stay in office until an AGM can be held.

### Red Plate Vehicles

Any unfinancial members with vehicles on the club plate scheme through WDHVC must not drive them, as VicRoads considers these vehicles to be unregistered. Heavy fines apply if you are detected driving unregistered vehicles on the roads.

**Red Plate registration renewals.** Contact Gus Shea directly to arrange for your paperwork to be signed if it falls due in the coming months. Ph Gus on 0400 203 151.

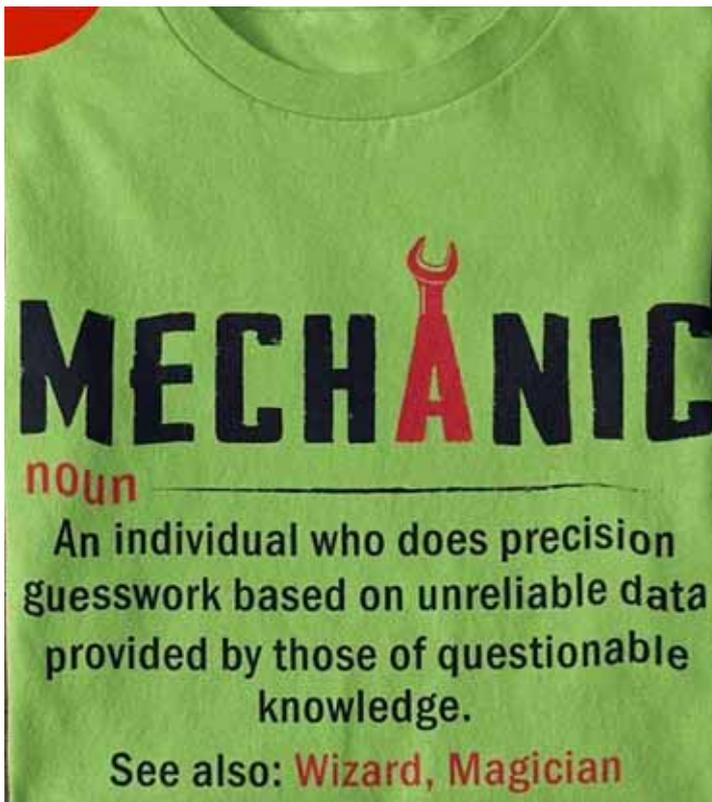
### Backfire

Backfire is continuing to be produced. Thank you for all the fascinating contributions received again this month. Keep up the great work! Help us all to stay in touch.

### Website

Gus is maintaining the website: check it out for updates and items of interest.

**24 AUGUST - MONDAY**      **SEPTEMBER**  
**BACKFIRE DEADLINE** *By 5pm please.*  
*Contact: Jon Breedveld 0417 311 441*



## Stories From the Shed

### A true story – don't do this at home!

Back in the 1940s a club member and his elder brother were coming home from a day's rabbiting, walking along the railway line, when they came across a cattle grate across the line. The younger brother (who used to talk his elder brother into all sorts of trouble) suggested they could get under the cattle grate, so they could look up at all the mechanical workings of the steam train when it ran over them.

After some coaxing they decided it would be good fun. Hearing a goods train coming not too far away, they quickly scratched out sufficient gravel so they could squeeze tightly under the grate. They just had time before the train arrived to jam tightly to the hole they had made and wait.

Well they started to feel the line moved down (remember they were jammed tight). The steam train started to squash them down flat as lizards. They couldn't get a breath, then when it was on top of them, it squirted steam down on them, then soot and clinker. They couldn't move their arms or anything.

As the train moved on the gap between the engine and each of the wagons was the only time they could gulp a breath of air as the line moved up a bit between each carriage. This went on for about 50 wagons – then the train was gone. They couldn't move until they got their wind back, then there was a scatter out of there.

The two kids were club member Ken Shepherd and his older brother Bruce.

They went home looking like to steamed dim sims, covered in coal burn marks and soot. Their mother took one look at them and said: "What the dickens have you two boys been doing now?"

Answer: "Nothing."

For two weeks after, every time a train went past their mother had to pull them out from under the house.

Don't put this on your bucket list!

-Bruce Shepherd



# RALLIES & RUNS

## 'Triumphs & Tribulations' - 18 years of long distance rallies

### Cast of characters:

- ◆ Fred Harris Driver
- ◆ Sharyn Harris Navigator
- ◆ Henry 1930 Model A Ford

*In 2002 we embarked on our maiden Long distance Rally. Strap in and hope everything goes well!!!!*

### CORRYONG & MILDURA

Numbers are lost in the mists of time but I think we had about 10-12 cars.

We stayed at Corryong and travelled to Mildura.

There were the usual hijinks, Ed McClurg's nightshirt had the sleeves and bottom sewn up. That caused quite an uproar. There became a game of finding the marks to commemorate the "56" flood courtesy of Judy Mills, who grew up in the Mildura area. You would not believe the places we found the marks and signs.

Well deep breath that one went well, maybe we will do this again.

### 2003 MILDURA, BROKEN HILL & GAWLER

On our reconnoitering we arrived in Mildura to the motel and found my husband had put his bag of clothes in the car but had forgotten mine. Off to the shops for some new ones. Oh well how sad.

Off we go again. Smooth start and in Mildura the weather was great. I remember coming out of the motel and looking up into a beautiful blue sky and four hot air balloons floated past. Just beautiful.

Broken Hill was just great, then it was time to leave and the temperature was warming up and the wind was on Henry's nose. All going well till we stopped for morning tea then some of the cars decides to vaporise and boil, and the wind was getting stronger and the temp hotter.

Made it to Wentworth for lunch very hot. Made the turn to Renmark so did the wind on Henry's nose again but stronger and hotter. Not pleasant. When we got to the motel the wind dropped to a breeze. Oh well the rest of the trip was great. Maybe we will try this again.

### 2004 BIG TRIP NEW ZEALAND

We took about 45 members and friends to NZ in March. We had a good start: Coral Lehmann had a significant birthday and the whole plane sang Happy Birthday.

We had our bus and a wonderful driver for the South island and not a bad one for the North Island. Some of the party went on a converted army duck and nearly sunk.

Murray Foran lost his hat in the deep blue sea and we ate some really strange stuff. Fred was given a traditional Maori welcome in Rotorua. The Motor Museum was the highlight and two gentlemen (who are no longer with us) decided to drink all the whisky in Dunedin.

Milford Sound was clear and the boat trip took us under a waterfall.



### 2004 KIAMA & McKILLOPS BRIDGE

Are we having a long distance rally? No you had one. No we didn't drive cars.

So off we went to Merimbula then on to Kiama and Goulburn, Club member John Hickford then told Fred that he had grown up in that area and we should go to McKillops Bridge. He didn't mention the state of the road. Have you heard of Seldom Seen Roadhouse or Bombala? We hadn't: the map was a spider web of tiny roads. When we asked at Bombala about the bridge we were told only drunks and idiots go that way. We were sober as judges so we obviously fell into the other category. Oh well away we went; the scenery was wonderful if you didn't look down. The scenery at Kiama was spectacular and the weather was freezing in Goulburn.

### 2005 GIPPSLAND 10 cars

We are getting the hang of this now. We started by going through Melbourne and down to Hastings. We saw the Tyabb packing shed and an old airplane museum, Phillip Island Grand Prix track, lots of junk shops and bakeries: this was new. Viewed wind turbines up close and Tara Bulga national park.

Ed McClurg stayed behind in the car at Wilson's Prom when we went for a walk. On our return, here he was with the windows down and parrots on the back of the front seat. When he woke one sat on his head. Another highlight lunch at the Dargo Pub: the start of Fred's Roads. Another success.

### 2006 PORT AUGUSTA AND PORT LINCOLN. 10 cars

Easy driving to Swan Hill and Mildura to start then on to Burra at Paxton Cottages for the next night. Board games, poker, Uno and pizza were the order of the night. Port Augusta and the Quorn train then onto Port Lincoln. The motel owner gave us some bad news: the weather was going to be 40. On the morning we were to leave, everyone was ready to go before 7am. This is not a trip I remember very fondly. The wind was on the nose and the heat had to be in to be believed. Fred took the bonnet off Henry and hoped for the best. On arrival at Port Augusta everyone disappeared into their rooms not to be seen for about three hours. Apart from a few hiccups this one was a success.

# RALLIES & RUNS

## 2006 PACIFIC CRUISE 18 members

I don't know how we were talked into this one. The morning of the cruise the whole of Australia was fogged in and we had to fly to Sydney. On arrival we were then waiting for half of the cruise to come from W.A. We subsequently went through the Heads in the dark. Then came the rough weather. The ship was deserted for about three days. The doctor made a fortune.

Everyone enjoyed the cruise on the whole but on trying to leave Sydney we had to wait on the tarmac in an electrical storm. Oh well.

## 2007 BATHURST, TENTERFIELD & COFFS HARBOUR 10 cars

Easy travelling to Bathurst then a trip up THE mountain in Henry what an experience!!

Back roads became a signature of rallies from here in. You never knew where Fred would find one. On leaving Port Macquarie service station he asked a lady what the road ahead was like she replied: "I broke my suspension last week on that road." That was all Fred needed to hear so off we went. No casualties. We enjoyed a lovely week at Coffs Harbour then home.

## 2008 DARWIN & THE GHAN 15 members

What a great trip: half of our party left a day early to visit Kakadu National Park. When the rest arrived they were all around the pool. Ray & Barb were in. "Come in, the waters beautiful" What a joke: I have never been in such cold water in my life!! We saw everything there was to see, went on a sunset cruise and learned such a lot about the bombing of Darwin. If you haven't been to Darwin you must, if only to learn about our history. After a wonderful week we caught the Ghan for the trip to Adelaide with some getting off at Alice Springs for two days then catching the next train.

## 2009 MERIMBULA 7 cars

We booked a week here and just explored the area. More back roads and a trip to the tip courtesy Fred. Found a great market, they sold good chocolate and ice cream.

## 2010 CANN RIVER & CANBERRA 7 cars

A long-awaited trip for me. I hadn't been to Canberra till we checked it out for motels etc. Sid & Bev Clifton's brother lived in Canberra and he made us most welcome for afternoon tea and to view his collections. We saw the Snowy Scheme, Laurie and I got lost on a morning walk and the weather was freezing. The highlight for me was a visit to the National War Museum where I learnt about my mother's brother who was killed in PNG. He is buried in Lae. I placed a poppy in the wall at his name. Very moving.

## 2011 LAKE EILDON, ALBURY & ECHUCA 7 cars

Maiden voyage for Judith Matthew's Capri. Her new rally car. We went on some more back roads and saw some beautiful scenery. The Lake is very extensive and a long way around. Then on to Albury for a couple of nights and Echuca to finish off.

## 2012 VICTOR HARBOUR & ADELAIDE HILLS 7 cars

We wound our way to Victor Harbour, a lovely little town. Had a ride on the horse drawn tram to Granite Island. Travelled on a steam train and then went to Harndorf for chocolate, cheese and wine. Yum. On our way home we visited a saw mill courtesy of Raelene Pretlove, whose brother works there.

## 2013 MORNINGTON PENINSULAR, PHILLIP ISLAND & WILSONS PROM 7 cars

We started this rally with a sea trip to Sorrento. At Kooweerup saw the most amazing back yard. Full of stuff. We visited a wrecking yard with a woman who had the most awesome vocabulary. Ray Matthews was enchanted. The highlight was a visit to the desalination plant: what a waste of money. The state coal mine was another visit. The Grand Ridge Road was worth another visit.

## 2014 HALLS GAP & WARRACKNABEAL 7 cars

We travelled to Halls Gap with a stop to see Imperial Eggs. We had kangaroos visit our motel as we had a BBQ dinner and we visited a horse drawn museum, machinery museum. Bought biscuits at Donald, made eucalyptus oil, and visited the Spanner Man.



HENRY RETIRED AS A LEAD CAR ON LONG DISTANCE RALLIES. He has done many miles on rallies over the last 20 years so it is time to share the load with the rest of the fleet.

## 2015 TUMUT, JINDABYNE & ALBURY 10 CARS

Our recon mission nearly resulted in our being lost in the snow in the Falcon. Do not listen to your husband when says: "It will be alright "

We visited a tram museum and visited and had wonderful tour of a turn of the century Chemist in Chilton. We also bought brooms at a factory in Tumut where they make them the old fashioned way. We had a cuppa at Jingellic, a great little pub, tucked away off the road near Albury.

# RALLIES & RUNS

In Albury we stayed at Tudor motel where there was an indoor pool. All partook of a swim.

## 2016 YOUNG, OBERON & BLUE MOUNTAINS 7 cars

We struck flood waters at Lancefield and the Benz nearly went under. Water to the bottom of the doors. Safely arrived for a tour of Puckapunyal Army base, very good. On to Junee for a visit to the railway roundhouse and the chocolate factory. Cowra and a look at the Japanese gardens and on to a little town called Carcour which time has forgotten. Oberon for five nights. A visit to Mayfield Gardens Magnificent!!, A daffodil festival (rained all day) and a visit to a train museum and a tractor orphanage. Jenolan caves where we went underground and the Three Sisters and a lap around Bathurst in the Benz this time. I think Fred went faster than last time. Did I mention it was still raining? We were to travel to Temora to view the Aviation museum, but there were floods everywhere, so here we were 14 people trying to find somewhere to stay for the night. Challenging, but we made it. On to Tocumwal and home.



On to Temora: we made it this time. Yarrawonga for two nights. More silos on the way to Benalla, visited an amazing motor bike collection and Judith jumped on a racing bike. She needed help to get off: the 2 Rays were fascinated. On to Echuca to the Beer Shed, lunch on the Mary Ann and dinner at Brad's place with a BBQ on the river.

Well you have all caught up with our adventures over the years. Covid 19 has blown the 2020 rally out of the water but we will try again next year. It has been great to look back over the trips we have done. Fred have made some wonderful friends and enjoyed seeing our wonderful country, seen some amazing things and done the same. We hope to see more of you on our next adventure.



- Sharyn

## 2017 BATESMANS BAY 10 cars

Travel through the tunnel to Sale and lunch at Timeless Memories. Plenty of junk shops on this trip and trestle bridges for the train buffs. Stayed a Merrimbula and so did 100s of bikies for the Police Memorial Run. Lunch at Tilba Tilba shopping and cheese, Bodella, more cheese. Batemans Bay for four nights. Met the Ulladulla Car club who looked after us wonderfully. Saw Tulips in Sutton and had a river cruise. Mogo for more shopping and onto Lakes Entrance over Brown's Mountain. Spectacular!

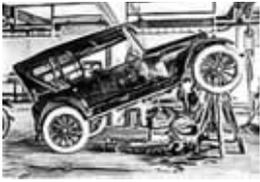
## 2018 SILOS & MILDURA 9 cars

This trip saw us view The Stick Shed at Murtoa, just wonderful, and onto the silo trail. We saw five painted silos on this trip. Mildura was the stop for four nights. Caught the bus for a paddleboat dinner cruise and the Pink Salt mine. More junk shops and to Wentworth for the day where everything was closed. The Psyche Pump House was opened for us and it was worth a look. Orange World for a tour and the Botanic Gardens. Robinvale Rural Life museum and Tytyndyer Homestead for a tour. On to the Flying Boat Museum to learn about WW11 in the area.

## 2019 SILOS & THE MURRAY 10 cars

This trip we had a lot to see, Just Mustangs at Riddles Creek the Kirwins Bridge, a 129 years old timber construction still in use. Saw a gold dredge at Eldorado and the scenery of Bright and Mt Beauty. Tonight we stayed in Albury at The Tudor Motel, we made sure Judith & Ray were in a four poster bedroom. She couldn't get up into it.





# Stories From the Shed



## Rusty Progress



"Rusty", the little green '53 Morris Minor sedan I bought early this year, is on club plates and on the road.

I didn't plan to buy it (does this sound familiar?). I already have a major project on my hands, restoring "Patsy", the 1938 Morris 8 Tourer that I have owned for a couple of years now. But late last year a Morris Club member unexpectedly announced that he was selling his project car and the price was very reasonable, so what do you do?

While a lot of the cosmetic work had been done, getting Rusty on the road has not been without its challenges. An early optimist's comment that I could have him ready to go after a weekend's work wasn't exactly accurate.

The first task was to wire in indicators, using the original dash-mounted Bakelite switch. (A set of Yamaha motorbike flashers did the trick.) Thanks Dallas for helping a color blind mate sort out the spaghetti wiring. Then I completely disassembled the wiper system, which had seized. They squeezed the motor and drive up under the dash in these early cars and I became a bit of a contortionist getting at it. Luckily all it needed was a good clean and lubrication. The SU electric fuel pump was next. It stopped working soon after the car came home. A swapped diaphragm (thanks John) and a lesson from the Morris workshop manual sorted that out.

While it ran quite nicely when I bought Rusty, I knew the 803 cc OHV motor hadn't been touched. A serious clean of the oil pump filter, a new oil filter and

replacing the gelatinous black goo in the sump with new oil did wonders for the oil pressure!

Further touch ups included returning the driver's seat to its original configuration, getting the horn working and adjusting the doors. "Rusty" then went off to a garage for repairs to the gear stick, a replaced clutch and pressure plate, new bushes in the rear springs and some minor welding to remedy minor rust in the floor.

I then reconditioned the master cylinder and speedo, and installed a new speedo cable, as well as various "minor" bodywork touch ups.

After all that I drove Rusty to Lethbridge, where club member Allan Tipper did the RWC. I came home tooting along the back roads, more suited to my 80kph top speed. I was actually starting to relax and enjoy the drive as we chugged up the long hill coming into Ceres. I didn't even mind the pouring rain, because I had wipers that worked.

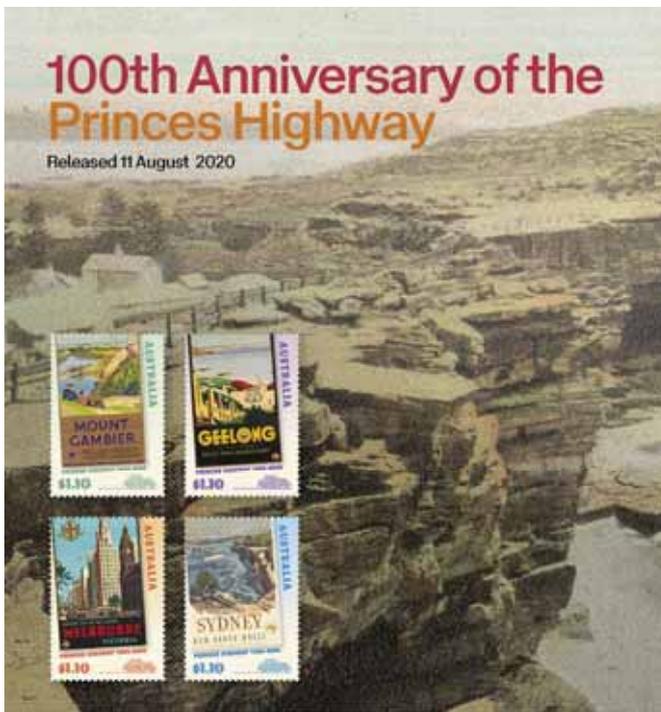
Suddenly the engine died - instantly and completely. Rusty had popped a welch plug, drowning the distributor. He came home the last 3 kms on the RACV flat top! And I had to phone my wife to get me, after standing under a tree in the rain.

A set of new welch plugs all round and a good flush of the system sorted that for now. Luckily the instant cut out had saved the motor from any apparent damage.

All good. I am learning all the time. And what else are you going to do during a pandemic? Now it's back to Patsy.  
- Ed



*He came home the last 3 kms on the RACV flat top*



\$4.70 2081002  
First day cover  
(gummed)



This month Evelyn Hill has sent in details of a new stamp release featuring Geelong and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the Princes Highway. The set of four stamps will be released on 11 August.

The stamps feature vintage travel posters of four places along the Princes Highway - Sydney, Melbourne, Geelong and Mt Gambier.

The Princes Highway was officially opened in 1920 as a major arterial road between Sydney and Melbourne via the New South Wales south coast and Gippsland in Victoria. The highway was named in honour of the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII / the Duke of Windsor) to mark his tour of Australia.

The Victorian section was formally opened on 10 August 1920 at Warragul in Gippsland, and the New South Wales opening took place on 19 October in Bulli on the south coast.

From 1922 the Princes Highway was extended to Adelaide via Geelong, Warrnambool, Portland, Robe and Mount Gambier. It was later extended to Port Augusta.

To find out more about stamp issues and how they are produced, go to: <https://australiapostcollectables.com.au/stamp-issues>

## SOME AUTOMOTIVE FIRSTS

From "*I Love Old Cars and Transport Stories*"  
- by Frank Rodwell OBE (\*over bloody eighty)

### The First Record of Petrol Imported into Australia

A consignment docket from a firm in England shows a quantity of 50 gallons of petrol, transported on board the S.S. Buteshire, to a Mr Roche of Melbourne, on 4 July 1899, at a cost of 11 pence (10 cents) per gallon (4 litres).

When I started as bowser boy and grease monkey at the Orbost Motor Works in 1948, I can clearly remember a service man having to replace the mechanism in the Shell pump, as the price had exceeded one and eleven pence half-penny per gallon. It had gone up to 2 shillings.

The first leaded petrol was served to motorists from Willard Talbott's service station in Dayton, Ohio, U.S.A. on 2 February 1923. For seven years prior to this, industrial chemists and researchers had experimented with some 33,000 fuel recipes in an endeavour to enhance performance and prevent engine knock. Tetraethyl lead proved to give the best results.



Also, it was found that ethanol, made from sugar cane and grain crops, could replace petrol, as it did not cause engine knock and was practically pollution free. Unfortunately it would take more than half the crops the country could provide and besides, the lead additive would deliver a substantial profit.

Some of those involved in the experiments developed symptoms of lead poisoning while, in the years 1924-1925, it was reported that 17 refinery workers at the tetraethyl plant had died and a further 50 were under observation. Some cities and states endeavoured to have leaded petrol banned but by early 1926, with the help of big business, it was returned to use, legally.

- supplied by Fred Harris

## Quotes About Cars

For every "Drive Safely" sign, shouldn't there be a "Resume Normal Driving" sign?

~ Robert Brault

## *My Favourite Vehicle* - the Austin York

Fellow British vehicle tragic, Peter Cullen, sent in this water color of his current car, a 1936 Austin 16/6 York. The image was created by Peter's friend David Trevaskis (it seems as a 60th birthday present, a few years ago) and captures the character of both the car and it's proud owner. Peter tells me the York is running very nicely and he has still been able to take it out for a short run or two.



The Austin Sixteen was introduced in 1927 as a medium saloon, sitting above the Seven and Twelve models but still much smaller than the 3.6 Litre Twenty.

The six-cylinder engine was new but similar to the engine in the Twenty with its timing chain at the rear of the block. The design was up to date, with the gearbox mounted in-unit with the engine and semi elliptic springs all round for the suspension. Triplex safety glass was fitted to all front screens from March 1929.

The wide range of body types was simplified over the years. The coupés went first in 1930 followed by the Weymann type fabric saloons in 1931.

Improvements for 1934 models included synchromesh on 3rd and 4th gears. An alternative larger (2511 cc) 18 hp engine was made available at no extra charge. An early automatic gearbox was available between 1934 and 1936 but few sold. A longer 120 in (3,000 mm) wheelbase chassis became an option.

Further upgrades were made in 1935. The body range now had only the 5 and 7 seat saloons. The radiator surround was painted body colour rather than chrome plated, and a small external boot was added to the rear which contained the spare wheel. Synchromesh was added to second gear. The larger engine was modified to have only four rather than eight main bearings.

In 1936 the York was part of a model range that included the Westminster, Chalfont and Hertford.

The York saloon (6-light) 18 or 16 hp saloon. Length 176 in (4,500 mm). Width 68.5 in (1,740 mm). Height 70.5 in (1,790 mm). Wheelbase 120 in (3,000 mm).

The straight six, 2501cc engine produced 43 bhp (32 kW; 44 PS) @2,600 rpm. It first sold for £328.

In mid 1937 this car's body was replaced by a new shape only available with the 18 hp engine and known as an Austin Eighteen.

## Metric Motoring

On 1 July 1974 Australia went metric. The metric system of unit is also known as SI units: "System International". Britain, New Zealand and Canada also went metric at this time. Some people did not like this.

### **A Farmers view on Metrication**

*"It all started back in 1966 when they changed from pounds to dollars, that doubled me overdraft. Then they brought in kilograms instead of pounds; me wool clip dropped off by half. After that they changed into millimetres and we haven't had an inch of rain since, if that wasn't bad wasn't enough they brought in Celsius, and it never got over 40 degrees, no wonder me wheat won't grow. Then they change from acres to hectares, and it ended up with only half the land I had. By this time I had enough and decided to sell out. I put the property in the agent's hand and then they change miles to kilometres. Now I'm too far out of town for anybody to buy the place!"*

Australia did a good job in metrication, as they had six years earlier in 1966 changed to decimal currency, which helped a lot. Also in 1965 the pharmaceutical industry changed to metric units. The quantity of medication changed from ounces and teaspoons to millimetres and we all got little plastic measures. Australia produced some good education leaflets on metrication and banned measuring tapes with inches. I think metrication was a very good decision. It had made teaching engineering and physics much easier. When I was a student I studied physics in both imperial and metric units. In 1975, I started teaching physics in only metric units. One of the disadvantages of changing to metric units was the loss of useful information. A hot day was 70° F and is now 30°C. There were a lot of new numbers like this to learn to get a feel of the size of the units. The simplicity of the metric system made up for this.

I did not use American textbooks as they were in both imperial and metric units. Instead I used British textbooks as they were in metric's units only. I have been out of teaching for a long time but I have seen some recent American textbooks and they now produce metric units (SI units) for export and dual units for own use in the USA.

This was also the time when calculations changed from log books and slide rules to electronic calculators.

It does not matter what units you use when you just measure something, but when you have to do calculations with these measurements there is a big difference. A question in a forklift exam asked to estimate the weight of a pallet with 4 x 200L drums of petrol. This makes 800L and if it was water it would be 800 kg as 1L of water equals 1kg. Since petrol is a little less dense than water it should be a little less but then add on the container and the pallet and it would be a little over 800kg or 0.8t.



Doing the same question in imperial units would be 4 x 44gallon drums which equals 176 gallons. Since 1 gallon equals 10 lb it would be 1760 lb. Since one ton equals 2240 pound you need to divide by this number to get tons which equal 0.78 ton or using the US ton (short ton) where one ton equals 2000 lb it would be 0.88 tons. The division is the hardest of the four arithmetic operations. If you had to calculate the volume from measurements it would be much more complicated. Metric: 1 cubic metre of water equals 1000 kg or 1 tonne. Imperial: 1 cubic foot of water equals 62.2lb or gal.

### **Motoring**

In 1974 we stopped driving at 60mph and started driving at 100km/h. It sounded faster, and was by 4.5km/h, (they raised the top speed to get the current limits). I pulled the speedo out of my car and put a sticker over the mph so it would show km/h. The odometer was still in miles but the speed was shown in kilometres per hour.

To convert miles to kilometres we doubled it and then added a little bit more. The old 100 mph or the 'ton' no longer had special meaning. Fuel economy went from being a large number to a smaller number in line with cost per kilometre.

# When?

From **1 JULY 1974**  
speed and distance signs will be in metric units.

# What?

Distances will be measured in **metres (m)** and **kilometres (km)** and speed in **kilometres per hour (km/h)**.  
One kilometre is about  $\frac{5}{8}$  of a mile.



Fingerboard signs with distances in kilometres will have the small km plate attached temporarily.



Clearance signs will be dual marked for a period.

Flood depth indicators will be in metres (m) divided into 0.2 m intervals replacing the present scale in feet.



This kilometre post shows the distance to Hobart as 90 km.



My first two cars were British which used imperial spanners, but my next cars were Japanese which used metric spanners. I am now restoring one of my British cars and now have to use imperial spanners again. It is not as easy to use imperial spanners as metric spanners. I use a 7/16 inch spanner as a label or a name and not a measurement. It is used for nuts in certain locations on the car. As a mathematics teacher, students find fractions very hard. They can manage 1/2 and 1/4 but when it gets to 1/8 and 1/16 they have trouble.

Arrange the following sizes in order:

- |        |     |
|--------|-----|
| 13/64" | 5mm |
| 5/32"  | 4mm |
| 1/4"   | 6mm |

Which is easier? Also, try cutting a 5 1/2" or 142mm in half. (Answer 2 3/4", 71mm). Now try dividing it into threes or thirds.

Appliances have hexagonal head self-tapping screws and bolts. Two common sizes are 5/16" (8mm is a good fit) and 1/4" (6.4mm and has no suitable metric socket, needs a 1/4 inch socket). The EU has a 7mm hexagonal head screw and bolts which is about the middle of the inch ones. Spade connectors are in 6.4mm and 4.7mm as they originated in the USA.

Vehicle tyres (as in the rest of the world) mark the rim diameter in inches and the width in millimetres. A car tyre marked '165/70R13' has a width of 165mm, an aspect ratio (profile) of 70% and a 13-inch rim diameter. Tyre pressures may be given in both kilopascals (kPa) and "pounds per square inch" (psi). Tyre pressure was the last imperial unit that I used in psi as my pressure gauge was only marked in psi. My current car only has the tyre pressure in kPa and now I use the metric unit.

## Driving in Other Countries

### New Zealand

In 2010 we hired a motor home and travelled around New Zealand. Driving in New Zealand is similar to Australia except that the stop signs are British style, where ours are European-style. Another difference is the give way to the left and right turning rule. The right-turning vehicles have right of way (like it used to be many years ago in Victoria until we changed in line with the other states). In Australia, 100 km will take about an hour but in New Zealand, it can take up to 2 hours or more due to the winding roads. We drove up to a mountain resort and it took all day to get up there and back. New Zealand has a good culture of allowing the following vehicles to pass because of their winding roads. Most of the bridges in New Zealand are one lane. I did find one straight road in New Zealand: it was out of Christchurch on the Canterbury Plains!

Australia and New Zealand share the same power point design but New Zealand uses round pins for their 15 amp power points. You can't cheat like some Australians with the 15 amp plugs. Motor homes are very popular and caravans are rare because they have to have see-through windows. The caravan parks are very good.

### Britain

In 2013 we hired a car travelled around the United Kingdom. The roads were still in mph, but distances to the intersections are in yards. The map book we purchased was in miles. I have seen an earlier version which was in dual units. We set the GPS in kilometres as we were more familiar with distances in kilometres now. In 1978 the cost of converting road signs from miles to kilometres in the United Kingdom was estimated to be between £7.5 million and £8.5 million (1978 prices).<sup>1</sup> As a result, the UK did not metricate the roads.

The UK is into roundabouts and is credited with inventing them.<sup>1</sup> With light traffic conditions, roundabouts decrease delays compared to traffic lights and reduce the number of types of collisions. When roundabouts get too busy for the volume of traffic, they put traffic lights on them. We have many roundabouts in Geelong that do not work during the peak period and could use this solution. The UK likes big roundabouts and the one in Fyans street with the railway line is small by UK standards.

- Lindsay Alford  
(Continued next month—Ed)

## Keep Up the Good Work

Eighteen years worth of Long Distance Rallies. Surely that must stir up a few good memories among participants? How about sharing your stories of a particular year? And what about some photos of the earlier rallies? I can scan printed photos and get them back to you if that helps.

For next month we already have Part 2 of Lindsay's Metric Musings and the first instalment of a fascinating yarn about three blokes and a Hupmobile in the early 1900s to look forward to.

But don't stop thinking about other topics of interest to fellow members. Looks like we might be socially distanced til Christmas at this rate, so keep sending in those interesting and varied items.

Emailed copy is best but photos & notes in my letterbox will also do. Give me a call to see what can be arranged.

### Some ideas:

- 1/. **Little Treasures** the smaller gems & bargains
- 2/. **"Stories from the Shed"**? Tell us about your project.
- 3/.. **"My Favorite Vehicle"** - what is that dream vehicle.?
- 4/. **"ISO Changes"** - positive stories of Covid Curiosities
- 5/. Anything else that takes your fancy.

Over to you. The deadline for the September *Backfire* is **5pm on Monday 24 August**, but don't wait that long to get in touch and plan your contribution - big or small.

Meanwhile, take care of yourself and those who matter to you.

Cheers,

Jon (0417 311 441) editor@wdhvcgeelong.com

**PS: I am using fresh 2020 email lists, so if you were getting emails from me and they have stopped, let me know ASAP and I will check your 2020 contact details.**

**CLUES** I just had a new windscreen fitted to my Jaguar. The man fitting them is rather an expert on fitting and making windscreens for older style cars. His name is Brent on 0404 002 018.

- Peter Donovan

## No Mars Bar Competition

*Have you found any old baby photos and sent them to Ray? Give him a head start while the Mars Bar Competition in hibernation. That way he can be ahead of the game when we get back together again.*

### Photos URGENTLY needed

Please sneak in your photo submissions to:

Ray van Galen

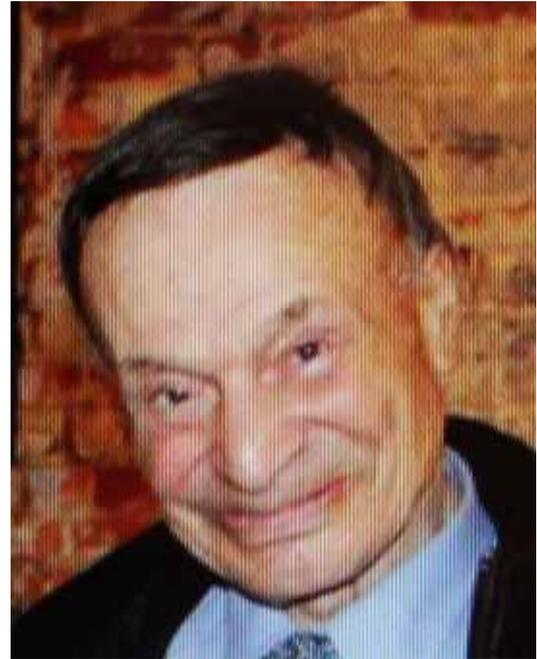
Ph 52789 368,

or

email rbvangalen@gmail.com



## WDHVC MEMBER PROFILE



### Name?

Charlie

### Where were you born?

Malta

### Family?

Wife Marlene, 2 sons, and 3 grand kids

### Number of years in the WDHVC?

4-5 years

### Other interests?

Watching television  
(big follower of Geelong football team)

### What was your first vehicle?

Standard 10

### What vehicle would you love to own?

E type Jaguar

### What vehicles do you have now?

Austin A40 sedan, Jaguar Mark 2, Austin Somerset, Holden ute

### Profession?

Ford welder for 30 years

### Skills?

Repairing old cars, excellent welder and great panel repairing skills .

### What bugs you the most?

Unable to walk and work in my shed

### What makes you happy?

Family and good health for my family and friends

- Peter Cullen

# Letter to the Editor



Hi Jon,

Just a quick note on an idea I had and that is maybe to ask members to write in about their experiences in breaking the boredom of all the Covid restrictions with no Morning Coffee Runs, Club Outings or even a coffee and bickie after the meetings.

In my case I recently took my letter box {a Bunnings special} and carefully masked it up and then filled all of the seams with silicone sealant. That done I got out the good old rubbing and cutting compound and gave it a hit with a buffing machine. I now have the stand out mailbox in the street and I'm getting all sorts of special offers from companies who will do everything for me and all they need is a credit card number.

Oh the things we do to relieve the boredom; I'm giving the car a run on alternate weeks to keep the brakes free and hopefully this will soon all be over and we can get back to enjoying our vehicles at club events

Keep up the great work.

- Karl Lorenz

**Thanks Karl. So what about it readers? We all know this crazy time sees us taking on projects we wouldn't normally consider. Tell the rest of us about yours in next month's Backfire.**

## My Quirky TCA (Time Consuming Activity)

I have been annoyed for years at how hard the butter is to spread during winter. I don't want my butter whipped, added to, marged or otherwise adulterated, but I do want it spreadable. So I found myself making a butter box recently. All from left over bits. A box, a lid, an incandescent light globe and an old dimmer switch to control the temperature. And it works fine! - Ed.



## FOR SALES, WANTED & CLUES

### For Sale

**2011 Mazda 3 Maxx Sport 2.2 Itr Turbo Diesel.** Man 6 spd. 183,000 km. One owner, full service history. RWC and 5 months reg YTK 648. \$7,000.

Call: 0427 606 444 Libby. 0417 028 982 Rod.

7/20

\*\*\*\*\*

### ZG Fairlane and HG Holden grilles

No reasonable offer refused.

Call Ian 0414 582 861.

7/20

\*\*\*\*\*

### Wanted:

Grifco siren and Hella KL7 or KL8 blue rotating light, commonly used on 60s 70s Victorian Police vehicles and other Australian Emergency vehicles.



Call Don Campanile  
0488351351 or email  
[don@tvdgroup.com.au](mailto:don@tvdgroup.com.au)

7/20

\*\*\*\*\*

### Buick 1939 Straight Eight Special parts

Front passenger side sun visor swivel fitting.

Call Brian Edward  
5222 6986 or  
[bseapm@bigpond.net.au](mailto:bseapm@bigpond.net.au)

6/20



For sale/wanted ads are free to Members and appear for **two issues** of *Backfire*. To remove advertisements from the newsletter earlier, email [editor@wdhvcgeelong.com](mailto:editor@wdhvcgeelong.com) (Ph 0417 311 441).

**Reminder:** All vehicles in the "For Sales" must have VIN number & Price or Registration Number & Price, otherwise they will be listed under "Clues". Ads for the 'Clues' section must not refer to any payment that may take place by mentioning an amount or 'best offer', etc.

All ads for cars also appear on the **club web site** where greater detail and photos (where supplied) can be viewed. To see ads, go to <http://www.wdhvcgeelong.com/wdsale.html>

**All ads remain on the website until you request their removal.** To remove an ad from the website, email [webmaster@wdhvcgeelong.com](mailto:webmaster@wdhvcgeelong.com) (Ph 0418 587 415).

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