

# BACKFIRE

Volume 53 No 8 December 2019

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

**Merry Christmas and**



**a Happy New Year**

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



*Backfire is the monthly newsletter of the Western District Historic Vehicle Club (Reg No A00011857H).  
Member of the Federation of Victorian Veteran, Vintage & Classic Vehicle Clubs.*

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## President's Piece

Well it's December and that means two things, summer is officially here and the Bendigo Swap is over for another 12 months. I take it from those that went on John's bus that they were tired at the end of the day which either means they had a lot of fun or they are just getting old. Not for me to say really.

Bendigo Swap was good this year, the weather was fairly kind and there were good numbers of buyers in attendance. I managed to get rid of a bit of rubbish and pretty much didn't come home with any new rubbish. The club tent was available once again but it seemed patronage was down. There is an awful lot of effort that goes into having it there, collection, set up, pulling down, cleaning etc so a big thanks to David Perkins for all his efforts. He and I put it up and we really could have done with a couple more pairs of hands. We managed though. If the use of this tent at the swap continues to decline, we may need to have a think about whether we actually need it there anymore. What are your thoughts?

While I was at the swap, I was told of the sad news of the passing of Hugh Thompson. He was an active member of our club and his absence will be noticed. My thoughts are with Barbara and his family.

Also heard this month was the mishap our very own Dame Judith had. I wish you a speedy recovery Judith. Amazes me the lengths you'll go to in order to get Ray to do the vacuuming!

This month I had the honour of carrying the CPS torch for Gus. Phew, what a job! We all know that Gus does a great job in this role and his efforts have not only been invaluable for the members,

but he has also established an enviable reputation for our club with VicRoads. So this month I have tried to accommodate our members CPS requests as Gus would have. This has shown me how much time he puts into it and for that he has my utmost admiration and thanks. Of course we all know that he loves it! It is a great excuse for him to have visitors and chew their ears off for an hour, and if he can, dump some little bit of rubbish or obscure object on them. We've all had that!

A big thank you to Les and Teresa for hosting us at their beautiful property for this month's Tinker day. Being a Total Fire Ban (TFB) day some members were concerned if it would go ahead or not. After some phone calls, I made the decision that it would be up to individuals to decide if they wanted to come as we weren't leaving the Geelong area. Everyone that showed up did so in fairly modern vehicles so the risk of going out in your vintage car was not an issue. Pretty much the same as if you went to the supermarket. That said, I wouldn't recommend going out in your old car on a TFB as trying to escape a fire or being in the way of emergency services may cause a problem.

At the time of writing, the Dinner Dance has not happened, but it will have at the time of your reading this. So my guess is that it was a great night and everybody had a fun time. I know I did/will/tried.

As this is the last Backfire before Christmas, I will take the opportunity to wish you all a happy and safe Christmas. If you are going to get out in your cars like I keep advocating, be careful and be safe as we are coming up to crazy season on our roads.

*Dallas*

# GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING No 598 OF THE WESTERN DISTRICT HISTORIC VEHICLE CLUB INC.  
HELD AT THE CLUBROOMS ON TUESDAY 12<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2019

## PRESIDING

President Dallas Jones opened the meeting and welcomed the 120 members, new members (Bernie & Mark Beck) and visitor Ashley Banks attending.

## APOLOGIES

Frank McKenzie, Colin Chappell, Jim Maffett, Frank Anderson, Graham Anderson, Darryn Tucker, Eva Barwise, Sandra Batson, Robert East, Wayne Oliver, Stephen & Kim Turner, Pam & Gus Shea, Lindsay Rogers, Pat Evans, Gary & Noreen Mellington, Graeme Walker, June Millard, Ron Jackson, Garry Wallace, Jenny Green, Paul Strickland.

Moved: Jim Coates

Seconded: Ken Batson

Carried

## SICK LIST

Jim Maffett and Frank McKenzie.

Our thoughts are with the Smeelie family on Ron's recent passing.

## MINUTES

The minutes of the previous general meeting as published in the *Backfire* confirmed as a correct record.

Moved: Libby Booley

Seconded: Graham Baldock

Carried

## CORRESPONDENCE (Fred)

### INWARD

#### Letters In

- Thank you card - Frank Anderson for our best wishes during his illness.
- Mt Gambier Veteran & Vintage Car Club - Invitation to attend their 2020. Australia Day tour 24th - 27th January.

#### Emails In

- Vintage & Classic Car Club Ballarat - invitation to attend their 49th Begonia Rally 21st - 23rd February 2020.
- Werribee & District Collectable Vehicle Club - invitation to attend the celebrations for the Mobil Altona Refinery 70th Anniversary 16th Nov 10.30.
- Invitation - to attend the Colac Show & Shine Saturday 29th February 2020 at Memorial Square.
- Federation President Neil Athorn - update of road safety regulations that began on 29th October 2019.
- John Blackney - suggestion for guest speaker: this has been forwarded on to John Bailey.

## OUTWARD

### Letters Out

- Sympathy Cards:

◊ Len & Noela Miller on the passing of her mother;

◊ Greg Stephenson on the passing of his mother;

◊ David Mitchel on the passing of his mother; and

◊ Dianne Whitehead on the passing of her father, Ron Smeelie.

- Get Well Card:

◊ Tom O'Farrell on his recent illness; and

◊ Frank McKenzie after his accident.

### Emails Out

- Greater City of Geelong - booking of Community roadside signs for the 2020 swap.

Moved: Graham Cameron

Seconded: Ken Parry

Carried

## TREASURER'S REPORT (Maurice)

The Treasurer reported on receipts and payments since the previous meeting and submitted accounts to be passed for payment.

Moved: Maurice Healy

Seconded: Max McKenzie

Carried

## PROGRAM DIRECTOR (John)

Hershey Swap video to follow the meeting.

## LIBRARY (Gary)

Gary recommended books on spray painting, a motorcycle mystery and art & automobile this month.

## DINE OUT (Gary)

Ten members said they plan to attend this month.

## EDITOR (Jon)

- Jon provided a list of incorrect member email addresses and invited members to send him new ones.
- John B and Jon B reminded the meeting of the Bendigo Swap bus arrangements

## WEBSITE (Damien)

Continuing good level of usage through the web site and Facebook. More videos have been added to the library collection.

## FEDERATION REPORT (David P)

At the recent meeting hosted by the Hobson's Bay Car Club the following was discussed:

◊ Potential future venues for the Bendigo Swap are under review;

## GENERAL MEETING MINUTES ctd

◇ Confirmation that the Federation will not be taking a position on taxing imported cars;

◇ Red Plate log books should be retained for 12 months after expiry for Police review if required; and

◇ Vic Roads advise that it is the owner's responsibility to follow up if the plate renewal advice is not issued on time.

**COMMITTEE REPORT** (Dallas for David M)  
No meeting this month.

**MERCHANDISE** (Dallas for David M)  
No report this month.

**TINKER DAY** (Ray)  
Les and Teresa Szalinski will be hosting the Tinker Day this month.

**MARS BAR AWARD** (Jon for Ray)  
Many correctly guessed the Tucker 48 car this month but Peter Telfer and Gwen Tucker took home the Mars Bars this month.

**VEHICLE PERMITS** (Dallas for Gus)  
No report this month.

Brian Edwards spoke to the meeting about his 1939 Buick on display. He purchased the car in Launching Place in 1972 for \$75 from the car's second owner. Brian restored the car over 5 years and completed the project in March 2002.

**CRAFT NIGHT**  
Card making this month. Bring a plate for a Christmas get together from 6:30.

**RALLY REPORTS/EVENTS** (Rod )  
Club members reported on the following events:

- Fred Dossier reported on the Studebaker Concourse;
- Simon Anderson attended the Hot Dog Run;
- John Bailey won the recent Observation Run;
- Karl Lorenz went to Lake Goldsmith;
- John Hickford enjoyed Motorclassica;
- Libby Booley enjoyed the recent Warragul Rally;
- Graeme Paech reported on the Coffee Run and taking his new Model A to Lake Goldsmith;
- Harold Newton had a good, but eventful, Crossley Run; and
- Ken Parry had a very successful racing weekend to report.
- Upcoming events:
  - ◇ Dinner Dance (sold out);
  - ◇ Bridgewater Farm;
  - ◇ Newstead Rally; and
  - ◇ Coffee Run.

**LONG DISTANCE RALLY** (Sharyn)  
No report.

**TECH NIGHT** (Peter)  
November's topic will be model engines.

**SWAP MEET** (Fred)  
No report this month.

**KITCHEN** (Rhonda)  
No report this month.

President Dallas formally thanked the small team that always makes the kitchen run so well. Their continuing support is greatly appreciated.

Merv Baum made a short speech on their great work and presented them with a newly made teapot stand.

### GENERAL BUSINESS

- President Dallas thanked the members who recently volunteered at the Geelong Show.
- Judith Matthews provided an update on the Club Member visit program. Twenty members have been visited since the program commenced.
- Max McKenzie reminded members that the Falcon seat on sale in the hall's workshop area is surplus to the Museum's requirements.

### FOR SALES, WANTED & CONFESSIONS

- Evelyn Hill admitted to buying more Model T parts.
- Rachel Stewart proudly announced that her Kingswood is now registered.
- Harold Newton asked for advice on local windscreen glass providers.
- Ray van Galen advised that he has a Honda motorbike for sale.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm.

**Next meeting to be held at 7.30pm on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019 in the clubrooms.**

- Leigh Dwyer



### Stand & Deliver

*Jeanette Dragt tries out the new teapot stand at supertime.*

*The hinged base holds the weight of the large pot and makes pouring easy.*

*Merv Baum presented the stand to the kitchen volunteers during the meeting.*

## Beautiful Buick the November Feature Car

Brian Edwards presented his 1939 Buick Straight Eight as the feature car last month. Speaking about the car, Brian said that its story was very much linked with the story of his own life. The Buick was manufactured in Flint Michigan by General Motors Holden in 1939. It was packed in crates and exported to Australia, being assembled in Elizabeth in South Australia with a Fisher body.

From 1971 to 1975 Brian was a relieving police sergeant in the Yarra Valley. In 1972 he found the car in a shed on a property belonging to a Doctor Scholl at Worri Yallock. Brian bought the car for \$75 and saved it from a date with the tip. It had no registration plates but the registration label indicated that it was first registered on 9 October 1939 with the original registration number AR 053. Brian found papers in the glove box, including the service book, which showed that the car had been bought from Preston motors in Elizabeth Street Melbourne by a Mr Flint of Caulfield. Doctor Scholl was the second owner and Brian became the third.



At this time Brian was kept busy with a young family, further study and his work with Victoria Police. This made it impossible for him to spend time restoring the Buick, so from 1970 to the 1997 the car remained under cover in Croydon in Melbourne. In 1997 it was moved to a vacant chook shed next to Mario's Bait Shop in Moolap. Brian started dismantling and categorising pieces of the car. He had no electrical tools in the shed so used a

painter scraper to clean down the body.

The chassis was dipped and powder coated, the engine was converted from 6V to 12V and he added a brake booster and renewed the petrol pump. In 1999 the car was moved from the chook shed to Terry O'Neill's. Brian and Vic Southall, a retired panel beater from Heath's Motors, removed the rust and prepared and re-sprayed the car. This included lead filling all the joints. At this time Brian relied on the technical advice of Max McKenzie and Lyle Stowe. The car restoration was finished in 2002 and it was re-registered on 8 March. On 10 March it went across to Tasmania on the Spirit of Tasmania for a 10 day rally. In 2003 Brian drove the car in the Bay to Birdwood with the Buick Car Club. Since then the car has been on red plate registration is used about four times a year.

"The car has bought me a great deal of pleasure in my life," Brian said, "as has this club."

- Ed



# Celebrating 600!

The **January 2020** meeting will be the **600<sup>th</sup>** monthly meeting of the Club.

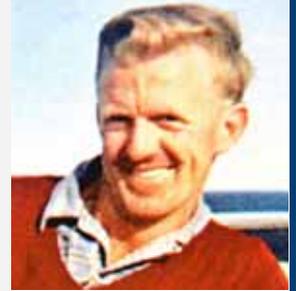
To mark the occasion, your Committee invites all members to come to the January meeting in a club car.

There will be a BBQ from 6pm, followed by the general meeting.

Supper will be supplied afterwards.

## VALE - THOMAS "HUGH" THOMPSON

We were saddened to learn that Club Member, Hugh Thompson passed away on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 2019 aged 84 years.



Hugh will best be remembered for his ex RAAF army blitz ambulance which he has displayed at numerous venues across the country. This vehicle was originally deployed at the Woomera Rocket Range. He also had lots of other army memorabilia including a Studebaker 6 x 6 truck and a folding army pushbike.

Hugh grew up in the Marcus Hill district and enlisted for National Service and then joined the C.M.F (which later became the Army Reserve), where he served with distinction, being awarded the Australian Defence Medal. He became an expert in house removal and reblocking, utilising army blitz vehicles. Hugh was often called upon to transport large loads such as the relocation of trams.

In 1965, he married Barbara and they had two children, Jan and James. Jan followed her father's interest in ex-army vehicles and she is one of the prime organisers of the Annual Military Vehicle rally which is held in Corowa. Hugh enjoyed attending this event immensely.

In recent years Barbara and Hugh have enjoyed travelling in Australia and had just returned from a coach trip through N.S.W.

We will remember Hugh as an active member of our Club, who was known for his enthusiasm, honesty, helpfulness and gentle manner and we extend our deepest sympathy to Barbara, Jan and James.

- Trevor Schneider

*I recall Hugh proudly providing details for a story about his uncle Sloan "Scotty" Bolton, who rode in the charge at Beersheba and is credited with saving the precious water supplies from being blown up before the Allies could secure them (Backfire Oct 2017)*

- Ed

## Trading Table Reintroduced

The Club has previously had a Trading Table for members.

This feature will be reintroduced from January 2020.



Anyone who has small items for sale can bring them along on meeting night and put them on the table in the workshop, with a price and their name attached.

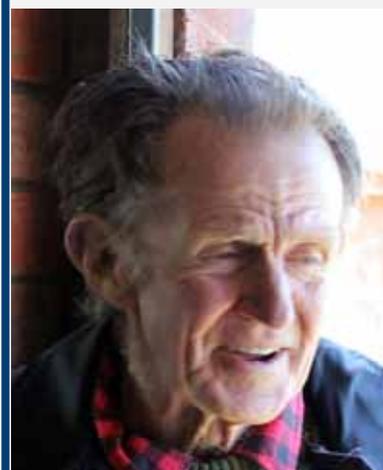
Interested members can then get in touch with the seller directly and work out a transaction.

We would like all members to get involved and to bring as many items as they like.

This is a good opportunity to clean out the garage shed or back bedroom!



**Trooper Sloan "Scotty" Bolton**



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## WDHVC EVENTS

See also -  
calendar summary  
on back page.

### 29 NOVEMBER - FRIDAY

**BACKFIRE FOLDING MORNING** 9am Clubrooms  
Contact: Peter Telfer 0427 526 938

### 30 NOVEMBER - SATURDAY

**CHRISTMAS DINNER DANCE** Pre-dinner drinks and nibbles supplied, starting at 6pm. A 2-course meal provided, served at about 6.30pm. BYO DRINKS & GLASS. Music, dancing and entertainment by Brendon Scott. Tickets sold out.  
Contact Rhonda Foran 0409 841 700 5248 2553.

### 5 DECEMBER - THURSDAY

**MORNING COFFEE RUN** Meet at clubrooms at 9.45am sharp.  
Contact: Rod Booley 5281 5340 (0417 021 982)

### 10 DECEMBER - TUESDAY

**GENERAL MEETING** 7.30pm. Clubrooms. (Bring a plate for a Christmas Supper.)

### 11 DECEMBER - WEDNESDAY

**BUS TRIP TO THE FARM** (Bendigo district) Leaving clubrooms at 6.30am. We will tow the trailer so BYO everything for a full day out - food, drink, chair, mug, sun-screen, rain hat and gumboots (optional). BYO Esky to keep things cool (or perhaps share one with a mate?) Look out for a special surprise on the way home. At time of printing there were 5 seats left on the bus. John is away from 2 Dec to 9 Dec, but will be at the meeting on 10 Dec. to confirm details.  
Contact: John Bailey 0413 258 302.- (or Jon Breedveld in John Bailey's absence (0417 311 441.)

### 12 DECEMBER - THURSDAY

**TINKER DAY** Starting at 10.30am from our clubrooms, we once again will be heading off to Ken and Ethel Shepherd's place in Moriac to be entertained by no less than 80 primary school children singing Christmas carols to us. The kids look forward to this event all year and so do we. The Shepherd family would like us out there at 11.30am and not much earlier so they can set up. Please bring a salad to share or ring Barbara van Galen for any other questions about bringing food. P.S. Please let me know of any venues that we can visit in the future.  
Contact: Ray van Galen 5278 9368. Mob. 0411 954 865. Barb's Mob. 0408 664 537

### 15 DECEMBER - SUNDAY

#### **PICNIC RALLY TO SEA SALT MEADOW**

Lower Bluff Rd St Leonards near the yacht club. (Leaving clubrooms 11am.) This rally has been designated as the Christmas breakup for this year so the club trailer will be provided. The club will provide all food, but please bring your own plates and crockery. Names and numbers to be placed on the list at the December meeting for catering purposes. If your name is not down there will be no meal. (If unable to attend the meeting please ring Sharyn 0417 546 089.) Contact: Fred Harris 0417 546 089.

### 17 DECEMBER - TUESDAY

**COMMITTEE MEETING** 7.30pm. Clubrooms.

### 30 DECEMBER - MONDAY

**JANUARY BACKFIRE DEADLINE** By 5pm please.

Contact: Jon Breedveld 0417 311 441

**NO DECEMBER DINE OUT**  
Queenscliff.

We will start again on 15 January for our traditional Fish & Chips at  
Contact Gary McCredden 5275 2544

### **NO DECEMBER CRAFT/TECH NIGHT**

We will not have Craft Night/Tech Night in December because of Christmas. The next one will be on Tuesday 28th January. Thanks to everyone who has supported us through the year. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Gaylene and Peter Telfer.  
Contact: Peter Telfer 0427 526 938

### DECEMBER - JANUARY

**SMELL THE ROSES DAYS?** During the months of December and January I will be laid up with a foot operation that has a slow recovery time, so I ask that if you want to go for a ride somewhere, see if you can organise a run instead of me doing it. Please advise our editor of the details. It is not difficult to do and a lot of fun.  
Ray van Galen

### NO COFFEE RUN IN JANUARY

### 3 JANUARY - FRIDAY

**BACKFIRE FOLDING MORNING** 9am Clubrooms  
Contact: Peter Telfer 0427 526 938

### 11/12 JANUARY - SAT/SUN

Cars wanted for display.  
Contact: Rod Booley 5281 5340 (0417 021 982).

### 14 JANUARY - TUESDAY

**600<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL MEETING** BBQ 6PM Clubrooms.  
(Bring a club car to mark the event.)

### 27 JANUARY - MONDAY

**AUSTRALIA DAY HOLIDAY ON THE WATER FRONT**  
Meet at entrance to Cunningham Pier 10am. Cars to be escorted onto pavilion lawn area for parking.  
Contact: Rod Booley 5281 5340 (0417 021 982)

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## WDHVC EVENTS

**6 FEBRUARY - THURSDAY**

**MORNING COFFEE RUN** Meet at clubrooms at 9.45am sharp.  
Contact: Rod Booley 5281 5340 (0417 021 989)

**9 FEBRUARY - NDAY**

**A DAY ON THE WATER FRONT**

Meet at entrance to Cunningham Pier 10am. Cars to be escorted onto pavilion lawn area for parking.  
Contact: Rod Booley 5281 5340 (0417 021 982)

## OTHER EVENTS

**2 FEBRUARY 2020 - SUNDAY** **SWANPOOL MOTOR FESTIVAL** 2426 Midland Highway, Swanpool. Contact: Ross Coles 0417 351 304 [rcoles49@gmail.com](mailto:rcoles49@gmail.com)

**29 FEBRUARY 2020 - SATURDAY** **COLAC SHOW 'N SHINE** Memorial Square, Colac. Details: [colacshowandshine@colacrsl.com.au](mailto:colacshowandshine@colacrsl.com.au) Ph. 0427 821 435 or 0467 762 036

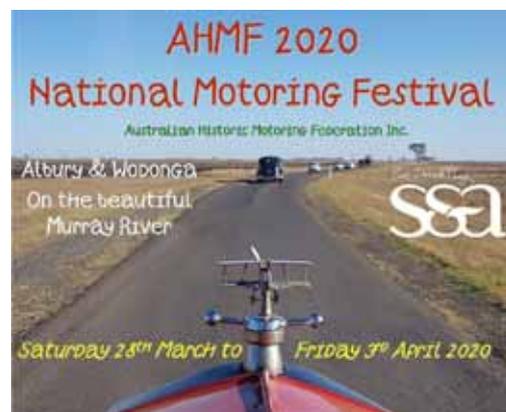
**5 MARCH 2020 SUNDAY** **WERRIBEE & DISTRICT SHOW 'N SHINE** Wyndham Civic Centre carpark, 45 Princes Highway, Werribee. Details : [https://www.facebook.com/pg/WDCVC/events/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/WDCVC/events/?ref=page_internal)

**18 APRIL 2020 SUNDAY** **ECHUCA SWAP MEET** Rotary Park, Rose St. Enquiries: 0456 010 665 [echucaswap@outlook.com](mailto:echucaswap@outlook.com)

**28 MARCH - 3 APRIL, 2020** **AHMF NATIONAL MOTORING FESTIVAL** Albury-Wodonga. Details : <https://www.ahmf.org.au/2020Tour/index.php>

**LAST SUN EVERY MONTH** **Werribee & District Collectable Vehicle Club Inc meet.** 9am to noon (weather permitting) car park cnr. Cherry St & Kelly St Werribee. Free entry. Have a bite to eat and a coffee. Talk car stuff with car-minded people.  
[https://www.facebook.com/pg/WDCVC/events/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/WDCVC/events/?ref=page_internal) John 0407 546 235.

- Rod Booley



The Echuca & District Historic Vehicle Club Inc.  
**Echuca Swap Meet Rotary Park, Rose St Echuca**  
Saturday, 18th April, 2020.  
Automotive parts & collectables welcome.  
Show & Shine open section & ladies only section.  
Prizes awarded.  
200 plus sites available at \$20/site. On site catering.  
Entry \$5 ea: children under 15 free.  
**Gates Open:** Sellers: 5am. Buyers: 7am.  
Enquiries: 0456 010 665 [echucaswap@outlook.com](mailto:echucaswap@outlook.com)  
\$500 donated to a local charity.



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# Happy Anniversary Bentley 100

## Aussie co-drives winning Bentley at the Le Mans 24 hour race.

The decade after the establishment of the company by Walter Bentley and his brother Horace, a talented engineer who designed engines for cars and aircraft, Bentley won four Le Mans 24 hour races from 1927 to 1930. Looking back to the champagne days of the "Bentley Boys" at Le Mans, it seems only fitting that the 1928 race should have been won by two drivers who had never raced there before – Barnato and Rubin.

Bernard Rubin was the only Australian "Bentley Boy". In 1928 he co-drove with the boss, Woolf Barnato, to win the Le Mans 24-hour race. Their victory was marked by high [but secret] drama



**Bernard Rubin**

when the chassis fractured in the closing stages, then broke completely on the last lap.

Sons of men who had amassed enormous wealth in the business of trading in diamonds and pearls, Woolf Barnato's father, the famous "Barney" Barnato, had disappeared overboard at night from a ship off the coast of Africa when

Woolf was two year old. It took seven years of courtroom battling to establish his right to the vast fortunes made by his father in the diamond and goldfields of South Africa, but the case was settled in 1926 and May that year, "Babe" Barnato took over Bentley Motors. He paid stockholders one shilling in the pound for their shares, spending 90,000 pounds on a venture regarded by his advisers as rash in the extreme.

Bernard Rubin was something of a mystery man among the flamboyant "Bentley Boys". He was born in a remote township on the northwest coast of Australia and brought up with the children of Chinese and Japanese pearl divers. His father was a pearl merchant. Bernard and his brother were sent to England to be educated at Eton, and when young Bernard returned to establish himself at home. He decided to take over a sheep station in the outback rather than follow his father as a pearl trader.

Rubin and Barnato owned adjoining apartments in Grosvenor Square, an elegant setting for the ranks of Bentleys and other sporting machinery that drew up for the Mayfair parties.

The famous 4½-litre shared by Barnato and Rubin at Le Mans in 1928, was the prototype, an enlarged version of the three-litre which was being outpaced. A bore of 100 mm and a stroke of 140 mm gave the new engine a capacity of 4398 cm. A new stronger crankshaft was made up, the crankcase was re-machined, the sump was retained from the latest three-litre, new racing pistons were fitted and connecting rods were borrowed from the 6½-litre model. The big four-cylinder motor had four overhead valves per cylinder, operated by a single camshaft driven by a vertical shaft and bevel gears from the front of the crankshaft. The crankshaft and camshaft ran in five main bearings. The chassis used for the prototype 4½-litre was a three-litre Long Standard type with a 10ft 10½in wheelbase. Suspension was by semi-ellipticals front and rear. The radiator on the prototype distinguished the car from later production versions, being wider and shorter. The petrol tank was enlarged to carry 72 litres. The end result of the re-worked motor was an extra 20 bhp over the three-litre, bringing power up to between 100 and 110 bhp, which was good for a safe 100mph at 3500 rpm.

At Le Mans in June, 1928, the same three 4½- litre cars were entered as the Bentley works team.

Hoods were not required to be raised at the start of the race in 1928 because the race organisers felt no hoods would withstand the speeds expected.

The main opposition was a lone black American Stutz of 4.7 litres, the largest car in the race, and four 4.1-litre Chryslers. The Stutz Black Hawk had a straight-eight, single overhead cam motor delivering 90 bhp at 3200 rpm and was driven by two Frenchmen.

Remember that in 1928 the Austin Seven Chummy was one of the most popular forms of family motoring in Britain. Fifty miles an hour was



**Woolf Barnato**



# Happy Anniversary Bentley 100

performance motoring on the public highway, so the 100 mph top speed of the 4½-litre Bentleys was regarded with some awe. In 1928 a doctor named Alexander Fleming discovered a green mould which he named penicillin – the first antibiotic. Kingsford Smith was the first man to fly the Pacific; Amelia Earhart the first woman to fly the Atlantic. Exciting days for a backdrop to the exciting race at Le Mans.

It wasn't unusual for drivers in those days to nerve themselves for the fray with a nip or two to reinforce their courage. "Would you want to race a lorry like that stone cold sober?"

Race day. The Tim Birkin Bentley was sent off as the "hare" at Le Mans in 1928, a role that he enjoyed totally. He set a record of 72.7 mph for the standing lap, Barnato set a new record of 74 mph on the second lap, Brisson raised it to 75.5 mph in the Stutz on the third lap, and on the fourth the honours were back with Bentley when Clement raised it to 76.2 mph.

On lap 20, Birkin, in the leading Bentley, blew a tyre at high speed and the flailing rubber wrapped itself around the hub. Three hours after the puncture they were back in the race.

Clement Bentley had taken the lead with Barnato second and the Stutz third, but a broken oil line and later minor ailments dropped Clement/Benjafield to fourth among the Chryslers. During the night the Barnato/Rubin Bentley and the Brisson/Bloch Stutz traded the lead back and forth. Early on the Sunday morning with fog making conditions tricky, the Clement/Benjafield car started to overheat and eventually retired with a broken water joint. It was no ordinary leak. The chassis frame had cracked. It had not been a freak fault, but metal fatigue and it could surely only be a matter of time before the same thing happened to the Barnato/Rubin car. Unaware of the looming drama, Barnato moved the well-used old prototype back ahead of the Stutz and into the lead again.

The lone Stutz was now in trouble and jumping out of top gear in the three speed box. By noon Barnato and Rubin were 20 miles ahead of the American car, and by 1 pm they had exceeded last year's record distance for the whole race.

Both drivers in the leading car were now uncomfortably aware that their chassis frame could break, but the secret was kept within the team. W.O. Bentley agonised at having to send Rubin out to stay in the lead when the chance of a serious accident was so real, but the Le Mans "rookies" were aware of the risks and still anxious to race on. The first signal that their frame was failing came when the radiator began to move in its mountings and a water leak started. Barnato cut his speed as much as he dared because the last permitted water stop had already been made. The Stutz pit were

obviously keeping a careful eye on the leader's speed and when the Bentley slowed, the signal went out to Brisson to increase speed.

Long after those anxious final laps, Barnato said that as he set out on what he thought to be his last lap, he knew the chassis had finally broken. "The door would not shut properly. The accelerator pedal would not come off under 1500 revs, and it was just a question of the thing holding together." Barnato was timing his run to the chequered flag on the dashboard clock but it was a minute or two fast and as he crossed the start/finish line there was no flag! He had to set off on another lap. "As I passed the pits and got to the top of the slope, I felt water in my face. I looked up and thought "Oh, it's coming on to rain again – No. Lovely blue sky." Then I looked down at the instruments and saw my temperature gauge go straight up to 100. I knew then what had happened. My top water joint had pulled out, but I still had to complete the lap if I was to be the winner." He eased back to 45 mph, as slow as the Bentley would run with the throttle jamming at 1500 rpm. The Stutz driver was three laps behind and convinced that Barnato was "grandstanding" cruising on that last lap in a display of blatant superiority. "I switched off down every possible hill, trying to cool the engine off and I was listening for the slightest little sign of tightening-up, at which I was determined to stop, let it cool off, and start again – because there was a rule that you had 20 minutes to complete your last lap. Never in my life have I been more thankful to get to a finishing line; and that was why, on succeeding Le Mans races, I never wanted to drive the last few hours."

When Rolls Royce effected a takeover of the Bentley company in 1931, Woolf Barnato relinquished his position as Bentley chairman, but retained a seat on the board of Rolls Royce. He died in 1948.

Bernard Rubin stayed around the verges of racing, Rubin became ill and died in Australia in 1935 having never recovered from the illness.

*- compiled by Graham Pretlove  
from Sports Car World*



# RALLIES & RUNS

## Tinker Day November 2019

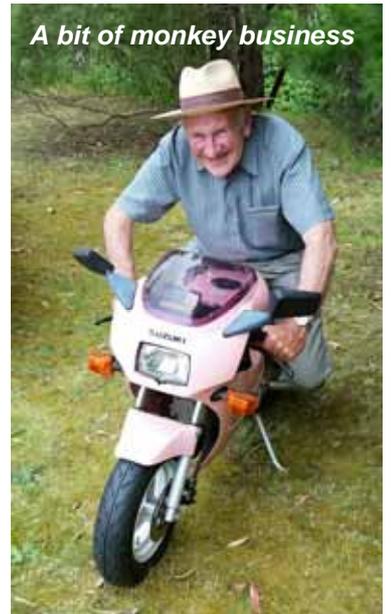
I would like to apologise to Peter for mis-describing his car. (I checked with Wikipedia, but did not read the article carefully enough and got confused about the model. (*The Howell Ngari Sports at Warwick Beanland's – Backfire Sept 19. – Ed.*) He wrote a very interesting article about the manufacturer and the car. The owners know more about their historic cars than anyone else and I would encourage owners to write articles about them, particularly if their cars are unique.

*(Perhaps Lindsay should make a few more errors and help generate more articles for the Backfire? - Ed)*

The weather on Thursday was hot with a strong north wind and was a Total Fire Ban day. An email from our editor said it was still on as the event was within the Geelong urban area. We had a number of red plated cars, but not very old ones or motor bikes. Being a hot day we had a topless one.

*(I hope Lindsay means a car! – Ed)*

After arriving at Les and Teresa's, we parked our cars we went to the back yard, which overlooks a creek with a high cliff on the other side. This protected us from the hot north wind and it was pleasant on the back lawn. Les cooked us some sausages and Teresa had a plate of treats.



Les has a collection of braces and bits covering a wall. He inherited one from his father, then purchased one for a dollar at a market and it took off from there. He also has a collection of vintage chain saws.

In another shed he had an small, old Chevrolet truck, which still needs a little work before being ready for a club permit. He has a solar panel to keep the battery charged, and to extend the life of the battery as it is only started occasionally.

Les and Teresa's large garden is mostly drought tolerant. They have a number of roses out in full bloom, just like Flemington without the horses. The black and white picture in the printed *Backfire* does not do justice to it: have a look on the web page version.

Thank you to Les and Teresa for sharing their place with us.

- Lindsay Alford



**The old Chevrolet truck still needs a little work**





## Bendigo Swap Meet Bus Run

Nineteen bus travellers spent almost \$3,000 between them at this year's Bendigo Swap, but the money spent was not the measure of the enjoyment they had wandering around the sprawling stalls.

Rather it was about the conversation, the catch up with friends not seen in a while, the unexpected find, the bargain buy - even the \$3 coffee and cake at the obligatory Maccas stop along the way. Whether they spent nothing or hundreds, the pleasure was the same.

Bus driver John Bailey had us off to an early start, leaving the clubrooms a bit after 6am, the 6 X 4 trailer bouncing jauntily behind the bus, ready to bring home the bargains.

John did his usual excellent job in piloting (and backing) the 24 seater. He again choose different tracks to get to Bendigo and back from his repertoire of routes to avoid the worst of the roadworks and traffic. The journey each way was achieved in around three hours, including stops, leaving plenty of time to wander around the stalls.

Once at the Swap, we went our own ways, melting into the crowds on a perfect day. It was cool but sunny, making conditions very comfortable. Occasionally we would bump into

each other along a dusty aisle, nodding, smiling or perhaps exchanging a few words about our purchases, before continuing on in search of that unknown and elusive buy.

A sandwich from home or a Rotary Club hamburger did for lunch under a shady tree or on a seat in the sun. The early afternoon saw a bunch of us resting in the club tent, grateful for a pause on a soft seat in shelter, recharging our batteries before launching out on a last foray.



*Good conversation is always part of the Bendigo trip*



*Evelyn ties his bargain Hudson wheels into the trailer for the trip home.*

By 3.30pm we had had enough. Weary, a little dusty but well satisfied, we tied the larger finds (including Evelyn's Hudson wheels) into the trailer and put the smaller, more fragile items in the bus. (You did well getting those two delicate clocks home Jack!) Then we headed for Geelong.

It didn't take long to untie and unpack back at the clubrooms, then we said our goodbyes and separated. Another great outing. Thank you to John and the Committee for making it possible for some members who would not otherwise have gone to attend the Bendigo Swap.

- Ed

# Great Mars Bar Competition

*The December Competition*



## WDHVC MEMBER PROFILE



This month's young man looks the part to become a highly respected lawyer, doctor, airline pilot or well dressed council worker.

How can we all look this good as kids, yet look at us now!

You can be the next owner of a fabulous Mars bar if you can tell us who this little chap is.

*- Ray van Galen*

### Photos URGENTLY needed

Please sneak in your photo submissions to:

Ray van Galen  
Ph 52789 368,  
or

email [rbvangalen@gmail.com](mailto:rbvangalen@gmail.com)



### Home for Christmas

A Scot calls his son in London the day before Christmas Eve and says, "I hate to ruin your day but I have to tell you that your mother and I are divorcing: 45 years of misery is enough."

"Dad, what are you talking about?" the son screams.

"We can't stand the sight of each other any longer," the father says. "We're sick of each other and I'm sick of talking about this, so you call your sister in Leeds and tell her."

Frantically, the son calls his sister, who explodes on the phone.

"Like hell they're getting divorced!" she shouts, "I'll take care of this!" She calls Scotland immediately, and screams at her father "You are NOT getting divorced. Don't do a single thing until I get there. I'm calling my brother back, and we'll both be there tomorrow. Until then, don't do a thing, DO YOU HEAR ME?" and hangs up.

The old man hangs up his phone and turns to his wife.

"Sorted! They're coming for Christmas - and they're paying their own way."

### Name?

Damien

### Where were you born?

Bolzano Italy

### Family?

Wife Teena, 3 sons and 3 grandchildren

### Number of years in the WDHVC?

5 years

### Other interests?

Gold/metal detecting

### What was your first vehicle?

1950's Mark 7 Jaguar

### What vehicle would you love to own ?

1950 Mark 5 Drophead Jaguar

### What vehicles do you have now?

1924 Dodge, 1972 Jaguar Series 1,  
1973 Triumph 2500 TC

### Profession?

Maintenance

### Skills?

IT, Computers

### What bugs you the most?

Push bikes 5 abreast on the road

### What makes you happy?

Making Scotch

*- Libby*

### Quotes About Cars

"Anyone driving slower than you is an idiot, and anyone going faster than you is a maniac.

*~ Author Unknown*

## FOR SALES, WANTED & CLUES

### For Sale

**Nissan Pulsar. 2000 Grey.** Tidy, with RWC. \$2500. Reg 1MD-1DE VIN jnibcan15a0009267 Reg'd till 22/01/2020  
Call Ray 5278 9368 or Barb 0408 664 537. **12/19**

**MGB parts.** Complete car minus the running gear, suspension and steering. **12/19**  
Call Dallas 0432 172 171.

**Mazda RX-7 coupe 1982.** Reg BKK 364, (expires 28/05/2020). Probable oil-pump defect. Battery not very old. Radiator replaced. Tyres like new. Paint blue, faded and chipped in some areas. Engine no. 2250549 ROT. Asking \$5,000.  
Call Lyle 5243 2494 / 0403 557 306. **10/19**

### **Mercedes Benz**

Reasonable offers, any profit goes to WDHVC.  
Call Vlad Ph: 5248 5759. **10/19**



**1930 Chev Pickup truck.**  
6 cylinder o/head valve motor. It runs and the brakes work, new seat, good tyres. Shedded for 30 years. Almost complete, ready for restoration. Chassis No. A2791. Body No. 177. \$16,000.  
Call Les 0429 946 079. **10/19**



For sale/wanted ads are free to Members and appear for **two issues** of *Backfire*. To remove advertisements from the [newsletter](mailto:earliereditor@wdhvcgeelong.com) email [earliereditor@wdhvcgeelong.com](mailto:earliereditor@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](mailto:webmaster@wdhvcgeelong.com), email [webmaster@wdhvcgeelong.com](mailto:webmaster@wdhvcgeelong.com) (Ph 0418 587 415).

### For Sale

#### **1948 Ford Pilot**

Original with 68,000 on clock. \$35,000 ono.  
Call Lenny Nelson 0497 656 682. **10/19**

#### **Five new tyres** and tubes on Willy rims.

5.50 X 16 Excelsior Cross Ply \$400  
Call Guy 0421 754 601 **10/19**

**1964½ Ford Mustang convertible.** 289 motor, LHD, Auto with power steering and electric roof. Restored 6 years ago. Red with black roof and interior, chrome wheels. Reg No 21055. \$43,800.  
Call Vince 0425 719 372. **10/19**



### Wanted:

Pair of boot hinges like fitted to an English vehicle. Top part of the hinge will need to be about 75mm long and the lower part about 150mm long.  
Call Dallas 0432 172 171. **12/19**

### Clues:

#### **Peugeot Collection**

1983 505 SRD Turbo; 1979 504 Diesel; 1977 504 Petrol. All have been stored in a shed: all in good condition for restoration: all running. Also good for parts. Call Gerald Baker 0408 176 084 **10/19**

**Copying Service.** Those wanting old movies, tapes, records or cassettes copied. \$10-\$15 ea.  
Call 0417 430 263.

If undeliverable return to:

WDHVC  
PO Box 200  
Newcomb VIC 3219

Backfire

PRINT  
POST

POSTAGE  
PAID

# December 2019



1939 Buick Straight Eight

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
24 <b>TOTAL FIRE DANGER DAYS:</b> Club events involving the use of historic vehicles on declared total fire danger days will be cancelled or postponed. Club functions not necessitating the use of historic vehicles can be held.	25	26	27	28	29 <i>Backfire</i> folding morning 9am Clubrooms	30 November Christmas Dinner Dance - 6pm Clubrooms
1	2	3	4	5 Morning Coffee Run 9.45am	6	7
8	9	10 General Meeting 7.30pm	11 Bus Trip to Farm 6.30am Clubrooms. No Dine Out	12 Tinker Day 10.30am Clubrooms	13	14
15 Picnic Rally to Sea Salt Meadow. 11am Clubrooms	16	17 Committee Meeting	18	19	20	21
22	23	24 No Craft/Tech Night.	25 Merry Christmas! 	26	27	28
29	30 Jan 2020 <i>Backfire</i> Deadline	31	1 January 	2 No Morning Coffee Run	3 Backfire folding morning 9am Clubrooms	4