

# BACKFIRE

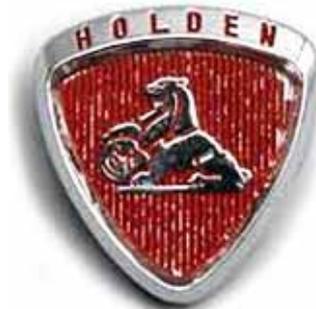


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**Club meetings:** 7.30pm 2<sup>nd</sup> Tues each month. **Clubroom:** Geelong Showgrounds, 79 Breakwater Rd East Geelong.



*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 finally happened. The AGM was held in January instead of April last year and the new Committee is in place. We had our first meeting this week and I noticed Dallas still has a big smile on his face.

I would like to thank the outgoing Committee members Damien Giustini and Rod Roach for all their hard work. They continue to support the club, including Damien as our web master.

Many thanks also to Dallas for his years as President and he will continue his guidance as a member of the Committee. I need to also mention all the other Committee members who continue in their roles and do a fantastic job supporting our club.

A big official welcome to the new members on the Committee, James Park and Graeme Anderson, even though they have been joining us since April last year. They can throw away the "L" plates now.

As we started to have a few socially distanced events it has been great to see many members out with their vehicles. I think more than usual have come out so there does seem to be a pent up demand to get out again. We will continue to bring back and add events as we can.

At the Committee meeting this week we had a discussion about whether we could manage to run the Swap Meet. With the additional COVID regulations required to run such an event and also the uncertainty of what may happen in terms of further outbreaks leading up to May, we made a decision not to run the event.

At this stage we will wait to see what happens later in the year and see what our options are.

We are also planning to have our first General Meeting for the year in March. It will have to be in the Pavilion next door to the clubrooms, similar to what we did for the AGM, due to the requirement for social distancing, so keep tuned for more about that.

And lastly, I hope to see many members at the BBQ and membership renewal event on 7 February. Dust off your old vehicle, bring it along and let it see some daylight.

- David

When bartenders find new jobs after all the bars close down



# 2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

MINUTES OF 53<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE WESTERN DISTRICT HISTORIC VEHICLE CLUB INC. HELD AT THE GEELONG SHOWGROUNDS ON TUESDAY 12 JANUARY 2021.

## PRESIDING

President Dallas Jones opened the meeting at 7.30pm and welcomed 80 members to the AGM.

## APOLOGIES

John Bailey, Barry Johansson, Len Millar, Ken & Jenny Parry and Alan Tipper.

Moved: Barb van Galen

Seconded: Libby Booley

Carried

## MINUTES

Minutes of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting held on April 9th 2019 were confirmed as a correct record.

Moved: Graeme Anderson

Seconded: David Perkins

Carried

## SICK LIST

None this month

## REPORTS

The President and Secretary presented their Annual Reports, to be published in the February *Backfire*.

## TREASURER REPORT (Maurice)

The Treasurer read the statement of incoming and outgoing expenses as compiled by our auditor, Gary Harbert, which is available for members to review.

Moved: Maurice Healey

Seconded: Damien Giustini

Carried

Maurice moved that the auditor be re-appointed.

Moved: Maurice Healey

Seconded: Barb Van Galen

Carried

## ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

President Dallas vacated the Chair and introduced life member Trevor Schneider who took the Chair, and thanked Dallas all the office bearers for their work over a challenging year.

Trevor noted that Damien Giustini and Rod Roach had chosen not to re-nominate for a Committee position. He thanked them for their support and contribution to the club.

All executive positions were declared vacant. Committee nominations did not exceed the positions available and so no vote was held.

The successful nominations were:

President: David Mitchell

Vice President: John Bailey

Secretary / Public Officer, Consumer Affairs  
Notification for Incorporated Association:  
Fred Harris

Treasurer: Maurice Healey

General Committee:

Graeme Anderson, Rod Booley, Jon Breedveld,  
James Park, David Perkins, Gus Shea,  
Barb van Galen.

## PRESENTATION OF TROPHIES

Dallas presented the Presidential Chain and Con Rod of Office to newly-elected President David.

Given the challenging year, no Club Person of the year award or 25 year membership badges were presented.

Meeting closed at 8pm.



***New President David Mitchell (r) accepted the "Con Rod of Office" from his predecessor, Dallas Jones, at the much-delayed 2020 AGM, which was held in the cavernous Hall of Agriculture pavilion beside the club rooms.***

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2020

Hello everyone. I will keep this short as this is not an AGM like any other.

I started writing the President's Report in March last year, fully expecting to hand over the reins to new leadership and committee. I certainly got that wrong! I have been in the big chair now for more than the 2 years I'd planned but now, finally, the time has come and we can have our AGM.

I fully support the rotation of leadership and committee composition. It brings with it new ideas and direction. Although I have threatened not going until Trump does!

Again this year we were saddened to hear of the passing of some of our members. It is always difficult for the club when we lose some of our own, as I'm sure you will agree, this club is very much like a family and the grief felt is widespread. These members will be missed.

Reflecting back to the year that was, prior to COVID 19 overwhelming our lives, I think we had a very good year with no big issues to upset the running of the club. The club seemed to be happy and content with the events and outings that took place over the year and for that, we have the committee and your fellow members to thank for coming up with these ideas or for organising them.

Whilst it seems like forever ago now, it is worth remembering some of the wonderful activities and events we were a part of. The Andrew Love fundraiser that has supported the effort of the Geelong Hospital cancer centre. I think it fair to say that we have all been touched in some way by this horrid disease so we can appreciate what a wonderful job of care and support the Andrew Love Centre does.

The dinner dance was another huge night and is always a good time.

The regular coffee mornings continue to grow and it is usual to see 30 to 40 people in attendance.

The Tinker Days are really enjoyable as members open their sheds and houses for us to see and the variety of interesting things we see is amazing and a really good insight to what makes our members tick.

John's bus trips have to rate a mention, they are always an interesting outing but more than that they are a laugh a minute. If you haven't been on one, you're missing out big time.

The 600<sup>th</sup> meeting last January was fantastic. The turnout of cars and members is one of the best I've seen. And most notable was that some of the vehicles on display were ones I've either never seen or not seen in a long time. Well done everyone.

We developed a policy that will help us when the weather or other extremes turn on us when a run or event is planned.

The use of our email list and our website to inform members of changes in our events has proven useful, especially when one considers all the cancellations and postponements being caused by the spread of the Corona virus.

We introduced a "Trading Table" which was well supported with both buyers and sellers, so expect this to continue when the doors are re-opened.

Of course none of this is my doing or on my own. I have been supported magnificently by your wonderful committee. This address would go on for a very long time if I was to try and properly thank everyone on the committee. So instead I will say a sincere thank you to the members of the committee that give so much of themselves to ensure you all have a club to be proud of. Please join me in applauding their efforts.

This has indeed been a year to remember although one I feel we would prefer to forget. So as we head into 2021 we hope we can put last year firmly behind us and get back to doing all the wonderful things we enjoy.

Whilst holding the position of President, it has been the greatest honour to captain this wonderful ship the WDHVC and I thank you all for entrusting me with this privilege.

As I hand over the big chair to David, I wish the incoming president and committee every success.

*Dallas Jones  
Out-going President - WDHVC*



**Attendees were well spread out at the 2020 AGM, with BYO folding chairs a popular accessory.**

# SECRETARY'S REPORT

## April 2019 - March 2020

The first event after our Annual meeting was the fund raising function in aid of the Andrew Love Cancer Centre. Sharyn Harris, Barb van Galen and Libby Booley and their band of helpers did a great job organising and feeding over 100 people and with their help and generous donations raised \$5,375. What a remarkable effort.

Then followed our traditional Anzac Day BBQ which is always very well attended. Thanks to the chefs.

Of course a big event for our club was our Swap. Many volunteers made the day a success. Many thanks for their efforts especially on the Friday, which was a wet and trying day.

We have had the usual casserole luncheons, tinker days, dine-outs, long distance rallies, morning coffee runs, bus trips, craft and tech nights, car displays, observation rallies and our traditional Christmas dinner dance, plus many more rallies. Thanks to everyone for organising these events.

Another milestone for our club was to hold our 600<sup>th</sup> meeting on 14 January 2020, with a large attendance at the meeting and a turnout of approximately 50 club cars and two motor cycles.

In March our Committee decided to cancel our Swap and all club activities until further notice. We hope this will not go on for too long but the future I think will become a little different from our usual way of life.

With Rod Roach and Damien Gustini retiring from our Committee and two new members, James Park and Graham Anderson, nominating for their positions, there will be no need for an election.

On behalf of all members I would like our President Dallas Jones, Treasurer Maurice Healey and Vice President David Mitchell and the Committee and all of the members who volunteered their time to make this club so enjoyable with the many events that have happened throughout the year.

We will have to wait and see when we can hold our Annual Meeting



*Fred Harris  
Secretary*



***"Who are those masked men and women?"  
After 10 months in "caretaker" mode, membership of the 2020 Committee was able to be ratified at the AGM***



***Gus set up his "red plate renewal" table outside too.***

***Covid meant that signing in was a bit different this time. James Park and Rod Roach welcomed attendees.***



***It seems that every man and his dog came along.***



***Members arrived before 7pm and waited patiently outside.***



# Gary's Giggles

## Tall Tales from our Legendary Librarian

A man walked into the ladies section of a large department store. He shyly walked up to the woman behind the counter and said: "I'd like to buy a bra for my wife."

"What type of bra?" asked the salesperson.

"Type?" enquired the man. "There's more than one type?"

"Look around," said the salesperson, as she showed a sea of bras in every shape, size, colour and material.

"Actually, even with all this variety, there are really only three types of bras," she said.

Confused, the man asked what types the types were.

The salesperson replied: "The Catholic type, the Salvation Army type and the Baptist type. Which one do you need?"

Still confused he asked: "What's the difference between them?"

The woman responded: "It's really quite simple. The Catholic type supports the masses, the Salvation Army type lifts up the fallen, and the Baptist type makes mountains out of molehills."

\*\*\*\*\*

A new monk arrives at the monastery. He is assigned to help the other monks in copying the old texts by hand. He notices however that they are copying copies, not the original books.

So the new monk goes to the head monk and asks him about this. He points out that if there'd been an error in the first copy, that error would be continued in all of the other copies.

The head monk says: "We have been copying from the copies for centuries, but you make a good point my son." So he goes down into the cellar with one of the copies to check it against the original.

Hours later, nobody has seen him. So one of the monks goes downstairs to look for him.

He hears sobbing coming from the back of the cellar and finds the old monk leaning over one of the original books, crying. He asks what's wrong.

"The word is "celebrate"! says the old monk.

\*\*\*\*\*

## COMMITTEE MEETING

Main points from the Committee meeting held at the clubrooms on 19 January 2021.

- ◇ 4 new members approved previously were present for a meet and greet with the Committee: Angelo & Anne Debono, Garry Toolman & Ian Harrison

### CORRESPONDENCE JANUARY 2021

#### INWARDS

- ◇ VicRoads – BBQ Trailer Renewal
- ◇ Rotary seeking our interest in participating in their 100<sup>th</sup> year celebrations.
- ◇ MG Car Club – Thanking club for supporting their application to erect their new shed.
- ◇ Consumer Affairs Victoria – Confirmation of lodging our annual statement.
- ◇ Vintage Drivers Club – Holding the Alpine Centenary Run on 20<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> November, limited to 100 vehicles up to 1930.

#### OUTWARDS

- ◇ Welcome to Angelo & Anne Debono.
- ◇ Membership form – John Blackney.
- ◇ VicRoads – confirming Martin French and Jon Breedveld are current financial members.

#### OTHER MATTERS

- ◇ **Membership.** 315 member & five on waiting list. If admitted, these five will bring membership up to capacity.
- ◇ **Rallies.** Unable to contact Council about an event on the waterfront. Will continue the COVID friendly picnic days and coffee runs.
- ◇ **Fees.** to be left unchanged for 2021.
- ◇ **Bay City Swap.** Is impractical to plan and conduct a 2021 Swap due to Covid requirements.
- ◇ **Tech Nights.** COVID rules allows 40 people in main club rooms. Peter Telfer to be asked to restart Tech Nights, with a max of 40 people and social distancing in place.
- ◇ **Model Car Display.** Call for new volunteer to manage the model car display at the next general meeting.
- ◇ **Monthly Meeting.** Aim to hold March monthly meeting in the Pavilion.
- ◇ **Club Permits.** VicRoads confirmed that the club has the right to not sign permits if expired, if the car is deemed not roadworthy or if the car is not being used in the spirit of the club plate system. Club Bylaws to be amended to clarify this.
- ◇ **Constitution.** New members to receive the latest constitution and bylaws.

- James Park

*non*

# RALLIES & RUNS

## Picnic Lunch - Sea Salt Meadow 17 January

A good turnout took advantage of a lovely location under the trees at St Leonards and a fine day to enjoy a BYO picnic lunch on Sunday 17 January.





# Events Calendar

## **Sunday 7 February 12pm - 3pm. Membership Renewal BBQ**

Because there will be no February general meeting, and to reduce the rush at the March meeting, a membership renewal BBQ will be held outside the clubrooms. BYO chair and picnic table. A chance to catch up and also to renew your membership. Take your special vehicle for a short run.

Membership Renewal Forms are enclosed with this *Backfire*.) Contact: Barb van Galen 0427 606 444.

**Sunday 7 February 12pm - 3pm Upholstery Sale.** (For those who need to upholster their cars/vans/chairs.) We will have a selection of quality leather and vinyls for sale at the clubrooms during the Membership BBQ. The leather will be sold at \$20 per roll and the vinyl & leatherette at \$10 per roll. A range of colors available.

**Note Covid Rules.** Please wait outside the club room.

Access will be limited: restricted numbers are allowed inside at any one time.

## **No February General Meeting.**

**Wednesday 10 February - February Dine Out.** Moorpanyul Park, North Shore. Come for an early BYO tea, or a late one. If it's cold, don't bother. Available on site: two double electric BBQs, toilets, shady trees and a playground for the grandchildren. Beautiful views of Geelong across the Bay. If coming from Geelong, turn right into North Shore Rd at the old Ford Factory, veer right over the railway lines, through the roundabout and left into The Esplanade. Contact: Gary McCredden 0427 752 544

Great to see a record Dine Out crowd at the Queenscliff fish and chips in January. Thanks to all for your attendance. - Gary

**Thursday 11 February - Coffee Run** at Newling Reserve, Moriac. (off Cape Otway Road near skate park) Meet onsite at 10.30am. BYO everything. Contact: Rod Booley 0417 021 982

**Tuesday 16 February** Committee Meeting 7.30pm in clubrooms.

**Sunday 21 February - Picnic lunch** at Bunjils Lookout, Maude. (near fire station) Meet on site at 12 Noon. BYO everything. Contact: Rod Booley 0417 021 982

**Tuesday 23rd February - Tech Night** Are you fed up with Covid? I certainly am! Tech Nights will resume with a masked and socially distanced theme suggested by John Bailey: "What did you do during Covid" show and tell. It will be a joint Craft and Tech Night, held in our wonderful clubrooms, not in the workshop. Bring along evidence of your achievements (physical, photographic or other). New grey hairs not accepted. Previous Craft or Tech Night attendees are warmly welcome. So are those who have never been. As is the club policy, visitors are always welcome. As we are a gender equal club, you may bring your other half. Be there around 7pm, so we can get set up for a 730pm start. WEAR YOUR NAME BADGE TO GET A FREE CHOCOLATE FROG! Contact: Peter Telfer 0427 526 938. (If you pull that multiple name badge stunt again, John Bailey, one frog per person!

**Tuesday 9 March—General Meeting** 7.30pm. Pavilion beside the clubrooms. BYO chairs. Membership fees and forms will be received from 6.30pm in the clubrooms before the meeting. Please wait outside. (Nomination forms for the 2021 Committee to be given to the Secretary by the close of this meeting.)

**Thursday 18 March - Coffee Run** - Lions Park, Anglesea. (opposite the main shopping centre) Meet onsite at 10.30am. BYO everything. Contact: Rod Booley 0417 021 982

**Monday 22 March** 5pm March Backfire Deadline. Contact: Jon Breedveld 0417 311 441

**Sunday 28 March - Picnic lunch** Portarlington Foreshore. (under trees near the public toilets) Meet on site at 12 noon. BYO everything. Contact: Rod Booley 0417 021 982

**Tuesday 13 April—General Meeting & 2021 AGM** 7.30pm. Pavilion beside the clubrooms. BYO chairs. The Annual General Meeting of the Western District Historic Vehicle Club Inc will be held in the Pavilion behind the Clubrooms at the Geelong Showgrounds on Tuesday, 13 April 2021, immediately after the monthly general meeting, which commences at 7.30pm. (Subject to the Covid restrictions current at that time.) Nominations for the committee and office bearers must be handed to the secretary by the end of the March meeting.



**For all events - please observe the Covid 19 rules current at the time.**

The wonderful Pam Ayres ... now 73 years old , has penned her latest ode ~ to Coronavirus...

## An ode to Coronavirus

I'm normally a social girl. I love to meet my mates  
But lately with the virus here. We can't go out the gates  
You see, we are the 'oldies' now. We need to stay inside.  
If they haven't seen us for a while. They'll think we've  
upped and died

They'll never know the things we did before we got this  
old.

There wasn't any Facebook. So not everything was told.

We may seem sweet old ladies.who would never be  
uncouth

But we grew up in the 60s - if you only knew the truth!

There was sex and drugs and rock 'n roll. The pill and  
miniskirts.

We smoked, we drank, we partied. And were quite  
outrageous flirts.

Then we settled down, got married and turned into  
someone's mum,

Somebody's wife, then nana. Who on earth did we  
become?

We didn't mind the change of pace because our lives were  
full.

But to bury us before we're dead is like a red rag to a bull!

So here you find me stuck inside for four weeks, maybe  
more.

I finally found myself again. Then I had to close the door!

It didn't really bother me. I'd while away the hour.

I'd bake for all the family but I've got no flaming flour!

Now Netflix is just wonderful. I like a gutsy thriller.

I'm swooning over Idris. Or some random sexy killer.

At least I've got a stash of booze for when I'm being idle.

There's wine and whiskey, even gin, if I'm feeling suicidal!

So let's all drink to lockdown. To recovery and health.

And hope this awful virus doesn't decimate our wealth.

We'll all get through the crisis and be back to join our  
mates.

Just hoping I'm not far too wide to fit through the flaming  
gates!

- contributed by Peter Telfer

## 1908 Brush



Here is what Simon brought back from SA. Give him a call if you can help to source further parts.

## Cheerios

Congratulations to Peter and Noelene Kemp on their recent marriage. We wish them many happy years together.

\*\*\*\*\*

Evelyn Hill has had an early stay in a nursing home with a broken foot. Hopefully he will be back on two feet soon and catching up on clearing sales!

\*\*\*\*\*

Thinking of Barry Jonathan and wishing him a steady recovery after a severe illness.

- Judith Matthews

### Quotes About Cars

I failed my driving test.

The driving examiner asked: 'What do you do at a red light?'

I replied: 'I usually respond to texts and check Facebook.'

~ Anon

# Letters to the Editor

## Car Owner's Virus

It seems I have a case of Car Owner's Virus ... after a quick trip to Adelaide with the trailer, a 1908 Brush followed me home.

I am slowly going through the parts and working out what we do and don't have.

The history of the car is that it was sold new in Perth in 1908-9 then found on a farm in 1964. We purchased it from this owner after he had owned it for 57 years.

If anyone has information or parts, I am very interested in hearing from them.

Thank you

*Simon Anderson*  
0414 482 241

## "Up a Ladder"

Hi Jon,

While Ken was deciding which of his misspent youth stories to write about next, I thought I would send you this story about him and his ladder incident years ago, only him involved. (He doesn't know I've sent this.)

After lunch one day, Ken was tinkering in his shed and working around backyard. I went into town to have coffee with a friend and do the shopping. On arriving home I turned into our drive only to see Ken's car go roaring up other drive, swing onto road and roar off up the road. Didn't see me, so thought he must have to be in Geelong for some part before the store closed.

Went into house, unpacked groceries, had a cup of coffee, after a while I started to prepare tea. I assumed Ken must have been having trouble finding part. Imagine my surprise when I went out to the rubbish bin and found the ladder flat on ground, broken in half. He had been on the roof and fallen off. I guessed he may have broken something, not serious and that was the reason for the trip to town.

As time passed I began to worry as I had heard nothing from him. Then I received a phone call from our doctor: Ken was in there with severe concussion. He had sent him for an X-ray etc, in case of any fractures or brain damage.

Would I be able to come get him as Ken in no state to drive. No worries, dispensed two daughters to pick him and car up. Then came the biggest problem: had to watch him carefully throughout night, and make him just sit and keep quiet for the next two days.

# Letters to the Editor



BOY! Almost had to call in the Defence Force to accomplish that task.

Finally received call from doctor: good news, no fractures or brain damage, but doctor had a message for Ken (see he gets it). Message read: BRAIN STILL IN THE WRAPPING PAPER AND HAS NEVER BEEN USED.

Ken was not amused but I laughed the rest of day. Jon, you can see he has never altered.

*Ethel Shepherd*

## "Lowell, Norman Hiram and Maxwell"

Hi Jon,

I have a little story for the next backfire magazine. I'm almost certain it's not true but ...

The four Goldberg brothers, Lowell, Norman Hiram and Maxwell, invented and developed the first automobile air-conditioner.

On July 17, 1946, the temperature in Detroit was 97 degrees.

The four brothers walked into old man Henry Ford's office and sweet-talked his secretary into telling him that four gentlemen were there with the most exciting innovation in the auto industry since the electric starter.

Henry was curious and invited them into his office. They declined, and instead asked that he come out to the parking lot to their car.

They persuaded Mr Ford to get into the car, which was about 130 degrees inside, then turned on the air-conditioner, which cooled the car immediately.

Mr Ford got very excited and invited them back to the office, where he offered them \$3 million for the patent.

The brothers refused, saying they would settle for \$2 million, but wanted the recognition by having a label "the Goldberg Air-Conditioner" on the dashboards of each car it was installed in.

There was no way old man Ford was going to put the Goldberg's name on millions of Ford cars.

They haggled back and forth for about two hours and finally agreed on \$4 Million in cash, and that just their first names be shown.

To this day, all Fords display - "Lo, Norm Hi and Max" on the dashboard controls.



*Sean Murphy*

# The 1957 Holden Station Wagon



covered inches deep in places with rich, red mud, to its owners, we were convinced, wholly and utterly, that the Station Sedan is an honest, solidly made vehicle able (and more than willing) to render hard service for as long as the average owner could wish.

## Rumours scotched

Inevitably, about any highly competitive vehicle there arises a crop of rumours. In the case of the station sedan for instance we heard (a) that "the front cross member breaks". (b) that "they don't hold the road", (c) that they were "thirsty". and (d) that practically all of them had "broken their backs" due to lack of a "proper chassis".

We concentrated on all these points more than somewhat during our test, and wish to announce flatly here and now that each one of these stories is apocryphal. Or to put it plainer, they're just so much damned nonsense (and, no, we don't hold any GMH shares!) But let's begin at the beginning

## First impressions doubtful

We took delivery of the station sedan on a Friday morning, after it had just returned from a fast, fully laden return trip to Melbourne. Stacks had checked it over, of course, but perhaps their checking had been a little hasty – we, after all, had been sitting on their backs about getting a loan of this car!

We drove it off through Sydney's Friday traffic, and it acquitted itself very well. The pedals can be toed-and-heeled very easily, which makes it so much easier getting restarted on hills when the traffic's jammed nose to tail and merely creeping.

It handled it well enough, was precise of placement, and was as smooth in operation as anyone could wish. So we took it out further onto our test route and began to poke our foot vigorously into the carburettor. Up we went to 60 – 70 – and while the roads remained flat and straight everything went swimmingly. Soon however we were into those fast sweeping bends of ours which you've read about – and everything suddenly started going haywire. To put it briefly the station wagon wouldn't handle very well at all. Something was loose somewhere.

Hah! we thought – there must've been something in those rumours after all; and we proceeded to scrutinise closely every point which could possibly be suspected of breakage. Nothing doing – everything was sound and healthy, and very strongly put together indeed.

We gave her another burst on the road, and she seemed to be steering with her back wheels. Underneath we went again and sure enough the rear

## "Wheels" December 1957

### Road Test and analysis of the HOLDEN STATION SEDAN

A practically styled, effortless, economical six seater able to cope well with any kind of rough usage is Holden's station sedan. We gave it one of our toughest tests and it emerged with colours flying.

Although many months have elapsed since Holden's immensely practical station sedan first made its appearance, the vehicle is still an eye stopper and gathers an admiring audience where ever it pauses. And no wonder for assuredly this is the "mostest" motor car for the money available today - if your inclinations run to a dual-purpose vehicle, or course. We therefore express a special note of gratitude to Stack & Co, Sydney, who put themselves to much inconvenience in order that we might test this car; despite the fact that undue publicity must inevitably embarrass them, so great is their backlog of orders.

Much has said and written this car since first it made debut. Its appearance and specifications are a matter of public knowledge, for disinterested indeed is the Australian who has not long since made himself fully familiar with this latest production from Fisherman's Bend. We shall therefore skip much of the normal preliminary wherein we usually describe the vehicle in full, and get straight on to commenting about its performance – because it is our belief that we have driven this vehicle for a greater distance and under a bigger variety of road and weather conditions than any other journal.

Nearly 1500 miles rolled beneath the wheels of that Holden whilst we had it in our possession, over good roads and bad; through sand, mud, rain, water, and snow, so that eventually the car and "Wheels" became great friends.

It has a few doubtful points, upon which we shall, in due course, remark — but when finally we returned it,

# The 1957 Holden Station Wagon

spring U bolts were a trifle loose. Out came the toolkit, up went those U bolts and from then onward that Holden was a transformed car – one which would sit down tightly on the road a matter what sort of treatment you subjected it to!

## Handling excellent

No portion of our test route (some 400 miles) phased it in the slightest. The suspension wouldn't bottom, the back wheels showed no inclination towards coming round to meet us, the steering and brakes were positive and precise at all times. You could let it laze its way up tightly winding inclines in that lovely flexible top gear – or, conversely, stuff it into second or low and feed it everything you had for the sake of just “going places”; and the Holden simply loved it, every minute of it!

We tried her out in sand, and she crawled through it amiably.

We belted her up and down our speed strip, getting a genuine 82 mph top speed and a standing quarter mile of 21.2 seconds, which shows that this dual purpose wagon is no slouch – although fractionally slower than the sedan.

Into the water she was plunged, time and again, and appeared to love it like a duck. Neven a miss from the engine and – incredibly – those brakes stayed with us right through the proceedings. So we took it back to Sydney, having done our best to wreck it meanwhile – although it still purred at us happily – and passed it straight away over to our associated magazine “Country” to see what they could manage in a similar direction!

## Into the mud

The following day we again crawled into this big, happy station wagon and, since we had to follow along portion of the Ampol trial route in order to collect news material, we loaded up with sandwiches and headed west.

As had been reported, the Ampol route turned out to be very much of a trial even at the time the cars went through – and here we were, almost a week later, following in the wheel marks of nearly 100 hurtling cars! It had been raining steadily all through the week, and the weather was freezing cold – and, naturally, we were out to waste no time whatever.

Corner after corner hurtled at us, seen dimly through the merrily ticking wipers, only to be rounded with a slither and a swoosh while the Holden arrowed on its way. On bitumen we cruised at a steady 70, frequently putting (on the long straight Riverina roads)

some 60 miles into every hour. The car's performance remained exemplary.

Day turned into night, and we were barging along through 8 inches of sloppy mud at 60 mph. We passed cars and trucks which were lumbering along in the 30s and 40s – and some were slithering about badly; but not our Holden!

Now and then great gobs of mud would shoot up and plaster the windscreen, and on one occasion (the rain had eased) we headed, going great guns, for a water-hole with the idea of wetting the screen and so letting the wipers sweep it clear. We bottomed of course, and the car sprang into the air like a 'roo, coming down axle deep again in mud – but still perfectly controllable, still motoring infinitely sweetly.

And then, near Cootamundra, it snowed. Not very heavily, but sufficient to complicate things; and the Holden loved that too. Occasionally the rear of the car would start drifting out from under you, but when that happened – even in a ticklish spot – you'd simply get right off the gas and hold the steering into the slide and never at any time would more than a mere split second elapse before all things were equal once again.

The Holden station sedan is a mighty fine piece of motorcar, and don't let anybody tell you different. Especially at the price!

Our journey ended with a non-stop 300 mile run over good bitumen roads back to Sydney, and although we hunted that car along in no uncertain manner, the engine never missed one single beat. In fact the way in which it keeps reeling out the revs for mile after mile, hour after hour, is little short of miraculous – more so, it is felt, when one goes to start it in freezing temperatures the following morning and it leaps into life immediately without any ado whatsoever. Nor is it ever in the least cranky while running cold.



# The 1957 Holden Station Wagon

## Criticism

There are a few dubious points about the car however.

Its square back design makes it a natural mud sucker, and following a few miles running on mud-strewn roads you can't see out of that big rear window for filth.

You can't release the handbrake, semi-ornamental contraption that it is, with your left hand in an emergency because it simply impossible to reach it through the small, horn rimmed wheel.

It's a cold car to drive, especially around your tootsies and cold footed owners will no doubt take advantage of the heater which may be bought as an accessory. Which reminds us, the test car had one of those GMH "Air Chief" radios installed, which proved to be not only good company but an admirable performer, both by day and by night.

We found that the rear seat can be both erected and collapsed from the driver's seat, using only one hand; and we give GMH full marks for this. It is felt, however, at some kind of skid rail fitted as standard, rather than as an extra, would both add to the car's usefulness and protect that plastic flooring to a worthwhile extent.

It doesn't leak and it doesn't let in dust. The windscreen fogs up, though, on the slightest provocation, in cold, wet weather – even when both ventipanes are open. We found it necessary in the snow, to resort to the old trick of placing a pencil beneath the bonnet's rear so as to spill hot bonnet air directly onto the screen before the driver.

The headlamps are adequate, as are the brakes. Road shock is kept to a minimum, and little, if any vibration is felt through the wheel.

Vision is of course quite extraordinary, but there is a trick to be learned when reversing the station sedan that strikes one as uncanny at first acquaintance. The curved glass quarter panels at the rear tend to distort the view, so that when reversing past a lamp post for example, the post appears to change its position by at least two feet as the car moves by!

This is distracting, but like we said, you can get used to it. And none of the above would be sufficient to put us off buying a Holden station sedan were we needing one – or able to get one without too long of a wait.

## Summary of impressions:

*A capable, agile six seater with ample room for carriage of light goods, a moderate thirst, unassuming good looks, and an uncanny capacity for hard work. Undoubtedly the best value pound for pound in the station wagon field today here in Australia – if you're lucky enough to get one.*



## Technical Details

### Specifications:

**MAKE:**  
Holden De Luxe six passenger Station Sedan. Our test car from Stack & Co., Sydney.

**PRICE AND AVAILABILITY:**  
£1311/9/6, incl. s./tax. Delivery 7 days.

**ENGINE:**  
6-cyl. o.h.v.; bore and stroke, 3" x 3.125"; capacity, 2,171 c.c.; compression ratio, 6.8 to 1; 1.65 b.h.p. per sq./in. piston area; 110 lbs./ft. torque at 1,200 r.p.m.; 70 b.h.p. (SAE) at 4,000 r.p.m. Single down-draught carburetor with oil bath air cleaner. Cap-acties: radiator, 16 pts.; sump, 6 pts. (re-fill); fuel tank, 91 gal.

**TRANSMISSION:**  
8" single dry plate clutch; 3-speed gearbox, steering col. lever operated, with s/m on two top ratios. Hotchkiss drive to hypoid differential, ratio 3.89 to 1. Overall ratios: 3.89, 6.20, 11.6 to 1. Rev., 11.6 to 1. Top gear m.p.h. per 1,000 r.p.m., 19.5; 92 m.p.h. at 2,500 ft./min. piston speed.

**CHASSIS AND BODY:**  
All steel unitary construction, with reinforcement to carry suspension.

**SUSPENSION:**  
I.f.s. by coils, unequal length wishbones, and tubular shock absorbers, incorporating an anti-roll bar. I.r.s. by shot-peened semi-elliptic leaf springs, longitudinally mounted, and tubular shock absorbers.

**BRAKES:**  
4 wheel hydraulic, mechanically operated handbrake on rear wheels from fascia lever. Friction lining area, 90 sq. in.; ratio per laden ton, 70.6 sq. in.

**STEERING:**  
Recirculating ball; ratio, 14 to 1; 3.8 turns 1,250 r.p.m. (top gear equivalent, 25 m.p.h.).

**ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT:**  
12 volt ignition and lighting; 7-plate battery. Lucas headlamps, self-cancelling flashing indicators, automatic courtesy lamp.

**WHEELS AND TYRES:**  
13" pressed steel disc with 5-stud attachment; 6.40 x 13 six-ply tubeless tyres.

**OVERALL DIMENSIONS:**  
Wheelbase, 105"; overall length, 176"; overall width, 67"; overall height, 61"; track, front, 54½"; rear, 54½"; ground clearance, 7½"; turning circle, 36½ ft. Dry weight, 20½ cwt.

### Performance:

**TOP SPEED:**  
Average of test runs ..... 81 m.p.h.  
Fastest one way ..... 81.2 m.p.h.

**MAXIMUM SPEED ON GEARS:**  
(Valve bounce): 1st, 30 m.p.h.; 2nd, 53 m.p.h. Recommended shift points: 1st, 12 m.p.h.; 2nd, 25 m.p.h.

**MAXIMUM ENGINE PERFORMANCE:**  
59.2 b.h.p. at 3,900/4,000 r.p.m. (top gear equivalent, 77 m.p.h.); 95 lbs./ft. torque at lock to lock.

**ACCELERATION:**  
Standing ¼ mile: average, 21.5 sec.; best one way 21.2 sec. Acceleration through gears: 0-20 m.p.h., 3.4 sec.; 0-30 m.p.h., 5 sec.; 0-40, 10 sec.; 0-50 m.p.h., 13.4 sec.; 0-60 m.p.h., 18.7 sec. Top gear: 10-30 m.p.h., 9.2 sec.; 20-40 m.p.h., 9 sec.; 30-50 m.p.h., 12.4 sec.; 40-60 m.p.h., 13 sec.; 50-70 m.p.h., 13.5 sec.

**BEST HILL CLIMBING:**  
Top gear: 1 in 9.8 at steady 25/35 m.p.h.

2nd gear: 1 in 7.7 at steady 32 m.p.h. 3rd gear: 1 in 3.4 at steady 18 m.p.h.

**BRAKING:**  
Footbrake from 30 m.p.h., gears in neutral: successive 1.7½ sec. stops. Fade approx. 8 per cent; brakes almost unaffected by water immersion. Handbrake from 30 m.p.h., 5.2 sec.

**SPEEDOMETER CALIBRATIONS:**  
10 m.p.h. (ind.) — 11.2 m.p.h. (actual); 20 m.p.h. — 20.8 m.p.h.; 30 m.p.h. — 30.2 m.p.h.; 40 m.p.h. — 39.7 m.p.h.; 50 m.p.h. — 48.6 m.p.h.; 60 m.p.h. — 57.6 m.p.h.; 70 m.p.h. — 67.4 m.p.h.; 80 m.p.h. — 76.3 m.p.h.

**FUEL CONSUMPTION:**  
Hard driving, incl. test runs, 23.2 m.p.g.; normal fast cruising, 27.6 m.p.g.

**CONDITIONS:**  
Hot and dry, varying to cold, with heavy rain and including some light snow. All types road surface, incl. 100 miles of muddy surface.

## FOR SALES, WANTED & CLUES

### For Sale:

**1990 Ford Laser Ghia Sedan** 4 door hatchback. Club plates 81742-H. Good Order 145,000km. \$2,100 negotiable. Call Merv 0438 434 758. **2/21**



\*\*\*\*\*

**1982 Falcon Station Wagon.** 4 spd Manual. 4.1 litre. A daily driver till recently. One owner. Mechanically good. No rego. VIN JG31AJ61738C. Some body work and windscreen required for RWC. Spares with car. Suit resto. Asking \$300, negotiable. Call Adrian 0429 051 181. **1/21**



\*\*\*\*\*

**TV-58".** Only a few years old. GC. \$100. Oil - 4-litre containers \$10 ea. Lots of Peugeot parts, including 16" wheels with tyres & tubes, a complete engine rebuild kit & gearboxes. Workshop manuals for Peugeot 203, 403, 505 & 604. Set of 4 Michelin tyres near new 16 X 195 \$300. Many other parts, including for Isuzu Bellett. Call me to see if I have what you need. Kevin 5248 3032. **2/21**

### Covid Quips

My wife says that if I don't get off the computer, she is going to ram my head into the keyboard.

I think she is jokin-9847tb0 v97np;g y;98ga98ye g[e8ghkfglhb 9egjygh lg94yg pho grh 9dy gp478y9vpa9dkvtbn;3-gmlkxj

.....

Now is not the right time to surround yourself with positive people!

## FOR SALES, WANTED & CLUES

### Wanted:

**1985 KB Laser** (for parts). Prefer the following: manual; blue interior; minimal rust in doors & bonnet; straight front right quarter panel; Geelong/Melbourne area (will travel for a rust free example). Call or text James 0466 580 922. **1/21**

\*\*\*\*\*

**1927 Oldsmobile** I wish to buy a LHS REAR AXLE to suit. Dimensions: length 765mm; diam. 30mm, with 10 splines. Call Karl 5284 1451. **12/20**

### Clues:

**Knobs** A note from Max McKenzie to those who bought the Ford seats from the car museum last year. Max now has the adjusting knobs for these seats. Contact Max if this affects you. **2/21**

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).

## Club Activities

Club activities are being resumed carefully. The committee continues to monitor the situation.

**Red Plate registration renewals.** Contact Gus Shea directly to arrange for your paperwork to be signed, so you can get it to VicRoads well before it falls due. Ph Gus on 0400 203 151.

### Backfire

As we creep out of Covid, let's maintain the flow of interesting and varied stories, to fit around the minutes, reports and event calendars.

### Website

Check it out at [www.wdhvcgeelong.com](http://www.wdhvcgeelong.com)

**22 FEB - MONDAY**

**MARCH BACKFIRE DEADLINE.**

Contact: Jon Breedveld 0417 311 441

The views/comments expressed in the publication of this newsletter are those of the individual contributor and are not necessarily endorsed by the current Committee of the Club. Whilst every care is taken to determine the safety of any technical information provided and the accuracy of the information supplied for inclusion in this newsletter, it is printed in good faith and neither the Committee nor the Club accept any responsibility for any loss or injury incurred by any application of such information.

*If undeliverable return to:*

**WDHVC**  
**PO Box 200**  
**Newcomb VIC 3219**

Backfire

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1957 FE Holden