

# 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.



*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

Hello members whoever you are, I know you are out there somewhere.

So another month of COVID restrictions has passed and another month without club activities to enjoy.

As time goes on I have to say I am missing the fellowship of the club more and more. With that in mind, a suggestion has been made by Simon Anderson to get us together in a proxy sort of way. The suggestion is to have a natter on ZOOM, an on-line meeting platform. Of course some of us may struggle a little with the technology but perhaps it is worth a try. Have one of your kids or grandkids get you set up and ready. It might be a bit of fun and if it works we can do some more of these.

So here is the plan, we will have two events/meetings: We usually have a coffee outing on the first Thursday of the month but some won't get the *Backfire* by then, so instead, on

**Thursday 10 September at 10.30am**, grab a coffee and a bit of cake and sit down in front of your computer or phone and we can have a go at catching up. Here is the meeting number and code you will need to access the session: **95629920696**, entry code: **829486**

Now mid-week isn't always suitable for every one so here is the second idea. Instead of the Craft/Tech night we usually hold on the fourth Tuesday of the month, how about we get together on ZOOM and we do a show and tell night? This will be **Tuesday 22 September at 7.30pm**. Have something you can hold up to the camera and show everybody, tell us about it and it doesn't have to be automotive related: maybe another hobby, something interesting.

The meeting number and code you will need to access this session is: **91723686274**, entry code: **651350**

If these are successful we can do more but at the very least we might be able to see a few faces we've not seen for some time. And catching up for a chat is something we at WDHVC do very well.

Let's see how it goes.

Still on the subject of getting together: A big thank you again to Jon on his *Backfire* publication. Last month was so good I read the words completely off the pages! This is a vital link and for many members the only way of knowing what is happening with the club. Thanks Jon, keep doing what you are doing.

So the last month has seen more time in the shed and some progress on the Buchanan. The motor is stripped down and appears in fairly standard condition so it should reco nicely. I've been learning a new skill in fibre glassing, making repairs to the body and some interior covers. An interesting process, a messy and itchy experience with lots of ways to get it wrong. It seems to be a bit of a black art but I'm getting somewhere.

So all I have left to say is; stay home, stay safe, stay well and stay in your shed.

*Dallas*

*Thanks for the kind words, Dallas, but it is because YOU the members continue to send me interesting items and Peter Telfer takes care of distribution that Backfire keeps firing. So thanks and keep up the good work all - send in those stories. If you all do that, I am more than happy to put them together. Cheers - Ed*



# Gary's Giggles

## Tall Tales from our Legendary Librarian

Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson went on a camping trip. After a good meal and a bottle of wine, they lay down for the night and went to sleep. Some hours later Holmes awoke and nudged his faithful friend. "Watson, look up at the sky and tell me what you see."

Watson replied: "I see millions and millions of stars."

"So what might one deduce from that?"

Watson pondered for a minute. "Astronomically, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Astrologically, I observe that Saturn is in Leo. Horologically, I deduce the time is approximately 3:15am. Theologically, I can see that God is all-powerful and that we are small and insignificant. Meteorology, I suspect that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you?"

Holmes was silent for a minute, then spoke: "Watson, you moron, some bastard has stolen our tent!"

: \*\*\*\*\*

A bus stops and two Italian men get on. They seat themselves and engage in animated conversation. The lady sitting behind them ignores them at first, then her attention is galvanised when she hears one of the men say: "Emma comes first. Denna I come. Two asses, dey comma together. I come again. Two asses, they come together again, I come again and pee twice. Then I come once more."

"You foul mouth swine," retorts the lady, very indignantly. "In this country we don't talk about our sex lives in public."

"Hey, coola down lady," says the man. "I'm just telling my friend how to spell Mississippi."

\*\*\*\*\*

Two weather beaten duck shooters were in a pub talking about the hunting season coming up.

"Yeah," one of the blokes said, "I made three decoy ducks out of softwood once. They were so flamin' lifelike a fox gobbled down two of them even before the paint was dry."

"Do tell," said his mate, pushing across their empty glasses. "And what happened to the third?"

"Oh he flew away."

## COMMITTEE MEETING

The Committee did not meet in August as there was no business to consider.

### CORRESPONDENCE AUGUST 2020

#### LETTERS IN

- ◇ Bendigo National Swap Committee - site holder decision to rollover site fee for 2021 or refund
- ◇ Judith Matthews - Thank you card for our thoughts on her recent accident
- ◇ Jeanette Dragt - Thank you card for our sympathy on the passing of her sister Helen
- ◇ New member application forms - Tim Paech, Colleen Marshallsea

#### LETTERS OUT

- ◇ Welcome letters sent to new members on approval at the last committee meeting –
  - ◆ Peter & Chris Connelly
  - ◆ Peter & Barbara Hamann
  - ◆ Peter & Francis Shinkfield
  - ◆ Ian Harrison
  - ◆ Nakita Donovan
  - ◆ Ashley & Trish Banks
  - ◆ Martin & Cindy French
- ◇ Consumer Affairs - seeking information about our extension of our Annual Statement

#### EMAILS IN

Nil

#### EMAILS OUT

Nil

- Fred Harris

## Club Activities

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

### Annual General Meeting

Members will be notified when further details about the AGM are available. Your current Committee will stay in office until an AGM can be held.

**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

Thank you for all the varied contributions to *Backfire* received again this month. Keep up the great work! Help us all to stay in touch.

### Website

Check it out the new items Gus has put on the website.

**28 SEPT - MONDAY**      **OCTOBER BACKFIRE**  
**DEADLINE** By 5pm please.  
Contact: Jon Breedveld 0417 311 441

# Club Permit Scheme Discussion Paper

## Discussion Paper: Policy and Legislation Department of Transport *Proposed Changes to Road Safety Regulations 2009*

This discussion paper talks about proposed changes to the Club Permit System (CPS).

On reading these proposed changes, all regulations and policy are made by the Department of Transport and NOT any other outside vehicle group.



***These are the main discussion points being canvassed in the discussion paper, which may affect the CPS.***

1. Current Regulation 152 provides that a *current financial member* means a paid up member. The word "financial" may be removed. It would sit with the individual club to sort out. This will not apply to our club as our constitution says you need to be a financial member to have a vehicle on club plates.
2. VicRoads has been somewhat inhibited by Regulation in acting against *rogue clubs*. We welcome the ability for VicRoads to apply certain requirements on individual clubs to ensure they meet the requirements of the CPS. (This discussion paper proposes to give VicRoads this ability.)
3. The paper proposes that VicRoads appointments for the issue of all Club Permits would be *pre-booked, paid appointments*. A \$19 fee would apply.
4. *Club Permit General Conditions*. On reading the regulations, we note that there is no definition for the use of vehicles, yet since the CPS started, it has been agreed that originally the use of vehicles was to be for club activity only.
5. The discussion paper proposes *permanent and temporary operating conditions*: for example vehicles with poor headlights could only be used during daylight hours.
6. We understand that current regulation 157D provides for *vehicle audits*. VicRoads may recall vehicles to be tested in Kew, Melbourne. This would make it difficult for people who live in Mildura or Bright.
7. *Club Permit Number Plates*. The discussion paper proposes to issue plates at a cost of \$38 (plus the permit fee) to align with the issue of standard plates.
8. *Issue of slimline plates*. This Regulation was previously amended in 2019 to cater for slimline plates. They have a place already in Reg 157G. As these are optional and effectively a special order, a fee of \$150 applies. This is something that no one has been contacted about previously.
9. The discussion paper proposes that *fees may go up* in line with the CPI.
10. *Reassignment of Club Permit for deceased estates*. Although the current regulations do not provide for this, in practice it is possible and has been achieved on a case by case basis. Requests have been made for assets to go to extended family, be it children or lineal descendants.

**Remember this is a discussion paper, which comes about every 10 years or so, and will have input from interested parties, including federations, clubs, incorporations and individuals.**

This month we have been inundated with mail to process application under the permit scheme, which has worked well. Others prefer to have the permit signed in hand, which is also okay. Either way you may have to process by mail to VicRoads in Kew. The Geelong VicRoads Customer Service Centre has been closed, with no word on reopening soon.

There has been keen interest in vehicles coming on line in the near future, as many members are at home, so into the shed they disappear, to continue with their project.

I will let you know about any information that comes to hand through the magazine, and keep all up to date.

Gus Shea  
Club Permit Officer

# RALLIES & RUNS

## *Our Memorable Incidents - 52 years of swap days & weekend rallies*

Fifty-two years is a long, long time and reading my diaries we have done a lot of things in that time with the historic vehicle club. For a start we dragged four children all over the state most weekends to swap days or weekend rallies; so is it any wonder they were deprived – of animals that is. Consequently they've all got dogs, cats and horses.

The main swap was in Bendigo from November 1976 where we always had a site the weekend. You were fortunate if you found some car/motorbike parts to swap. It was normally done with money. The first few years there was a dance in the hall at the Showgrounds on the Saturday evening and all the kids thought it was marvellous. They all knew each other from all the swap meets.

One year after picking the kids up from school we arrived in Bendigo about 8pm on Friday and set up the 12 x 12 tent. The wind can be very gusty and often there are willy willys which lift the tent off its centre pole. So Ray devised a method, with ropes and a large tent peg, to hold the centre pole in place. That year water pipes had all been replaced in plastic about 4 inches under the surface of the showground so guess what, out of all that ground we managed to pierce the pipe and get a gusher – in the tent.



So all the water was switched off, a plumber had to be found. It was late and pitch dark so we had to move to the next-door site of a friend and re-pitch the tent, and it happened to be on an ant's this time. It was after midnight before we were sorted out and up at 5am to prepare the stall. We've only had water through the tent twice in 41 years when we got drowned with rain.

We usually had friends who went with us, and occasionally he'd take a bottle of wine. One day at the Ararat swap at 10 am he said to Ray: "Come and have a look at your missus." I was dead to the world in his car after having been offered one glass and the children were all having adventures around the area. I had never had an alcoholic drink till I was allowed a sherry on my 21<sup>st</sup> so I wasn't used to it was I?

Swap days were a big part of our lives, with Ray preparing and restoring parts to sell. Ballarat high-rise concrete car park was absolutely freezing in the winter, with the kids are huddled in a corner with the icy wind whistling through. But it was the opposite in Canberra in July and the car boil because the weather was too hot. I think we might have been cruel but at the time it was character building – when the little kids all slept overnight curled up on seats in the open sided shared at Numurkah before the swap there.

On a rally to Camperdown we stopped at the Koala Motel in the Stony Rises for the children to see the zoo. One of the extra children poked her finger in the cage and got bitten by the monkey so back to the Colac Hospital for treatment. There's not much left on that motel site now.

This reminds me of my encounter with a monkey on my sixth birthday at the zoo. I was wearing a beautiful silk shantung dress and matching knickers (that is what they were called in those days) when a great gust of wind blew my clothing against the cage and the quick monkey grabbed and tore it to shreds. My strict mother was not impressed and nor was I with the scolding I got, as if it was my fault!

We used to take the old Nash to the Gardens in Melbourne on Australia Day. The timing gear had been replaced with new old stock year earlier but it broke again just over the Westgate Bridge, being made of old canvas fibre. I got a taxi home and got the family car to tow Ray home.

My first tow had been to collect the Nash many years earlier, and the kids were yelling: "Dad is happy he is waving". He was waving all right – the reverse gear wanted to engage any he had to use a screwdriver to keep it apart so he was "not happy Jan". And of course I was driving too fast. Well this time I knew to take it easy via backroads and Little River: I still broke the tow rope five times but somehow got us home.

At one big rally in Drysdale there was a very good find. Our children picked up a packet and upon opening it found \$600, which was a lot of money then. Being good and honest, and disappointed, they took it to the police station and were

# RALLIES & RUNS

eventually thanked by the sports club that lost it.

There were weekend rallies we called the "battlers rally". I don't think we paid for the children because they slept on the floor and sleeping bags. There was one to Maryborough where we had a very warm welcome to the Bull and Mouth Hotel. We had the best and biggest room over the bar room where there had been an accidental fire the day before and the floor was still very hot, lovely for the kids to sleep on! Can you imagine that situation happening these days?

There was a hotel in Castlemaine for another battlers rally. Why do I remember it? The meal was awful, the little kids were sick in sleeping bags on the floor, and we were in a borrowed car. We've been very fortunate that almost all away rallies were very comfortable and we were well fed. I suppose that's why the crook one is remembered.

In the Nash with a full complement of youngsters on the Queenscliff – Portarlington Road we got a flat tyre. All piling out, Ray chasing the keeper of the tire and the youngest went and held onto the fence. It was electric – imagine the fuss. Then Ray had to visit the closest house to borrow a jack. We all remember that outing and since then we've just about got everything but the kitchen sink on board under and in front of the seats.

One year on the way to Bendigo our wagon decided to break down before Daylesford with a full trailer. The RACV bought our car back to Highton servo and a daughter came and rescued the trailer and us. We changed cars at home, took what we could in the little Festiva and set off. Halfway there the servo phoned – car ready, distributor cap replaced. But too late. As a result of all this I slept with the men in the club tent – with Ray!

At Fun on the Farm in Camperdown there were glider flights towed by a vehicle. I initially said "no way" but then thought "why not?" The glider pulls up sharply and when the tow rope is dropped the nose dips. It's beautifully peaceful, enjoying the scenery and feeling perfectly safe. I was lucky to have an extra long flight due to a pilot change.

A lot better than the helicopter flight over the First Fleet Re-enactment at Portland with the club. The door wouldn't shut properly and there was something wrong with the seatbelt. One club member had a separate flight from his wife just in case! By the way that helicopter was rumoured to have gone missing on its flight back to Moorabbin.

Castlemaine is a lovely venue and a good swap, but the day after a wedding we were both tired. On our way home we both went to sleep while I was driving and shot across the road into gravel, woke up and shot back to my side in front of four cars

coming towards me. The poor driver behind me nearly passed out in fright. I waited in fear all the next week for the police to call and charge me with dangerous driving. We have never driven blinky-eyed since then and to have to tell our children their perfect mother had done such a thing was hard. But they had to know it can happen.

Night rallies were very popular, with supper at Steiglitz and ending up at the You Yangs for breakfast. One year there was an amusing incident when we were pulled over by the police. "What's wrong with our Nash?" "Your lights are too bright." We have a 6 V system on an 8 V battery which gives a very good lighting

We had a great trip to New Zealand with the club with a few extra passengers. One was a Scottish gentleman who had a lifetime passport which had not been seen or heard of by airport authorities, so he was taken aside while they worked it out each time.

On the same trip we were about to get on the coach when I noticed a large cow pat near the door. So that no one would step on it and then onto the coach, I stood over it. Unbeknown to me someone went behind me and took a very unbecoming photo of me astride this wretched pile and put it on the club wall for all to see, with the caption "S\*\*t happens"!

Club people and events have played a big and enjoyable part of our lives and although there are sad occasions we've had many a good laugh and many happy memories.

♦ *Judith Matthew*

## Buried Treasure

- Tinplate Toys



A couple of finds, the results of digging around the goldfields of Western Australia.

Most have been subjected to the 'pressing' effect of a bulldozer when the rubbish dumps were levelled.

- *Harold Newton*

### Penetrating Mystery Solved

(Re-edited from *The Best of Old Cars Weekly*)

Several years ago, two glass plate negatives were found showing an ancient car. The car was identified as a 1903 Winton, the owner being a Mr John Foley. At the time the pictures were found no other details were mentioned.

There was however, something quite strange about one picture showing the rear of the car with two white arrows drawn on the picture showing two small holes dotting the back of the car. No explanation for the holes or the arrows was provided.



Time passed and little thought was given to the puncture-riddled Winton until the author came across an issue of *The Horseless Age* dated 27 July 1904.

There on the editorial page was the missing link of a certain Winton autos history.

The article read as follows: "After many threats to use guns to restrain speeding motorists, mostly by incensed farmers, this method of enforcing the law was applied for the first time last week by a deputy sheriff on Long Island. The deputy who did the shooting has been unable to make a case against the driver and the matter has been discharged owing to lack of evidence.

The details of the case are as follows : a course was measured off along the road and passing motorists were timed by deputy sheriff Wickes and two assistants.

When Foley came along in his car, his speed was taken by the latter two, who informed Wickes, stationed on the road, that it was beyond the legal limit of 10 miles per hour.

Wickes thereupon called to the motorists to stop, and when they did not heed his orders, began to fire at the car with a revolver. Two bullets passed through the tonneau door and grazed the legs of the occupants. Foley continued on his way but returned later to surrender himself and to lodge a complaint against the deputy.

He claimed that his speed was not above eight miles per hour and that he did not hear the deputy sheriff calling him to stop. The deputy on the other hand, claimed that the speed was twelve miles per hour and that in shooting he had aimed at the tires." (must have been a lousy shot.)

- Gary Mellington

## My Favourite Vehicle Long Live the Republic!

*My grandfather's Fenwick Findley Republic: model 75, chassis no 261796, 1<sup>1/2</sup> ton truck, 4 cylinder C T Lycoming motor, Fuller gearbox, N.S.W. registration no 180033.*

I had heard a lot of stories from my mother and aunties about the Republic truck, as it was used for carting produce from the family farm on the Great Northern Road at Glenorie to the market in Sydney, bringing in fowl manure and blood & bone as fertilizer to improve the soil and was then washed down to take the family out to Hurstville.



*In amongst the photos were two of the Republic truck, one a side view and the other one had my mother and two of her sisters sitting at the rear of the tray.*

It took the family to the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, to Wisemans Ferry for fishing trips and visiting relatives. At one stage they were driving to Parramatta when they collided with a car driven by a priest. As the truck had no doors, my grandmother was thrown out onto the ground and injured, which affected her for the rest of her life. Looking back on the accident I asked myself whether my grandfather, a lay minister in the Brethren Church, was trying to convert the priest or vice a versa.

My grandfather died in 1948, the year I was born, and the farm and truck were sold to Stuart Semple. My grandmother died in 1968 and the family albums came to Victoria. In amongst the photos were two photos of the Republic truck, one a side view and the other one had my mother and two of her sisters sitting at the rear of the tray. I asked about the owner of the farm and it was still owned by the Semple family. I contacted Mr Semple about the truck and was told it was still on the farm. I asked whether I could get it: he said yes, but he wanted the diff to make a post hole digger!

The early Republic trucks used a Thorbensen diff, which had a straight axle with a hole in the centre where the crown wheel and pinion are mounted and two jack shafts with cogs to a gear in the wheel - what they called the lever action. Republic brought Thorbensen and later sold to Eaton because of financial difficulties.



***The Republic as I found it in the bush***

In early 1973 I left Geelong with a HT Holden sedan and hired a tandem trailer and retrieved the truck. The chassis was severely rusted: nearly all the rivets were pitted and needed to be replaced.

I placed ads in magazines etc - no replies. I went to a swap meet at Woodend, recognised some parts for sale. I asked where the rest of the Republic truck was and he said it was in Bendigo.

I went there after the swap meet it turned out to be a model 50 Republic 6 cylinder 4sl Lycoming. I brought for \$100 with spares, so the Republic obsession had begun!

Later Republics came from Canberra, Mt Macedon, Clayton and Horsham. More parts came from Benalla. I swapped a gearbox for a model 75 chassis only to find out it was different to a 75 R60. Later chassis were heavier and stronger. I have also acquired two model 19s. They have a K4 continental 4 cylinder motor and GU Fuller gearbox. One came from Bairnsdale and one from Grafton and miscellaneous spares for all the vehicles.

- Evelyn Hill

# ***My Favourite Vehicle***

## ***Velocettes & Bugattis***

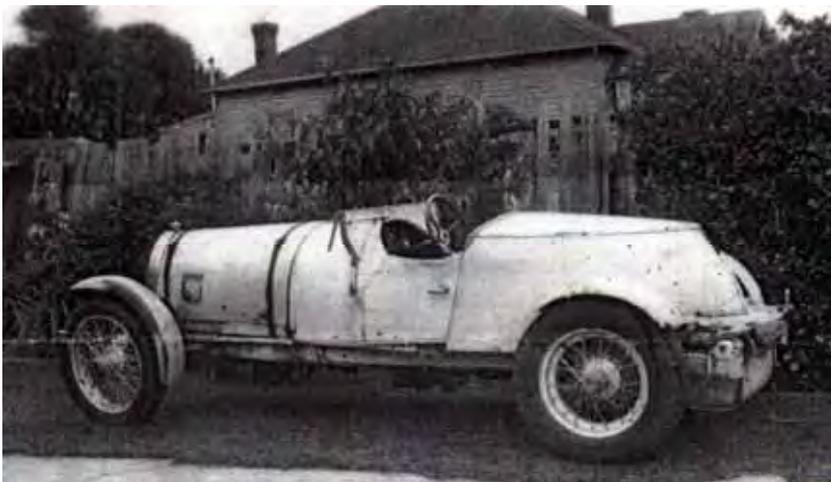
In 1952 or thereabouts my mates and I were riding Velocette motorbikes, one of which had a bevel gear driven overhead cam engine (KSS). We heard of an old car for sale which sounded interesting and which we could afford, so we bought it between us.

It was a Type 13 Bugatti (Brescia) mainly because it had a bevel gear driven, overhead cam engine. Being an early car it had no front brakes and the general condition was poor. The engine ran all right, but the clutch, which consisted of an alternate series of steel plates, had welded itself solid. After freeing this up with kerosene and it worked okay, so the next thing was the gearbox.

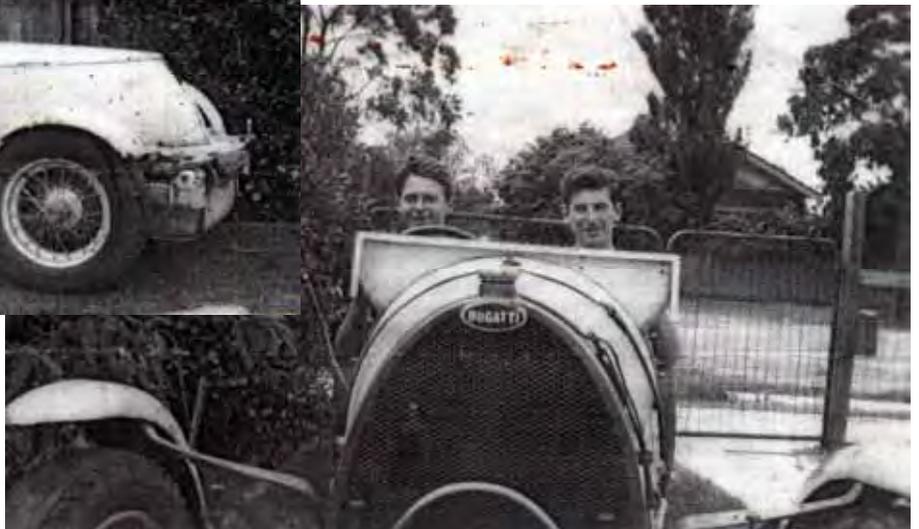
On taking off the top cover we found all the gear teeth of the gears were missing, thanks to the non-functioning clutch. We wrote a letter to the manufacturer in France and received a polite reply that they could supply a set of gears for about £80. Unfortunately we were only getting paid about 30 shillings a week as electrical apprentices, so were unable to avail ourselves of Molsheim's offer. We did however manage to travel around the block in Newport a couple of times in top (direct) gear.

The enclosed photo was taken on arrival home. That's me on the left and my mate Eric W Clarke on the right. The Bugatti was sold on after this. I bought a not a Riley nine and Eric bought a straight eight Bugatti later on. I wonder if the car or parts still exist?

- Frank McKenzie



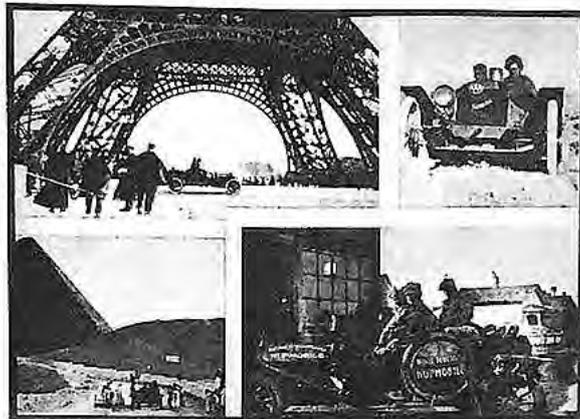
***Frank (left), Eric and the Bugatti***



*Simon Anderson has contributed the following story of an epic world journey by three men in a Hupmobile over 100 years ago! (reprinted with permission.) - Ed*

Hupp Herald Fall / Winter 2019

*Editor's note: The following amazing article first appeared in the Vol 1, No. 3 1972 issue of The Herald and is reprinted here with a few very small non-substantive changes. The car still exists, and is on display in the Crawford Auto Aviation Collection in Cleveland, Ohio.*



## AROUND THE WORLD IN A MODEL 20 HUPMOBILE

By Jeff Godshall

How much faith do you Club members have in your Hupmobiles? Would you be willing to drive your cars cross-country? How about around the world? How about around the world in an open car through countries that have never seen a car, where roads and service stations are nonexistent, and knowing that you wouldn't get to see your family for over a year?

Well, that's what three brave men did in 1910-1912 as they toured the world in an open Hupmobile just to prove the worth of a car barely two years on the American market. The car was a standard 1910 Model 20 Hupp touring car, four seater. The three men were Joseph R. Drake, Hupp Motor Car Company treasurer and co-founder; Thomas M. Hanlon, the driver and later manager of the service department; and Tom Jones, Detroit Free Press writer, reporter, and official photographer. Endurance runs were popular among early motor car manufacturers as a means of garnering reams of free publicity and of proving that their products wouldn't fall apart at the first chuck-hole. Since Hupp was a relative newcomer, having been organized in 1908, the company officers decided on this spectacular test of men and machine as an excellent way of proving that Hupp products were rugged and dependable. The New York-to-Paris race in 1908 had put the Thomas Flyer name before the public and Hupp officers expected the round-the-world drive to do the same for the fledgling Hupmobile.

So it was that a group of company officials, reporters, local celebrities, political types, sightseers, and a host of Hupmobile owners and their cars gathered in Detroit's Cadillac Square on November 4, 1910 to give an official send-off to the hearty men and their fragile motorcar. The night before there had been a grand banquet attended by Hupp management and 42 dealers in honor of the three crewmembers. Now amid the hustle and confusion of last minute preparations, Detroit Mayor Phillip Breitmeyer presented the Hupp's crew with a small American flag to carry on their long journey together with a message of greetings for the Mayor of San Francisco. At 2:45 PM, amid the shouts of the crowd and the tears of relatives, the little Hupmobile and its crew were off around the world!

And a little-known world at that. Before the trip Drake and Jones had gone to New York City to the national headquarters of the American Automobile Association in an effort to get maps of their world itinerary. Unfortunately, the AAA could offer no help – maps just weren't available – and Drake promised to send back information on local conditions so the AAA could begin compiling such data. So except for the fact that Hanlon was acquainted with the western United States, the trip was a kind of blind man's bluff.

The Model 20 and its crew arrived in Chicago November 7 accompanied by an escort of cars representing every Hupmobile model manufactured, including the coupe. They left the Windy City a day later – minus the escort – and struck out across the plains. Stops were made in Davenport and Des Moines, Iowa; Omaha, Nebraska; Denver,

Colorado; Cheyenne, Wyoming; and Salt Lake City, Utah. Outside Omaha water froze in the generator, extinguishing lights and the electrical system. Hot water was procured from a nearby farmhouse and the frozen unit was thawed out. A full day was spent in Des Moines demonstrating the car since the residents had not yet seen a Hupp touring car.

Before the Rockies were reached the going wasn't bad. A run of 263 miles was made in one day through Iowa but from then on the situation worsened. From Denver, Colorado to Ogden, Utah, across the Continental Divide in the Rocky Mountains and through the Red Desert and Bitter Creek District of Wyoming the crew pressed forward. "Desolate beyond words" was the way Hanlon described the countryside. Often they would not see a human or house for days. The alkali was so thick that it cracked the crew's lips and made throats and nostrils bone dry. But while the crew was always thirsty, the alkali effectively spoiled the drinking water.

The "roads" had such high centers that the differential was polished from rubbing on the ground. But the only damage to the car was a snapped radius rod done in by a protruding rock. Twenty miles a day was a good average on that stretch. But one 9 mile section through soft sand required 14 hours to traverse – 30 feet at a time, laying strips of canvas ahead of the car. Another day was spent wading through a blizzard with 60-mile headwinds.

On November 21 the Hupp climbed an altitude of 8500 feet, 2000 feet in one hour. So much for the Model 20's hill-climbing ability. A close call came while travelling at night through the Bitter Creek District. Drake managed to spot a black drop in the field of the headlights and Hanlon managed to stop the car 18 inches from a 30-foot crater – 30 feet deep, that is!

In December the crew finally reached the West Coast, stopping at Los Angeles and then driving to San Francisco. The car was then examined and found to have no significant defects despite 3600 tough miles from Detroit. Not bad for a 1600 pound car loaded with 1000 pounds of passengers and baggage. On December 13, the Hupp was carefully lifted aboard the steamer Manchuria and six days later crew and car arrived in Honolulu.

During their three weeks' stay in the Hawaiian Islands, the car scaled a 38 mile long road to the 4000 feet altitude of the crater Kilauea, an active volcano. The little Hupp was the first car of its size to make the climb. Next stop was the Fiji Islands. Even though there were only 27 non-native people on the islands, a dealership was opened and orders placed for 12 cars.

On January 3<sup>rd</sup> the crew departed via the steamer Moanna for Australia. On the 18-day voyage to Brisbane, the ship was on fire (in the cargo hold) for eight days during the trip, but the passengers were peacefully unaware of the trouble until the last day and by then the fire had been successfully beaten. Fortunately, the Hupp was not damaged.

While in Australia the crew drove from Brisbane to Sidney to Melbourne. They were always pestered by rabbits and kangaroos, especially at night since the beasts were attracted by the car's headlights. It got so bad Hanlon had to turn off the lights and run without illumination. The crew counted 100 Hupmobiles on the streets of Sydney.



LEFT TO RIGHT: J. A. DRAKE (AT WHEEL);  
T. O. JONES; T. M. HANLON

## Metric Motoring (ctd from August)

Continuing Lindsay Alford's observations of the intricacies of Metric and Imperial measurement. We resume with Lindsay's comments about different countries, starting with Britain.

### Driving in Other Countries

#### Britain

The changeover from gallon to litres for selling petrol happened because of the technical shortcoming of petrol pump design. (The pumps were electro-mechanical, well before the digital pump.) Pumps had been designed to be switchable between metric and imperial units but had no provisions for prices above £1 per unit of fuel. Once the price of petrol rose above £1 per gallon, the industry requested that they be permitted to sell fuel by the litre rather than the gallon, enabling them to reduce the unit price by a factor of about 4.5 and so to extend the lives of existing pumps.<sup>1</sup> I had a similar situation in Australia when travelling across the Nullarbor when the price of petrol was greater than a dollar a litre. It had a note on the browser's saying that the price was half and they were charging double the dollar value.

Since 2000, the remaining non-metric units, allowed by United Kingdom law without supplementary indicators for economic, public health, public safety or administrative use, are limited to:

- the mile, yard, foot and inch for road traffic signs, distance and speed measurement,
- the imperial pint for the dispensing of draught beer and cider, and the sale of milk in returnable containers, (in Australia beer is now sold in metric units but they have kept the old names),
- the acre for land registration,
- the troy ounce for transaction in precious metals

The British metrication programme lacked leadership from the government.<sup>1</sup> Watching UK movies, they still talk in imperial units.

#### Canada

In 2015 we travelled in Canada and Alaska on buses and coaches but did not drive. Canada's roads are metricated, with speeds in kilometres per hour. The road signs are the same as ours except that they have km/h on the bottom of the sign. This is to remind the USA visitors who came to Canada for a cheap holiday that 100 is not 100 mph. Also, the USA and Canada have a common registration database so traffic fines will find their correct home when over the border.

Petrol is sold in litres and the price includes taxes. Like the USA, for all other goods the marked price is not what you have to pay. Taxes have to be added onto the marked price when paying for them. With restaurants, you also have to add the tip onto the bill.

America and Canada have decimal currencies but



have a 25c coin called a quarter. I found this strange to use. (See my previous comments on fractions.)

Apart from the roads and most pre-packaged goods, Canada has a dual system of units. The railways still use miles. This is because of opposition to metrication and living adjacent to the United States. Canadians like to keep everybody happy. They have kept the French Quebec people from voting for independence from Canada despite defeating them in a war. All of Canada is a dual-language country which is English and French and all government signs by law show both languages. All government offices have to have French interpreter service, even by telephone. This is why a lot of user manuals from North America are written in English and French. Heights of mountains are given in metres and feet for the American visitors. Travelling on a cruise ship to Alaska the Americans are not so obliging. They sometimes give both units but not always. They often gave the temperature only in Fahrenheit with no Celsius temperatures. I have long forgotten the Fahrenheit scale.

Confusion between pound and kilograms of fuel and a malfunctioning fuel gauge contributed to Air Canada Flight 143, running out of fuel mid-flight on July 23, 1983.<sup>1</sup>

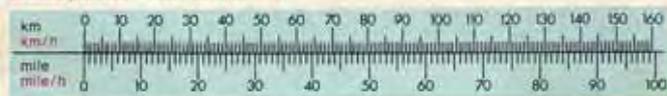
# Speedometers

It is not compulsory to convert your speedometer **BUT!** you are strongly urged to make some alteration or addition to provide an indication of speed in kilometres per hour (km/h).

## Conversion Scales

### MILES — KILOMETRES

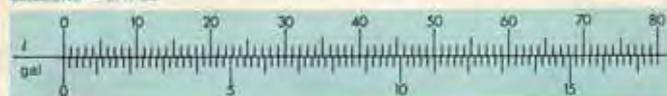
or miles per hour — kilometres per hour



### YARDS — METRES



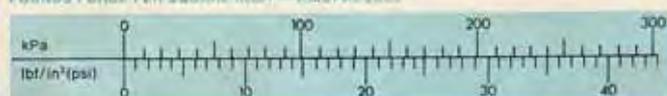
### GALLONS — LITRES



### MILES PER GALLON — LITRES PER 100 KILOMETRES



### POUNDS FORCE PER SQUARE INCH — KILOPASCALS



## USA

The United States is one of only three countries (the others being Myanmar (Burma) and Liberia) that have not officially adopted the metric system as the primary means of weights and measures. The United States inherited the imperial system of units from Britain after independence. They now call it *customary units*. However, they did change the gallon and others such as the pipe thread from the BSP (British Standard Pipe Thread) to NPT (National Pipe Thread). The thread on the tap are different to Australia. This causes confusion with washing machine hoses.

The Metric Act of 1866 (Public Law 39-183) legislated the use of the metric system in the United States. This law made it unlawful to refuse to trade or deal in metric quantities. The Convention of the Metre signed on 20 May 1875 in Paris by 17 nations, including the United States.<sup>1</sup> However, widespread use of the metric system was not adopted because it was too French, and due to opposition from the manufacturing industry, which had machine tools using inches and the cost of conversion was too great.

In 1975, the United States passed the Metric Conversion Act. The legislation was meant to slowly transition its units of measurement from feet and pounds to meters and kilograms, bringing the US up to speed with the rest of the world. However, the conversion was not mandatory and many

industries chose not to convert, and unlike other countries, there is no governmental or major social desire to implement further metrication.

In 1994 federal law also mandates most packaged consumer goods be labelled in both customary and metric units. Both Hawaii and Oregon have had legislation introduced to make metric the official measurement for their states. Both attempts have failed.

According to the US metric Association, which is promoting changes to the metric system, companies like Ford and others benefited from design and manufacture in metric units. The US is slowly moving towards metrication but we still have to put up with imperial measurements in some dominant American industries such as aviation (with altitude in feet), photographic paper with inch measurements and computers (pixels per inch). When China overtakes the United States as the dominant manufacturing country things may change. China has a complex alphabet and the United States have a complex system of units. Which is the biggest disadvantage? Having two sets of units makes things more difficult. Trades and professions like to keep things complex for their own self-importance and interests.

In Australia, refrigeration temperatures are measured in Celsius and charges on refrigerant gases are measured in grams. In the United States, temperatures are measured in Fahrenheit and charges of refrigerant gases are measured in decimal ounces, decimal pounds or pounds and ounces. It appears that they can buy cans of refrigerant gases in places like Walmart and DIY regas, where in Australia you need an EPA licence to buy and use it. With digital or electronic controllers for fridges, the controller has to calculate the temperature in both units increasing the complexity. The main problem is been able to change from one set of units using only a limited number of buttons. Confusion can arise if the units are changed accidentally.

**Mars orbiter blunder** The use of two different unit systems caused the loss of the Mars Climate Orbiter in 1999. NASA specified metric units in the contract. NASA and other organisations applied metric units in their work, but one subcontractor, Lockheed Martin, provided software that calculated and reported thruster performance in pound-force-seconds, rather than the expected newton-seconds. The spacecraft was intended to orbit Mars at about 150 kilometres altitude, but incorrect data caused it to descend, burning up in the Martian atmosphere.<sup>1</sup>

References (marked <sup>1</sup>) – Wikipedia

- Lindsay Alford

## Quotes About Cars

Yes, Officer, I did see the speed limit sign.  
I just didn't see you.

~ **Author Unknown**

# The Trailer

- by Blue the Shearer (copyright Col Wilson)

In my very early childhood I learned to crawl and walk.  
To use the potty on command, to gurgle, goo, and talk.  
And in good time I went to school and learned to read and write. To coexist in playgrounds, to run and jump and fight.

When I grew up I got a job. A wife and family too.  
In short I did the kind of things that most men get to do.  
And whilst my life may not have gained the ultimate success, I can say in modesty it's not a total mess.

That's why I find it difficult to contemplate my failure.  
Despite my years of trying to, I still can't back a trailer.  
All my friends who have one seem to do it well.  
So why do my attempts end up a journey into hell?

When I bought my trailer, 6 x 4 and painted green,  
I thought it was the nicest trailer I had ever seen.  
I hooked it on and drove it home determined to arrive in a blaze of glory by backing up the drive.

I knew the theory, left hand down, to back it to the right.  
Right hand down to guide it left. As I said I'm bright.  
But theory into practice, though it may sound common sense, for me it seems quite impossible and so I hit the fence.

Quite a crowd soon gathered round. Advice was far from lacking.

With every new arrival asking: "Having trouble backing?"  
I finally unhooked it and wheeled it through the gate.  
Up the drive and round the back so I could concentrate.

On learning how to back it, this trailer so perverse,  
instead of getting better, I kept on getting worse.  
You can see where I've been learning, my area of practice  
the woodpile fence is broken and all the shrubs are cactus

The corner of the garage is gone, no trees are left alive.  
And I've completely flattened both the downpipes in the drive.

The clothes hoist has a nasty, bend the sprinklers are no more.  
And the imprint of the number plate is on the toilet door.

My backing reputation now is legend in this town. I'm down the street some smart arse says: "Hey Blue, left hand down." But since I've bought my trailer I have to persevere. Accidents don't worry me, it's ridicule I fear.

So when I take it to the dump I hope no one's around. But folk just seem to know I'm there. Spectators abound. They hope I'm going to duplicate that trailer backing sin. And go to near the edge again, and drop the damn thing in.

But finally I've solved it. The problem is not so hard.  
I only drive it forward now when I'm not in the yard.



In the matter of reversing there's really nothing to it.  
When I need to back it, I just get the wife to do it.

- Graham Peacock

# WDHVC MEMBER PROFILE



## Name?

Ron

## Where were you born?

Footscray Hospital

## Family?

Wife Jan, 1 son ,1 daughter and 5 grand kids

## Number of years in the WDHVC?

33 years

## Other interests?

Woodwork and turning, car restoration, and car museum

## What was your first vehicle?

61 Hillman Minx

## What vehicle would you love to own?

Aston Martin

## What vehicles do you have now?

A40 sedan, A40 unrestored convertible, Mini Moke, and Daihatsu

## Profession?

Retired telecom technician

## Skills?

Many .

## What bugs you the most?

People who speed

## What makes you happy?

My cars, family and my time at the museum, which give me great joy.

- Peter Cullen

# Letter to the Editor



Thanks Jon,

That was fantastic. (*John Bailey's link to the You Tube car museum video – Ed.*)

I have kept myself busy while restricted at home: I had a 1970 Italian Motron moped given to me about 20 years ago in very poor condition.

So I took this time to try and make it respectable again, and I am almost there. Just have to figure out the kill switch.



1979 Motron Moped

But this shutdown is better than the last one. We were free camping at Yarrowonga on the Murray River enjoying the peace and quiet over a beer when a very large bow fell on our new Ranger, crushing it.

The insurance company was good but slow. Nine weeks later we got a brand new car.

But we found out a lot about the fine print. Did you know that if your car is written off they cancel your insurance? And don't expect your roadside total care to help with the van towing because it's not a breakdown. And even though it wasn't my fault we still had to pay excess.

But we did get a brand new car.

Regards,

Phill Abbott

"Go Cats!"

(Motron S.p.A.) was founded in Modena, Italy in 1961 by Eduardo Po, when he took over Moto Romeo. Romeo made competitive sport bikes with 50cc 15hp Minarelli shifter engines, plus mini bikes and mopeds with Minarelli V1 50cc 1.5hp automatics in the 1960's and 70's.

In 1976 Eduardo's sons Ermanno and Adriano took over, modernized the company, and changed the name from Romeo to Motron. (*Source: Mopedarmy.com - Ed*)

**Send your stories or Letter to Editor to:  
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**All contributions welcome!**

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### For Sale

#### ZG Fairlane and HG Holden grilles

No reasonable offer refused.  
Call Ian 0414 582 861.

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[don@tvdgroup.com.au](mailto:don@tvdgroup.com.au)

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1909 Hupmobile Model 20