



## OFFICE BEARERS 2020-2021

<b>PRESIDENT</b>	Darrell Leemhuis	darrell@apleemhuis.com.au	0418 696 646
<b>VICE PRESIDENT</b>	Chris Hogan	simandchris@optusnet.com.au	6259 5250
<b>SECRETARY</b>	Nick Nowak	nowakn@iinet.net.au	0428 486 614
<b>TREASURER</b>	John Cadona	fbs@webone.com.au	0419 297 125
<b>EDITOR</b>	Mathew Spackman	mathew.spackman@outlook.com	0429 885 448
<b>MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY</b>	Carol Nowak	nowakn@iinet.net.au	0484 585 340
<b>EVENTS DIRECTORS</b>	Vacant		
<b>MEETING ACTIVITIES</b>	Rob Woolley	robwoolley275@gmail.com	0409 549 485
<b>INSPECTION OFFICERS</b>	Rob Woolley	robwoolley275@gmail.com	0409 549 485
	Barry Roberts	lawley_house@bigpond.com.au	6292 8920
	Robert McGuire	12 Maloney St. Wanniasa 2903	6231 8087
	Roger Gottlob	rogerandgillian@grapevine.com.au	0418 962 312
	Nick Nowak	nowakn@iinet.net.au	0428 486 614
<b>CLUB REGISTRAR</b>	Rob Woolley	robwoolley275@gmail.com	0409 549 485
<b>COMPLIANCE OFFICERS</b>	Nick Nowak	nowakn@iinet.net.au	0428 486 614
	Roger Gottlob	rogerandgillian@grapevine.com.au	0418 962 312
	Barry Roberts	lawley_house@bigpond.com.au	6292 8920
	Robert McGuire	12 Maloney St. Wanniasa 2903	6231 8087
<b>DATING COMMITTEE</b>	Rob Woolley	robwoolley275@gmail.com	0409 549 485
	Ian Irwin	eleanor.11@bigpond.com	0413 582 687
	Greg Spackman	mary.spackman@gmail.com	6231 2559
	Bill Atkinson		
<b>LIBRARIAN/S</b>	Greg Spackman	mary.spackman@gmail.com	6231 2559
	Roy Bendall	abendall@bigpond.com.au	6281 6152
<b>PUBLIC OFFICER</b>	Beth Woolley	bwoolley275@gmail.com	0414 653 946
<b>COUNCIL DELEGATES</b>	Chris Hogan	simandchris@optusnet.com.au	6259 5250

***Address for Correspondence:- Hon Secretary, VVCCA ACT (Inc), PO Box 3394, Manuka ACT 2603***

## MEETINGS & MEMBERSHIP

**HELD EVERY 3RD WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH AT 7.30PM.**

The Club meets in the meeting room of Shannons Insurance at Unit 20/2 Yallourn St, Fyshwick. The building can be accessed from either Yallourn St, or the Canberra Ave Service Rd. (access between Bristol Paints and Classic Car Wash – next to United Petrol) Meetings are usually followed by a talk on some interesting theme, a film or other entertainment and then by supper. Visitors are always welcome at our meetings. Standard membership fees are \$50 per year. However, for the 2020/21 financial year fees are \$25.

**Life Members – Ian Irwin O.A.M, Alan Higginson (D'csd), Garth Fisher (D'csd), Alan Pickup (D'csd)**

*Like our Front Cover? The radiator badges and scripts shown have been specifically chosen as each depicts a marque of which a veteran and/or vintage example has been represented in our Club over the years. At last count there were 116.*

## OUR CLUB

The Veteran and Vintage Car Club of Australia ACT (Inc) was formed in 1963. Its Objectives are;

- To sponsor and encourage the preservation, restoration and use of Veteran and Vintage vehicles
- To engage in rallies, exhibitions and other events suitable for Veteran and Vintage vehicles
- To encourage the retention of Veteran and Vintage vehicles in Australia
- To collect and disseminate technical and historical information as shall be of interest to the members
- To offer the services of the Club, its members and vehicles to such charitable organisations as may be decided upon from time to time
- To engage in such other activities associated or allied with all or any of these Objectives which are intended to promote a better and wider knowledge and understanding of Veteran and Vintage vehicles among club members and the public generally

## SAVE THE DATE

Club Events will restart as soon as it is safe and practical to do so.

**RETREADS**—‘Re-tyred’ members of many ACT Car Clubs meet informally for a light lunch at the Southern Cross Club Woden, at noon on the 1st Friday of each month. The group is known as “The Retreads”. Outings in their old cars are often arranged. The VVCCA (ACT) recognises these outings as legitimate events for any of its members who wish to participate

### COVID-19 IMPACTS ON CLUB EVENTS

Government regulations around COVID-19 and the potential risk it poses to members and the Community that all Club meetings and activities are suspended until further notice. If you were planning on attending other rallies or “old “ vehicle events, please check their websites or Facebook to see if they are still going ahead or if they have been rescheduled or cancelled.

As you are aware, the AGM is held in August each year to elect a new Committee to run the Club for a further 12 month term. Due to the Pandemic the committee feels that it would not be responsible to hold the AGM this year. The Committee has decided that the most practical way to go forward is to retain the existing Committee for a further term of 12 months. Members who currently hold positions will remain in their positions for a further 12 month period until August 2021.

For your reference the minutes of the previous AGM held last year are published in this issue of the Edwardian.

Please note that the position of "Events Director" remains vacant . If there is any member willing to take on this position Nick would love to hear from you.

The Committee can't wait to see the old cars and bikes back out on the road and have a couple of ideas for events and/or runs. Events will be organised as soon as it is considered safe to do so.

## EDITORIAL

Another 2 months passed, and another magazine out later than I had planned. My apologies. I hope everyone is still doing well and staying safe.

I have started to venture out of the house and back to the office a few days a week, but things are still a long way from normal and probably will be for a while yet.

Working on the Model T in my spare time seems to be going backwards rather than forwards. With it already pulled down so much, I decided to go all the way down to allow me to do some other tidy up tasks. I really hope



I remember how it all goes back together. Most days I continue to receive delivered parcels of parts, nuts, and bolts that I will replace when I do get back to putting it together again.

My 22 month old son has been watching very closely and “helping out”. It’s a bit scary to see how comfortable he is already with a hammer, screwdriver, and spanner. I can only hope he will share the same interest in the car as me as he gets older.

I hope you enjoy this issue!

### Some Highlights of This Issue

Video of the Issue

Automobile Notes

Recycle: Donate Life

Emergency Services in 1919

Boudair Car

Outback Model T Ford Rally

The Three Australian Underslung London-Edinburgh Rolls-Royce Cars

Classifieds

### Have anything to share?

Taken the old car out? Been to a swap meet? Done a bit of maintenance? Something to sell? If you have a spare moment, please grab a couple of photos and jot down a couple of notes and send it through. All contributions to The Edwardian are welcome. Just e-mail [mathew.spackman@outlook.com](mailto:mathew.spackman@outlook.com)

## VIDEO OF THE ISSUE

Another video from the archives of an unknown veteran rally. Like many I have, there was no markings on the reel of when or where.

If you can shed some light, please get in contact with me at [mathew.spackman@outlook.com](mailto:mathew.spackman@outlook.com)

You can watch the video at:

<https://youtu.be/RvjIOYsqBeU>



## AUTOMOTIVE NOTES

### News from the Council

- Due to COVID-19 regulations, the AGM has been postponed again to Friday, 9th April, 2021 in Temora. This council did not take this decision lightly. The uncertainty posed by the ever-changing COVID-19 environment, community concern about travel and the need to protect the health and safety of Delegates, Members and the broader community were important factors.
- All Committee members terms of office be extended to 10th April 2021 or present expiry date, whichever is later.
- As you may be aware, this year represents 50 years since the formation of a motoring council (now known as Council of Heritage Motor Clubs Inc.) to represent heritage motoring clubs located in country New South Wales. Unfortunately due to COVID-19 regulation the celebration even planned for the 24th and 25th of October has been **cancelled**.
- CHMC will run online workshops to update club officials and members on topics that were scheduled to be discussed at the AGM.
- CHMC's Committee continues to actively address all issues or concerns raised by or affecting clubs and members, especially with RMS/TfNSW, and maintains its regular contact with Affiliated Clubs on these matters.



## THE NATIONAL CALENDAR

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 7 – 13 April, 2021 (To Be Confirmed) | 1 & 2 Cyl National Rally – Charleville, QLD in 2020 Hosted by the Veteran Car Club of Australia (QLD) Inc. For more information contact the 2020 National 1 & 2 Cylinder Rally Directors Graham Donges 0417 718 617 • Irene Donges 0419 751 324  |
| 8 – 12 April, 2021                   | CHMC Annual Rally - Temora, NSW  |
| 10—16 October, 2021                  | RACV National Veteran Car Rally - Based in Swan Hill on the Murray River, the rally will celebrate Rural Edwardian Australiana. Suitable for both large and small veterans, 1&2's will easily cope with the terrain and the runs. The rally starts on Sunday afternoon (October 10th) and finishes on Saturday morning (October 16th). Rally Directors Michael & Claudia Holding 0407 008 895 or email <a href="mailto:mholding@netspace.net.au">mholding@netspace.net.au</a> for the spiel: <a href="mailto:claudia_holding@hotmail.com">claudia_holding@hotmail.com</a> for the facts! |



## RECYCLE: DONATE LIFE

How amazing is this truck? Dedicated by it's owner Marcus Sims to his parents and his organ donor and built with recycled parts around rusted 1914 'T' model truck chassis that was being used to stack firewood, the truck is a local symbol for Organ Donation Week.

You can read more about this amazing story here—<https://www.nambuccaguardian.com.au/story/6864709/vallas-marcus-sims-and-the-story-of-recycled-parts/?cs=732>.



*Photo sourced from original article in The Nambucca Guardian*

## EMERGENCY SERVICES IN 1919

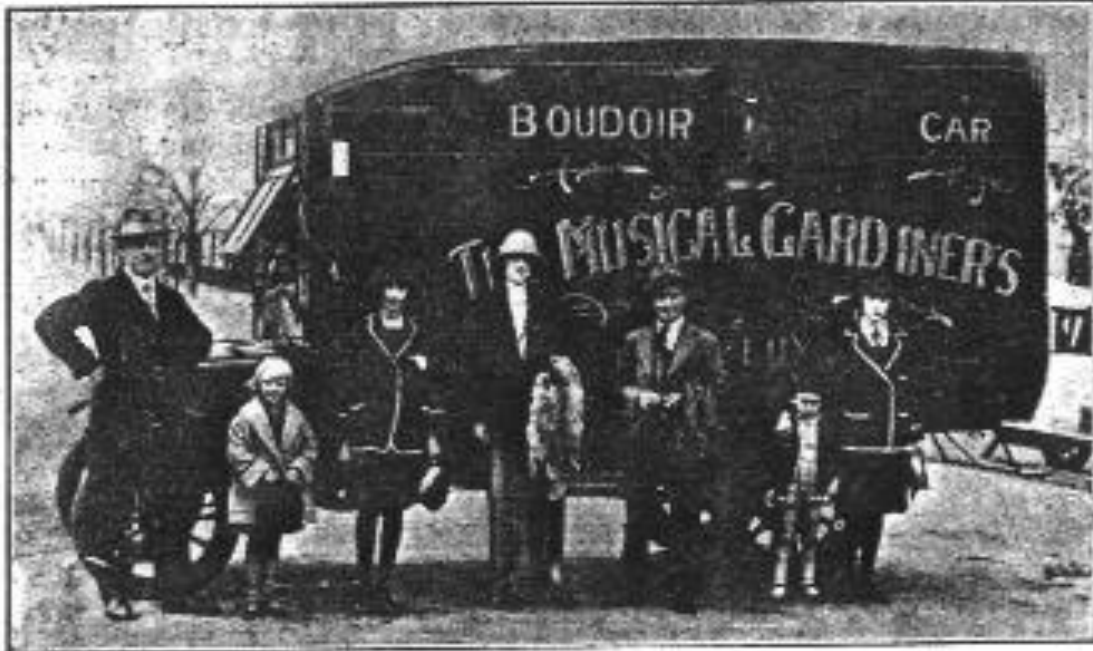
Thanks to Ian for sending in these amazing photos of Emergency Services in the 1919 Flu Epidemic. Ian has also issued a challenge. Can you identify the make of motor cycle and car being used by the nurses about to depart Blackfriars Depot in Chippendale, Sydney in the photo on the left.



## BOUDAIR CAR

Thanks again to Ian for sharing this with us all. This snippet is from the Australian Ford News in December 15, 1924.

Many people have dreams of buying themselves a motor car and travelling the country. This article from Australian Ford News of December 15th, 1924 tells the story of a family making a living from performing as a family musical troupe and travelled in their 'Boudair Car'. A very early and very snug motor home.



### THE MUSICAL GARDINER FAMILY IN THEIR BOUDOIR CAR

**M**ESSRS. DUNCAN MOTORS LTD., of Adelaide, send us the following interesting letter and accompanying photograph:—

"It gives me the greatest of pleasure to add my testimony to the many others you have of the merits of the Ford Car.

"I left Melbourne with my company nine months ago, and during this period have travelled 12,000 miles with my one-ton Ford Truck, carrying all the members of the company, together with the baggage, instruments, etc., required in their various performances. Incidentally, I may add that the truck was purchased from Tarrant & Co., Melbourne, from which city I first set out, crossing the Coorong to Adelaide. The

total weight carried on our journeyings was well over a ton.

"I have motored on all sorts and conditions of roads, embracing the West Coast of South Australia, which extends half-way across the Great Australian Bight. I have a great number of times been compelled to go out of the beaten track to give performances in isolated parts—sometimes having bullock tracks to traverse, sometimes no tracks at all, over mallee roots and sand dunes. I can only say that the truck has proved, under all conditions, more than equal to the tasks assigned to it, no mechanical difficulties being encountered during the whole period. This I consider to be a marvellous record.

"I shall be at all times loud in my praises of the sterling qualities of the Ford, and be ready at all times to personally attest to its really remarkable efficacy."

**GEO. GARDINER,**  
Prop. Musical Gardiners.

Gladstone, April 2nd, 1924.

## OUTBACK MODEL T FORD RALLY, PARKES, NSW

### 24TH – 27TH JULY, 2020

The Outback Model T Ford Club meets about 5 times a year for weekend rallies which usually consists of about 200 plus kms a day and includes dirt roads.

The plan for us was to tow the Model T to Parkes and join in the rally with David and Deidre joining us for the Saturday in our Town car. When I rang David on the Thursday night before to advise him that we had a significant oil leak from the hogs head he said they would not be able to make it also due to work commitments. The weather forecast was for rain all weekend and there was about 30mm over the weekend with minor local flooding. The rally was based at Brian and Alicia Day's property just out of Parkes where there was plenty of room to park motorhomes and caravans and a large workshop for dining and socialising.

The rally was a BYO everything, Brian and Alicia provided a BBQ, gas heaters, tables and chair and the entrants provided all food including picnic lunches.

Friday night was a welcome BBQ and opportunity to meet the other members, there were 8 Model T Fords and 10 families. The cars ranged from 1912 to 1927.

Saturdays run started at 9.00am and was out to Bogan Gate for morning tea and then some back roads to Bedgerebong and Jemalong Weir for lunch at Ducky's friends place where he had a fire going in the shed before returning to Parkes via Forbes, all travel was off major roads and highways with some good gravel roads included. Brian has all the necessary equipment for restoring cars and a couple of cars needed minor work including fitting 2 new beaded edge tyres. Saturday night was the AGM and the same officers were returned for the current year. A BBQ followed with desert provided by some of the members.

Sundays run started at 9.00am and travelled through Bogan Gate and turning north to, Trundle, Fifield, Tullamore and Peak Hill for lunch in the Park. We returned via back roads to Parkes passing Gold and Rare Earth Mines along the way. The country side looks great, they had good general rain in June July and all the crops are all doing very well. We were speaking to a farmer and he said his crops are the best in 30 years. The gravel roads today were greasy and some of the water crossings were about 300mm deep. There was one major failure near the end of the run when the car we were travelling in seized a rear wheel bearing that resulted in a broken axle and damaged guard. We covered about 450kms over the weekend and a great time was had by all.

A great weekend thanks to Brian and Alicia Day. The next Model T Ford Weekend Rally is the 13th—**16th November in Junee.**

Rob Woolley



## OUTBACK MODEL T FORD RALLY, PARKES, NSW 24TH – 27TH JULY, 2020





# THE THREE AUSTRALIAN UNDERSLUNG LONDON-EDINBURGH ROLLS-ROYCE CARS. PART III, CHASSIS 1958.

BY IAN IRWIN (ACT)

*This article originally appeared in the national RROC magazine Praeclarvm in January-February issue of 2018, our thanks to the Editor Tim Dean, for permission to reprint it in The Edwardian. The article has also been republished with permission in other publications in the US, USA and New Zealand.*

In Praeclarvm, 5-2017 and 6-2017, Ian Irwin took us through some background to the underslung London-Edinburgh cars of which only fifteen were manufactured. Only five of those cars had been confirmed as survivors. His colleague John Fasal (UK) advises that another might be added, being Chassis 1814, but this has yet to be verified. Three of these historic cars had long-time Australian connections. In this, the last of the trilogy, Ian outlines the fascinating history of Chassis 1958, and finally resolves the mystery of this car's migration from India, its first adopted country, to rural Victoria, Australia, during the torrid years of the Great War.

Chassis 1958 is perhaps the best known of the three 'Australian', underslung London-Edinburgh Silver Ghosts. Unlike Chassis 1826E and 1884, Chassis 1958 was on the road for most of its years in Australia, and even when off the road, it was never laid up for long. It was mainly for maintenance, restoration or re-restoration.

In December 1911, Chassis 1958 was assigned to an order placed for a 40/50HP standard chassis to carry 7-seater torpedo coachwork of 7.5 cwt, and fitted with optional Vinet artillery wheels with detachable rims.

In March 1912, the original order was withdrawn, and replacement instructions

reveal that Chassis 1958 was to be anything but standard.

She was then to be constructed as a 'duplicate of 1701', a London-to-Edinburgh, the destiny of which was to become a demonstrator car based at the Indian Depot in Calcutta. By a stroke of genius, the Indian market potential had been foreseen by Claude Johnson as one of enormous promise given the wealth of the maharajahs. It was an opportunity to showcase the best that the Company could produce. This was now to become a very special chassis with the best the Company could offer.

Changes to this special chassis construction included a colonial front

axle providing larger ground clearance, small type flywheel, colonial silencer with snout turned to the side, the new 1912 style Rudge-Whitworth wire wheels fitted with oversize 935 x 135 rims, a 20-gallon fuel tank, the high compression engine option, and the rear axle with the highest ratio available, the 19:52 rear axle option, and of course the rare underslung rear suspension. Fitted with Lucas acetylene headlamps, and paraffin side and tail lamps, it was indeed a most impressive car, and clearly one of which the company was exceedingly proud.

On 3 May, 1912, Chassis 1958 passed its factory tests, fitted with the quintessential Rolls-Royce London-to-Edinburgh Tourer coachwork, constructed by Holmes of Derby. The earliest image of the car that survives, appeared, in colour, in the 1913 Rolls-Royce Sales Catalogue. In the photograph, the driver is R.D. Spinney, of the Rolls-Royce London Showroom. It was shipped to Calcutta where George Cecil Gnapp (1873-1942), of the Indian Depot, used it extensively as one of several demonstrator cars.

Gnapp, a mechanical engineer by profession, had served 10 years in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and managed the workshops of one of the country's largest firms. He had returned to England in 1906 to



left: The Rolls-Royce India Depot, Calcutta, c.1912. (Photo: Rolls-Royce Ltd.)

below: Chassis 1958, as a feature car in colour, in the 1913 Rolls-Royce Sales Catalogue. (Photo: John Fasal Collection.)





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commenced from Government House, Calcutta, and travelled via the Princely States of Gwalior, Dholpur, Nabha, Kapurthala and Patiala, visiting cities including Benares, Allahabad, Lucknow and Delhi. In his article, 'The Best Client of Rolls-Royce, The Maharajah of Patiala' John Fasal states that 'so remarkable were the virtues displayed by the 40/50 HP, that it encouraged the rulers [of the Princely states] named above to purchase, collectively, [over time] no less than 54 of them!'

A significant collection of photographs of Chassis 1958, when in India, survive. One of these, from the John Fasal Collection, reproduced here, shows G. Cecil Gnapp at the wheel of 1958 in Calcutta in January 1913. Along with Gnapp is the Company's local driver beside him, prior to the car being sold to H.H. The Maharajah of Patiala, Sir Buhpinder Singh (1891-1938). His Highness was soon to become the Company's best customer. Prior to World War 1, he had purchased Chassis 1659, 1688, 1697, 1958, 2039, 2128, 2334, 2355, 2441, 2460E, 2517, 2533, 2560, 2580 and 2656. Several other photographs from the writer's collection also show the car in all its splendour, in India around the same time.



manage the Maudslay Motor Works, but in December, 1912 his respected experience in, and knowledge of the region saw him appointed as the Rolls-Royce Special Representative in Calcutta.

During 1912-13, Chassis 1958, carrying registration plate 1882, and with Gnapp at the wheel, covered over 12,000 miles in India, accompanied by the two Rolls-Royce Trials cars, Chassis 2039 and 2078. The journey

top: G. Cecil Gnapp, Rolls-Royce Special Representative for India, at the wheel of Chassis 1958 on the Maidan, Calcutta. 1913. (Photo: John Fasal Collection)

centre: Cartoon: Imperial Indian Army Ceremonial. (Author's collection)

left: Chassis 1958 departing Ulgirk Palace, Patiala, late 1912. (*The Motor*, 6.5.1913, p.643. Author's collection)

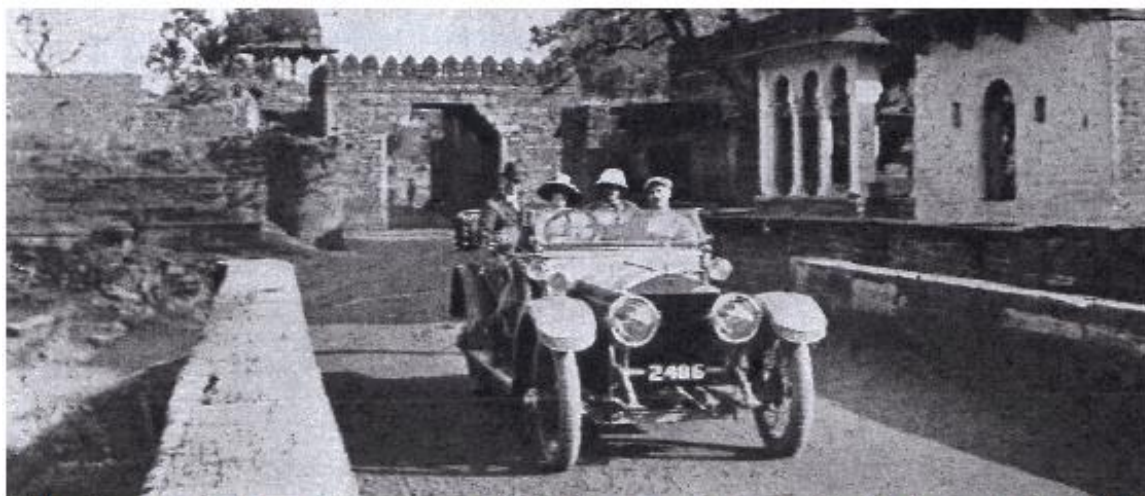
right: The Maharajah of Patiala. (Author's collection)





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BY IAN IRWIN (ACT)



The writer and no doubt many others have wondered why, with the resources to purchase and maintain so many cars, the Maharajah was willing to part with one of his most desirable cars so early in its life. More particularly we have long been curious as to how it was that Chassis 1958 arrived in Australia. Factory records reveal that the car, in 1916, was with its second owner, Mr J. A. Johnston of 'Lyndhurst', Woodend, a serene rural setting in the Macedon Ranges between Melbourne and Bendigo, Victoria. We have known of Johnston's ownership for many years.

But who was J. A. Johnston, and by what means did he acquire Chassis 1958? This has puzzled the mind of the author, and no doubt many who have owned or researched the owners of this car. Hitherto, there has been no insight anywhere into how this may have come about.

James A. Johnston was a breeder of top quality horses in the later years of the Nineteenth Century. Many high quality cavalry horses were also sold to the Australian Government from the outset of Australia's participation in the Boer War. The trade in Australian horses to the Indian Army had commenced by the mid-1870s. In 1892, The Indian Government's contract was for 2500 horses, and 2215 left in the period from 8th to 20th October. Sales to private buyers in India lifted the total dramatically.

Amongst the most loyal of Indian leaders was the young Maharajah of Patiala. He placed himself and the

resources of his State unreservedly at the disposal of his Emperor, King George V. We are told by John Fasal, that H.H. placed vast sums of money into the allied cause, and provided over 1000 horses, mules and camels along with more than 200 drivers for service wagons, thirteen motor cars and many motor boats. He gifted two of his nine 1913 Silver Ghosts to serve with the Expeditionary Forces. He personally saw active service on the Western Front as Commander of the Indian Forces.

It seemed that there had to have been a close relationship, between the wealthy and powerful Maharajah of Patiala, and J.A. Johnston, the Australian horse breeder and exporter. Working from this belief, extensive research followed.

The author's first direct link of Johnston to Patiala came with the discovery of a media social snippet that 'Mr & Mrs J.A. Johnston and Miss Johnston of Lyndhurst, Woodend, returned from India by the R.M.S. Orama on Monday 29th June 1914' in the Melbourne Punch of 2 July 1914. Further research revealed an even more relevant link. The Argus of 12 June 1916 reported that 'Messrs J.A. and A.R. Johnston of Lyndhurst, Woodend returned by the R.M.S. Medina from Patiala State India where they have been on a visit as guests of His Highness the Maharajah (sic) Sahib of Patiala.'

Was Johnston a provider of high quality cavalry horses to His Highness? From research across numerous regional papers of the era, it was established that for more than 30 years, Johnson's equine stock fetched the highest prices at sales in Victoria. The Annual 'Kirk's Bazaar' horse sales at the Melbourne Royal Agricultural Show were dominated by Johnson's well-bred animals. Apart from cavalry horses, these sales also included hunting and polo horses, police, draught, buggy and cart horses, hacks and ponies. Such was the pre-eminence of the Johnson stock at the annual sales, that his name had become legendary in the industry by the 1890s.

Over a hundred years had passed since Chassis 1958 arrived in Australia, and until recently the writer could only speculate as to how the car was acquired by James Johnston of Woodend. The writer had thought maybe it was purchased outright, or possibly it was literally 'horse-traded'. Perhaps, just perhaps, out of his obvious high regard for Johnston, and in appreciation for his services, the Maharajah gifted him the car. I thought however, that most likely we would never know, for no link has yet been found to the descendants of Johnston.

Almost out of ideas, and considering what now was the final option, the writer

above: Another of the Company's demonstration cars, Chassis 2039, named 'Noornihar' leaving the Palace of Gwalior. Both 1958 and 2039 did thousands of miles as demonstrator cars, and were acquired in 1913 by The Maharajah of Patiala.

(Photo: Author's collection)

right: James A. Johnston's Horse Emporium in Woodend, Victoria, in 1914. The Maharajah's Aide-de-Camp, Major Jaswant Singh, sits between Johnston and the local mayor at a special ceremony welcoming him to the township in rural Victoria in October 1914. (Photo: Woodend Historical Society.)





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approached the Woodend and District Heritage Society just a week before Xmas 2017. From the website I was aware that the Society was closed until early February 2018. But with nothing to lose, I chose to write anyway.

I was delighted to receive an immediate response from Jannysse Williams, the Director, who clearly sensed my enthusiasm. She told me she would visit the museum and check the Johnston files for me. Within a few days an email arrived with photographs enclosed, and above all, confirmation that the car had been gifted to Johnston by the Maharajah! Further information was received in the last mail prior to Xmas 2017. This significant breakthrough was a most welcome Xmas gift.

I am enormously indebted to Jannysse Williams, for she was exceptionally keen to assist from the outset.

We also learn from Horace Laffaye's book 'Profiles in Polo', that Colonel Thomas St Quintin, a veteran of the British 10th Hussars Regiment, came to Australia in 1874 to accompany the Indian Gov't Remount Agent, Colonel James Thacker, on a six-month assignment. The express task of the pair was to meet with breeders and dealers of quality horses, and relevant shipping agents 'to streamline the process of buying and shipping thousands of Australian horses, better suited than the English bred to the Indian climate, for the use of the military and civilians alike.' James Johnston,

the renowned vendor and agent had shipped remounts to South Africa. It may confidently be assumed that it was no coincidence that Johnston found huge sales in India.

In 1899, a game of polo was played in Western Victoria. The Australian team comprised Ernest De Little (later the original owner of the 1908 Silver Ghost 60757) and three Manifold brothers, Edward, James and William. It is likely that this was the occasion where Johnston and St Quinton first met. For some years from 1882, St. Quinton had been the Indian Government Remount (and purchasing) Officer. He had returned to the UK, and in this role for the British

Government arranged for horses for the Boer war in South Africa. In 1899 he was again in Australia in the role of Indian Government Remount Agent. It is documented that Johnston shipped 150 horses to South Africa for the British Forces.

We can be reasonably certain that it was Col. St Quinton's influence with the Maharajah of Patiala that opened the way for Johnston's trading of polo and cavalry horses with him. From media documentation, we discover that Johnston had been selling horses and visiting Patiala at least from 1908 if not earlier. Hundreds of horses in each of numerous shipments and 400 alone in October 1914 give us an indication of the extent of Johnston's sales to Patiala. Inevitably a strong and close personal relationship clearly evolved. Johnston made no fewer than six trips to India before the end of the Great War. One of these was an extended trip from 1910 into 1912, with a visit to the Coronation of King George V in London.

Johnston's association with his Rolls-Royce was relatively short-lived. He had parted with 1958 by 1919, from which time he appears to have favoured his Studebaker car. In that year the Silver Ghost passed to another horse-breeder, Norman Falkiner of 'Noonilim Stud', near Echuca on the Murray River. Johnston and Falkiner would have been well known to each other, and as was often the case in that era, quality cars passed between



above: Mr and Mrs Johnston and son Arthur (left to right, seated) with staff at the Palace of the Maharajah of Patiala. The Johnstons were guests of His Highness on at least eight occasions, sometimes for lengthy periods. (Photo: Johnston Family Album, Woodend Historical Society.)

right top: The Johnstons enjoy a ride, as guests of His Highness, in one of his many carriages. (Photo: Johnston Family Album, Woodend Historical Society.)

right: James Johnston takes the reins of one H.H. The Maharajah of Patiala's superb sulky horses, tended by senior staff. (Photo: Johnston Family Album, Woodend Historical Society.)





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friends without being advertised in the media.

It has been suggested that this was one of many cars photographed at the docks in Melbourne in 1919, welcoming Australian troops on their return from Europe, but that car has been identified at Chassis 2678, with the later Rudge-Whitworth wire wheels.

Around 1920-21, Chassis 1958 had been acquired by Louis Melville Whyte (1890-1975) of the historic property, 'The Heights', at Geelong. Early in 1919 Whyte had witnessed a display of surfing by the great Hawaiian, Duke Kahanamoku, accredited as the father of modern surfing, and had followed him back to Hawaii for six months of intensive tuition in the sport.

Lou Whyte was the first Australian to pursue an interest in surfing as a sport, and in late 1919, he was the person who brought the sport of surfing to the waves at Lorne, with his importation of four Redwood boards each weighing a massive 32 kgs. He is acknowledged as one of Victoria's greatest sportsmen and been inducted into the state's Sporting Hall of Fame.

The car was sold to John A.C. Blair of Dendy St, Brighton, Victoria, with whom it was registered (Vic) 38.921. Blair's ownership is marked by a speeding offence. Blair was charged with 'driving at a speed dangerous to the public' on St Kilda Road, and faced South Melbourne Court in June 1922, when a local P.C. recorded a speed of 28½mph, over a distance of 300 yards. John Blair, a solicitor, naturally defended his case, arguing that as the car was a Rolls-Royce, it could be pulled up in two yards, but his argument did not carry any weight. One magistrate said 'they can pull down a few people before they can pull up.' Before the full bench of three magistrates in the South Melbourne Court, it was determined that Blair be fined 40/- (£2). Blair, the following year was in court again, this time on a far more serious charge. He had knocked down a 70-year old man who, when crossing the road near Werribee, 'appeared to be flurried' by the approaching Rolls-Royce. The elderly man died instantly.

Presumably the outcome was none too unfavourable, for Blair soon appeared in the High Court in February 1923, on another matter. Blair had issued a writ

above: Taken c.1921, this is the earliest known photo of Chassis 1958 in Australia. (Photo: The Blair Family.)

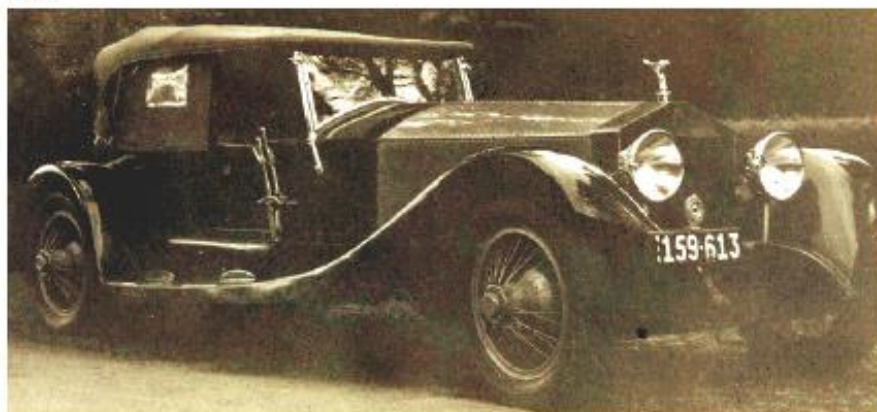
below: Chassis 1958, like so many early Silver Ghosts, was slightly 'modernised' in the mid-1930s. When owned by Alfred Blannin, the body was modified but retained much of the original panel work. Apart from the obvious huge mudguards, changes included raised radiator, alterations to bonnet and cowl, widened cabin section, minor door alterations, substantial chassis valances, new windscreen design and supports, and later Bosch style headlamps. (Photo: Simon Pilbeam, grandson of Alfred Blannin.)

against the District Council of Meningie (South Australia) seeking £375 for damages caused by negligence, to his Rolls-Royce when boarding a punt, the Wellington Ferry, over the Murray River. It was later settled in Chambers, with the Judge Starke setting aside the writ, and £4/4/- costs against the respondent.

It is in Blair's ownership, that we have what is to date, the earliest photograph of 1958 on Australian soil.

It has been stated that Chassis 1958 had as many as 40 owners over the years, but the writer cannot find unequivocal evidence to support this claim. The car

however, did have quite a number of owners. The next was a Mr Cyril H. Creaser, who lived on the corner of Toorak Rd and Elizabeth Street, Malvern. Creaser, like Blair, found the sporting car to his liking, but at some personal cost. The Age press reports that he faced the St Kilda Court on 18 February 1927, charged with 'having driven at a speed dangerous to the public', but the actual speed was not disclosed. He was fined £5 and had his licence suspended for three months.





# THE THREE AUSTRALIAN UNDERSLUNG LONDON-EDINBURGH ROLLS-ROYCE CARS. PART III, CHASSIS 1958.

BY IAN IRWIN (ACT)

By 1935, 1958 was with Alfred Blannin of Camberwell.

It was during Alfred Blannin's ownership that Chassis 1958 was to receive a facelift. There were many modifications effected c1935-36 in Melbourne, that somewhat disguised the car's original identity. The principal changes were the removal of the independent mudguards and replacement with heavy guards in the style of Martin & King of that city. The chassis rails were fitted with valances of bold profile, with nickel plated kick plates all round, even beneath the gear and brake levers, where a driver's door had been added. The original windscreen was also replaced, later Dunlop wheels supplanted the original 895 x 135 Rudge-Whitworth wire wheels, the radiator was elevated some two inches to give the car a raised bonnet line. A front bumper bar was added, and

In the 15 October, 1946 issue of Australian Motor Sport, John Barraclough, the editor, (later, Australian Hillclimb Champion in 1949) wrote in his inimitable style, of his recent drive from Melbourne to Sydney in 1958. Over to John:

'Drove grandly up to Sydney in a Rolls-Royce this month. Was so impressed with myself after the first couple of hundred that I was all for buying a shooting stick or maybe a monocle.' To the garage boy disdainfully, 'Oh no my boy, we only top the oil every New Year's Day, but we'll take another 50 gallons if you could run to it, and would you mind wiping the dust off the radiator, m'lud.'

'I might add that the many charms of motoring with Rolls-Royce are added to by the fact that old ladies and little children all know a Rolls-Royce when they see one, and make appropriate noises.'

in Blake St, Dover Heights to the QEA Terminal at the Kingsford-Smith Airport at Mascot and the Catalina Flying Boat Base at Rose Bay, for in excess of a year.

In 1949, carrying the NSW plate (NSW) UC.882, the car was photographed in the grounds of the University of Sydney, fitted with vertical radiator shutters in the style of the Rolls-Royce Phantoms, a central driving light, twin Bosch horns, and faux quick-release knock-off hub spinners. The car was in company with the new Silver Wraith, WAB24, then recently delivered (24.10.1948) in the UK to V.A. Roberts of Lankey's Creek, via Holbrook. 1958 was soon to be in the ownership of Oliver 'Butch' Garvin, and later reputedly with a John Taylor (c1950-51).

From the Lithgow Mercury press, we discover that the grazier, G.C. Doddemeade, of Coombe Park, Marsden Swamp, via Little Hartley west of Bathurst, was using 1958 as his regular personal vehicle in January, 1952. The impressive long car, in its then maroon exterior finish, was often parked in the main street of Lithgow, where it consistently aroused the interest of locals and tourists alike. A journalist from the local paper left a note on the seat, seeking the opportunity to know more of the car's history. 'Within an hour Mr Doddemeade was in the office.' In the subsequent published article, appropriately titled 'This Rolls Just Rolls Merrily Along', Doddemeade told of the car's origins being in the pre-Great War years, in 1912, but his knowledge of the car's history was far from accurate.



above: This photo was taken at the Harbour View Service Station, at Vaucluse, in 1946, on the day that Jack Jeffery sold 1958 to E. Bennett Bremner. Twin horns, a spotlight, faux knock-off hubcaps and a radiator grille are amongst a few additions that have been made, and the car has undergone a repaint.

Mr and Mrs Bennett-Bremner are standing near the archway.

(Photo: Author's collection, via George Roberts.)

two spare wheels, one atop the other, mounted on the rear of the body between the new rear bumperettes. Outside door handles were fitted also.

The original Lucas self-generating headlamps and paraffin sidelamps fitted in 1912 in England had been replaced with a set of CAV electric lamps at some early stage in the life of the car. In the 1930s refit, these in turn were replaced with Bosch acorn style lamps.

Amazingly, the original Holmes London-Edinburgh tourer coachwork escaped any serious modification, and survived. There are no recorded owners' names after Blannin, until after World War II. Around this time, it carried the registration Vic 159.613. In c1937, it was advertised for £150.

The purpose of 600-mile trip was to deliver the car to its new owner. It is uncertain as to just who that new Sydney owner was that received Chassis 1958 when it arrived. After a considerable amount of research, the writer has concluded that while there were several owners in 1946, we cannot be certain as to the identity of the original Sydney owner. The most likely, it would seem, was Jack Jeffery.

Jeffery owned the Harbour View Service Station at Dover Heights, and offered 1958 to George Roberts, highly regarded engineer with Qantas Empire Airways (QEA), who lived close by. With several enthusiast cars already, and nowhere to house it, Roberts suggested Jeffery offer 1958 to E. Bennett Bremner, the Public Relations Manager of QEA, and a close friend of his. It was a wise suggestion, and Roberts took photographs of the car at the service station on the day that the car passed to 'Ben' Bremner in December, 1946. Ben and his wife are to be seen on the right in the accompanying photograph. While Bremner owned the car, George Roberts was afforded the opportunity to drive the car on a regular basis, from his home

With a prophecy then, that clearly has long since come true, Doddemeade predicted 'That car will still be going when all the others have given up the ghost.' Beyond this, his prediction erred somewhat, thankfully: 'No doubt when its life as a pleasure car is passed, it will become a tow wagon for some garage. The old Rolls', [with] powerful motors are bought up as reliable tow engines.'

Waxing eloquently, Doddemeade continued: 'You know, I couldn't buy a car today for £1500 which would give me any better, or as good results.' He went on to comment quite unfavourably on the cars of the day that he had driven.

When asked the usual question of what top speed the car could attain, Doddemeade commented: 'Well I'm not one of those harem-scarem fellows that's always in a hurry, but I'll admit that out on the Bathurst road on one occasion, I took her up to 70 mph, and she still had a reserve. I thought 70 mph was a bit fast anyway.' In the interview, he said the car was in perfect mechanical order, did not use any oil, and that it was light on tyres. He conceded that in general



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BY IAN IRWIN (ACT)

use it gave 10 miles to the gallon. He said it had never in his ownership broken down, and had cost 'next to nothing' in repairs.

At the end of the interview, when Doddmeade climbed into the car 'which closely rivals a semi-trailer for length, he kicked over the motor as smoothly as a showroom model, and purred away watched by many people who were both amused by the model and intrigued by its very evident elegance.'

If he were alive today, Doddmeade would be pleased to know that his car, for which he obviously held so much affection, has continued to be loved by all who have owned and driven it since, and that its circle of admirers has broadened beyond the main street of Lithgow, to captivate Silver Ghost enthusiasts around the world!

At this juncture, it is probably appropriate to stop and consider just how few pre Great-War motor cars of any make were in still in everyday use in the early 1950s. While the writer was a mere lad then in the early years of high school, the recollections remain clear. Extremely rarely was such an early car ever seen on the streets of Sydney. In well over six decades since, and with a long association with veteran cars I cannot recall more than a handful of pre-WWI cars I have known that were in regular daily use after World War II.

In 1955 the car in the ownership of motor racing identity Dick Cobden, carried one of the new series yellow plates, (NSW) AZG.338. In 1956, with an 'Invitation Entry' it was the oldest participant in the Mobilgas Economy Run from Sydney to Southport. Cobden had lent the car, which he had named 'Lady Agatha', to fellow-racing driver John



Crouch to drive, with Russell Short his co-driver. As an invited entry, it was not eligible for any award.

The 1001-mile event, from 18 to 20 October, travelled the inland route, heading west over the Blue Mountains, thence via Dubbo, Gunnedah, Inverell, Warwick, Ipswich and Brisbane to Southport. Under strict supervision, the car achieved almost 15½ mpg. It weighed in at 38½ cwt, and meeting the event formula, achieved a remarkable 28.6347 ton mpg. 'The Argus', (Melbourne) commented: 'There is no doubt that Lady Agatha was everybody's darling throughout the event.'

As I understand it, at the conclusion of the Mobilgas Run, the now famous old car was temporarily placed on exhibition in the [Ben] Bronk Motor Museum in the old theatre at Watson's Bay (Vaucluse) to give the public the chance to view it. Professor Barrie Gillings received a call at the Sydney Dental Hospital, from George Green requesting him to go to Vaucluse and pick up his newly acquired Ghost, 1958, and drive it to his home

in Strathfield. Barrie tells of driving it through city traffic and along Parramatta Road at peak hour with no brakes at all, but cannot recall precisely whether it was 1956 or early 1957. In any event, the car was entered in the Veteran Car Club NSW 2nd Annual Blue Mountains Rally on 16/17 March, 1957, as Entry 12 of 43 cars, and driven by Green's friend Paul Samuels, a co-founder of both the Veteran Car Club and the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club in NSW. It was at this event, that the writer first became acquainted with this noble car.

George W. Green, of Thomas Green & Sons, Woolbuyers, already had his father's 1920 Silver Ghost when he became an ardent enthusiast of veteran and vintage cars in the 1950s. Green was to eventually accumulate more than a hundred cars, mostly of the veteran and vintage eras. He established Green's Motorcade Museum at Leppington in south-western Sydney, housing many of the largest private collection of early cars in NSW. Chassis 1958 was one of five Edwardian Silver Ghosts (1332, 1606, 1749, 1958 and 45NA) and seven post-

Great War Silver Ghosts in his care over time. Chassis 1958 was probably George's favourite Edwardian Silver Ghost, and certainly was out and about on club events at every possible opportunity. In Green's ownership it would have covered many tens of thousands of

above: Chassis 1958 crosses the NSW border into Queensland with many more miles to go, on the 1956 Mobilgas Economy Run. (Photo: Terry McGrath, W.A.)

left: Lord Edward Montagu at the wheel, with Lady Belinda Montagu on the 1974 Blue Mountains Rally. Co-driver Martin McCarthy is in the rear seat behind Lord Montagu.)





# THE THREE AUSTRALIAN UNDERSLUNG LONDON-EDINBURGH ROLLS-ROYCE CARS. PART III, CHASSIS 1958.

BY IAN IRWIN (ACT)



**above:** The car as many members will recall it, in the 1950s to the 1980s. Affectionately (but incorrectly) known as The Alpine, the car did many thousands of miles on rallies when owned in this period by George Green. (Photo: Origin unknown.)

**below top:** The car was sold from the George Green estate to Frank Illich who removed the entire coachwork, and built this replica body. Photo taken at the F. Illich auction, Dec. 1984. (Photo: Jim Weir.)

**below bottom:** In the ownership of Jim Weir, the body was modified to bring it closer to the original concept. In the mid-1980s, 1958 encountered a new experience in the alpine country of the Snowy Mountains of NSW. (Photo: Jim Weir.)

miles. For most of its life with Green, it was known as 'The Alpine', listed in club records as Chassis 1972, with coachwork by Vanden Plas. In an era when a car's history was none too important, it was of little significance that 1958 did not comply with any of those criteria. Green maintained the cars regardless of expense, and generously loaned 1958 to others to drive. In 1970, it was loaned to Terry Cook to drive on the FIVA International Rally from Sydney to Melbourne.

In 1974, Lord Montagu of Beaulieu drove the car on the Blue Mountains Rally, with Martin McCarthy as co-driver

and navigator. In 1978 it was loaned to Laurie Ogle, a well-known 30/98 Vauxhall exponent, to participate in a two-week rally, and Laurie later recalled 'my most vivid recollection of this fine old vehicle was its enormous 'long legs'. It was an incredibly fast car for its era.' In 1978, it was Grahame Wilkinson of Queensland (owner of Chassis 2242) who was loaned the car to drive on the Sydney-Brisbane FIVA International Rally.

When George Green had acquired the 1911 car, Chassis 1749, soon to be restored with Balloon Car coachwork, that car carried the plate (NSW) RR.408. This plate was promptly transferred to the mobile 1958. The car was probably one of the most photographed in the movement, as it attended many club events and displays, and enthusiasts with long memories reminisce today with great respect for the car and its wonderful performance.

George Green passed away suddenly, in 1983, and the wonderful collection later went under the hammer. This car, however, was negotiated privately, and became the property of Green's business partner, Frank Illich. A re-restoration of the car was soon commenced. The original 1912 Holmes tourer coachwork was removed and a new London-Edinburgh body built, and painted bright red. But in 1984, with the project not quite finished, the car was sold at auction, with the new owners being Jim & Val Weir of Castle Hill, in Sydney's north-west.

In Weir's ownership, 1958 was once again to undergo further restoration, with the body constructed. This body was a joint project completed by Weir in conjunction with Molyneux of the old firm of Diskon and Molneux. This restoration took a further several years, and the finished car, presented in bright yellow emerged to once more take to the road to be rallied. It now carried





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NSW Concessional Registration, with plate 166.

Jim & Val Weir entered the car in the 1988 FIVA Castrol World Rally, and chose to commence from Darwin on the arduous route down from the Northern Territory, to Adelaide, (South Australia), then via Ballarat (Victoria), through southern New South Wales to Canberra. The car was sold and shipped to the UK in 1990.

Back in its country of origin, Chassis 1958 was entrusted by its new owner, The Hon Sir Michael Kadoorie, into the skilled hands of P & A Wood, of Dunmow, Essex who undertook a complete ground-up restoration. A completely new London-Edinburgh body was constructed by Penny, in the style of the car's original coachwork by Holmes of Derby. The completed restoration saw the car initially registered as SV8770, and back on the road within several years. Now, once more it is appropriately carrying the period UK 1912 registration R.8818, and can be seen occasionally at RREC events in the UK.

It is a wonderful tribute to the model, that Chassis 1958 has been on the road for the vast majority of its 105 years, tolerated the handling of many owners and other drivers, and still has its original engine and drive train intact. As a car that created so much public interest for so many years, it is wonderful to know that it continues to be a crowd pleaser, and giving its current owners great pleasure.

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District Heritage Society; Jim and Peter Weir; Andrew Wood of P & A Wood Ltd, (UK); Clarke T. /Neeley, *D. RR & Bentley in the Sunburnt Country* and Supplement; *The Motor*, 6 May, 1913; John Fasal: 'The Best Client of Rolls-Royce, The Maharajah of Patiala' in *The Roycean*, 2010; *Melbourne Punch*, 28 August, 1898, 2 July, 1914, and 12 June 1916; *Argus*, 6 Sept, 1901, & 26 Oct. 1956; *The Age*, 9 June 1922 and 19 Feb, 1927; *Werribee Shire Banner*, 8 March, 1923; *York Motors News*, Jan-Feb, 1949; *Lithgow Mercury*, 16 Jan., 1952; *Australian Motor Sports*, 15 Oct. 1946; *Golden Fleece/ VOCA NSW Blue Mountains Rally Flyer* 1957; *Sports Cars World*, November 1958; Unsourced media article, 'Ancient Rolls Will Take Part'; Margaret and Barrie Gillings, the late George Roberts, Martin McCarthy, The Hon. Sir Michael Kadoorie, P & A Wood Ltd and John Kennedy. Laurie Ogle; Terry McGrath (WA).

above: In 1988, Jim Weir put the car to the test in Australia's harsh interior on the long road from Darwin via Alice Springs to Adelaide, and on to Victoria, and southern NSW into Canberra the National Capital. The occasion was the Australian Bicentennial Castrol World Rally for Veteran and Vintage cars. The writer spent four years planning and coordinating this major international event. (Photo: John Kennedy.)

below: Unparalleled splendour; Chassis 1958, in the ownership of Sir Michael Kadoorie. Sir Michael entrusted the car to P & A Wood who undertook a complete chassis re-restoration to exacting authentic original detail. A completely new body was constructed by Steve Penny of Penny Vintage Carriage Bodies Ltd, Banbury. (Photos: Courtesy of Sir Michael Kadoorie.)



Did you know?

Has the Boudair Car got you curious about the history of the motor home? It's actually rather fascinating. The world's first leisure trailer was built by the Bristol Wagon & Carriage Works in 1880 for Dr. William Gordon Stables, who was a popular author of adventure fiction. Based on American Bible Wagons used by travelling preachers, he named his caravan *The Wanderer* and travelled around the British countryside. His journey is documented in his book *The Gentleman Gypsy*.

In August, 1915 the Conklin family departed Huntington, New York on a cross-country trip in a vehicle christened the 'Gypsy Van'. Custom built by Roland Conklin's Gas-Electric Motor Bus Company for roughing it on the road to San Francisco. Twenty-five feet long and weighing in at eight tons with its own electric generator and a rooftop garden, It caused quite the stir and became the general template for generations of motor homes.

It wasn't the first, that is thought to have been hand built onto an automobile in 1904. It was followed by many tinkers adapting cars and trucks with camping alterations. The first true RV, the Touring Landau built by Pierce-Arrow motor company and introduced the Madison Square Garden auto show in 1910.

Housecars were rebranded motor homes by Raymond Frank who designed and built his first motorhome in 1958 on a Dodge chassis. After been asked by fellow campers to build them one as well, and selling several motorhomes in the next two years, Frank launched Frank Motor Homes in 1961.

In Australia, the earliest known motorhome was built in 1929. It is now in the Goolwa Museum, where it has been partially restored. It is recognized by both the National Museum of Australia and the (Australian) National Motor Museum as being the first motorized caravan in Australia.

Have a look here for some fascinating photos of housecars and motor homes over the years—<https://rvshare.com/blog/motorhome-history/>



#### Upcoming Swap Meets and Shows

Due to Government regulations related to the COVID-19 pandemic currently upcoming swap meets have either been cancelled or postponed to later in the year. I'll update once everything starts opening back up again.

# MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING VETERAN AND VINTAGE CAR CLUB OF AUSTRALIA (ACT) 21 AUGUST 2019

**Meeting Opened:** 7.59pm

Darrell Leemhuis Returning Officer.

Tony Watson Secretary.

Copies of the minutes from the 2018 AGM were published in the August edition of the Club newsletter. Moved: Rick McDonough that these minutes were a true and accurate record of that meeting. Seconded: Nick Nowak.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Darrell reported another successful year for the Club.

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

John presented his audited report of the Club's finances for 2018-19. This report indicated that the Club is in a sound financial position and no increase in annual subscriptions is warranted. The meeting agreed that in lieu of payment to the auditor a donation of \$100 should be made to the Prostate Council of the ACT.

Moved John Cadona that this report be accepted – Seconded: Gerard Frawley.

## **ELECTION OF COMMITTEE**

Darrell declared all Committee positions vacant and asked members for nominations:

**President: Darrell Lemhuis** - Nominated: Rick McDonough Seconded: John Cadona. All in favour.

**Secretary: Nick Nowak** - Nominated: Tony Watson Seconded: Bob Courtney. All in favour.

**Membership Secretary: Carol Nowak** - Nominated: Darrell Leemhuis Seconded: Nick Nowak. All in favour.

**Treasurer: John Cadona** - Nominated: Darrell Leemhuis: Seconded: Tony Watson. All in favour.

**Vice President: Chris Hogan** (last outgoing President).

**Editor: Mathew Spackman** - Nominated: Rick McDonough Seconded: Roy Bendall. All in favour.

**Events Director:** No nomination received. The meeting agreed that the current events roster arrangement should continue in 2019-20.

**Meeting Activities: Rob Wooley** - Nominated: Nick Nowak Seconded: Tony Watson. All in favour.

**Inspection Officers: Rob Woolley, Barry Roberts, Robert McGuire, Nick Nowak and Roger Gottlob** (fixed



<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING</b> <b>VETERAN AND VINTAGE CAR CLUB OF AUSTRALIA (ACT)</b> <b>21 AUGUST 2019</b></p>
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**Librarians: Roy Bendall and Greg Spackman** - Nominated: Gerard Frawley: Seconded: Darrell Leemhuis. All in favour.

**Public Officer: Beth Woolley** - Beth was not present but had previously indicated that she was prepared to remain as the Club's Public Officer. Nominated: Tony Watson Seconded: Darrell Leemhuis. All in favour.

**Council Delegate: Chris Hogan** - Nominated: Darrell Leemhuis. Seconded: Tony Watson. All in favour. The President is automatically appointed as a Council Delegate.

**GENERAL BUSINESS:**

- Darrell agreed to take responsibility for opening the meeting room each month.
- The meeting discussed John's undertaking to garage the Council's pie cart.

**CLOSE**

The Annual General Meeting closed at 8.18pm.

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