

May 2023



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Journal of the Veteran Car Club of Australia (NSW) Inc.

All letters, advertisements, articles are to be sent to "The Editor of Spit & Polish" preferably by **email:** editor@vccansw.org or by **mail:** 45 Acacia Road, Kirrawee NSW 2232. Articles are to be received by the FIRST WEDNESDAY of the month.

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### ON THE COVER:

The late Kevin Spackman and his wife Narelle in their 1911 Model T Ford



# **Club Information**

## Club Management and Contact Details

#### OFFICE BEARERS

President Vice President Secretary Treasurer	Phil O'Loan Graeme Newman Peter Martin Louise Yeomans Geoff Yeomans	0439 223 031 0412 138 063 02 4657 2994 0488 082 611 02 9884 9314	president@vccansw.org vicepresident@vccansw.org vicepresident2@vccansw.org secretary@vccansw.org treasurer@vccansw.org
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## Minutes

Minutes of Monthly Club Meeting held on 27 April 2023. Conducted at the hall and by Zoom.

#### ATTENDANCE

Committee: 7 Members 20 Member's family: 2 Total at hall (18) and total on zoom (10): 28

#### **MEETING OPENED AT 8:00PM**

One minute's silence was observed to remember two members, Kevin Spackman and Roger Allan Foy, who died during the last month.

**APOLOGIES:** John Grant, Lynette Martin, Harriette Martin, Peter Martin, Susan Martin, Norm and Inez Mitchell.

#### PRESIDENT'S OPENING REMARKS

The President, Phil O'Loan, welcomed members to the meeting.

Vale Kevin Spackman and Allan Foy OAM

Graeme Newman spoke eloquently about Kevin Spackman. The funeral for Kevin John Spackman (#1026) was held in Canberra and members commented that it was a lovely service and farewell. Kevin was the son-in-law of Betty Cherry. The Canberra club had three cars in attendance. Kevin began his working life as a green keeper, and later owned a service station with David Cherry and finished up working at Sanitarium. Kevin owned, loved and drove a 1911 Model T Ford and was well known at national rallies. Perhaps Kevin was better known for his whacky dress sense – he loved destination T shirts and whacky hats. His favourite story was how his model T made the fastest time on a Speedway in Queensland. In 2020 Kevin entered hospital for what was described as a standard operation but the operation and rehab didn't go well for Kevin. He will be sadly missed by his family, friends and club members. The President thanked Graeme for his remarks about Kevin.

The President paid his respects to Allan Foy and recalled Allan's contribution to heritage motoring, especially veteran vehicles.

Roger Allan Foy OAM (# 105) died on 13 April. Allan joined the club on 25 June 1958 and before his death held the longest continuous membership of the club. Allan made a wonderful contribution to the club as events co-ordinator, member of the Dating Committee, secretary and President (1970-1973). He was part of the committee which purchased the property in Queens Road, led the formation of The Council of Veteran, Vintage and Thoroughbred Motor Clubs and was its president from 1973-1974. In 1974 the club recognised Allan's dedication to the club with honorary life membership. During this time Allan was custodian for George Green of a 1908 Reo and later 1913 Prince Henry Vauxhall. He worked for BMC and was part of the design team for P76. On retirement Allan worked every Tuesday at Fagan Park helping to restore vehicles and machinery. Allan maintained an active interest in the club donating slides, articles and coming to a meeting, when possible, to regale us with stories of the early

#### May 2023

days of the club. A memorial service will be held at a later date for Allan. Our love and sympathy to Leah and their family.

#### MINUTES PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes arising from the minutes: Nil Proposer: Barry Shinfield Seconder: Robert Fordham

#### INWARDS CORRESPONDENCE

National Trust - receipt of application for Butler Bequest for high wheeler rally and acknowledgement of the evaluation of the Premier Rally HCCA International Rally newsletter Small Torque Vintage Sports Car Club Minutes Newcastle Branch Fire Service report Request from VCCA(Q) for 1978 International Rally film footage David Norton - renewed Goggle domain name for the club email addresses Receipt of letter from Gunnedah Shire Council OUTWARDS CORRESPONDENCE Pre-membership to Ian Brenner National Trust – evaluation of Premier Rally National Trust application for Butler Bequest for High Wheeler Rally Letter to Gunnedah Shire Council for sponsorship of High Wheeler Rally Letters to Australian Railway Historical Society - thank you for hosting visit Flowers to Spackman family Proposer: David McCredie Seconder: Graham Weekes

#### TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer's report was tabled. Balances are:

Moved: Graeme Newman Seconded: Les Johnson

#### MAGAZINE

Lauren apologised for the lateness of S&P. It was posted today. The President added that the printer

had dropped the ball and the club is looking at alternatives.

#### EVENTS

PAST EVENTS

16-19 March RACV 1- & 2-cylinder Rally Cobram

20-22 March 125th Anniversary Renault Rally: Robert Fordham attended both rallies. There were 69 entrants but not all came. One day had a long run of 160kms to Shepperton. Another day, the rally visited Tocumwal with an interesting new museum at the airport. It was well organised and relaxed. The first Renault made with a De Dion motor and bicycle tyres was there. One day Robert was overtaken by an AX Renault travelling very fast. He noticed the wheels were wobbling but couldn't catch the car! Another 30 km on and back at the start, the Renault was found to have only 3 of its 6 bolts in the wheel. Renault is the second longest company to have been producing vehicles continuously only surpassed by Peugeot.

24 March and 21April - Northern MaSH Coffee Run: Neil Martin enjoyed both outings.

26 March – Visit to Ron Hattersley's home: Barry Shinfield enjoyed the visit. Ron's home is like a museum. It's a 4-storey house with lots of steps to keep Ron fit and with a view over the Spit. Ron issued an invitation to members to come and visit. Contact Ron if you are interested.

1 April – visit to Luskintyre Aerodrome: It was a better weather so the planes were flying.

2 April - Northern Sydney Breakfast Run to Berowra Waters: Only one veteran (David McCredie drove his Maxwell) came as it was pouring rain. Good number of people for a delicious morning tea.

#### COMING EVENTS

4-7 May - Pre-31-Event Cowra. See club website for entry

21 May - National Motoring Heritage Day - Newcastle Branch have organised an event but otherwise take your veteran out for a drive!

4 June - Northern Sydney Breakfast Run - Mangrove Mountain. Details to come

9-12 June CHMC Rally – Wagga Wagga. See http://heritagemotoringcouncil.org.au/ for entry forms 16-18 June - Newcastle Branch Singleton Rally. See website and S&P for entry form.

20 August - Shannons Sydney Classic at Eastern Creek - see Graeme if you would like a ticket. Garry Canton and Phil O'Loan are interested.

#### 2024 Premier Rally

Rod Holmes and Laurie McGrath zoomed in from Inverell. They had visited the Transport Museum at Inverell which was keen. Dates would be 11-14 April 2024. They are looking at some daily runs of about 60-80 kms. With perhaps a longer day of 120 kms. Rod asked for suggestions and requests. As it's the 70th year of the club let's make it a special rally!

#### Possible Event

Mal Garthon and Ian Shinfield attended a Fun Drive at Ansel Park owned by the Fiat Car Club. The event was organised by the VSCCA and the Alvis Car Club as a gymkhana. The 8 events were more suited to veteran cars. As its private land, younger and less experienced drives of veteran cars can have a go. The Fiat Car Club is happy to hire out the grounds. The Club is willing to run its own event but it would need reasonable attendance. Let Graeme Newman or a committee member know if you are interested in participating in such an event.

#### May 2023

#### LIBRARY

Jenny Fawbert and I visited the Australian Railway Historical Society and leant how it manages it collection and archives. Jenny commented on the size of the archives. A team is involved in scanning documents. The archive has state-of-the art fire protection. To boost finances the ARHS runs a coffee shop, publishes books and produces two magazines which are available for sale.

#### DATING

The President presented Graham Weekes with a dating certificate for his Buick model F be dated 1908. John Burke thanked Neil Martin for carrying out the physical inspection of the car and Graham for the photographs etc., and is looking forward to seeing the car finished and being used. Graham is hoping to start the car soon.



#### PERMIT TO MOVE/REGISTRATION

There have been three registrations – Brad Grant for the 1911 Empire, Andrew Benoit for the 1911 Panhard et Levassor and 1912 Buick for Graham Weekes.

**MEMBERSHIP** Ian Brenner was voted into the club unanimously. The President congratulated Ian and welcomed him to the club.

HALL Robert has sprayed and baited for an infestation of cockroaches.

#### СНМС

Jenny Fawbert reported that the CHMC is running some workshops on registration across the state – Ballina, Cooma and Armidale. Details are on the Bush Council website. The workshops are open to club registrars and anyone who is interested. Entries for Wagga close on 1 May and in 2024 the annual rally will be at Parkes over Easter.

**CMC** No report was lodged. The President asked for a volunteer as our club is one of its foundation members.

**WEBSITE** Abbey is scanning some older issues of S&P and will load onto the website. More Vehicle Profiles were requested.

#### **GENERAL BUSINESS**

#### 1. Update on Club Rules (Andrea Holden)

Andrea outlined the main changes to the new constitution and the timeline for implementing the new constitution. She pointed out that the new constitution has been updated to follow the Model Constitution from the Department of Fair Trading. The sub-committee has left the proposed membership changes on pause. These are the main changes from the Powerpoint presented by Andrea.

#### 1. Fees

- a. The cost of the membership fees has been removed.
- b. The Constitution now just references the by-laws, which can be changed at a general meeting.
- c. The period to pay your fees for your membership has been adjusted from 6 months to 3 months

#### 2. Committee Members

- a. Of the 5 committee members which are not office bearers, these can be either associate or ordinary members of the club.
- b. Office bearers can only be ordinary members.

#### 3. Use of technology at meetings

- a. Electronic communication can be used to constitute a quorum at general and committee meetings.
- b. Members who vote online are taken to have voted in person.

#### 4. Proxy voting

- a. The proposal is to remove proxy voting from the constitution.
- b. Instead, electronic and postal voting will be used, which is in line with Fair Trading's guidelines.

#### 5. Quorum for a general meeting

The number of members for a quorum at general meetings has been changed from 20 to 15.

#### 6. Special general meeting

If an issue arises within the association:

A submission must be made in writing to the committee outlining the issue.

The committee must take into consideration any submissions made by the member(s) in connection with the issue within two committee meetings or a mutually acceptable timeframe.

If the committee fails to resolve the issue, then the committee must, on the requisition in writing of at least 5% of the total number of ordinary members, convene a special general meeting of the association.

#### Feedback:

Members at the meeting were invited to comment on the changes.

There will be another constitution discussing at the next club meeting in June (25 June), so please bring any discussion points to this meeting. If you do have any feedback before then that you would like the committee to discuss at the next committee meeting, please email this feedback to the secretary.

**Special thank-you** Garry Canton thanked Jenny Fawbert for her help with a new purchase, 1919 Dodge. She provided some background information within 30 minutes of speaking with her.

It was agreed by all that Jenny is amazing!

**Apologies** Phil O'Loan apologised in advance for missing the next meeting. He will be in Hong Kong looking after his grandchildren. He hopes to be able to join the meeting by zoom. In Phil's place, Graeme Newman will chair the meeting.

MEETING CLOSED AT 8:40pm The raffle was drawn.

Phil O'Loan	Louise Yeomans
President	Secretary

# **President's Report**

By Phil O'Loan

The proposed Constitutional draft has now been completed. Andrea, in the April club meeting, outlined the main changes to the new constitution and the timeline for implementing the new Constitution. She pointed out that the new Constitution has been updated to follow the Model Constitution prepared by Department of Fair Trading. As stated previously, the sub-committee has left the proposed membership changes on pause, as not to delay the implementation of the new Constitution.

These are the main changes from the PowerPoint presented by Andrea.

#### 1. Fees

- a. The cost of the membership fees has been removed.
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If the committee fails to resolve the issue, then the committee must, on the requisition in writing of at

least 5% of the total number of ordinary members, convene a special general meeting of the association.

#### Feedback:

The proposed Constitutional draft has been sent out to members via email and posted to the 12 members without emails. Members were invited to comment on the changes with feedback back to the Secretary by email or in writing. There will be another Constitution discussion at the next club meeting and we welcome your feedback.

Legal advice is being considered to review the changes from the Model Constitution presented by the Department of Fair Trading. However, this may not be necessary as the changes proposed follow the Model reasonably closely. Ideally, the revised Constitution will be ready for voting on at this year's Annual General Meeting.

On a personal note, Terri and I will be travelling to Hong Kong to babysit the grandkids (no hardship) on the 22nd of May for two weeks. Unfortunately I will not be able to attend in person the club meeting in May, however I may be able to participate via video conference. Graeme Newman will be chairing this meeting on my behalf.

Happy Motoring.

## **Editor's Report**

### By Lauren Newman

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the magazine this month. It is a fairly full magazine this month, with some particularly lovely words written about two of our members, Kevin Spackman and Allan Foy who sadly passed away last month.

Jenny Fawbert has once come to the rescue with Part 4 to her *Sidelights* series, and Part 5 is already in my inbox so that will be coming up in the next few magazines. Peter Martin has been busy in the shed again and has been lucky enough to have witnessed the recent London to Brighton Event - something we would all like to witness in person I'm sure. So thank you Peter for you contibutions this month! The Adams family have also been busy in the workshop with the completion of their 1914 Fiat Zero, which is excellent to see - thank you Neil for your article.

As usual, more articles would be welcomed. It excellent to have people writing about the projects they're working on at the moment, so if you've got some activity happening in your shed, don't hesitate to write about it!

## **Remembering Kevin Spackman**

## 26 April 1957-6 April 2023. By Mathew Spackman

Kevin Spackman was born 26th April 1957 in Young, NSW. While Kevin was only a fairly recent member of our club after moving back to Canberra with his wife Narelle after ill health, Kevin has been involved in cars and motorcycles for quite some time.

Kevin grew up in Wallanbeen, NSW, before moving to Young township in 1969 where he attended primary school and started high school. In 1971 Kevin and his family moved to Canberra where he attended Stirling High School.

As a teenager, Kevin worked several part time jobs including delivering newspapers and furniture removal. He then completed a greenkeeper apprenticeship with the Federal Golf Club where he would later become an Assistant Greenkeeper. In 1976 Kevin visited Sydney with one of his mates, where he



met Narelle, and then in 1980 married in Eastwood, NSW. They bought their first house in Kambah in 1980, and in 1984 welcomed their first child Mathew, and in 1986 their first daughter Alana.

Alana barely had a chance to see her Canberra home, before the family so far packed up and moved to the Central Coast where they would spend the next 35 years. They moved so Kevin could make a career change, leaving Greenkeeping to work for Narelle's

uncle in the service station business. Kevin built the family home on the Central Coast, and in 1989, their second daughter Marnie was born. Kevin would go on to have a successful career in the service station business, becoming an owner operator himself.

In later years, it was beneficial to sell up the service station and seek new opportunities, so Kevin went to work for Albany International manufacturing advanced textile products. After many years at Albany, their Australian division closure saw him move to Sanitarium Health Foods. He worked at Sanitarium for the rest of his career before having to retire for medical reasons.

Kevin always had a passion for vehicles. In fact, if he was asked a question about pretty much any sport, his reply would be "Not interested if it does not have a motor". His interest started with motorcycles, but extended to cars, boats, planes, you name it, but it had to have a motor. In his early days it was just trail bikes but after meeting Narelle and going on a 1978 Veteran Car Rally he said to his father-in-law (a member of our club back in the late 60's), "I would love to own a vintage motorcycle" who replied, "there is nothing stopping you". Well, that was the wrong answer! Kevin went on to own 13 vintage motorcycles in his collection. Later in life as his family grew up and he had more time he would also fall

in love with veteran cars. He spent many days learning things from his father-in-law and ended up owning several veteran and vintage cars of his own. His favourite was his 1911 Model T Ford.

Over the years Kevin has been involved in many clubs including Veteran Vintage and Classic Motorcycle Club of ACT, Central Coast Classic Motor Cycle Club, Veteran Car Club of Australia (NSW), Central Coast Historic Car Club, Central Coast Leagues Vintage Drivers Club, and most recently the Veteran and Vintage Car Club of Australia ACT. Throughout the years he has attended many rallies, including many National Veteran and National Model T Ford. Kevin's passion of cars and motorcycles lives on through his family, with his wife, son, brother, and sister -in-law, all members of the Veteran and Vintage Car Club of Australia ACT, and brother-in-law and mother-in-law both members of the Veteran Car Club of Australia (NSW).

## **Remembering Allan Foy**

## Roger Allan Foy OAM. 4 May 1930-13 April 2023. By Louise Yeomans.

Known as Allan to VCCA(NSW) members, Allan was a past president and honorary life member of the club.

Roger Allan Foy OAM (# 105) died on 13 April 2023. Prior to his death Allan was the longest standing member of the club, joining the club on 25 June 1958. Allan made a wonderful contribution to the club as events co-ordinator, member of the Dating Committee, secretary and President (1970-1973). He was part of the committee which purchased the property in Queens Road, led the formation of The Council of Veteran, Vintage and Thoroughbred Motor Clubs(now CMC) and was its president from 1973-1974. In 1974 the VCCA recognised Allan dedication to the club with honorary life membership. During this time



Allan was custodian for George Green of 1908 Reo and later 1913 Prince Henry Vauxhall. He worked for BMC and was part of the design team for P76. On retirement Allan worked every Tuesday at Fagan



Park helping to restore vehicles and machinery. Allan maintained an active interest in the club donating slides, articles and coming to a meeting, when possible, to regale us with stories of the early days of the club.

Allan was always a gentleman and will continue to be greatly respected for his generosity and willingness to share his expertise. Our love and sympathy to Allan's wife of 65 years, Leah, his children Lorrae and Graham and families.

## **Events Calendar**

## Club Events

### MAY

Sunday 21st	National Motoring Heritage Day
Thursday 25th	Monthly Club Meeting - 134 Queens Road, Canada Bay. 8:00pm
Friday 26th	Northern MASH Coffee Run - Meet at 10:30am at Curry Reserve Elderslie.
	Contact Bill or Robyn Betts for details.

### JUNE

Sunday 4th	Northern Sydney Breakfast Run to Mangrove Mountain
Friday 9th	Southern MaSH Coffee Run - Meet at 10:30am at Winifred West Park.
	Contact Bill or Robyn Betts for details.
Saturday 10th-12th	CHMC (Bush Council) Rally - Wagga Wagga, NSW. Entry form and details
	on the CHMC website. Contact: Jenny Fawbert
Tuesday 13th	Newcastle Branch Meeting - 78 Main Road, Boolaroo. 7:30pm
Friday 16th-18th	Newcastle Branch Singleton Rally. Entry form in March Spit and Polish.
	Contact: John Burke
Thursday 22nd	Monthly Club Meeting - 134 Queens Road, Canada Bay. 8:00pm
Friday 23rd	Northern MASH Coffee Run - Meet at 10:30am at Curry Reserve Elderslie.
	Contact Bill or Robyn Betts for details.

## JULY

Friday 14th	Southern MaSH Coffee Run - Meet at 10:30am at Winifred West Park.
	Contact Bill or Robyn Betts for details.
Saturday 15th	Christmas in July - see page 13 for details
Tuesday 18th	Newcastle Branch Meeting - 78 Main Road, Boolaroo. 7:30pm
Thursday 27th	Monthly Club Meeting - 134 Queens Road, Canada Bay. 8:00pm
Friday 28th	Northern MASH Coffee Run - Meet at 10:30am at Curry Reserve Elderslie.
	Contact Bill or Robyn Betts for details.

## Major Events

### AUGUST

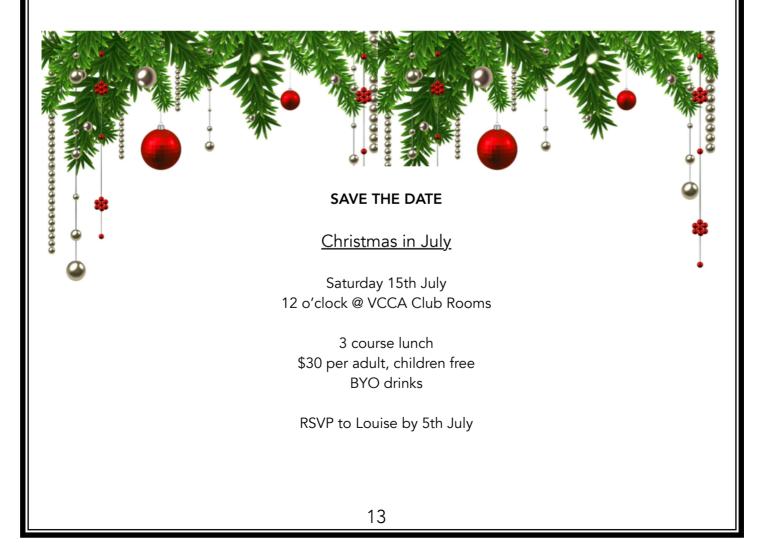
Sunday 20th	Shannons Sydney Classic hosted by the CMC at Sydney Motorsport Park
	from 8:30am to 3pm - a ticket will be required. Further details to follow

## SEPTEMBER

Friday 8th-10th**5th Annual Pre '05 Pioneers Run** - Forbes, NSW. First Newsletteron page 24. Contact: John Fryirs or Russell Holden

### OCTOBER

Monday 2nd-8th	National Rally - Griffith, NSW. Details are both on our website and the
	Veteran and Vintage Car Club of Australia - A.C.T website.
Sunday 15th	Sydney Tramway Museum Display - We have been invited to an event at
	the Sydney Tramway Museum, at Loftus on to display our cars. More
	information to come.
Sunday 22nd-28th	16th Highwheeler Rally - Gunnedah, NSW. First Newsletter circulated in
	Friday Fact and Fiction. Contact: Rob Duffy



# 2022 London to Brighton

### 6th November 2022. By Peter Martin

London on an early November morning is generally dark and cold, as it was this past Sunday the 6th, I had been up for two hours, and it was

still only 6am. Saturday the 5th is Guy Fawkes night, and I had stayed up late to soak in the atmosphere near where I was staying around Tower Bridge, with the people milling around and the fireworks it was a real party atmosphere. So, at 4am I was feeling the night before! I made my way down to Tower Bridge Tube station only 50 metres from my hotel to be greeted by a sign informing me that the trains would not be running until 7am! What to do? I headed back to the hotel and the taxi rank at the front door and caught a cab.

I was making my way to Hyde Park to witness, for the second time lucky me, and for a veteran car tragic, the spine-chilling spectacle of nearly four hundred pre-1905 cars making their ungainly entrance through the Alexandra gate and along the Serpentine to their staging place to make ready for the slow but stately procession to Brighton.



I had expected a slight foggy mist to be hanging in the air as the night before was clear and bright however the heavens had opened at around 5.30 and it was raining in an almost biblical way as I reached the starting point at Hyde Park gate.



The orange glow of candle lamps could be seen and the unmistakable subdued roar of a Bunsen burner heating a platinum tube as the really early starters made ready for the off.

I was asked in June if I would consider delivering a keynote address to a health care forum in London in early November, my mind instantly turned to the London to Brighton knowing that the first Sunday in November was the key day. I had my doubts that I would be able to go but made my request to my director at work to which

his reply was "why wouldn't you go, what a great opportunity", so with an agreement in hand I accepted, then asked the organisers if I could stay for an additional week at my cost to do some sight-seeing etc, I was with a group of eleven from Australia and most had organised trips here and there to



visit the many historic sights. That Sunday we had planned to go to Hampton Court Palace, so I had the start and the bit of the run through London to see before I was off again and of course the concourse held just off the Mall near the Royal Automobile Clubs building the day before, which luckily was reasonably dry and was well represented by the most interesting early cars.

So, here I was in the pouring rain standing at the start of, without doubt the greatest motoring event a veteran car enthusiast could witness. Sue and I had participated in the run in 2004 where we were invited

to accompany the late John Hughes as his passengers, on that occasion we were on board an 1896

Daimler he had been loaned by the Ward brothers Daniel and Toby, what an experience that was! therefore I wasn't too worried that I could only see the start.

Right on the dot at 6am the starter tore the red flag in half and flagged the two remaining 1903 Gordon Bennet Trophy Napier racing cars off to begin the run down to Brighton. From that point on and for a solid hour there was a non-stop parade of cars through the start gate, and for that whole time the rain persisted.



I streamed the whole thing live to my television set

at home in Australia via my mobile phone on MS Teams and in 4K hi definition to the unlucky few that couldn't be there with me. It was a bit like old home week during the two days I caught-up with Tracey



Rickets-Lecher and her husband Jeff, Tracey is the editor of the Horseless Carriage Gazette whom we'd previously met when she was in Australia for the HCCA run that Russell Holden ran in Bathurst. I also caught up with Stuart, Haf and Manon Griffin who own an IHC buggy the same as ours and are regular attendees on the Highwheeler rallies. Stuart is originally from Adelaide but is now based in Wales as an Orthopaedic surgeon, due to the pandemic they have not been able to get to the last couple of runs so seeing them was a bonus. As a matter of fact, when I got to the start and had set my television studio up Stuart tapped me on the shoulder, and we spent the next hour luxuriating in veteran-ness in the pouring rain.

The whole thing just sort of ends for those watching from the sidelines, and as the last car passed the start gate the pack-up crews were pulling the temporary fencing down and the crowd just vanishes, what sun there was destined to be that day struggled to break through and I walked back to Hyde Park tube station caught the train back to Tower Hill walked to my hotel had a warming shower then lay down in bed for an hour or so to warm up.

## 1914 Fiat Zero

### By Neil Adams

Around April 2018 we received a call from an old family friend, Ross Moffatt, who had lived in Japan for many years, wanting to sell his family's veteran cars as his late mother Audrey was moving to aged care and his father Don had passed away a number of years prior. We knew that Don had a late teen Studebaker Light 6 very similar to the one our grandparents George and Beatrice rallied for many years, and a Metz friction drive from around 1913-14. A deal was done on the basis that we buy the cars and also clear the garage and carport, that way we could sift through the mountain of "stuff" to ensure we didn't miss any parts.

To say there was a mountain of stuff was an understatement. Don was a collector of all sorts of things and there was a large skip of rubbish to go. While moving an old tub we unearthed a 4 cylinder engine with Fiat cast on the water manifold, which actually turned over, and with a bit more digging and we came across a fuel tank with a Fiat cap and the remains of a wooden roadster body. After we towed the Metz, Studebaker and another 1921 Studebaker out, there was room to what was actually hidden in amongst the mountain of stuff.



What we had uncovered was a Tipo 51A or Model Zero, made from 1912-1915, approx. 1.8litre, marketed as 12-15hp. This car being a 1914, the Italians stamped date of manufacture in a number of places, most noticeably the top rear of the diff.

It looked like the car was mechanically complete, chassis front and rear end and there were bottles of small parts where Don had dismantled the car mostly with labels. The engine was a different story, the one we had found outside was actually a Type 1 which is very similar. The Zero engine was fully dismantled, the crank and pistons were laying on the ground, the block was on the other side of the garage with the gearbox and sump (the sump and gearbox are one casting).



After it was all collected and back at the workshop and roughly assembled, the conclusion was it was all there with the exception of the radiator. Don had found and bought the car at a Bendigo swap meet back in the early 1980's where he and Dad brought it home in the Betco Truck. Apparently there was no radiator with the car.

We initially made the decision to mechanically rebuild the motor to make sure we kept all the parts together... which then became mechanically restore the car... which ended up becoming fully restore the car.

The pistons were quite worn and needed to be replaced as well as the block needing a rebore, the crank shaft, cam shaft and valves were in good condition. The original Fiat carburetor and Bosh magneto were useable after some refurbishing and before long we had a running engine.

The gearbox was next to be rebuilt, the gears all in surprisingly good condition. The diff was a bit of a challenge, particularly how to dismantle it. Although they are basically 2 halves with bolts all the way around, there was a definite disassembly/assembly procedure that had us all pulling our hair out. The crown wheel and pinion were in very good condition and it appeared that the car had probably not done a lot of hard work.

After a number of false starts and failed leads for a radiator, Norm Mitchell let me know that a gent from Mittagong had a Zero radiator as a wall hanger... but he didn't have a car. Unfortunately the chap was unwilling to part with it as he liked the brass radiator. Money, plus the offer of another radiator, even another Fiat radiator, wouldn't sway him. We eventually gave up and located one in New Zealand months later and just as we were getting organised to buy it, Norm called to say unfortunately the old chap had passed, but fortunately for us his wife wanted to get rid of the radiator. A deal was done, and the radiator, in very nice condition, was finally ours.

With the car a running chassis it was time for the "billy cart" test (drive around the back yard with a milk

#### May 2023

crate as a seat). The little car was very civilised, ran nicely and was quite powerful. Obviously when the body was completed and fixed the weight increased and the performance dampened a bit.

The body was very original and in relatively good condition and we wanted to use as much of the original wood and steel panels as we could. In the end around 50% of the timber work is original as some had succumbed to dry rot. The rear/boot had been cut off and the car made into a farm ute which often happened. The metal panels were in better condition and while some of the lower parts of the scuttle and rear tub needed metal replaced, the guards, bonnet, doors were good. An acquaintance in the UK was kind enough take some pictures of a Zero at the UK Natonal Motor Museum in Beaulieu which has a very similar model car to help us work out what the rear of the car should look like. John Taylor, a family friend and a Fiat man (he had a Vintage 501), helped with much of the coach building work.

A lot of time was spent getting it put together, but the whole team (Stu, Chris, Dave, Pete and JT) all agreed that is a very attractive car, respectfully and properly restored. Regretably JT passed away



before the car was completed and he didn't get to see it 100% finished.

My Mum Neryl and I took "Maria" as we call her, on her first proper outing up to Bolwarra Heights and on to Alan Dunlop's at Vacy for lunch. She is comfortable and easy to drive and performed well without incident (we lost a head light locking pin and used a stick then a split pin to hold it shut, but that doesn't really count).

It certainly has been a learning curve restoring a car from scratch but it was very enjoyable and rewarding. There are quite a few things we would do differently next time, which is good as we have a few other projects underway... but they are stories for the future.

## Sidelights #4

By Jenny Fawbert

#### FIAT Motor vehicle accident 1911.

This accident involved a 20-25h.p. FIAT motor car, registration number 16, at the intersection of Jeffcott and Ward Streets, North Adelaide, at about 7.00pm on

13 April 1911.

Driven by its owner, Charles Gilbert, the car was hired by Sylvia Maurer, Evelyn Aborn and Vi Martin from the Gay Gordons Theatre Company, and was returning from the Outer Harbor when it crashed into a trench at the intersection.

In June 1911 Miss Aborn, who suffered the most severe injuries, sued F.A. McCarty & Co., for failing to adequately light the trench. She was awarded £450.

The unfortunate Mr Gilbert seems to have had a number of accidents befall his vehicles including colliding with a bull, a dog, and later a cyclist – all incidents resulting in court cases. And in 1914 his car, while stationary, caught alight.



Original images held by State Library of South Australia https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+39395 https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+39396



Original image State Library of Victoria http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/24327

## **THE BENZ MOTOR AGENCY** 103-105 Exhibition Street, Melbourne.

The Benz Motor Agency was initially operated out of Scheps Bros. Garage, 118-124 Toorak Road, South Yarra, and owned by August Hoette, who was also a competitive driver in his pre-WW1 Benz's. Hoette came to Australia in 1901, securing the Benz agency in 1907. In 1914 the Agency moved into these impressive buildings. Hoette was involved in many areas of the automotive industry, notably as Managing Director of Robert Bosch Australia. He also founded Pyrox, the spark plug and auto electrical equipment company.

**SYME'S BENZ** This tourer was owned by George F. Syme of 'The Age' newspaper.

Both photos (*page 20*) possibly taken outside Stevenson Brothers, Motor Body Builders, 406 Punt Road, South Yarra.

The building appears in a photo of a Nazarro Ambulance built by Stevenson's for Syme to donate to

the Red Cross in 1914. The motoring journalist for Punch wrote in 1914 that "One notices some very remarkable looking motor bodies on the streets in these days. Fashions change and vary like the Victorian climate, and each new motorist comes along with some new idea. Messrs. Stevenson Bros., of South Yarra, have been responsible for some very excellent new designs



Benz motor car with roof down owned by George Francis Syme of 'The Age', Melbourne, ca. 1915. Original image held by National Library of Australia https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-148264952/view

of late which make for originality in every way. The Stevensons were trained in motor body building in the early days of the motoring era, and showed originality from the start, and have frequently inspected new creations turned out by this firm, and have always found much to admire in the workmanship and finish. One generally sees something new in the Stevenson work, and special features are continually introduced."

For just a couple of years pre-WW1 G F Syme's Benz's were briefly mentioned in the Melbourne papers. In 1913 his 38-60 Benz performed well in the ACV's hill climb at Wheeler Hill, and at the April 1914 Wildwood hill climb the 60hp Benz was run as a stripped/chassis, driven by George M. McCarey, and



Benz motor car with roof up owned by George Francis Syme of 'The Age', Melbourne, ca. 1915. Original image held by National Library of Australia https://nla.gov.au/tarkine/nla.obj-148172832

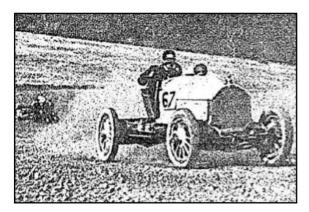
against some classy competition it recorded the fastest times of the day. This press photo shows the Benz, wearing no. 67, competing on that day, note it has artillery wheels.

Syme also entered a 40hp Benz at the same event. His 22-40hp Benz had previously made the fastest time at the December 1913 Wildwood hill climb.

Another photo of a stripped vehicle, bearing rego. number 13631, at speed in a pre-WW1 event – is this the same car as the one titled "Benz motor car with roof up", it is the same registration number? Which leads me to the vehicle these days known as the ex-Erle, ex-Syme Prince Henry 1910 Benz.

The cars called Prince Henrich Benz's (aka Prince Henry or Prince Henri) participated in one of the most significant motor events of the pre-WW1 years, the Prince Henrich Tour, named after Prinz Albrecht

Wilhelm Heinrich of Prussia, a keen motorist and brother of German Emperor Wilhelm II. The Tour in 1908 was won by Fritz Erle in a 50hp Benz, and in the following competitions Benz produced a limited run of Prinz Heinrich models with various engines. For 1910 Benz entered ten special cars with newly designed 4-cylinder engines, four of them of 5.7 litres and six with 7.3 litre engines, built for long distance, fast running over open roads. The cars were distinguished by their aerodynamic profile and their tapered rear end, all tourers they had to be able to carry four. Racing cars were not permitted to



enter, these had to be fast touring cars. The Tour was run as a regularity trial with some speed events over closed roads, Benz entry number 36, driven by Fritz Erle, finished 5th and number 38, driven by Carl Neumaier, finished 11th in the 2,000 kms Prince Heinrich Tour.

Within weeks both cars were competing in the Tsar Nicolas Tour of 3,000 kms in Russia. Number 38 for this event was driven by Benz engineer Fritz Erle, and was fitted with a long-stroke 5.5 litre engine with a bore/stroke ratio of 100

x 175 mm. This engine change in 1910 has resulted in this car being designated as the Type 21/80 Benz.

Subsequently both cars appear in London in 1911, here #36 was bought by wealthy Australian T. A. Craig of Melbourne department store Craig, Williamsons. The car's body was altered to achieve greater speed; however, his driver had a high-speed crash, flying over the banking in it at Brooklands, the car was repaired at Mannheim then shipped to its owner in Australia. G. F. Syme and family sailed to London in March 1911 and it was on this trip he purchased Benz #38. In Australia some alterations were made to the car, including changing its factory artillery wheels (covered by moon discs when raced in Europe for aerodynamics) for Rudge wire wheels.

Despite deep research l've found nothing in the Australian press 1911 to 1993 about a Syme's owned Benz being related to the famous European contests, it appears nothing was made of this in the

contemporary press. There's mention in UK magazines in the 1950 to the 1980s about Bob Chamberlain having the ex-Symes "Prince Henry" Benz car under restoration. The story goes that Chamberlain for a long time before Symes agreed to sell him the car, and that he also had the opportunity to acquire the other 1910 Prince Heinrich Benz in Australia, the Craig car, which he did.

In 1993 press articles briefly reported about the two Benz's when they were part of the Chamberlain Collection auction, which also included the 1904



Car driven on dirt country road with spectators behind wire fence in background, ca. 1915 https://nla.gov.au:443/tarkine/nla.obj- 148269206

Gordon Bennett Napier. The 1910 Benz's unfortunately, for Australia, slipped past the "protection" of

the Protection of Moveable Cultural Heritage, which to many then and now should have exempted them from export, and they were shipped to new owners overseas.

Both cars seem to have gone into storage till cooperation between the owner of the Erle/Craig, #36 Prince Heinrich, the Louwman Museum, and Mercedes-Benz Classic, owner of the ex- Symes #38, saw them undertake impeccable restorations, returning both cars to their 1910 appearance. The restored cars were revealed at Retromobile 2013 in Paris.

Interestingly overseas articles say Louwman's bought two dismantled/derelict cars from the Chamberlain Collection, whereas the press in 1993 reported, and anecdotally it was said, that both cars were put in running order by Chamberlain and the Syme car not only driveable but rather more respectable than *dismantled/derelict!* 

Little appears online about the Syme Benz until it appeared at Retromobile when it was described thus: "The museums of Mercedes- Benz and Louwman have ...... focused on the challenging restoration of two 1910 Prince Henry Trials Benz team cars. Discovered dismantled and in a poor state in



Une Mercedes-Benz Prince Henry présentée lors du salon retromobile 2013. Thesupermat. Image used under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Paris\_-\_Retromobile\_2013\_-\_\_Mercedes-Benz\_- Prince\_Henry\_-\_1909\_-\_001.jpg

Australia, they are now magnificently restored. The advanced 100mph shaft-driven pair with 'tulip'-style bodywork and 80hp engines will appear in action at the Goodwood Festival of Speed.

Sadly, there seems to be an approach overseas to almost ignore that either of the 1910 Prince Heinrich Benz's had Australian histories, when it in fact they were here for some 80 years, and further, if their Australian "experience" it is in almost negative tones. Had Australians like Bob Chamberlain not saved these cars, they may not even exist today.

## A Veteran Affair - stories from the shed

Part Four - March/April 2023. By Peter Martin



I've not done much in the last couple of months apart from moving things around to make better use of the space in the shed, I have 260 square metres of space that is bulging at the moment, it is time to think about expanding.

Unfortunately, most of the events we're now holding I'm not able to attend due to the timing being either on week days or school days, so I've not been feeling like doing much veteran related. Luckily I have enough projects to keep me going and interested.

#### 1968 Volkswagen Beetle

To that end I'm moving more to the modern cars that we can just jump into and go down for coffee on a Sunday morning.

Harriette announced a couple of years ago that she wanted a VW Beetle as her first car, I happened to know of the



whereabouts of one that was in the hands of a mate of mine, so I did a deal sight unseen, it turns out to be a 1968 car with 26000 miles from new and a 1916cc engine built by a renowned VW race engine



builder, Harriette got it for Christmas, so we christened it the Christmas Beetle. On Boxing Day, Harriette and I rebuilt the two carburettors and we had it running and driving the following day albeit with no brakes.

A full brake rebuild, and a bit of a clean-up and we had it registered and on the road in time for her to go back to school in her own car. I joined the local car club which is based just at the end of my street so I can register all the modern cars on club rego which helps when you have so many to keep on the road.

#### 1907ish General Vehicle Company, (GV Electric).

Only a week ago I received a message from a mate of mine with five photos attached asking "Do you think we should save this" they showed a small electric car chassis, my answer was obvious...yes. It turns out that the fellow that owned it bought it from auction when the Lachlan Vintage Village at Forbes was sold up in the eighties, he took it home to Springwood pulled it apart

and stored it under his house.

As he has now just bought a new camper trailer that needed space he was under instruction from his wife to get rid of it. Multiple railway museums were approached to take it all to no avail, so he started asking around to see if someone would rescue it from Sims metal where it was unfortunately destined to end-up....in steps me.

As it was only up at Springwood I made a quick dash up the mountains loaded it up and brought it home. Looking it over and through all of the boxes that came with it I'm confident that it is probably 99.9% complete mechanically and electrically. All of the controls are there the only thing missing that I can see is the steering wheel which shouldn't be a problem to make.



As I said it was bought from the Lachlan Vintage Village auction, and the story is that it was bought new



by the NSW Government Railways to be used at the new Sydney Central Station which opened in 1906, I've found some chalk scribblings indicating that it was still in use in 1945 so the hunt is on to find more evidence of its previous life. The traction motor is in great condition, I suspect that it was rewound by the railways Electrical Fitters shop as it is varnished in the standard hi-temp Gliplin that all those railway traction motors were done in.

GV Electrics were built by the General Vehicle Company, which was a division of the General Electric Company, they had over 4000 electrics on the road by about 1906-7 mostly if not all commercials so they were quite popular. The traction motor, step controller and rheostat bank are importantly all there. Luckily both Dad and I are

electricians so the drive

component of the restoration shouldn't pose any issues.

It runs via an 84v DC traction motor driving an intermediate shaft via an enclosed morse chain then via side roller chain to the rear wheels. Electrically it has a GE step controller and rheostat bank with 5 forward positions and one reverse, all pretty simple stuff.

Apparently they had a range of about 45-50 miles on each charge, and now that electric car charging stations are becoming more prolific I might add an on-board charger that can take advantage of the modern infrastructure being rolled out.



As it is all there with very little wear on any of the mechanical components that I can see at first glance, it looks like it just needs dissembling sandblast make any minor repairs, paint and reassemble. At this



stage I intend to build a little station hack body on it with room underneath for a bank of batteries.

Hopefully a fairly simple and quick restoration.....famous last words.

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