August 2026

Brass Notes

www.veterancarclub.org.au

The journal of the VETERAN CAR CLUB of AUSTRALIA (Vic.) Inc.



Dementia Prodest

Veteran Car Club of Australia (Victoria) Inc.
Registration Number A0097964Y

Patron: Mr Greg Robinson,
President and Chairman, RACV

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The RACV is the principal sponsor of the Veteran Car Club of Australia (Victoria) Inc.

The RACV supports the:

- RACV 1&2 Cylinder Rally
- RACV Midwinter Rally
- RACV Veteran Car Club Annual Rally
- RACV Four & More Rally
- RACV Pre-1905 Pioneers Run



Photo Accreditation: David Zeunert.

Flashback

By Greg Smith



This month's flashback car is once again a very special vehicle in our Club's history. Coincidentally, two people sent me photographs of the car within days of each other, both asking the same question: where is it now?

The first photograph came from Chester McKaige, and the second from Callum Walsh. I am grateful to both of them for their willingness and enthusiasm in supporting this column.

The two images show the car at different points in time: one painted maroon and the other green. I can say with certainty that they are the same car, photographed during different periods.

Chester's photograph (above) appears to have been taken at an Annual Rally - my guess is around 1961 - in Lansdowne Street, Melbourne, a starting point often used for the Club's early Annual Rallies.

The location of the second photograph (below left) is less certain. It shows the car among other vintage vehicles at what appears to be a public display. By this time, the car was carrying Club permit plate number 059.

As mentioned earlier, this vehicle holds a special place in our Club's history. It was seen regularly in the Club's early rallying years, before disappearing from view for a time.

It later returned to the Club through the efforts of a prolific restorer, who brought it back into our fold and used it on many runs.

I hope members may remember this car and be able to share more about its history, including who owned it over the years and where it might be now. It has not been seen for quite some time, so any details would be greatly appreciated.

Please send any relevant information to the Editor.

Coming Events

11 August 2026	**August Natter Night** Meeting from 8pm - in the Clubrooms or online
21 - 23 August 2026	**The Aussie B40 Rally** Contact: Callum Walsh
8 September 2026	**September Natter Night** Meeting from 8pm - in the Clubrooms or online
25 October 2026	**Combined Clubs Petanque Competition - Clubrooms** Contact: Andrew McDougall
20 - 22 November 2026	**HCCA (SEA) Creepy Crawly Rally - Moss Vale, NSW** Contact: Doug Fulford 0490 721 033
13 December 2026	**VSCC Vic Two Wheel Brake Rally** Contact: Callum Walsh

Major Events

23 - 26 September 2026	**RACV Pre-1905 Pioneers Run - Wentworth, NSW** Contact: Doug Fulford
6 - 8 November 2026	**RACV Annual Rally - Lancefield** Contact: Ben Alcock

National Events

6 - 12 September 2026	**National Veteran Vehicle Rally - Cowra, NSW - ENTRIES HAVE CLOSED** https://www.vccansw.com/cowra



A unique line-up of 7 Model T Fords at the RACV Midwinter Rally at Ocean Grove. See the rally report on page 8.

President's Message

I am putting pen to paper having just arrived home from this year's RACV Midwinter Rally. We are definitely doing something right as, similar to last year's event at Philip Island, we were again blessed with three days of near perfect weather to enjoy the drives and vistas around the Bellarine Peninsula.

Rally Director Callum Walsh, along with his dedicated team of helpers (not the least being his dad, Brendan) did a fantastic job of putting the whole show together and finding some real gems in the local area.

The view that we were presented with at Saturday lunch at Jack Rabbit winery, has to be experienced to be believed. To add icing to the cake, at the same time we all turned up to be placed in the prime parking position, so did a 60th birthday function, who all made a beeline for the impromptu display. If you thought that interest in veteran vehicles from the wider community was diminishing – think again.

Rick Thege and I were participants, and first-time outers, in the recently refurbished ex-Neil Ferguson 1909 Daimler 38hp Roadster. The vehicle has been undergoing an extensive heart transplant for quite some time and is now back on the road and performing better than ever. The blanket of blue exhaust from the sleeve-valve motor is no longer the issue it was; just don't ask about the fuel economy!

By the time you read this, our industrious Club Secretary, Brian Churchill, will have also received a major grease and oil change. The club's thoughts are with Brian for his recovery.

Despite the winter evenings, Natter Night continues to be well supported with attendance up around 35-40 each month, taking into account those tuning in via ZOOM. We continue to send out a reminder to members on the Tuesday of the meeting to ensure that the necessary link is close to the top of your inbox. Consider getting involved if you haven't tried it before and if you need assistance – ask the grandkids.

With the heater turned up a notch,

Daryl Meek,
President VCCA (Victoria)

MEMBERSHIP

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

- Peter & Helen Stone, Merbein, 1916 Buick DX44 Roadster
- Graham & Kerry Hosking, Mt Eliza, Cadillac 1905, Coey Bear 1912, Griffin Zedel 1902 & 1903



Sometimes it's the spectators who make the photo. David Provan and Peter Hawkins look on in disbelief, Jill Hawkins applauds wildly, Lillie Keogh is jumping for joy, while one very proud father has arms raised in triumph. This picture captures the true spirit of the Cold Start Competition.

Editorial

By Greg Smith

In last month's editorial, I mentioned how pleased I was with the response to my request for articles and contributions about nurses in transport during our Veteran era. One particularly fine article caught my attention: the story of a very special vehicle donated to the war effort by a rural community. At the time, I was simply waiting for confirmation from the author that we could share it with our readers.

We were very fortunate to receive approval from David Neely, the author of that article, who is keen for us to present it in our publication. Even better, David has also given us permission to publish two more articles on similar topics in the coming months.

This discovery came about through Doug Fulford's efforts while carrying out his "rally director" duties for the Pre-1905 Pioneers Run at Wentworth. During that work, he came across wonderful photographs of three Overland Ambulances donated to the Australian Army Medical Corps by the Wentworth district. From there, it also emerged that another vehicle had been donated from the same area, and David Neely has written a wonderful account of that story. See page 14 for this fascinating account.

As I said last month, sometimes one thing leads to another and produces an even better outcome. We are extremely thankful for David's generosity, and we look forward to sharing these articles with you. From little things, big things grow.

Having just returned from a fabulous RACV Midwinter Rally - though I still like to call it the Icicle Rally - I feel once again buoyed by our Club's enthusiasm and commitment to enjoying this wonderful hobby. The event was ably run by Callum and Brendan Walsh, who, in my view, are among our finest event directors. Of course, the superb weather certainly did not hurt the cause either.

Once again, I took a little time during the highlight of the Midwinter Rally, the Cold Start Competition - to stand back and observe something that is not always present in many clubs.

There is a genuine bond and harmony within our Club that can be hard to find elsewhere. It was wonderful to see people actively barracking, applauding, laughing, and thoroughly enjoying the antics of both competitors and officials. Maybe the betting had a bearing on this.

To make the moment even better, a much-loved and humble old Ford Model T with my beloved son at the crank, went on to win the competition. That really was the icing on the cake. I was brought up in that car, so it does hold many special memories for me.

Everyone who was there should take a bow. The spirit on display was something quite unique, and something our Club can be very proud of. A wiser soul than me, in fact one of our ex-editors, David Jones, said this event is the mortar that helps keep the bricks together. How right he is.

I would also like to acknowledge Jason Palmer for the effort, work, and contributions he has made to this edition. Jason provided the front cover image and accompanying write-up, then followed this with two excellent articles connected to the cover theme. One explores "speedsters", while the other appears in the What in the World column and also relates to speedsters and runabouts. See these articles on pages 11 and 21.

We are fortunate to receive such generous and enlightening contributions. They add real interest to the publication and, I must admit, make my editorial life a little easier.

Time Is About to Run Out

Membership Subscriptions were due by the 1st of July and we still have more than 40 members who have not yet renewed!

REMEMBER those members who do not renew should also note:

1. This will be your last edition of *Brass Notes*;

2. Any VCCA (Vic) sponsored CPS Veteran is regarded by VicRoads as "unregistered" if you are unfinancial, and the Registrar is required to notify VicRoads; and

3. You will lose continuity of membership and will need to re-apply which includes payment of the $25 joining fee again.

HOWEVER you can still renew this month, using the Annual Renewal on-line option on our website

www.veterancarclub.org.au

Alternatively, you can complete your hardcopy Renewal Notice you would have received in June and sign the Declaration (it's essential this is done), pay by EFT, Cheque or Money Order and return the form to the Registrar PO Box 828, Somerville, Vic 3912. Details are on the form.

If you have misplaced your renewal form, and struggle on-line, simply contact the Registrar. (Contact details below)

If you have any questions regarding your membership, please contact the Registrar.

Rob Anderson
Registrar
0414 446 953

registrar@veterancarclub.org.au

Front Cover Information

By Jason Palmer

Not racing, running about, or showing off its speed, this Empire Model 20 is stuck solid in the mud without a rear guard. It was photographed by Darge in Oakleigh, Melbourne, in 1912 and comes courtesy of the Palmer collection.

The scene gives a clear indication of the condition of some of Melbourne's roads during the early 1910–1915 period.

The location has been pinpointed as the intersection of Dandenong Road and Atkinson Street, Oakleigh, using records relating to J. J. Webster's Oakleigh Timber Yard, which appears on the right of the photograph.

How times have changed - see the Google map image below showing the current location. Some country members, however, might disagree.



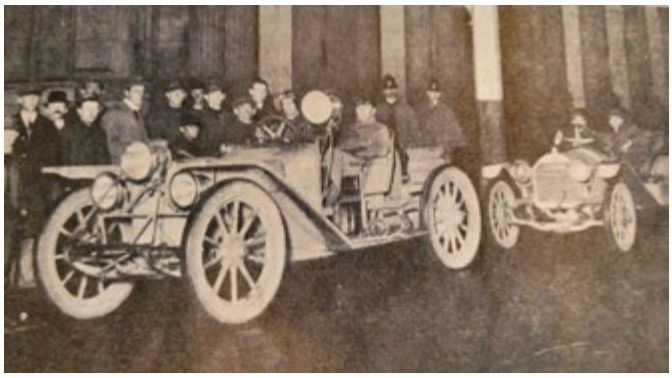
The same area as photographed on the front cover as it is today.

We also have two further images of the Empire from the Zeunert Archive, again photographed by Darge. Another image, supplied by Tim Harris, comes from a newspaper cutting he inherited from John Stanley.



Darge's Empire in the foreground on the 1914 Melbourne to Sydney Reliability Trial.

For more on raceabouts - this month's *Brass Notes* theme - see the article on Speedsters, Raceabouts and Runabouts on page 11, along with the "What in the World" article on page 21.



The Darge Empire motorcar pictured behind the record breaking, Melbourne to Sydney American Underslung in 1913.

Flashback Response - 1911 SCAT

By Daryl Meek



July's Flashback shows the 1911 SCAT owned by Howard Keil and was taken on the club's first annual rally, the1956 Golden Fleece Veteran Car Rally to Ballarat.

I'm not exactly sure where the images were taken, but I suspect the top image with the small grandstand may have been at the Saturday lunch stop at Maddingley Park in Bacchus Marsh. I wonder whether the lower photo might have been taken on a different event as the number plate appears to differ from the first image and the Sunday return via Myrniong to Port Melbourne Cricket Ground was recorded as being a quite damp affair.

This particular SCAT has an intriguing early history, having spent less than 2 years on the road before being stored in a Melbourne garage. In 1951, vehicle collector and Veteran Car Club Foundation Life Member, Howard Kiel, purchased the car at auction. It passed to Cliff Heard around 1966 before being acquired by Colin Daniels in 1990. In 2007 it was again put up for auction through Bonhams and Goodman where it sold to a presently unknown buyer. It is suspected that the vehicle left Australian shores not long after.

A more comprehensive history of the vehicle will be ready for the next edition of *Brass Notes*.

Flashback Response for June

By Steve Everett & Greg Smith

In the June edition of *Brass Notes*, we featured a circa 1910 Little and published a wonderful article from Alan Carpenter. Alan described how he located various Littles around the country and set about restoring his own car. It was a very enjoyable read.

Although the car pictured was not the same Little featured in Alan's story, the article did mention another Little in Victoria that had been owned by Jim Everett. We have since been able to confirm that the car pictured in June was originally found by Jim Everett and rescued from the Kilmore Creek, some time around the early 60s.

This confirmation came after we were contacted by Jim's son, Steve, who first reached out to our Secretary, Brian. Brian then put Steve in touch with me, and I had a very pleasant phone conversation with him about the Little his father had owned.

Steve also mentioned that he still had photographs of the car, along with related information, which he kindly promised to send to me by Australia Post. Unfortunately, nothing arrived at first, and the photographs and notes appeared to have gone missing. Eventually, they were found, revealing that Jim Everett had owned several very interesting cars, including a Lorraine Dietrich, a 23 hp vintage Minerva, a 1923 Chenard-Walcker, and, of course, the 1910 Little that he restored.

I was already aware that the Little had also been owned by Reg Harris, which is where I remember the car so well from. The information supplied by Steve helped explain the connection: his father, Jim, worked for Harris Bros., a firm of shopfitters.

Harris Bros. often fitted out butcher's shops, and Jim was generally responsible for installing the steel runners used to hang meat, as well as the galvanised racks used in coolrooms. This work appears to have been the link between Jim Everett and Reg Harris.

Among the material provided by Steve Everett was a 1972 newspaper article showing the Little and Jim Everett taking part in the Royal Children's Hospital Appeal.

As part of the Appeal, they drove the Little along Lower Dandenong Road, Warrigal Road, and Canterbury Road to the 3DB (radio station) offices. Along the route, they stopped at intersections, where collectors accepted donations from people who paused to look at the car. Unfortunately, the quality of the newspaper image is not good enough for reproduction

The Little was eventually sold to Reg Harris in the late 1970s or early 1980s. Reg rallied and used the car for a number of years.

What happened to the Little after Reg Harris owned it remains a mystery. If anyone can provide further details about the car's later history, please send the relevant information to the Editor.



The 1910 Little belonging to Reg Harris at the 100th Anniversary of the Melbourne International Motor Show in 1986 at the Exhibition Buildings in Carlton.

I would also like to thank member Ray Cook, owner of the beautiful 1905 Curved Dash Oldsmobile. Ray contacted Steve Everett, presumably because he was aware of some of the Little's history. As a result, we were fortunate to receive Steve's related material. —Ed



RACV Midwinter Rally - Ocean Grove, 17-19 July, 2026

By Murray Murfett

Most entrants stayed at the Riverside Motel which was booked out just for us and it worked very well, with plenty of spaces for a welcoming 'Happy Hour' in the courtyard and the much-anticipated Cold Start Competition.

All up there were 50 people and 17 veteran cars & 4 motorcycles, with several 'first time outers' (people and vehicles), including Brandon Price with the (ex-Andrew McDougall) 1914 Matchless 1000cc V-Twin and Rick Thege in the (ex-Neil Ferguson) impressive 1909 38h.p. Daimler Roadster. And it was great to see Peter & Jill Hawkins, our friends from across Bass Strait, who travelled the furthest to be with us. And it seemed like a Ford invasion, with no fewer than 7 Model T's, which accounted for one third of the entrants!

On Saturday there was a special guest appearance at the Jack Rabbit Winery of the 1912 Adams, driven down from Geelong by Graeme Anderson. Discovered abandoned on a farm in the late 1950s as a wreck with parts scattered all over, the car was restored by Tom Anderson and first rallied in the early 1960s. It seems that it is the only Adams in Australia and the only one of that model in the world! There is a wonderful back story and hopefully Graeme could be persuaded to write an article on it.

The annual Midwinter Rally has become synonymous with its Cold Start Competition and…gambling! Beginning in 1977, this entertaining event is taken very seriously by the entrants, with winner's names engraved on the 'Bert Lamshed Memorial Hotchkiss Trophy'.

Prior to commencement, bets are placed and the whole event is run like the Melbourne Cup, with timekeepers, scrutineers, mishaps and cheering spectators! Once again Michael Holding was Team Manager, with strict rules applying. 'Conniving' Kim and 'Crooked' Claudia were the 'on course Bookies', extracting our bets!

The 8 cars and 2 motorcycles entered did it pretty tough, with an overnight temperature of just 4 degrees, rising by only 1 degree at the start time of 8.30 am.

The worthy winners were:

1st Brenton Smith, 1913 Ford T
2nd James Dunshea, 1911 Hotchkiss
3rd Brandon Price, 1914 Matchless m/c

Some interesting facts - this is the third time that Brenton has won it (father, Greg, has won it a record 6 times with the Swift), James has won it four times with the Hotchkiss, and Brandon's Matchless, that was previously owned by Andrew McDougall, was thrilled by its success!

With 100+ year old vehicles there are usually one or two that fail to proceed. At least two will be sent straight to the 'naughty corner' when they get home!



7 Model T Fords lined up at the start of the RACV Midwinter Rally. Quite the sight.



Graeme Anderson mobbed by a bunch of 60 year old party goers.

Author, Murray Murfett's Buick failed to proceed after about 2 km, and Greg Orde's Rover motorcycle suffered a more major mechanical issue and will require some engine work.



The 'on course' team. Michael, Claudia and Kim.



The winners podium. Brandan Price 3rd, Brenton Smith 1st, James Dunshea 2nd. Do you think there is some advantage in being young and able to run?



Murray Murfett and Barry Smith in the Buick ready for the long drive of 2km.



(Left to Right) Barry Murfett's Humber motorcycle and Greg Orde's Rover motorcycle at the start.

Our Rally Director, Callum Walsh, did an excellent organising job, with wonderful scenic drives, good choices for meal venues (Jack Rabbit & Bowls Club), accommodation, courtesy buses, roads without potholes, and excellent weather! The rally was both leisurely and friendly, with plenty of time for catching up.

Callum thanked several willing members for their much-appreciated help in running a very successful RACV Midwinter Rally, including his dad, Brendan, Michael & Claudia, Nick the Tail-end Charlie and Paul Daley for printing the rally booklets and the entrants for making the effort to attend. As Chair of the Events Sub-Committee Callum also took the opportunity to call for volunteers to run future Rallies and spoke of the great support provided by other members in some of the aspects of organising them. Rallies held in new areas are always welcomed.



The line up of 7 Model T Fords from the other direction.

Cold Start Times and Placings

		DIVIDEND PER $1.00 BET				
	Total Bets on this Cranker	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**	**Time**	**Placing**
Brenton Smith	$44.00	$6.36	$1.82	$0.91	7.33 sec	1
James Dunshea	$86.00	$3.26	$0.93	$0.47	8.43 sec	2
Brandon Price	$66.00	$4.24	$1.21	$0.61	10.03 sec	3
David Jenkins	$12.00	$23.33	$6.67	$3.33	17.05 sec	4
Chris Dillon	$10.00	$28.00	$8.00	$4.00	18.65 sec	5
Andrew McDougall	$11.00	$25.45	$7.27	$3.64	37.73 sec	6
Mark Herbstreit	$68.00	$4.12	$1.18	$0.59	60.04 sec	7
David Jones	$19.00	$14.74	$4.21	$2.11	DNF	--
Barry Murfett	$17.00	$16.47	$4.71	$2.35	DNS	--
Murray Murfett	$67.00	$4.18	$1.19	$0.60	DNF	--

Entry List

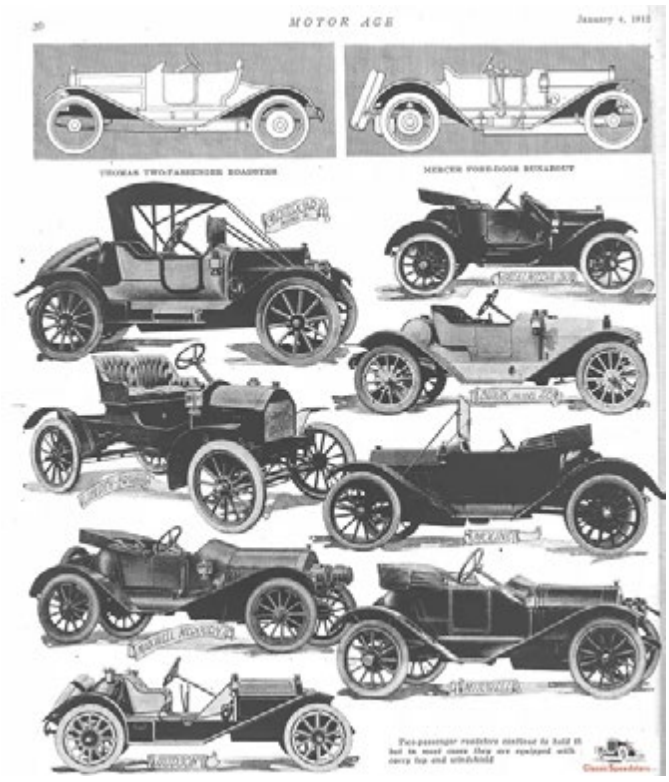
Entrant	**Passengers**	**Vehicle**
Deb Alcock		
Jeff Alcock		
Chris Dillon	Fiona Dillon	1911 Ford T
James Dunshea	Sherryn Dunshea	1911 Hotchkiss Type Z
Paul Fullard		1914 A G Healing Big 4
Peter Hammet	Joan Hammet	1914 De Dion Bouton EK Tourer
Peter Hawkins	Jill Hawkins	
Michael Holding	Claudia Holding	
Brian Hussey	Jill Bartlett	1913 Ford 'T'
David Jenkins		1916 Ford T
David Jones	Julie Jones	1914 Ford T
Mark Herbstreit	Peter Jordan-Hill	1912 Ford T
Alan Long	Janne Long	
Michael Matthews	Bernadette Matthews	1917 Cadillac Type 55
Andrew McDougall	Frances McDougall	1915 Ford T
Jamie McKew		
Daryl Meek	Rick Thege	1909 Daimler 38hp Roadster
Murray Murfett	Evan Murfett & Karen Noonan	1911 Buick 32
Barry Murfett		1912 Humber Motorcycle
Gregory Orde		1914 Rover m/c 500cc
Jason Palmer		
Brandon Price		1914 Matchless 1000cc V-twin
David Provan	David Nicholls	1912 Talbot 4CT Doctor's Coupe
Barry Smith	Rosslyn Smith	
Brenton Smith	Greg Smith & Lillie Keogh	1913 Ford T
Callum Walsh	Brendan Walsh	
Paul Williams	Kim Williams	1911 Wolseley Tourer
Murray Wright	Julie Wright	1912 Enfield 12hp
Nicholas Doncon		Tail End Charlie

Speedster Or Raceabout? I'm Not Giving You The Runabout!

By Jason Palmer

I must admit although being a fan of the genuine Roi-de-Belge and Demi Tonneau style of body, nothing brings more oohs and ah's than the sight of a nice speedster body. But what really is a genuine speedster? Is it a Voiturette de Course, Torpedo, Runabout, Raceabout, Open Two Seater, Boattail or Skiff? Or is it a combination of all? The term speedster has been around since the early days of the motor car and has survived to this day and over the years has defined brands including the famous Auburn boattail speedsters, the heavily desired Porche speedster and now the re-imagination of the E type Jaguar in the guise of The Eagle.

For the era we love, the word speedster immediately evokes thoughts of the Mercer, Stutz Bearcat or American Underslung. Essentially the speedster is a stripped-down runabout, usually without windscreen or doors, with 2 seats, bolster style tank and multiple spare wheels attached to the rear. It is thought that the term 'speedster' first appeared in automobile advertising around 1905. For us in Australia, we probably more readily recognise the term runabout.

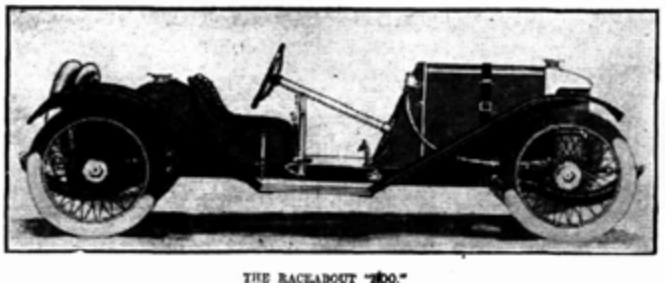


(1912 Motor Age article courtesy classicspeedsters.com)

From my 'shallow' research on Trove and the like, it appears our main source of the speedster/runabout body was through American Underslung, Regal and Overland. I have not found any early teens representatives of either Mercer or Stutz in Victoria, but we do know that at least one Stutz Bearcat appeared in Victoria, owned by a member of our club, but sadly the car is now not on our shores. We do have an outstanding photo record of the like in Victoria along with a few marque survivors.

It appears that in 1917 at least one Australian manufacturer attempted to introduce a 'Raceabout' and that was Roo. *The Mail* (Adelaide SA), November 1917 reports: The raceabout model of the "Roo", which is manufactured entirely in Australia and sold for 175 is of attractive and finished design.

The same chassis is used on both models – the Standard and Raceabout – built by the Roo Motor Car Company, Sydney. The Raceabout, which is geared 2 ½ to 1 on high, will travel a mile in 58 seconds with an ordinary run. The standard gear ratio is 3 to 1 on high. Geared 3 ½ to 1, the machine will travel almost anywhere on high, carrying two passengers. The consumption of petrol works out at 60 miles per gallon. The weight of the car is 8 ½ cwt with petrol tank empty. The raceabout is designed along the lines of a speed car embodying the features which have been tried out by the designer on the Indianapolis Speedway, and other well known speed grounds. Other features of the car are; 9 ½ inch clearance, 16 gallon petrol tank, radiator 3 ½ gallons water, specially designed cams, 13 ¼ oz pistons, drilled connecting rods and a standard colour of yellow, with black fenders and white enamel wheels. Not a bad looking car all round – however were any actually built?



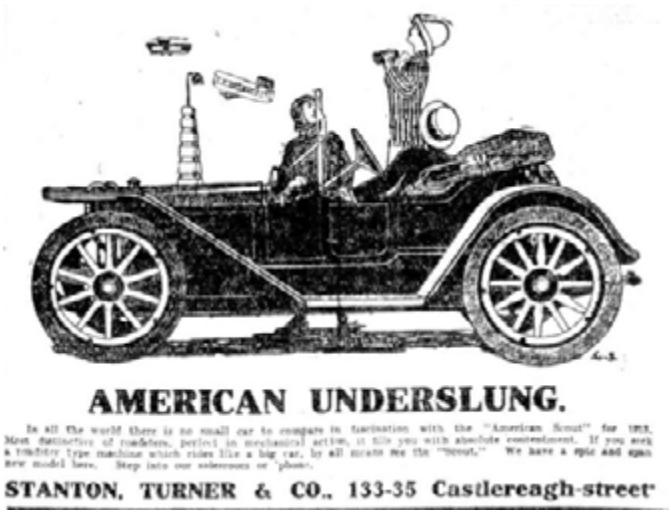
THE RACEABOUT "ROO."



(c1912 Regal Underslung outside private address, Victoria or NSW, Palmer collection)

The Regal, represented in Victoria by The ACME Motor Car & Engineering Company, Lonsdale Street, are remembered mostly for the Underslung model. *The Age*, August 1911 gives a glowing description of the advantages of an underslung chassis.

The centre of gravity is lowered to such an extent that little or no action from the springs is felt from rounding a sharp turn, preventing a "swing-out" feeling. All danger of overturning is eliminated by underslinging and wheels of much greater diameter can be employed without abnormally raising the height of the car. Another advantage is that the forward dumb irons on an underslung frame incline upwards, and in the event of the front axle breaking the frame acts as a skid. Experience shows that less dust is caused by cars so constructed, due to the engine being placed high thereby permitting a flat protective shield underneath.





(Advertisements from NSW agents for American & Regal. Elliot's were more pro-active in promoting the raceabout than ACME who focussed more on the 4 seaters, TROVE)

When we talk about speedsters, raceabouts or runabouts, the Europeans were definitely not missing out on bodying cars in that style, probably even before the American manufacturers got on board. This can be seen from the magnificent vehicle depicted (sadly not hitting the shores of Australia), on page 13.

Described as a c1908 140 hp Mercedes when I purchased the image, current research is leaning more towards a very large Lorraine Deitrich.

Regardless, we did have some very fine vehicles arrive in Australia, either bodied locally or fully imported. I was hoping to include a picture of one of my favourites a c1908 Berliet 40 hp which just embodies the sporting car of the time. Unfortunately, I couldn't obtain permission for the image to be reproduced in this article. Although I would like to acknowledge the assistance of the Sporting Car Club of S.A. For those with the excellent series of books, Book 2, Page 26.

One vehicle that did appear on Victorian Roads was the c1908 LaBuire Voiture de Course. This was offered from the factory with the engine set further back into the frame than other production models. Without windscreen or weather protection it would have been an interesting drive for the ladies pictured (left) outside Hamilton in Victoria. This vehicle was most likely supplied new by Brown Bros. Geelong and powered by a 4 cylinder Monobloc engine of 12 hp.

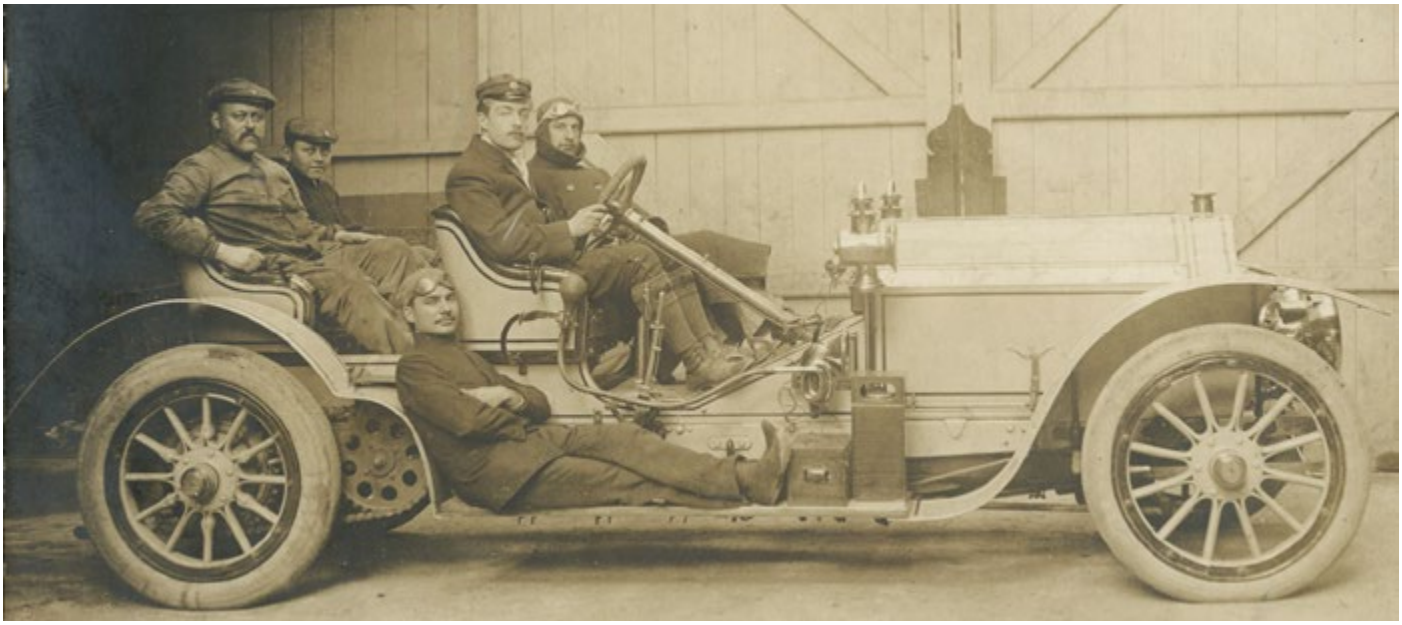


(c1908 LaBuire Voiture de Course near Hamilton Victoria: Palmer via Hamilton History Centre)



(American Underslung, Broadmeadows Camp 1914, Darge Photo, AWM DAOD1118)

These examples are very appealing cars indeed, and we are lucky to have surviving examples in Australia and especially within our club.



(Possible c1908 Lorraine Deitrich Torpedo/Voiturette de Course: Postcard Palmer Collection)

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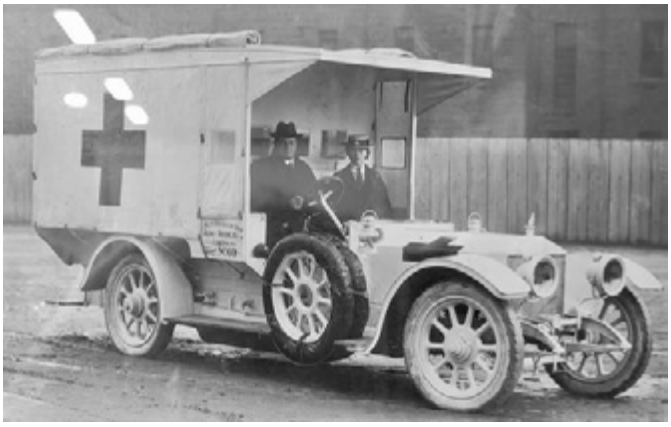
The Spirit of Mercy - A Rolls-Royce Ambulance in World War I

By David Neely



Above: Ben Chaffey and his daughter Mavis seated in 1911 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost chassis 1732 with its ambulance body. It was presented to Senator Pearce, the Minister for Defence, at Melbourne's Victoria Barracks on 28 August 1915. Note the kangaroo mascot. [Wentworth Museum]

Ben Chaffey, pastoralist, businessman and notable racehorse owner, was one of many patriotic Australians who donated motor ambulances in World War I. Some raised money for ambulances to be built in England or Australia. A few, like Chaffey, donated their own cars, after they had been converted into ambulances. In Chaffey's case it was his 1911 Silver Ghost chassis 1732, which he donated in 1915.

While motor ambulances were in civilian use when war was declared on 4 August 1914, the Australian military authorities were planning to send only horse-drawn ambulances. They began to equip the Australian Imperial Force in September 1914. The deployment of motorised vehicles, let alone motor ambulances, was not envisaged. However, when it was realised the convoy was to sail without a motor ambulance there was public disquiet. This led to a campaign to raise funds and two motor ambulances left Melbourne with the October 1914 departures. Ambulances were a very tangible means of alleviating the suffering of war casualties. Fund-raising was readily embraced around the country, including in the Riverina in south-western New South Wales, where the Chaffeys hailed from.



Above: Initially only horse-drawn ambulances were planned by the Australian military authorities when equipping the AIF in 1914. Shown here is the 16th Infantry Regiment field ambulance, Sydney, NSW. [Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales]



Above: Civilian motor ambulances had been in use in the years leading up to World War I. The first Sydney motor ambulance body was built by Angus & Son, established in 1858, on a 38 h.p. Minerva chassis. It was donated to the Civil Ambulance Corps in Sydney by Anthony Hordern of the department store family on 27 May 1912. [Wikimedia Commons]



Inset above: Ben Chaffey's 1911 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost chassis 1732 with its original tourer body by the Sydney firm of J. Mackey Ltd. ['Australian Motorist', 1 April 1914]

Above: The Surrey Hills, Sydney, premises of J. Mackey Ltd with all the staff, probably taken about 1915. The Rolls-Royce is 1913 Silver Ghost chassis 2320E a tourer by the English firm of Barker. [Courtesy of the Mackey family]



John Mackey founder of the firm.

[Courtesy of the Mackey family]

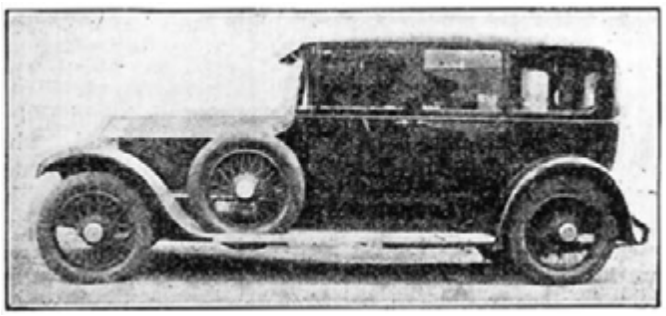


Left to right: The Mackey brothers, Robert, George, Sydney and William. Note the two factory boys seated at the front in the middle. [Courtesy of the Mackey family]

The original body on Chaffey's Silver Ghost was a tourer by J. Mackey Ltd of Sydney. John Mackey was born in Sydney in 1850. In 1877 he started his own business as a blacksmith and later coachbuilder in Surry Hills above Sydney's Central Railway Station. The firm specialised in hansom cabs, named after the design patented by the Englishman Joseph Hansom in 1834.

Blacksmiths were known to have a beer on a hot day. The Reservoir Hotel was nearby. Conveniently close enough for the factory boy to fetch a billy can of beer to slake a hot thirst from the glowing coals. In 1913 John Mackey died as a result of falling down the steps of the hotel. "Intemperance" was the one-word conclusion of the coroner! Four of John's sons worked in the business, which eventually closed in 1959.

Silver Ghost 1732 was rebodied as a roadster after serving as an ambulance. It was again rebodied this time as a saloon by 1927. It was then owned by H Bishop, Melbourne, in 1930. 1732 ended up in Queensland and was broken up. Many parts that survived were retrieved in the 1960s and used in other Silver Ghost restorations.



1911 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost chassis 1732 with its saloon body. ['Coach and Motor Builder' March 1927] The motor body builders who built the ambulance, the roadster and the saloon bodies are not known.

Benjamin Chaffey was born in Canada in 1876. His family migrated to Australia in 1885.

He was aged eleven when his father George Chaffey (1848-1932) and uncle William Benjamin Chaffey (1856-1926) started building Australia's first "irrigation colonies" at Mildura and Renmark on the Murray River in 1887. They had constructed successful irrigation schemes in California where Australia's future prime minister Alfred Deakin met them two years earlier on a government fact-finding trip about irrigation. Chaffey's father returned to California but his uncle remained and became a highly respected member of the Mildura community.

The George Chaffey Bridge across the Murray River at Mildura is named after his father and a statue erected in Mildura in 1929 commemorates his uncle.

Chaffey married Cowra Crozier (1874 -1950) who came from a prominent family. They married in 1898 and had one child, Mavis Anne Chaffey (1900-1968), who was named after a horse! Chaffey's fortune started with a winning gamble on his horse 'Mavis' in the late 1890s. With the proceeds he established a pastoral empire which at various times took in Moorara Station, followed by Tapio, Culpaulin, Avoca, Kilfera, Manfred, Tolarno and other properties.



Chaffey, however, had another family with Laura Treweek (1890-1978), pictured left, who had worked on Chaffey's properties as a domestic and companion. He kept the relationship secret to avoid any scandal associated with the otherwise respected Chaffey name throughout the Riverina.

They had three children, Peter in 1913, John in 1915 and Margaret in 1917. When Chaffey bought her a house in Melbourne Laura regained custody of her first daughter Lorraine, born about 1909, from another relationship. All the children were given the surname Murray after Laura created the persona of Mrs Constance Murray, widow of an imaginary barrister Mr Chester Byron Murray, who supposedly died in the Spanish flu pandemic in 1918. The so-called trust fund left by Chester Murray was a useful ruse for the support Chaffey provided for his secret family.

Author Louise Austin, John Murray's niece, uncovered the web of mystery that surrounded the family and documented John Murray's impressive military and parliamentary careers. He was one of the 'Rats of Tobruk' and a Federal and State politician. Her marvellous book, *Journey to Tobruk: John Murray, bushman, soldier, survivor* was published in 2009.

In 1917 Chaffey purchased the property Woodlands in Cowra's name. He began breeding thoroughbreds. Notable among his horses were 'Manfred', whose winnings totalled £28,830, and 'Whittier', who won £26,590. In 1930 he was elected chairman of the Victoria Amateur Turf club.

After Ben Chaffey's death in 1937 Woodlands was acquired by Charles Brown Kellow, who had the Rolls-Royce agency in Victoria by 1906 and the Melbourne firm of Kellow-Falkiner. It survives as Woodlands Historic Park & Homestead just north of Melbourne Airport.





The driveway and entrance to Woodlands when it was the home of the Chaffey family. [State Library of Victoria]

John Murray worked at Woodlands as a teenager. For part of the time he lived with the household. It was then that he was closest to a hazy notion of Chaffey as his father. When Chaffey was dying John phoned Cowra to ask if he could visit. Cowra refused. When John visited Woodlands in 2001 the estate manager, while aware of rumours of the secret Chaffey family, was intrigued to learn the full story. The saga of Woodlands was revised.

In the Wentworth district Chaffey was the leading figure in "The Ambulance Movement". In early August 1915, Chaffey addressed a meeting in Wentworth, as the carnage of the war was now distressingly apparent. "I happen to know that as late as Saturday morning an Imperial cable message was received in Melbourne urging the Government to equip and send every possible ambulance that Australia could spare – that the Imperial authorities were sadly in need of them, and would appreciate every effort put forward in that direction." – *The Mildura and Darling and Lower Murray Advocate* on 10 August 1915.

The tourer body on Chaffey's Silver Ghost was only a few years old when it was replaced by an ambulance body built to the specifications of the military authorities in 1915. It was then ready to be presented to the Minister of Defence along with three others. "Four magnificent new motor-ambulances stood in the Victoria Barracks square on Saturday morning (28 August 1915) – a practical demonstration of the admiration and sympathy of the people of Wentworth, NSW, for the Australian soldiers ..... One of Australia's public spirited pastoralists, Mr. Ben Chaffey, had offered to present his Rolls-Royce car, fully equipped as an ambulance, to the Defence Department, as a gift from the district, on condition that the district subscribed a sum of £1,000 to cover the cost of maintenance for two years. Inside a fortnight, the amount stipulated had been over-subscribed, and the car was converted into an ambulance." – the Melbourne newspaper *The Argus* Monday 30 August 1915.

The *Riverina Recorder* on 8 September 1915, "The car was converted into an ambulance at the expense of Mrs and Miss Chaffey." And later, "Miss Mavis Chaffey, who defrayed portion of the cost of converting the Rolls-Royce, was present at the ceremony (at Victoria Barracks)." Mavis was only fifteen so she must have had a lot of pocket-money – or a rich father!

In August 1916 Chaffey was back at Victoria Barracks for another presentation from the people of Wentworth. This brought their contributions to a total of ten ambulances.

Around the same time Chaffey also became involved in plans for the convalescence of wounded soldiers and indicated his Avoca homestead could accommodate about twenty sick and wounded soldiers. Chaffey bought Avoca in 1911. Situated at the junction of the Darling and Murray Rivers it comprised 31,000 acres freehold and 450,000 acres leasehold. The 1929 edition of *Who's Who in Australia* noted, "During the Great War he was a member of the Victorian Federal Board dealing with the repatriation of the Australian Expeditionary Army, and is the author of an extensive scheme for the settlement of Australian and British soldiers on grazing areas throughout the Commonwealth."

During 1919 the Silver Ghost was returned to Chaffey. "Mrs. Ben Chaffey and Miss Mavis Chaffey have been staying for some weeks at Woodend. Mr. Chaffey joined them last week-end, motoring up in his Rolls-Royce, which is now in his possession again, after doing considerable service as a motor ambulance. Mr. Chaffey lent his car to the Defence Department during the war, and he has had it beautifully refitted; it is said to be the only single seater of that make in Australia." – *Table Talk* 24 December 1919.

Chaffey was a large man, standing 6ft 3 ins tall, with a large vision for his community's support for the war effort. He donated one, the community two but the fourth ambulance was contributed by the people of the small township of Cal Lal, about 50 miles west of Wentworth. They raised £500 in one night. The money was not the only contribution by the people of Cal Lal.

"It is claimed that Cal Lal, a settlement in the Wentworth district of New South Wales, has given men for the war in greater proportion than any other place in Australia. Of 110 families there 33 men have gone to war. In addition, the settlement had contributed sufficient money to purchase four motor ambulances.", reported *The Armidale Express and New England General Advertiser* 28 May 1918.

Of the 300,000 Australians who enlisted in World War I, 61,919 were killed and around 156,000 wounded, gassed or taken prisoner. Devastating numbers for a population of fewer than five million.

Ben Chaffey and the people of Wentworth and Cal Lal in particular, played their part in providing motor ambulances for the war effort.



Apart in life, together in death. Ben Chaffey's grave was restored in 2002 by the families of his three children, Peter, John and Margaret.

The ashes of Laura Treweek, now Laura Constance Glanville, as she married Charles Glanville in 1934, were re-interred and rest with Ben and Laura's son John Murray alongside Ben Chaffey's grave on the right. [www.findagrave.com]

Commercial Collage

By Greg Smith

Like many manufacturers of the period, the Briton Motor Co. of Wolverhampton expanded its range to include commercial vehicles as a way to increase sales. The commercial market had become essential, playing a key role in the nation's transport network and wider business activity. Manufacturers recognised the growing importance of goods transport and were eager to take part in this developing sector.

Briton Motor Co. described its commercial range in its sales brochures as follows: "Although we have been extremely busy with the pleasure car trade, we have by no means been idle in experimenting and designing light vans, especially suitable for the tradesman who has to deliver goods by road. Our efforts have resulted in the placing upon the market the vans illustrated in this list."

The company appeared to offer a van for a wide variety of needs, including:

- smaller two-cylinder models capable of carrying 5 cwt
- larger four-cylinder models with a capacity of 15 cwt
- additional configurations designed to carry loads between these two weights

The brochure also made clear that the vans were offered in standard form, with additional charges applying to custom work.

- Lettering could be added to the vans for an extra charge, according to the customer's requirements.
- Any departure from the standard design or construction would incur additional cost.
- Vans could also be supplied in chassis form, allowing customers to have bodies built locally if preferred.

Altogether, this suggests that the company was making a determined push into the commercial vehicle market.

We are again indebted to Tim Harris for supplying the detail on the Briton commercial vehicles.


BRITON
LIGHT
COMMERCIAL VEHICLES.
ISSUED APRIL, 1914.
THE BRITON MOTOR Co. (1912), LTD.
WOLVERHAMPTON.
BRITON 10-12-h.p. 4-Cylinder LIGHT DELIVERY VAN.
To carry up to 7 cwts.


BRITON 10-12-h.p. 2-Cylinder LIGHT DELIVERY VAN.
To carry up to 5 cwts.
SPECIFICATION OF VAN AS ILLUSTRATED.
ENGINE.—10-h.p. 2-cylinder, bore 98 m/m., stroke 120 m/m., R.A.C. rating, 11·9. All valves on one side, interchangeable. Nominal speed, 1,000 r.p.m.
CLUTCH.—Leather covered cone type.
IGNITION.—H.T. magneto, fixed.
CARBURETTOR.—Latest type, regulated by hand and foot.
GEAR BOX.—Gate change, latest and improved type; all shafts running on self-contained journal bearings. THREE SPEEDS forward and one reverse. Direct drive on third speed.
WATER CIRCULATION.—Thermo syphon, in conjunction with radiator of large dimensions, and fan to induce draught.
FRAME.—Specially designed pressed steel frame, of deep section, strengthened.
SPRINGING.—Special heavy springs, made of the best quality spring steel, ½ elliptic to rear.
TRANSMISSION.—By Cardan shaft, with very effective universal joints at gear box and back axle ends, with provision for efficient lubrication.
BRAKES.—A very powerful foot-brake is fitted, and also two effective brakes on the road wheels.
WHEELS.—Artillery, running on self-contained journal bearings.
TYRES.—Dunlop, heavy plain 700×85.
DIMENSIONS.—Wheel base, 7′ 10″; track, 4′ 3″; length over all, 11′ 6″; width over all, 5′ 4″; weight of van, about 15 cwt.
ALL COMPLETE WITH 3 LAMPS, HORN, TYRE PUMP, AND ALL TOOLS.
155 Guineas.


BRITON 14-16-h.p. 4-Cylinder LIGHT DELIVERY VAN.
To carry up to 15 cwts.
SPECIFICATION OF VAN AS ILLUSTRATED.
ENGINE.—14-h.p. 4-cylinder, 80 m/m. bore, 120 m/m. stroke, 15·9 R.A.C. rating; cylinders cast in pairs; all valves on one side; interchangeable; nominal speed of engine, 1,000 r.p.m.
CLUTCH.—Leather-covered cone type.
IGNITION.—Fixed magneto, high tension.
CARBURETTOR.—Zenith, regulated by hand and foot.
GEAR BOX.—Gate change, latest and improved type; all shafts running on self-contained journal bearings. Speeds: Three forward and one reverse, direct drive on third speed.
WATER CIRCULATION.—Thermo syphon, in conjunction with radiator of large dimensions, and fan to induce draught.
FRAME.—Specially designed pressed steel frame, of deep section, and strengthened.
SPRINGING.—All springs are made of the best quality spring steel. Rear, ½ in. elliptic. Lubricators fitted to shackle pins, special heavy type.
TRANSMISSION.—By Cardan shaft, with very effective universal joints at gear box and back axle end, with provision for efficient lubrication.
BRAKES.—A very powerful foot brake is fitted, and also two effective brakes on the road wheels.
WHEELS.—Artillery, running on self-contained journal bearings.
TYRES.—Dunlop 760 × 90 m/m., heavy, plain all round.
DIMENSIONS.—Wheel base, 8′ 10″; track, 4′ 3″; length over all, 12′ 6″; width over all, 5′ 4″; weight of Van, about 18 cwt.
ALL COMPLETE WITH 3 LAMPS, HORN, TYRE PUMP, AND ALL TOOLS.
220 Guineas.

Nurses and Ambulances

By Doug Fulford

Doug Fulford has generously supplied some information about his experience of building an Ambulance body on one of his Veteran Studebakers for filming in the mini-series, called the Anzac Girls. Another of our members, Rick Cove also supplied his 1916 Albion A10 and we featured this truck recently in the May 2026 edition of Brass Notes. I also believe another of our members at the time, Bob Gardener supplied his 1912 Talbot ambulance as well. -Ed



Rick Cove's 1916 Albion A10 and Bob Gardener's 1912 Talbot on set of the Anzac Girls mini-series.

Dear Greg,

In the June edition of *Brass Notes*, you asked for input on nurses with veteran vehicles. Some years ago, I was approached to build a replica WW1 ambulance for the TV mini-series Anzac Girls. The series was based on a factual account of the experience of several Australian and New Zealand nurses in WW1 in the book, *The Other ANZACs*, by Peter Rees (later editions published as *Anzac Girls*). They were extraordinary women, many of whom went on to forge outstanding careers after the war. I thoroughly recommend reading the book and watching the mini-series which is available to watch for free on ABC iView at https://iview.abc.net.au/show/anzac-girls. (Note: the ambulances don't appear until episode 2)

Kevin Boardman and I got photographs of WW1 ambulances from The Australian War Memorial and built a composite replica based on a 1913 four-cylinder Studebaker chassis. I guess people in television production companies are mostly the "creative type" (whatever that means) and work differently from me, so construction proceeded pretty much on a good will basis rather than normal commercial relationships. In the end the contract was signed with only one day of filming remaining! Along the way we had to build a second ambulance based on a resurrected T Ford chassis and a lot of borrowed parts.

The ambulance bodies were built in my garage but had to be removed from the chassis and then re-attached outside as the doors of the garage weren't high enough for the ambulance to exit otherwise. They seemed pretty big to me but were dwarfed by the Albion truck which was an automotive "co-star" in the series.



Doug Fulford's Studebaker and Rick Coves Albion during the filming of Anzac Girls



The Studebaker Ambulance with a couple of Nurse Actresses on set



The Studebaker photographed at Picton War memorial opening



Mannequin Nurse (not Vivian) in the Studebaker at Picton

The vehicle was in demand at the time as it was the hundred-year anniversary of the events of World War 1. These included the opening of a new war memorial in Picton and taking part in a Gallipoli re-enactment which was a special feature of the Camden Show. On the latter occasion the Anzacs and the Turks were firing (blanks, thankfully) at each other and one Anzac was a "designated casualty". My job was to drive the ambulance so the two ladies in WW1 nurse's outfits could attend to him. However, he forgot he was supposed to be a casualty and duly marched off the oval with his mates leaving us somewhat "high and dry".

Mind you I nearly didn't make it as the fellow on the showground gate didn't want to let me in without a ticket despite having a signed letter from the show committee requesting my involvement.

The ambulance body is really too big and heavy for any serious travel. I do have some original tourer panels but doubt I will ever find the time to put a more appropriate body on this chassis. As an aside if you happen to have a 1913 Studebaker six-cylinder chassis that you would be willing to part with please let me know. I have most of the mechanicals but no chassis.

Doug Fulford

FANY – The First Women to Serve on the Front Line

By Greg Smith

Fany is just not a girl's name, FANY was paramount in WW1 and one of the most remarkable voluntary organisations I have read about. This is exactly why I thought that delving into the history of nurses and transport during the Veteran era would be fascinating.

The **First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANY)** was formed in Britain in **1907**, originally to provide first aid assistance by women on the battlefield with members trained to ride on horseback to rescue and treat the wounded. Although the British Army was initially reluctant to accept their services, the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 gave the organisation the opportunity to prove its worth.

During the war, FANY volunteers served close to the front lines, driving ambulances, transporting wounded soldiers, operating mobile hospitals, carrying supplies and performing vital communications duties. Many became highly skilled mechanics, maintaining and repairing their own vehicles under extremely difficult conditions.

Working in France and Belgium, often under shellfire, the women of the FANY displayed remarkable courage and dedication. They served with the Belgian and French Armies before eventually working alongside British forces. Their professionalism earned widespread respect, and many members received military honours for bravery and distinguished service.

Unlike many organisations of the time, the FANYs demonstrated that women could successfully undertake demanding and dangerous work traditionally performed by men. Their contribution not only saved countless lives but also helped change public attitudes towards the role of women in wartime service.

The First Aid Nursing Yeomanry remains one of the most remarkable volunteer organisations of the First World War, remembered for its courage, resilience and pioneering spirit.

The following gallery features photographs I have gathered from the internet. These images provide a vivid glimpse of the remarkable FANY nurses and Red Cross nurses and the vehicles they used during the First World War.








FIRST
AID
NURSING
YEOMANRY


65-800






IWM


2230




IWM

What In The World!

By Jason Palmer



1912 Reading 40 H.P Raceabout

It's time to cross the pond to the U.S.A. To continue the theme of Raceabouts, Speedsters and Runabouts.

Maybe minus door would be more appropriate. The Reading, a product of the Middleby Automobile Company of Reading, Pennsylvania (1909-1913). Marketed as an up-market companion car to the Middleby with a slightly larger four-cylinder engine and a foot longer wheel-base at 122 inches. Middleby initially concentrated on air-cooled engines before later switching to water-cooled in 1911. The Reading 40 was listed for $1,650. The Middleby company was started in 1909 by Joseph Middleby along with his sons, Charles and Harry Middleby, acquiring the Duryea Power Works. By 1911 producing only 400 vehicles per year, the company went into receivership in 1913 after the death of Joseph in 1911 and rising costs of materials and the merger of multiple Auto brands at the time.

As can be seen by the slightly confused looking driver, a very large automobile. There are no known survivors of the Reading production.

Nice to see as per our cover photo, we weren't the only ones with bad roads!



Ford T Time

I couldn't let the story end with the final paragraph in the June edition of Brass Notes. After selling his Ford Motor business in Ballarat, Graham Carey set out on a very different path: he established a flying school in Ballarat. This article tells how that remarkable change unfolded. In the second part of the article it also explains how the first aircraft Carey purchased happened to be the very same plane that carried the first mail flight from Melbourne to Sydney. Although this story is not primarily about Ford Model Ts, Carey's journey is too remarkable to leave untold. -Ed

Graham Carey the Aviator

By 1915, with the war into its second-year, car sales had well and truly dropped off in Ballarat and everywhere else. There was little or no stock from Europe available but a large number of Fords had landed in the previous months, unfortunately customers were few (the young male was overseas and those at home had other more pressing problems to contend with) and sales plummeted even though the delivery of the Fords was widely publicised. It was during this time that Graham Carey discovered one of his customers was a highly skilled English airman who had returned from the war back to Ballarat. His name was Edwin Prosser, and he knew of an aircraft which was in Australia which may be available to purchase. Graham Carey had become so interested in the new adventure of the time "aviation" that when he heard about this aircraft, he was immediately excited. On a wharf in Sydney harbour crated up ready for dispatch back to France was the damaged remains of a French Bleriot aircraft. Brought to Australia in 1914 by Frenchman Maurice Guillaux who flew the Bleriot around Melbourne, then to Sydney, before crashing the Bleriot on August 1, 1914 and injuring himself badly. When he recovered enough from his injuries, he arranged for the Bleriot to be packed up and for it to be sent back to France. Because of the situation with the war the Bleriot was unable to be shipped to France.

Carey and Prosser took the train to Sydney and negotiated terms to remove the storage fees, which had accumulated, and purchased the Bleriot, arranging to have it shipped by sea back to Melbourne and then on to Ballarat. The Bleriot was a simple construction so that replacement of the timber and rewiring the structure would have been possible by competent tradesmen. The engine had obviously survived any major damage, and the Bleriot was rebuilt and quickly made airworthy again. Graham Carey convinced Edwin Prosser to teach him how to fly the aircraft which he started doing on the Ballarat common but immediately received opposition from locals as the Bleriot scared stock on the common leading to some deaths of the animals. He moved the Bleriot to Bacchus Marsh where he obtained the necessary skills to enable him to gain a pilot's licence. Carey was able to obtain the licence and was the first civilian to receive a pilot's licence in Australia.



A post card advertising the Ballarat Flying School

There was no stopping Carey and Prosser, and they formed the Ballarat Flying School to give country people the opportunity to become involved in the aviation industry. The Bleriot was a single seater but could accommodate another person if they sat in the small space with the pilot. In the next few years Carey and Prosser flew all around Victoria giving demonstrations and encouraging others to take up flying. Although it seems a sensible thing to only fly when weather conditions were good if the plane was due to show up at any town, Carey always said "wet or fine" he would show up. How flying the Bleriot in heavy rain was comfortable, if not dangerous, is a mystery but, in most cases, he saw it was not a problem.

Several times Carey was caught out when in the air and he and the Bleriot encountered severe buffeting. The few times he had trouble, such as flying into overhead wires or damaging the landing wheels, the Bleriot being so basic in design it only took a short time to repair any damage as he usually was at a town, and suitable materials were usually available. On one occasion when the Bleriot came down heavily, spectators rushed to the crash expecting to see the pilot either dead or severely injured and instead found Carey tinkering with the damaged frame so he could continue with his flight. One terrible flight in 1918 resulted in Carey striking heavy driving rain when he was forced to fly into gale force winds and the Bleriot lifted over 60 ft into the air and then plummeted nearly as far down. Carey had no safety harness and ended up feet above the seat, and the monoplane tilted 45 degrees, Carey thought it was possibly his worse day ever in the air. Carey had a formable reputation for safety; he never attempted any sort of stunt flying (he left that to Edwin Prosser) and in his entire career he never had a passenger injured in his aircraft and their number were in the thousands.

This experience in 1918 spelt the end of the Bleriot to some extent and it gradually was retired, sold to Edwin Prosser and later to other people eventually ending up in dilapidated condition in Sydney along with other historical aircraft. It was finally purchased by the Sydney Powerhouse Museum, where it was restored and is now part of the Museum's collection to this day.





The Bleriot XI

Maurice Guillaux's Air Mail flight from Melbourne to Sydney.

By 1914 the airplane phenomenon had arrived well and truly into Australia. Flying was still an experimental exercise and risks were extremely high. The fundamentals were known but there were many dangers and the physics of flight were still being worked out completely and accidents were very high. Americal aviator Arthur Stone announced in May 1914 he intended to fly from Melbourne to Sydney to deliver mail between the two cities. Unfortunately, before he could do so he crashed and was badly injured. Maurice Guillaux replaced him and on the 16th of July loaded up with 1785 postcards, messages from Victoria's Governor and the French Consul to their counterparts in NSW, a packet of Lipton Tea, a drink called "OT" (a lemon squash drink) and a Thermos flask which Guillaux had filled with the tea, which he then used to promote the Thermos flask associated with his flight.



Maurice Guillaux with the Bleriot on his arrival in Sydney

He took off from Flemington Showgrounds at 9:12 am flew to Seymour and then to Wangaratta where he landed at each town before flying on to New South Wales where he landed at Albury racecourse at 12:50pm. There he had lunch and then flew to Wagga Wagga and then on to Harden arriving there at 4:06pm. He followed the railway line which made it easy for him to navigate his progress.

Bad weather forced him to return to Harden after he tried to go further for the day, his total for the day was 357 miles. During the flight he did aerobatic displays over the towns and huge crowds greeted him at each stop. His Bleriot aircraft was built to enable aerial displays. At the Bleriot factory in France, it received a 50hp Gnome rotary 7-cylinder engine. The aeroplane when built in 1912 had been altered to allow it to be a "Boucle" (looper). This was done by changing the wing section, lengthening it and strengthening the machine for stunt flying. The overall build of the plane had features specifically for the plane to be used for stunt flying.

Weather forced Guillaux to stay in Harden the following day the 17th of July and on the 18th of July he was able to fly on to Goulburn. The weather that morning was freezing and Maurice, when he landed, rushed to thaw out at a beacon fire set out on the landing paddock for his arrival. He then flew on to Liverpool missing a planned landing at Moss Vale. He had lunch with the locals and took off for Sydney central arriving at Moore Park around 2:50pm.

As mentioned before, a few days after Maurice Guillaux crashed the Bleriot at Ascot Racecourse and was badly injured. As the war was still ongoing Maurice, when he was well enough, returned to France leaving the damaged Bleriot packed in a crate with it ready to be shipped back to France. A private foreign citizen's shipment to France, a country under attack in a war involving Australia and Britian would have had little chance of finding space on any ship sailing to Europe, so it remained stuck on a wharf. So, Graham Carey and Edwin Prosser were able to purchase the smashed Bleriot. Maurice Guillaux died when testing an aircraft in France in 1918.





Newspaper ads after the Mail flight for the drinks

Findings, Feedback and Follow-ups

In the March edition of Brass Notes on page 22 and 23 Nick McNeil provided an article on the Bonnot Gang that used cars as get away vehicles in committing crimes, and in some cases "carjacking" to gain such vehicles. Andrew Benoit has provided a photo of one such car the Bonnot Gang stole, a beautiful Delaunay Belleville. Thanks, Andrew, for uncovering this photograph and providing further information on the Bonnot Gang. - Ed



Hi Greg,

Attached is a photograph from 1913 of a stolen and abandoned Delaunay Belleville. Besides being a great photo of one of the Bonnot Gang's getaway cars, it's worth noting that it was located by Clemenceau's "Brigade Mobile", one of the first police squads to be equipped with cars.

The very popular 1970s French TV series Les Brigades du Tigre (on YouTube) and the 2006 film of the same name (on SBS from time to time) both cover this police unit (and feature a lot of veteran cars). If anyone is interested in more detail, John Merrimack's book *The Ballad of the Anarchist Bandits* is a well-researched English language account of the Bonnot Gang.

Regards

Andrew Benoit

More on the American Underslung

Andrew Winter contacted me suggesting that the American Underslung that survives still in Sydney is probably not the same car that was at the Chamberlain Auction in 1993. Andrew believes the surviving car in Sydney came from Keith Ross who found the car near Gunnedah, and the car was local to that area. Andrew also stated that the American Underslung was on the 1988 Bi Centennial National Rally and driven on that event by Keith Ross. I checked the entry list and that is quite factual. Thank you, Andrew, for the information. This was also proven by the following article that was kindly supplied by Max Burke.

This still does not solve the issue of where the car from the Chamberlain Auction ended up. Someone must know the answer. -Ed



Here is the American Underslung and note the International Bicentennial Rally Number Plate.

AMERICAN UNDERSLUNG OR NOT?

Giday Greg.

In July *Brass Notes*, you asked whether anyone remembered an American Underslung vehicle from the Liverpool Plains area of New South Wales.

About 60 years ago, my friend Doug Marr, who is now sadly departed, spent much of his spare time searching for old motorcycles and cars. On a property southeast of Gunnedah, he found an American Underslung. It was completely dismantled, with the engine broken into many pieces and scattered around the property.

The owner told Doug that when his son graduated from Duntroon Military College as a trained engineer, he would return home to take over the farm. Father and son then intended to restore the family Underslung. However, if those plans changed, Doug's offer would be considered, giving him first refusal on the car.

Doug checked in from time to time. However, because he was already restoring both a veteran Sunbeam and a veteran Diatto, he was not too disappointed to learn that the Underslung had eventually passed to Mr. Keith Ross, a farmer in the area.

Restoring the Underslung while trying to make a living as a farmer was slow work, but Keith made steady progress. Eventually he reached the point where the car needed tyres, which were not available to him locally.

He persuaded Peter Adams to have Peter's company, BETCO, produce five tyres for the car. Peter arranged a deal for Keith through his tyre contacts in America, and the Underslung was finally shod.

The original engine could not be reclaimed. However, H. J. Hughes, an enthusiast and trader, found another engine in the Karuah area that had previously been used in a boat.

It was a type sometimes used in American Underslung vehicles, although it was not the same make as the engine originally fitted to this car. That engine became the one used in Keith's Underslung.

Soon after the Underslung was back on the road, Keith told me that he needed to replace his family home. Providing a place for the Ross family to live took precedence over keeping the car, and the sale of the American Underslung helped fund the building of their new home.

This disappointed the BETCO tyre company, as Peter had hoped Keith and his family would join our Newcastle Group. Unfortunately, it was not to be.

I do not know whether Keith sold the Underslung directly to the Graham family in Sydney or whether it was sold on his behalf at auction. What I do know is that it achieved a very high price for the time. Although I have not known the Graham family to rally the American Underslung, they do own an excellent early veteran Overland, and I have no reason to think they would sell either vehicle.

Max Burke.

Late Breaking News

In some very late news, Andrew Winter has kindly sent us some photographs of the American Underslung that Keith Ross so generously sent to him.

It shows the before and after restoration photographs of the car. We are very hopeful that some time in the future we may even get the full written account of the discovery and restoration process that Keith undertook in making this American Underslung look absolutely fantastic and being able to participate in the International Rally in 1988.

We sincerely thank both Keith and Andrew for supplying these resources for us to use. -Ed



Front view of the American Underslung as found



Side view of the American Underslung with engine dismantled



Rear view of the American Underslung in restored condition



Side view of the amazing American Underslung

A selection of photographs showing the car as found, as well as post-restoration.

Terry Parker has responded to a couple of our articles in the last edition of Brass Notes. - Ed

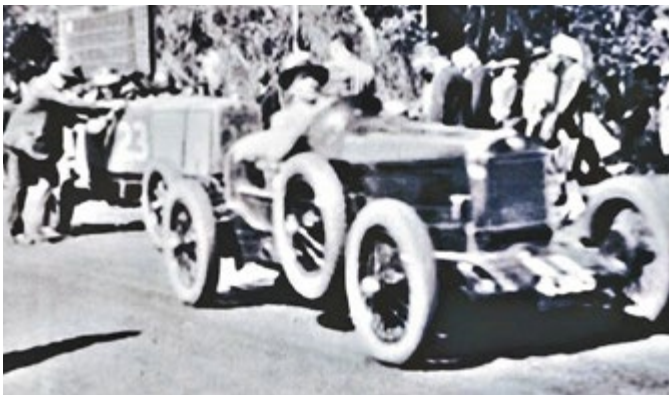
Hi Greg,

Another great edition. I had some information on R. G. Carey but nothing like what you have gathered. I used the photo of him in the 1913 event in one of my publications. The front passenger beside Carey is Maurice Shmith. *(Terry really has an eagle eye – Ed)*

Interestingly Maurice Shmith, who worked for Tarrant's, later came into possession of the Tarrant motorcar now owned by the RACV. He drove it in two early events



Graham Carey and passengers (Maurice Shmith) at the finish of the 1913 Reliability Trial

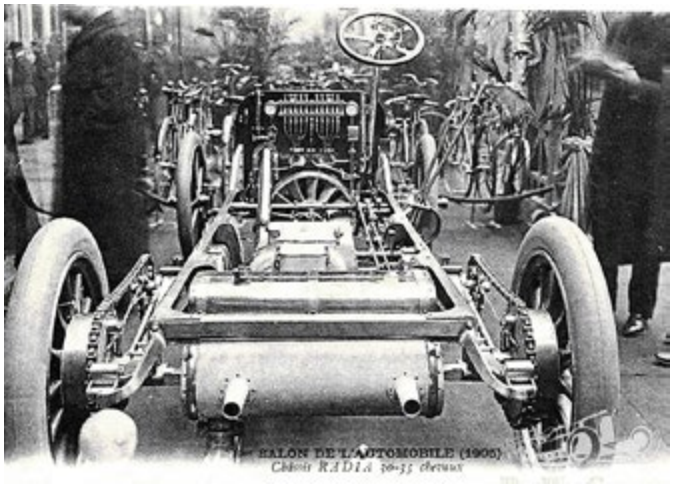


Maurice Shmith in his FIAT

in the 1930s and again in the first Argus Rally in 1955. After his death, his widow presented the car to Ken and Peter Holmes, grandsons of Colonel Harley Tarrant.

The other article which sent me into the files is the Radia, knew I had something and it is shown in the attached photo. I didn't have the story, and without the L'Automotrice article, I would never have found it. Best, TG.





30 hp Radia. What an impressive oiler

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FOR SALE

1909 Schacht - Model K

“The Invincible Runabout”

Double opposed - 2 cylinder (4 cycle) 18-20hp. 4 ¾” Bore and 5” stroke Water Cooled. Mechanical force feed oiler. Multi speed - Friction drive. Dual chain drive, acting on a counter shaft. Internal expanding brakes with emergency on friction wheel. 38” Wheels with Timken bearings. 74” Wheelbase standard tread 56”.

This example is one of the most correct original examples of the Schacht company, retaining all its original components!

Fresh out of 65 years of family ownership, the last 25 in a Private Museum, the paint is not original as it suffered a “tart up” for the museum display, however everything else is!

$59,500.00 ono
For Sale by the Veteran Garage, Mudgee NSW
Ph: 0422 219 911



WANTED

Information and history on the 1905 Reo that was owned by Byron Dobson and Albert Blashki at one time. I have purchased the car and would like to know its past.

Contact: Alan Esmore

Ph: 0418 356 532

FOR SALE

1916 Oakland model 32B 4 door Tourer

Club plate registration. Mechanically fully refurbished. Original 6 cylinder engine with overhead valve and original electric start. Original body frame and panels and a good hood. Older Repaint retaining patina suitable for the car. Starts and drives well. Rebuilt by the late David Couper. A great car to start rallies in immediately.

Asking $22,000.00



Contact: Rob Couper
Ph: 0488 207 058

FOR SALE

Original Manuals.

1917 Indian motorcycle sales booklet. 24pages. $40.00. 1919 Hudson Triangle 18”/13” double sided info on early Hudson’s.$10.00. Chevrolet model 490. 118page parts list on 490 models. Models 1916 to 1922. 115 pages $50.00.North-East electric Starting&Lighting systems for Dodge cars.Instruction Booklet,16pages. $40.00. Dodge 1915-1916 Wiring&North-East info charts. $10.00. Studebaker S.D. four. lube Chart. $10.00. Armstrong Whitworth Motor Car 18/22hp. & 25hp.,78pages owners manual WELL USED condition. $30.00.

Contact: Graeme Edward
Ph: 0409 850 192

Natter Night Meeting Minutes

VCCA (Victoria) at Clubrooms and Online Zoom Meeting
On Tuesday, 14th July 2026 @8.00pm

Opening
The Club President, Daryl Meek, welcomed all to our monthly Natter Night.

Attendance
There were 22 members in our Clubrooms and 13 members online.

Apologies:
Brian Churchill, Andrew and Frances McDougall, Michael and Claudia Holding, Jennifer Atherton, Neil Robert, Russell Ward, David Inglis, Robin Blackwell

Member News
Condolences on the passing of Yvonne Mee, wife of long-standing member Russell Mee.

Congratulations and warm wishes to Stan and Maggie Bone who are celebrating their 61st Wedding Anniversary.

New Members
Peter & Helen Stone, Merbein, 1916 Buick DX44 Roadster

Graham & Kerry Hosking, Mt Eliza, Cadillac 1905, Coey Bear 1912, Griffin Zedel 1902 & 1903

Membership Renewals
The Registrar Rob Anderson advised that this is progressing well and expressed thanks to all those who have already renewed, with the great majority of those being on-line.

43 renewals remain outstanding and members were advised that the deadline for renewal is strictly 31st August 2026 (not 30th September as in previous years).

Raffle
The usual delights, Roast, Desert, etc. - thanks Deb.

Financial Reports – No report this evening as both the Treasurer and Secretary are an apology tonight. All is well under control.

Past Events:
None reported

Future Events:
Midwinter 2026 – Bellarine Peninsula - 17-19th July. Callum reported that we have 28 entries with 49 people attending. All preparations are well in hand.

National Veteran Vehicle Rally – Cowra - NSW club. 6-12th September 2026 – entries have closed but late entries will be accepted – contact the organisers directly. Lang Kidby, who previously drove a 1912 Overland van through Central Australia promoting men's prostate health, has bought the vehicle back and will be attending.

RACV Pre-1905 Pioneers Run – 2026. Wentworth. Wed 23-Sat 26 September 2026. Doug Fulford reported that planning is progressing well. A private evening at the Fiber Optic Symphonic Orchestra has been secured. 23 rooms are booked at Wentworth Grand Resort (only 10 remaining); some participants are also booked at Wanderers Crossing Caravan Park. The Grand resort is offering free continental breakfast. A communal room will be available throughout the rally. Strong cooperation from the Mildura Vintage Car Club. The Sunday optional excursion to Lake Mungo National Park is available — a four-wheel drive bus trip including morning tea, lunch, and park entry, with access to restricted areas not available to private vehicles. Members interested in attending this rally should book accommodation at Wentworth Grand Resort promptly, as only 10 rooms remain

2026 RACV Veteran Car Club Annual rally – 6-8th November – Lancefield – Ben Alcock advised that the rally departs from the north of Melbourne, driving to Lancefield with lunch on the way. A short shakedown run is planned for Friday afternoon. Saturday is a full driving day on hilly roads, with an optional flatter 50 km route departing at morning teatime (vs. the full ~100 km route). Accommodation is based in central Lancefield with approximately 34 rooms (motel and guest house). Trailer storage will be available at the starting point. Entries to open in one to two weeks after the Midwinter Rally. An email with full accommodation details to be sent to all members the following day.

2028 National Veteran Rally - Warrnambool - Provisionally scheduled for 18–23 April 2028 (possibly to the 24th), starting the day after Easter Monday (17 April) and finishing just before Anzac Day. Warrnambool confirmed as the host city. Dates chosen to avoid the busy end-of-year period. More details to follow as planning progresses.

Library and Archives Report –
Daryl reported as follows:
The digitisation project continues. Approximately 40 slides donated by Rhonda Guthrie were digitised, revealing images from the, 1955, 1956, and 1957 rallies (approximately 12 slides) and approximately 35 slides from a 1963 Queensland event (believed to be a national event).

Ruth Burns and her son James (daughter and grandson of the late Jim Lunney) visited at the start of the meeting and donated 3 boxes of books, miscellaneous items, and a wall clock (requiring restoration).

A colour photograph from the Guthrie slides was shared, showing George McKaige at the South Australian - Victorian border in Theo van Alkemade's 1914 Vermorel, en route to the 1955 South Australian rally at Nurioopta. The Vermorel remains in the van Alkemade family, now in Western Australia.

Daryl proposed a dedicated Sunday afternoon session before the year-end at the Clubrooms inviting members to identify unidentified photographs and digitised VHS tapes (thousands of photos, hundreds of slides, and nearly 30 VHS tapes now digitised).

Stan Bone offered to contribute a personal VHS recording of a rally (year unknown) showing nearly every car leaving the starting site (believed to be from the Melbourne Showgrounds area). Thank you, Stan.

Wanted, for Sale or Swap
John Horswell offered a Waterbury clock (approximately 2.5–3-inch diameter, working condition, with angled firewall bracket suitable for a veteran car, Roman numerals on face).

Approximately 10 vintage cast iron spanners (mainly large, metric, Whitworth not included) donated by Giff Hadfield, who has downsized after moving to Doncaster. Available for a small contribution to the library account.

Items of General Business
Clubrooms Upgrades - Ben Alcock advised members that the interior of the Clubrooms has been repainted in a brighter colour. The pathway at the entrance has been cleared — bushes along the left edge were removed at a working bee two weekends prior (attended by Peter Hammet, Deb Alcock, Cooper, Jordan, Pétanque group, and Girl Guides), restoring full footpath access.

A list of maintenance items is being compiled; Council funding is being pursued. Members are encouraged to report any issues to Ben Alcock or Peter Hammet.

A proposal is being developed to better utilise the former bowling green area, including new stairs and usable space for clubs using the rooms.

The meeting Closed at 8.50pm and was followed by a screening of the digitised 1956 Annual Rally film — the first of the club's annual rallies — travelling from Melbourne to Ballarat (approximately 150 miles over two days), with a lunch stop at Bacchus Marsh. The film featured 89 vehicles, commentary on scoring criteria, and footage of notable cars and participants. Several vehicles, and at least two members (Philip Ironside with the Briton, and Maurice Stone with the Arrol-Johnston) are noted as still alive and in possession of their cars.

Next Meeting 8.00 pm on Tuesday 11th August 2026

Events

2026 RACV PRE-1905 PIONEERS RUN

When: Wednesday 23 to Saturday 26 September
Where: Wentworth NSW
Rally Directors: Vivian and Doug Fulford
Contact: 0491 721 033, dougfulford97@gmail.com

The 2026 RACV Pioneers' Pre-05 Rally is being held in Wentworth, NSW, where the Darling meets the Murray. It starts with a shakedown run on the afternoon of Wednesday 23 September and finishes with the rally dinner in the evening of Saturday 26 September. We are suggesting that many of you might like to stay for the Sunday as well and join a proposed bus trip to and guided tour of Mungo National Park. We are also working with Wentworth Council to organise a night time trip to the Fibre Optic Symphony Orchestra. We have been receiving great support from the locals, especially members of the Mildura Vintage Vehicles Club who will provide us with a barbeque one evening and watch over our vehicles on the "display morning" so you are free to enjoy the Old Wentworth Gaol and the Pioneer Museum. Speaking of which I am looking for a car (and driver) happy to drive behind a person carrying a red flag for a few hundred metres at a walking pace (6 kph max) for a few hundred metres. Let's make a grand entrance!

There is a country music festival being organised in the area at the same time so we suggest you book your accommodation now just in case the town gets booked out. Runs are short (less than 60 km round trip) and we will work with any steam car owners to ensure adequate water supplies are available. There are other attractions in the area that you may wish to stay on to experience – possibly even country music! Accommodation at the well appointed Wentworth Grande Resort is well priced.

Vivian and I are excited to be organising this rally and are doing our best to make sure that everyone is informed. If you haven't received newsletter 1 but would like to be kept informed about this rally please let me, Doug Fulford, know on 0491 721 033 or dougfulford97@gmail.com.

Accommodation

The rally headquarters is the Wentworth Grande Resort [61-79 Darling Street, Wentworth NSW 2648 phone: (03) 5027 2225]. This venue provides excellent facilities at favourable rates. For those who prefer a caravan park we recommend Wanderers Crossing River Retreat [14-16 Darling Street, Wentworth NSW 2648 phone: (03) 5027 3213]. The event dinners are an easy stroll from either of these establishments. We suggest booking early to avoid disappointment.

Don't Have a Pre-05

If you don't have a pre-05 but wish to experience this kind of event, you are welcome to join us as an observer. Vivian and I would be delighted to have you participate in what we feel will be a memorable rally.

Expression of Interest

To receive more information about the rally, local points of interest and additional accommodation options please complete an Expression of Interest. A link to this form is on the VCCA (Vic) website. Navigate to the Upcoming Events Page and select the RACV Pre-1905 Pioneers Run. Alternatively email (dougfulford97@gmail.com) or phone (0491 721 033) Doug.

Vivian and Doug Fulford





THE VETERAN CAR CLUB OF AUSTRALIA (VICTORIA) INC.
Registration number A0097964Y

ABN: 61 276 214 581

PLEASE DIRECT ENQUIRIES IN THE FIRST INSTANCE TO THE SECRETARY

CLUB MAILING ADDRESS
PO Box 2300,
Mt Waverley, VIC 3149

PRESIDENT
Daryl Meek (Fiona)
t 0407 881 288
e president@veterancarclub.org.au

VICE PRESIDENT
Callum Walsh (Francesca)
t 0447 766 724
e vicepresident@veterancarclub.org.au

SECRETARY
Brian Churchill
t 0408 344 434
e secretary@veterancarclub.org.au

TREASURER
Claudia Holding (Michael)
t 0402 484 036
e treasurer@veterancarclub.org.au

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT
Ben Alcock
t 0404 917 366
e ben.alcock90@gmail.com

COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Andrew McDougall (Frances)
t 0417 310 852

Steve Hobbins
t 0419 317 687

Greg Smith (Denise)
t 0447 395 233

Jeff Alcock
t 0425 519 959

Simon Anderson (Tess)
t 0414 482 241

Peter Hammet (Joan)
t 0428 282 631

Rob Anderson (Leonie)
t 0414 446 953

Michael Holding (Claudia)
t 0407 008 895

FIVA REPRESENTATIVE (TAVCCA)
Andrew McDougall

SUB-COMMITTEES

DATING
Andrew McDougall

LIBRARIAN AND ARCHIVIST
Daryl Meek
e history@veterancarclub.org.au

EVENTS SUBCOMMITTEE
The Events Subcommittee meets in February, May and October to plan the Club's forthcoming events, which are published annually in the Club Calendar with regular updates in *Brass Notes*. Chair – Callum Walsh.

SUBCOMMITTEE: CLUBROOMS MANAGEMENT
Ben Alcock and Jim McCaffrey

REGISTRAR & PERMIT RENEWALS
Rob Anderson
t 0414 446 953
e leonierob@bigpond.com
Post: PO BOX 828
Somerville VIC 3912

SAFETY COMMITTEE / SCRUTINEERS
Brian Hussey
t 0418 561 910

Bob Ballinger (Helen)
t 0439 488 386

EDITOR
Greg Smith
e editor@veterancarclub.org.au

LAYOUT EDITOR
Roger Berg
e editor@veterancarclub.org.au

WEBMASTER
Ben Alcock
t 0404 917 366

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY
Frances McDougall

AOMC DELEGATES
Daryl Meek

Andrew McDougall

VETERAN CARS & THE VCCA
A veteran vehicle is any mechanically propelled vehicle built on or before December 31, 1918. The Veteran Car Club of Australia (Victoria) is open to all persons interested in the preservation and restoration of these vehicles, and ownership of such a vehicle is not a condition of membership. Please refer to our web-site for a membership application form and additional information.

NEW MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES
New membership application enquiries to Brian Churchill

t 0408 344 434
e secretary@veterancarclub.org.au

Download the application form at veterancarclub.org.au.

BRASS NOTES
Brass Notes is the Journal of the Veteran Car Club of Australia (Victoria). Contributions for *Brass Notes* are welcome, and should be forwarded to the editor by the 20th of the prior month preferably via email, or posted to the Club's address. When submitting digital photos, please send as JPG files attached to an email at the highest resolution available.

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VICROADS PERMITS AND SAFETY CHECKS FOR MEMBERS VETERAN CARS AND MOTORCYCLES
If you require your vehicle safety inspected, and verified for Vicroads eligibility, please review the Vicroads permit requirements on their web-site, and contact Brian Hussey or Bob Ballinger. They will assist with the process for obtaining a permit, and advise of a club Scrutineer who can inspect the vehicle at a mutually convenient time.

JP SERVICES AT NATTER NIGHTS
As a service to Club members Paul Daley J.P. and David Provan J.P., in their capacity as Honorary Justices of the Peace for the State of Victoria, are available at Natter Nights or by appointment to provide document witnessing and certification services.

CLUB MEETINGS
Monthly meetings (Natter Nights) are held at 8:00pm on the 2nd Tuesday of the month (excl. January) in the Club Rooms:

Lynden Park Club Room, Wakefields Grove, Camberwell, off Through Rd.

Find us on Facebook

RACV Midwinter Rally Ocean Grove

Photos by Frances McDougall and Callum Walsh



Brandon Price on his 1914 Matchless on its first time out.



Rick Thege and Daryl Meek in the 1909 Daimler 38hp on its first time out. Great to see it again after a long hiatus.



David Jenkins and his 1916 Ford T in real action during the cold start competition.



Chris Dillon attempts a quick start with his 1911 Ford T.



David Jones using every trick in the book including cap backwards to reduce drag completes a good time with his 1914 Ford T.



Barry Murfett with the 1912 Humber motorcycle has two to hold the bike. Don't know why as it failed to start!

RACV Midwinter Rally Ocean Grove

Photos by Frances McDougall and Callum Walsh



Brandon Price sprints after starting the 1914 Matchless. Look at the face on James suggesting that is the time to beat. 3rd best time of the competition.



Brenton Smith in action to be the winner of the cold start competition with the 1913 Ford T. This is a "cracking" time for a Model T



Murray Murfett using the unusual action of kick starting the crank of his 1911 Buick. Turns out a method failed, with a poor result this time around.



Mark Herbstreit who was one of the fancies, cranks vigorously with not his best result this year with his 1912 Ford T.



James Dunshea gives it all he can in front of the captivated crowd as the hot favourite with the 1911 Hotchkiss. 2nd best time of the day.



Andrew McDougall with not much happening in the cold start competition with his 1915 Ford T. Pity he didn't turn the key on properly!