

# ***THE AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIAN***

**December 2022**

**AUTOMOTIVE  
HISTORIANS  
AUSTRALIA INC**

**FOUNDING PATRON: Ron Tauranac AO**

## **In This Newsletter**

### **Ford Archives and Holden Heritage Event**

In his President's Report, Norm Darwin discusses the ongoing saga of Ford Australia's archive preservation and a Melbourne event celebrating the heritage of Holden.

### **Design to Driveway**

Our own David Burrell has helped produce a documentary series interviewing seven of Australia's most influential car designers in this Shannons series. All seven episodes have been broadcast and links are below along with a behind the scenes story written by David about the making of the series.

### **Rob Roy Hillclimb**

Leon Sims has provided a copy of the program for the 1993 Historic and Classic meeting at Rob Roy Hillclimb. This was the first open meeting held after the track reopened the previous year.

There's also a clip from Leon's *History of Rob Roy* film and information about the inaugural **Rob Roy Revival**, a motorsport and community festival being held on 18 and 19 March 2023.

### **Tribute to Reg Hunt**

David Neely has written a fine tribute to Reg Hunt, legendary motor racing driver and businessman.

### **Turin Conference**

Roger Beattie recently attended the third European Conference for Automotive

History in Turin. His report is in this edition.

### **Benzina Magazine**

Jack Quinn is editor of *Benzina Magazine*, which commenced publication in 2021. Jack presented *She Dared to Drive: Four Iconic Women Drivers Past to Present* along with Michelle Mantsio at our 2019 AHA Conference.

We've included some information about *Benzina* and a link to the 2019 presentation and another presentation at that conference by Ted and Jill Powell. Coincidentally, Jack also drove at the 1993 Rob Roy Hillclimb event featured in this newsletter.

### **Request for Holden Badges**

We've had a special request from the United States for Holden badges, emblems and scripts to help design a gift for a boy with a serious illness. If you have some spares you can read how to help out.

### **An MG Winning a Formula 1 Race?**

There's been no record of an MG winning a Formula 1 race, until now. Eli Solomon has written a great piece on a bit of motor racing history.

### **Bill Pearson's Motor Racing Archive**

Bill Pearson has published some terrific footage he shot as a young cameraman in the 1960s. In this instalment Bill takes us back to Warwick Farm and Catalina Park for more 60s racing.

### **Articles, Photos and Videos Wanted**

We would always like articles, videos or photos from members about your cars, items of memorabilia, research or other motoring-related matters.

Thanks again to all the members who have contributed ideas, information and feedback for the newsletter.

**Tony Lupton**  
**Secretary and Editor**

### **AHA Membership and Membership Renewals**

**Membership renewals were due on 1 July**, as the financial membership year commences on 1 July for the forthcoming year. If you are receiving the member-only benefits, such as the *Wheels Across the Pacific* videos and the notice of the AGM, you are financial until 30 June 2023.

New member subscriptions are \$60 and the renewing member fee is \$50. If you have renewed or joined since April your membership is valid for the 2022-23 membership year.

If you're receiving this newsletter and wish to obtain the additional benefits of AHA membership, such as attending the recent symposium, [click here to go to](#)

[our membership page.](#)

[Renewing members can keep their membership current by clicking here.](#)

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## From The President

### Ford Archives

As the year closes the issue of the Australian Ford Archives has arisen again. An article in *Drive* by Joshua Dowling speculates that Ford Australia is perhaps agitating to have permission to ship the archives back to Detroit or they will be left to rot in the basement of the Broadmeadows office building. See the article [Fight for Ford Australia historical archives goes international - Drive](#)

It is uncertain who prompted the story that includes quotes from Ford America. The quotes do not give an indication that it is Ford pushing the idea to have the Australian Ford material shipped to Ford's central archive.

What the story has done is restart a push to have Ford Australia decide on the fate of the documents. The AHA is among a group who are pushing to have the matter settled. Led by Peter Fry, an ex-Ford Australia engineer who has followed the archive story closely, the group is preparing a submission with options.

Peter has been in touch with the relevant Ford America personnel and found they are receptive to suitable ideas for the archive's preservation.

Their Heritage Manager, Ted Ryan, told *Drive*, *"If somebody ever approached us about being creative, we can be creative, and we can figure out a way to preserve the materials (from Australia) because right now it's split between three different (areas) and I don't think anybody's winning."*

Peter expects to have a draft submission completed by Christmas for comment. We will keep you informed.

### Holden Heritage Event

On Sunday 4 December I was invited to participate in the Holden Heritage Day at Fishermans Bend. Initially organised by two Holden retirees, the event was handed over to the Melbourne City Council who generously took on the project at their Gateway site, located under the Bolte bridge in Lorimer street.



*Holden FE panel van and 1951 48-215 sedan owned by Brett Murray. Photo Norm Darwin.*

Eight former Holden designers and engineers were on hand to talk about the company's cars at Fishermans Bend and I provided a brief historical background of the site.



*Holden SS HQ sedan under the Bolte bridge, a little modified with 6-light rear bumper and chrome rims.*

*Photo Norm Darwin.*

Fifty cars representing Holden models produced between 1948 and 2018 were on show. The event was free to the public and well attended.

I wish you all a safe and happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

**Norm Darwin  
President**

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## Shannons Design to Driveway Series

All seven episodes are now available and the links to each are below. Click on the photo to watch the episode.

Congratulations to David Burrell and his team, particularly the designers, who made this terrific series possible.

In addition to the stories of Leo Pruneau, David Ford, Dennis Nicolle and Phil Zmood we now have the episodes featuring David Hardy, Graham Wadsworth and Richard Ferlazzo.

Click on the photo to watch the episode.





DAVID  
HARDY

**David Hardy – Leyland  
Australia Designer |  
SHANNONS DESIGN TO  
DRIVEWAY | Ep 5**

This promotional graphic features a portrait of David Hardy on the right. On the left, there are two images: a yellow station wagon and a grey sedan. The text 'DAVID HARDY' is overlaid on the portrait. Below the images and portrait, the text reads 'David Hardy – Leyland Australia Designer | SHANNONS DESIGN TO DRIVEWAY | Ep 5'. A 'DESIGN TO DRIVEWAY' logo is visible in the bottom left corner of the image area.



EXCLUSIVE

GRAHAM  
WADSWORTH

**Graham Wadsworth -  
Ford Australia Designer  
| SHANNONS DESIGN  
TO DRIVEWAY | Ep 6**

This promotional graphic features a portrait of Graham Wadsworth on the right. On the left, there are two images: a blue hatchback and a blue sedan. The text 'EXCLUSIVE' is overlaid on the top image. The text 'GRAHAM WADSWORTH' is overlaid on the portrait. Below the images and portrait, the text reads 'Graham Wadsworth - Ford Australia Designer | SHANNONS DESIGN TO DRIVEWAY | Ep 6'. A 'DESIGN TO DRIVEWAY' logo is visible in the bottom left corner of the image area.



RICHARD  
FERLAZZO

**Richard Ferlazzo -  
Holden Chief Designer |  
SHANNONS DESIGN TO  
DRIVEWAY | Ep 7**

This promotional graphic features a portrait of Richard Ferlazzo on the right. On the left, there are two images: a yellow sedan and a red sedan. The text 'RICHARD FERLAZZO' is overlaid on the portrait. Below the images and portrait, the text reads 'Richard Ferlazzo - Holden Chief Designer | SHANNONS DESIGN TO DRIVEWAY | Ep 7'. A 'DESIGN TO DRIVEWAY' logo is visible in the bottom left corner of the image area.

## Design to Driveway: Behind the Scenes of the TV Series

David Burrell takes us behind the scenes in this story about the making of the TV series. Click on the photo to read David's story.



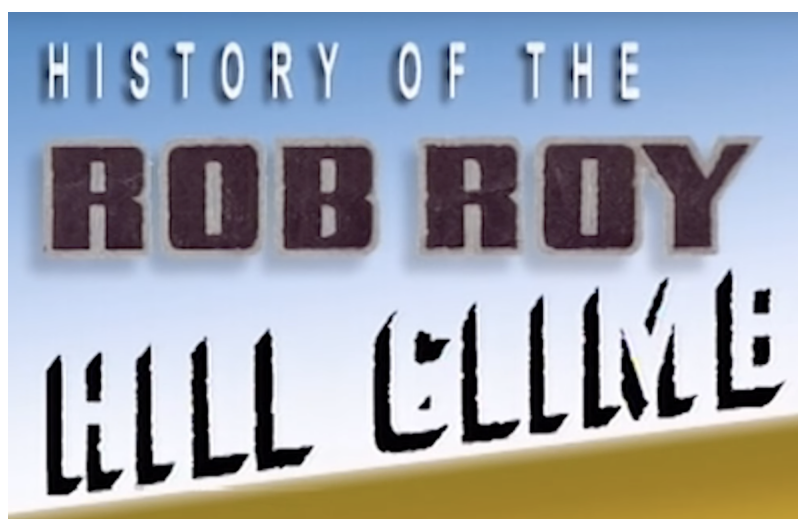
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## Rob Roy Hillclimb History

The Rob Roy Hillclimb is Australia's oldest purpose-built hillclimb and opened in 1937. It closed following bushfires in the early 1960s and since reopening in 1992 the MG Car Club Victoria (of which I am currently the secretary) has operated the hillclimb under lease from the state government.

Leon Sims is a long-time member of the MG Car Club and historian of the Rob Roy Hillclimb. He wrote *A History of Rob Roy Hillclimb 1937-1961* and, with support from Penrite Oil's Dymond family, produced the History of Rob Roy DVD.

To watch an extract from the film click on the image below. Coincidentally, the film includes a cameo by former racing driver and businessman Reg Hunt, whose tribute by David Neely also appears in this newsletter.



The program pictured below, supplied by Leon Sims from his archive, is for the first open meeting after the hillclimb returned to competition. Thanks go to Leon

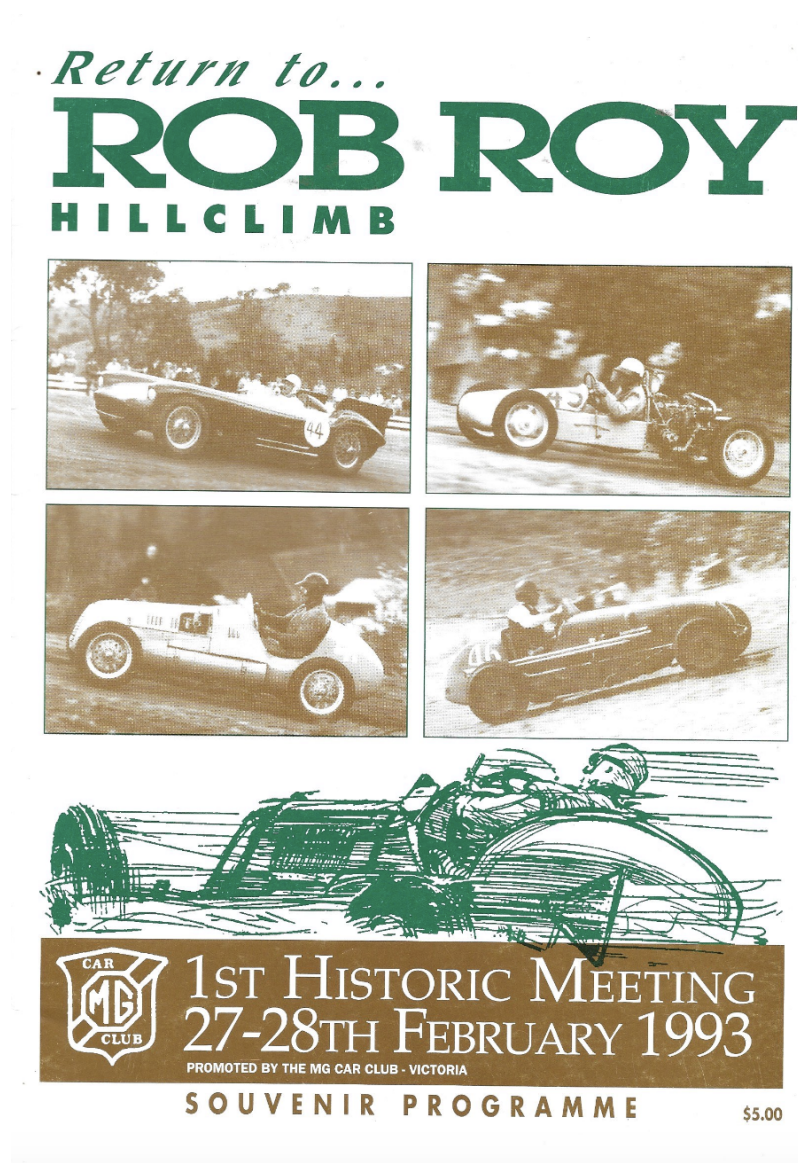
for making it available. The program includes more Rob Roy history written back then by Leon along with driver biographies and details of competing vehicles.

One of the drivers noted was a young Jack Quinn driving a famous Alfa Romeo, who now edits *Benzina* magazine mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter.

Because the program is a very large file we have separated it into two parts to make downloads easier. Click the links to read each part of the program.

[Return to Rob Roy program part 1.](#)

[Return to Rob Roy program part 2.](#)



## Rob Roy Revival

On 18 and 19 March 2023, another first will occur with the inaugural Rob Roy Revival, a two day motorsport and community festival involving 75 invited



historic cars competing alongside the festival with live music, fashion shows, gourmet food, local wines and craft beers and other Yarra Valley produce.

This type of event has been made possible by a Victorian Government Community Motorsport Infrastructure grant which, along with additional funds contributed by the MG Car Club Victoria, has been used for major redevelopment works and improved spectator facilities at the track.

Spectators are encouraged to wear period dress, which will be required to enter the Paddock area.

Spectator entry to this event is by pre-purchased tickets only.

Click on the image below for further information.

### **Rob Roy Revival 2023**



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### **Tribute to Reg Hunt**



**Reg Hunt – A Tribute**  
**Veteran Rolls-Royce and Grand Prix Maserati**

**By David Neely**

Reg Hunt passed away on 22 August 2022 aged 99. His name will be familiar to those interested in Australian motor racing in the 1950s. He is pictured above at the wheel of his Maserati A6GCM during the Albert Park meeting in late March 1955.

Those from Melbourne may recognise his name as a very successful retailer of Holdens and other makes. He built the largest Holden distributorship in Australia and also ran a vast used car operation including 2,000 cars on a 12 acre site in Elsternwick. He sold out of the car business in 1998.

This tribute to Reg Hunt looks back to the 1950s. His connection with the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia takes us to the Victoria Branch and a veteran Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost, which is interesting but not unusual. However, how many Rolls-Royce Owners' Club members competed against motor racing royalty, literally in the case of Prince Bira of Siam, and figuratively in the case of Jack Brabham and Stirling Moss? Reg Hunt did and this takes us to his Maserati open-wheel racing cars.

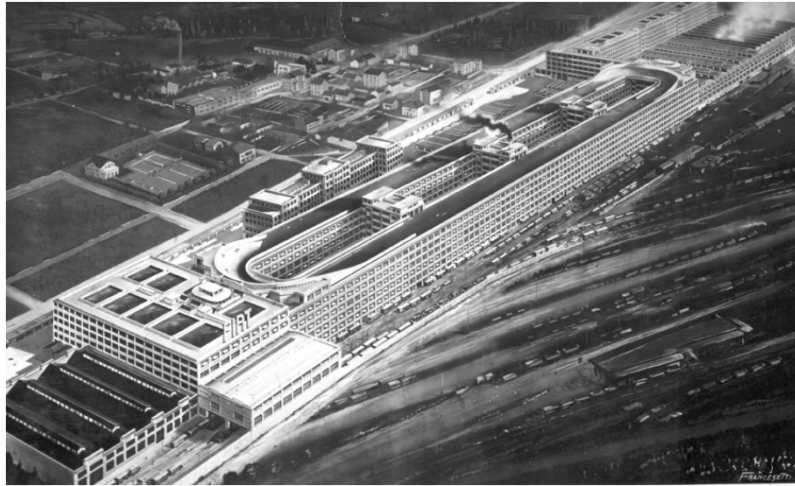
**[To continue reading the full article click here.](#)**

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## **Third Pan-European Automotive Historians Conference**

**AHA committee member and President of the Fiat Car Club of Victoria, Roger Beattie, attended the conference in Turin. Here's his report.**

It was my great pleasure to be back in my beloved Turin for the 3rd PEAHC last month. Even the accommodation had historic links for me as we were housed in the old FIAT Lingotto factory which was built from 1916-21 and includes the famous rooftop test track. Production there ended in 1982 but the building has been converted into a number of commercial spaces, including 2 hotels and a shopping centre, a performing arts complex and multiple offices, storages and public spaces. The most recent addition is the rooftop Pista 500 roof garden and the Casa 500 museum and cafe which Stellantis (current FIAT corporate incarnation) has installed for the enjoyment of the people of Turin.



Many were concerned that the loss of the track integrity on the roof was a retrograde step but seeing the crowds of families coming to learn about the automotive heritage of the city amid 40,000 plants compared to the few lonely car nuts who traversed the broken bitumen as it was I would have to say it is an enormous success. Cars can still circulate the track and a number did so celebrating the centenary of the Lancia Lambda a couple of weeks prior to my visit.

[Click here to read Roger's complete report.](#)

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## Benzina Magazine and AHA

Jack Quinn and Michelle Mantsio edit Benzina Magazine, which commenced publication in 2021. It's a beautiful and locally-produced motoring magazine well worth checking out.

Jack and Michelle presented **She Dared to Drive: Four Iconic Women Drivers Past to Present** at the 2019 AHA conference.

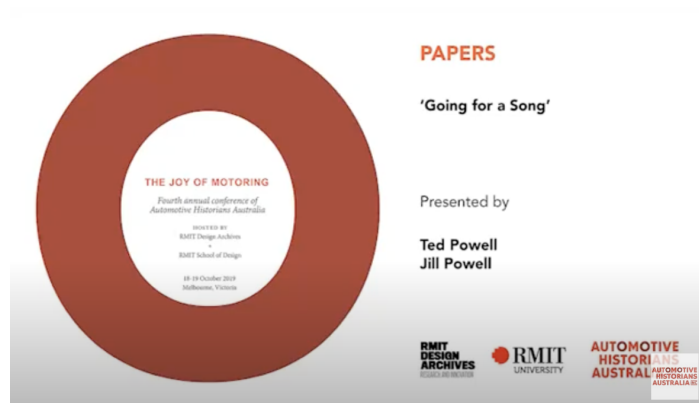
Click on the image below to watch Jack and Michelle's presentation.



Their first edition, the cover of which is below, featured a story by Ted Powell about his years as an advertising executive working on the Ford Motor Company account.

AHA members will remember that Ted and Jill Powell also presented at our 2019 conference, with *Going for a Song* about Ford's Global Anthem advertisement.

Click on the image below to watch Ted and Jill's presentation.



Click on the cover photo below for a link to *Benzina Magazine*.



## Request for Holden Badges

We have had a request from a 71-year-old car nut, Rick, who lives in Massachusetts and would very much appreciate any assistance you could give him in finding old Holden badges, emblems, and scripts. His 10-year-old nephew, named Holden Pike suffers from neurofibromatosis, a severe nerve disorder colloquially referred to as “Elephant Man’s Disease”. Rick tried to interest some Australian wreckers to help but none bothered to reply. His intent is to mount these pieces of Holden memorabilia on a lovely wooden plaque and give it to his nephew Holden to hang in his bedroom. Rick doubts he even knows that his first name is also that of a former car brand. Very recently Rick read an article in Hemmings Motor News about our recently concluded joint conference with the Society of Automotive Historians, he immediately thought we might be able to help.

I am sure we all have the odd badge lying around, I know I do. Heather’s cousin suffers from this disorder so I have some knowledge of what Rick’s nephew will go through during his life. If you have a Holden badge to spare, can you please send it to Rick Paris at PO Box 63, 57 Woodsneck Road, East Orleans, MA 02643-0063, USA and tell him you read it here. Better still share this around with your local club.

[Click here to read the Hemmings story.](#)

Norm Darwin

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## MG Wins a Formula 1 Race

First, a correction from the previous newsletter. Johore, location of the 1949 Grand Prix written about by Eli Solomon in this story, is in Malaysia, not in Singapore.

The Johore public road circuit was a short distance from the causeway linking Peninsula Malaysia with the island of Singapore, and although not run in Singapore the race meeting was organised by the Singapore Motor Club.

Here's Eli's story again. His research into early post-war Grand Prix races led to this interesting hypothesis. If a race was run to FIA Formula 1 regulations, was it a Formula 1 race? If so, an MG TC Special called "Black Draught" driven by Mick Jennings in the 1949 Johore Grand Prix is a Formula 1 winner.

As an MG owner I'm happy to accept the proposition. Click on the photo to read the evidence for yourself.



*Mick Jennings on his lap of honour in his MG TC Special after winning the 1949 Johore Grand Prix. (Rewind Media website).*

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## Bill Pearson's Motor Racing Films

Bill Pearson has published some terrific motor racing footage shot by himself and his father in the 1960s. The second instalment includes some background information about Warwick Farm and footage of the 1966 Hordern Trophy Gold

Star round and a Catalina Park meeting in January 1967.

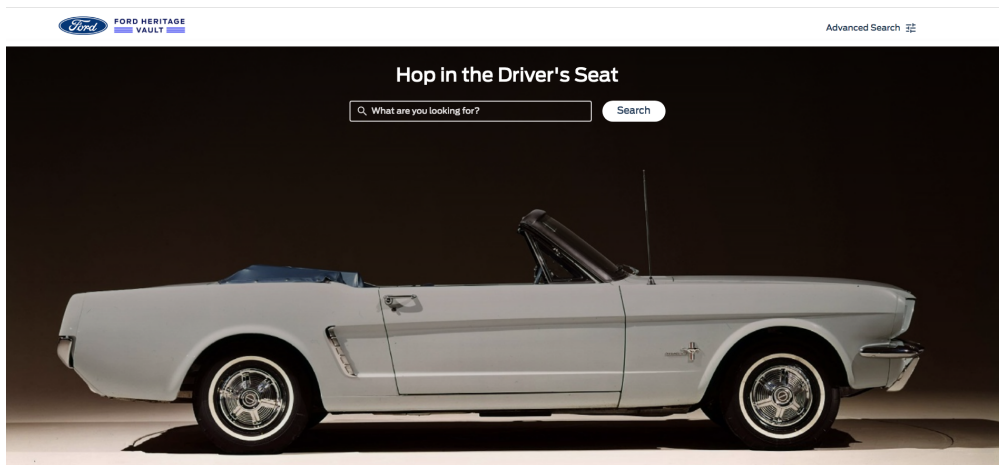
Click on the photo for Volume 2 of Bill Pearson's Motor Racing Films. (Although the clip appears to be 20 minutes it finishes at 12 minutes).



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## Ford Heritage Vault Website

Ford enthusiasts will find plenty of interest in this website containing over 5,000 photographs and brochures on American and Canadian Ford and Lincoln models. Click on the photo to go to the website.



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## AHA Resources Page

Previous articles from the newsletter and other resources are available on the **AHA Resources Page** - click on the titles below to read the articles or [click here](#) to be taken to the Resources Page.

Recent articles:

[An Open and Closed Case - The Saint-Didier Convertible Body](#)

[An Anorak's Guide to Early Q Plates](#)

[Marion Bell. Round Australia in a 1925 Oldsmobile](#)

[The Queen of Whale Cay](#)

[Women in the Early Australian Automotive Industry - a Survey](#)

[Australian Women's Automobile Club](#)

[AGM Michell and the Crankless Engine](#)

[Horace Washington Harrison, an Australian Automobile Pioneer](#)

[Early Ballarat Motoring - Part 1](#)

[Early Ballarat Motoring - Part 2](#)

[A History of Steenbhom Ltd. Coach and Motor Body Builders](#)

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## **Database of Digitised Magazines**

Subsequent to discussion of documenting collections that have been or are being digitised, a list of Australian sites was quickly developed. They are listed below. Should you know of others, please advise. This is now being extended to include a list of all Australian Automotive magazines regularly published and sold or distributed publicly.

[Click here to see the database of digitised magazines.](#)

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## **Newsletters on Historic Motoring Themes**

Some of our members and friends produce very interesting and informative newsletters of their own. Many cover events and history with a rural and regional focus.

Here are some newsletters you may wish to subscribe to.



Johannes "John" Schuurman produces ***The Australian Chrysler Narrator***, which focuses on all things to do with pre-1960 Chryslers in Australia, including Dodge, De Soto and Plymouth. John's email is [plymouthpalace@gmail.com](mailto:plymouthpalace@gmail.com)



David Vaughan produces ***Country Motor***. David's publication focuses on historic vehicles, collections, events and personalities in regional Australia. All back copies are available through a link on the AOMC website here <https://www.aomc.asn.au/country-motor-australia>. The email for subscriptions is [countrymotor@aussiebb.com.au](mailto:countrymotor@aussiebb.com.au)




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Members are encouraged to send in contributions or ideas for inclusion in member updates. Whether it's something about motoring history you think members may be interested in, a project you're working on or have finished or a suggestion for AHA, let us know about it.

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## Local Links

Websites for some of our Australian motoring friends

### [Association of Motoring Clubs](#)



### [Veteran Car Club of Australia \(Victoria\) Inc.](#)



### [Victorian Historic Racing Register](#)



### [Royal Historical Society Victoria](#)



### [Council of Heritage Motor Clubs \(NSW\)](#)



[Vintage Sports Car Club of Australia](#)



[Vintage Sports Car Club of Victoria](#)



[Historic Sports and Racing Car Association](#)



[Australian Motor Heritage Foundation](#)



### [The Sir Henry Royce Foundation Australia](#)

*Any other organisations wishing to be included are asked to contact AHA.*

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## International Friends



The Society of Automotive Historians

*In Britain*

Information about SAHB is available at their website: <https://thesahb.com/>



Information about SAH (USA) and their events can be found on their website:  
<https://autohistory.org/>

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Automotive Historians Australia can be contacted by email at [info@autohistoriansaustralia.org](mailto:info@autohistoriansaustralia.org), by mail at P.O. Box 319 Balaclava 3183 or via our website at [autohistoriansaustralia.org](http://autohistoriansaustralia.org)

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AHA would appreciate you distributing this newsletter to your friends, networks, clubs and associations.

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