

# ***THE AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIAN***

**Newsletter July 2021**

**AUTOMOTIVE  
HISTORIANS  
AUSTRALIA INC**

**FOUNDING PATRON: Ron Tauranac AO**

Hello members and welcome to the AHA Newsletter.

## **From the Secretary**

This edition of the newsletter includes information about our upcoming conference in Castlemaine, a great exhibition on GMH design at Fishermans Bend, more videos and historic recordings, news about books, magazines and other publications concerning historic motoring.

I've had great feedback about *The Racers Who Stopped The World*, and the good news is there's a sequel - a behind the scenes film with additional footage and discussion about making the film. I think you will enjoy this too. There's a link below.

I'd really like some short videos and photos from members - two or three minutes would be fine - showing us some of your cars, items of memorabilia or other motoring activities. This month we feature Larry O'Toole at Autoplex in Castlemaine.

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

Tony Lupton  
Secretary

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## **President's Report**

There is no more news yet on the future of the GMH buildings at Fishermans Bend. A report I read in the Humber Club newsletter lamented the demise of the former Rootes Group building, despite assurances that had been given by the developer. Further disturbing news is that Melbourne Water is looking for a site at Fishermans Bend for a water treatment plant, which would no doubt involve more land clearing.

In this newsletter are details of Harriet Edquist's exhibition, ***The Dream Factory***, at Melbourne City Gallery in the Town Hall, featuring the actual art of Holden designers from the 1960s to 2020.



*Phillip Zmood with some of his designs featured at the Dream Factory exhibition.*

Also in this newsletter there is more information about a visit to Castlemaine to view the Autoplex site. I look forward to working with Larry O'Toole to bring you our conference from Autoplex.

I have also met with members of the NSW-based Australian Motor Heritage Foundation, who visited Harriet's exhibition along with a number of archives to see how documents are stored. I look forward to a positive association with their group.

Norm Darwin  
President

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## ***2021 Conference at Autoplex Castlemaine***

Preparations are well under way for our 2021 conference at Autoplex Castlemaine on 4-5 September. Save the date. More program details will be available soon. If you would like to make a presentation, deliver a paper or participate on a panel, please put in an expression of interest via the website.

[Here's a video with Tony speaking to Larry O'Toole, who explains some of the vision behind Autoplex and their plans for the future.](#)



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*Harriet Edquist's*

## **Dream Factory: GMH design at Fishermans Bend 1964-2020**

From Aussie classics to contemporary concept cars, Dream Factory takes a tour through almost 60 years of design by way of rarely seen drawings, models, photographs, film and memories from key designers, showcasing one of Australia's most important industrial design studios, the Technical Centre, at Fishermans Bend.



Opened in 1964 and scarcely known outside the world of GMH, the Technical Centre was a powerhouse of design and one of the most successful industrial design studios in Australia.

The drawings on display represent the work of nine designers covering a span of more than 50 years. Accompanied by quotations about style, technique and intent, the exhibition explores the activity of design and Australia's industrial design history.

[Read more](#)

The exhibition is running **until 31 August at the City Gallery, Melbourne Town Hall**. the gallery is open Monday to Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm.

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## **Mark Bisset's Historic News in *Auto Action***

Mark Bisset of Primotipo.com now has a regular column on all things historic in Auto Action. This is terrific news for the historic racing fraternity.

The magazine is making an effort to cater for the historic community with Mark's columns and interviews by Mark Fogarty, so give them some support if you can.



As Mark says, "if you have news of boughts, solds, repaireds, importeds, in-process restorations, gossip that won't get them sued and upcoming events gimme a yell." Email [mark@bisset.com.au](mailto:mark@bisset.com.au)

## Radio 3AW Motoring Recordings

### BP Rally 1961

Here's another in our series of historic recordings featuring 3AW motoring journalist Lox McGrath and notable characters in motorsport. This recording features Lox McGrath at the St Kilda Esplanade finish of the 1961 BP Rally on May 7, 1961. [Listen to the recording here.](#)

Lox interviews the winner, Bob Foreman, who drove a Volkswagen, and Peter Coffey who finished third in a Ford Anglia, along with rally director Don Thomson.

I've also included press clippings from The Age reporting on the result, their road test of the winning Volkswagen and a Sydney Sun-Herald "Win on Sunday Sell on Monday" advertisement. The other items in the clippings also give a flavour of the times.

# Gruelling BP Rally Won by Bob Foreman

Kyneton farmer and veteran rally competitor Bob Foreman, who drove a Volkswagen, was yesterday named provisional winner of the fourth BP Rally.

Forty-two mud-splattered vehicles pulled into St. Kilda yesterday afternoon after three days and a half of gruelling driving around Victorian roads.

On a provisional count, Foreman, whose navigators were Martin and Bill Hartigan, also Kyneton farmers, lost 61 points. Of these, 31 points were lost on the first stage of the rally, from Melbourne to Bendigo.

Fifteen of the 57 starters did not finish the muddy, scrubby, river-crossed course of 2000 miles.

The director and organiser of the rally, the national secretary of the Confederation of Australian Motor Sport (Mr. Donald Thomson) described the course he set as the toughest yet seen in Victoria. The weary competitors agreed with him.

## Complaints

Several drivers complained of the organisation of the rally. They said several control points were eliminated.

Some drivers are considering lodging protests.

"The organisation could have been better," the winner of last year's BP rally, Kevin Lott, said. "However, it was generally a success and the sportsmanship of all competitors would have been a tribute to any sport."

Kevin Lott's navigator, Frank Kilfoyle, won the sub-

event of backing and driving at St. Kilda with a time of 19.8 sec.

Provisional results:—

**OUTRIGHT WINNER.—**

R. Foreman (Volkswagen), 61 pts. lost; J. Ellis (Falcon), 108; P. Coffey (Anglia), 143. **A CLASS.—** P. Coffey (Anglia), 143; H. Firth (Austin Sprite), 174; G. Hughes (Anglia), 179. **B**

**CLASS.—** R. Foreman (V.W.), 61; R. Christie (V.W.), 186; K. Lott (V.W.), 261. **C CLASS.—** G. Russell (Peugeot), 189; R. Lilley (Peugeot), 447; J. Stretch (Peugeot), 578. **D CLASS.—** J. Ellis (Falcon), 108; K. Harper (Falcon), 342; S. Hughes (Falcon), 631. **WOMEN'S PRIZE.—** Mrs. L. Gamble (V.W.). **TEAMS PRIZE.—** Volkswagen.

## "Beautiful Blonde," the Pigeons' Friend

**SYDNEY, Sunday.** — Sydney City Council's long-fought battle against pigeons which infest the town hall's carved stonework took an unexpected turn last week with the entry of a "beautiful blonde" saboteur.

Almost since the Town Hall was built, the council has unsuccessfully tried methods to get rid of the pigeons.

Recently the council invited samples from firms in England, the United States, who claim to have perfected "anti-pigeon paste."

Two edges where the paste has been spread are free from pigeons, but large quantities of bird seed spread on patches of lawn around the Town Hall has helped compensate the birds for lack of perching space.

Alderman W. Slowgrove revealed the "sabotage plot" to the council last week.

He said he had seen a woman he described as "a beautiful blonde and well dressed" armed with about 8 lbs. of bird seed on several occasions around the Town Hall.

Town Hall officials denied the woman was a council staff member.

In spite of the sabotage, the council still believes it will win the "battle of the birds."



**BP RALLY**  **1961**

*Here's the winning Volkswagen and the winning crew — driver Bob Foreman (left) with navigators Martin and Bill Harrison.*

**There was only ONE outright winner  
— VOLKSWAGEN!**

**There was only ONE teams prize winner  
— VOLKSWAGEN!**

**There was only ONE women's prize winner  
— VOLKSWAGEN!**

**And to cap it all—Volkswagen returned the three best times  
of the day in the braking, manoeuvrability and acceleration test—  
final proof of Volkswagen's unmatched safety and reliability**

(Results subject to official confirmation)

In the gruelling, 2,000-mile BP Rally of 1961 (May 4-7), Volkswagen not only came first, second and third in its class—**IT WON THE EVENT OUTHRIGHT.** The 57 starters included practically every make and model on the market. But regardless of size, price or horsepower, Volkswagen beat them all. In the toughest road test a car can have through rain, flood, mud and dust, Volkswagens again proved their ability to outclass all others. This is yet another example of VW's continued dominance of trials and rallies throughout the world.



**£971 TAX PAID**  
(1966 capital cost)  
**no extras to buy!**

**A close look will convince you—  
Volkswagen is the car you can afford to buy and to run today!**

73 THE SUN-HERALD, MAY 14, 1961 73

## Requests for Information

### Spyker Cars in Australia

Fons Alkemade has sent a link to a Youtube video of a Spyker car that went to the Netherlands in 1994 from Australia.

He is still looking for information about the number of Spyker 30-40 hp models that were imported to Australia and what happened to them.

Who can assist Fons with information about the main automotive magazines in Australia in the early 1920s?

Does anyone have copies that may include information on Spyker cars?

Here's the video that Fons sent: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mt0-18hL9Ts>

### Clyno Cars in Australia

Jim Gibson, an Australian automotive journalist, is researching the number of Clyno cars that came to our country during the 1920s. He is after any contacts that may be able to assist him with this information? Anyone with information on Clyno cars, please let Tony Lupton know and I will put you in touch with Jim.

### Pre-1911 NSW Registration Information

Gary Luke has asked for information about any sources of records for pre-1911 vehicle registration and ownership in New South Wales. If anyone has any information or helpful hints please get in touch with Tony Lupton.

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## The Racers that Stopped the World - Behind the Scenes



This is a follow-up to the documentary, explaining some of the history of the film and including some extra footage. Click on the photo or the link to watch the film. Enjoy!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYjPtI-ZosQ>

Tony Lupton

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## Books and Research Projects

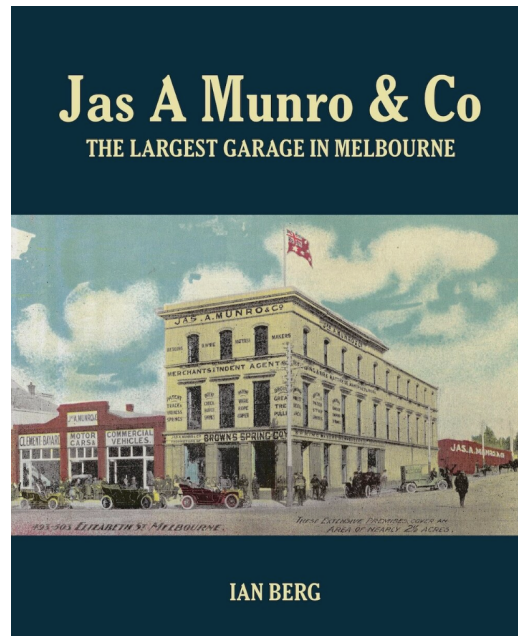
Jas A Munro & Co



## The Largest Garage in Melbourne

by Ian Berg

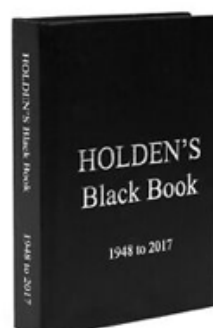
Veteran Car Club of Australia (Victoria) stalwart and AHA member, Ian Berg has written a fascinating story of early Melbourne in his work on Jas Munro. The foreword is written by AHA member Jon Faine.



Anyone interested in automotive history, the development of Melbourne and the place of Elizabeth Street in our history will enjoy reading Ian's book. Copies are available through Ian's website at: <https://www.ianberg.org/>

## Warren Turnbull's Holden Histories

Warren Turnbull's contribution about his Holden history research resulted in Laurie Shine from Western Australia getting in touch. Laurie runs the Torana L34 Register and wanted to share some information about the Holden Production Broadcasts. It's hoped they have a productive discussion.





Members are invited to supply some details of their current work projects so other members who have any resources or information that might assist their research can contact them.

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## Member's Stories

### Automotive Artefacts

Artefact an object that is made by a person, such as a tool or a decoration, especially one that is of historical interest [Cambridge Dictionary]

Most of us are well aware of the great variety of artefacts that come under the heading of automobilia, from enamel advertising signs to petrol pumps, from motor meters to motor accessories, and much more. But what about smaller, personal automotive artefacts?

Recently I had cause to pause while researching a pioneering motorist and think about what I just read in a 1911 newspaper "then Mr. Dodwell presented to Mr. Andrew Lang a beautiful gold medal, sent out from England for him by the Talbot Company, on account of a memorable and record trip made by him in a Talbot car over the transcontinental railway route, a distance of 2,668 miles."

Now, that was the second time I'd read about Talbot sending gold medals out to Australia in recognition of a major motoring feat in a Talbot car. Also in 1911, the Clement Talbot Company sent two massive gold medals out to Vivian Lewis Limited, South Australia, to be awarded to Gilmore White and Fred Custance in recognition of the record breaking runs those men had made between Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide in a 35 hp Talbot. So, there were at least 3 rather unique gold medals in Australia in 1911, but where are they now? Indeed where are any of the many gold medals awarded by our early Australian automobile clubs for competition successes?

The earliest motoring medals here would likely be the gold medals won by the class winners of the 1905 Dunlop Motor Reliability Contests, the awarding of such medals obviously carried over from the bicycling competitions that had been a part of the lives of so many of our first motorists.

Now I've had a bit of a hunt around the interweb but so far drawn a blank on the whereabouts of any significant early Australian motoring medals. I've looked at museum and auction catalogues and the offerings of medal vendors, all to no avail. Are the medals perhaps forgotten in a drawer amongst family heirlooms, or neglected in a tin in someone's garage, maybe they are cherished but kept privately, and if so, does the current custodian truly realise that they would hold great interest to historians and enthusiasts should they be made available for public viewing? Possibly some are in cluttered local collections or museums, where the curators are innocently unaware of their heritage value.

Where ever these medals are, and I firmly believe that not all have been lost or destroyed, hopefully they will soon be discovered and made available one way or another for public display for all to appreciate. I am sure that there are a number of appropriate museums and collections in Australia that would readily give exhibit space to such medals, either on loan or permanent acquisition.

Let's all see if we can encourage the discovery of significant early motoring medals, trophies, certificates, ribbons and such, and encourage the public display of these artefacts, hopefully alongside the vehicles (or similar) to which they relate, and with authentic historical narratives to explain the award, the vehicle and the persons/ associated with both.

These automotive artefacts deserve bringing back into the light, they deserve proper recognition, as well as appropriate conservation, so they can again enhance the exploits and stories of early motorists in Australia.

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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 examples you may wish to subscribe to.

The **Kar Kulture** e-news, from Stefan Nechwatal, includes a calendar of events and other historical snippets with special emphasis on the central Victoria region.

The email for subscriptions is [dford.kar.kulture@gmail.com](mailto:dford.kar.kulture@gmail.com)

Refer to pdf attached, Lynda Brighton, Editor and Proprietor, The Owner Builder magazine, with credit. Lynda comm the wayside during this pandemic.  
With not a lot happening in lockdown, we are celebrating Nostalgia, which I know is wasted on the young, but there  
This is my mystery photo and more to say about this image from the 50s. Inside.



Also inside a large feature on Women in motoring and engineering during World War 2. While the hardships and often dangers in their newly adopted workplaces. This caused conflict when the re

Included as an attachment is a print copy of a new email from Automotive Historians Australia, w Joy of Motoring. Some of the enjoyable reads are from the lectures:  
Larry O'Toole- Why is Castlemaine the Hot Rod Centre of the Universe?  
Jenny Fawbert- On being a vintage car driver, and Early Century Reliability Motoring Contests.  
Rhonda Hamilton- The role of architecture and related automobile showcase the adaptations in

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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## AHA Resources Page

### David Neely's History of Jackson, Jones & Collins

Automotive historian David Neely has provided our resources page with a history of [Jackson, Jones & Collins – A Sydney firm of motor body builders](#). [Click to read the article.](#)



*Parramatta Road, Leichhardt, Sydney in the 1920s.*

David, together with Tom Clarke, wrote *Rolls Royce & Bentley in the Sunburnt Country - the first fifty years in Australia*. It is a fine documentation of both marques that also contains many histories of motor body builders who were building motor bodies for both makes in Australia.

### Sydney's First Gathering of Motorists

Jenny Fawbert has written a fascinating paper on Sydney's first motoring get-together. [Read the article on our Resources Page.](#)

### GM on Designing and Planning Automotive Dealerships in Australia

Michael Bogle's paper on GM's approach to automotive dealership design is a very good read. [Read the paper on our Resources Page.](#)



## **Land Title Data as an Automotive History Research Tool**

Norm Darwin has an interesting take on using land survey information in automotive research. [Read it on the Resources Page.](#)

If you have an article that needs publishing please forward it for consideration to [info@autohistoriansaustralia.org](mailto:info@autohistoriansaustralia.org)

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## **Changed Arrangements for Third European Conference for Automotive History, Turin**

We have heard from Anders Ditlev Clausager, Secretary of the Society of Automotive Historians in Britain, that the conference in Turin will now be held in April 2022. Here's the new advertisement and call for papers.

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Conférence Européenne sur  
l'Histoire de l'Automobile



Thomas Ulrich, AHG, Germany;  
Anders Ditlev Clausager, SAHB, Britain;  
Together with the AISA, Associazione Italiana  
per la Storia dell'Automobile  
And the FIVA Culture and Youth Commission



invite you to the

### Third European Conference for Automotive History

Supported and hosted by MAUTO



Torino / Turin—Italia / Italy / Italien  
1-3 aprile / April / avril 2022  
[www.pan-european-automobile-history.com](http://www.pan-european-automobile-history.com)  
[info@museoauto.it](mailto:info@museoauto.it)

#### CALL FOR PAPERS:

Together with the Museo Nazionale dell'Automobile and the AISA, we are pleased to invite you to our third European conference for automotive history, to be held in the Mauto, Corso Unità d'Italia 40, Turin, Italy, from 1 to 3 April 2022, with invitations cordially extended to AHA (Australia), AHG (Germany), CONAM (The Netherlands), PHAF (France), SAH (USA), SAHB (Britain) and UIA (Serbia), as well as to other interested organisations and individuals.

To further international discourse, conference presentations will focus on subjects which have a cross-border European or International interest, or are of general interest to automotive historians.

The provisional programme is as follows:

**Friday 1 April:** arrival, informal dinner in the hotel.

**Saturday 2 April:** conference in the museum starting at 9am, with a break for lunch, followed by dinner.

**Sunday 3 April:** a morning session of further papers, finishing at midday.

Speeches should be made in English, with accompanying Powerpoint presentations. The length of each presentation is provisionally set at 30 minutes., with 10 minutes for questions and discussions.

Please note that the programme is subject to change.

The organisers reserve the right to cancel any part of the programme.

The closing date for submissions of papers for consideration by the organisers is **1 October 2021**, please supply an abstract or outline, including estimated length and number of slides. Please contact:

**Anders Ditlev Clausager, 62 Viceroy Close,  
Birmingham B5 7UT, England  
Telephone +44 (0)121 440 4745  
email: [sahb.secretary@btinternet.com](mailto:sahb.secretary@btinternet.com)**

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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 \(NSW\)](#)



## 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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