

THE AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIAN

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**AUTOMOTIVE
HISTORIANS
AUSTRALIA INC**

PATRON: Ron Tauranac AO

2018 AHA Conference Preview

The conference will be hosted by the Australian Centre for Architectural History, Urban and Cultural Heritage and Melbourne School of Design at the University of Melbourne on 11th and 12th August.

There will be conference paper sessions, enthusiast presentations and the AHA Annual General Meeting, along with the conference dinner.

*A highlight of the conference will be the third Ron Tauranac Lecture, to be given by historian Graeme Davison, author of *Car Wars*.*

[REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE
AND DINNER HERE](#)

The Theme for the Conference Papers

Autopia: the car and the modern city

2017 was a significant year for motor vehicle manufacture in Australia with the closure of the last Holden Plant at Elizabeth. As a retrospective of the legacy of the local manufacturing industry, the third annual conference of Automotive Historians Australia considers the impact of the automobile on all aspects of urban life.

While some historians point to the erosion of the public sphere by private convenience of the automobile, they have nevertheless been one of the most potent objects of everyday Australian life and a pervasive symbol of our modern experience. Therefore the theme of the 2018 Automotive Historians Australia Conference is **AUTOPIA: the car and the modern city**.

The Ron Tauranac Lecture for 2018

Beyond Nostalgia: Rethinking the History of the Car in a Post-Fordist World, is the title of the Ron Tauranac lecture for 2018, to be delivered by Graeme Davison.

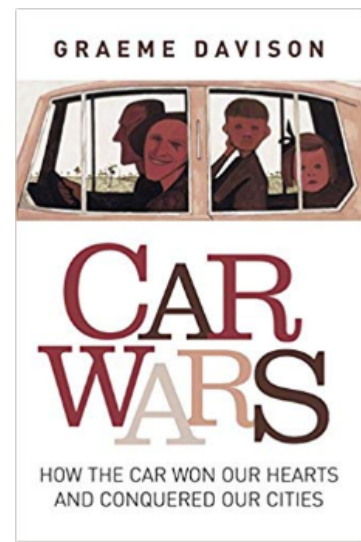
Graeme Davison is Emeritus Professor of History at Monash University. He has taught at Melbourne and Monash Universities and held visiting appointments at Harvard, Edinburgh, ANU, Tübingen and King's College London.



He has written widely on Australian urban and cultural history and has been active as an advisor and commentator on heritage, museums and

urban policy.

His books include *Car Wars: How the Car Won Our Hearts and Conquered our Cities* (2004), *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne* (1978 and 2004) and *City Dreamers: The Urban Imagination in Australia* (2016).



Sunday is Enthusiast Day

One of the principal reasons for establishing the Automotive Historians Australia association was to provide an opportunity for academics and writers, industry professionals and enthusiasts to share their passion for all things to do with Australia's automotive heritage. As our major event for the year, the annual conference provides a great opportunity to focus on bringing these elements together with an emphasis on the enthusiast in us all.

The Sunday Enthusiast program for this year's conference will include a panel of guests in conversation about the significance of Australia's motor sport heritage, with panellists having competed, worked in top teams, made sure historic racing is kept alive and have documented the cars, drivers and circuits that created the legends.

The panel includes **Ian Tate**, President of the Victorian Historic Racing Register who is well known

Along with Ian and Patrick on the panel is **Mark Bisset**, who has owned and raced Alfa Romeo, Porsche, Lotus, Venom, Asp, Elfin, Lola, Van Diemen & Ralt cars, and who now informs and entertains us with the sensational motor racing website and blog called [Primotipo](#).

Our three experts have a wealth of knowledge to share and will swap anecdotes, reflect on some great personalities and explain the importance of historic racing.

A historical presentation by **Ian Berg**, who has long been a stalwart of the Veteran Car Club, will also be part of the Sunday Enthusiast program. Ian will present his reflections on the history of the Veteran Car Club of Australia (Victoria) in conjunction with the publication of the club's history.

And the history of automotive design in Australia will be featured in a

as an expert engine builder and member of the Holden Dealer Team during its heyday.

Also on the panel is **Patrick Ryan**, a notable competitor in historic racing, who fields a stable of cars driven by himself, son Conor and other invited drivers.

Patrick's garage includes a Vauxhall 30/98, Bolwell Mk3 known as the Elgaram, an MG TC, a Formula Vee and the Demmitt Speed Car.

presentation by **Norm Darwin** and **Paul Beranger**, who have both recently published books on this topic. Norm provides a rich historical perspective on the first 50 years of design in this country in *Early Australian Automotive Design, The first fifty years*, while in *Crayon to CAD, A History of Post-War Automotive Design in Australia*, Paul brings a designers expertise to understanding design up to the present day. More details of these books are available below.



Formula Vee and 'Elgaram' Bolwell Mk3 in the Ryan pit garage at Winton Raceway in May 2018

A taste of the papers to be presented at the conference

Creating the Educated Driver: The Practical Australian Motorist Illustrated

AnnMarie Brennan will examine this 1953 book and demonstrate how it attempted to educate the public about the inner workings of the motor car, enabled people to choose, maintain and repair their car and helped establish an automobile culture in Australia.

Early Automotive Contests in Urban America

Urban and suburban settings like Brighton Beach on Coney Island, Empire City in Yonkers, Morris Park in the Bronx and Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn were the venues for early American auto races. H. Donald Capps will look at this aspect of the relationship between the automobile and the urban environment.

The Automobile and Fishermans Bend - Did the automobile make Fishermans Bend or did Fishermans Bend make the automobile?

In this paper Norm Darwin examines the importance of Fishermans Bend to the Australian automotive industry and why it evolved into a manufacturing centre for vehicles and parts. While the machinery of making automobiles is now silent, links remain and point to a future in design, engineering, training and selling of motor vehicles.

Eleanor Dark's *Return to Coolami* (1936), a pioneering road novel

In this paper that draws on the role of the interwar novel in the construction of Australian modernism, Harriet Edquist examines the pioneering Australian road novel *Return to Coolami* in which the car, a green Madison tourer, and the road are vital elements in a narrative of psychological, emotional and intellectual awakening.

Featurism and the Fishbowl: Robin Boyd's Drive-in Design for 1969

Philip Goad argues the design for 'Neptune's Fishbowl', a drive-in takeaway fish and chip outlet on Toorak Road South Yarra, was not only part of a new architecture designed for the road, but was part of an emerging acceptance that automobile-related architecture might play a decisive role in shifting opinions about the aesthetics of the city.

Behind the shield: glass as vehicle of technological transfer from the automotive industry to the buildings of the International Style

Giorgio Marfella analyses the technological affinity between the automotive and construction industries by examining how laminated glass technology that enabled curved car windshields was applied to the architectural and construction industries in the buildings of the International Style.

Concrete and Ramps: Stories from the Carpark

Representations of underground and open-deck carparks range from generic film noir scenes to vistas of suburban monotony. By examining physical carparks and their representation in films centred on young people living in Australian cities, Renee Miller-Yeaman explores the physical and psychological relationships between the carpark and its adjacent shopping mall, focusing on how this typology demarcates boundaries of economic and social exclusion and inclusion.

One Hawaiian pack to take away: the architecture of Australian fast food

Andrew Murray examines the landscape dominated by buildings and signage designed to be consumed at speed and documents the emergence of the fast food industry in Australia and the wide range of buildings this industry produced.

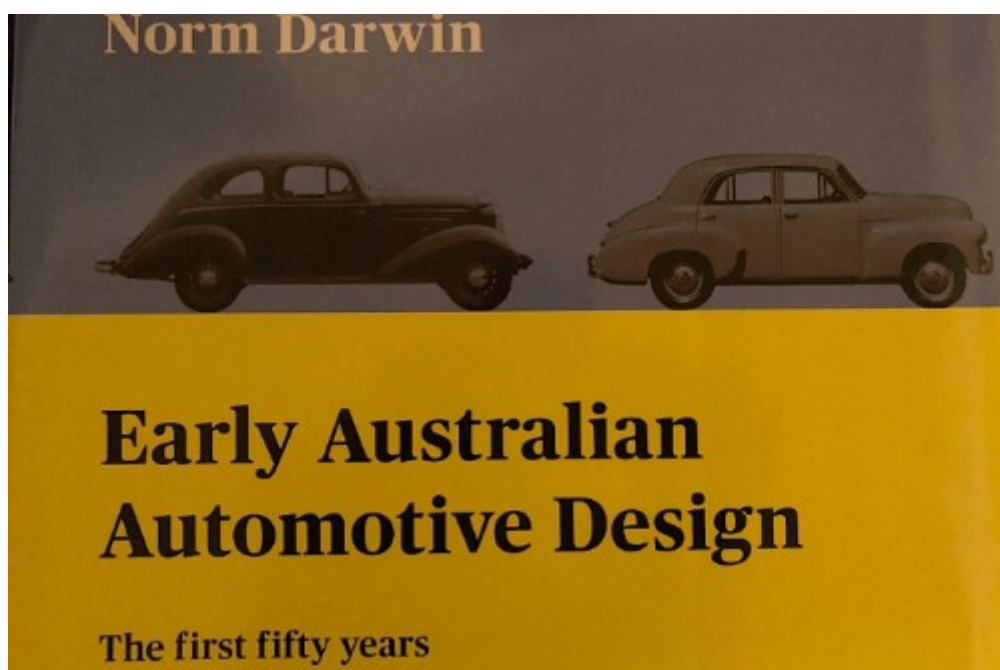
Post-manufacturing: The state of manufacturing in Victoria after the 2017 automotive production closures

Much is still unknown about how industry is responding in the wake of automotive production closures. Mark Richardson and Simon Lockrey use data from expert interviews and literature reviews to compare predictions to the actual outcomes, providing insights to help plan ahead and meet emerging challenges.

Women at Work - Early Auto Industry Publication Photographic Documentation

One of the largest identifiable anonymous labour force groups were women, who were far less credited for their day-to-day contributions than their male counterparts. The focus of Francis Clax's paper is on early auto industry factory floor photos of female employees documented by industry publications at such companies as Motometer, Cadillac, Chalmers, Maxwell and Packard.

Recently Published Automotive Design Books

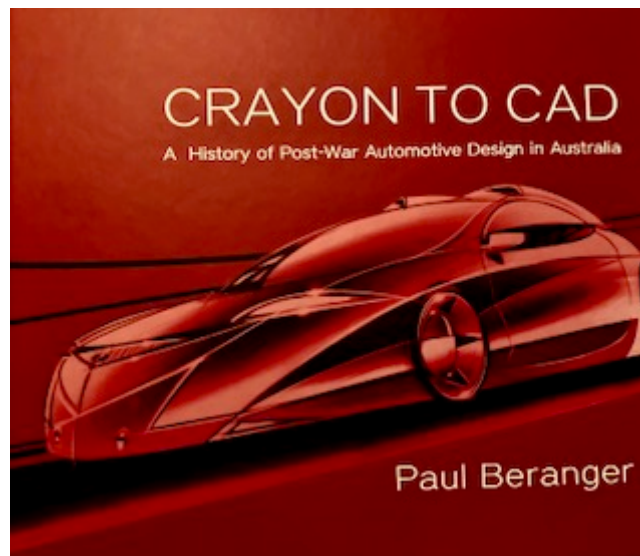


Early Australian Automobile Design, The first fifty years reveals new

knowledge and provides the first comprehensive account of the origins and early development of Australian vehicle design from the 1890s to the 1950s. The research also uncovers the names of Australian designers who have been neglected, along with unknown early Australian automobiles.

The book sets out to clarify what an Australian car is, significant endeavours of design and manufacture and includes short biographies of influential Australian automobile designers, ensuring Australia's design legacy is recorded so that we may understand the uniqueness and inventiveness that is still evident in the current automotive design environment in Australia.

Early Australian Automobile Design, The first fifty years is available from www.handpub.com.au and good bookshops.



Crayon to CAD: A History of Post-War Automotive Design in Australia, written by Paul Beranger, is a unique book about cars and people, places and technologies. With over 40 years as an automotive designer, planner and manager, Paul has brought his own knowledge together with other automotive luminaries, many of whom he worked with, to produce a rare record of post-war automotive design.

In engaging, non-technical language, this 336 page illustrated hardback coffee table book takes the reader through high security design studio doors, tracking the progress of automotive design in Australia, from early drawing board and crayons to sophisticated computer technologies (CAD).

Crayon to CAD: A History of Post-War Automotive Design in Australia, is available from www.c2cpublishing.com.au and good bookshops.

Automotive Historians Australia Committee: Harriet Edquist (President)
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Helen Stitt (Assistant-Secretary) Simon Lockrey (Committee Member) Mark
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