



AOMC News Bulletin

August 2020 - Issue 4

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www.aomc.asn.au

Due to Stage 4 restrictions in Melbourne and Stage 3 restrictions in Regional Victoria, any move to restore normal club activities has come to a halt.

Committee meetings, members meetings and any events/gatherings cannot take place for at least the 6 week State of Disaster time period.

More information inside this news bulletin

Looking back to more carefree times, below is an image taken at the c1977 British Car Show at Templestowe. In this issue we have several more pictures from that day, supplied by Graham Keys from the Wolseley Car Club.



FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

The State of Play in Victoria	3
VicRoads News	4
VHRR & AOMC Notices	5
British Motoring Show 1977	7
Resurrecting the 1914 Delage Grand Prix car	8
News From the UK	12
News From the USA	13
The Buick Riviera	15
Information Required	16

CONTACTING THE AOMC:

The AOMC office and phone is attended 2 days per week, all other times there is an answering machine operating which is accessed remotely, so your call will be attended to within 24 hours. When leaving a message, please ensure you leave your contact number and a brief outline of your query.

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ASSOCIATION OF MOTORING CLUBS ISSUES & ACTIONS

- Support the Development and Retention of the permit scheme for historic vehicles
- Lobby against the introduction of annual roadworthy inspections
- Lobby against any legislation that introduces compulsory removal of older vehicles from the road.
- Support Retention of the left hand drive registration scheme for classic, historic vehicles
- Lobby for the introduction of Australian standards for fuels suitable for the historic fleet.
- Carry out a watching brief for any State or Federal legislation that may affect the ability of the historic vehicle movement to continue to use their vehicles on the roads and highways.
- Continue to monitor the historic vehicle movement to ensure that it operates in a manner that is not considered anti social by the wider community and that attention is paid to changing community environmental standards.
- Provide relevant advice to clubs on matters that have state wide ramifications.
- Provide forums for discussions and training for club officials on matters of common interest.
- Assist with the recording of information relating to the part played in the history of the State by the historical vehicle fleet.
- Assist clubs with promotion of the member clubs and of the historic vehicle movement.
- Provide assistance or support with the establishment and promotion of events of state wide significance that showcase the historic vehicle movement.
- Liaise with other state wide organisations that service the historic vehicle movement.
- Alert state clubs of prospective Victorian local Government rules impacting on local clubs relating to the storage of vehicles on private property.

From Your Editor

"Strange days Indeed" sang John Lennon, and it could not be more true now. The rapid spread of the corona virus in Melbourne shows how fragile our lifestyle can be with such a viral pandemic running loose. Even talk of moving the AFL Grand Final and Melbourne Cup interstate!

All we can do is buckle down for now and hope the spread is controlled or eliminated.

In the meantime, we have some news items and articles of interest for you and your members.

Stay safe and think of everyone else at this time.

Daryl McMahon

The State of Play in Victoria -

What Re Imposing of Restrictions means for Club Activities

The State of Disaster announcement by the Victorian State Government for metropolitan Melbourne has put a halt to any club activities that may have been planned for the immediate future. Regional Victoria is also under Stage 3 restrictions, whilst not as severe it also puts a halt to any club activity including face to face committee meetings until further notice.

The AOMC committee have been holding video conference meetings via zoom, and have even held a planning meeting with British and European clubs for next years planned car show with 38 participants. We are looking at conducting several such video meetings with club delegates in the near future, as it is hard to envisage when a full scale delegates meeting will be able to take place with 100 delegates in one room.

Many clubs are coming into their AGM season, and will need to look for ways to conduct or defer these. Many of our largest corporations, such as Telstra, are arranging to run their AGM's via electronic communication in one form or another.

As to the service suppliers we rely on, I have included media releases from the VACC (below) and VicRoads (following page) with information on what can be done and how under the current restrictions.

Clubs are advised to rely on the most recent news stories and Bulletins only, as government advice and regulations will continue to change as the COVID-19 situation develops. The advice contained in this news sheet was correct at the time of publication. Editor

VACC Media Release: Auto remains open 5 August 2020

Victoria's automotive industry remains open for business, providing crucial services to the state's more than five million motorists – albeit with increased restrictions on some sectors, says peak industry body, the Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce (VACC).

“After consulting the Victorian State Government, VACC can assure automotive business owners, and the 111,600 Victorians employed in the sector, that the automotive industry is still open for business,” said VACC CEO, Geoff Gwilym.

However, there are important and specific new guidelines for the vehicle and parts sales sectors in metropolitan Melbourne.

“Wholesale and retail sales of vehicles and automotive parts are not permitted at a physical site in the metro area. But these businesses can still operate. Service and repair operations at vehicle dealerships can remain open on-site and vehicle sales can still take place, but these will need to take place online, and trade sales of vehicle parts can continue, meaning service and repair workshops and body repair businesses can continue their work,” said Mr Gwilym.

Aftermarket service and repair, body repair, tyre fitting and all other areas of the automotive industry can remain open on-site, if conducting operations within government safety guidelines. These businesses are required to implement a COVID-19 Safe Plan, focused on safety, prevention, and response in the event of an outbreak, by midnight Friday, 7 August. Therefore, VACC is encouraging automotive businesses needing assistance to consider engaging the services of its specialist OHS&E Unit.

“Logbook servicing, tyre and windscreen replacement, body repairs, and other safety-related work can be conducted by dealerships, aftermarket repairers, and body repair shops,” said Mr Gwilym.

In response to confusion regarding the five kilometre radius restriction, the Chamber is assuring motorists that if a vehicle requires a specialist and/or brand-specific workplace in order to complete repairs, then they can travel outside the five kilometre zone to access these services.

“Importantly, all automotive businesses in regional Victoria – with the exception of public auctions – remain open for business under Stage 3 restrictions,” said Mr Gwilym.

VACC continues to have a strong dialogue with government and is committed to ensuring the automotive supply chain remains open, where it is safe to do so.

VicRoads News

State of Disaster Stage 4 restrictions are in place for metropolitan Melbourne. Stage 3 Stay at Home restrictions will be in place from 11:59pm on Wednesday 5 August for Regional Victoria. All licence and computer-based tests in Regional Victoria will be postponed and we are contacting all customers directly. Please avoid visiting a Customer Service Centre unless your matter is urgent.

Our Customer Service Centres remain open for essential services. Otherwise we encourage you to complete your matter online or by phone.

Please note: Our Geelong Customer Service Centre is closed until further notice. All customers with existing appointments are being contacted to have their appointments postponed. See below for services that can be completed online.

You can call 13 11 71 to get information about how we're supporting those in essential services or customers with hardship requests. We're confident we can help you to complete your transaction online or over the phone.

Pay for your registration or licence renewal online or over the phone: You can pay for your registration online or by calling 1300 086 314. Go to '*Renew your registration*' on our website to learn more.

You don't need a new photo, you can pay for your licence with BPAY (if shown on your renewal notice) or by calling **1300 554 853**. Go to 'How to renew your licence' on our website to learn more.

Mandatory face coverings: Customers visiting any of our Customer Service Centres must wear a face covering, unless an exemption applies. Visit the DHHS website for more information on wearing face coverings.

If you do visit, you should attend your closest Customer Service Centre wherever possible. To protect the health and wellbeing of all customers and staff, strict hygiene protocols will be in place for both drive test vehicles and at our Customer Service Centres.

We have implemented additional safety measures, including temperature checks and recording customer details for contact tracing at all our metropolitan Customer Service Centres and Seymour Customer Service Centre. For more information go to '*Safety operating procedures for licence testing*'.

Short-term registration. Right now, short-term registration gives everyone the option to pay their vehicle registration at three or six month registration periods, providing more flexibility while helping to relieve financial pressure. Login to your *myVicRoads account* to update your registration.

Seasonal registration for heavy vehicles: Seasonal registration means you can nominate parts of the year your heavy vehicle is in use and only pay for the months it's being used. All heavy vehicles (vehicles with a GVM over 4.5 tonnes) can use seasonal registration.

Medical Review driving tests: Based on the latest medical advice, VicRoads is postponing all Medical Review drive tests across Victoria (as practitioners typically move frequently between metropolitan and regional areas).

Based on a case-by-case assessment of road safety risk, you may be provided with a 'conditional licence' with restrictions, while you are waiting for your on-road assessment.

If you have previously been issued with a conditional licence with restrictions, these conditions will remain until you undertake and pass your test or assessment, following the easing of restrictions.

Historic Sandown 2020

As you may be aware, the VHRR Committee has for sometime been in pre planning for Historic Sandown 2020 and incorporating both the Government's Covid-19 restrictions and Motorsport Australia's Return To Race strategy into the deliberations.

Our Event Secretary and Clerk of Course have been developing Supplementary Regulations consistent with Government restrictions, which would have required restrictions on the number of persons onsite, including NO Spectators, likely limit on Pit Crew of 1 or 2, no Trade Stands, No displays and no food or beverage sales.

Whilst it was likely that the event would be conducted at a financial loss, our primary consideration has been the health and safety of Competitors and Crew, and our Officials and strict compliance with the Government restrictions applicable at the time of the event.

Unfortunately the situation in Victoria has continued to worsen with increasing doubt on our ability to conduct the event.

The VHRR Committee wishes to advise that we have come to the reluctant unanimous decision to cancel Historic Sandown 2020. We trust that you can appreciate our efforts in attempting to run the event and that you understand that we have been left with no choice in reaching this decision.

We look forward to welcoming you to Historic Sandown 2021 when hopefully this dreadful virus will be under control. In the meantime we trust that you and your families maintain good health in these difficult times.

The AOMC Executive Committee

Like all organisations our committee constantly needs change. Change that can bring new ideas and emphasis for the organisation.

If you have a desire to see our movement thrive into the future, have an understanding of legislative procedures affecting the movement, or generally value the need for a state level representative association, we would like to hear from you.

We want to develop more representation from the European and American vehicle clubs on our committee. As well youth orientated, and female representation would be welcomed.

It is expected that committee members would be able to attend a monthly committee meeting, scheduled for a Monday evening. Face to face meetings are held in Springvale (zoom meetings are currently taking place). Meetings generally last no more than two hours. As well the organisation promotes shows and seminars, committee members are expected to attend and assist with these events. Applicants must be computer literate.

As well we need a **shows coordinator** to assist in the organisation of our annual Motoring Shows. A great opportunity for a well organised enthusiast to put his/her stamp on these popular events. This is a multifaceted role combining venue management, publicity, and financials. Full support will be provided by the Executive committee.

If you would like to discuss committee positions or the shows coordinator role in the first instance, please contact me for a chat.

Iain Ross
President
imgross@bigpond.com

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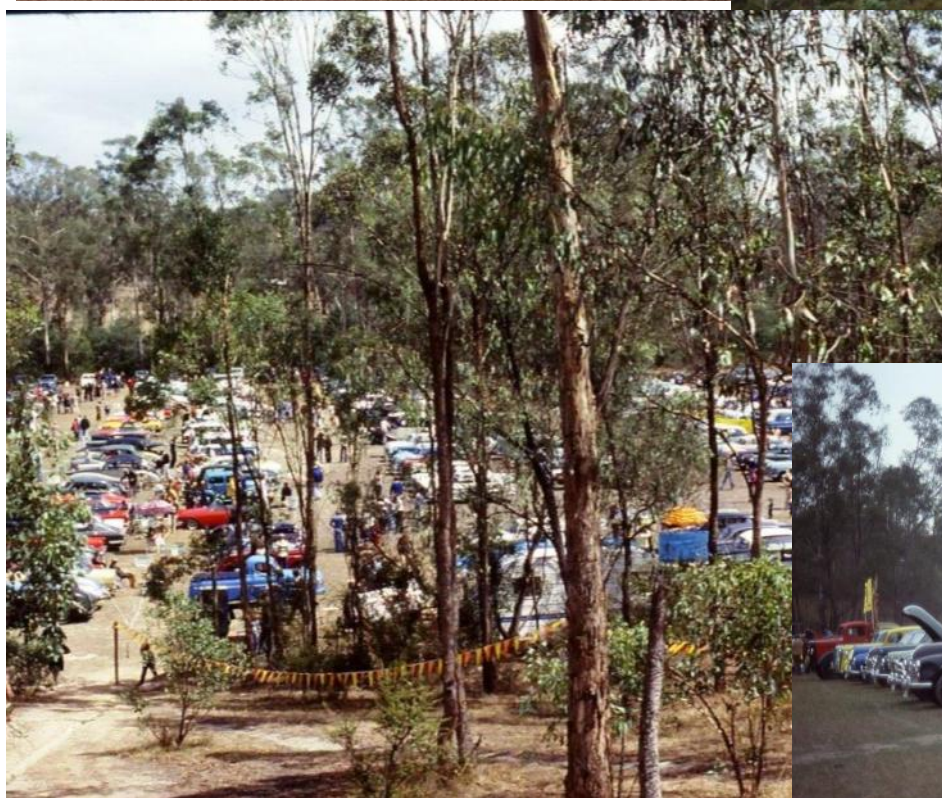
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British Motoring Show Templestowe circa 1977

Graham Keys from the Wolseley Car Club has sent in these historic images. They were taken at the second British Motoring Show which was held at the old Templestowe Hillclimb in around 1977. This was not an AOMC event, as all these early shows were organised by the clubs themselves. If anyone has images and / or information on any of these formulative car shows we would be grateful if you could pass these on to the AOMC.



RESURRECTING THE 1914 DELAGE GRAND PRIX CAR

Author: Philip Guilfoyle, Vintage Restoration Management Pty Ltd. philip.guilfoyle@gmail.com

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The French car maker, Delage, was one of the premier sporting and luxury car manufacturers of the early years of the motor car. With numerous technical innovations and motor racing successes, Delage was a leader in automotive technology.

In 1914, Delage fielded a team of three new racing cars, the Type S, for the premier auto race in Europe, the 1914 Grand Prix De L'ACF, at Lyons on 4th July. These cars combined many of the most advanced features of automotive design, resulting in possibly the most advanced vehicle of its day.

They embodied many features which did not become common for decades. To quote automotive

historian Griffith Borgeson, "they were ultra-sophisticated and prophetic.". The designer, Arthur Leon Michelat, drew upon the revolutionary engine designs of Ernst Henry, combined them with previous Delage innovations seen in the Type-Y, and added other innovations such as desmodromic valve operation and four wheel brakes.



Delage Type S racing in 1914

SPECIFICATION

- **Engine** – Sand cast in cast iron, integral head and block. Four cylinder, original capacity 4,441cc, bore 94mm x stroke 160mm, compression ratio 5.5:1. Hollow tubular con-rods. Four piece crankshaft on five ball bearing races. Double overhead cam shafts with desmodromic operation of four 90° inclined valves per cylinder, in pent-roof cross-flow combustion chambers. Note: The capacity was increased to 4.8L by Harry Miller.
- **Drive Train** – 5 speed gearbox, overdrive on 4th & 5th. Brakes on four wheels plus transmission.
- **Chassis** – Wheelbase 2,743mm. Weight (dry) 998kg.
- **Performance** – 113 BHP at 2,800 RPM. 25 BHP per litre. More than 160 KPH.

Although competitive and fast, only one Delage finished the race (8th position). These radical cars needed further development. WW1 erupted one month later, and racing in Europe ceased. In 1915 the Delage Type S cars were sold to the USA, where board track racing was thriving. Mechanical features of the sole surviving car indicate that it was owned and raced by the famous "barnstormer" Barney Oldfield, who raced it on speedways all across the country, including Indianapolis in 1916. After Barney broke a con-rod, it was rebuilt by Harry Miller who also fitted a new carburettor of his own advanced design.



May 1916: Barney Oldfield's Delage at Indy



December 1925: George McCarey at Maroubra

In 1923 or 1924, the "Oldfield" Delage came out to Australia to race. It easily won the inaugural race meeting at the Olympia Motor Speedway at Maroubra, Sydney in December 1925. The car was owned for many years by four times Australian Grand Prix winner Lex Davison.

His widow sold the car to Mr. Stuart Murdoch in 1975. The Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum and the Donington Collection had missed their opportunity to acquire the world's only Delage Type-S.

Stuart Murdoch and his family have driven the Delage on the road, circuits and hill climbs ever since restoration was completed in 1978 by Jack Nelson of Romsey, Victoria.

WHY IS THIS CAR SIGNIFICANT?

- It is a team car of one of the great marques of early motor sport – Delage. And it includes early racing modifications by the great Harry Miller.
- It is the apogee of a period of great technical advancement in automotive development. It embodies ground breaking design features that were both innovations at the time and harbingers of the future.
- It is the first multi-cylinder high performance desmodromic valve engine.
- It was driven by some of the great drivers of the early era, in some of the great races, and was owned by one of Australia's motor racing greats.
- It is the sole remaining example of the Type-S Delage in the world.
- It is widely acknowledged to be one of the most beautiful veteran cars in the Australia.
- It survives as a driving, living masterpiece, not as a static and silent museum exhibit.

In 2014, a known problem area in the engine block casting failed. The failure would be impossible to access without cutting open the block, and any repair would be risky. Inspection revealed that this failure would likely be followed by others in time. Laser welding and cold metal spraying were both tried without success. If the Delage was to stay on the road, a new block was required.

Re-manufacture using traditional pattern making techniques was an option, but would have been slow, extremely expensive, reliant on fading pattern making skills, with an uncertain outcome. The vintage car restoration business responsible for repairing the vehicle approached a leading foundry and CSIRO Lab22 to re-manufacture the engine block using the latest in sand casting technology – 3D printed sand moulds.



Delage Type-S engine block, 2015.



Casting failure No. 3 cylinder and area of failed repair.

ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED WITHIN THE PROJECT

- The vehicle and its engine are unique. There is a world-wide market of one only. The remanufacturing process must be cost effective, yet deliver all of the requirements listed below.
- The original engine block is part of the provenance of the vehicle. It must not be damaged.
- The original engine block is the only one in the world. The only information is the block itself.
- The only part to be replaced is the engine block. The replacement engine block must be precisely the same and must be machined to accept all existing engine components.
- The replacement engine block must be exactly like the original, in every way. It must look and function exactly the same. It must be made from the same material, by a similar final process. 6. The re-manufactured block must be durable and fit for purpose - extended driving on the road.

THE PROJECT TEAM

Mr. Stuart Murdoch is the owner of the 1914 Delage Type-S Grand Prix Car.

Up The Creek Workshop Pty Ltd (Castlemaine) restores and maintains an extraordinary range of exotic and valuable old cars. UTCW is located in. See www.upcreek.com.au

Philip Guilfoyle of Vintage Restoration Management Pty Ltd was Technical Adviser and Project Manager of the GP Delage Project, managing activities of various parties on behalf of the owner.

Keech3D Pty Ltd and Keech Australia (Bendigo) are an engineering and foundry business supplying castings to the manufacturing and mining industries.

Lab22 is the Manufacturing Innovation Centre of CSIRO. Lab22 provided the Voxeljet 3D Sand Printer, training, and support.

WYSIWYG 3D Pty Ltd (Sydney) scanned the engine block and created the CAD model.

METHODS USED

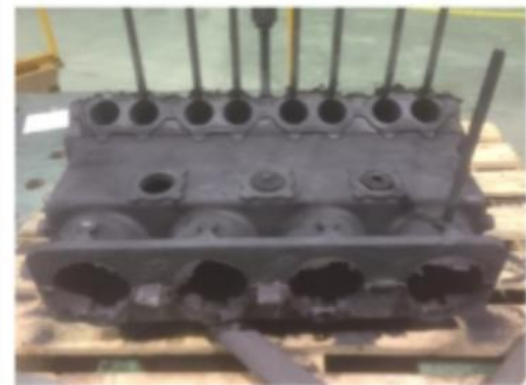
- 1 The engine was disassembled and the engine block cleaned. Paint was removed.
- 2 The block was digitised using a laser scanner and stylus probe.
- 3 A complete three dimensional computer model of the engine block – a virtual engine block - was built using scanned surface data and solid modelled internal details. Material was added to machined surfaces to be machined off later.
- 4 The virtual engine block was reviewed to check dimensions, wall sections and clearances.
- 5 A piece of the material was analysed to determine composition and hardness.
- 6 The virtual engine block was run through a series of computer simulations to determine mould flow, molten material parameters and flow characteristics.
- 7 A contraction allowance was added to the CAD model of the engine block to compensate for material contraction during the casting process.
- 8 A series of sand moulds were designed in CAD and evaluated. A final design was modelled.



Sealed mould set, partly assembled.



Trial casting emerging from destroyed sand mould.



Production casting (raw).



Production casting partly machined (with original).

- 9 The mould design was 3D printed at scale 1:4 to check fits, develop the mould assembly process and communicate with the foundry operators.
- 10 A trial sand mould was printed using a Voxeljet VX1000 Sand Printer. The mould set comprised 14 individual parts and cores, printed in two build sets. (Note - The original mould set comprised at least 42 individual parts and cores, probably more.)
- 11 The mould parts were examined and surface finished where necessary.
- 12 The trial mould was sealed, assembled and poured in grey cast iron.
- 13 The cast material was checked for composition and mechanical properties.
- 14 The trial casting was cleaned, inspected and measured. It was then cut into sections to inspect mould function, core location, wall thicknesses, and casting quality.
- 15 Minor modifications were made to the mould design and foundry process.
- 16 A final production mould set was printed.
- 17 The production mould set was surface finished.
- 18 The production mould set was sealed, assembled and poured.
- 19 The production casting was cleaned, inspected and measured.
- 20 The production casting was machined to the same dimensions as the original. The external surfaces were finished to match the original.
- 21 The engine was reassembled, fitted in the chassis, tuned and extensively tested.
- 22 The car was driven for many kilometres to run-in the new block and to ensure that everything was perfect before handing it back to the owner. (Note: The vehicle is road registered.)

The ABC did a 7.30 Report segment on the project, available on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPkxtzMuvFQ>

CONCLUSIONS

At present, this is an innovative method of vehicle restoration. However, I believe it will become the default method for sand casting replication in the future, due to its advantages in cost, speed, detail and accuracy.

As a result, the historic vehicle sector will be less dependent on remnant stocks of parts and fading skills. Instead, we will access the “economy of scope” to be found in digital manufacturing, augmenting a diminishing legacy of the industrial era’s “economy of scale”.

Digital technologies made the GP Delage Project technically and financially feasible. These methods can be applied to an infinite variety of low volume / high value and specialist projects due to the editability of the data and the flexibility of the methods.

But at the core of the Type-S GP Delage Project is authenticity. The final part is the same as the original. It is only the method of copying the part and making the mould that is different.

The GP Delage returned to the road in December 2016, a working example of automotive innovations of the past and restoration opportunities of the future.



**Today: The 1914 Delage
Grand Prix Type-S**

Reliant Motor Club - Virtual Rally

Traditionally the Easter Bank Holiday weekend is one filled with motoring events although sadly, due to the Coronavirus Covid-19 lockdown, they were all cancelled.

I (Elvis Payne) am the Chairman and the Historian for the Reliant Motor Club and with all the usual motoring events cancelled, our Treasurer, Mark Cropper, came up with the idea of a virtual Reliant rally to celebrate the 85th Anniversary of Reliant. The virtual rally had all the events usually found at a car rally although people entered them by posting photos of their Reliants instead of the real thing. It was open to all so you did not need to be a member to participate.

Using Social Media, the gates to the virtual rally field in Tamworth (Birthplace of the Reliant) opened at 10am on Bank Holiday Monday and (unofficially) it was opened by the club's Honorary Member, HRH The Princess Royal. We started several events, Car of the Day, Restoration of the Day, Photo of the Day, Furthest Travelled, Celebs & Royals along with a main area where people checked in, said hello and parked their car(s) by adding a photo of them. We even had a virtual snack van on site to keep everyone fed.

The event was a huge hit and within a few hours, well over 500 people had checked into the rally with Reliant owners from all around the world including California, Switzerland, Sweden, Germany, Belgium and Holland. For our 'Furthest Travelled' event people had to show their route from their home to Tamworth with the winner travelling 5,338 miles from California... in a Reliant Regal.

To make the rally even more interesting I contacted the Mayor of Tamworth (Richard Kingstone) and he also sent us a message welcoming everyone, albeit virtually, to Tamworth which was really well received and surprised a few people, so much so we had to point out that it really was a message from the Mayor of Tamworth. In addition, our Club President, former Reliant Director Barrie Wills was also there along with several other former Reliant employees. For those needing information, our website at www.reliant.website covered that containing over 730 historical documents for that members can peruse.

The virtual rally was such a huge success, especially for those overseas who cannot usually get to a rally in the UK, that many people who attended are now asking for another virtual Reliant rally in Tamworth. During the event people were even Googling Tamworth to see what restaurants or bars they would go to. So, whilst the tumbleweed blew through the empty streets of locked down Tamworth, online Tamworth was absolutely buzzing. For other motoring clubs that have been hit by the lock down, I would really recommend an online virtual rally for getting everyone together and even to boost club membership. We will certainly be holding more virtual rallies in the future.

Thank you very much to the Reliant Motor Club for sharing their great initiative to give their many members (and non-members) a boost in these current circumstances. Maybe other clubs may wish to try something similar?



SEMA Action Network

SEMA Calls on U.S. Department of the Interior to Spend Money Appropriated by Congress to Save the Bonneville Salt Flats

The U.S. Department of Interior's Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Utah Department of Natural Resources (DNR) agreed to create a "Restore Bonneville" program in April 2020, which will dramatically increase the amount of salt being pumped onto the Bonneville Salt Flats. The U.S. Congress appropriated more than \$2 million in the BLM's Fiscal Year 2020 budget to start the program, although the Interior Department has not yet released the funds. SEMA is calling on the land-speed racing community to contact the Interior Department and request that it allocate funding for Bonneville before the end of the fiscal year (September 30, 2020).

Over the past several years, SEMA and the **Save the Salt Coalition** have worked with BLM, UDNR, Intrepid Potash and U.S. Congress to help create and begin funding the 10-year "Restore Bonneville" program. It is modeled after a 1997–2002 pilot program that pumped an average of 1.25 million tons of salt—dramatically more than the current 300,000 tons or less each year. The program strengthened the salt crust, and the salt flats began to expand before the program ended. Bonneville's existence is endangered under the current pumping levels. The Utah State Legislature funded the first year of the "Restore Bonneville" program at \$1 million, although the agency is waiting to release the "Restore Bonneville" funds until the federal government allocates matching funds.

The 2020 race season at Bonneville will commence with **Speed Week** (August 8-14, 2020) organized by the Southern California Timing Association (SCTA) and Bonneville Nationals Inc. (BNI). The organizations have conducted the event since 1949. More than 250 teams, ranging from streamliners topping more than 500 mph to vintage 50cc motorcycles, are entered in this year's event. In light of the coronavirus pandemic, SCTA/BNI have been working with local, state and federal government agencies to ensure the health and safety of participants of the event, which is set for one of the most socially-distanced racing venues in the world

SEMA Research: Many Consumers Using This Time to Work on Their Cars

Last week, SEMA and Directions Research conducted a nationally representative survey of more than 1,000 consumers to check in on how people are using their cars. While many people say they are driving less these days, more than a third (35%) say they are using this time to do some work on their car or truck.

When it comes to driving, most consumers, especially men, are still getting on the road regularly. During the last two weeks, nearly 60% of men and 46% of women have driven their car every day or every few days

Consumers are also continuing to maintain, repair and upgrade their cars and trucks. This is especially true for auto enthusiasts. Over the last two weeks, 32% of enthusiasts have gone to an auto-parts store or searched for parts online. Nearly one-fourth of enthusiasts (22%) said they bought parts, accessories or made modifications to their vehicles.

Overall, most consumers (57%) believe that the changes they have made in their lives because of the virus will return to normal within the next three months. Despite some uncertainty right now, consumers remain optimistic and are looking forward to getting in their cars and out on the road again.



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Buick Riviera

The Grand American coupe with European grace

This article has been sourced from the Shannon's members page on their website.

Super Models

By Dr John Wright

The 1963 Buick Riviera is among the most significant American cars of the postwar generation. It was not only an entirely new kind of Buick – remember that Buick's famous catchcry was, 'when better cars are built, Buick will build them' -- but in many respects it was a whole new kind of American car, a genuine original, one that looked first to Europe rather than Detroit; a glorious fusion of American muscle and size with European grace.

The Riviera was not merely(!) an undisputed design masterpiece but, mostly, it had the driving qualities and performance to match the elegant new style.

The Riviera was not the first product of Detroit to bear a European model name and certainly wouldn't be the last. Edsel Ford's 1939 Lincoln Continental really began that trend. There was the Lincoln Capri for 1952. And Buick had first used the Riviera model name for its 1949 Roadmaster Riviera pillarless 'hardtop convertible' then later (1959-1962) for up-spec Electra 225 four-door hardtop sedans. Cadillac appended ' Biarritz' to 'Eldorado' in 1956 and later came the Seville. But all these cars were pure North America in their specification and design



Information Required

VDC member **Tom Kent** is seeking information about the exploits of his father Richard Kent (on right below). He and flight Lieutenant JR Balmer with his 1924 Vauxhall 30/98, in 1938 broke the "Round Australia record" taking 24 days 11 hours 58 minutes.

The Kent family were very early motor engineers in Melbourne operating as Kent Motor and Engineering in Elizabeth Street until 1925, later moving to Carlton adjacent to the university.

As a nineteen year old Richard's parents relocated to Lake Tyers in East Gippsland and Tom has been trying to establish if his father was involved in the family business. It is assumed the Vauxhall was prepared for the record attempt by the Kent family business. The attempt seems to have had the support of the Victorian Light Car Club whose records have provided some information about this attempt. The trip commenced at the club room in East Melbourne.



Some of the unanswered questions include

- Repco, Beaurepaires and Shell backed the record attempt, but no information has been available from these sources.
- Is this still a record? John Balmer's written account of the trip were lost by his family. Information is required as to how John and Richard came to know each other (possibly both Light Car Club members)

The record-breaking Vauxhall was purchased by John Balmer in the early thirties and along with R Robinson as co-driver, broke transcontinental runs from Darwin to Adelaide and Fremantle to Melbourne. Balmer used the Vauxhall in local hill climbs and the Vintage Sports Car Club hold a trophy in his name. Later Balmer and J Sutherland went record breaking in a Ford V8 coupe. They travelled Melbourne Darwin and return in record time.

Some of the mechanical challenges encountered on the 1938 Round Australia Record included Holed petrol tank on the first leg near Albury

From Brisbane to Darwin they used a compass for directions and chains were required due to the muddy conditions. Heading towards Adelaide the differential tube broke, they jerry rigged a sapling and continued on. Shell had provided fuel to be dumped at strategic locations for their use. The generator burnt out near Darwin so night driving was out. Springs were broken regularly and were clamped together; they were prepared for this eventuality.

The Vauxhall's body was modified to allow for a driver's seat and room for the co- driver to lay on a mattress provided.

Richard Kent later suggested, but for the generator problems and the unusually wet weather in Queensland the trip could have been shortened by seven days!

They were presented with a very attractive cup fully engraved with the record details and provided by Frank Beaurepaire, Beaurepaire Tyres Company's founder.

During world war two, Balmer and Robinson a Vauxhall 30/98 owner as well were based at the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds.

Information Required (continued)

Both were pilots one serving in Europe and the other in the Pacific, the two did lots of modifications to the Vauxhalls eventually combining components to make one car out of the two. It is said they took great delight in circumnavigating the showgrounds trotting track at full throttle in one giant slide. Balmer was eventually killed during the Berlin raid and Robinson survived to eventually live in Warrnambool where this Vauxhall was commonly seen and heard on the local roads.

Eventually the car was sold overseas, and the left over components have surfaced within other local 'thirsties."

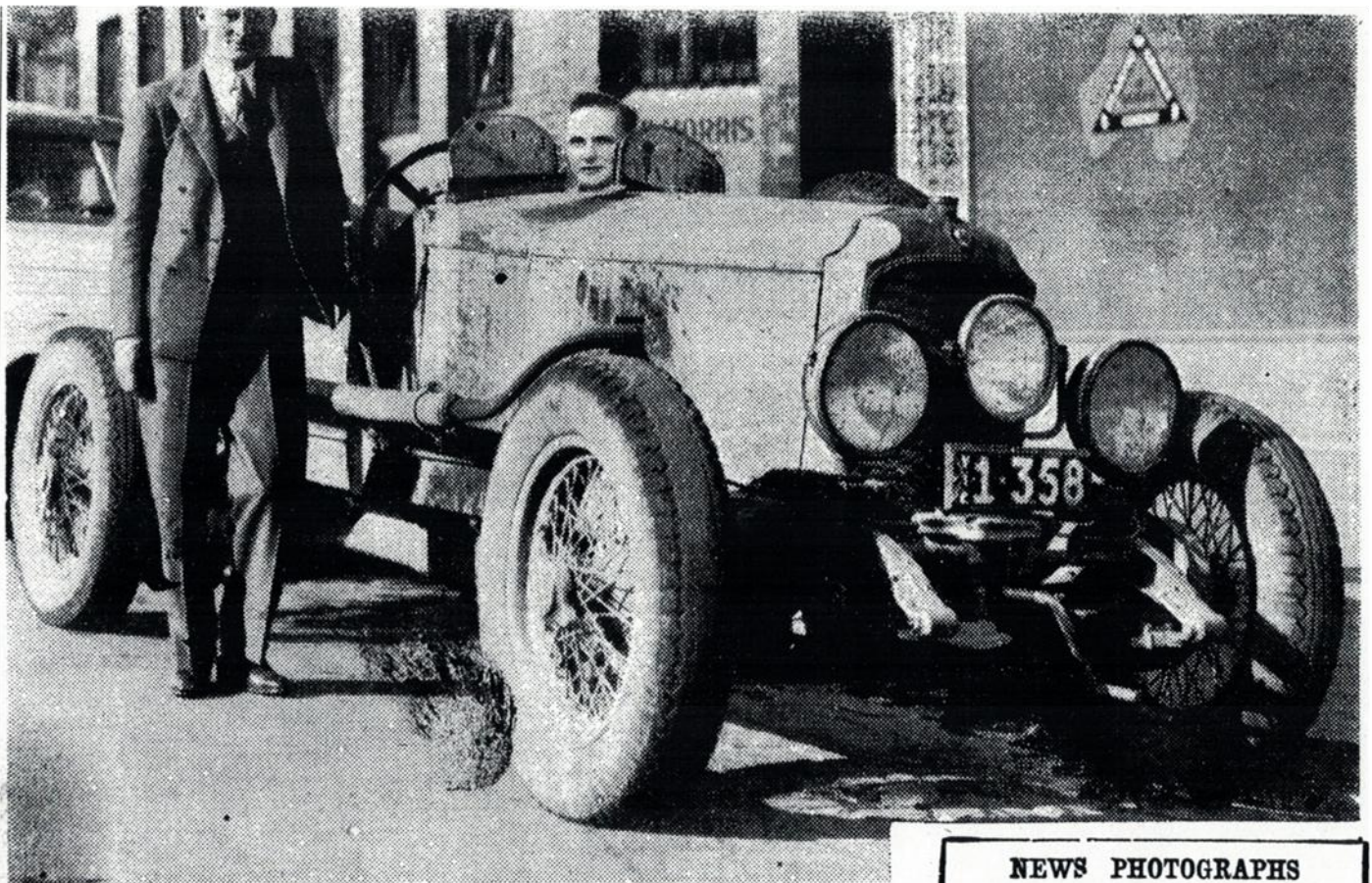
Finally I trust that our newly established Automotive Historians Australia organisation may be able to ascertain if any of the sponsors of the record attempt retained any information or if the Light Car Club records can shine any further light on this event.

I am sure some of our more senior members would remember Kents in Carlton, I know I took my first car to them for alignment or for something that I cannot remember.

Kents are still in business in Clayton servicing suspensions and automotive repairs.

So dear readers if any one of you have any shred of information about this terrific adventure in the Vauxhall or of the later Ford V8 record attempts, Tom would be delighted to hear from you.

Tom can be contacted on Mob: 0403 181 356



NEWS PHOTOGRAPHS

Copies of pictures taken by staff photographers of "The Argus" may be purchased in a variety of sizes at the Photo. Sales Department, fourth floor, "The Argus" Head Office, 365 Elizabeth street, or at "The Argus" Branch Office, at 248 Collins street.

Mr. RICHARD KENT (left) and Flight-Lieutenant John Balmer and the 14-year-old Vauxhall car in which they established a new round-Australia car record of 9,000 miles in 23½ days. Their trip took only three days more than the first aeroplane trip round Australia in 1924.



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