

Motor Vehicle Enthusiasts Club



No 102

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TRANSMISSION

If you find you need more information about this club or just can't wait to join ring Peet Menzies on 0417855222.

GPO Box 911 Darwin 0801
In Katherine call 89710605 .
Newsletter enquiries to Ted longtelescope@gmail.com



Ornithopter replica

Something a bit different. This ornithopter was seen barnstorming around the airshow at Jamestown, SA. A Flintstones flying machine replica it is an exact copy of the original except for the 1905 engine, the original is believed to be pedal powered. The wing walker on top of the aircraft is traditional to early barnstorming days and is not for the faint hearted. While this machine is not particularly fast, its main feature is its short take off and landing (like that of a bird) in fact it may be shorter than that of a bird, so short that it may not be noticeable to the untrained eye. With a chassis consisting of an undressed log and minimal use of steel fasteners, it is mostly held together with rope. Wheels are made from old planks screwed together. Rear brake is by a piece of flat belt rubbing on the wheel. Joystick is a piece of bough jammed in a hole. And those wings flap up and down as it cruises along. Neat!!





Merv Robinson

Old cars seem to attract old cars. While cruising Jamestown in the mid north of SA in our model T, a stranger suggested I meet Merv Robinson. "he's got a model T" he said. So a week or so later on my way back I rang Merv. "Yeah I've got a couple of cars in the shed he replied. I took a guess that that might not be the whole story and when I took my first glance inside, I decided I needed my camera.

This was one of those places where there is so much good stuff before you that you don't quite know where to start. The first thing that caught my eye was a whopping great aeroplane engine and what I guessed to be a Auburn standing majestically in the middle with the far end lined with older cars.

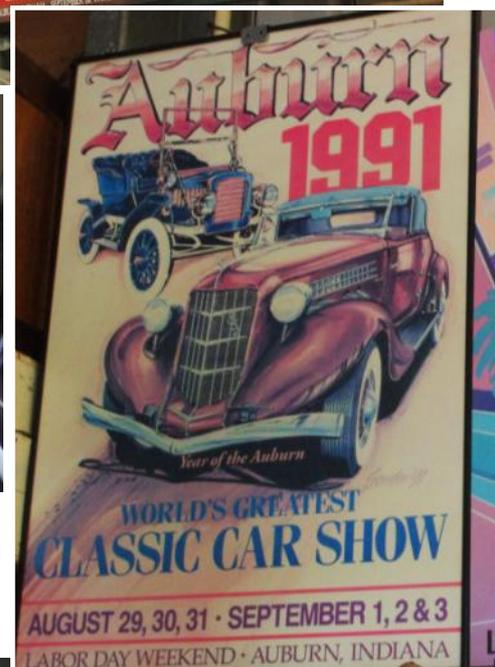
The story starts back in 1912 when Merv's great grandfather bought a model T. By 1923 he was finding it difficult to crank it to start and the new ones had a beaut electric starter so he upgraded to a new one but had the rego number off the 1912 model transferred to the new 1923 and its still there. During the war he was using the vehicle to cart wheat so had converted the tourer body to a buckboard, but the rear tub and associated bits weren't discarded. Merv remembers as a kid, sitting on the T's rear seat where it was used as an outdoor seat under the verandah. So, in the seventies it was put back together as a

1935 Auburn. Only the supercharged models had the exhaust pipes sticking outside the engine compartment.





Above: Showing the steps up to the dicky seat
 Right: The dicky seat.



Right: 1991 Auburn poster is significant as it displays Merv's correct even to RH drive

tourer and was handed down to son and then to grandson. It has been repainted but is the identical colour as it was at new, and with the same numberplate. Here is some definite proof that not all model T,s were black when new.

And as we all know it was pretty common back in the old days for a tourer to be converted into a buckboard. But a garage at Peterborough, just up the road, added just a bit more. They would not only build the buckboard on the back, but instead of discarding the rear tub they would modify it to be a steel roof over the cab. Several of these models still exist in the area.

Then in about 1980, the proprietor of a firm, Aristocrat motor trimmers, died. He had a collection of 50 cars and his widow began to sell them off. By the time Merv found out about them the collection was down to about 20 but Merv secured a 1926 Auburn and a 1925 Flint, for \$50 each. Sounds cheap but don't forget they were 1980 dollars. We didn't get that much in our pay packets back in them days. (remember when you actually got your pay in a packet?) The Auburn mentioned here is not the one currently gleaming in the middle of the shed, it was pretty sad, and although it was started way back then, it is still in a panel shop about to get painted. A long time on a project? It seems to be something you find in South Australia, where another project comes along to relieve the pain of a project taking too long.

This is a picture on the shed wall depicting the 1926 Auburn currently under restoration.





And what could possibly distract you from working on an Auburn? How about another Auburn. The shiny one in the middle of the shed wasn't so shiny when he got it from Maroochydore in Qld. It had been owned by a QANTAS steward and driven as the family car from 1952 to 1973 when the diff blew up. He then pulled it to bits to do it up and with his job of travelling he was able to bring back some new old stock and some reproduction parts, but he never progressed and sold the car to Merv in 1988. It is a 1935 straight 8 supercharged Cabriolet, 288 cid, 150 hp with a vacuum operated 2 speed diff. The supercharger is driven off the camshaft and runs at 5 times engine speed which gives it 4.5 to 5 Lbs boost. The same Lycoming engine without the supercharger delivers 110 hp. The supercharger was an optional extra.

So Merv was distracted for about 4 years doing this one up. The fact that he has since done 35000 miles in it suggests he likes driving it. And Auburn enthusiasts meet every year in a place called Auburn (funny about that) in Indiana in USA. They have about 350 Auburns attending, along with about 80 Cords and 20 Deussenbergs, both associated brands. Merv has been over to attend 5 times. So it may not come as a surprise that there is a place called Flint. Although there is no reun-

Model T's have a tendency to shimmy. Obviously they used to do it in the olden days too. A common fix was a bolt holding 2 thick washers jamming up your steering. The gears are the speedo drive off the front wheel.

Totally original 1923 model T. Every bit of this car is the very same bit than came with it in '23 and the colour is identical. The rego number was transferred from great grandfathers 1911 T in '23.



The predecessor of RAA, AASA (Automobile Association South Australia) gave you a badge with your membership number stamped on it. Original equipment on this car, naturally.





Merv with the '25 Flint

ion of which I am aware, part of the old manufacturing plant still exists. Naturally Merv has visited it, too.

The 1925 Flint model 40 was a much easier restoration than the earlier Auburn, so the job of fixing it came before the Auburn. One problem was a cracked cylinder head. With a bit of luck he was able to get a rolling chassis with an engine from Echuca in Vic and the head was good. The engine is a 6 cylinder Continental. It still took 4 years to get the whole car completed. He drove it to Darwin and back in 1988. And back in the days before there were specialised magazines and internet based ads, you used to come across stuff just by chance. A friend of Merv's bought a dairy farm at Mt Barker back in 1965 and came across an old gent with an old car in his shed. The car was a Falcon Knight from 1927 and had been converted into a buckboard. Nothing unusual about that, but he still had the original rear tub as well. The gent was pleased to sell it to Merv for \$10 and went to great pains to find any bits that belonged to the car but were not attached. He found the rear doors, the hood bows and even the battery. And once he got it home Merv was able to get it running. no worries.



The Falcon Knight dual sleeve valve engine. Cross flow design.. Hanging under the middle of the manifold is the device that sucks the oil from the sleeves and deposits it back in the sump. Had a hemi head in 1927!



The engine is a twin sleeve valve design by Knights own patent. Other manufacturers made sleeve valve engines using Knights patent design but they are slightly different and parts are not interchangeable. This engine has two sleeves per cylinder, one inside the engine bore, then another sleeve inside that and the piston inside that one. The sleeves move up and down to line up ports that are about 1/2 inch high and 1 1/2 inches wide, a slot in one side prevents them from turning. And it is a cross flow configuration. It has a second, small crankshaft on the right hand side with journals about 3/4" diameter and conrods maybe 5" long. These are what move the sleeves up and down. These engines run beautifully but have one problem of burning oil at low speed. The sleeves naturally need to be lubricated and there is a kind of vacuum mechanism to remove the excess oil and return it to the sump. It seems to have a problem at low engine speed and although the car runs perfect cruising, it blows annoying smoke when asked to travel slowly as in a procession.

And every shed needs a future project. You wouldn't want to look into the future and see gloomy boredom over the horizon! In this case it is a magnificent Stutz model M. This vehicle was a hire car from when it was new in 1929 in Pt Augusta. It has passed through innumerable owners in Adelaide and around the state before Merv bought it from a collector in Crystal Brook about ten years ago. It looks a bit sad but the engine runs, or, it did for the last owner so we would imagine nothing has changed in that department. It is a straight 8 sidevalve engine. Has dual ignition. Shutters on radiator are operated automatically.

And just to make things interesting there is a Curtis Wright Cyclone B29 bomber engine, 3350 cubic inch with 18 radial cylinders. That's one big engine, if you divide 3350 by 18, the answer is 186. That is one 186 Holden in every one of those cylinders. No wonder it could pull 2400 Hp at takeoff. This engine came from an aircraft that was used in the atomic bomb tests at Maralinga in SA in the 1950's. It was later cut up and the engine ended up in Kevin Rohrlac's fantastic Museum of Technology in the Barossa Valley. When Kev died the collection was broken up and sold and this small piece came into Merv's shed.



*Stutz model M 1927 needs a tidy up.
Below: Straight 8 engine is OHC and cross flow sidevalve.
Manifold has been modified at some stage of it's life.*



*This car uses Ryan headlights.
Merv came across a pair of
matching pair of Ryan spot
lights at a swap meet. The
seller didn't have any idea
what they were for and sold
them for \$50. Note the embel-
lishment on the headlight rims*



*Inside this is one of
those cars roomy
enough for a party in
the back. It is a seven
seat layout with 2 fold
out jump seats in the
back.*



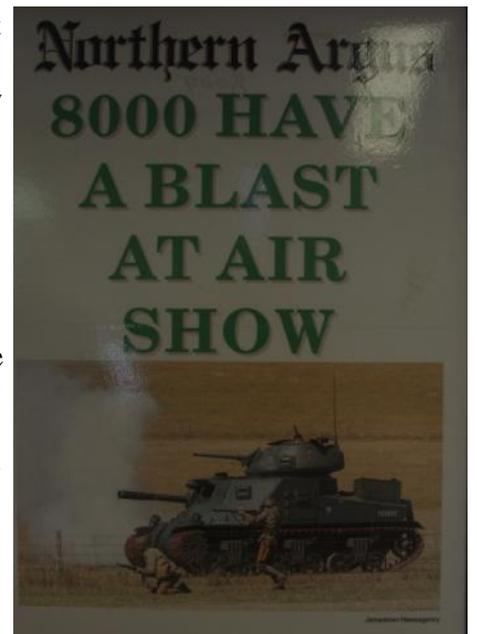
Back in the 1980's Merv realised it would be nice to have a Stuart tank and went through the motions to find one to do up. After a long and unfruitful search he came across the remains of a General Grant tank that had been bought by a feller near Albury Wodonga, as army surplus in 1953. These tanks were sold as they had been superceded by the Centurion. The gent had bought 3 of them, one to cut down to make a bulldozer with the other two to cut up into bulldozer blades, or for repairs to bulldozer blades and any other use he might have for a bulk supply of steel. The tank Merv found was one of those not used as the bulldozer, but as the steel warehouse. It was far



from complete, basically just the remains of the shell but did have one gun but no breechblock, and no turret. So the search started to find all the missing bits. The big bits turned up in all sorts of places. He advertised for bits in Vic and received a reply from a sawmill operator in WA who had upgraded his plant and had two 671 GM motors for sale, the very engines required, one left hand and one right hand. The left and right hand engines are different but both spin anticlockwise and feed into a gearcase with a single output shaft. The engines are at the rear of the tank with the drive at the front. There is a 5 speed gearbox and if one engine fails, it can be locked out and the machine continue to function on one. With engines and transmission intact the search went on. Merv's father had a collection of old farming magazines dating back to the 50's so they painstakingly searched through them looking for articles where farmers had used the army surplus tanks. He then visited these farms to find out if there were any remnants of them left. Surprisingly there were, and a dashboard turned up near Mildura, someplace else he found a set of headlights and a siren. (yep this tank had a siren) Other places turned up all sorts of little bits. Swapmeets turned up a 24 v Homelight generator, and there were some 24v tail lights for sale that are the same as Jeeps and some Harleys, except for those examples they are 6v. The seller decided his lights were not very saleable with 24v globes. He was happy to be able to unload them to Merv cheap. The cone that supports the turret turned up as did the turret from Corowa (it weighs in at 3 tons). A place near Melbourne came up with a set of tracks and a complete set of NOS idlers and the engine compartment doors, but to me the most amazing find was the radio. Merv's wife took their gramophone into the local repairman and the feller remarked to her that he had a radio on the shelf that fitted their tank.

The Curtis Wright Cyclone R3350 It took 1 girl 13 days to do a rebuild of this engine. During the war the men flew the planes, ladies filled the workshops back home.

I didn't actually get to see the tank in the flesh. The story came about from a photo in the shed, taken at the local airshow 3 years ago, where they simulated a WW2 scene involving the tank defeating a bunch of German soldiers. Upon seeing the tank a local reminisced he had been a tank driver in the war and explained that these tanks had replaced another type that had proved inferior



Newspaper headline featuring the tank battle re-enactment.

to what the Germans were using. With the release of the General Grant tank it turned the tide to the Australian's advantage and they then had no problem outgunning the Germans. He was happy to say that this model tank saved his bacon for sure.

The tank is back to standard armament with a 75mm and a 37mm gun plus a 30 calibre Browning machine gun. The guns have all been fitted with a device that injects and lights propane gas to simulate live firing. The frequency is adjustable on the machine gun but is set for the bigger guns and is very close to the 15 secs it actually took to reload the real thing.



Where have all the Packards gone?

While cruising NZ earlier this year, more than once it had been mentioned to me that there was a whacko collection of Packards, but it was somewhere around the area we had already been in our cruise about the north island . But with a cyclone threatening to wreck our well planned trip it seemed we needed something to keep us away from the demolition area, so, to have a closer look at places we had been seemed a good idea. I had a look on the internet . The Packard and Pioneer collection was at a place called Maungatapere, not far from a larger place, Whangarei where they had motels. Their website , at the time, showed the days they operated tours, and for out of area visitors , there was an invitation to contact them if you were unable to attend one of their sessions. I gave them a call and next day we had our own one on one tour. It wasn't cheap but it sure was worth every penny.

It was explained to us that a gentleman , Graeme Crow, was once apprenticed to the then Packard agents in Auckland. He decided that the Packard was quite an outstanding automobile with its high quality mechanicals and lovely styling, but was resigned to the fact that they would always be beyond his reach financially.

Moving forward many years the story took a new twist. He was attending a stock auction where he bid and won a small mob of sheep but had gone to the auction unprepared as he had no means at hand to transport them back to his property. Across the road from the auction, lying derelict next to a shed was an old Packard and Mr Crow enquired of the owner if he could buy it. He did, and being a mechanic by trade he had it running in a very short time and was able to

Some of the sheds are almost purely Packard. The almost is because there is also the odd Studebaker, as Studebaker and Packard are closely related.





transport his new flock home. That incident revived the enthusiasm from when he was an apprentice and from then on he began acquiring Packards whenever they became available. He wasn't into restoring them, just collecting. It wasn't just whole cars. He would collect pieces of memorabilia and if necessary he would sell pieces to finance other pieces or other cars. And the collecting obviously branched out a bit along the way. It copped a few motorbikes. Then a few cars that weren't Packards. Then there were a few stationary engines and lawn mowers and a couple of old wireless sets. After getting sidetracked like that he got back into the mainstream collecting of Packards but of course while looking for them he would come across all sorts of other stuff. More cars, more motorbikes and stationary engines, but then there were Cobb and Co coaches, trucks, a telephone exchange, more household appliances and even a steam locomotive. Graeme, somewhere during the story started to be a bit strapped

As you can see in these photos, it's not just Packards. If some one made a car once there is a fair chance there is an example in this collection. That's the Landrover that the Queen showed herself off in during her coronation tour back in the early fifties.





for room to put all this stuff and had to put the feelers out for someplace with a lot of covered space. Naturally it had to be old to match what he was going to put in it. He came up with an old dairy factory. The dairy was perfect for the job. It had a front office (Packard showroom) and shed after shed to house the various departments. Plus a lot of yardspace to put the larger items that would not fit in any of the sheds. From my point of view the collection just went on forever, one shed after another, floor above floor, everything within, in good to showroom condition. Then we went out the back to a gigantic shed, maybe 100 metres long, and inside was one or more of anything ever made, but especially old trucks and earth-moving equipment. Not much smicko stuff in here but it really made your heart pump. There were a bunch of WW2 aircraft engines, but what really caught my eye were the veteran trucks, mostly complete but unrestored. Until then I didn't know they made Packard trucks but here they were. The sad bit is that Graeme Craw died a couple of years ago. The good thing is his collection is not being broken up but has been put into a trust. I could see why they had it arranged so that visitors could only view the collection as a tour, as, sadly, if you sent people through there by themselves it would be a case of help yourself and pretty soon things would look a bit bare. As it is Graeme has left what may be the largest collection of Packards anywhere in the world. Unreal!

Above: Just one shed and below just a couple of examples of what's in it.



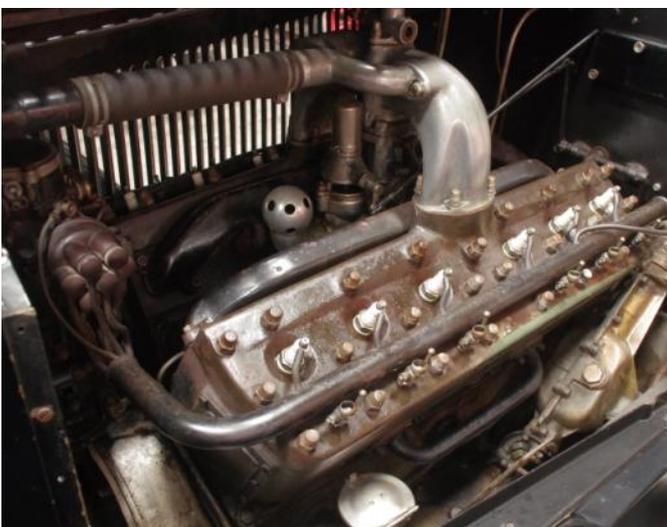


A small part of the gun department. The sad looking WW1 German machine gun was pristine until a bunch of kids broke in and stole it. It was found 18 months later dumped in a creek. The turret and 4 inch guns are the genuine articles off HMS Achilles used in the Battle of the River Plate. And they are still complete with breech blocks and everything.



And if it's engines that get your heart beating, this also is but a small selection. Not in the photos is a steam locomotive and mobs of smaller stationary engines. Note the radial behind the Merlin. The V12 is Packard.

The engine with the head off is a Foden Double 6, a supercharged diesel for marine use. It is made with thicker than normal castings to allow saltwater cooling with allowance for corrosion.





MVEC's Christmas Dinner



28th Nov 2015

Nightcliff Sports Club, Camphor St, Nightcliff

6 PM For 6.30 start

Cost	Members and friends	\$25
	Children 16 & under	\$12.50
	Children 10 & under	Free

• *Bring a small present for your child if you would like Santa to hand it out*

Payment must be made by 19th November for catering purposes.

1. Place your payment in an envelope in the lectern at the Hangar with names of all attendees, or
2. Pay online at Bendigo Bank BSB633000 ACC 142473552 include name, number and XMAS, or
3. Mail to PO box 911 Darwin 0801, include cheque & names
BEFORE 19 November



KRIS KRINGLE

To enter our MVEC Christmas Kris Kringle raffle, **each person** wishing to take part is asked to bring a wrapped present up to \$10.00 value to receive a ticket in the draw. Each person in the draw will receive a prize

1967 HUMBER SUPER SNIPE

SERIES 5A. Recent restoration. Good condition throughout. On club rego. \$10,000

Contact Terry [Ducks] Ross at central Motors, Katherine.89721668 or 89722743 home.

Free stuff

Get your free ads in here.

Give stuff away, sell stuff, get information, find a lover. Got a story to tell? Whatever you like.

Email Ted at longtelescope@gmail.com
or phone 89886049

Deadline...the end of the month

Toyota Camry 1994 Auto sedan

184,000 km

Needs Head gasket

Has injection pulse

Has spark

Has Fuel pressure and flow

Cranks over

Will need ext door handles

This car is complete and probably too good to wreck

Car is in Darwin 2km from Qantas Hangar

Total price is 2 cartons of 4 xxxx stubbies preferably cold

Ring Dingo on 89856665 BH



Back issues

Need to jog your memory about something from a couple of years ago? All the back issues of Transmission are available at

mvec.weebly.com

Motorbike riders and helmets

NT has brought itself in line with NSW and Victoria in relation to Motorcycle Helmet Legislation by allowing Helmets that are Certified under the European Union to be used in the NT. Up until recently each state and territory had its own legislation and certification requirements and not one of them aligned which meant Motorcycle Riders were being booked for using an illegal helmet in one state that was legal in another.

Humber Vogue

\$3500 or make an offer

Contact Michelle 0419368838



Sorry folks, nothing in this photo is for sale, its just a space filler.

The Motor Vehicle Enthusiasts Club

extends it's thanks to

Shannons Insurance

For it's continued support for the club



Kawasaki 900 1973

Running condition but no rego

\$12000 ono

Dean 0402794108



WOTS ON THIS YEAR

Come along and enjoy!

On the 2nd Wed of every month there is a members meeting at the hangar 7.30 pm plus bbq beforehand.
Also there is a working bee at the hangar the following Sunday.

28th Nov Christmas Dinner

5th December Ulysses Toy Run Casuarina Plaza Car Park 3:45 for a 4:00 departure Motor bike run.

6th December 8:30 Caltex Berrimah Motor bike run.

Stuff on the net

Here is one of those aircraft designs that were good until something better came along

<http://www.chonday.com/Videos/carplanfuit2>

And the Oilfield Dodge.

If you haven't seen it you need to, and if you have seen it you might want to see it again. Then you won't complain about crook roads.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/nq2jY1trxqg?rel=0>

40 years of marriage

A married couple in their early 60s are celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary in a quiet, romantic little restaurant.

Suddenly, a tiny yet beautiful fairy appeared on their table.

She said, 'For being such an exemplary married couple and for being loving to each other for all this time, I will grant you each a wish.'

The wife answered, 'Oh, I want to travel around the world with my darling husband.'

The fairy waved her magic wand and - poof! - tickets for the Queen Mary II appeared in her hands.

The husband thought for a moment:

Well, this is all very romantic, but an opportunity like this will never come again. I'm sorry my love, but my wish is to have a wife 30 years younger than me.'

The wife, and the fairy, were deeply disappointed, but a wish is a wish.!

So the fairy waved her magic wand and poof!...

The husband became 92 years old.