

# Motor Vehicle Enthusiasts Club

No 125

JUNE 2018



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

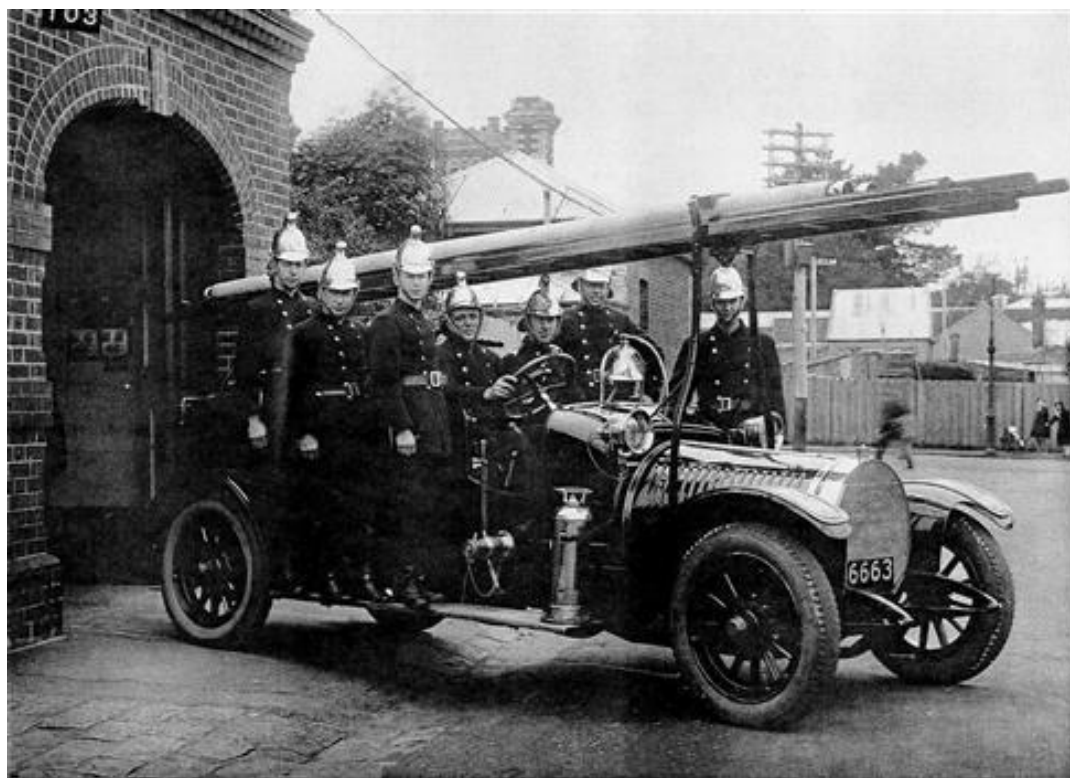
In Katherine call 89710605 .

Newsletter enquiries to Ted [longtelescope@gmail.com](mailto:longtelescope@gmail.com)

# TRANSMISSION

## Hotchkiss Fire Engines

The photo below was taken in Melbourne back in the days. As you can see Australia post obviously thought it was noteworthy and some of these vehicles have survived, but not necessarily as fire engines.







**1914 Hotchkiss**  
**Rick Thege**

Rick first came across this car in 1959. A bloke by the name of Neil Burns was restoring it. It was an ex Melbourne Metropolitan Fire Brigade tender. When war was declared at the start of WW1, a ship was diverted into Melbourne. It was carrying a load of Hotchkiss motor cars. The fire brigade was able to get permission from the Victorian Government to purchase them. They had all been built with civilian bodies but the majority had the bodies removed and were converted to fire appliances. The bodies were safely stored in a warehouse. A small number of the vehicles retained their bodies for use by fire chiefs and executives of the fire brigade.

Fast forward to 1950's and someone noticed all these car bodies taking up space in a warehouse, so he had them all removed and promptly burned the lot. Soon after, they started selling off the fire appliances. There were a lot of people building bodies around Melbourne!

Neil Burns contacted Hotchkiss in France who were still going at the time, and was able to get the original plans for the bodies and built his own body faithfully to the plan. By 1961 he had it running and on the road and by the late 60's he had added a towbar and was pulling a large tandem wheeled caravan around the country. At one point the cops gave him a hard time



*Hotchkiss' gun making heritage is reflected in their insignia above, and embossed into the top radiator tank. below.*





and reckoned the brakes on the car weren't good enough to tow such a big van. He pointed out to the police that with the caravan on, and with its caravan brakes he could stop a bloody site quicker with the van on, than he could with the car by itself. They let him go.

And with its 6.5 litre engine this car made towing a large caravan a bit of a non event, and as the years wore on Neil did some major rebuilding on the engine but there came a time about 8 years ago

when he just became too crook and weak to spin the crank handle on that whopping engine. Rick quietly suggested if it might be time to sell the car but Niel replied with a pretty emphatic NO! He will never sell it. But a few days later Rick received a phone call suggesting he come and have a look. The car had only done about 20km since it had a \$34,000 rebuild on the motor. The crankshaft has three different diameter main bearings with tapered seats which was a bit of a challenge to line bore.

When Rick became the new owner he was of the impression that the car would outlast him, but after only 400 km the engine was history. The firm that had done the reco had not machined it with enough clearance and not only were the liners and pistons shot, but the cylinders were cracked as well. And after being off the road for 5 years and another \$23,500 spent on the engine, the national vet rally in SA in 2018 was its first outing. It was a bit of a concern that those cracked cylinders appeared to be leaking again. But on the good side, this is one easy car to drive, as for it, hills just do not exist. Rick tells of a rally where at the briefing drivers were warned about all these treacherous hills. At the end of it Rick said to the bloke, "what hills" , as once he had changed into top gear, he never changed gears again till he stopped at the end.

And did you know Hotchkiss also manufactured Jeeps under licence?



*Note the cylinders cast with integral heads.*



*A leak from nowhere is a worry especially when you have spent a small fortune on the engine.*



*The Froggy word for oil is huile*

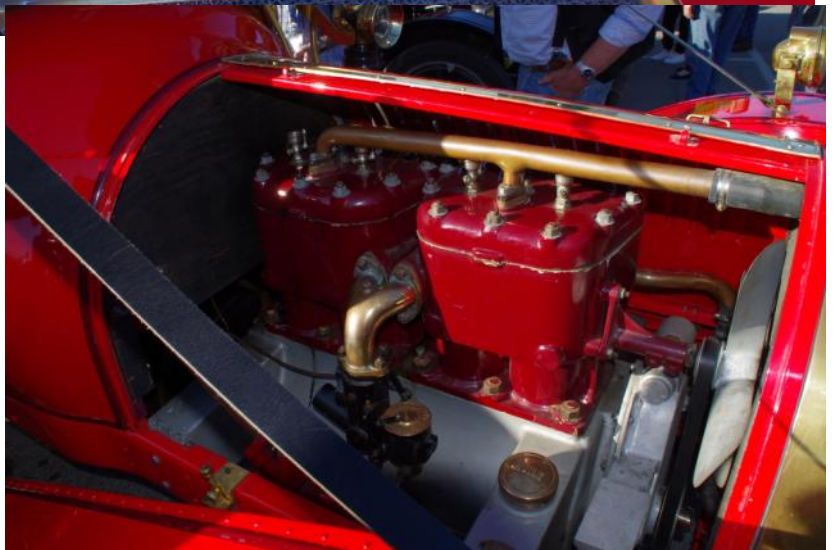




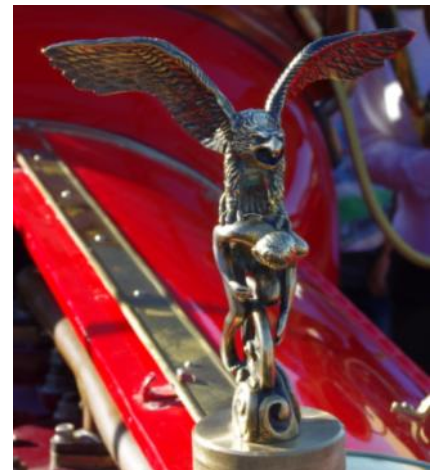
## 1914 Hotchkiss John and Linda Stevens

Another Hotchkiss that started its life in Australia as a Melbourne fire brigade ladder carrier. It carried that fire brigade body up until the 1980's and was displayed in a museum that way until it disappeared to places unknown for a while, till it reared its head at an auction in Sydney with a seized engine and with a beautiful new but unusual sporting body typical of a pre WW1 New York style. It was also lacking most of its brassware and its gear change gate.

Under the bonnet the most interesting feature is the cylinder heads. The engine in its original configuration was monoblock, with cylinders cast in pairs with integral heads. It is assumed something catastrophic had happened to the engine as the top of the cylinders have been cut, or ground off, and replacement heads cast and bolted on. This may have happened during the war when parts were impossible to obtain. Interestingly there are 2 other examples of these Hotchkiss engines with identical modifications, both from Melbourne based vehicles.



*Note the detachable cylinder heads, different from Rick Thege's car.*







**1911 Berliet**  
**Owned and restored by Alan and Heather Esmore**

Alan was in the motor trade in Victoria. One of the apprentices came to work one day to tell the story of parking in the bush with his girlfriend. The story didn't go as you might imagine, he told of the racket of a bloke sawing wood with the power coming from an old engine with a low and brass radiator with a rounded top. The description of the radiator aroused Alan's interest as the mention of the brass radiator sparked thoughts of something from the veteran era. With directions from the apprentice, Alan headed to Newstead and approached the owner of the old saw-mill. It turned out he was another mechanic but he had no real interest in the engine and was more than pleased to sell it. Alan left with the engine attached to about 3 feet of chassis, and the radiator. That happened in 1968. But

*With the body faithfully reproduced from the original sales brochure, even down to the colour, this is the only one of its model anywhere.*

*And they realised the significance of wind way back in 1911*





that engine is not the engine that resides in this car.

He started advertising in vet car club magazines for parts, he also wrote to the Marius Berliet Foundation in France. They answered his queries by way of letters written in French. He had to take his French letters to the local high school to have them translated. By and by lots of small bits even-tuated from those adverts, then a bloke from Tasmania replied, stating that he had a chassis, front and back axles and some wheels, not to mention a scuttle and two doors. This collecting went on for 19 years until a previous employer of Alan's father produced a sales booklet for this very car, and in colour too! It was a very detailed publication with listings showing the dimensions of various parts of the car. In particular the distances between the dash, front and back seats and the steering wheel. There were also good pictures of the bodywork and upholstery, and the colour of the car in the pictures was yellow. Alan decided he liked the style of that particular body and since he now had a clear picture of what the car was meant to look like he decided to stick to it even down to the colour.

One of his customers had a nephew, John Woods, who had been the last person to be apprenticed in the art of coach building in Victoria, back in the days. He had a look at the job and pointed out he could build a timber frame for that body and could arrange a mate, Richard Stanley, to do the metal panels to cover it all. Alan points out the timber framework is absolutely beautiful, but the catch is you can't see it as it is covered by the lovely metal panels. The body panels are all aluminium with the guards made of steel, and the finish was so good that there was no filler used when painting it. Work started putting all the bits together in 1985 and it was on the road in



*All those screws around the trim have their slots line up.*

*Upholstery is in leather. The leather supplier bought 5 hides at auction to complete the job.*





1986, and 30 odd years later it still looks brand new.

During his research Alan discovered that from 1911 there were 2 engine options available. Not your usual 6 or V8 configuration, you could have an engine with cylinders cast in pairs or cast all together, known as monoblock. Alan liked the look of the one with separate cylinders and travelled to Queensland to answer an offer of a complete car. The complete car turned out to be a wreck of an engine, a gearbox with a bullet hole in it, and a few bits of tin. But the engine was one with the cylinders, not monoblock, and it had the manifolds. He bought the bits. And a bit later another engine was delivered to him. So the monoblock engine that ran the saw at the start sits in the shed in silence.

In the sales brochure there was no mention of the headlights, the only guide was in the photos where it could be seen they were bell shaped. In a catalogue for an auction held in Sydney in 1972 there was a pair of bell shaped headlights. Alan headed to Sydney with the express intention to buy those headlights. He was successful but they were a bit cruddy at the time. While buffing one of the rims, it caught in the buff, then wrapped itself round Alan's wrist and nearly took his hand off. The rim on one of those headlights is now a reproduction.

A Radiator core was made in NZ and soldered into the radiator shell in Melbourne. I believe the radiator shell is about the only bit from the saw that made it into the completed project.

*Alan chose the engine with separate cylinders for no other reason than he reckoned they look better. Both types displace 2.4 litres*

*The bell shaped headlights, seemingly identical, they both have different name plaques. One is labeled F.I.A.T. Bleriot sounds French but they are made in England.*



*Berliet never had a mascot on their vehicles in France but when they were built in United States the Americans wanted one. Since they were manufacturing locomotives there, they decided to use them as their own mascot.*





## 1912 Overland

Chris and Jenny Sorenson

Here's a story with a bit of a difference. It starts about 40 years ago when Chris and Jenny Sorenson "desperately" wanted to buy a brassy era model T Ford. Living in Newcastle at the time Chris approached the Model T club there. No one there had anything to offer or any suggestions where they might get one, but they did mention an old Overland that was for sale in Sydney. A bloke down there had restored it, but had since died. His twin brother had no interest in it and wanted to move it on but it was a "horrible" colour and no one was interested in it. They headed down to Sydney for a look, and there it was gleaming and in immaculate condition. And they loved the colour. So do I for that matter. It has been suggested that it may be a Torana colour, probably Mandarin Red, which is a sort of orange. Anyhow it looked great and still does. Naturally they bought it, and that is basically all there was to it. There was nothing to fix, none of those frustrations trying to find impossible to get parts, no finding bodgy workmanship after you get it home. It had all been done up perfectly to new condition. All it needed was to be driven. Over 40 years it has been to rallies all over, including to South Australia and Tassie, from Qld, where it lives now and it still looks great! And we crossed paths with it in Tasmania.





## The Iconic Australian Ute

The iconic story behind the ute is a classic example of Australian ingenuity.

Legend has it that a Gippsland farmer's wife wrote to the Ford Motor Company in Geelong advising the need for a vehicle which would take her to church on Sundays and pigs to market on Mondays.

The concept took off and, in 1934, 22-year-old Ford designer Lewis Bandt presented to the world the Ford Coupe Utility 302. The 302 had a 1.6-metre long tray that could carry 550kg. The ute took inspiration from a two-door coupe but with a cargo bed attached behind the cabin. A sample body was made in 1933 and the first utilities, or 'utes', rolled off the production line next year. Dubbed 'the Kangaroo Chaser' by Henry Ford when Bandt displayed two examples in Detroit in 1935.

The ute was quickly recognised as the ideal farmers' vehicle. Both Ford and General Motors were soon manufacturing models for the American market. In early marketing rhetoric Ford trumpeted the car as having "comfortable passenger accommodation and large carrying space in the rear compartment". In World War 2 Bandt worked on the production of auxiliary fuel tanks for fighter aircraft. He won bronze medals in the annual British Empire motorcar design competitions in 1947-48. Among the most popular of Bandt's later designs were a station wagon conversion of the Mark II Ford Zephyr in the 1950s and a right-hand drive version of the 1967 Ford Fairlane.

Lewis retired in 1975 and on 18 March 1987 he took part in an Australian Broadcasting Corporation television documentary about the utility. Tragically however, while driving his lovingly restored 1934 ute home that day he collided with a truck on the Midland Highway near Bannockburn in Victoria and was fatally injured.



Lewis Bandt pictured left with a production 1935 utility and right with his restored utility in which he was tragically fatally injured.

Joe grew up in a small town in outback Queensland, then moved to Brisbane to attend law school. He decided to come back to the country town because he felt he could be a big shot at home. He really wanted to impress everyone, so he returned and opened his new law office. The first day he saw a man coming up the drive. He decided to make a big impression on this new client when he arrived.

As the man came to the door, Joe picked up the phone. He motioned the man in, all the while talking on the phone. "No. Absolutely not! You tell those clowns in Sydney that we won't settle this case for less than one million... Yes, the Court of Appeal has agreed to hear that case next week. I'll be handling the primary arguments and the other members of my team will provide support! Okay, tell the Attorney General that I'll meet with him next week to discuss the details..." The 'conversation' went on for almost five minutes. All the while the man sat patiently as Joe rattled instructions. Finally, Joe put down the phone and turned to the man, "I'm sorry for the delay but as you can see, I'm very busy. What can I do for you?" The man replied, "I'm from Telstra, and I came to hook up your phone!"



# IT'S COMING



LAKE PERKOLILLI

## RED DUST

## REVIVAL 2019

If you want some **real** fun get yourself a car or bike ready for this event. Open to any pre 1940 vehicles. Any old clunker will do. Check out the teaser at <http://reddustracers.blogspot.com/2018/06/blog-post.html>

**Serious fun!!**





## Repairs mistakes and blunders, from Rockauto newsletters

In the '70s, I owned, and operated a service station. One of the most unusual mechanical problems I encountered was with a late model pickup truck. The customer told me that when she would turn on the windshield defroster, the truck would accelerate to 80 plus miles an hour! I had never run into that before, but I told her if I could find out why, we should both be featured in *Motor Trend* magazine the following month.

I asked her to pull into the bay, unlatch the hood and leave the engine running in neutral, with her foot on the brake pedal (driving through my bay walls was a concern). Standing off to the side of the truck like a matador, I asked her to turn on the defroster, while I closely watched the carburetor. She turned on the defroster, and the engine immediately raced to 5,000 RPM. Wow...she was not kidding! But, I luckily had also spotted the cause. It was a one second diagnosis, and a one minute fix.

In the '70s, most carburetors were equipped with an electrical dashpot actuator. Its purpose was to slowly release the accelerator cam in the event of a hard, quick stop, preventing the engine from suddenly stalling, a danger in heavy traffic. When the metal lever on the firewall was moved to defrost, it moved near enough to allow a spark to arc from the actuator to the lever, serving as a ground for the actuator to activate to full-on, max open throttle position, scaring the devil out of the driver, with the vehicle abruptly changing from Driving Miss Daisy to Dukes of Hazzard speed!

Some electrical insulation added to both surfaces to act as a shield fixed the problem. Not really *Motor Trend* article worthy though. I was hoping for a bronze statue of me holding a roll of electrical tape.

My first car while in high school was a Dodge Aspen. As I started to tinker with it, I noticed a minor oil leak from a valve cover gasket. It looked easy enough to replace, so I got the gasket and pulled the valve cover off. I noticed the bolts in the valve train were not very tight, so I tightened them. I installed the new valve cover gasket and put everything together. But, surprisingly the car did not start!

After some debate and discussion, my friend and I decided to push the car a couple blocks to a small repair shop. I did not think mentioning the valve tightening I had performed was important. The shop called the next day to say they could not get it started and suggested we take my car to the Dodge dealership. Later that day, the dealership mechanic called and asked if anyone messed with the valves, and I sheepishly told him that someone might have. Luckily it was an easy fix after the diagnosis.

That experience taught me that just because something is not tight, does not necessarily mean it should be!

(Editor's Note: Chrysler's earlier versions of the venerable 225cid "Slant-6" has solid (rather than hydraulic) valve lifters. Each tappet has its own adjusting bolt.)





**JUNE 24<sup>TH</sup> 2018 FROM 9AM**

# **Terribly British Picnic**

## **The Jaguar Drivers Club of the Northern Territory**

Would like to invite you and your British Car or Motorbike to our Inaugural Terribly British Picnic.

Contact: Tony Dale for further information on 0412821158 or email [tony-dale@bigpond.com](mailto:tony-dale@bigpond.com)

Sponsored by DMG Jaguar Land Rover Darwin



For those that don't own one of these beautiful English vehicles you are also invited, even encouraged, to come and join this memorable occasion, and also encouraged to dress and to experience the spirit.

**Join us and other British car owners on the grass at Jervois Park at Darwin Waterfront.**

**Come and go anytime between 9am and 4pm**

**A Family Day Event**

**Bring your fold out table & chairs, or a rug on the lawn, Picnic Basket or Esky with whatever you want to eat & drink and mingle with other car Owners & Enthusiasts.**

**So if you own an Aston Martin, Austin, Land Rover, Mini, Ford, Triumph, MG, Bentley, Rolls Royce, Lotus, Daimler, Jaguar or any other British car, Come and Join us.**



# **Friends of TAMINMIN LIBRARY Motor Vehicle Enthusiasts Club NT**

## **DARWIN TO THE DOO**

**Great family day out**

**SUNDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2018 9am-1pm**

Darwin cars and bikes meet at Qantas Hangar, Parap at 8.30am,  
leaving at 9am to travel to  
Taminmin Library, Challoner Circuit, Humpty Doo



**Swapmeet \$15 (includes entry fee) - turn  
those old car & bike parts into \$\$\$**

**Call Rob - 0417262918 / Pete - 0413 019 005**

**Rocker cover car  
racing 11am - 12noon**

**Food & Drinks  
available**



**GOLD COIN DONATION  
AT GATE**

**Gate opens for  
participants at 7am**

**Enquiries**

General car show Taminmin Library [Lyn] - 89881200

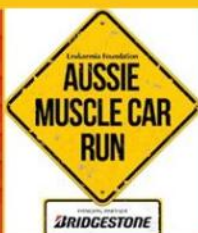
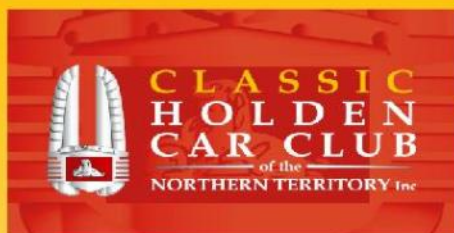
Swap site & rocker cover car racing



-Darwin Doo Car Show







**WE'RE RAISING FUNDS FOR 2018**



# ALL GENERAL MOTORS DAY

## WHEN

**24th June 2018**

**10am-2pm** (vehicle entrants arrive between 8am and 9am)

## WHERE

**The Big Shed - Fred's Pass**

**ALL GM DAY SPONSORS** • Shannons • Repco Winnellie • Kerry's Holden • Burson • Beta Meats • Fred's Pass Sport & Rec Reserve • Woolworths



**WWW.CLASSICOLDENCARCLUBNT.COM**

## WHATS THERE

Show and Shine  
Sausage sizzle  
Soft drinks ♦ Coffee  
Raffle and prizes  
Music ♦ Popcorn  
Jumping castle  
Merry-go-round

## CARS ON SHOW

Holden ♦ Cadillac  
Pontiacs ♦ Buick  
Oldsmobile ♦ Chevrolet  
Daewoo & More!



## COST

Vehicle entry \$10 donation  
Public entry \$5 donation  
Kids under 13 free

## GET INVOLVED

To register your car, email  
[info@classicholdencarclubnt.com](mailto:info@classicholdencarclubnt.com)  
or call John Palamountain  
on 0438 561 949

## FUNDS RAISED

will help patients and families  
living with leukaemias, lympho-  
mas, myeloma or related blood  
disorders, vital research as well  
as provide accommodation dur-  
ing treatment.



### Apology

Apologies to Stan & Marg Bone. They own the magnificent 1910 FN which I wrote about in the March edition of Transmission, and it was Stan who did all that impeccable restoration work. How I came up with someone else's name I have no idea. Maybe I don't get paid enough.

### Morris 110 chrome dress rim

Ducks is looking for one chrome 12 inch dress rim for his Morris 1100 that he has finished restoring.

Please contact centmot@bigpond.net.au if you can help

### Free stuff

Get your free ads in here  
Give stuff away, sell stuff, get information, find a lover. Got a story to sell? Whatever you like.  
Email Ted at [longtelescope@gmail.com](mailto:longtelescope@gmail.com)  
Or phone 89886049

**Deadline.... The end of the month.**

### Previous editions

All previous editions of Transmission are now available at [mvec.weebly.com](http://mvec.weebly.com)

### Magazine collection

We have 5 wine bottle boxes of Unique Cars and Performance magazines from the early 2000's to give away .

Andrew 0417087602

**1998 Ducati Monster 750** (the original Monster),  
56,500 kms.

Excellent condition – tyres and chain and sprockets in good condition with many kms left on them.

**Rego until 23/12/18.**

Second owner only and has had regular/5,000 km servicing (oil, filter etc). **\$4,300**

Ranid : **0431 269 360**



### The Motor Vehicle Enthusiasts Club

**extends it's thanks to  
Shannons Insurance  
For it's continued support for the club**



### YELLOW LIGHT INCIDENT

The light turned yellow, just in front of him. He did the right thing and stopped at the crosswalk, even though he could have beaten the red light by accelerating through the intersection.

The tailgating woman behind him was furious and honked her horn, screaming in frustration, as she missed her chance to get through the intersection.

As she was still in mid-rant, she heard a tap on her window and looked up to into the face of a very serious police officer. The officer ordered her to exit her car with her hands up. He took her to the police station where she was searched,

fingerprinted, photographed and placed in a holding cell.

After a couple of hours, a policeman approached the cell and opened the door. She was escorted back to the booking desk where the arresting officer was waiting with her personal effects.

He said "I am very sorry for the mistake. You see, I pulled up behind your car while you were blowing your horn, giving the guy in front of you the finger and cursing him. I noticed the 'What Would Jesus Do' sticker, the 'Choose Life' licence plate holder, the 'Follow Me to Sunday-School' sticker and the chrome-plated Christian Fish emblem on the trunk, so naturally I thought you had stolen the car."



## Wots Always On

All events listed on this page are club events for club registered vehicles/bikes

On the 2nd Wed of every month there is a members meeting at the hangar 7.30 pm plus bbq about 7pm. Also there is a working bee at the hangar the following Sunday.

On the first Sunday morning of each month there is a motor bike ride round Darwin or its hinterland. Ring Peter Grice 0459 81 81 31 for details

On the first Friday of each month the Chrome Bumper Cruise is on at Fisherman's Wharf open to all clubs

24th June Terribly British Picnic see attached flyer

24th June GM Day see attached flyer

15th July Darwin to the Doo see attached flyer

12—16 Sept 2019 Red Dust Revival <http://reddustracers.blogspot.com/2018/06/blog-post.html>

## **Stuff on the net**

“Welcome to Horopito Motors the largest and only vintage car dismantlers in Australasia. We have acres of older vehicles dating from 1920's to 1970's and we may have a few parts for pre World War I cars.”

Sounds too good to be true? Its for real. Check out <http://www.horopitomotors.co.nz/history/>

And “Prized Possession” is about Guy Martin and his relationship with his Merlin. You should take note of the consequences of over revving one of these beauties. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9wkxrQOkNdc>

**This is a story** about the bond formed between a little girl and a group of building workers. It's allegedly true and might help to confirm your belief in the goodness of people and that there is hope for the human race.....

A young family moved into a house next door to an empty plot. One day, a gang of building workers turned up to start building on the plot.

The young family's 5-year-old daughter naturally took an interest in all the activity going on next door and started talking with the workers.

She hung around and eventually the builders, all with hearts of gold, more or less adopted the little girl as a sort of project mascot. They chatted with her, let her sit with them while they had tea and lunch breaks, and gave her little jobs to do here and there to make her feel important.

They even gave the child her very own hard hat and gloves, which thrilled her immensely.

At the end of the first week, the smiling builders presented her with a pay envelope - containing \$10 in 50c coins. The little girl took her 'pay' home to her mother who suggested that they take the money to the bank the next day to open a savings account.

At the bank, the female cashier was tickled pink listening to the little girl telling her about her 'work' on the building site and the fact she had a 'pay packet'.

'You must have worked very hard to earn all this', said the cashier.

The little girl proudly replied, 'Yes, I worked every day with Steve and Wayne and Mike. We're building a big house.'

'My goodness gracious,' said the cashier, 'And will you be working on the house again next week?'

The child thought for a moment. Then she said seriously:

'I think so .... provided those wankers at Boral deliver the fuckin bricks on time.'