## Motor Vehicle Enthusiasts Club

No 140

**DEC 2020** 



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

# Merry Christmas



Rumbling Hearts needed some retro vehicles to show off their retro fashions and there is no better place to find old cars than at MVEC.

That's Millie Devine, Scarlett Ribbon, Sweet Viper and Carolyn Wilson sending you big smiles and best wishes at Christmas time. And if you need some ladies retro fashion you can find them at <a href="https://">https://</a>

www.rumblinghearts.com.au/



### **Rob Balfour's Stanley Steamer**

The first time my eyes latched on to a steam driven car was at Adelaide's Down Under London to Brighton event a couple of years ago. I couldn't believe my eyes were seeing this magnificent thing coming down the road surrounded by its own cloud of steam. And when it sounded its horn it sounded just like a giant steam locomotive. Pretty impressive. But when it got closer and parked up it got even more impressive. It had tricky bits like giant snakes that belched steam. The only catch was that there were a lot of people present, all of them wanted to talk to the owner, and to squeeze in a proper interview was unlikely so I just enjoyed looking, and listening and being impressed.

Move forward to this year's Bay to Birdwood, and because of all the crap to do with virus restrictions the veteran entrants all met at another location to travel to the official start in a group, so all the veteran cars could travel together. A bit of a spectacle maybe. Anyhow while we were waiting for the appropriate time for the group to move off we were just having a chat and I found myself talking to the owner of that very same steam powered car, and he pointed out it was parked just over yonder and would I have time for a quick spin round the block? Would I? And there we were choof choofing down the road with a quick blast of that train whistle (which is accompanied with a large cloud of steam) and



I loved the snake. The snake looks like a Boa constrictor horn but it was made especially for this car in UK. Apart from honking like a normal horn it also hisses like any self respecting snake should.

Then again sometimes it gets real excited!



cruizin. And it was just fantastic. Probably a couple of steps better than fantastic! The only noise is a quiet choof choof from underneath, a bit reminiscent of a train but very distant. Being a steam engine there is no clutch or gearbox so no moans of grinds. It just moves along, and quite sprightly too. Of course with a bloody great steam whistle and a giant snake that belches steam, you have to vent them both fairly regularly. The owner, Rob Balfour wasn't going in the bay to Birdwood, he was just out for a spin, but I did get an invite to come and check out the 1909 Stanley model Z. A couple of weeks later I found there

were a lot more goodies in his shed as well as the Stanley Steamer...

The 1916 Ford model T started its reborn life when found in a paddock near Bathurst in NSW in 1986 with a tree growing through its chassis. The bloke that discovered it was a collector that had a thought to

build an authentic looking farm vehicle with it. So it was restored to look as a dilapidated buckboard and he used it at rallies as such. The next owner was also in NSW but he was able to buy a kit to convert it into a speedster on the cheap. It seems someone had ordered the kit, manufactured by Rootlieb in America, but had then not gone ahead with the purchase, so the set of body panels was offered at a discount price to get rid of it. But the new owner also wanted the car to perform a bit better and fitted an overhead valve Rajo head to it. Back in its heyday, there were many firms manufacturing hot-up bits for these cars and Rajo was one of





The model T today has a lot more bling than it did when I last saw it in 2013 (below) but it is still identifiable by the rally badges.



the more popular ones. Attached to the Rajo head was a pair of Holley NH carbs (the standard single carb for the car) and a set of exhaust headers into a large diameter system. I came across this vehicle during a national rally "Lizzies convene in 2013" and the owner showed me an advertisement from back in the days and explained he had built the car to look like the picture. He had done a good job. It looked remarkably like the poster. And I took pics of it and under the bonnet of the famed Rajo head. So when I laid eyes on Rob's car I noticed the resemblance but when Rob explained about the Rootlieb kit I figured it was just another example of the same thing. But when I got back home I looked at my photos from 2013 and I could see the rally badges on the front were the same. This is the same car, but Rob has tidied it up and made some changes that certainly give it a lot more bling! He has replaced the standard brass radiator with a replica Livingstone variety and replaced the electric headlights with acetylene ones and their associated generator. And little bits here and there, like replacing the plastic motorbike rear view mirrors with brass ones and racing numbers, all add up to making the car stand out. I thought it stood out 7 years ago but it sure stands out a lot more now. When Rob first laid his

hands on it one of his first jobs was to have a new exhaust system built for it. He gave the job to some so called expert that took ages to build it and in Robs words, it was the shittiest job he had ever done. Rob was so pissed off the car sat around for 4 1/2 years before he touched it again, then because he couldn't do much with the Corona virus restrictions on, he and a mate built a new exhaust and this one is just great. Rob reckons the car runs a lot better too.



The advertisement the previous owner showed to me. He set out to have his car look just like the picture.

The engine bay is basically the same but so much flasher!







This Stanley steam car was built in 1909, a model Z. It was part of the collection of Robert Homes a Court. It had been restored to a high standard and boasts a plaque declaring it to have won 1st prize in 1980 at the national judging by the Antique Automobile club of America.

Holmes a Court was obviously impressed as he bought it and shipped it to Australia. He entered it in the Bay to Birdwood run but didn't finish due to problems caused by low water level in the boiler. It seems you have to plan ahead a bit driving these cars. For instance if you are about to climb a long steep hill you have to be certain you have enough water to get you to the top. When under power steam cars can use a lot of water. If you run out of water it's not like running out of petrol, you may fry your boiler and then you will be going nowhere. The Stanley then graced the floor in his car museum until his sudden death in 1990 after which all the cars were auctioned.

An associate of Robs bought 3 of em but he didn't actually do anything with the Stanley and it just sat around his place for some time until he sold it on to Rob. At this stage the vehicle was not in running condition. Sitting around in a museum is not good for cars, nor is running them low on wa-

Rob and daughter Brianna out for a days steaming. On this day they rescued a couple driving their more conventional old car that didn't complete the run..



Robs all girl family are the team that keep the Stanley steaming. Being a 9 seater they can also carry extras.

ter, plus it seems, the standard of workmanship of the original restoration in America was not up to scratch. It took Rob 5 years to get it up to speed. The body was fine but the plumbing was in poor shape and believe me there is a lot of plumbing in this car. All the pipes were replaced and about half the valves. Gauges had to be built from scratch and there is a new boiler which has nearly 1000 tubes in it, runs at up to 600psi and is wrapped with 3 layers of piano wire to keep all that pressure inside. Tyres were a problem, although they still make the size, 36 x 4, they only make em in black. This vehicle needs whitewalls! The only way he could get a set was to buy the last ones in existence anywhere. It was a set dated at 30 years, but new old stock still wrapped in black paper. He made new tanks and new engine cowlings and immeasurable time getting information and advice from UK and other steam enthusiasts in Australia. It was a lot of work and still is, but it is unreal. No doubt you have heard how long it takes to

get a steam locomotive from stone cold to ready to run. The Stanley is not like that at all. 30 to 40 minutes and you can be on your way. And you can park it up and go and do your thing for as long as it takes and when you come back it is still all steamed up ready for you to drive off. There is a bit of a routine at the start of the day but Rob's all girl family share the task and it all runs smoothly. There is a tank on the side containing Shellite which is pressurised to about 20psi. This runs a pilot light at the front of the boiler where its main task is to heat a vaporiser for the main fuel which is a mixture of 60/40 diesel/petrol. It also helps get the water temp up. It takes about 20 minutes to get to the vaporising temp during which time one of the girls is hand pumping the main fuel tank to 120 psi. Rob is also busy oiling everything and checking valves. He then chocks the front wheels and jacks up one back wheel. The engine can then run and with the back axle turning a pump pumps water up to the boiler and also pumps 600w oil into the engine. That is a very abbreviated version of the startup. Once the steam has done its job and is exhausted from the engine it is piped forward to preheat the water going into the boiler before it is released to the atmosphere. And when it does, I bet there are people that think that this car is blowing a lot of smoke.

At the front of the boiler. The white vapour is the fuel for the pilot light that keeps things hot while the car is waiting for some action.



Under the bonnet you don't find an engine, Instead there is the boiler. Runs at up to 600psi.





Behind the boiler is a mass of pipes and valves. To the right of the photo is the blow off valve if it all gets out of hand.





If you reckon the dash is a bit complicated you would be right. One unusual device on there is called a winker. It winks at you every time oil gets injected into the cylinders. If it doesn't wink, you stop quick! Note the shiny Kero lamp attached to the steering column facing forward. That is the dash illumination for night driving.





Its referred to as coffin nosed.

Some of the gauges had to be made specially for this car.



Copper tank on the side holds pressurised white spirits for the pilot light. All these tanks have been fabricated and are works of art.





A plaque from back in its days in the States in 1980. First prize from the Antique Automobile Club of America.



The serpent fascinates me!



No this car does not have worn rings!

And as every good shed should be, every bit of available space is taken up by other neat stuff...Check out what's on the shelves.

These stationary engines are all half sized replicas of a full size engine. They all run. Rob has the full sized version of them in another shed. There just isn't enough room in this garage for all the full size versions.

And model radial engines. Once again part sized replicas. They run and will idle smoothly. Rob doesn't have the full sized version of these.







More stationary engines, still half sized





This engine is a baby. Called a non compressing engine I didn't quite grasp how it works but rest assured I watched it tick over nicely on that small jar of unleaded petrol.



Biggest mobs of hot air engines and hot air engined fans. These aren't models but the real thing.

The technical name for a hot air engine is Stirling Cycle.

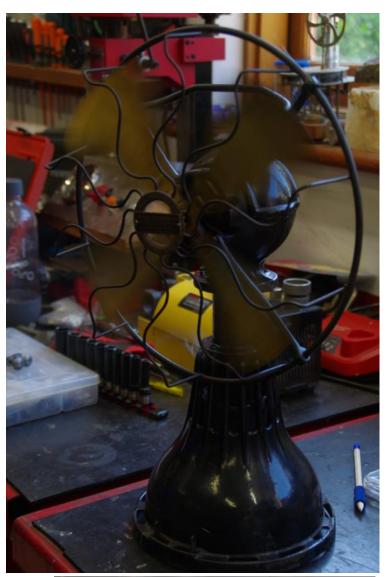


Rob fired this fan up. Just a simple kero burner. It started running after a few seconds and within a minute or so was shifting a tidy volume of air. It makes a quiet knocking sound to remind you that its running. These fans were quite widespread once upon a time. The plaque on the Quirks fan advertised they were in most of the capital cities.

Did you or do you have musical horns on your car? Press a button and it plays La Cucaracha or something? Well it turns out they had musical horns way before electrically driven ones. Testophone they were called. Each time you squeeze the bulb it plays a different note. They came with different amounts of trumpets for fancier tunes. Robs got heaps of em.









And you can change the tune it plays with the turn of a knob.





### MODEL "Z" Mountain Wagon Coffin Nose "The Flying Teapot"

The "Mountain Wagons" were developed by twinsFreelan Oscar Stanley& Francis Edgar Stanley to carry summer visitors 34 miles, uphill, from the railway station in Loveland, Colorado into Estes Park in the heart of the Colorado Rockies, where the Stanley Hotel still stands. This was a climb with gradients that few internal combustion cars cared to attempt at that time. The Mountain Wagons did it with ease and they were built from 1909 to 1917 for the Estes Park resort and other hotel operators.

Year: 1909

Chassis No#: 4745

Rego: STEAM O (Currently South Australian Registered)

Production: Only 33 Model "Z" Mountain Wagons was made in 1909. Only a handful of Model "Z" 9-seater cars are still operating in the world currently. This is the only car in the world with the correct

rims for the Mountain Wagon.

Cost of Car: Base price was \$2,000 USD in 1909 compared to a "Model Ford T" only costing \$500

Pilot Light Fuel: **Hexane or Shellite** Pilot Light Fuel Pressure: **15-25psi** 

Main Burner Fuel: 60%Diesel,40% Petrol Mix ratio, car Originally Ran off Kerosene.

Fuel Tank Capacity: 32-38 Gallons or 143ltrs under rear row of seats.

Main Burner Fuel Pressure: 140psi

Vaporizer: Fuel enters a 6 1/2ft vaporizing tube at 140psi, once it heats up to 600 degrees it then turns

in to full vapour through a 58-thou fuel injector under the main burner plate.

Time to Steam from Cold: 20-30 Minutes
Top Speed: 50-70mph (at Least) or 80-112kph
Cruising Speed: 25-35mph or 40- 56kph

Weight: 2600lb or 1179kgs Empty/The GVW is 4700lbs or 2131kgs

Water Usage: 1 Gallon of water per mile Fuel economy: 1 Gallon of Fuel per 10 miles

Engine rated power: 20HP - Twin Cylinder 4 1/2" x 6 1/2" double acting engine Stephenson's valve

Engine Gearing: Turns less than twice (40:60) for each revolution of the wheels

Transmission: No Transmission/No Gear Box/No Clutch, Direct drive only with Forward, reverse

valve timing with halfway cut off to save steam.

Reserve water tank capacity: 40 Gallons or 151ltrs, need re-filling approximately every 80kms

Boiler Type: 30hpFire Tube Boiler

Boiler Operating Pressure: **550-600 Psi- about 38 bar** Boiler Pressure Hydrostatically tested to: **1100PSI** 

Boiler Dimensions:16" x 26" Diameter with 999 copper tubes using steel ferrules, Fire tube length 16" being a total of 1332ft 158ft of lineal Copper tubing.

Boiler Thickness is: 1/2" thick with 3 layers of "Piano Wire" around the boiler for strength

Tyres size: 36 x4 6 Ply Universal Tires/Tire Pressure 65-70PSI

Wheel Base: 118 inches

Car Suspension: Elliptical Suspension gives the car a very soft ride

Brakes:13 ½" Drum brakes (Does not stop easily) or use Reverse as a compression brake Headlights: Runs of Acetylene Gas from a Presto fuel tank on side running board.

### STANLEY SPEED RECORD JAN 1899 (Freelan O. Stanley)

On August 31, 1899 Freelan 0. Stanley and his wife Flora drove their Stanley-designed Locomobile #93 up the 7.6-mile, 4,725 foot vertical rise Mount Washington carriage road in two hours and 10 minutes (including a stop to take on water), far less than the usual six hours it took to climb the mountain in a horse drawn stage.

### STANLEY SPEED RECORD JAN 1906 (Fred Marriot)

A Stanley Steamer set the world Speed Record for the fastest mile in an automobile in 1906 at (28.2 seconds by Fred Marriott). This record of 127.66 mph (204 Km per hour) was not broken by another car until 1911. (a V8 powered motor cycle beat this time at 136 mph (219Km) in 1907 by Glen Curtis).

# JAN. 26, 1906: FRED MARRIOTT LETS OFF SOME STEAM



"Fred Marriott" American race car driver Born 31st December 1872 Died 28th April 1956

Fred Marriott went down Stanley Rocket. On Jan. 23 pressure built up, then let 28-1/5 seconds, or 127.6 r

An attempt to break the record at Daytona in 1907 used an improved version of the car but the car hit a rut at an estimated speed of 140sat on the floor of the Roc 150 mph. The car sailed in the air, breaking in half upon impact: Marriott was injured and did not make another attempt.

#### "Stanley Steamer world records established by Fred Marriott in the famous 'Rocket' steamer"

DATE	DISTANCE	TIME
January 23, 1906	1 mile (rolling start)	31-4/5 seconds (113.2 MPH/182.17)
January 24, 1906	5 miles	2 minutes, 47-1/5 seconds (107.7 MPH)
January 26, 1906	1 kilometre	18-2/5 seconds (195.7 KPH - 121.6 MPH)
January 26, 1906	1 mile (rolling start)	28-1/5 seconds (127.6 MPH)
January 26, 1906	2 miles	59-3/5 seconds (120.8 MPH)
1907	Daytona Beach	Approximately 150mph (Car Crashed)

These records represent runs made in one direction only. Not until December 1910, did two-way timed run regulations go into effect.

Marriott's mark for the steam land speed record, which had become the longest-standing such record, was finally broken more than 100 years later in August 2009 when Charles Burnett III of the British "Inspiration" team recorded an average speed of 139.843 mph (225.06 km/h) at Edwards Air Force Base in California

# STEAM-POWERED CAR BREAKS A CENTURY-OLD SPEED RECORD 2009 "NAMEDINSPIRATION"

August 26th 2009

An unusual vehicle known as "the fastest kettle in the world" has busted the speed record for steam-powered cars, a record set at the beginning of the automobile age. The sleek car, named Inspiration, achieved

an average speed of 139.8 miles per hour over the course of the two required runs at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

The Inspiration may sound like a crawling turtle compared to the jet-powered car that holds the world's land speed record: Thrust SSC roared up to a



speed of 763 miles per hour in 1997. But the Inspiration, a British-built car, can claim other bragging rights: The car's boilers can produce steam at a rate fast enough to make 23 cups of tea a second—an enjoyably British fact

The previous steam-powered speed record of 127 miles per hour was set in 1906 by Fred Marriott at Daytona Beach, driving a modified version of a popular car known as the Stanley Steamer. Many of the earliest road vehicles were powered by steam, which were easier and safer to start than early gas-powered cars, which had to be cranked by hand. But by the 1920s, the convenience of the internal combustion engine had essentially made steam cars obsolete [New Scientist].

The British Steam Car Team has been tinkering with their design for the Inspiration for years, and even after they arrived at Edwards Air Force Base they were bedeviled by electrical faults and valve problems in the car's complicated boiler system. The car's engine burns liquid petroleum gas to heat water in 12 suitcase-sized boilers, creating steam heated to 400°C. The steam then drives a two-stage turbine that spins at 13,000 revolutions per minute to power its wheels [New Scientist]. But you aren't likely to see steam cars on the race track anytime soon: Inspiration required two miles to accelerate to its record speed, and another two miles at the end to slow down with the aid of a parachute.

### 1951 RACE WITH 1913 STANLEY "STEAM VS GAS"



1913 Model 65 #7204 participated in a race with a 1911 Stoddard-Dayton, from Chicago to New York, in the fall of 1951.

The race was nationally publicized, and the "steam vs. gas" rivalry was played to the hilt.

One memorable moment was the taking on of water from a helicopter.

Several images exist of this operation, but this one gives the strongest appearance that the car was moving at the time. (It probably wasn't.)

I often recall this picture when I'm on a tour and the next water stop is further away than I'd like.

This article is taken from the WA club"s "Early Autos' however there is certainly interest in Australia regarding the land speed record. Check out Rosco McGlashan's website aussieinvader.com



by Bill Buys

THE World Land Speed Record stands at 1227.9km/h, or 763 mph. It was set by former RAF pilot Andy Green in the twin turbofan jet-powered ThrustSSC, at Black Rock Desert, Nevada, back in 1997.

So it seems that now, 23 years on, there's no longer much interest in the record, but until then it was a big international talking point, especially so in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

In 1929, Sir Henry Segrave, US-born but Etoneducated and a British national, held the honour of being the fastest man on four wheels. Also a former RAF fighter pilot, he achieved 231.36mph (327.34km/h) in the Golden Arrow, and six years earlier, in 1923, he won the French Grand Prix in a Brit-made Sunbeam.

That did not sit too well with Rene Stapp, a Frenchman described as a racing driver and engineer. His name does not feature in French racing history, but it matters not.

The proud Frenchman decided to build a car better and faster than the Golden Arrow, and after two years of secret development, produced his Stapp Jupiter.



It was a sight to behold and looking much like a streamlined military machine, it had a large cylindrical body and a vast tailfin, and M Stapp revealed it had a trio of 29litre Bristol Jupiter radial aero engines, from which he had removed the pistons and converted them to what he described as 'internal combustion turbines.'

Pardon? Oui, that's what he said.

The body was mounted on the chassis of a Voisin, a pres-



tigious French luxury car of the ( pictured) and he retained the Voisin's big-six engine for use as the starter motor for the modified

aero engines, which he said, would each produce 600kW and the power would go to all four wheels via an electric transmission.

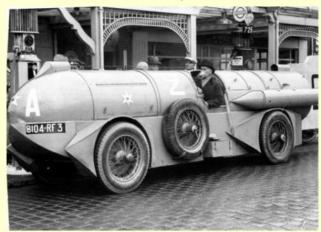
He figured the car would reach 372 mph (600km/h) when he took it to the sands of Daytona Beach, Florida.

However, first he wanted to do a trial run on a beach at La Baule in Brittany, so his car acquired a registration plate, rear view mirror and a side-mounted spare wheel so he could drive it though the streets of Paris to give the public a look at it.

That drive raised many a French eyebrow, for the

car had no windscreen and mechanic and driver had no seats: it was a stand-up position and Rene had to see the path ahead from a hatch in the bodywork.

There were rocket-like pods on either side and



multiple exhaust outlets in the car's conical tail.

It reached Brittany, but it burst into flames, apparently on its first run on the beach. Rene and le mechanic jumped out (or off) and sustained slight injuries, but the Stapp Jupiter rapidly became a pile of molten metal.

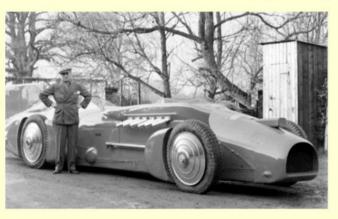


Oddly, nobody ever claimed to have seen or heard the magic internal combustion turbines it was supposed to have.

But the body alone was clearly the product of a lot of effort, however misguided it might have been.

So was it a tragic loss of a noble 'vive le France' effort, or the work of a nutcase? Nobody knows, and M Rene Stapp was never again heard of.

The speed record fell three years later, to Sir Malcolm Campbell, (below) who became the first man to top 300 mph. He drove Bluebird to 301.337 mph (484.9km/h).



Zut! as Rene might have remarked.



MG for sale. It is in good condition and very original. It was running and registered about 6 years ago. Flossie 0418845539. Offers wanted.

### White walls-Flappers.

One of my cars had white walled tyres on it. When I got new tyres it never occurred to me to get white walled tyres and a bit later I decided it looked drab with normal black tyres. So I bought a set of flappers. They made the car look great again. Then I drove the car to Katherine. The flappers started to look sad. Then I drove to SA and the flappers started to fall to bits. One of em came off when the wife washed the car at the car wash. The bit on the bead is still there but the rest of them all has disintegrated. It has also left a groove where it has worn the tyre away too. The bottom line is if you only drive your car a very short distance to pose off once in a while they certainly look good, but if you are doing any miles, forget em for sure!

### Rfukit St Mintabe

Had a conversation with a bloke at Marla in SA.He was tellin me how a cop was checkin his licence and when he saw the address on it, was convinced it wasn't a real licence. But the cop at Marla had issued it, and the bloke showed me the offending licence. Sure enough the address is real, Rfukit St, Mintabe SA. Pronounce the first letter seperately.

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#### STUFF ON THE NET

Need a fast boat to get you to the fishin spots faster? But using 1 gallon of fuel per second its probably not a practical solution. Worth checkin out though!

https://youtu.be/Cpy4cJzTqr8



Ever heard of primer spark plugs? Or an oil filter with a replaceable cartridge that is actually a roll of dunny paper? You better check this one out too, there is some neat stuff you may have never heard of. <a href="https://www.quora.com/What-is-something-in-an-old-car-most-people-would-not-recognize-today/">https://www.quora.com/What-is-something-in-an-old-car-most-people-would-not-recognize-today/</a> answers/168674000?ch=8&share=741dc48d&srid=3gP05





And woody wagons. It turns out they made a lot more woody cars than I ever heard of. Some of them are pretty cool. <a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qr2h4LQSfMvv05hWfDm\_9GIrTie-xmHL/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qr2h4LQSfMvv05hWfDm\_9GIrTie-xmHL/view?usp=sharing</a>

