

Motor Vehicle Enthusiasts Club

No 147

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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
Newsletter enquiries to Ted longtelescope@gmail.com



Here is a pretty neat car. Its been in the same family for most of it's life .

We were in the Bay to Birdwood a couple of years ago and a bunch of spectators got up and started applauding. I felt a bit chuffed. Then I realised they were clapping the car behind us... This one. Read on....

Geoff Mitton's 1904 DeDion Bouton

This car was bought new in London in 1904 by a merchant who shipped it to Adelaide in SA. This gent was one of the founding members of the RAA and was very keen on all the motoring events going on. He entered it in one of the first motor races in SA. The venue was the Morphetville Race Course, a venue normally for horses, held on November 12 1904. He entered it in the heavy car class but unfortunately enthusiasm doesn't necessarily win races, he didn't do very well. So the next attempt was reliability trials at Victor Harbour. He didn't do too well there either. He failed to finish. Not to be discouraged he changed his mode of operation to using the car to find venues for future motoring events, one being a hill climb to Norton Summit, a small town in the hills just above Adelaide.

He sold the car in late 1905 to a doctor in Burra where it was one of the first cars in the area. It seems doc drummed up a bit of doctor business as the car was involved in several incidents involving broken legs and the like due to horses that had never experienced a motor car, panicking. After a couple of years doc bought another car but never parted with the De Dion, merely parking it in the shed where it stayed until his death in 1915. Upon moving to Adelaide, his widow sold the car to an Adelaide doctor who, as part of his practice, looked after the interests of the prisoners at the Adelaide gaol, one of his jobs there being to decide whether a prisoner was sane or not. Insanity deprived an inmate of the privilege of the gallows. Whilst travelling to the gaol one day the car broke down on North Terrace, right on the edge of Adelaide city. It was pushed into a shed at the back of the Jubilee Exhi-



Burra to Morgan rally start 1906. The car is named "Daisy Belle" it's the second one from the left. Geoff has 1000 photos of his car's early life.



Glenelg, the finish of the first SA veteran car run in May 1934. The driver is Percy Wein-Smith, Geoff's grandfather.

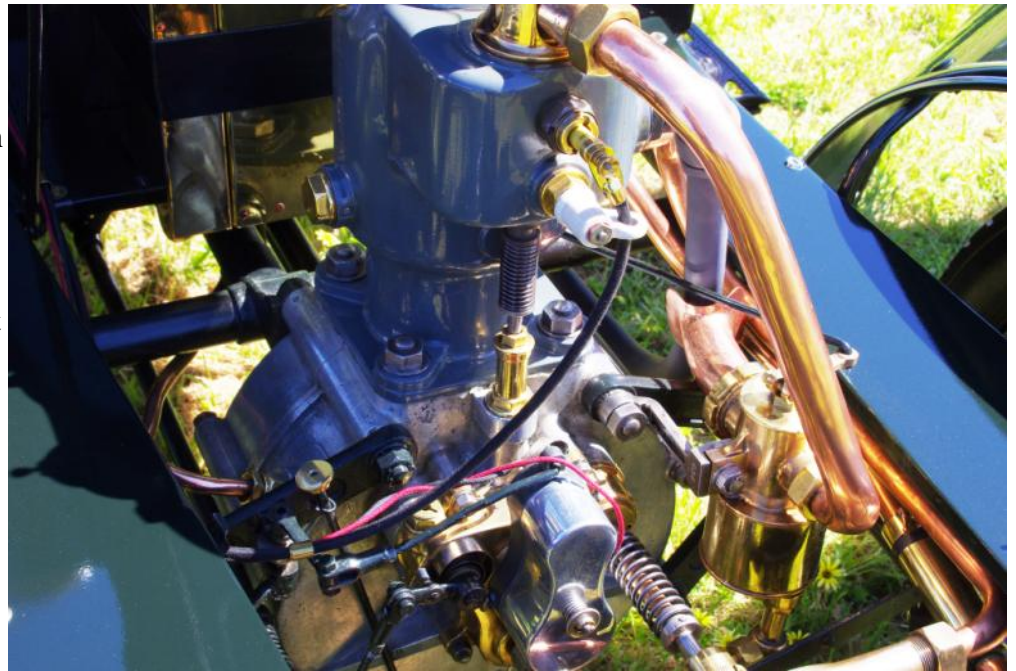


2020 and still looking good at the Barossa Valley

tion Building, a large and impressive building at the time, and there it stayed gathering dust until well after the doctors death in about 1927. Geoff Mitton's grandfather, lived in the same area as the doc and it was grandfather that came up with the idea of having runs involving old cars. He went about looking for old cars and by pure chance stumbled upon this one in January 1934. All that was wrong with it was a crook battery and he was able to buy it for the token amount of about £1 and started the veteran car movement in South Australia. The first ever old car rally in SA was run with this car in May 1934 and from then on it was a regular sight at events. It took part in the South Australian centenary year celebrations in 1936 and there is a photo of it drag racing bullock teams at Victoria Park race-course. Then came the war, but by the early 1950's when it emerged it was getting a bit tired. It was repainted and had some bearings replaced, but Grandfather didn't discard the old parts. He stashed them in the shed, along with photos of what he had done. Some of those pics showed the internals of the gearbox with notes showing where he had replaced things. So once again the old car still got plenty of use, it was driven to Sydney, with a top speed of 40kph, it took a couple of weeks. I believe he had it shipped back for the return trip. Somewhere around then it was a national concours winner. Grandfather died in 1956 and it was passed on to Geoff's uncle, who in 1994 decided to replace the leather upholstery. Geoff can remember sitting in the car as a 5 year old and he certainly understood



A bonnet within a bonnet. The car isn't broken, it's just part of the startup ritual.



*With the bonnet raised you cant help but be impressed.
There is no doubt it deserved it's win at the Concours at Bay to Birdwood*



why the leather work had to be replaced. During this period it was taken to England to be part of the 100th anniversary of the London to Brighton run. Then in 2013 Geoff inherited the car. It was then he found all the parts that had been replaced in the 1950's and the photos associated with the work. Where he could, Geoff reconditioned those original parts and reinstalled them, just in the name of keeping the car as original as possible.



The rear passengers enter via the door in the centre back. It's close to 30 years since the leather was replaced. It looks like new.

And in 2020 it was the winner of the Concours d'Elegance at the Bay to Birdwood run in Adelaide.



Rear suspension is interesting with a transverse spring mounted to a longitudinal one.

And it has a De Dion rear end Just like a modern Commodore. Fancy that!



The manufacturers liked to put their name on plaques all over the car but the odd one is from the centenary London to Brighton in 1996.



1953 Packard Clipper

Now here is a local story with a happy ending. The first part by yours truly and the better part by Kevin Murphy the current owner

By your faithful editor Ted Mumme

I was filling my model T with fuel at the local servo when a young bloke walks up and asks if I would be interested in a Packard Clipper. He explained it was on his parents block and they had sold the property and the car had to be gone by settlement in a weeks time. If no one buys it, it would go to the tip. It was one of a collection that had originally belonged to a Darwin doctor that was touching up his female patients, he had to leave the country in a hurry to avoid going to Gaol. It seems the doc had quite a collection and employed someone to pull em to bits and fix em up but didn't quite get time to put them back together.

I couldn't see it go to the tip, and although it had no engine or transmission, I thought a small block Chev would fit in there easy. So I bought it. I think he asked \$500 and I paid \$300. I also believe my wife was unimpressed. Then one night on my way to bed I decided I wasn't sleepy and fired up the computer and typed Packard into eBay and what should come up but a Packard 327 Thunderbolt straight 8 engine, the correct one for the car. I decided I had to have that engine and won the auction, the engine was at Murwillumbah in NSW.

When I rang the bloke that sold it I asked if he knew of a transmission for the car, to which he replied he did, in Sydney, and he was going there next week and offered to see if he could get it for me, which he did. And the auto trans was the one that had originally been attached to the engine I bought. The bloke put the engine and trans on a pallet and I had them picked up and freighted to Darwin. Then I had workshop manuals sent over from the states for them. But after putting it all under cover, that's about as far as I got. Many years later too many projects and too many interests got in the way and I decided to shed some, the Packard being one of them, so I advertised it but the only interest I got was a bloke from Qld who was only interested in the engine and gear-box which I sold him for \$1500. I probably got back most of what I paid for them. His boss's father had bought one these cars new and it was sitting in a warehouse in remarkably original condition except that years ago persons unknown had removed the head and lost it and all the bits that had been pulled off and with sitting around all these years open it was not in good nick. They wanted to get this car going before the old bloke pegged out which probably was not far off.

That left me with the body, so once again I advertised it without the engine and along came Kevin.

by Kevin Murphy.

I suppose the story of how I came to be doing a restoration on this Packard really began when I was young and stupid and full of big ideas. I had purchased a 1948 Ford Prefect, the plan was to build an awesome Hot Rod. I pulled out the engine and ripped the car to bits ready for the big project, sadly that's as far as I got. The engine ended up powering a saw bench and years later my brother sold the remainder of the car at a swap meet. I believe the Prefect was later lovingly restored, but I always had a sense of regret and shame because of my inability to complete the project. About 37 years later, when I came across the 53 Packard Clipper Deluxe in the classifieds of a local car club online newsletter, I thought the time had come to make up for my past sins. My skills had also increased significantly to tackle a major restoration Project. I had only vaguely heard of the make Packard prior to seeing the Ad, and after a bit of a google search on the car and model I decided that it might have potential as a decent restorer.

Motor Vehicle Enthusiasts Club

No 5

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The voice of the Motor Vehicle Enthusiasts Club

TRANSMISSION



If you find you need more information about this club or just cant wait to join ring. Peet Menzies on 89 81 4746 GPO BOX 911 Darwin 0801 or if you're in Katherine call 89711325 For correspondence regarding this newsletter email Propellers@bigpond.com

Merry Christmas



I used the Packard for my Christmas photo in this publication in 2006 . It gives you an idea of it's condition when Kevin took it away.



\$300 seemed pretty cheap for any old car that could be saved so I gave the owner Ted a call and headed out to Berry Springs just a 40 minute drive away.

The car that greeted me looked in a pretty sad state. The engine and gear box were missing, having been removed and left somewhere else a long time ago, the seats were rotten and rusty, the car had been partly disassembled with parts leaning around the walls of the shed and in the rafters as well as in pots, boxes and containers inside the car. However a stocktake revealed that most of the parts seemed to be there.

From what Ted told me the car belonged to a bloke who started to restore it, but then got into some sort of strife and had to leave Darwin in a bit of a hurry. The Packard passed through another owner before coming to rest in Teds shed for the last 20 years.

I loaded up the car and all the bits onto a trailer and into the back of my ute and headed home through a tremendous late wet season April storm "2019". Wasps, rats, spiders and God knows what else had made the Packard their home for the many years it had been sitting around,

The Clipper in its current condition. That's Kevin with his creation and it sure is testimony to his ability.

The modern Holden V8 almost looks lonely in that gigantic engine bay. Only 4 cylinders long, the original engine was 8 cylinders long. Kevin would sit on the guards with his legs inside there while he was working on it.





The interior has been done as original. Some of the seat springs had replacements from an old lounge. And check out the radio, behind the old dial numbers you can see modern LCD display.



I must have removed a couple of kilos of wasp nests from every nook and cranny of the car. I roughly reassembled the car and amazingly apart from a grill extension fuel tank and drive line, it all seemed to be there. There was a bit of rust in the rear passenger floor and boot floor as well as the bottoms of the doors and a few other minor spots but all in all not too bad and whilst nowhere near perfect it looked reasonably straight with a few old repairs lurking underneath the primer. *“No worries I thought I should have this on the road by Christmas.”*

Being a spray painter by trade, although something I haven't done for a living for quite some time, I was able to rip into the rust and body repairs fairly quickly. The colour I chose was Grabber Blue from a late model mustang and a metallic blue for the roof, the front guards and bonnet needed to be sandblasted due to it having been sitting around in bare metal for so long. The chrome on the bumpers, over riders, headlight bezels and outer grill were all in pretty bad order, but I wasn't going to spend around 6 to 7 thousand dollars on new chrome, so instead I painted them with Alsa Easy Chrome. It is nowhere near as good as real chrome but the effect is quite good. I sent a few small pieces away for chroming and would not see them again for another year.

I repaired and repainted the seat frames and made new door cards, I sent these off along with the roof lining to the Motor Trimmers. *“Things are taking a bit longer than I anticipated, Christmas 2019 has*



come and gone, but I reckon I'll have it done by July"2020.

The chances of finding a Packard straight 8 engine and gear box seemed slim so I believed this gave me free licence to put in something a little more modern, I hoped that the Packard puritans out there wouldn't judge me too harshly for it. A Holden 5 Litre V8 with an auto turbo 700 attached came my way so I thought this would do nicely. The steering box got in the way of the headers so a steering rack from a VS commodore went in, and I might as well utilise the diff and tail shaft from the same car. The steering column would also have to be changed so a GM collapsible tilt column and steering wheel were added. I couldn't have disk brakes on the rear and drums on the front so a brake upgrade from Hoppers Stoppers was now required. After a fair bit of searching around a fuel tank from a XG falcon ute fit into the hole that the previous tank left fit pretty well."Mid-year has passed, but early in the New Year 2021 should see it on the road."

Okay so the engine is in but I can't get the bloody thing started the whole car has been rewired and has an interface kit for the Electronic Control Unit (ECU), I'm thinking that I may be the only person in the history of Packard's that has ever had a problem with an ECU, so after admitting defeat I called in an auto electrician who finally diagnosed a faulty ECU. The Packard is put on a trailer and leaves the shed for the first time in a couple of years, it has a 2 and 1/4 inch exhaust fitted. Turns out that the brake upgrade presented another problem, the commodore wheels now don't fit over the front callipers. Despite all the mechanical modifications, I didn't want to change the appearance of the exterior by putting on mag wheels so I had some smoothie rims manufactured with 16 inch rims and added dress rims and hub caps."Surely I can make it to the Red Centre Nat's in September2021."

After some last minute problem solving with the handbrake, boot hinges, idler sensor and other things too numerous to mention, the engineering pass for the modifications was issued. A day later I walk out of MVR with plates in hand and a smile on my face. As I drove the part Packard and part Holden home in January tropical storm 2 years and 8 months after I began, I think I have, I have, exorcized my demons from the Ford Prefect fiasco.

"If nothing, all goes well I should be good for the Packard National Rally in May 2022."



When the car left Berry Springs, the spare wheel would have fallen through onto the ground.



Editors note: Inspired to do something similar? See my ad for MkV Jaguar in the for sale section.

King Dick

Chances are, if you own an older British car, you've got a need for some Whitworth wrenches or possibly even have a handful in an old tool roll in the boot. And, if you fit that category and have gone shopping for Whitworth spanners, you've probably come across the King Dick brand of tools. Possibly you've seen the King Dick name and signature bulldog on some of the tools in the kit that came with your MG, Austin-Healey, Sunbeam, Rolls-Royce or other English car.

Post Image

Okay, adolescents, stop snickering at the name and stand by for a bit of a history lesson.

Thomas Mabbutt opened the Abingdon Works Co. Ltd. in 1856 in Birmingham's Gun Quarter, primarily to manufacture breech blocks, but also roller skates and tools. Surely, Britain's insatiable Victorian-era appetite

for expanding the empire had a lot to do with the Abingdon Works' success, leading even to the production of cartridges for bullets. By the 1880s, the Abingdon Works (never actually located in Abingdon, but named for Mabbutt's hometown of Abingdon on Thames, later famous for the MG plant there) was in the bicycle and tri-cycle parts business, along with tools and the breech-loading actions for rifles.

Bicycles and tricycles were serious business in the latter half of the 19th century (they are much lower maintenance than horses, after all) and Abingdon went so far as to engineer and patent the Abingdon Axle, a rear axle for a tricycle that used a geared differential. Think about that for a minute: a human-powered, chain-driven tricycle with a differential!

Like so many other bicycle companies in the early 1900s, Abingdon made the transition to manufacturing motorcycles, first with engines purchased from other companies and later developing single and V-twin four-stroke engines of its own design, some of which were used by the more well known makers Ariel and Invicta. The King Dick name was used on some models of single-cylinder motorcycles as well, which were largely branded Abingdon, though, after a fashion, just AKD, for Abingdon King Dick. They were the first to produce a telescoping front shock absorber, known as the Abingdon Spring Fork.

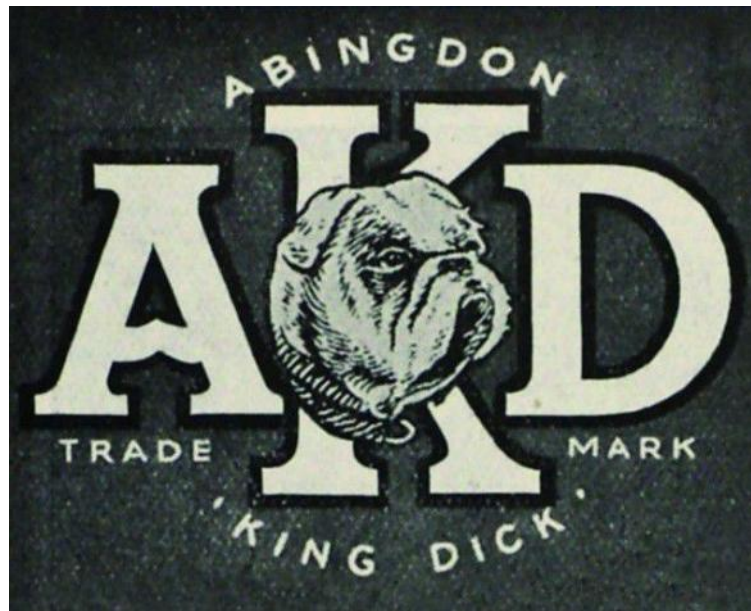
During these years, the company merged with the Albert Eadie Chain Co. to again change its name, this time to Abingdon-Ecco Ltd. (from the Eadie Chain Co.) and then soon after to Abingdon Works Ltd., this time without the added Co. And, once again, like the motorcycles, the name changed to Abingdon King Dick, a name it still goes by today.

The company began selling a type of adjustable wrench, or spanner, in the late 19th century, quickly gaining a reputation for building quality tools. Even as the motorcycle business became tougher after World War I, and a brief, unsuccessful experiment in car building yielded only a dozen or so vehicles in 1922 and 1923, the tool business continued to be strong. By 1931, the failing motorcycle business, hit hard by the double whammy of cheap, reliable automobiles and the brutal Depression-era economy, put AKD into liquidation. Rescued by a new owner, its last year of motorcycle production was 1932, after which it concentrated solely on manufacturing hand tools.

Still based in Birmingham, King Dick continues to sell a variety of U.K.-made wrenches in metric, British Standard Whitworth (a thread designation, technically, as opposed to a nut or bolt size) and Imperial A.F., which stands for "across the flats," or how we commonly measure fasteners in fractions of an inch. They also sell a variety of other hand tools, such as pliers, socket sets, hammers, screwdrivers and small toolboxes to keep them in. And if you need to complete a tool set for your MG TD or Austin-Healey 100, there are plenty of vintage King Dick spanners on the used market, here and in the U.K.

And what about the King Dick name itself? The owner of Abingdon Works adopted the name and the bulldog symbol from his own bulldog, a breed that was first established in Great Britain not long after the founding of Abingdon Works. The first bulldog to be officially shown--and famously so--in 1860 was known as King Dick, and surely many others afterward adopted the boldly noble name. For King Dick tools, the bulldog over the Union Jack symbolism captures the steadfast resolution and strong projection of Great Britain, and thus the tools themselves. On some of the motorcycles, they went so far as to cast the visage of the bulldog onto the gearbox cover along with the King Dick name.

And the name lives on. You can still buy King Dick tools.





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MVEC AUSTRALIA DAY BBQ 2022

By Suzzy

The annual Australia Day BBQ was held at the hangar this year with the hope that the monsoonal rain would stay away long enough for the sausages to cook. There was a wide range of vehicles & motorcycles on display, plus Tim's interesting bull catcher/bush basher Ute.

The sun shone for a good while but when the black cloud we had all been watching hit the rush to move the not so waterproof cars under cover was on for young & old. It was a good day, members & friends all enjoyed a catch up.

The talk of the day was Steve Bow's new acquisition which is now on display at the hangar.



MVEC Club President arriving in his Studebaker



Club members having a chat & swapping stories



Some very nice club cars enjoying the sunshine [but not for long]
1963 GT Hawk Studebaker, 1960 Mercedes Ponton, A Model 1930



Members enjoying the BBQ



1944 WW2 Ford Willys Jeep & 1958 Morris Traveller



Tim's bush basher which was used as a buffalo catcher, a mean machine



A new edition to the hangar – 1927 Riley Monaco Special

Mk V Jaguar 3.5 litre saloon

Engine reconditioned, Chassis restored. Rust repairs completed on body. Panels straight. Mostly disassembled. An impressive car as restored to original or make a equally impressive hotrod. The massive chassis on these cars need no modification to accept the most powerful modern V8

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OAM Awarded to Jared Archibald

MVEC Club committee member Jared Archibald has been awarded an Order of Australia Medal [OAM]. Jared has been recognised for his tireless service to the museum and galleries sector.

MVEC congratulates Jared on a job well done.

Wots on

19th February

80th Anniversary of the Bombing of Darwin. Club display of WW2 Vehicles, BBQ & Darwin Amateur Radio club display of a commemorative radio station to mark the event.

All of this at the hangar 10am - 4pm

Bring along you old vehicle to show it off and check out the radio club's radio station transmitting from the hangar.

25th April ANZAC Day open day

From 9.30 after the parade where the military vehicles will be involved

15 May Rally to the other end.

Continuation of the Rally to the end in 2021.

17th July

MVEC vs Classic Holden Car Club annual cricket match.

At the picturesque Batchelor oval. You can throw balls at a Holden owner or just come for a drive and watch. And there will be a barbie fired up there at lunchtime. BBQ ashes being the cuisine of the day. And if you are not into cricket, it's a nice drive.

An old cowboy dressed to kill with cowboy shirt, hat, jeans, spurs and chaps went to a bar and ordered a drink. As he sat there sipping his whiskey a young lady sat down next to him. After she ordered her drink she turned to the cowboy and asked him, "Are you a real cowboy?"

He replied, "Well, I have spent my whole life on the ranch, herding cows, breaking horses, and mending fences. I guess I am."

After a short while he asked her what she was. She replied, "I've never been on a ranch so I'm not a cowboy, but I am a lesbian. I spend my whole day thinking about women. As soon as I get up in the morning I think of women, when I eat, shower, watch TV, everything seems to make me think of women."

A short while later she left and the cowboy ordered another drink. A couple sat down next to him and asked, "Are you a real cowboy?"

To which he replied, "I always thought I was, but I just found out that I'm a lesbian"