

Motor Vehicle Enthusiasts Club

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TRANSMISSION



The voice of the Motor Vehicle Enthusiasts Club

If you find you need more information about this club or just cant wait to join ring Peet Menzies on 0417 855222
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In Katherine call 89710605
Newsletter enquiries to Ted propellers@bigpond.com or 08 89886049

Waltzing Matilda



Graham Mead with the 1919 Rolls Royce Silver Ghost named "Matilda"

It's not often you see a vintage car cruising outback Australia. They tend to stand out a bit and when the vehicle is a 1919 Rolls Royce it stands out even more. Graham Mead and his lady Barbara have sampled outback Australia in one of these vehicles more than once. Regular readers may remember the story of Rick Brown and his Silver Ghost in the Simpson Desert. In the story there was mention of "a Pommie bloke named Graham." Graham Mead is that Pommie feller and he is no stranger to Australia. Their first taste of adventure in this style started back in 1994 when they shipped their 1923 Silver Ghost

to Fremantle to drive it to Sydney. The real adventure started at Norseman where you turn left onto the Eyre Highway. In England (Graham and Barbara really do live in England) it is a maximum of fifty feet to the nearest person and here they were about to embark on a road where the next human was in the small town of Balladonia, 139 miles away. The car was 70 years old! This was scary stuff!

They needn't have worried. They drove all the way to Sydney with no problems. The trip was so good they put the car on a ship for NZ and continued the

fun over there. There is a club, The Silver Ghost Association where owners of these vehicles participate in rallies at various places around the world. In 1996 the rally was from Sydney to Alice Springs. Most of the participants drove from Sydney to Adelaide then put their cars on the train to Alice, then at the conclusion had their cars transported back to whence they had

come from. Again they shipped their car to Australia but at the end of the rally Graham and Barbara drove their Ghost to Darwin, then to Perth before sending it back home to England. Before long the bug was setting in again as the Rolls was on a ship bound for South Africa, and from South Africa it was back in Perth again for another trip across the Nullarbor but for a bit of variety this time they went to Sydney via Broken Hill. From Sydney it was back to Kiwiland to tour NZ for a year. But instead of taking the Ghost home it was back to Sydney for a trip to Cairns, Mt Isa, then from Barkly Homestead up to the Heartbreak Hotel. On this leg of the trip they met up with some other English folk who lived 20 miles from their



Barbara and Graham at Exmouth. She was the catalyst for the vintage Rolls Royce interest !

home. On to Katherine and back to Perth they shipped the Rolls back home to England in 1998.

But it's hard to stay away from a place with so much elbow room. In 2004 they were back. This time they came via NZ but in a 1910 Silver Ghost. Arriving via Brisbane, naturally they had to drive to Perth but this time it was the long way. They did Brisbane to Melbourne, Melbourne to Tasmania, and Tasmania to Perth. But they did break that trip into two one month





Now that's a carb! Its massive, but so is the 7428cc engine it feeds!

The rego number is this vehicle's original rego number when it was first registered in England. YP denotes a suburb of London. It is currently registered in Qld and the personalised plates reflect this original number and the style of the plates also is from that first registration. The front plate was made in England while the back one is painted on the fuel tank as original.

trips, one in 2004 and one in 2005.

Readers, you may have noticed there is a lot of shipping happening in this story. Graham and Barbara are motoring enthusiasts, and it had become apparent they were adding to the coffers of shipping companies, and that was not the pastime they were interested in. Since they were enjoying driving round this large landmass called Australia so much, the obvious thing to do was buy a car already there. Naturally it had to be a Silver Ghost. In 2004 during one of their trips, they attended a Rolls Royce owners rally in Melbourne. Here they spied a 1919 Ghost that was for sale. This Ghost had been undergoing a complete restoration in Brisbane and was almost completed when the 1974 floods hit. Consequently the car was submerged under 20 feet of water. The owner dismantled, cleaned and stored the parts but unfortunately he died before he could reassemble it. Eventually it was purchased from the widow but in the meantime she had given away a number of it's parts to other Rolls Royce enthusiasts. Obviously it survived and the restoration was completed as Barbara and Graham bought it and picked it up in March 2005 with the idea to drive it right around the country. Not in one big drive but two trips per year. One in Feb/Mar and Oct/Nov of each year.

Over the past 6 years there have been twelve trips and at the time of writing they have just left Exmouth where I caught up with them. At this



The fishtail exhaust is not just fashion. Rolls Royce found that the fishtail's cross sectional area is the same as the exhaust pipe, so does not detract any power but it is considerably less noisy.

stage they had covered 30,000 miles since leaving Brisbane where the circumnavigation trip started (they took the long way) and they are on the way to Darwin. There they will rendezvous with a couple more Silver Ghosts that have travelled from Brisbane, then they will all travel back to Brisbane together. Not necessarily via the most direct route mind you. Boroloola, Heartbreak hotel and Boulia are on the itinerary. When they reach Brisbane the circumnavigation will be complete. What then I asked? Do it again, then again and again, replied Graham. Till my times up!

I have said it before. Life's tough!

During their 30,000 mile trip the Rolls Royce has only had one unscheduled stop where they needed help. They were fording a swollen river crossing in Northern NSW when a truck travelling in the opposite direction severely drenched them and filled the ignition system with water. Luckily a friendly farmer spied them and towed them a mile to his property where they could dry out the problems.

I am always curious to the reasons people get involved in their pursuits of old cars. In this case it was most certainly Barbara's influence. You see when she was a young lady in her teenage years she developed a love of cars with running boards. She clearly remembers working for a car dealership when a customer brought in his Sunbeam Talbot and was allowed £17/10/- as a trade in. She wanted it passionately but her Dad wouldn't advance her the money. He said there was nowhere for her to keep it. It didn't even have running boards but the thought was deeply entrenched in her memory. Forty years later flying back from NZ she recollected she still



Even filling up with petrol attracts attention



Friction shock absorbers are instantly adjustable.

wanted a car with running boards! Shortly afterwards they owned a 1932 Rolls Royce 20/25.

And a couple of points of interest...

The only item on the vehicle that is not original equipment is the GPS speedo and odometer on the steering column. There is no radio or any similar entertainment.

A most important instrument is the clock. There is no fuel gauge and the fuel consumption calculations are done according to the time travelled. Also there is no automatic voltage regulation in this vehicle. The generator will charge at a max of 8 amps. To maintain a fully charged battery Graham switches on the charge for 4 mins every hour plus a short burst every time the electric starter motor is used.

It is actually colder in WA than in England. The roof is normally down. Rain is not a problem. The only time the roof is put up is for protection from the sun.



Graham and Barbara made it to Darwin long before you read this report. They parked Matilda in our hangar while they went for a quick trip to SA to check out some whales. While they were away there was a bit of an invasion of vintage Rolls Royce in Darwin. Graham Singer (an Aussie bloke named Graham) and Dean Prangley, both from Queensland drove their Silver Ghosts up here to rendezvous with Pommie Graham and to join him for the last leg of the trip to Brisbane.



*Above: Pommie Graham's Ghost in our Hangar
Left: Dean, Aussie Graham and Pommie Graham line up for the next leg of the trip.*

Bay to Birdwood Dearest wife, Shirley left me for a week or so of partying in Adelaide. It was her sister's birthday. After one of those rotten airline flights that fly right when you should be in bed, she bobbed right into the start of the Bay to Birdwood rally. What a way to relieve the symptoms of no sleep. This is the rally to end rallies in Australia and she stumbled on it while just trying to get a cup of tea to revive herself. It was not just any year either. This was the 30th anniversary! 1300 pre 1956 vehicles was quite a sight and landing just as the sun was thinking about rising, she saw the whole lot arrive and get organised. She reckons it was great to see such a large fellowship of car buffs and age knew no barrier here. Entrants had also gone to great pains to dress in the appropriate era to match their cars and along the route a large proportion of the spectators were sporting old cars. And she reckons the organisation was impeccable. I think I'm jealous!



A remarkable view through the windscreen!



Julie has found her perfect Match. A lovely Mk 4 Jaguar!



*Something for Everyone.
A Packard or maybe a double decker bus*



Nothing but Ford

You didn't necessarily have to be a Ford nutter to appreciate the "Just Ford" day organised by the Classic Ford Club recently. The show started at midday, strategically situated at one end of Mindil Beach so that when the sunset markets got underway, a lot of the patrons came over to check out the goodies. And there were lots of them. I didn't actually get round to counting, but rest assured there were big mobs.

And they were all Ford! As I drove my '63 Futura in I noticed a real flash Chev follow me in. A bit cheeky I thought! It parked just in the gate. But I heard a few snide comments floating around and next time I looked it had gone. A chicken amongst the wolves, I guess he had second thoughts. A smart move too.

This event was for anything that had a Ford badge on it, age was not an issue here. There were brand new cars on display right through to the model T. By far the best represented era was the XW, XY and GT Falcon, but there was a good representation of the earlier Falcons with original examples as well as some with radical V8 powerplants. Plus one only XB GT in very nice condition. One absolutely smicko restored Customline rested near another one, not so shiny but with a sign declaring that these cars were meant for driving not polishing!

There were Escorts, Capris from the 70's and 90's (all the earlier ones had a V8 in the engine bay), and the odd hotrod. A whole row of AC Cobra replicas and a GT 40 replica. Then there was a gigantic gap from the mid fifties (the Customlines) to 1921 and my model T. The organisers had hired a group of fairies to entertain the little kids and paint flowers all over their faces and generally keep them happy. Also they had colouring competitions (colouring in Fords of course) and I asked one Mum what the paperwork she and numerous others were studying while they peered at my model T. They were doing a sort of treasure hunt where they had to identify certain cars. The model T was fairly easy to pick as the oldest vehicle on display.

And prizes, they had mobs of em. Brian and Margaret Nixon and their smiko XK Falcon were awarded the best Sedan and with just a minor bribe our XL Futura was declared the best unrestored survivor. I got the vibes that the whole show was so good they will be holding it every year. Maybe there needs to be a "GM Only Day" just to maintain the balance. And it never had occurred to me before just how many Fords there are in our family!



Margaret and Brian Nixon's 1960 XK Falcon outshines its young sibling. This is one of the first Falcons made in Australia



Father's Day Car Show

From our on the spot reporter Howard Moses

Photos by Stuart Duncan

Motor Vehicle Enthusiasts Club members held an open day at the Old Qantas Hangar, Parap, on Sunday 5th September. Wet season rains of the previous day threatened to return and wash out the show.

Safely parked under cover inside the Hangar were the concourse classics : Rolls Royce, Pontiac, Oldsmobile (1904 curved dash model), Studebaker, Jensen, early Fords and Chevrolets plus two striking MG sports cars recently restored by Richard Chappell and Ron Barker. Other brave members were prepared to display their cars outside - never mind the rain (which never came !) Allen Marshall displayed his fabulous 2 tone 1940 Ford V8 wellside truck for the first time since restoration began 3 years ago. Other classics on display included :

1928 Chrysler Ute (S Perron)

1955 Sunbeam Talbot (R Charrington)

1955 Morris Oxford (P Menzies)

1955 Vauxhall Velox Ute (G Smith)

1957 Morris Marshall (T Feehan)

1961 Chrysler Valiant Ute (Les Wilson)

1963 Studebaker Gran Turismo (President P Menzies)

1973 Ford Falcon XW (P O'Donnell)

1976 Ginetta Coupe (D George)

1980 Holden WB Ute (G Colliver)

1981 Chev Corvette (Geoff Smith)

Bob Archbold (1927 Morris Cowley, 1957 Ford Zephyr) cooked up a delicious Bar B Q for everyone, with drinks, and free courtesy of MVEC.

Steve Hall turned up in the Purple Pontiac Parisienne fresh from the Variety Bash 2010 Rally to Gove.

Citroen was represented by a demonstration of hydro pneumatic self raising suspension of the yellow 1974 D Special (H Moses)

The Open Day attracted a constant stream of visitors ; Fathers, families, the curious and the dreamers - all potential enthusiasts.

Besides the rare and classic cars, the Hangar also houses vintage trucks and military machines, motor-bikes, memorabilia plus Leo Izod's lifetime collection of stationary engines. Everything on display in the main hangar is in working condition.

The Old Qantas Hangar is a great place to visit. Open Monday to Friday 8 to 5pm and Saturday 8 to 12 noon, courtesy of Leo Izod.



Colin De La Rue's bikes

Honda CX650E Sports

Vehicle No. RC 2004 083

Engine No. RC10E 2006116

Manufacture – 7/83

Odometer - 56,264km.

This bike was acquired from a friend in North Queensland for somewhere about \$1100 in a complicated trade-off. I had rather liked these 650's for some time as they seemed quite sophisticated, without being bafflingly complicated for the aging motorcyclist. I picked the

bike up on 2 July 2009 and decided to make it my immediate restoration project, so that I would have something fitting to ride in my declining years.

From some of the papers that came with it, the bike may originally have been bought in Western Australia. It was last registered in Queensland in July 2006. It is essentially complete, even to having the owner's handbook and most of the tool kit and with it, but it has been neglected for some years. The disc brake hydraulics are corroded and locked, and it generally needs a thorough service and tidy-up.

A preliminary visit to the Honda agents, Precision Motorcycles, elicited the disturbing information that the CX650E was not officially allocated to Australia by Honda. Thus Honda takes no responsibility for providing a factory parts service (bastards!). As with a number of models sold here prior to Honda deciding that the economics favoured a full-scale Australian marketing, it was imported by various dealers off their own bat.



(Who am I (however suspicious) to contradict this explanation? – Precision's dealer's manuals certainly have no listings for CX 650E parts or service information.) Bits & pieces must be tracked down by finding where they (or suitable substitutes) were used on other models that were officially imported. Fortunately, Precision Motorcycles Spares staff appears to be quite happy to engage in such a hunt. The favoured system is for me to bring any reject parts along to them, and they will hunt up the equivalent or best available alternative for me. This seems to be working well, besides, careful searching on the Honda Parts computer catalogue has wrung out a number of relevant part numbers. The main job has been dismantling the brakes, which required making up a couple of special tools to overcome seized callipers. On dismantling, the hydraulic system appears to have been topped up with cappuccino - or perhaps Turkish coffee. Now, with new tyres fitted and brake parts on their way the process of re-fettling and servicing can begin.

There are two statues in a park; one of a **naked** man and one of a **naked** woman. They had been facing each other across a pathway for a hundred years, when one day an angel comes down from the sky and, with a single gesture, brings the two to life.

The angel tells them, 'As a reward for being so patient through a hundred blazing summers and dismal winters, you have been given life for thirty minutes to do what you've wished to do the most.'

He looks at her, she looks at him, and they go running behind the shrubbery.

The angel waits patiently as the bushes rustle and giggling ensues. After fifteen minutes, the two return, out of breath and laughing..

The angel tells them, 'Um, you have fifteen minutes left, would you care to do it again?' He asks her 'Shall we?' She eagerly replies, 'Oh, yes, let's! But let's change positions. This time, I'll hold the pigeon down and you shit on its head.'

VW Type 3 'Fastback'

1972 Automatic
Not running
\$1200

Ph: 89810430

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get information, find a lover. Whatever you like.
For photos to be published they need to come to me
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Email Ted at propellers@bigpond.com
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Deadline.. The end of the month

Ford Customline
Rolling chassis
Offers wanted

Geoff 0417843728



*A real Ford at the All Ford Day. An XP ute. No resto-
ration here and it is towing an XL on a trailer. The
XL is for sale..... See below..*

Attention Katherine mob

4 door Morris Minor
2 door Morris Minor
1 carton of beer each

Geoff 0417843728

XL Falcon

\$1,200. No motor or gearbox (but there is a motor avail-
able in Darwin). Mostly clean, straight, rust-free body
(ex Katherine).

Phone Tim 8928 1182.

Honda CR85 2005 model
Kids dirt bike \$2000 ono

Can be viewed at Darwin
Motorcycle wreckers

Geoff 0417843728

Porsche 944

1982 Red 2.5 litre non-turbo 4 cylinder
Has later model 944S front

220000km - 3 + 6 months rego
In good condition \$6500

Derek 8983 1736 [AH]



The motor vehicle Enthusiasts Club
Extends its thanks to
Shannons
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For its continued support for the club

Wots on

13th October **Monthly meeting** at the Hangar. Guest speaker is historian Pearl Ogden

6th Nov **AGM** 6PM at the hangar. Barbie afterwards. It's only once a year. Be there!
There will be no monthly meeting in Nov

Sat 20 Nov Katherine Christmas Toy Run

Sat 27 Nov Darwin Christmas Dinner - at Cazalys Club in Palmerston.

25th Dec **Christmas Day**. You didn't really need a reminder did you.

The monthly meeting is normally on the 2nd Wed of the month.

On the following Sun there is always a working bee at the hangar.

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John was a salesman's delight when it came to any kind of unusual gimmick. His wife Marsha had long ago given up trying to get him to change. One day John came home with another one of his unusual purchases. It was a robot that John claimed was actually a lie detector. It was about 5:30 that afternoon when Tommy, their 11 year old son, returned home from school. Tommy was over 2 hours late. 'Where have you been? Why are you over 2 hours late getting home?' asked John. 'Several of us went to the library to work on an extra credit project,' said Tommy. The robot then walked around the table and slapped Tommy, knocking him completely out of his chair.

'Son,' said John, 'this robot is a lie detector. Now tell us where you really were after school.' 'We went to Bobby's house and watched a movie,' said Tommy. 'What did you watch?' asked Marsha. 'The Ten Commandments', answered Tommy. The robot went around to Tommy and once again slapped him, knocking him off his chair once more. With his lip quivering, Tommy got up, sat down and said, 'I am sorry I lied. We really watched a tape called Sex Queen.' 'I am ashamed of you son,' said John. 'When I was your age, I never lied to my parents.' The robot then walked around to John and delivered a whack that nearly knocked him out of his chair.

Marsha doubled over in laughter, almost in tears and said, 'Boy, did you ever ask for that one! You can't be too mad with Tommy. After all, he is your son!'

With that the robot immediately walked around to Marsha and knocked her out of her chair.