

ISSUE 794



JULY 2024

THE VINTAGE DRIVER

The official magazine of the Vintage Drivers Club

Patron: Brian Tanti



THE VINTAGE DRIVERS' CLUB INC

Established 1958 Reg No. A0110905M ABN 30 004 426 528

'Catering for those who own or appreciate Vintage Vehicles'

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Committee: Trevor Barby



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Safety Check Officers

The following Club Members are eligible to conduct Vehicle Safety Inspections on Members vehicles and sign Vehicle Safety Reports:

John Rhodes	0400 118 309
Brian Smith	0401 802 264
John Davis	0418 998 520
John Johnston	0417 354 998
Hein Otten	0418 390 538

An inspection fee will be charged by the service provider which will include an amount of \$25, which is to be returned to the Club.

Licensed Club Nominee:

John Johnston

Magazine Editor

Iain Ross

Email: editor@vdc.org.au

Events Committee:

Stuart McCorkelle, Doug & Edith Stevenson, Garry Jewell, Holly Schwind, Adam Francis and Doug Sterry.

BOOKING DOC'S DODGE

Simply complete the online booking form and then contact David Jenkins to confirm availability.

Email: dnpjenkins@yahoo.com

Members Meeting Friday 26th July 2024

Display car this month is John Hofstee's 1928 Chevrolet
Enjoy a drink and a chat from 6.30pm
Meeting starts at 8pm

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Vintage Drivers Club or its officers. Whilst all care has been taken, neither the club nor its officers accept responsibility for the accuracy of information printed and or the quality of any items or services advertised or mentioned in this publication. The editor reserves the right to edit contributions submitted for publication.

CALENDAR 2024

July	26th	Friday	Members Meeting
	28th	Sunday	New Members Day & 100 year old cars
August	10th	Saturday	Coffee & Chat
	11th	Sunday	Observation Run with VSCC
	14th	Wednesday	Mid-Week Run
	23rd	Friday	Members Meeting
Sept.	14th	Saturday	Coffee & Chat
	18th	Wednesday	Mid-Week Run
	22nd	Sunday	Rob Roy VSCC Vintage Hill Climb
	27th	Friday	Members Meeting
	27th-29th	Fri to Sun	Grand Final Camping Weekend

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New Members

The following have recently joined our Club,
Please make them very welcome

Richard & Josie Rose.

Wilma Balle.

We hope you enjoy being members of our Club.

Front Cover:



Dominic Kaukas's 1936 SS 100
Jaguar 2.5 Litre Roadster, read more
inside this issue.

Membership Enquiries

New Membership Applications &
all membership enquiries to Doug
Stevenson Mob: 0419 319 977
Email: membership@vdc.org.au

Magazine Closing Date

Closing date for contributions for the August magazine is:

Wednesday 31st July 2024

Permit Renewals & Applications: are to be sent to the Club Permits Officer, Arnold Chivers 10 Beaufort Rise, Warrandyte Vic 3113. Documentation should include—**1.** VicRoads Renewal Application Form **SIGNED BY THE MEMBER** **2.** Cheque or money order made payable to VicRoads **3.** Stamped envelope addressed to VicRoads. OR Stamped self addressed envelope if you want the signed form returned to yourself. The Club Permits Officer will: Confirm the applicant's membership, financial status and vehicle eligibility and will post all relevant documents in the envelope provided. **NEW PERMIT APPLICATIONS** are to be sent to the Club Permit Officer as above and include **1.** Vic Roads Application Form **2.** VicRoads Eligibility Form **3.** Photos as per VicRoads requirements **4.** For vehicles pre 1948, a vehicle safety report signed by an authorized Vehicle Safety Check Officer as appointed by the Club or a roadworthy certificate. Vehicles post 1948 a Roadworthy Certificate. As it is better for the owner to personally collect the new plates from VicRoads the application should be accompanied by a stamped self addressed envelope and no payment need be included.

From the Editors Desk

Welcome to the July edition of The Vintage Driver. As you may be aware our president has been on an overseas tour for the last month hence there is no presidents report this month.

This month we are featuring an article highlighting the establishment of the Nash marque and its quite remarkable Charles Nash one of Americas pioneer automotive promoters.

I thank Fred Menke for providing this information and I note there are over twenty Nash listed as members cars of choice. Your editor was introduced to Nash early on as his state school headmaster had a Nash sedan of the early thirties, He was clearly proud of it as he would be seen

cleaning it of a lunchtime. To this car mad adolescent, it was something quite different.

Charlie Nash continued well into the early fifties, and we will feature his later exploits in a future edition.

As always thanks to our members for your contributions your efforts are appreciated. And if you are yet to join the list of contributors you will be most welcome. As well if you have a vehicle suitable for display on the cover with a little story about it do not hesitate to let me know.

Enjoy the read
Iain R



Vale - Les Boyes

We were recently advised of the passing of our member Les Boyes. Les was based in the Wodonga area; he was a member of the club for fifty-nine years and owned a 1926 Crossley. He was 93 at the time of his passing. Our sincere condolences to his wife Nancy and family.

Doc's Dodge

You may already own a superior vintage vehicle, but have you thought of comparing your treasure to Doc's Dodge?

Doc's dodge has been lovingly restored by an enthusiastic group of club members and is available for use by the membership, particularly at club endorsed events, but not limited to that.

Booking is a relatively simple online process with availability confirmed by contacting myself, David Jenkins at <dnjjenkins@yahoo.com> There is a brief booking form to be filled, found on the club website and then you can be set to go.

There are some simple conditions that we ask should be observed and after your experience of driving this masterpiece we would welcome your comments, favourable or otherwise.

In conclusion I would encourage members to avail themselves of the opportunity of driving something different or maybe trying a vintage car for the first time.



Minutes Of The Vintage Drivers Club Members Meeting

Friday June 28th, 2024.

Meeting Chaired by: Vice President, Iain Ross

New Members Present: Welcome to Ron Mason with his 1928 Dodge.

Apologies: Kevin and Julie Wilby, John DeMaria, Michael and Judy House and Dee Baxter.

Zoom Attendees: Eleven Members on Zoom – Val Bugeja, Ron Bishop, Kris Cunningham, Rodney Adler, Annette Moody, Augustine Banko, Stuart Stancombe, David Stott, Kelvin McMeekin, Graham Bell, Colin Handasyde.

Attendees Present: There were fifty members present.

Minutes of the last meeting: The previous minutes were accepted and moved by Doug Stevenson, Seconded by Trevor Barby. Carried.

DISPLAY VEHICLE Unfortunately, John Hofstee was to bring his 1928 Chev to be displayed at the meeting, but due to mechanical issues he was unable to attend, however we were fortunate to have Daniel Zampatti with his 1927 Austin 7 Australian bodied Chummy. On display.

TREASURERS REPORT: Maureen Ross presented the following Treasurer's Report-

The following figures are for the period of 15th May to 18th June 2024.

Our operating expense for this period was \$15,221.00

Our expenses this month were the normal Magazine costs and Clubroom expenses, cleaning, telephone etc. along with our Club Catering Van and Scholarship payments.

Our income for the month was \$16,869.00

This was mainly from Clubrooms rental payments and membership renewals.

Maureen made note that those wishing to pay their membership renewals can do so.

NEW MEMBERS REPORT: Doug Stevenson reported on new members as follows:

Re-joining members - Richard & Josie Rose from Metung who are also looking for a suitable vehicle.

Wilma Balle from Hoddles Creek.

A big welcome to our new members.

GEARBOX REPORT: There was no Gearbox report for the month due to Gary Jewell being absent.

EVENTS REPORT: Stuart McCorkelle presented the following Events report:

PAST EVENTS:

June –

- Coffee & Chat
- Mid-Week Run organized by Frank Mercuri.
- June members meeting.

COMING EVENTS

July-

- 13th July - Coffee & Chat being held in the Clubrooms.
- 17th July - Mid-Week Run organized by Kurt Schulz is organizing Christmas in July. Unfortunately, as there were not enough numbers, the day will be held at an alternative venue but still starting at the same place. For further information please contact Kurt Schulz.

• 26th July – Club Meeting

• 28th July – New Members Day celebrating 100-year-old vehicles.

August-

- 10th August – Coffee & Chat.
- 11th August – Observation Run a combined event with the VSCC.
- 14th August – Mid Week Run organized by Ann Drysdale meeting at the Wheelers Hill Hotel. For more information contact Ann.
- 23rd August - Members Meeting.

PRESIDENTS REPORT: As the President was away there was no Presidents report.

AOMC REPORT & MYSTERY CAR:

This month's mystery car was a Sizaire Frere.

Iain Ross discussed the AOMC Club Management Seminar held last weekend discussing Taxation for Clubs. The Commissioner from the Taxation Department addressed the meeting, which was well received by those that attended. Another seminar will be held for clubs on Publicity and Websites on Saturday 20th July. The AOMC has set dates for some major events for next year -

- Festival of Motoring will be held at Cruden Farm on January 19th, 2025.

- British European Motoring Show will be held at Yarra Glen on February 16th, 2025.

- American Motoring Show will be returning on February 23rd, 2025, at Mornington Racecourse and will be celebrating 100 years of Chrysler.

CARS AND PARTS FOR SALE OR WANTED:

- 1928 Model A Ford Roadster for sale, not running with no cylinder head but is a good sound car. For more information contact Charlie Grima.

- Holly Schwind has parts for sale for a 1927 Chev that originally belonged to Dave Jenkins. If anyone is interested, please contact Holly.

- A member in Queensland is looking for a Marquette car window winder mechanism that he believes is the same as an early Holden. If anyone has one or knows of where one may be obtained, please contact Iain Ross.

GENERAL BUSINESS: If anyone would like to bring their car into the Clubrooms for the Display car of the month please contact Doug Sterry.

Iain Ross discussed the difficulty in getting spare parts for Vintage Cars for instance wiring looms are getting impossible to get under a 12-month waiting period in Australia. This is a problem within the movement.

Holly Schwind gave an update on Yarra Glen Swap Meet for 2025 with a meeting due to be held in July. If you would like to join this exciting committee, please see Holly for further information.

SLIDE SHOW: This month's guest speaker was Geoff Bartlett.

Geoff was kind enough to share an informative slide show of his father's business and its beginnings. Norman Stanley Bartlett began his Trailer Manufacturing business back in May 1946 and to the family's credit is still running to this day. It was during the war that Gas was almost impossible to get unless you were a return service man. It was agreed upon with Mr. Bartlett's next-door neighbor who was also starting a business and also a return serviceman that the neighbor could share the business premises in return for he did some welding. As was the case in those times people helped others out to make do.

In 1963 Geoff Bartlett designed the Barlett 9" ball coupling which is still being sold to this day.

An array of different custom manufactured trailers was shown with a fascinating explanation of what trailers were made for what purpose. Amongst the trailer slides an impressive array of both truck and car were shown.

Thank you for an informative and interesting talk Geoff, it was enjoyed by all.

RAFFLE: The usual raffle was drawn with some new faces winning some great prizes.

MEETING CLOSED AT 9.10 pm followed by supper.

COMING EVENTS

Doc's Dodge – our club car is available for use by members to attend any of the events. Booking form on our website or contact club car manager – Dave Jenkins 0413 901 734

Members Meeting Friday 26th July



Meeting Tonight

New Members Day & Celebration of 100 Year Old Vehicles Sunday 28th July

At Our Club Rooms. From 12.00 noon There will be a free BBQ Lunch for all attending. All new members who have joined in last 12 months and members with vehicles listed with our club as 1924 models will receive an invitation to this day. So, keep the day free and come along to meet new members and celebrate the 100 year old cars.



Let's see how many members & club cars we can get there on this very special day.

Coffee & Chat Saturday 10th August.

10.00 am at our Clubrooms.



Spare Parts at Coffee & Chat
There will be a large quantity of speedo cables both inner and outer at the August Coffee & Chat. Most are new & packaged but not identified for a vehicle. You will need to bring a sample to properly identify your cable. There are other years not just Vintage.

Invitation Event- VSCC Sunday 11 August Day Trial - Observation Run

A glorious crisp winter's day of motoring. with an intermittent lunch at a fine country pub to catch your breath, and, up with your chums.

Essentially dead easy navigation and all distances given in "clear", miles and kilometres). No cryptic stuff, just a few inane questions as route checks, with the answers to the questions on the left and visible at touring speeds. You should complete the event by 5:00 pm, and so be home in time for tea.

Start: Tallarook, Melway 610 M7

Time: 9:00 am for a prompt 9:30 am start

Lunch: at a fine country pub

Finish: about 50 miles north of Melbourne

Bring: Melway not essential, but useful.

Odometer (or good sense of road distances).

Entry fee: \$20.00 (includes 24 hour temporary VSCC membership for non-members)

Please let the organiser know of your intended participation by 4:00 pm on Friday 2 august (ideally by returning your entry form by email) so that numbers can be confirmed for lunch.

Organiser: Andrew Green.

Phone or Text: 0411 287 642

Email: agreen@sbalaw.com

Entry form available at Coffee & Chat, Members Meeting and on our (VDC) website.

Mid-Week Run, Wed. 14th August.

The Run will start from Wheelers Hill Hotel Car Park. Meet at 10.00am to leave by 10.30am.

A scenic drive to Settlers Run Golf Club at Botanic Ridge near Cranbourne for Lunch. A menu of Garlic & Herb Bread with a selection main courses will be available for \$29.00 per person.

Numbers required by the 7th August to confirm booking with the Club
Ann & Lyle Drysdale

Members Meeting Friday 23rd August

Speaker Frank Braden



Past Events

Mid-Week Run to Flowerdale - Wednesday 12th June 2024

A hardy group who ventured out on a forecast wet & cold day met at the Coffee Shop at Bundoora Farm on River Red Gum Avenue. After an enjoyable coffee & chat, Frank Mercuri handed out instructions for the run which took us to Whittlesea Show Grounds and then on to Flowerdale via the Humevale Road, a windy scenic route that was the original road to Kinglake. Actually, the weather was kinder than we expected.



Three members braved the weather and brought their club cars out for the run: Rob Bonner 1930 Graham Sedan. Doug Seymour 1929 Dodge Coupe & Augustine Banko with his delightful 1936 Fiat Spider.



After a very enjoyable lunch at the Flowerdale Hotel Frank suggested that we could continue on to Yea and visit the Cheviot Rail Tunnel.

The 201 metre long brick lined Cheviot Tunnel opened in 1889 as part of the Yea to Molesworth rail line extension. The tunnel was constructed from approximately 675,000 handmade bricks from clay quarried and kilned nearby. The line closed in 1979. The tunnel remains in excellent condition and is now part of the Great Victorian Rail Trail.



Tunnel in use 1970's



Thanks to Frank for organising this enjoyable day and also suggesting alternative routes that we could take to return home.

Attendees: Rob & Beth Kirby, Rob Bonner, Doug & Edith Stevenson, Charlie & Linda Grima, Wilma Balle, Doug Seymour, Dennis Robertshaw, Frank Mercuri, Dee Baxter, Augustine Banko, Kevin Lemm.

Past Events

Last Month's Members Meeting

Held on Friday 24th May saw a reasonable crowd attending there being some notable absences due to it coinciding with a wintery Friday evening 28th June a healthy group of members came together to be part of our regular meeting. We were privileged to have long time member and enthusiast Geoff Bartlet as our guest speaker to outline his family's business manufacturing heavy duty trailers for the transport industry.

The display vehicle was an Austin Seven chummy with an Australian body owned by Daniel Zampatti.

Unfortunately, John Hofstee's Chevrolet tourer suffered mechanical problems and could not make it.

As well as all the above there was plenty of both earnest and lighthearted banter amongst our members both before and after our meeting.

All members are invited to attend our regular monthly meetings.



Members Car

Dominic Kaukas's 1936 SS 100 Jaguar 2.5 Litre Roadster

Swallow Sidecars Ltd of Coventry, England built the SS 100 2.5 Litre Jaguar 2-seat sports car between 1936 & 1938.

Swallow Sidecars, founded in 1922 by William Walmsley and William Lyons to build motorcycle sidecars. In March 1945 the S. S. Cars shareholders agreed to change the name to Jaguar Cars Limited.

This vehicle has Considerable history in Australia and particularly in one South Australian family.

Whilst it is a 1936 2.5 Litre model, it is a rebuild of a race car that was wrecked sometime prior to the early 1970's. The previous owner/restorer contacted the Jaguar factory about rebuilding it and was given many copies of the factory drawings for the chassis and suspension springs etc. and subsequently travelled to England and Europe a lot during the '70's to source original SS parts that were still available then.

The cars restoration was completed in the late '70's or early '80's and subsequently it was driven regularly until the owner became ill. It was then unused for ten plus years.

Since the previous owner passed away his son took on the task of resurrecting it, which has required quite a bit of rebuilding/replacing the 'fragile' bits such as carburettors, fuel pumps, electrics, fuel system generally etc. It has just had the carbs overhauled (again) and the steering box rebuilt and new battery fitted.

It goes well for such an aged car and there is now nothing else that I know of that requires work on it for it to be driven around. That said, there is plenty of cosmetic work that could now be done given that the rebuild was completed well over forty years ago.



Club Project

Vintage Catering Van Matt Weeks Reports

I received some engine parts.

060" oversized pistons and rings, new valves and 8 valve guides. Someone obviously thought it was a 4 cylinder so I'll need to chase up another 4 of them which is a little painful.

I have cleaned up the crankshaft the best I can, it's definitely not beautiful but I think it will be ok. We're not racing it. Also got the full gasket kit with a copper head gasket.



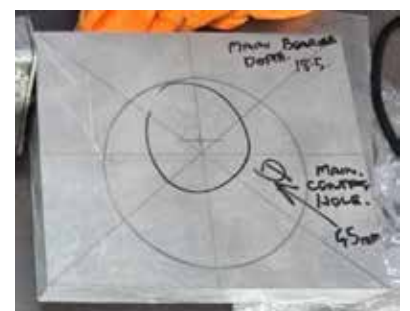
So, I can continue with the engine rebuild now that I have all the parts. Spent a day machining the main shaft to adapt to the Dodge gear box. Machining the old hardened Jag spline off was no easy task. I had to grind the bulk of it off.

Machining the Dodge tailshaft spline down to fit inside the overdrive shaft. DA spline fitted to the overdrive.

Using original parts it can be reversed at anytime in the future. Making the adaptation plate to bolt the overdrive to the chassis.



I started off with a block of aluminum about 40mm thick. It needs the main shaft bearing recessed into it by 18.5mm and the on the opposite side it needs a lip seal machined into it.

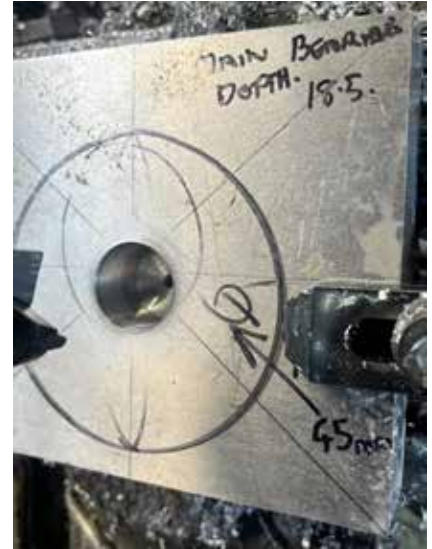


Club Project

Vintage Catering Van Matt Weeks Reports

Starting off with a 1/4 hole so when it's turned over for the seal I can centre it again.

Also drilled a hole big enough so I can machine it out for the shaft and bearing. Recess for the shaft bearing.



Turned over I can use the 1/4 hole to centre the aluminum for machining out the seal. I still need to enlarge the shaft hole by 5mm and recess the lip seal.



Got the overdrive dry mounted today. Just waiting on a new main shaft bearing to fit it up permanently.

Seemed to fit in very nicely so now I just need to make a new tail shaft. I will fit a rear support across the back of it between the two chassis rails.

Cheers Matt

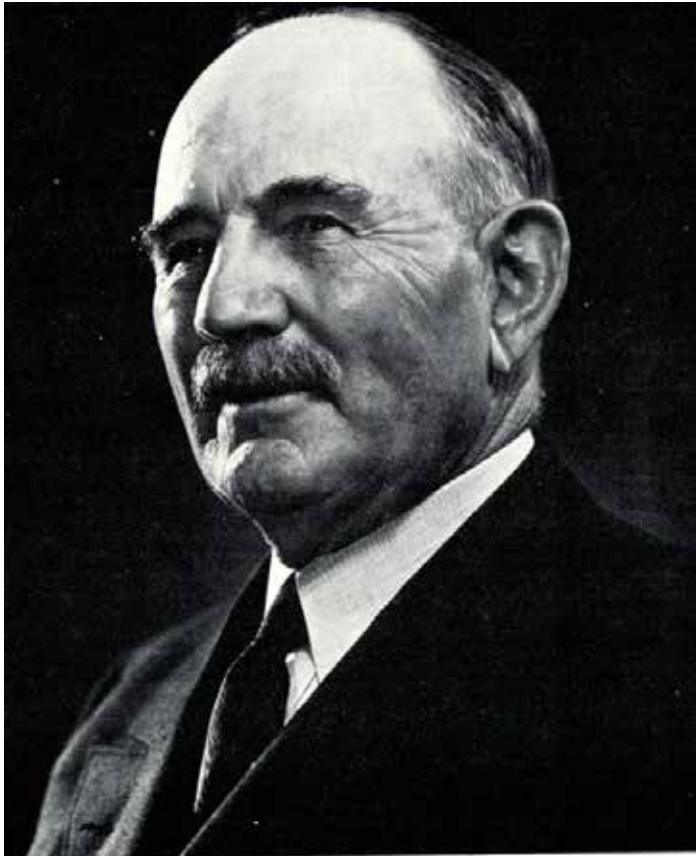


The Charles W Nash Story and the empire he built.

By Beverley Rae Kimes appearing in *Automobile Quarterly*.

The American Automobile industry pioneers were an interesting lot generally entrepreneurs rather than the often dour engineers of England and Europe who often emerged from the railway world.

Charles Nash was a self-made man I hope you find his story as interesting as I did.



Charlie Nash

It was hot, one of those sizzlers when the air stands still, and not so much as a breath, let alone a breeze, wafts across Lake Michigan. It was dog day in Chicago. It was July 13th, 1916.

Upstairs in the Blackstone Hotel, two men sat in a small room, a large blade fan slowly circulating above them. How much? one man asked. He was told. The price was high, but it was worth it, he thought. He took a cheque book from his jacket and scribbled. A cool \$500,000 would bind the deal. The men shook hands and left.

Charles W. Nash of Michigan had just bought the Thomas B. Jeffery Company of Wisconsin. Charlie Nash was on his way to Kenosha.

Had he not been in the Blackstone that day, had he not been in a buying mood, had he decided instead on an early retirement and a life thereafter of leisure, few would have considered it other than his due. But Charlie had

decided to build the Nash. It would be very much like him.

Powerful in frame, muscular and hardy, honest, square dealing, a rugged, righteous fellow, they said of Charlie in those days, a man's man, "but in fact, no man's man at all except his own." The Nash was like that. Sonnets are not composed about such cars. Lots of people have said Nash probably never built a bad car, but they've said little more. The Nash was merely a good car. But that isn't really all the Nash was. The Nash was as interesting as Charlie.

Charlie Nash was born on a farm in DeKalb County, Illinois on January 28th, 1864. Six years later his parents O.L. and Anna Caldwell Nash separated. Neither wanted the child. He was "bound out" by the court to a farmer named Robert Lapworth in Flushing, Michigan; in exchange for work on the farm, he was to receive room, board, three months of schooling per year and a hundred dollars, a new suit of clothes and his freedom upon reaching age twenty-one.

On Sunday, July 5th, 1876, Charlie Nash skipped church. He skipped town that afternoon, walked fifteen miles to a farm near Grand Blanc and took a job for eight dollars a month. By the time he was thirteen, he was on another farm Alexander McFarlan's in Mt. Morris for twelve dollars a month, using his savings to buy ten sheep, his first capital investment. In five years his flock numbered eighty, he'd learned the carpenter's trade and had acquired some mechanical training via a portable steam hay presser. When he was twenty, he was pressing hay at the Halleck farm near Flint when he saw the farmer's daughter. Charlie Nash and Jessie Halleck were married April 23rd, 1884. "She is the guiding hand of my life and my ablest, wisest adviser," he would say of her when he chose his words carefully. "She's the general," he would say when he did not. He loved her deeply. In 1890, when her health dictated that she be closer to a doctor, he did not hesitate. They left the McFarlan farm. Charlie and Jessie moved to Flint.

A dollar a day as a grocery clerk in the store of W.C. Pierce was his first full-time job; the same salary as a cushion stuffer at the Flint Road Cart Company was his second. The gentlemen who controlled the latter were William Crapo Durant and Josiah Dallas Dort. Of his new cushion stuffer, Dallas Dort remembered years later, "That Charlie was a mighty good and fast stuffer is evidenced by the complaint of many of his fellow workers that might upset the standard production requirement on the piecework price in effect. But Charlie had his eye on bigger things. He needed the money, so he kept right on stuffing."

Within six months Charlie Nash was a department superintendent of Flint Road Cart. In 1895 the company was reorganized as Durant-Dort Carriage Company, and subsequently Charlie Nash had a new title and new responsibilities. He recalled both for a reporter later: "I

The Charles W Nash Story and the empire he built.

think possibly when I say I was General Superintendent that I may be putting it a little mild, as I was Vice-President and General Superintendent, and I had charge of the designing and building the vehicles, the purchase of the materials, and in addition to the operation of the factories, I also sold what we called the 'jobbing trade,' which took about one-half of our production." A banker in Flint went even further: "I believe he did everything down there but run the books." Durant-Dort was soon a two-million-dollar concern, America's-and possibly the world's-largest producer of road carriages.

In 1897 Charlie Nash saw his first automobile, -Jessie pointed it out to him, an electric on the streets of New York City. He coaxed the owner into giving him a ride. In later years he liked to think this was the impetus leading ultimately to his Nash. Probably it was not. Charlie Nash was initially unimpressed with the horseless carriage, as was Dallas Dort. In 1904, when Durant bought the automobile company begun by David Dunbar Buick, Nash and Dort paid it little mind. When, two years following, during a visit among the three in Durant's home, after the host had stopped thumping a player piano and started talking of the remarkable future of automobiles, Charlie turned to Dort. "Dallas," he said, "I think Billy has gone crazy." Two years later Billy Durant founded General Motors. Two years after that Billy Durant was in trouble.

Durant had overextended himself, badly. He had persuaded Frenchman Albert Champion to Michigan with his spark plugs, he bought Cadillac from that formidable Yankee, Henry Martyn Leland-but he had also purchased a good many other companies that were worth considerably less than the land on which they were sited. The bankers behind General Motors were aghast. In a reorganization shuffle, James Storrow of the Boston banking house of Lee Higginson and Company took the presidency of General Motors, and Billy Durant took off to talk to Louis Chevrolet. But before he left, he offered his recommendation for the top Buick post. Charlie Nash. Charlie took the job.

By now Nash had changed his mind about the future of the automobile. He thought it could be built along the straight-line conveyor assembly system he had developed for Durant-Dort, but he was aware he didn't know much about the mechanics of the vehicles he'd be building. So as works manager he brought to Buick a railroad man and avocational tinkerer of automobiles, a go-getter by the name of Walter Percy Chrysler. "No 1912 [Buicks] Are Left ... Entire Output of 20,000 Cars Has Been Disposed Of" headlined the Chicago Evening Post of July 21st, 1912. Four months later Charlie Nash was president of General Motors.

During the next three years, General Motors profits doubled and trebled. In 1916, however, Billy Durant was back in control of the company." ... We were great friends up to the time I was put into the Buick Motor Company," Charlie Nash said of Durant." His policies and mine, of

course, were absolutely opposed to each other, but I like him." Not enough, though, to work for him. A man whose guiding maxim was a dollar saved is worth two earned could scarcely work harmoniously with a man who preferred earning two and spending three. Durant wanted Nash, however, and offered him a salary that Charlie said, "was more than any man's worth." He refused-formally resigning the GM presidency on June 1st, 1916, to become effective August 1st. He had never taken a vacation, he was fifty-two. He told reporters he was going "fishing." He was.

Joining him was Jim Storrow, who had found himself persona non grata at General Motors with the Durant takeover. Walter Chrysler was invited along but he preferred, at the moment, to remain with GM. Storrow and Nash approached Henry B. Joy in Detroit first, and he was willing to consider selling the company he headed-but no one else at Packard was. Their next stop was Kenosha.

The Thomas B. Jeffery organization was one of the oldest, best-known and largest companies in the automobile industry. It had made the Rambler name famous first as a bicycle-second as a car; President William Howard Taft, whose girth served testimony to the sturdiness of any vehicle, was photographed riding in one. John North Willys had been a contented dealer for Rambler, and Edward S. (Ned) Jordan had handled the advertising for it and the Jeffery, which the product was renamed for the 1914 model year, his handiwork including one racy number promoting the Jeffery "Chesterfield" and depicting a woman smoking a cigarette-in 1916. The car was a good one and the four wheel drive Jeffery Quad truck was an even more striking success. Thomas B. Jeffery had died in 1910, his two sons had carried on, Charles T. Jeffery most actively in charge. He welcomed the overtures from Charlie Nash.

The purchase price was, trade papers reported, \$9 million. On July 29th Nash Motors Company was incorporated in Maryland for \$24,999,500. Then Charlie Nash really did go fishing.

He returned two weeks later to find matters already well in hand. On Jeffery company stationery-Nash Motors wasn't yet printed-had been sent out an extensive public relations release. "We feel there is a great deal of news interest in this story," it read. "First of all, everybody (at least everybody interested in automobiles) is wondering about Mr. Nash's plans for the future. Furthermore, his phenomenal climb from an obscure, orphaned youngster, homeless at age six, to one of America's most prominent captains of industry, should be interesting reading material for most anybody."

Initial plans called for continuation of the Jeffery line-by the summer of '17 sporting Nash nameplates-until Charlie Nash' could knit together the nucleus of a new organization. There was none of the new broom sweeping clean to all this; Charlie retained much of the Jeffery

The Charles W Nash Story and the empire he built.

middle and lower echelon intact. Into key posts, however, came his trusted friends and associates. An extraordinary man was Walter H. Alford, known affectionately as the "Judge" and widely regarded as a financial wizard. He defected as comptroller from General Motors to join Charlie. Billy Durant could have used him. To head sales Charlie brought in Charles B Voorhis who had handled the same very well for General Motors' Oakland. And to head engineering he hired Nils Erik Wahlberg, a native of Finland, a graduate of Ecole Polytechnic Federal in Zurich (Switzerland's famed mechanical engineering schools were also educating such luminaries as Marc Birkigt and Ernest Henry at the time), an emigre to America in 1909, a draftsman and designer for Maxwell-Briscoe, E.R. Thomas and Packard thereafter, and since 1913 chief engineer of Oakland. Erik Wahlberg was as good at what he did as Voorhis and Alford were in their respective jobs. Charlie's raid on General Motors may not have been extensive, but the result of it was deep in talent.

In mid-July of 1917 Charlie Nash met with the Jeffery-cum-Nash dealers (about 150 strong) in the Hotel Wisconsin in Milwaukee and signed up \$42 million worth of contracts for cars and trucks for the coming year. The new Nash-designated Model 681-had arrived. Erik Wahlberg had been busy.

The fact that the new Nash engine was the "valve in head" type pioneered by Buick came as no surprise. Departures from the standard, however, did-Nash chose to call its version "perfected valve in head." A six with a bore and stroke of 3 1/4 by 5 and cubic inches numbering 249, it developed 67 bhp, 0.27 per cubic inch, an uncommonly good figure. The engine was notable in several respects. It was characterized by simplicity of design and its valve mechanism-operated by an enclosed, gear-driven camshaft-was of thoroughly modern conception. In an effort to eliminate as many auxiliary shafts as possible, the forged camshaft was also used to drive the oil pump-which provided pressure lubrication to the balanced, three-main-bearing crank-water pump and centrally mounted distributor. (Interestingly, the main bearing diameter and main bearing area, respectively, of this first Nash Six equaled and exceeded the like dimensions of the contemporary Packard Twin Six.) Cylinder walls and pushrods were lubricated by splash and oil vapor.

One of the engine's most obvious novelties was its generator mounting. This component was bolted to the upper front of the crankcase and carried a built-in fan. Both were efficiently driven by a rather short belt. Also noteworthy was that every moving part of the engine-save the spinning fan-was enclosed: The Nash six was thus extremely clean in both operation and appearance.

And there were other niceties. The combustion chambers were machined all over and were each slightly larger than the 3 1/4-inch bore to allow for rather oversized valves. The intake manifold was located directly beneath and

in contact with the exhaust manifold to provide a sort of built-in manifold heat for entering gases. The exhaust manifold's outlet was located at the engine's front so as not to radiate heat into the driver's compartment. A hot foot in those days wasn't always a prank, it was an unfortunate reality in driving many American cars.

The Nash chassis was extravagantly clean and extremely light, with "not an unnecessary rod or cross bar," as The American Chauffeur put it. The frame of the car was designed to fit the sill of the body and supported the latter for its entire length. The front axle was straight, not dropped as was the norm then, the rear cross member widened to serve both as cross member and support of fuel tank and tire carrier. Hotchkiss drive was employed another weight saver suspension was semi elliptics all round. The wheelbase was 121 inches (with 127 for the seven-passenger N model); prices were \$1295-\$1985, though these were raised in two increments of about a hundred dollars each to \$1490-\$2250 by September of 1918; and the whole of Nash motorcar-plus ninety-three percent of its parts-was made entirely in the Nash shops. And they were now the Nash shops. Hascall Bliss recalled later that only two pieces of machinery were not removed, replaced, rebuilt or repositioned during the Jeffery-Nash changeover. Charlie Nash reorganized every department, he was in the factory every day, he made his own production studies, set things up the way he wanted to, for maximum efficiency-and profit. The new company made over \$2 million in its first fifteen months of operation.

Of course, there was the matter of the war in Europe. In June of 1918, Erik Wahlberg received a commission as major in the Quartermaster Corps and went overseas immediately. Charlie Nash stayed in the States and in July went to Washington as assistant director of engineering and production under John D. Ryan in the Bureau of Aircraft Production. The appointment was widely cheered. "This action should lead to bringing together all the loose ends of the aircraft program," Automotive Industries said. "Heretofore there has not been enough get-together among those engaged in cur craft manufacture." If anybody could straighten things out, even in Washington, Charlie Nash could. He did his best, and after the Armistice returned to Kenosha with what the press understated as "unbounded enthusiasm." "It is a great satisfaction again to be on the ground with my own organization," Charlie said. His own organization had more than doubled production from 1917-1918-to 21,773 units. Half of these had been trucks, the Jeffery four-wheel drive was now the Nash Quad, and the company set a new truck production record for the industry in 1918 with 11,490 delivered to the U.S. Army. This would seem to have set Nash up beautifully as a truck manufacturer of the first magnitude, but though Charlie enthused in a speech in early 1919 before his Omaha dealers that the American truck was virtually responsible for winning the war ("It may be news to some, but ... I was told by General Goethals that his instructions from General Pershing were to give truck preference over almost

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everything, excepting food"), the commercial vehicle did not interest him much. As Martin Winther, designer of the Quad, remembered, "Nash had no patience with small quantity production; it was not his cup of tea. He was an expert on high speed, high quantity processing. Nothing interested him so much as making a million pieces all alike." Winther left Nash to establish the Winther Truck Company in nearby Winthrop Harbor, Illinois-and Nash, like numerous other automotive firms, eased out of truck production in the Twenties.

The passenger car would be the Nash future. Both at home and abroad. John A Rose had set up an export department for Charles T. Jeffery in 1915-he had remained on with Nash. A month after the Armistice, he submitted a thirteen-page report of what the department had accomplished thus far-673 vehicles over a two-year period shipped overseas, all without Rose's setting foot outside the United States. "The export department at this time consists of myself and Miss May Beesley," he wrote "Our work is already getting so heavy that it will be necessary for us to have some assistants. For instance, I want a capable man or possibly young woman to take care of routine export department work. I shall also need another stenographer."

As for another traveling representative, Rose saw no need to go to that expense, the department already doing so well without one, but "in lieu of this I would suggest that at some time in the future when Mr. Nash, Mr. Alford or Mr. Voorhis should take real vacations, that they combine business with pleasure and cover different parts of the world." Charlie liked the way John Rose thought. Rose got his assistant and another stenographer. Nash exported the following year 1135 vehicles net sales valued at \$1.5 million.

The Nash representative in England was the redoubtable Charles Jarrott, and The Motor congratulated him on the car he handled. It was "a great deal more attractive than many other American models selling at more than its price," its engine was "absolutely silent," its coachwork didn't creak, the exhaust note was deep and sonorous, "very different from the tinny rackets set up by some," and there was a "pleasing absence of the multitude of loose parts" that fell off most American importations. Charlie Nash decided that he could produce a four-cylinder car-in the \$1395 price range-just as admirably. It was simple enough, merely the six minus two cylinders (for 179 cubic inches, a little over 35 hp) and nine inches in wheelbase. He had a new factory built for it in Milwaukee and put Ben W. Twyman,

formerly head of Inter State of Muncie, Indiana, in charge. The prototype was shown at the New York Automobile Show in January 1920, and it was a smash at the Palace. Production started rolling that November.

These were salad days for Charlie Nash, indeed the entire industry. Nash production for 1919 was 31,108 units; for 1920, 38,781. The postwar boom was in full swing, and Charlie-momentarily-was carried away. "Sales the country over are little short of marvelous," he declared in late April of 1919, he announced the addition of a large forge shop and other factory additions to meet production demands, and he acquired a half interest in Seaman Body Corporation of Milwaukee to ensure a continuing supply of bodies. Then in the fall of 1920, boom turned to bust, manufacturers began slashing prices, Henry Ford leading the way. Charlie didn't, and at a stormy meeting of the National Automobile Chamber of Commerce talked about supply and demand and-so the press said-"gave good evidence of possessing the grace of consistency." Charlie was the only one, it was suggested, who made sense. Charlie also vowed never again to allow his enthusiasm to get the better of his judgment.



1921 Model 41

Billy Durant was out of General Motors-again-by this time, and the corporation was in disarray. Among other wild rumors circulating-including Billy's buying Lincoln and Dodge to put GM "on the blink"-was one bringing back Nash as president of General Motors "to run the whole shooting match." Charlie couldn't have been less interested. He had plans of his own. They carried the name LaFayette.

LaFayette Motors Company of Mars Hill, Indianapolis was founded in October of 1919 to produce a car in the luxury range for "customers who are able to secure the best of everything." According to the press releases, D. McCall

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White and Earl C. Howard, chief engineer and sales manager of Cadillac respectively, were the men in charge, and they had secured the services of another Cadillac engineer, J.W. Applin, and Cadillac's advertising manager Leo Burnett, plus Maurice J. Moore as secretary and treasurer. Nobody mentioned at first who the president of the new company was. It was Charlie. And the money behind the project belonged to Jim Storrow and Lee Higginson. LaFayette was entirely separate from Nash Motors-but it was apparent what the two were up to.

Charlie Nash admitted his involvement shortly thereafter, and D. McCall White assured the press the new car, a V-8, would be "far ahead of any previous automobile built under his supervision." But the LaFayette, alas, was jinxed from the start. The car was introduced in January of 1920 and was well received; production began in October coincidental with the postwar depression. "There have been far better times to introduce a motorcar," said Charlie in the fall of 1921 as he related the dismal figures, just a few more than 700 cars sold. Secretary-treasurer Moore had died in February, D. McCall White left in October, having finished his job, he said, but that didn't ring true. And in April of 1922, a forthcoming merger between LaFayette and

Pierce-Arrow was announced, with Charlie Nash to become "chairman of the board in complete charge of the joint operating forces" and "mere details" only to be worked out in the next week. By mid-May, however, the inability of the participants to agree on those details quashed the project, and Charlie Nash said he now planned a "conservative but comprehensive ... gradual, orderly development" of the company-and while previously concerned extensively with

policy planning, he would now participate more actively in its management. By July this included the removal of LaFayette from Indianapolis into a new plant to be built in Milwaukee "located cheek by jowl with the big Nash Four plant." Leo Burnett stayed behind in Indianapolis to work in the copy and planning department of Homer McKee Company-and to begin entertaining notions of starting an advertising agency of his own. J.W. Applin stayed behind as well, to become the Franklin, Indiana dealer for Billy Durant's new venture with the Durant and Star (Rugby here). By January of '23, the LaFayette was in its new home, with production ensuing at a lackluster six cars a day, and former Packard engineer Earl G. Gunn joining LaFayette as chief engineer in March.

In the Nash Four plant in Milwaukee, Ben Twyman had come up with an idea of his own and he left Nash-his management of Four production was turned over to Nash son-in-law Wilson-and took over LaFayette's old

Indianapolis factory with the idea of starting a business to rebuild used cars. Twyman Re-manufacturing Motors Company would initially confine itself to remaking Buicks and Nashes within a 300-mile radius of Indianapolis, but plans called for carrying the project nationwide with more factories as the demand swelled. This project proceeded to fare as well as the LaFayette. By May of 1924, Earl Howard left Milwaukee for Detroit to handle public relations for Fisher Body; by the second week in August, Ben Twyman left Indianapolis for Marysville, Michigan to ally himself with the fortunes of C. Harold Wills; and during the last week in August, Jim Storrow and Charlie Nash sent a letter to LaFayette stockholders-"the company has not been able to overcome the difficulty of unprofitable operation"-and advised them to accept the offer of Ajax Motors to put an end to the unhappy business for \$225,000. Charlie Nash had poured \$2 million of Nash Motors money into LaFayette, he was prepared to pour no more. He had made a big mistake; he wouldn't make it again. Nevermore would Charlie Nash think all out luxury car. Ajax bought LaFayette. The Ajax company was owned entirely by Nash Motors, but that is getting ahead of the story.



1927 LaFayette

In 1921 Charlie's problems were not confined to the LaFayette. The new Nash line had been introduced the previous December. The Six, designated 691, was refined with Delco electrics throughout, "wonderful new springs," the ads said (master leaf, rebound leaf and thirteen thinner, flexible leaves) and straight-line styling capped by a radiator, as export manager Rose described it, "of graceful design, without sharp angles, but well-shaped like a chorus girl from the 'Follies'." It was an even nicer car than the first Nash six. But the times were not good. From a hundred cars a day, output was but forty in January of 1921. In June the company went on half time, to continue thereon, as Charlie candidly put it, "pending improvement in the demand for cars." In July he reduced prices throughout his line by \$100 to \$200-and business picked up. By year's end, despite a production drop to 20,953 units, Nash Motors still made \$2 million. "In these

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troubled times when some sections of the financial world and many of the public believe that Ford and the Ford type of business is the only one that can make money," Automobile Topics reported, "such a record ... is at once impressive and inspiring." The company was described as a veritable Rock of Gibraltar in the automobile industry.

Charlie was particularly happy about his Four, the best "first" car he'd ever brought out, he said. Reducing its price to the \$1000 range would, he thought, create for it its own price class. In terms of refinement-and for '22 this included rubber engine mounting, an avant-garde idea, and a sedan model called the "Carriole" at \$1350, introduced a few weeks after the Essex Coach, unfortunately, so it would be Hudson and not Nash that would be credited with pioneering the closed car in the popular-price range-and in terms of solid build, the Nash Four was a formidable contender in the marketplace.

In May of 1922, Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover declared that American industry was "out of the woods." And it was. In July a Nash Six was driven from

Los Angeles to Salt Lake City in 26 hours 21 minutes, breaking the old record by seven hours, and that month too in Wisconsin Nash Motors broke all records, sales exceeding all of 1921 already. Those were the only kind of records and that was the only kind of competition in which Charlie Nash was interested. By year's end production stood at 41,923 units. And Charlie went fishing in Maine. He was successfully angling for cod when a big halibut came by. He offered a cod as bait, and the halibut took it: It was Charlie's biggest fish ever-six feet nine inches. It had been a good year.

"The day of reckless extravagance ... has come to an abrupt and definite end," Charlie Nash had said in 1922. Scant did he suspect. But the Twenties would roar without Charlie. Watch your overhead, eliminate waste, he cautioned.

To be continued.

Thanks to Fred Menke for providing this article.



Above:
1929 Model 40 special six

Right:
1925 Model 371 advanced six



Technical Topic

Replacing Wooden Steering Wheels.

I see quite a few bent wood steering wheels coming to the end of their well-earned life span. I have seen quite a few ingenious ways of them being held together to keep them going just a little longer.

The way I rebuild them is reasonably easy and can be done with some basic wood working tools. So, I'm hoping to share with the members how I do it so if you're willing to try I'm sure you'll succeed.

I'll start with a few pics of the old ones that I have had to rebuild.

This is an old Chev wheel that has seen better days.

An old Dodge wheel starting to come apart. In all fairness it's served the one family 99 years of good service.

So, I start with timber that is generally about 150-200mm wide and around 20mm thick.

I draw on a pattern the inner and outer circumference allowing an extra 5mm per side for machining.



I then divide the circle into 3 and then transfer a third of the circle onto the timber 6 times allowing a little extra for trimming to length.

Once the pieces are cut they need to be cut to length to create a circle.



At this stage we need to be quite accurate cutting to get a pretty perfect circle. They can be cut straight or mitred. This is where the pattern comes in handy to get your circle as good as possible.

I use epoxy glue to join them and let them sit on a dead flat surface overnight to dry with no actual fixings at the joints. A bit of masking tape works well.

Once glue you end up with 2 circles of timber and depending on the type of steering wheel centres depends on how the next stage is done.

Some wheels require the 2 pieces to be laminated together and then just screwed to the metal centre. Other wheels need the spoke legs machined into both side of the timber before laminating them together. Later more modern wheels have a steel ring that needs to be machined into both halves to hide the steel ring inside the timber. These wheels can create a small degree of difficulty.

Technical Topic

Replacing Wooden Steering Wheels.

Screw to the back of the timber type wheel. With this type your 2 circles can be glued together and then machined.

Spoke wheel centre that needs to be machined into the 2 timber circles evenly before gluing together.

Steel ring type wheel that requires the centre of the timber machined out to take the steel ring.

Normally about 5/16 or 3/8 round. These can be difficult due to the fact they are never very round.

In making my steering wheels I use my wooden spoke wheel facing machine which makes things a little easier. I glue each half to a board and machine my timber circles perfectly round.

So, whichever wheel you have once they are ready to be laminated together, the 3 joins in the circle of timber need to be evenly offset to the opposite piece. That way the joins are fully supported by the opposing piece of timber. Once laminated together the wheel becomes very strong.

Depending on the type of wheel the rounding off of the timber on the inside needs to be done before gluing together.

Once glued together the outside edge can be machined. Outside edge routed on both sides. Some wheels have the scolloping on the inside edge and others on the back edge of the wheel. I use an overhead router on my wheel machine to do these.

I generally just mark the spaces out evenly between the spokes and then cut each one.

I then use a router to start blending them into the edge of the wheel. This is where a lot of hand sanding is needed to blend it all in.



Technical Topic

Replacing Wooden Steering Wheels.

Then from there it's a matter of sanding it ready for staining and Clear coating. I normally give a steering wheel about 10 coats of automotive 2pak clear coat. A few different types of wheels I've done.



From left: Lancia, Studebaker and Triumph wheels



From Left: 25 Dodge and Dodge Victory Six wheels.

If I can be of any help to you if you decide to take on building your own wheel please feel free to give me a call. It normally takes a good 10 hours or so to build one from start to finish. They are a very time consuming job.

Call Matt on 0409 402 772

Some Unusual Names.

“Brocklebank, Besst, Turcal Mery, Gordon & Mypo”

While on The Graham Owners Biannual Rally in Murray Bridge we visited Aussie Apricots in the nearby Township of Mypolonga (Locally known as Mypo). The owners of the Apricot business also have a car museum: Revolution Motor Museum. The museum has two sections, one with performance cars and the other with mostly veteran & vintage cars. This display included many unusual & rare vehicles.

Most of the early cars are the collection of the late Malcolm Wicks of Balhannah S.A. His family did not want the collection broken up and hence this magnificent display in the museum.

Below are some of the car makes that we were not familiar with, maybe you know more about them.

Edith & Doug Stevenson.



1928 Brocklebank.

The Brocklebank is a British car that was built by Brocklebank & Richards Ltd in Birmingham. 6 cyl 2051cc engine .

This car was originally a sedan but rebodied after a fire.



1926 BESST

“IF YOU WANT THE BEST BUY A BESST”

Advertising Slogan

Besst cars were made in Adelaide by Mays Motor Works with a body by T.J. Richards and a 4 cyl Lycoming engine. Very few cars were made, and this one is believed to be the only survivor.



Some Unusual Names.

“Brocklebank, Besst, Turcal Mery, Gordon & Mypo”

1925 Turcat-Méry

The Turcat-Méry manufactured cars in France from 1899 to 1928. Description with car states: 4 cyl OHC, Limited production model designed for rally purposes. This car was raced at the now closed Port Wakefield racetrack It is reputed to be the only surviving OHC model.



1914 Gordon Cycle Car

Gordon a British Cycle Car made in Yorkshire from 1912 to 1916 by East Riding Engineering part of the Armstrong Patents Company which was established by Gordon Armstrong well known for the Armstrong Shock Absorbers. J.A.P. twin cylinder water cooled engine.



A Tale of a Salesman - Prosper McTaggart Thomson - 'George'

For those of you who can remember enjoying the 1979 -1994 English TV show 'The Minder' which starred Dennis Waterman as ex- boxer Terry McCann and George Cole as Arthur Daley the "very experienced" used car dealer who knew a thing or two, this is some of the happenings in the life of Adelaide's Arthur Daley – George Thomson.

George was born into a relatively well established Queensland station property which did not serve his purposes so he left home at the age of 14 years. He then had to fend for himself.

I first met George around 1961 when I was working as an articled clerk in a small commercial law firm. My firm's office was only 200 metres from Thomson Motors which comprised of a relatively narrow block of land containing a glass fronted car show room in Pulteney Street, Adelaide. Directly over the road was a larger establishment of Theodore Bruce Auctioneers which sold interesting collections of furniture, cars, antiques and collectables.

So, I had two interesting sources of entertainment to fill lunch hours and Saturday mornings.

George was very Australian, quite tall with pale blue steely eyes and he had been a soldier during WW2. Prior to joining the army George was involved with buying and selling cars. By the time I met him George was a well known Adelaide character around the traps and in various car clubs. George was a longtime member of the Sporting Car Club of South Australia founded in 1934. By 1961 George had participated in numerous Veteran car events with that club. When Vintage car events started in the 1960's George was a keen participant, usually in an Austin Seven or a large Rolls Royce.

Being tall he completely filled his Austin Seven cars and when he drove a large maroon Phantom 1 Rolls Royce he was often accompanied by a jovial, short, rotund Frank Rees who was a wealthy bookmaker who loved cars and horses. Frank was also an accomplished pianist.

Quite often I would meet Frank who would be sitting at the back of the Thomson Motors showroom and together we would watch George handle potential car buyers.

Frank often said, "If you and I had this business Jim we would starve but look at George he is amazing".

One of the daily issues for George was how to sell enough cars to cover the monthly rent.

If a car lingered too long in the show room George would exclaim, 'This car bites me every time I go near it' or 'All I have got from this car is experience and I have had plenty of that'.

As many readers come from Melbourne it should be noted that George had close connections with Melbourne. For

many years he regularly caught the 'Overland Express' from Adelaide to Melbourne on Friday nights. On Saturday George would buy a vintage or classic car in Melbourne and then drive it back to Adelaide on Sunday to have it in Adelaide on the showroom floor on Monday or Tuesday.

George had a number of techniques to sell his cars. Often a very interesting car would have a note on the windscreen, 'Not for sale'. This made the car more intriguing to buyers. When asked why the car was not for sale George would explain it belonged to Jo, his wife. Jo was the opposite of George, being of short stature and a very well educated person who was not at all interested in George's cars but she inadvertently persuaded a reluctant George to sell many of 'her' cars!

One day I called on George and he was unhappy about a Morris Minor that failed to sell.

George had \$850 on it and it was at the back of the showroom. At the front window of the showroom was a 50's Bentley and a 50's Rolls Royce. George placed the Morris Minor between the Bentley and the Rolls Royce, and he placed a note 'Special Price \$1500' on the Morris front windscreen. The next day I visited George and realized the Morris Minor was missing. George told me a buyer had come in 'and beat me down to \$1250 so I had to sell it, lad'. Of course.

A good friend of mine, John Lucas, had known George before I met him. John owned a very well restored 1915 Model T Ford. John had owned the Ford for many years. John saw a rare 1934 Packard Eight 7 passenger sedan in George's shop. George told John that the Packard had been owned by a Lord Mayor of Melbourne. John loved this Packard painted in traditional Packard blue and he took his T Ford into George who gave John the Packard and \$250 for the 1915 Ford T!!

John could not believe his luck and he kept the Packard for 50 years.

I owned a 1934 Buick Eight 6 Wheel sedan with an original 99,000 miles on the clock when I bought it. It was a fine car and quite brisk on the road. I decided to sell it because oil fumes came from the engine into the cabin at times. I had a for sale advertisement in my pocket as I drove the car into Adelaide. Price for the car was \$350. While stationary at a traffic light I was hit from behind by a VW Beetle car driven at speed by a doctor who had fallen asleep at the wheel. The crash impact wrecked the front of the VW and damaged the rear of the Buick slightly and it caused the front bench seat which had been jammed in position, to move backwards quickly probably saving me from a more severe whiplash injury. The doctor was rescued from the VW with some injuries but none life threatening. I gave the damaged Buick to two brothers who had worked on a previous car I owned and went to George to buy a replacement car. The doctor, whom I did

A Tale of a Salesman - Prosper McTaggart Thomson - 'George'



1935 Packard

not know at the time of the crash, delivered our first born son many years later.

The brothers restored the damaged Buick and sold it for \$1500 – I was very pleased.

A few days after the crash I saw George had a desert sand 1950 Ford Custom V8 sedan for sale.

Parked in the showroom next to a wall with 55,000 miles on the clock the Ford looked first class. I explained to George that I sold the Buick because of the fumes problem, and I did not want another car with that problem. After a brief chat I paid \$350 for the Ford.

Sometime earlier I had seen Robert Mitchum drive a similar Ford in the black and white movie "Thunder Road". I thought it was a great adventure story where Mitchum carried illegal moonshine liquor across state lines in his Ford Custom at high speed to avoid the cops.

So, I now owned a smooth running V8 high speed Ford Custom.

What I discovered the next day was a deep long scratch along the side of the car which had been next to the wall in George's showroom. I went back to George and asked what was going on with this damage. His reply was, "Well what did you expect for the money, lad?"

I laughed and drove away.

The next thing I discovered was the Ford went really well in a straight line but was extremely reluctant to turn any corner due to the weight of the engine at the front of

the car. I mentioned this to George and he added "also those Fords are a bugger to fume, lad". So much for the request not to get a car that fumed. In fact, this car did not have that problem while I owned it.

Two years later I returned the car to George, and he gave me my purchase price for it!

George sometimes provided sage advice. I have previously written a story about buying a 1927 Stutz Eight Coupe in Melbourne and driving it back to Adelaide over three days due to various misadventures.

When I mentioned the Stutz to George, he told me that when I produced the car for official inspection for registration, I should deliberately alter something obvious on the inspection form. "If you do that lad and the inspector finds it, he will become excited and make a fuss and probably not look for other issues with the car".

So, I put an incorrect number regarding the chassis number of the Stutz on the inspection form and proceeded to the inspection site at the Adelaide Railway station.

Sure enough, everything worked out as George anticipated.

The inspector noted the incorrect chassis number, rebuked me for the error and signed the form without noting the faulty horn and windscreen wipers on the car.

It was the only car of its type to be registered in South Australia so it hardly mattered if the chassis number was one digit out!!

A Tale of a Salesman - Prosper McTaggart Thomson - 'George'

On one occasion George had an Austin 20 tourer for sale. Only one person expressed interest in the car but George knew he probably would not buy the car and he was annoying George in the process. So George took the Austin to his home and advertised it for sale there. I happened to visit George at home on the Saturday morning. I was looking at the Austin with George near George's home. Suddenly the pesky enthusiast arrived and as he came towards the gate George yelled out, "THE CAR IS SOLD! SEE YOU LATER". The fellow departed.

I then asked George who bought the Austin, "You did, lad, you did"

Of course.

In 1965 I was driving a fine 1927 Packard Six 7 passenger sedan as my daily car. It was a fine town car as it had good all round vision and was easy to drive. A fellow member of the Sporting Car Club, Ian Polson, explained to me the advantages of English vintage cars especially Alvis cars, over American vintage cars. Ian was super enthusiastic!

So, I bought a 1923 Alvis 12/40 which had a side valve engine. It was dreadful and I called it the 'chaff cutter'. Polson told me I had bought the wrong model and that George had for sale a proper Alvis 12/50 Duck's back body with a restored engine.

So, armed with corrected information I proceeded to see George. The 12/50 with polished aluminium body and new red leather seats was standing at the rear of George's showroom. Not surprisingly it had a brief note on the windscreen, 'Not for Sale'.

George sat in a chair reading the newspaper. I asked George what price is the Alvis.

'It's not for sale lad but if someone offered me 650 pounds, I may sell it'. I was aware that the highest price for similar cars was around 400 pounds. However, relying on Polson's sound advice, I told George I would pay 650 pounds. George threw down the newspaper to finalise the sale immediately!

The only information I had managed to find on Alvis 12/50 engines before visiting George was that they had a weakness with their gudgeon pins. If the engine has faulty gudgeon pins it would make an odd clacking noise. I collected the Alvis from George and proceeded to drive home.

To my surprise I could hear an odd clacking noise!!

I rang Polson straight away and said the car's engine is restored so why would there be gudgeon issues. Polson then announced the engine had been restored in 1956!!

So, I had the engine rebuilt and just had it fitted in time to

drive the Alvis to the 1967 Albury National Car Rally. The car went well, and I drove from Albury to Sydney and back to Adelaide over the next week. The Alvis had a 'Big port' engine and was happy on flat roads at 65 mph.

In the mid 60's I bought John Lucas's restored 1956 Packard. This car had a powerful V8 engine, an unusual torsion bar suspension with steel rods connected to a central motor and a very large body. At the time a Packard Club of South Australia had been formed with about 25 enthusiastic members. After I bought John's car about ten members told me that if I ever wanted to sell the car they would buy it. When I purchased my first house for \$10,700, I needed extra money for the stamp duty so I decided to sell the Packard. Not one of the 'interested' Packard Club members wanted to buy the car so George bought it for my purchase price, and I paid the stamp duty. Thank you, George!

George had a metallic green Silver Dawn Rolls Royce in his showroom around 1967. He told me, "I have made more money than Rolls Royce Limited on this car, lad. I have sold it four times".

A 1953 Riley sedan with a seized motor appeared at George's establishment. A week later it was gone! "Just needed vinegar through each spark plug hole, lad and it was ready to go".

George was a long time member of the Rolls Royce Owners Club South Australian branch. Around Christmas time the club members met at a stately home "Wairoa" in Aldgate in the Adelaide Hills. Most members took lunch and drinks for themselves, but George always turned up with a large khaki canister full of ice cream dandies for the children attending. I thought this was a very generous act by one of the less well off members of the club as no other member did anything like it.

I later discovered that the ice creams were 'borrowed' from an ice cream factory by an employee who was a friend of George. Anyway, the children were happy!

If there was a shortage of accommodation at a car rally or event George could always secure a room. He would approach the lady of the house and say, "Hello Peaches. You know that special reserve room you keep available well I am the very person who could use it". George always secured accommodation.

There are many other stories about George but basically, he was a lone battler making a living from buying and selling what were often cars other people could not sell.

All cars sold by George were "100 per cent". I never found out what the 100 per cent related to and neither did anyone else.

He died aged 82 and at his funeral I said I learned the facts of law in the law office and the facts of life at George's showroom. Apart from trading interesting cars

A Tale of a Salesman - Prosper McTaggart Thomson - 'George'

George was a skilful gardener. He lived by his intuition and experience, and he had an innate ability to sum up people and situations. He was not liked by some people but most of the many who knew him respected his knowledge and had a quiet smile at his antics.

Happy memories.

Jim Thomson (despite my name I am not related to George).




1932 RR Phantom 2 & 35 Packard in 1968

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Last Month's Mystery Vehicle

Last month's mystery vehicle was a Sizaire Freres from France of around 1924.

Folks for the first time ever I may have stumped you all!!

My usual respondents were well off the mark Rob Coney was the closest suggesting Sizaire Berwick.

As far as I can ascertain none have been listed as registered in Victoria, but it is suggested a chassis exists in a playground in South Australia.

Here are some details of this obscure marque



In 1923, there emerged from the Sizaire works in Courbevoie the world's first production car to have all independent suspension; the Sizaire Frères Type 4RI. The system of the Sizaire Frères car was basically similar to that of the old transverse-spring Sizaire-Naudin, considerably refined, and applied to all four wheels. As before, Maurice Sizaire was responsible for it, while his brother Georges looked after experimental work. The power unit of the Sizaire Frères car was a 11CV of 2 litres, with a single overhead camshaft, and developed 50bhp. The 4RI Sizaire Frères car was capable of almost 70mph. A 16-valve sports version of this advanced fast Sizaire Frères car was listed in 1926. The suspension system remained unchanged throughout the Sizaire Frères car's career, though Lockheed brakes arrived in 1928, and various proprietary engines were used on the Sizaire Frères cars. These included, in the same year, an ohv Hotchkiss and a Willys-Knight sleeve-valve six. In 1929 production of Sizaire Frères cars ceased in France, but Georges Sizaire began small-scale manufacture in Belgium, where the Sizaire Frères car was known as the Belga Rise. This usually had Willys-Knight engines, but Hotchkiss or Minerva units could be ordered.

So, a very obscure marque that had the initiative to introduce what was then a very advanced suspension system.

This Month's Mystery Vehicle

This month's mystery perhaps a little better known for their luxury line?? The ladies look to be very happy!

The first correct answer from electronic and hard copy versions will receive a small reward.

Contact: Iain Ross Mob: 0409 027 392
Email: imgross@bigpond.com



Classifieds

FOR SALE AND WANTED

The Vintage Drivers Club acts as a venue for sellers to list cars and parts and buyers to purchase cars and parts also to post wanted advertisements. Free advertising is offered for members and for non-members who may have vehicles or parts of interest to club members. Wanted Advertisements are for members only. Advertisements will run for three months after which they will only be continued only by agreement between the advertiser and the editor or web site coordinator.

The Vintage Drivers Club gives no undertaking or representations accepts no liability or responsibility and has no control regarding: (a) the accuracy or details in the advertisements; (b) the quality or safety of the items advertised; (c) the transactions between vendors and buyers.

Advertisements for private sale of registered vehicles must comply with the current Motor Traders Act and must contain the cash price of the vehicle, registration number, engine number and chassis or VIN number. Club permit vehicles are considered to be unregistered.

FOR SALE

1911 Brass Gray & Davis Winton Headlight, reasonable condition, some dents from the past 100 years. \$400

A 1930 Cadillac Distributor, very complete and comes with extra internal distributor components. \$450.

6 vintage Franklin air cooled cylinder barrels, unsure of exact year, the bore is 3 1/2 inch in diameter. \$200 for the set.

1929 Lasalle aluminium engine block (engine number 603413) there is a neat repair, no doubt from a conrod that at one point must have left its designated position.. \$200

Contact Scott Emmerson 0488 002 054 scottemmerson12@gmail.com



FOR SALE

1927 Chevrolet Truck motor, good for reconditioning \$450.

1926 Chevrolet engine and gearbox with numerous accessories attached \$500.

1927 Chevrolet project and parts collection. Includes reconditioned engine with <1000m on it, plus a spare engine, multiple gearboxes, a huge collection of parts, almost everything you could need. Only missing the woodwork and back doors. \$6,500. Contact Holly Schwind (AH) 0412 055 258. Situated in Emerald, Vic.

FOR SALE

1923 Hudson Essex Tourer

Been a great car. Starts first go every time, nice & reliable. Older restoration but still quite clean and mechanically good. Currently Club Reg. Quite a few spares. \$22,500
Contact: Brett Stanley Email: bretts@outlook.com.au



FOR SALE

Shockers - Storey Super Hydraulic Light Car Type \$100 pair
Contact Keith Montell
Email: k.montell44@gmail.com



FOR SALE

GMC1800w Air Compressor, tank capacity 40 Litres, pump displacement 206 L/min. Working pressure 0.8 mpa, with nail gun. \$250.00 All as new (no hoses) Contact Frank Braden 0401 275 545

FOR SALE

1927 Chrysler Tourer

In good working and driving condition and is currently club permitted in South Australia.

Reason for sale is advanced age of owner Odometer reads 49600 miles

It has been full reconditioned. Has a new battery, It is olive green with black guards. The car comes with many spare parts including an engine, 2 chassis, gearbox, differential, Vacuum tanks and a

trailer full of associated parts The car originally came from Cooma NSW and the current owner has had it for 7 years.

The car is located in Mount Gambier. Priced at around \$18,000

Contact Paul Dwan 0400 823 738 or 9700 5825 Email apdwan@gmail.com

FOR SALE

Reluctant sale of my 1937 Riley Falcon, Full history of the car from date of purchase, date of registration and its history to date, Includes Handbook, Parts Book, Workshop Manual, and original brochures covering the car and all accessories too many to list. In Running order with documentation of work carried out, available on request. Some spare parts go with the car. Asking \$35,000 reasonable offers considered.
Kurt Schulz 0402 117 788
Email. brooklands9@gmail.com

**FOR SALE -**

English Star cars. 1925 12/25 and 1922 11.9 hp. The 1925 is mid restoration, with reco engine, gearbox, diff, brakes, radiator (incl mascot) and all lights nickel plated. Complete with full set of instruments and second engine with a reco crankshaft and second gearbox, and short motor. The earlier 11.9 hp is parts only, chassis rails, engine, gearbox, axles, steering box and column, radiator, and lights. \$15,000 the lot.
Contact Richard by
Email: richard.shenfield@hotmail.com or
Mob: 0408 364 470

**FOR SALE**

1928 Model A roadster Reg. no MS 809.
Selling for a friend. Currently has full registration. Selling due to ill health of owner.
Car is basically complete but has had the head removed and will be selling "as is". \$20,000.
Further details and more photos contact Charlie Grima
0414366235 or grimaoldfords@gmail.com for more photos.

**FOR SALE**

1926 Chrysler Imperial E80 long wheelbase 7 passenger tourer / Ute Long wheelbase 7 passenger tourer which has been converted to a ute. The body has been re timbered and is ready to install on the chassis. It has been done as a barn find / bush ute. There are enough parts there to restore as a 7-passenger tourer if desired.
Engine partly rebuilt new pistons, valves, bores sleeved can be finished by negotiation. New gasket kit, new brake linings, clutch plate and suspension bushes.
Two engines, two gearboxes, two diffs, two steering boxes, two sets of instruments and all jewellery is included in the sale.
Looking for \$10,000 open to offers.
Stewart Perry 0434 677 434

**FOR SALE**

Stutz Special Six 1923, 4.4 Litre, 4 Speed, Restored 1980, Full weather equipment, comes with spare 3 speed g/box and spare differential 4.4:1, All original body and running gear, Quite possibly the only Special Six in Australia and a great opportunity to own something exclusive and in good condition. \$120,000, will consider serious offers.
Call for further details
Greg Orde
0447313267.

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Peter Fleming 0408 389 439



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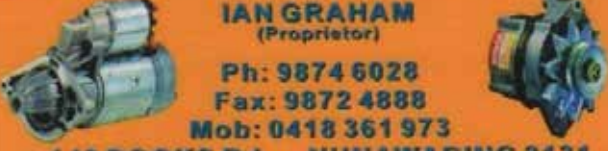
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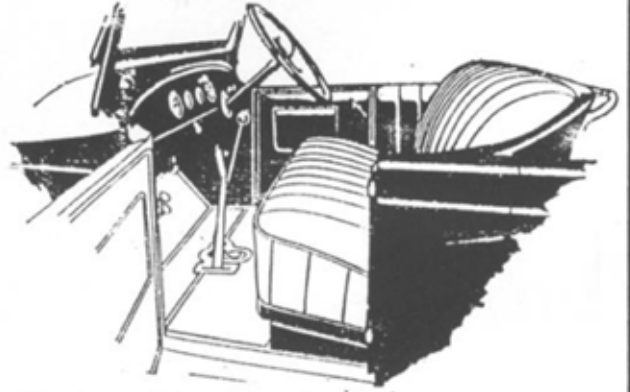
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