

THE VINTAGE BULLETIN



ESTABLISHED 1945



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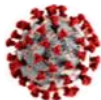
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General Meetings in 2026

in the Combined Car Clubs Clubrooms

Clark Avenue, Glandore

**7.30pm on the last Friday of the month
except December**

Committee Meetings

On the second Thursday of each month

THE VINTAGE BULLETIN

Published every month

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For the Down Under London to Brighton Run

downunderlondontobrighton@gmail.com



THE VINTAGE BULLETIN

THE JOURNAL OF THE VINTAGE SPORTS CAR CLUB OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.

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COPY for **July** DUE midnight
Thursday **9th July 2026**



Acknowledgements and Thanks

The Editor and Publisher of *The Vintage Bulletin* acknowledge inclusions and assistance from Members and non-Members of The Vintage Sports Car Club of South Australia Inc.

THANK YOU to Staff at the National Motor Museum, Brodie Bishop, Doug Gordon, Annie Moody, Jim Thompson, Bill Wood, Caroline Wood and Wayne Wood for your assistance and/or contributions of words and/or pictures to enable this Month's *The Vintage Bulletin* to be available for publication and distribution.

Thanks too to all others who provided reports or pictures, ideas and snippets from which information and/or ideas was obtained for inclusion for the entertainment and/or benefit of Members and Readers.

BULLETIN ARTICLE LOTTO

is officially in abeyance, but
Members and Readers are invited to submit items for publication; and thereby have their name listed in the panel above this notice—in addition to their contribution to Readers of the journal.

DISCLAIMER

Readers are advised that the views and opinions expressed in *The Vintage Bulletin* are solely the views and opinions of the contributors and are not necessarily the views and opinions of the Editor, Management or Membership of The Vintage Sports Car Club of S.A. Inc.



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The Editor is always pleased to receive copy but reserves the right not to publish material which he considers prejudicial to the interests of the Club. The Editor also reserves the right to edit all contributions to maintain an acceptable standard and length.

PREFACE

PRODUCING THIS EDITION HAS BEEN A BIT OF A STRUGGLE.

Without contributions from Members and Readers the Editor has tried to produce a publication in which those who read it will find at least some interesting bits. **Brodie** sent an email about a B40 event. Oh to be young, eh? The editor remembers ... but can't remember where he left his glasses, keys, phone, etc. About the Rally, in Brodie's words, "*get your kids, grandkids, nieces, nephews, cousins or any other youngsters you know in the driver's seat of your pride and joy and point them east!*"

There are two feature articles this month. One about London's Austin taxis. More could be written. Perhaps later. The other about the first woman to drive around our continent. The Editor's main interest is in the way she was treated compared to the way a bloke would be treated in the same circumstances. It was the 1920s so things have changed a bit—but in some circles, not much.

There are a range of motoring events advertised in this edition. Hopefully Readers and Members will find some of interest and worth attending. Perhaps some articles for *The Vintage Bulletin* will result.

Recently, the Editor visited the National Transport Museum in Inverell, New South Wales. Run by volunteers and only closed on Christmas Day. The Editor was told that, like most car clubs, the volunteers are getting older as a group but younger ones don't join; or when they do they don't join in the work. Perhaps they need some B40 events. Next month's issue of *The Vintage Bulletin* will have more about the Museum and its exhibits.

Now for a reminder: July is the time for the Club's Annual General Meeting. Please don't just "consider", but actually nominate for a Committee position. Meetings are able to be "attended" via electronic gadgets so no need to travel.

The Australian Women's Cricket Team should win the current T20 World Championship.

Anyway,

that's what I think.

Wayne Wood

JUNE 2026



E and OE Thank You

FROM THE COMMITTEE

- ◆ Meals before Meetings have been reintroduced on a trial basis, from the February General Meeting. \$5.00 per head. 6.30pm.

- ◆ **COMING EVENTS SCHEDULED FOR 2026**

Wednesday 1st July

Sunday 19th July

Sunday 16th August

Tuesday 1st September

Sunday 13th September

Sunday 25th October

Sunday 15th November

TBA xth December

Friday 11th December

Mystery Train Ride and Lunch

Annual Lunch

Ladies' Day

Old Car Day/National Wattle Day

The Bert Pope

Down Under London to Brighton

Club Picnic

End of Year Run

Christmas Dinner

Interesting Runs involving public transport will be arranged if Members are interested.

FIRST ONE will be

Wednesday 1st July

Mystery Train Ride and Lunch

PLEASE See ON Page 7



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

These fall due on 1st July each year.

Invoices have been sent out and must be paid by 30th June to ensure that vehicles registered as "Historic" etc are able to be driven on public roads.

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DUE TO COVID-19, ALL CLUB MEETINGS AND EVENTS ARE REVIEWED AND CONDUCTED IN THE LIGHT OF GOVERNMENT DIRECTIONS AND THE RISK TO MEMBERS.

COMING VSCC EVENTS

GENERAL MEETINGS IN 2026

in the Combined Car Clubs Clubrooms
Clark Avenue, Glandore

Clubrooms open 6.00pm
Formal proceedings 7.30pm



GENERAL MEETING

Friday 26th June 2026



Come and join us



Return of "Meals before the Meetings"
Clubrooms open 6.00pm for a meal at 6.30pm

Roast Chicken and Vegetables

\$5 per head

Tea, coffee and biscuits included

RSVP Caroline

Phone/text: 0412 685 527

Email: treasurer@vsccsa.org.au

Then the following (Friday) General Meetings:

31st July 2026 (Annual General Meeting)

28th August 2026

25th September 2026

30th October 2026

27th November 2026





MYSTERY TRAIN RIDE and LUNCH **Wednesday 1st July 2026**

We will use our Senior status for a free ride there and back to a place some of us will not have been before.

What is known at present is that it will start at the Adelaide Railway Station where we will take the 10.08 train to Gawler Central, (arr. 11.01).

At Gawler, we will alight and explore some interesting places before having lunch together.

After lunch there will be more time to explore or chat before catching the 3.17 train for the return trip to Adelaide, (arr. 4.10).

For catering purposes, please confirm your attendance with Caroline on or before Friday 26th June 2026.

Treasurer, **Caroline Wood**

treasurer@vsccsa.org.au

0412 685 527



**39th**

Down Under.
London to Brighton
Run

for
**Self-propelled Vehicles, including
Motorcycles, at least 100 years old**

Sunday 25th October 2026

**London Road, Mile End South
to Brighton Beach**

Hosted by The Vintage Sports Car Club of SA Inc.



The Club acknowledges and thanks the Federation of Historic Motoring Clubs Inc. for its financial assistance; and also the Clubs and individuals who attended the 2026 Historic Motor Vehicle Gathering to ensure its success.



There is more information about this on pages 17 and 18.



B40 RALLY
TORQUAY 21ST-23RD AUGUST

**FOR THOSE UNDER
40 YEARS OF AGE,
DRIVING PRE-1940
VEHICLES**

CONTACTS:
CALLUM WALSH
0447 766 724
BRANDON PRICE
0473 646 536

RSVP NOW



CALLUM WALSH: 0447 766 724

BRANDON PRICE: 0473 646 536



NATIONAL WATTLE DAY

Tuesday 1st September 2026



September 1st
“DRIVE-IT DAY”
“OLD CAR DAY”



Old Car Day
Tuesday September 1st, 2026.
Bethany Reserve; Bethany Road, Bethany 11.00am
BYO Lunch



The first day of Spring, September 1st is promoted by the Federation of Historic Motor Vehicles SA as “Drive It Day” in SA. You are encouraged to take your historic vehicles out so that the public can see them. Take them to work, take them shopping, go for a drive, organise a run.



The Gawler Veteran Vintage and Classic Vehicle Club invite your club or club members to join us at Bethany Reserve; Bethany Road, Bethany at around 11.00am on Tuesday September 1st, 2026.

The Gawler Club has organised runs to Bethany starting as follows:

Fremont Park, Elizabeth

Princes Park, Gawler Showgrounds, Gawler

All runs meet at 9.00 am for 9.30 am start.

You are welcome to join us, organise your own runs, or just turn up.

It is all very informal, BYO lunch, toilets and a large shelter are available, but we suggest that you bring chairs.



It is a great opportunity to mix informally and share our hobby. So, come along, meet with fellow enthusiasts, have a chat, give the old vehicle an airing.

More Information: Alvin Jenkin 85292504 or email e-torque@gawlercarclub.com.au

NATIONAL WATTLE DAY





Sunday 18th October 2026

Entries will open in early July

FEDERATION MOTORFEST 2026

12th October to 23rd October

Entries close 1st October 2026

Day One	Monday 12th October	Milang Vintage Machinery Club AUCHENDARROCH HOUSE AND GARDEN
Day Two	Tuesday 13th October	Adelaide Allmake Automobile Club OUR LOCAL WILDLIFE EXPERIENCE
Day Three	Wednesday 14th October	Gawler Vet, Vint. & Classic Vec' Club CARS TO THE PORT
Day Four	Thursday 15th October	Military Vehicle Preservation Society AN EVENING WITH AUTOMOTIVE HISTORY IN KHAKI
Day Five	Friday 16th October	Mercedes Benz Club of SA BATTUNGA COUNTRY
Day Six	Saturday 17th October	No Event
Day Seven	Sunday 18th October	BAY TO BIRDWOOD
Day Eight	Monday 19th October	Adelaide Allmake Automobile Club SMELL THE ROSES
Day Nine	Tuesday 20th October	Motorfest Committee THE GRANGE IN GRANGE ... WHO IS CHARLOTTE?
Day Ten	Wednesday 21st October	Early Ford V-8 Club of SA GIANTS OF STEAM

Days Eleven and Twelve

No Events

www.fhmcsa.org.au

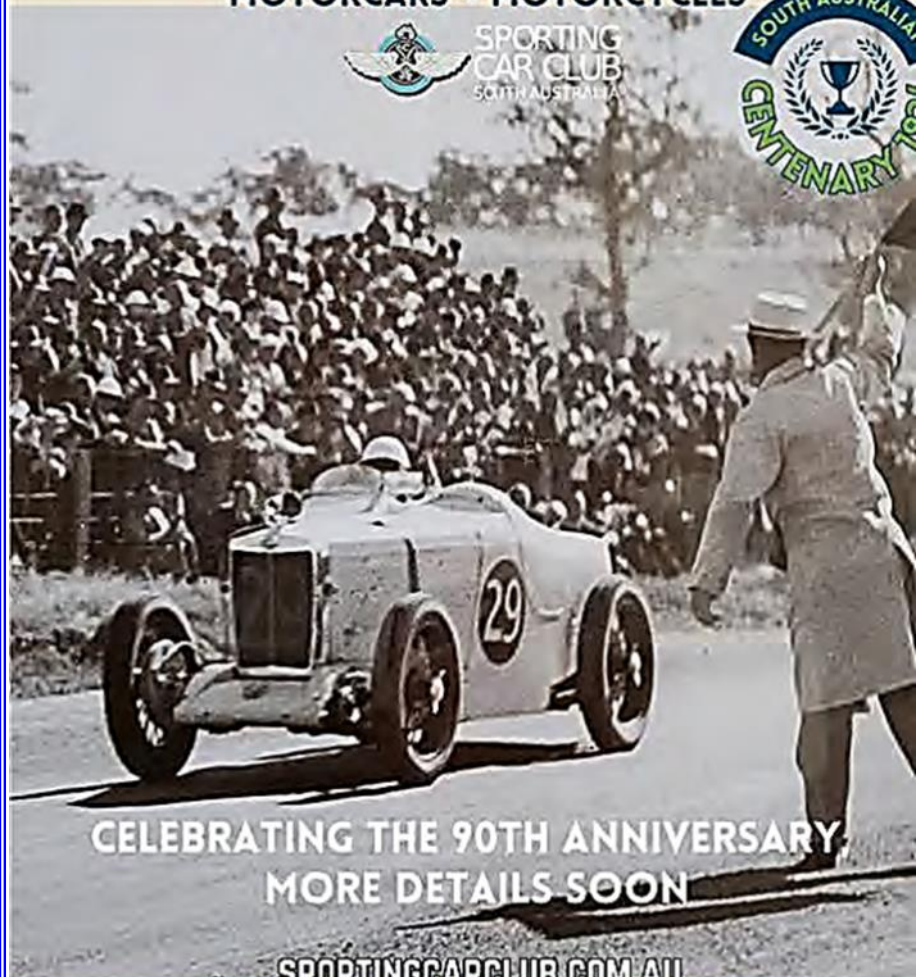


VICTOR HARBOR GRAND PRIX

MOTORCARS ~ MOTORCYCLES



SPORTING
CAR CLUB
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



CELEBRATING THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY
MORE DETAILS SOON

SPORTINGCARCLUB.COM.AU

26-27TH SEPTEMBER 2026



A vintage-style poster for the Barossa Vintage Collingrove Hillclimb. The background is a photograph of a dirt road curving through a green landscape, with a crowd of spectators lining the right side. In the foreground, the front of a yellow vintage car is visible. The text is overlaid on the image. At the top center is a winged logo. The main title 'Barossa Vintage' is in a large, red, cursive font. Below it, 'COLLINGROVE HILLCLIMB' is in bold black capital letters. Underneath that, 'A Celebration of Race Circuits' is in a smaller, white, cursive font. Further down, 'PRE WAR & PRE 1972 CARS & MOTORBIKES' and 'HISTORIC CAR DISPLAY & CIRCUIT DRIVES' are in bold black capital letters. A red banner in the middle contains the event schedule: 'NURIOOTPA GRAND PRIX CIRCUIT-SAT 3 OCT', 'COLLINGROVE HILLCLIMB-SUN 4 OCT', and 'WOODSIDE F1 CIRCUIT-MON 5 OCT'. A red circle on the left side contains the date '3-5TH OCTOBER 2026'. At the bottom center is a red rectangular logo for 'FINCH RESTORATIONS' with a winged logo and the website 'SPORTINGCARCLUB.COM.AU' below it.



Barossa Vintage

COLLINGROVE HILLCLIMB

A Celebration of Race Circuits

PRE WAR & PRE 1972 CARS & MOTORBIKES
HISTORIC CAR DISPLAY & CIRCUIT DRIVES

NURIOOTPA GRAND PRIX CIRCUIT-SAT 3 OCT
COLLINGROVE HILLCLIMB-SUN 4 OCT
WOODSIDE F1 CIRCUIT-MON 5 OCT

**3-5TH
OCTOBER
2026**

 **FINCH**
RESTORATIONS
SPORTINGCARCLUB.COM.AU



Renmark Red Mud Run

Saturday 24th and Sunday
25th October 2026

Registrations on website
rvccc.com.au

SATURDAY

From 11:00 am at Olivewood—Registration venue

Places of interest:

Paddle Steamer 'Industry'—Cruise and afternoon tea

23rd Street Distillery—Tour of the distillery

Roy's Farm—History talk, tastings and tour of production facility and
Historic House

Mallee Estates—Tour and tasting

Big Orange, the biggest of the Big Fruit in Australia—Cafe, viewing
level, craft brewery and distillery

SUNDAY

10:00 am at Lyrup club or Cooltong Hall—Morning Tea

Bert Dix Park, Paringa—'Show and Shine'

Woolshed Brewery—Following the 'Show and Shine' we will drive to
the Woolshed for a spectacular view and an abundance of history





38TH

POWER OF THE PAST

14th & 15th November 2026

Echunga Recreation Grounds

Echunga Rd Echunga SA

Veteran, Vintage & Classic Cars, Trucks and
Motorcycles, Heritage Stationary Engines, Machinery
And Tractors. General Displays, Trade Stalls.

Children's Activities, Fully Catered.

Swapmeet Sunday 15th

Sellers 6.00am Buyers 7.00am



10:00am to 5.00pm Saturday and 9.00am to 3.00pm Sunday

Information:

Allan Wheaton 0408 899 775. Bev Hunter 0427 970 518

pop@ahmrc.org





Was this at the start of Marion Bell's Journey around Australia?
(Story begins on page 19)

FOOTNOTE: Mrs Bell led an interesting life. Before her record-breaking drive she had undertaken other long-distance trips. She died on 3 December 1982 and her ashes were scattered at the Karrakatta Cemetery in Perth.

Oldsmobile

Encircles Australia

A Sweeping Success

Triumphant Return of Mrs. Marion Bell

All honor to the brave little woman of the West who drove an Oldsmobile car round the Australian Coast.

The wanderlust was on her and HAD to be satisfied! She wanted to explore the far flung wilds of our vast continent just as she had, in her girlhood days, explored the unknown tracks of New Zealand.

She determined to make the hazardous trip by car, and, knowing the wonderful performance and record of the Oldsmobile in the Francis Birtles Darwin to Adelaide

Illustrations: Hills, River Beds

The Aussie B40 RALLY

Friday 21st to Sunday 23rd August 2026

Torquay, Victoria

The Aussie B40 Rally was an initiative put together by the Vintage Drivers Club of Victoria in 2021 to mirror the 'Beforty Rally' held in Europe. The rally is an exclusive, youth-driven motoring event specifically designed for drivers under 40 years of age operating vehicles built prior to 1940.

The event is growing in numbers every year as more and more youth get involved in the vintage car movement. Last year's event saw great numbers ranging from Vauxhalls and Lancias all the way to Austin 7s.

I have attended the last 4 events in both my Vauxhall and my Fiat 501 and have had an absolute blast driving old cars the way they were intended with like-minded people. See (opposite) photos of last year's crowd in Echuca as well as an action shot of the Vauxhall mid motorkhana. Viewer discretion is advised.

This year the rally is based in Torquay, Victoria which offers some fantastic scenery of the Great Ocean Road and surrounding hills. The event extends over 3 days and includes a night trial, a scatter run, a motorkhana along with many regular runs and opportunities to socialise in between. Trailer parking is available and accommodation is usually scattered between caravan parks and local motels. Naturally, all participants do their best to drain the local establishments of the refreshments on offer on the Saturday night.

This event is all about getting the next generation interested by demonstrating that there's more to old cars than parades, displays and trophies. So, get your kids, grandkids, nieces, nephews, cousins or any other youngsters you know in the driver's seat of your pride and joy and point them east!

Brodie Bishop



The Aussie B40 Rally *(cont'd)*



Brodie's
pictures
from the
2025
B40
Rally in
Echuca



**FOR THOSE UNDER
40 YEARS OF AGE,
DRIVING PRE-1940
VEHICLES**

CONTACTS:
CALLUM WALSH
0447 766 724
BRANDON PRICE
0473 646 536



RSVP NOW



MRS BELL'S AMAZING MOTOR FEAT

The first woman to drive around Australia

PERTH 1925: MARION BELL AND HER DAUGHTER LEFT PERTH as the third of three parties aiming to drive around Australia. They were in a 1925 Oldsmobile Six. They were back in Perth, after covering some 19,000 kilometres, about five months later.

Mabel Marion Bell, née Chaffey, was born on 18th April 1891 in Okaihau on New Zealand's North Island. She grew up in the country in what was at the time a rather remote area, and became an accomplished horse rider, bush woman and mechanic. As a ten year old, without asking she took one of her father's racehorses and visited her grandmother who lived about 600 km away. Older, she rode the length of the South Island and travelled extensively through Polynesia and the Americas.

At some stage Marion moved to Sydney and conducted a retail business. In 1921 she married William Robert Sinclair in Melbourne. He died in 1922. Later that year she married Thomas Henry Norman Bell. They eventually, with her children Marion and Cedric, moved to Perth. (*As an aside, Cedric later became a fast bowler for Fremantle. Ed.*)



Marion Bell

Last month *The Vintage Bulletin* contained a story about aspects of Marion's long drive with her then eleven year old daughter. It focussed on how she dressed and looked. I don't recall having read such material about any male who drove around Australia. The article reported that Mrs Bell made light of her achievements.

There is no doubt that the journey was an "amazing motor feat" as claimed by *The Australian WOMAN'S MIRROR* (January 12th 1926 p.11). It was mostly across country with no roads or bridges and lacking European settlement. It was apparently undertaken without much detailed planning—and ostensibly ignoring somewhat her husband's concerns. And, it coincided with the Wet Season in Northern Australia.



Mrs Bell's Amazing Motor Feat (cont'd)

Marion left Perth on 14th October 1925. She arrived back, after travelling via Darwin, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, on 7th April 1926, greeted by a large crowd.

"It was a trip constantly beset by a struggle against primeval Nature", according to a report in the *West Australian Motorist and Wheelman* on 30th April 1926, page 39. In hindsight, "primeval Nature" was not the problem. Perhaps more telling was the country's apparent emptiness—in simple terms the lack of Europeans and their trappings. Nevertheless, there was a great deal of interest in the pair's journey. They were feted wherever they went. There were numerous articles, with many words and pictures appearing in newspapers, motoring and other magazines.

Words used to describe her and her trip included "Tremendous Ordeal", "Great Adventure", "Wonder Woman", "Brave little woman of the West"—and even "the little woman with the big smile and the big job". (*Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, Vol.13 No.3: Georgine Clarsen on page 359). Journalistic licence may account for some of this. Some of it may have been the result of inherent sexism. Some because the writers were female. Some because the writers were male. Who knows?

Whatever the case, Marion received a lot of praise. Not much was attributed to her actual skills and abilities though. She was a skilled driver and a competent mechanic; and was a capable businesswoman who had benefitted from being raised in rural New Zealand. In 1924 she had established a Perth-Fremantle bus service, often driving the buses herself. The business was contracted to supply an ambulance service too, so she became an ambulance driver and was involved in recruiting ambulance officers.

After selling the buses, the Bells took over a Fremantle Taxi Service which they then ran from their service station. Unsurprisingly, Mrs Bell was the first woman to earn a taxi licence. She was also a driving instructor—who taught men how to drive.

Some of her stories about her journey around Australia may have been influenced by her exaggeration of some events and omission of others. It transpires that after leaving Perth, she caught up with another driver attempting to circumnavigate the continent in a Citroën 5CV. Mr J K Warner had left Perth on 13th October.



Mrs Bell's Amazing Motor Feat (cont'd)

Perth's *Daily News* on 24th December 1925 quoted an article from Sydney's *Daily Guardian*, printed on 18th December—roughly coinciding with the Bell's arrival in Sydney—quoting Mr Warner. He said that, after trying to persuade Marion to abandon her trip because of the conditions ahead, they had agreed to travel together. At one point he had loaned her one of the drums of petrol from five left for him. Then at Roy Hill they just missed some sort of tribal fighting. He took pictures. Mrs Bell bought a spear and other items from the conflict. The day after the fighting, Mr Warner travelled 100 miles to collect three more fuel drums, one of which he gave to Marion.

He went on to say that over several days, the cars were frequently bogged in sand. Sometimes it took four hours to free them. Once, a teamster was needed to free the Oldsmobile from a bog. He also overhauled the cars when the opportunity arose, such as when staying at a station homestead.

After successfully crossing the river at Fitzroy Crossing with the aid of a Policeman and a team of locals, they were heading to Bells Creek when the Oldsmobile broke down. A rock had cracked the clutch housing. Repairs were not possible on the track so Mr Warner took the Bells back to Fitzroy Crossing. He remained with them until satisfied that they would be safe. He then resumed his journey and a donkey team towed the disabled car into the "Crossing".

Mr William John (Jack) Carey was in the town. He had the same model car as Marion and tried to take parts off it to fix her car. When that did not work they signed a formal agreement that they would exchange cars. Bell would have her car fixed for him and would pay his expenses for the rest of the journey—and for a steamer ticket from Fremantle to Derby to collect the car when he returned to Western Australia.

Jack stayed with the Bells from Fitzroy Crossing until Toowoomba. His knowledge of the country was invaluable to Marion. He said later that he also assisted with the driving.

After arriving back in Perth, Marion was hailed as a heroine. Unfortunately, her accounts of activities and the journey were embellished. Freeing the bogged car by herself, for example. That resulted in public arguments with Mr Warner.



Mrs Bell's Amazing Motor Feat (cont'd)

Perth's *Mirror* newspaper and *Smith's Weekly*—published in Sydney and distributed nationally—investigated the claims on both sides. Marion's stories of freeing her bogged car herself, stopping a tribal war, driving herself all the way, and of taking her own car all the way were examined and debunked.

A successful journey tarnished! She was, after all, the first woman to travel around Australia by motor car. And, her daughter was, no doubt, the first girl to do the same.

After her adventure, Marion kept running her garage, taxi business and ambulance service until well after the end of the Second World War. She had a sign painted in large letters across the garage window. It read "Marion Bell: The First Woman to Drive Around Australia"

Marion bought her Oldsmobile from Sewell and Poole. Mr Sewell was prompted to write to the Editor of the *West Australian* newspaper which published it on Thursday 29th April 1926 on page 6.

MARION BELL'S TRIP.

To the Editor.

Sir.—Since Mrs. Marion Bell completed her wonderful trip by car around Australia there has been a certain amount of adverse criticism from a small section of the community of her undoubtedly excellent performance. It has been stated that the whole trip was an advertising "stunt" put up by our firm. This is absolutely untrue, as we did not in the slightest degree encourage Mrs. Bell to undertake this venturesome trip, feeling as we did that she would never be able to drive through the North West territory let alone right round this island continent. We were expecting to hear of her turning back after a few days' tries but were surprised and pleased to learn of her successful progress. We would like to state also that we have not contributed directly or indirectly one penny towards her expenses. When Mrs. Bell reached the Fitzroy Crossing she had the misfortune to strike a rock which cracked the clutch housing—this might easily happen between Perth and Armadale—and rather than wait for repairs and being offered the use of another car of the same make and model she decided to make the change and push on with her journey as the tropical storms were just commencing. Mrs. Bell purchased her car at full price and we have never made her any rebate or allowance either directly or indirectly. We are quite willing to permit any reputable accountant to examine our books and verify this statement.

Yours, etc.

F. D. SEWELL (Sewell and Poole).
Perth, April 28.

Wayne Wood



A NATIONAL INSTITUTION

The London AUSTIN Taxi-cabs



1933 Austin 12/4 High Lot Taxi

BRASIER, UNIC AND RENAULT provided most of the early internal combustion-engined London taxis after the first, a Prunel, was introduced in 1903. Before that, besides horse-drawn “hackney” carriages there were electric-powered carriages on the streets. Designed by Walter Bersey—and informally known as “Berseys”—they were provided by the London Electrical Cab Company.

From 1910, Mann and Overton Limited, (established in 1901), negotiated with Unic for the purchase of Unic chassis. These were driven from Paris to London where British coach-builders fitted bodies. Thus Unic became the dominant brand of taxis in London. Rivals included Austin, Beardmore, Humber, Rover and Wolseley.



PRUNEL

To support the war effort, in September 1915 the Right Honourable Reginald McKenna, Chancellor of the Exchequer, introduced a 33.33% tax on luxury imports.



AUSTIN taxis in London (cont'd)**Austin 12/4 Low Loader taxi mid 30s**

Initially, these so called “McKenna Duties” excluded commercial vehicles needed for the First World War. Removed at the end of the War, the tax was reintroduced in July 1925 and from May 1926 was imposed on commercial vehicles to protect against foreign imports.

Subsequently, in an effort to reduce import duties, Unic Motors (1928) was established in the UK. Unfortunately, the locally assembled vehicles proved less reliable than the French ones—and were more expensive. Mann and Overton therefore replaced the imported Unic chassis with locally built, modified Austin Heavy 12/4 chassis. That move proved to be the right one as they soon dominated the market.

In the 1930s there were some rivals to the taxis built on Austin chassis. Beardmore and Morris were two examples. The 1938 Morris Commercial Super Six was equipped with a 1805cc 14 hp Wolseley engine. It was the first—and for a long time apparently the only—six cylinder-engined London taxi-cab available.

**UNIC**

AUSTIN taxis in London (cont'd)**1937 Austin 12/4 'Low Loader' Taxicab**

Several traditional coach-builders built bodies for the Austin chassis, but after the Second World War Mann and Overton wanted steel-bodied taxis. The Austin works in Birmingham were unable to produce them, so Carbodies of Coventry were approached for assistance. An agreement was made with Carbodies and Austin and in June 1948 the Austin FX3 taxi was released. It had a fully enclosed, steel-bodied cab for the driver. Passengers enjoyed spacious, comfortable compartments—but any luggage was still left outside.

The FX3 vehicles were functional and compared to their predecessors were cheaper to buy and to run. Austin 16 Hereford engines ensured that they were suited to the London traffic. Later ones had 2.2 litre diesel engines. The last of the FX3s were retired in 1969, having achieved the maximum of ten year's service allowed by the regulations.

**BRASIER**

In 1956, Austin recognised the need for a new design for the future. It had to comply with the Metropolitan Police "Conditions of Fitness for London Taxis". These conditions were quite detailed and are what made London taxis unique.



AUSTIN taxis in London (cont'd)**AUSTIN FX 3 of the 1950s**

Among these conditions were interior space, safety, height, ground clearance, opening hood and turning circle requirements. Staff at the Longbridge plant were given the responsibility for a new design.

Some external body features were changed and the FX4 emerged. Not wishing to alienate the public, the changes were not radical—but did not include an open luggage rack. Instead it was the first taxi with a passenger door similar to that of an ordinary car. Overall, it was reportedly considered to be a more balanced design.

From 1959 until late 1997 the FX4 was produced, during which time Car-bodies took over all manufacturing of it in 1982. In that time, the requirement to retire taxis after ten years' service was abolished. That saved many well-maintained owner-driver taxis from being scrapped.

Metrocabs, built by railway carriage manufacturer Metro-Cammel-Weymann were introduced in 1987. That, and the requirement to have wheelchair access is a story for another day. So too is information about "The Knowledge" needed before driving a London taxi-cab.

**1897 BERSEY (electrics)**

Known as "Hummingbirds" because of their sound and colours



AUSTIN taxis in London (cont'd)



AUSTIN FX4



Two generations of Beardmore taxis parked side by side in a suburban street. Furthest from the camera is a Mk I, reg no XO5206, first introduced in 1920, with a specially designed roof rack. In the foreground is a Beardmore Mk IV, reg no BMC610, more commonly known as the 'Paramount', introduced in 1933.

Beardmore was a Scottish firm and built what were generally regarded as the Rolls Royce of taxis.

Cabs could be found in many different colours before the 1940s and fleets could have their own colours. Black was adopted because it was cheap.



AUSTIN taxis in London (cont'd)



METRO-CAB



1938 MORRIS COMMERCIAL 'G2SW'
Super Six London Taxi



1908 Brasier Type KD



Wayne Wood



NATIONAL TRANSPORT MUSEUM

Inverell, NSW
The Sapphire City

SETTLED IN 1836, INVERELL COULD BE AN ADELAIDE SISTER CITY. It is a beautiful, clean, tidy, town of around 12,500 people. Situated in the Macintyre Valley on the Gwydir Highway below the New England Ranges in the New England High Country of New South Wales.



Located in the town, the National Transport Museum—also known as the “Inverell Motor Museum”—is open every day from 9:00am until 4:00pm except on Christmas Day, when it remains closed.

Run by volunteers, the Museum houses an interesting collection of motor vehicles—both domestic and commercial—as well as motor bikes, bicycles, wedding cakes, gramophones, dolls, model cars and a model electric train layout. I needed to be selective during the two hours I was there recently. A lot to see.



National Transport Museum (cont'd)



Read more about the Museum in the July 2026 edition of *The Vintage Bulletin*



WORDS AND PICTURES FROM

Wayne Wood

**NATIONAL
TRANSPORT MUSEUM**





"Steve's Post Marques" are having a rest while Steve is away. The best that the Editor could provide in their place is the postcard printed below. Not quite the same though, is it? Happily, it has an AUSTIN printed on it.

**1934 Austin London Taxicab
(Long Island Auto Museum Postcard)**

Note the rear section of the hood can be folded down to accommodate passengers wearing top hats



For Sale

Model Rolls Royce \$50 ono
Contact editor for details



1/4

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For Sale

Restored 1927 FALCON KNIGHT Model 10

Excellent provenance, old documentation.

Has been in same family since new, (2 owners).

Completely stripped and restored—see photographs referenced below.

Electrics converted to 12volt.

A number of spares included.

Car is in Stirling, South Australia.

Best offer over \$25,000

Contacts: 0493871874

moralana@internode.on.net



RESTORATION PHOTOGRAPHS

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Wanted

1926 RUGBY 380mm Steering Wheel

Required to complete the restoration of a car which has been in a Broken Hill family for 80+ years

1/4

Email: editor@vsccsa.org.au

Hi all, we are chasing the trip odometer wheel assembly from an oval Stewart Warner speedo for the Model A Ford we are doing at the mens' shed. The rest of what we have is all good but the trip wheel assembly is dinged up and jams at certain points so we need to find a better one.

Anyone able to help out?

Cheers, Steve

Phone: 0497 377 774

1/4

Email: hupmobile24@gmail.com

For Sale

HOLDEN *Commodore* VR Sedan 1992

White. 4-door . Automatic.

Good straight body. No rust.

Duel Fuel. Tow Bar. Rear spoiler.

Not Registered. Can be heard running.

Needs some work.

Ideal project for Holden enthusiast.

Many Spare Parts.

Phone: 0456 415 811

Original Salt & Pepper Hood Material off the roll

2/4

Phone: 0456 415 811

Jim's Puzzle[©]

Find the Words – AUSTIN

Find the words below. They go forward, backward, up, down and diagonal. IF THERE IS A REPEAT IT IS TO BE FOUND ONCE. When you have found them you will have 14 letters left. Circle them and write them in order to find the hidden message. Good luck.

A	U	S	T	I	N	M	O	T	O	R	C	A	R	L
N	A	E	S	M	T	R	E	B	R	E	H	V	E	T
D	1928	X	U	E	B	W	V	C	1921	C	A	S	D	D
F	7	I	S	R	R	H	I	12/4	1.661	T	N	C	N	1906
I	P	S	M	G	A	E	R	T	T	E	G	O	I	1970
V	R	E	R	E	K	E	D	H	W	N	E	L	L	E
E	O	M	O	D	E	L	S	G	E	E	D	B	Y	O
S	D	O	F	S	S	F	U	I	L	V	T	O	C	V
S	U	S	I	D	E	V	A	L	V	E	O	N	4	E
I	C	S	D	A	E	H	T	1½	E	S	B	O	N	R
R	E	R	13	Y	E	L	A	E	H	1980	L	M	A	50
R	D	U	B	F	O	E	C	I	O	H	C	L	D	1945
O	1922	O	H	B	M	C	H	A	I	N	A	3.66	E	OHV
M	L	F	P	R	E	T	S	D	A	O	R	1918	S	22L
1952	R	Y	L	T	S	O	M	1913	1908	U	S	747	CC	N

AUSTIN MOTOR CAR / LTD 1906 TO 1970 1½ LIGHT 12/4
 HERBERT AUSTIN MOSTLY / FOURS / SOME SIXES
 1908 TO 1913 SIDE VALVE / T HEADS
 CHAIN / DRIVE 1952 MORRIS / MERGE FORMS / BMC
 4 CYLINDER / MODELS 1918 3.66 L MONOBLOC SV
 1922 / MODEL / 7 PRODUCED TO 1928
 CHANGED TO BL CARS LTD / 1980
 CHOICE OF / OVER 50 / MODELS
 AUSTIN HEALEY ROADSTER
 TWELVE AND FIVE SIXES
 1945 OHV 2.2 L / SEDAN
 FOUR WHEEL BRAKES
 1921 1.661 CC TWELVE
 TEN SEVEN
 13 BHP / 747 CC





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