

VINTAGE NEWS

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER of
THE QUEENSLAND VINTAGE VEHICLE ASSOCIATION Inc
November 2025



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QHMC Delligate	Graham Porter	0407 257 440
Membership Officer	Rolf Rose	0428 202 164

QVVA welcomes visitors who have an interest in the preservation and restoration of all types of vehicles to an original condition as far as practicable.

Meetings:

General meetings are held at 7:30pm on the fourth Wednesday of each month at the Veteran Car Clubrooms, 1376 Old Cleveland Road, Carindale 4512 Ph: 07 3843 0010

Subscriptions:

The annual subscription is currently \$60 and renewable on 1st July with a 50% pro-rata for applications after 1st January.

A \$40 joining fee applies for new members.

Membership will be considered to have lapsed after three months of non-payment. A person with three months arrears who wishes to join again will be treated as a new applicant.

EFT payment can be made to our bank: BSB: 124 – 078 a/c 90528779 Use your surname as a reference.

Concessional Registration:

To qualify for the Special Interest Vehicle Scheme concessional registration you should be familiar with the Queensland Transport “Criteria for Eligibility” guide and observe the restrictions.

Newsletter Distribution:

The newsletter is sent members by email only but is also posted on our website www.qvva.org.au for casual viewing.

Name Badges: Failure to wear a name badge at club events incurs a \$2 fine.

Disclaimer: The Queensland Vintage vehicle Association does not hold itself responsible for statements made or opinions expressed by contributors to the Vintage News.



PRESIDENTS REPORT NOVEMBER 2025

Our Bonnets up day was very successful. Most cars were put up on the hoist and very few problems were found. To me, it shows that we are looking after our heritage vehicles. The Ferguson's is a great venue for this event. I offer them a big THANK YOU for making their property and equipment available to our great club. I also thank them for providing lunch for all attendees, a lovely BBQ cooked under the watchful eye of a very friendly Kookaburra.

We have a GOF lunch on November 12 at Belmont Tavern, 12 Noon. Please come along, you will be made welcome.

On November 16 we are going to the Mathena Gallery 2557 Mount Mee Road. Ocean View. We will meet at Tullamore Park, McKenzie Street in Dayboro at 9.00 am (MORNING TEA) for a 9.30 departure. After our visit we will head back to Dayboro for lunch at the Sugar Mill Café. If you want to join us, and you have not put your name on the list. please call me on 0407 257 440. We will be joined on this run with members of BVAC and the Chevrolet Club.

Our Christmas party will be held on Saturday December 13 commencing at 12 Noon. Price \$40 per head with numbers required. A list will be circulated at the November meeting or you can contact me to advise of your presence. Santa and an Elf will be attending and there will be a Christmas raffle as well.

I thank James and Phoebi for dressing the club window with a Christmas theme. This year QVVA was the first to do it. I am sure other clubs will notice our enthusiasm.

The November meeting will be our last general meeting for 2025. I would like to thank all members for their support and participation at all events. I know it is not possible to attend them all but our numbers are slowly improving. The talks at meetings are very entertaining and I appreciate that not everyone can talk on the microphone. No body will criticize you for doing your best.

Before closing the Committee and I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous 2026

Merry CHRISTMAS
Until January 2026
For Gasoline Cars,

The True Cost Of A Professional Restoration

Written by Bryan Joslin on January 29, 2024

Editor: These are USA costs

There's a reason so many people choose to restore a classic vehicle on their own. Spoiler alert: it's not usually for the pure joy of it. Fact is, a proper restoration takes not only time, space, and tons of skill, but also countless tools and equipment. And all of that still requires money. So, for those with more time and tools than money, performing your own restoration might be the only option. Simply put, paying professionals to restore your car is expensive, as I learned firsthand when running a restoration shop. In the year and a half that I ran that shop, I saw countless customers come to the realization that a professional restoration didn't make sense for them. As my shop managers shared estimates with them based on years of experience, I often see their dreams fade away. And there was usually one factor that our clients couldn't get their heads around: how fast the labour adds up.

Breaking Down the Numbers

We'll use the round figure of \$125 an hour for labour. At that rate, to have a single technician working on a car for a full, 8-hour day will consume \$1,000. And that's before any parts, materials, shop supplies, taxes, or other fees. A full week of work will leave you with a \$5,000 bill.

Now let's talk about how long a full restoration takes. If you start with a solid, complete, running and driving vehicle and you're thinking about a mild cosmetic refresh (paint and upholstery, say) and a light mechanical overhaul, you will probably be looking at 800-1,000 hours of labour alone. If you don't have your calculator handy, that adds up to \$100,000-125,000 in labour. Before parts, materials, taxes, etc. But let's say you want a full, frame-of restoration with every nut, bolt, and finish factory-correct. There's the usual several decades worth of rust, shortcut repairs, dry-rotted rubber, and maybe a dubious body patch made with surplus roofing material where no one could see it. Perhaps a couple pieces of rare trim missing as well. Start by doubling the original labour estimate. Even a "simple" car can consume a couple thousand hours of skilled labour if perfection is a goal. Three-thousand hours is not uncommon for some vehicles. Yes, a quarter-million dollars (before parts and other materials, naturally) is not an unusual budget for a proper show-worthy restoration. And of course, no experienced shop will write a binding estimate for the labor required for such a job. Old cars are simply too unpredictable. Restoration shops don't typically work on "book time" but rather on a time-and-materials basis. And it's not uncommon to see three technicians spending billable time to, say, lower a freshly painted body back onto its frame to ensure it lands without a scratch. Three guys on that task for an hour equals three billable hours of labour on your bill.

Who's Getting Rich?

But back to the labour rate. Isn't that \$125 an hour a bit excessive? That depends on the individual business to some extent. The guys billing at the low end tend to be one- or two-person operations working on very limited projects. They may also be working out of a small shop or in a remote area with low expenses. More often than not they'll be subletting a lot of the smaller work they aren't equipped to handle. That sublet work may be billed at a higher labour rate than their own, and they may still add a markup on it. But even at the low end of the scale, 2,000 hours at an \$85-an-hour shop is still a lot of money.

More realistically, the shops in the middle range charging that \$125 rate are spending about a third of that on salaries and benefits for the folks who bill the hours. During the pandemic, technicians were in short supply and customers were eager to spend extra cash on their projects. Keeping experienced talent during this time meant a lot of shops increased pay for their technicians. A typical restoration tech earns between \$30 and \$40 an hour today based on where they are and their experience. So what about the other two thirds? A fair majority of that typically goes to fixed overhead like the building and other facilities. Running a shop requires a lot of power to run compressors and lights, not to mention heat and cooling. I used to write \$5,000 checks for heating oil in the wintertime. A paint booth only adds to that burden. And wherever there is a strong market for restorations (typically larger metro areas), the property values tend to follow. That's assuming you can even find a suitable building to rent or buy. Most of what's left goes to other salaries, such as the office manager, parts manager, and various support roles. And yes, that includes the owner if they're not actively working the shop and billing their own labour. However, in talking to dozens of other shop owners over the years, I never met one who claimed to be getting rich on restorations. It is, almost universally, a labour of love. Does it Make Sense?

So, does it make sense to pay someone to restore a car for you? Maybe. If you have more money than skills, tools, time, and space, then perhaps it does. If you have a blue-chip collectible that is worth more once the work is done, then yes, absolutely. If you own a vehicle that has incalculable sentimental value and a budget to see your vision through, it just may.

But for many of us, restoration is only possible by doing the work ourselves. And that's okay too. Either way, we're keeping the memories of these classics alive and sharing them with future generations. And that's the whole point in the first place.



Australia Post marks Ford Australia Centenary with a limited edition stamp collection, click on the link below to view.

<https://retrorides.com.au/news/australia-post-ford-australia-centenary-limited-edition-stamp-collection/>

Journey to the Jacarandas

Fabulous Friday

Today we departed from Grafton passing through Glenreagh, Nana Glen, Coramba to Coffs Harbour. The road was in good condition through the rain forest. I have never seen such tall and straight Gum trees, most of them were over thirty feet tall. As the road had no passing lane it was difficult to let the following traffic pass, however one Land cruiser decided to give it ago and at great speed passed us all. (F- wit) Five minutes later Mr Plod stepped out and directed him to a parking spot and issued him with a gift. I was very tempted to blow the horn and give him a wave, but Mr Plod did not seem friendly.

We had morning tea at Glenreagh in a park beside the river. Very quiet and lots of birds chirping.

From there we headed to Coffs Harbour to the National Cartoon Gallery and Holden Museum. There were hundreds of political and topical cartoons and some featuring President Trump as well as a wall featuring all Australian Prime Ministers from Menzies to Albanese. Yes, Holt was there wearing a snorkel and little Jonny Howard featured as well.

From there we headed to the Clog Barn for a Dutch lunch very morish, followed by a visit to the miniature Dutch village with wind mills and Dutch buildings. A demonstration of clog making was also given at this place. A few photos of the QVVA Clog Wogs are elsewhere in the magazine. We then filled with petrol and headed back to Grafton. 175 K for the day.



Journey to the Jacarandas

Special Sunday

Today we headed to New Italy for morning Tea. Approximately 80K trip with some Highway driving. Most of us had passed this complex every time we headed Beyond Ballina on our way south, but none of us had bothered to stop. We had morning tea repacked our cars and proceeded to look around. The toilets were very new and very clean; however, the rest of the complex was shut up tight. Very disappointing. I think the Italians must have gone to mass today.

Back on the road we headed to Byron Bay for lunch, and a ride on the solar powered train down to the waterfront.

Our tour organizer found that we could purchase return tickets for the train and lunch at a hotel for \$35 per head. Great Value. The meal was from the hotel menu and most of us chose the Chicken Parmigiana. When they came from the kitchen they were on a bed of chips the chicken filet was 200mm diameter, crumbed and had 6mm of melted cheese on top. Not all could eat the lot so most asked for a takeaway box to take the remainder away. After lunch we all waddled over the road for our train journey.

IT was a ten minute run to the beach, travelling along a creek with ducks, herons and wading birds all looking for a feed. The train was a three carriage rail motor from the 50's and was well presented and the crew was very helpful. Well worth the price. The rail motor could achieve 12 to 15 trips a day doing a round trip of 22km on a single charge.

Leaving Byron Bay we headed to Murwillumbah via the Tweed Valley Way, The scenery was second to none, and for Susan & I reminded US of a previous Lismore rally that we participated in some ten or twelve years ago..

Susan & I thank Wendy for a great six days so far and look forward to our trip home on MAGIC MONDAY. 200 k's for the day

Thanks to all participants who made a wonderful week of 'Touring the Jacarandas'

First Publicized Use of a Rearview Mirror

Ray Harroun in the "Wasp"

The first well-known use of a rearview mirror for automobiles was by a race car driver in the very first Indianapolis 500, held in 1911. Ray Harroun was driving an Indianapolis built Marmon "Wasp," a crowd favourite. The rules of the day specified that drivers were accompanied in their cars by their mechanics. If the car broke down, the mechanic was right there to get to work. When the car was in motion, the mechanic's job was to keep an eye to the rear and to side of the race car to keep the driver informed of what was coming up around him. But Harroun had a plan. He didn't expect his car to break down and he convinced officials to let him install a rear-facing mirror to replace the need for a mechanic.

Less weight in the car would mean faster speed and Harroun was playing for every advantage he could. Ultimately, the officials went along with the rearview mirror plan and Harroun won that first Indy 500 race. Certainly, a lighter weight car had its value, but did the mirror make the difference in race strategy? It turned out it didn't. Later, Harroun said that the mirror did him no good. In 1911, the raceway at Indianapolis was called the "Brickyard," as the surface chosen for the roadway was brick. Harroun explained that as the Marmon rolled over brick after brick during the race, the vibration was so strong that Harroun was unable to see images in the mirror. When asked about how he came up with such an innovative idea as the rearview mirror, Harroun took no

credit. He said that in 1904 he saw a driver of a horse drawn buggy using a rearview mirror.

Harroun thought it was a great idea. He copied it and installed it on his race car.

Elmer Berger is usually credited with inventing the rear view mirror, though in fact he had patent it in 1921. He marketed his product as the Cop-Spotter, a means of avoiding being caught speeding by police.

Though Elmer Berger's Cop-spotter was the first widely marketed auto mirror, it was not the first to be attached to early automobiles.

Even before Harroun and Berger, others were experimenting with the use of mirrors on cars. As early 1906, a European car, the Argus, had dash mirrors installed.

The first U.S. patent on a rearview mirror was issued in 1914 to Chester A. Weed of Brooklyn. Weed's patent was for a "mirror attachment for automobiles" to avoid blind spots. The patent application is somewhat unusual as it recommends that drivers also add a "reflecting" mirror so that their automobile would be more easily seen. The patent application itself described a "reducing" mirror—the images appeared smaller than they really were but thereby could give a more complete view of the view behind the driver.

Timeline:

- 1906: A European car, the Argus, featured dash mirrors, and a French inventor, Mr. Bilal Ghanty, patented a "Warning mirror for automobiles".
- 1911: Ray Harroun used a mirror on his race car at the Indianapolis 500, though it vibrated excessively and was largely ineffective.
- 1914: Chester A. Weed received the first U.S. patent for a "mirror attachment for automobiles".
- 1921: Elmer Berger patented the first commercially viable rear-view mirror, which he marketed as the "Cop-Spotter" to help drivers avoid police.
- 1920s: Other manufacturers began to adopt rear-view mirrors, and they were widely distributed.
- 1966: Rear-view mirrors became standard equipment on all new cars in the United States after the passage of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act.



In 1900, 40% of cars in America were powered by steam, 38% by electricity, and 22% by gasoline.

A MOTOR COURTSHIP

BY BANJO PATERSON

INTO HER PRESENCE HE GAILY PRANCED
A VERY FAT SPARK, AND A BIT ADVANCED.

WITH A SAMSON TREAD ON THE EARTH, HE TRACKS
HE WAS STAYED AND GAITED, AND FIFTY ODD.

AND SHE WAS A TULIP JUST UNFURLED
THE SWEETEST THING IN THE MOTOR WORLD.

HER BODY WAS ONE OF WHICH POETS DREAMED,
EIGHTEEN-TWENTY OR SO SHE SEEMED.

HER AIR WAS HAUGHTY, HER SPIRIT PROUD
BUT PROPERLY GOVERNED, AS ALL ALLOWED.

"PITY," HE SAID, MY SAD CONDITION,
MY HEARTS IN A STATE OF ADVANCED IGNITION.

"ASK ME TO DO SOME DESPERATE DEED,
AND ILL DO IT AT ONCE AT MY TOPMOST SPEED".

"SIR" SAID THE MAIDEN, PRAY BE SEATED,
I FEAR FROM YOUR BEARING YOURE SOMEWHAT HEATED,

AND I TRUST THAT A TIMELY LUBRICATION OF
THROTTLE WILL COOL YOUR CIRCULATION

AS WELL-MADE MIXTURE SHE INDICATED
WITH JOY AND GLADNESS, HE RADIATED.

"OH COME" SAID HE, IN THIS SOFT SPRING WEATHER,
LET US RUN OVER THE WORLD TOGETHER.

BUT SHE SLIPPED THE CLUTCH WITH A GESTURE MOCKING,
YOUR HEART SHE SAID, I CAN HEAR IT KNOCKING.

YOU HAVENT THE GEAR AT MY PACE TO LAST
BOTH MEN AND MOTORS – I LIKE THEM BOTH

AND I THINK THAT IN ME YOU HAVE MISSED YOUR MISSION
YOU ARE ONLY AN OLD-STYLE TUBE IGNITION

WITH A SIDELONG MOTION HE LEFT THE PLACE
FOR WEAL OR WOE, HE WAS OFF HIS BASE.

HE DROVE HIS CAR TO THE CLIFFS OF DOVER
MADE ONE SHORT CIRCUIT AND RAN HER OVER

AND THE STORMY PETROLHER REST IS TAKING
WHERE ONLY THE WILD WAVES ARE BRAKEING

Built in China Isn't the Same As "Made in China"

Published: 31 Oct 2025, 16:19 UTC • By: [Sergiu Tudose](#)



Modern cars today can be conceived in one country, engineered in a second, with various components hailing from a third. There's no such thing anymore as a purely "national" automobile, at least not in most cases. Meanwhile, the expression "made in" has become more of a marketing tale.

I can't tell you how many times I've heard people complain about where cars are being manufactured. Even among my peers, who are supposed to know better. The second some carmaker is purchased by a foreign company, or they decide to build a manufacturing facility abroad, their products stop becoming synonymous with their country of origin. Which is straight up nonsense.

This confusion becomes particularly heated when China enters the discussion – everyone's favorite global villain. After Russia. Or is it the other way around? Who even knows.

Some consumers still think that "built in China" means you're looking at a "Chinese car". So, to them, a Mazda EZ-6, aka the Mazda6e, which is assembled in Nanjing by the Changan Mazda joint venture, is the same as a [BYD](#) or a NIO.

Where a car is produced shouldn't weigh more than brand identity. Mazda is a good example because of how its Chinese production is structured. While the EZ-6 is assembled through that previously mentioned joint venture (as Chinese law dictates when it comes to domestic manufacturers), its DNA, from the engineering philosophy to the software, is still undeniably Japanese.

China does make valuable contributions, as they now have some of the world's most advanced automotive production capabilities, including robotics and supply chain efficiency. Yet, calling the [Mazda EZ-6/6e](#) "Chinese made" basically erases decades of design heritage and intellectual ownership. You really shouldn't be disrespecting Hiroshima like that.

Then there's Tesla. People tend to or even choose to forget that Elon had a gigafactory built in Shanghai. Cars produced there serve both Europe and Asia, and the quality is just as good as anywhere else. And yes, the Tesla brand, tech stack and corporate ecosystem remain 100% American. Shanghai only does what Fremont and Austin command.

Anyway, these distinctions matter, because language shapes perception and perception drives purchasing decisions, among other things. When people talk about "Chinese EVs flooding Europe", they don't always differentiate between the Mazda6e and the BYD Seal. One is a Japanese product; the other is a Chinese product – even though they're both made in China.

By the way, you can read all about our review of the Mazda6e by clicking [here](#). It's one of the most impressive EVs we've ever tested and one of the best value-for-money propositions you can find as far as the automotive industry is concerned.

When it comes to outsourcing production, Americans in particular really should know better, because GM, Ford and Stellantis all have manufacturing plants in both Mexico and Canada, yet nobody's ever called the Lincoln Nautilus "Canadian", nor have I ever heard someone referring to their [GMC Terrain](#) as "Mexican".

Wait, you didn't know that? The third-generation GMC Terrain, unveiled last year, is in production at the San Luis Potosi plant in Mexico, a site that had already been making GM products for over a decade now. The Chevy Equinox is made there as well, and before that, you had the Trax too, which was Mexican-made, so to speak.

The reality is that Mexico offers manufacturing cost advantages, and for compact/midsize SUVs like the Terrain, this is huge. Most of the production there is for export, rather than the local Mexican market.

The Lincoln Nautilus' production is even more interesting. Originally, they were assembled at the Oakville plant in Ontario, Canada, but for the 2024 model year onward, production shifted. Guess where to? That's right, [China](#) – via the Changan Ford joint venture. So, if you buy a Nautilus today, depending on model year, it would have been built either in Canada (if you get a used one), or China (if you get the second-gen car).



Yet, Lincoln remains an American luxury brand as far as heritage, design and engineering is concerned. The assembly location doesn't change anything – but again, perception matters, and scrutiny is inevitable.

Are you going to reject the [all-new Nautilus](#) because it's "made in China"? I actually think some people will, for all the wrong reasons.

Dismissing a vehicle because its assembly plant happens to be located in China is like rejecting a tailored Armani suit because the final stitching was done in Vietnam. I mean, you don't think of your iPhone as being Chinese, do you? Don't let assembly location alone define how you view any one vehicle.

From a market-analysis point of view, assembly in Mexico or China isn't inherently worse or better. It's simply a strategic choice. What ultimately matters is what the carmaker can deliver in terms of quality, design, and value.

MINUTES OF THE 676TH MEETING OF THE QUEENSLAND VINTAGE VEHICLE ASSOCIATION ON 22ND OCTOBER 2025

Meeting Opened at 7:35pm

Apologies - Adrian Deering

Previous Minutes - Read and moved by Wendy Tyquin - Tervor Farnell seconded

New member - Brenton Howe

Treasurers report - moved by Wendy Tyquin. Seconded by James Humphrey.

Events Report - James Humphrey.

Looking for feedback on events to run. Reviewing previous runs for ones that can be re-done.

Bonnets up day this Sunday at Fergusons. Sign up sheet is available.

November 4 - **Club Dinner** - Gaythorne RSL

November 12 - **GOF lunch**

November 16 - **Mathena Mathematics museum** with lunch at Sugar Mill Cafe

26 Nov – **Next Club Meeting**

13 Dec - **Christmas party**. Sign up sheet is avail.

Membership Report - Rolf Rose. Since July 1 there has been 8 new members and 10 SIVS letters have been issued.

Sausage Sizzle Report - Don Lake. Last went well with good weather. \$967 raised. Next planned for February. Bunnings have asked us to supply 3 staff to cook for Halloween night for \$250 payment.

General Business -

Decoration of clubhouse window for Christmas. Call for volunteers. None received

Thanks was given to Wendy and Ross for organising the tour to Grafton. A small gift was presented to Wendy. Discussion about some of the places visited during the tour including the Petrol Bowser museum.

QHMC - Discussion about recent swap meet which was limited to English cars only. No issue was seen with this limitation. QMHC is also attempting to re-define the age categorisation for vehicles. Discussion of their constitution and that Graham Porter has been unable so far to get a copy.

Public Relations.

Illness from Barry Shipway, Jodie Ferguson and Barbara Kroll.

Presentation from Phoebe on her cartoons and video game.

Regards: Ben Carol

COMING EVENTS

QVVA Events.

Sunday 16th November. Club tour to Mathena Mathematics Museum

Wednesday 26th November. Club general meeting and birthday celebration

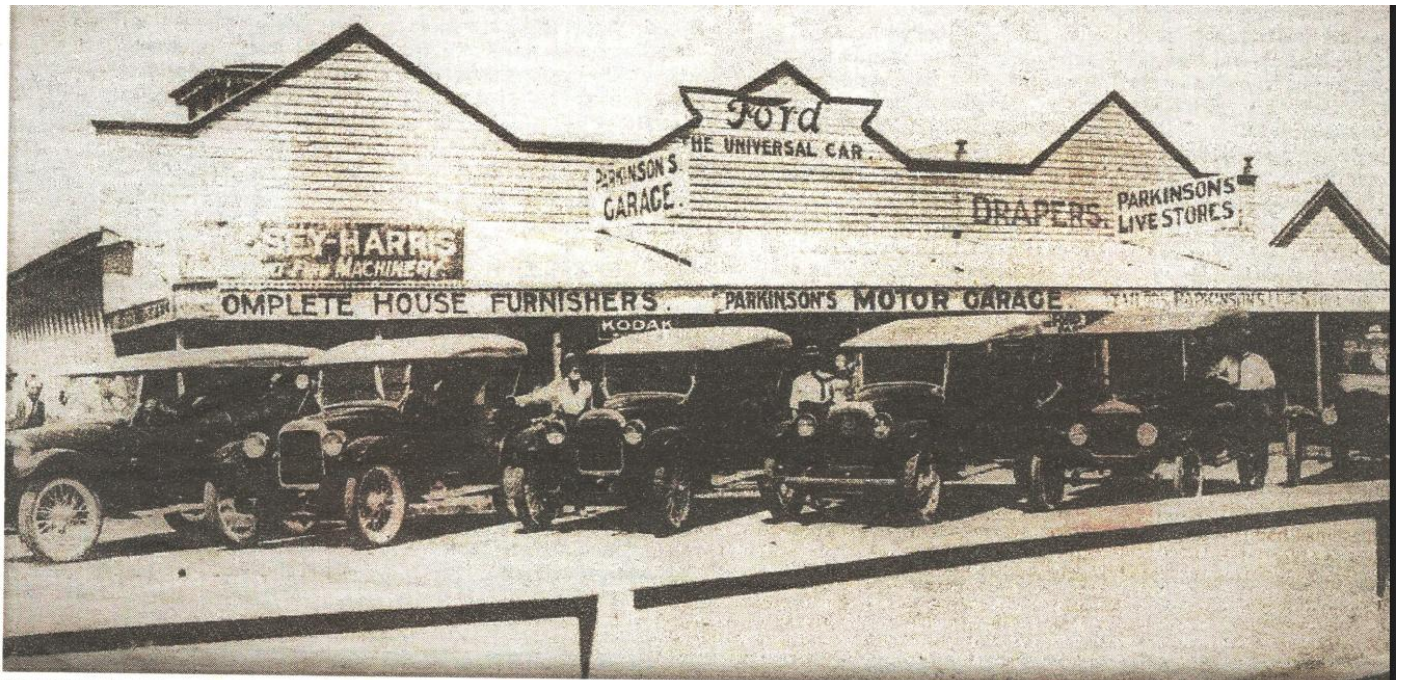
Tuesday 2nd December. Club dinner. Capalaba Sports club. 113 Ney Road, Capalaba

Saturday 13th December. Club Christmas party. Club rooms

Wednesday 31st December. Club picnic. Lota.

Other Events

November						
Nov	Sun	2/11/2025	06:00	Rebels Car Club Show and Swap	Rocklea Showgrounds	
Nov	Sat	8/11/2025	06:00	Kingaroy Swap	Geoff Ralph Drive, Kingaroy	Set up from Friday 12:00
Nov	Sun	23/11/2025	06:00	Beaudesert Swap	Beaudesert Showgrounds	
Nov	Sun	23/11/2025	07:00	Rusty and Dusty Swap	Yatala Drive In 100 Stapylton-Jacobs Well Rd, Stapylton	
January						
Jan	Sat	24/01/2026		Allora Heritage Day	Allora Showgrounds New England Highway Allora	
Jan	Sun	25/01/2026		Allora Heritage Day	Allora Showgrounds	
February						
Feb	Sat	7/02/2026	06:00	Toowoomba Swap	Toowoomba Showgrounds	Darling Downs Veteran and Vintage Motor Club
Feb	Sun	8/02/2026	06:00	Toowoomba Swap	Toowoomba Showgrounds	Darling Downs Veteran and Vintage Motor Club
Feb	Sun	22/02/2026	07:00	Rusty and Dusty Swap	Yatala Drive In 100 Stapylton-Jacobs Well Rd, Stapylton	
Feb	Sun	22/02/2026	07:00	Ballina Swap and North Coast Show and Shine	Ballina Jockey Club Racecourse Rd Ballina	
January						
Jan	Sat	17/01/2026	14:00	Rosewood Charity Show and Shine	Rosewood Bowls Club	Third Saturday in January
Jan	Mon	26/01/2026	07:30	Australia Day Rally	Ormiston State School	
Jan	Mon	26/01/2026	08:00	Australia Day Show and Shine	Glasshouse Mountains Sorts Club Steve Irwin Way, Glasshouse Mountains	
Jan	Sat	24/01/2026		Allora Heritage Day	Allora Showgrounds New England Highway Allora	
Jan	Sun	25/01/2026		Allora Heritage Day	Allora Showgrounds	
February						
Feb	Sun	1/02/2026	08:00	Wheels in the Woods	148 Goldmine Rd Ormeau Woods	
Feb	Sun	8/02/2026	06:00	Bayers Breaky Bash	Cairns St. Loganholme	
Feb	Fri	13/02/2026		Moonshine Run		
Feb	Sat	14/02/2026		Moonshine Run	Cottonvale	Bonfire and Spit
Feb	Sun	15/02/2026		Moonshine Run	Applethorpe State School	Show and Shine
Feb	Sun	22/02/2026	07:00	Ballina Swap and North Coast Show and Shine	Ballina Jockey Club Racecourse Rd Ballina	
Feb	Sun	22/02/2026	07:30	All Japanese Classic Day	Earnshaw State College Banyo	



FORD DEALER: This photo, taken c1923, shows Parkinson's Motor Garage in Oakey which was opened by John Robert Parkinson in 1922. The premises were opposite Oakey railway station and had housed Parkinson's tailoring business from 1914. In 1925, he opened a second garage in Dalby. The photograph was sent in by Valerie Weise-Young.

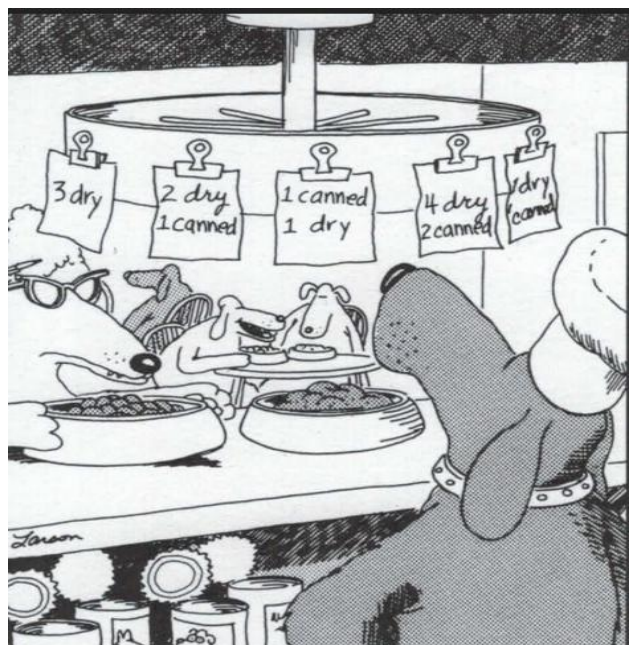
The Way We Were



Tractor Broom



Michael's Pick Up



Dog Café

What makes spark plugs last so much longer than when I was a kid?

OK. There have been a couple of answers to this question that came close and a lot from people who obviously did not work on cars or change plugs in the past. Let me try to explain what has changed. Note that through the 1950s and 1960s and in prior eras it was necessary to replace spark plugs every 10K miles and clean and file and gap them every 3K miles. Today spark plug go for 100K miles before needing to be replaced. What has changed?

The single greatest difference that increased spark plug life was the elimination of lead fouling.

In the 1970s the American EPA banned the use of tetraethyl lead in motor fuels. This was done for health reasons as lead is toxic and is not only harmful to humans but interferes with brain development in children. A serendipitous effect of this ban was to eliminate the lead fouling that, up to that time, caused spark plugs to fail and required that they be cleaned at that aforementioned 3K interval and replaced every 10K miles.

The next change was a drastic reduction in carbon fouling.

The same EPA regulations that forced the auto makers to reduce tailpipe emissions and CAFE requirements that increased fuel economy eliminated the excessively rich mixtures that were required by the crude carbureted engines to start, run during warm-up, and accelerate, also reduced the carbon fouling that had required spark plugs to be cleaned every 3K miles and replaced every 10K.

Two other changes eliminated oil fouling.

The first and most important was the introduction by Mobil of synthetic engine oils. Synthetic oils, if introduced into the combustion process, burn much more cleanly and don't foul plugs. The next change was precision machining that enabled car manufacturers to mass produce engines with much greater precision and much tighter tolerances. In those engines far less oil makes it past the rings or through the valve guides.

Computer controlled ignition, again required to meet government emissions regulations, replaced the crude vacuum and centrifugal advance system systems. This, again serendipitously, eliminated the burnt plugs that resulted from excessive ignition advance.

Replacement of the old points and coil system with first capacitive discharge and then fully electronic coil-on-plug systems greatly increased the secondary voltage at the spark plug and enabled the plug to reliably fire at much wider gaps but even if slightly fouled.

Changes in the plugs account for some of the increased spark plug life expectancy. The use of platinum and iridium electrodes rather than copper has reduced electrode erosion and eliminated the need for frequent filing and re-gapping. Extended tip spark plugs reduced oil fouling. The improvement in the composition of the insulator has had some minor effect, but only in the ability of the plug to endure slightly higher temperatures and resist breakage from misuse. But all of the major factors that have influenced the increase in spark plug life from the 10K miles that was the norm for five decades to the present 100K miles are the result of fuel and engine changes made, often reluctantly, by the manufacturers in response to government emissions and fuel economy regulations.

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By Michael Kay



