



# CentreSpoke

February 2020

## 2020

We're hydrated,  
having good sex with people who deserve us,  
eating veggies,  
hiking,  
leaving behind toxic relationships,  
communicating our feelings,  
saying no,  
respecting animals  
and  
most importantly spoiling ourselves with love,"



**Motor Enthusiasts Club of Central Australia**

Incorporating The Alice Springs Vintage & Veteran Car Club

PO Box 1506, Alice Springs. NT. 0871

Email: [mecca@mecca.asn.au](mailto:mecca@mecca.asn.au)

Web site: [www.mecca.asn.au](http://www.mecca.asn.au)

# MECCA Committee 2019/2020

|                    |  |                              |
|--------------------|--|------------------------------|
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| LIFE MEMBERS:      | Dave Simpson, Tony Bullock,<br>Walter & Alvina Spears, Stuart & Marie Gear,<br>Col Jarrett |                              |



## *President's Report*

### Members

Firstly Happy New Year and hope you all had a fabulous holiday and are ready for the year ahead.

It is a pleasure being the President of our club and having so many members supporting the Committee by becoming involved with our events.

**Well** what a fabulous turnout for Breakfast at Mercure Inn we had 31 members, 2 new members and 4 children - how good was that?

That is a record from last year where I think there were only 20 members for breakfast.

The food was great and the company was even better.

Well done to all of you for coming and I look forward to the year ahead.

See you all at our next meeting at Masonic Hall Allchurch St, on Sunday 8th March starting at 9.00am followed by run through White Gums and Honeymoon Gap and ending for lunch at Golf Club

Keep Safe,

Tony O'Brien



## *The Sec's Desk*

### **MECCA** **MOTOR ENTHUSIAST CLUB CENTRAL AUSTRALIA inc**

#### **MEETING SUNDAY 9th February 2020**

**Meeting Opened:** 8am

**Present:** :

Raelene Beale, Garry Bentley, Jared + Katy Bentvelzen and their children, Allan Campbell, Clinton Dennison and his children, Stephen + Cameron Dinner, Douglas + Elaine Draeger, Russ + Liz Driver, Brian Eather, Marie + Stuart Gear, Lisa, Neville + Megan Heness, Michael Hanrahan, Trevor Hyman, Aileen Kennedy, Craig + Robyn Lambley, Jasmina Muhic, Tony O'Brien, John Syme, Alvina + Wally Spears, Michele + Mike Thompson, Mandy + Steve Vandenberg, John Wischusen

**Apologies:**

John Bridgefoot, Bryan Cartwright, John Cooper, Phillippe Freidel, Peter Hilliard, John Hubner, Peter + Judy Inkster, Col + Vicki Jarrett, Tony + Margaret McKenzie, Derek Poolier, Pietje Span, Fred Twohig, Tim Schubert

**Visitors,**

\_Mick Ryan, Carl Blackmore

**Next General Meeting**

Masonic Hall Allchurch St, on Sunday 8th March starting at 9.00am  
Our run has changed to lunch at Golf Club after the meeting.

**Meeting Closed:** 10.30am

**MECCA**  
**MOTOR ENTHUSIAST CLUB CENTRAL AUSTRALIA inc**

## CLUB Calendar 2020

- March 8<sup>th</sup>**, Club meeting 9am followed by run through White Gums and Honeymoon Gap and ending for lunch at Golf Club
- April 12<sup>th</sup>**, Club meeting followed by shed run, destination tba  
 Easter long weekend Fri 10<sup>th</sup> – Mon 13<sup>nd</sup> April – EASTER
- May 4<sup>th</sup>** Bangtail Muster – Monday May Day Public Holiday
- May 10<sup>th</sup>** Mothers Day – Club General Meeting / No run
- May 17<sup>th</sup>** National Motoring Day, Run starting at Masonic Hall 10.30 for 11am start, run to Aviation Museum for BBQ lunch
- June 14<sup>th</sup>** Club meeting followed by run to Tropic of Capricorn and return, followed by lunch at RFDS Café  
 (Note FINKE weekend 7-10 June)
- July 3<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>** – Alice Springs Show
- July 12<sup>th</sup>** Club meeting followed by BBQ at Russ & Liz Driver's property
- August 9<sup>th</sup>** – Club **AGM**, followed by lunch at Golf Club
- August 22<sup>th</sup>** – Sat night, RTHF 25 year anniversary Reunion Truckers Dinner, members work bar - tba
- September 13<sup>th</sup>** – Club meeting followed by run to Standley Chasm for lunch
- October 11<sup>th</sup>** – 8am – 9am BBQ Breakfast before run followed by club meeting on return. Details tba
- Details to follow / suggested:**  
 Social Night – BBQ / Film Night – members property – details tba  
 Weekend run / Glen Helen – Sat night stay and / or Sunday morning tea run  
 Joint run with Aces and Eights (club calendars to be shared to organize a joint run)  
 ASTC – Coffee and Chrome – date tba

YUMMY

Our first meeting for the year- being spoilt,  
foods cooked, table is set, help yourself to the  
tucker and when you finish leave the table a  
mess and some-one else cleans up.  
That's what I call great





# Saurer



Adolph Saurer AG based in Arbon, Switzerland was a manufacturer of trucks and buses under the Saurer and Berna (beginning in 1929) brand names, active between 1903 and 1982.

The origins of the company date back to 1853, when Franz Saurer (1806–1882) from Veringenstadt in Germany established an iron foundry for household goods near the Swiss town of Sankt Gallen. In 1863 he started production of Jacquard sewing machines in Arbon, from 1869 together with his sons as company associates of F. Saurer & Söhne. In 1896 his eldest surviving son Adolph Saurer (1841–1920) took over the company. He and his son Hippolyt (1878–1936) developed the enterprise as a joint-stock company.

From 1896 Saurer also manufactured petrol engines and the next year Hippolyt Saurer initiated the production of a phaeton body automobile run by a one-cylinder opposed-piston engine. From 1903 onwards Saurer concentrated on the production of commercial vehicles which soon gained a good reputation. The company ran subsidiary companies in Austria (1906–1959, in the end taken over by Steyr-Daimler-Puch), France (1910–1956, taken over by Unic), the United Kingdom (1927–1931, taken over by Armstrong Whitworth), and in Germany (1915–1918, taken over by MAN). In Italy, the Officine Meccaniche (OM) manufacturer was for many years licensee of Saurer engines and other mechanical units, which they used in their own ranges of trucks and buses. In Poland the state-owned Panstwowe Zaklady Inzynieryjne produced license-built Saurer engines and coach chassis used in the Zawrat bus. In the United States, the Saurer Motor Truck Company, headed by C.P. Coleman, had the rights to manufacture and sell heavy trucks under the Saurer brand name at its plant in Plainfield, New Jersey. In 1911, the Saurer Motor Truck Company merged with the Mack Brothers Motor Car Company of Allentown, Pennsylvania, to form the International Motor Truck Company (IMTC). IMTC would continue to make and sell trucks using the Saurer name until 1918. In 1922 IMTC would become Mack Trucks, Inc.

In 1929 Saurer acquired its Swiss rival, Motorwagenfabrik Berna AG of Olten, but the Berna name was allowed to continue, badging the very same Saurer models. From 1932 on, Trolley buses were a very significant segment of Saurer production. Typically Saurer, or Berna, trolleybuses featured Brown, Boveri & Cie or Société Anonyme des Ateliers de Sécheron (SAAS) electric equipment and Carrosserie Hess bodies. Saurer trolleybuses operated in most of Central Europe countries.

Declining sales in the early 1980s saw the two leading Swiss truck makers, Saurer and FBW, forming a joint organization called Nutzfahrzeuggesellschaft Arbon & Wetzikon, proceeding with motorbus and trolleybus production under the NAW brand, while the last Saurer-badged truck sold in the open market was delivered in 1983. Four years later, in 1987, a model 10DM supplied to the Swiss Army meant the very last Saurer truck produced in history.

## Humour page



A trucker came into a truck stop cafe and placed his order.

He said, "I want three flat tyres, a pair of headlights and a pair of running boards."

The brand new waitress, not wanting to appear stupid, went to the kitchen and said to the cook,

"This guy out there just ordered three flat tyres, a pair of headlights and a pair of running boards.

What does he think this place is, an auto parts store?"

"No," the cook said. "Three flat tyres mean three pancakes, a pair of headlights is two eggs sunny side up, and running boards are 2 slices of crisp bacon."

"Oh, OK!" said the waitress.

She thought about it for a moment and then spooned up a bowl of beans and gave it to the customer.

The trucker asked, "What are the beans for?"

She replied, "I thought while you were waiting for the flat tyres, headlights and running boards, you might as well gas up."



## **Holden has been a part of our story for 72 years.** **Here's how it helped shape Australia.**

General Motors has sold cars in Australia since 1902, setting up an Oldsmobile dealer north west of Adelaide – which continues to sell Holden's today.

However, the US giant first became involved with Holden in 1924. At the time Holden was a motor body builder, fitting its designs to other car brand's chassis, graduating to this new fangled form of transportation after starting as a saddlery in 1856.

From 1924 onwards, General Motors did a deal with Holden to produce car bodies only for its vehicles.

General Motors then increased its stake in Australia in 1931, merging with Holden Motor Bodies to create the company known as General Motors Holden (GMH). By the mid-1930s GMH had begun planning full scale local production of motor vehicles, but World War II delayed those ambitions as the company began shifting its manufacturing expertise to support the military among the allied nations. After the war, GMH was left with the ability to make engines, chassis and vehicle bodies in-house and in 1946 the company began work on what would become the first Holden car. Known as the 48-215, it was a scaled down version of a Chevrolet design that had been discarded in the US. After testing in 1947 it was ready for production by the end of 1948. In November 1948 then Prime Minister Ben Chifley welcomed the very first home-grown Holden and famously declared "she's a beauty".

Holden went on to dominate the Australian car market for much of the next half century and shape the nation's culture, accounting for up to half of all new vehicles sold in the late 1950s, while remaining at or near the top of the charts through to 2002, its last year as the nation's favourite car brand.

Sadly, it will reach the end of the road by the end of 2020,



## The Holden story: a timeline

Compiled by Joshua Dowling

**1856:** Holden starts as a saddlery in Adelaide in 1856.

**1908:** Holden expands its business to include vehicle upholstery.

**1914:** Holden makes its first car body using horse carriage building techniques.

**1918:** Holden builds 587 car bodies (but not the engine, chassis, steering or suspension) as the automobile starts to overtake the horse and cart.

**1924:** General Motors signs a contract with Holden to manufacture local bodies exclusively for its cars.

**1928:** Holden's famous "lion and stone" logo is created.

**1931:** General Motors buys Holden, establishes GMH.



**1936:** Holden assembles cars in Port Melbourne using foreign US parts. General Motors executives start to plan a uniquely Australian car.

**1939:** As the world goes to war, General Motors' plans for an Australian car are put on hold. Instead the factory supports the war effort.

**1948:** On November 29, 1948 Prime Minister Ben Chifley launches the first Holden car in Port Melbourne and declares "she's a beauty". Dealers were reportedly holding more than 18,000 orders before the first one was built. Price when new: \$1466 (£733).

## The Holden story: a timeline (2)

**1971:** The HQ Kingswood goes on sale. An epic 485,650 were built from 1971 to 1974, making the biggest-selling Holden model of all time.

**1978:** The Holden Commodore is born. General Motors switches to a smaller sedan after two “oil crises” in the 1970s. The Commodore is an adaptation of a General Motors sedan from Germany.

**1986:** Holden does the unthinkable and fits an imported Nissan six-cylinder engine under the bonnet of the VL Commodore. It’s faster and more fuel-efficient than the V8. Holden markets the V8 for “towing” and the six-cylinder for “performance”.

But as the Australian dollar weakens the Japanese engine becomes too expensive and Holden hatches a plan for a GM-sourced V6 engine for future models.



**1987:** Peter Brock unveils a device called an “Energy Polarizer” and fits it to his latest series HDT performance road cars. But Holden can’t verify Brock’s claims or find any benefit despite numerous engineering tests. Holden parts company with the racing legend.

**1989:** Holden switches its model-sharing deal with Nissan to a partnership with Toyota. Under the federal government’s consolidation plan, Toyota gets a version of the Commodore V6 (called the Lexcen), while in return gets two four-cylinder cars: a version of the locally-made Camry, called the Apollo, and a version of the locally-made Toyota Corolla, called the Holden Nova.

## The Holden story: a timeline (3)

**1996:** The model sharing partnership between Holden and Toyota ends after slow sales and rising tension on both sides. The Commodore starts its 15-year run as Australia's favourite car.

**1997:** Holden releases the new generation VT Commodore, it would go on to become one of the biggest selling Holden's of all time, with 303,895 built from 1997 to 2000. Holden would go on to build 207, 339 VX Commodore models from 2000 to 2002.

**1998:** Holden stuns the industry when it unveils a sleek two-door Commodore concept car at the Sydney motor show. Originally designed to take attention away from the new Ford Falcon, the public and the media instantly label it the modern Monaro. Holden, which had no intention of producing the car, starts crunching numbers to see if it can make a business case.

**2001:** In December 2001, the Holden Monaro goes on sale. Executives in Detroit are so impressed with the car, they plan to export left-hand-drive versions to the US as a Pontiac GTO.

**2004-2005:** Holden exports 31,500 Monaro's to the US as a Pontiac GTO – more than twice the number of Monaro's sold locally over four years.

**2006:** Holden launches its "billion-dollar baby", the VE Commodore sedan and WM Caprice limousine. Unlike every Commodore and Caprice before them, these vehicles are designed and engineered from the ground up in Australia. The underpinnings would also be used for the new Chevrolet Camaro sold in the US, but engineered by Holden in Australia.

Plans for a right-hand drive Camaro for Australia are scrapped during the Global Financial Crisis.



## The Holden story: a timeline (4)

- 2007-2009:** More than 41,000 Commodores are exported to North America as Pontiac sedans between November 2007 and February 2009, almost equivalent to Holden's annual sales of Commodore at the time – but the deal ends when the Pontiac brand is axed during the Global Financial Crisis.
- 2011:** The Holden Cruze goes into production alongside the Commodore in the Elizabeth factory, having initially imported the model from South Korea since June 2009. Prime Minister Julia Gillard attends the ceremony and drives the first Australian-made Holden Cruze off the production line.
- 2012:** Holden begins exporting the Caprice limousine to the US as a police car.
- 2013:** The new generation Holden Commodore VF goes on sale in the same month Ford announces its factories will shut in October 2016.



- October 2013:** Holden begins exporting the Holden Commodore SS V8 sports sedan as a Chevrolet SS. It is also the basis for Chevrolet's Nascar, putting the 'Commodore' in front of the biggest sporting audience ever.
- December 2013:** In Federal Parliament, treasurer Joe Hockey challenges Holden to "come clean" on its future manufacturing plans, with his "either you're here or you're not" speech. Days after Hockey's speech, and one day after a Productivity Commission review, Holden boss Mike Devereux announces Holden will close its manufacturing operations in 2017.
- 7 October 2016:** The last Holden Cruze rolls off the Elizabeth production line, the same day as Ford closes Broadmeadows and Geelong.
- 29 November 2016:** Holden shuts its Port Melbourne engine plant after 68 years of continuous operation since 1948, and more than 10 million engines produced.
- March 2017:** General Motors sells its loss-making European brands (Opel in Germany and Vauxhall in the UK) to Peugeot-Citroen. The French car giant says it will honour its obligation to supply Holden with the Commodore and Astra. General Motors executives flatly deny rumours there was a secret plan to bundle Holden with the sale of Opel and Vauxhall.

## The Holden story: a timeline (5)

**20 October 2017:** Holden builds its – and Australia’s – last car, a red Holden Commodore V8 in a private ceremony attended by 1000 factory workers past and present.

**November 2017:** Holden begins importing the new generation Opel Insignia – with a choice of four-cylinder or V6 power – and rebadges it as a Commodore. There is no V8 in Holden showroom for the first time in decades.

**December 2017:** Holden introduces the Equinox SUV (below), a five-seater designed to compete with the likes of the Toyota RAV4 and Mazda CX-5. Holden originally forecast sales of 32,000 per year; it has averaged less than 5000 annually.



**October 2018:** Holden introduces the Acadia SUV, a full-sized seven-seater from the US. The cost of the factory conversion to right-hand drive reportedly cost \$100 million. Fewer than 4000 have been sold since it went on sale, which equates to more than \$25,000 per right-hand drive vehicle on the additional engineering cost alone.

**December 2019:** Holden boss Dave Buttner, a former Toyota Australia executive, steps down on 2 December 2019 after just 16 months in the job. Marketing boss Kristian Aquilina, a 22-year veteran of Holden, is appointed interim chairman and managing director.

One week later, Holden announces the Commodore will be dropped from local showrooms and the model will be phased out as dealers clear remaining stock.

**Early January 2020:** Official figures for 2019 show Holden posted its lowest annual sales since 1954 after producing six of its lowest monthly results since 1948.

**February 2020:** General Motors announces it is getting out of all right-hand drive markets globally, with Holden dealers due to shut their doors by the end of 2020.

## SERVICES

Trev's Auto Repairs

For Rego checks, repairs and wheel alignments.

Phone 8955-5568



### To all members.



Our Club 2020 Calendar is out and some members received them at November 2019 meeting.

If you do not have your complimentary Calendars please ring me so you can pick up.

If you would like to purchase extra Calendars to give to family and friends they are \$3 each

If you are away give me a call when your return to collect.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Liz Driver  
0427 970 744



## MOTOR ENTHUSIASTS CLUB OF CENTRAL AUSTRALIA (MECCA)

Incorporating the Alice Springs Vintage & Veteran Car Club Inc

Postal Address: PO Box 1506, Alice Springs NT 0871

Email: [mecca@mecca.asn.au](mailto:mecca@mecca.asn.au) Web Site: [www.mecca.asn.au](http://www.mecca.asn.au)

### *Overlander Badge History & Particulars*

The members of the Alice Springs Vintage & Veteran Car Club originally created this very special and much sought after award in the mid 1970s in recognition of the many Veteran, Vintage and Classic motor vehicles whose drivers took up the challenge to travel from interstate to visit Alice Springs. Back in those days the roads to Alice were not the wide, smooth roads we have today but were narrow, undulating strips of bitumen with rough shoulders and causeways where we now have all weather bridges. The Stuart Highway from Port Augusta to the Northern Territory border was still a rough boulder strewn, bull dust and corrugated dirt track which tested the endurance of man and his machine. The sealing of this part of the Stuart Highway was not completed until 1987. The award was appropriately named the **OVERLANDER BADGE** to commemorate the vast distances covered on these roads, the confidence or blind faith the owners had in their vehicles, and the courage of the drivers and passengers who travelled in them to reach Alice Springs. In July 1996 when the **Motor Enthusiasts Club of Central Australia** was formed and incorporated the **Alice Springs Vintage & Veteran Car Club** it was decided that a new category be established to award vehicles from 1947 to a rolling date of 30 years old that make the journey to Alice Springs. This is called the **Special Interest** category.

Today the **OVERLANDER BADGE** is available to anyone who is confident enough to take up the challenge to drive their Veteran, Vintage, Classic or Special Interest vehicle or motor cycle either to or from Alice Springs over an approved distance. The Badge can only be awarded to the nominated driver and vehicle which must arrive at or depart from Alice Springs and cover the specified distance under the vehicles own power.

#### THE APPROVED DISTANCES FOR THE FOUR CATEGORIES ARE:

|                   |                      |                 |
|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Veteran:          | Up to 1919           | 500 kilometres  |
| Vintage:          | 1920 to 1930         | 1500 kilometres |
| Classic:          | 1931 to 1946         | 3000 kilometres |
| Special Interest: | 1947 to 30 years old | 3000 kilometres |



The badges differ in design to distinguish the different categories:

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Veteran Badge:    | White tyre, red spokes, silver grey background and yellow scroll.    |
| Vintage Badge:    | Black tyre, green spokes. Silver grey background and yellow scroll.  |
| Classic:          | Black tyre, orange spokes. Silver grey background and yellow scroll. |
| Special Interest: | Black tyre, blue spokes. Silver grey background and yellow scroll.   |

**TO APPLY** for the badge, contact your club secretary, or apply directly to the MECCA Club secretary. An application form will be sent to you or your club secretary, as required. This form is self-explanatory and must be returned to the MECCA club secretary on completion of the road kilometre requirements. Fee for the badge and engraving is \$75.00. We recommend payment in advance, ie., upon application, to ensure engraving is completed in time for presentation at the completion of your trip.

**ALL APPLICANTS**, whether arriving from interstate or originating in Alice Springs, must submit reasonable proof of their completion of the qualifying road kilometres in order to be awarded the Overland Badge. This is typically in the form of fuel receipts from the service stations along the route.

**AFTER APPROVAL** by the Overlander Badge committee, the badge applicable to your vehicle will be duly inscribed with the applicants name and vehicle and registered in our files. The badge will then be posted to you or your club secretary's postal address, as specified. If you have completed your required kilometres upon arrival in Alice Springs, MECCA can present the badge to the applicant in person.

For further inquiries email us, or drop us a line at the above addresses.



## Editors Page

Happy New Year to you all

Well we survived Christmas and all that food and booze and of course the left overs that came with it- what a great time of the year.

New Years Eve came and went - (we slept through it ) and when we woke it was 1st of January 2020 and the sun was shining and it was a wonderful day.

Russ + I have been busy with the Transport Hall of Fame - and WOW the place is looking great. You will need to take time off to go and have a look and of course take your friends, relatives etc to keep this magnificent icon going and of course you can join and become a member with benefits.

Our first meeting - breakfast was fantastic - plenty of good food and it was great to catch up with everyone. Raelene Beale bought along some fresh Limes for us all to take home - Thankyou.

Also great to see 2 new people who are going to join the club - welcome  
Carl Blackmore and Mick Ryan

On a sad note - Condolences to Peter Hilliard for the loss of his Father this year, our thoughts are with you at this difficult time.

That's it for me short and sweet this time - see you at the March meeting

Liz Driver  
0427 970 744  
Email: [wheelnuts@always17.com.au](mailto:wheelnuts@always17.com.au)

P.s if you have any stories about your adventures, jokes, for sale, give away, or your new project for the year I would love to put it into the next CentreSpoke

