

# ***IDLE TORQUE***

**DECEMBER 2023**

**Edition No. 259**

**Newsletter of the  
C.ex Coffs  
Sports, Touring &  
Classic Car Club**

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Website: [www.cexcoffsstccarclub.info](http://www.cexcoffsstccarclub.info)

NSW Historic Motoring Association

<https://historicmotoring.com.au/>



***“More  
than just a  
car club”***


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Whilst all care has been taken, neither the club nor its officers accept responsibility for the accuracy of information printed and the quality of any items or services advertised or mentioned in this publication.

The Committee reserves the right to edit contributions for publication.

**JUDY PHEMISTER — NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

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<b>WEBMASTER</b> <b>VACANT- Nominations Welcome</b>	<b>TRAINING</b>	<b>PROVIDED</b>	<b>VACANT - Nominations Welcome</b>
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<b>RAFFLE CO-ORDINATOR</b> <b>VACANT- Nominations Welcome</b>			<b>VACANT - Nominations Welcome</b>
<p>The following members will also attend and participate in Committee meetings.</p> <p>Judy Phemister Brian Carter Jeff Clancy Ian Reynolds</p>			



# Presidents Message

**Greetings Members,**

We are pleased to advise Judy Phemister will officially return to her two important roles of Newsletter Editor and Events Co-ordinator in January, following her recent break.

I would like to thank Michael Guymer for standing in as Newsletter Editor and Pat O'Carroll for organising some major events, in particular the highly successful Christmas Party.

Club events last month included a BYO morning tea at Urunga and a lunch at Yamba Tavern which included a morning tea stop over at Ulmarra. Both events were well attended with the Yamba event providing a great opportunity for our club cars to stretch their legs.

On behalf of the Committee, I wish all members, partners and their families a very merry Christmas and a happy and healthy new year.

Happy Motoring.

**Ian Ward  
President**

**Our sponsors Auto Barn and Seabreeze Auto Body are not renewing their sponsorship of our Christmas party. We thank them for their support over the past years.**


**Our car club member discount of 10% from Autobarn will continue under our car club membership card system.**

**We welcome Battery World as a new sponsor and we will be seeking further new sponsors in 2024.**



Could this be Russ & Judy - another time, another place?

# EVENTS CALENDAR

DATE	DAY	MONTH AND EVENT	CONTACT	RSVP
<b>DECEMBER 2023</b>				
3rd	Sun	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>THE "BIGGER THAN BEN HUR" CHRISTMAS PARTY</b></p>	Pat O'Carroll theocarrolls@hotmail.com 0448 017 048 	<b>Wednesday 15th Nov</b>
4th	Mon		<p style="text-align: center;">COMMITTEE MEETING 6.00 pm GENERAL MEETING 7.00 pm</p> 	
13th	Wed	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Morning Tea at Mylestom BYO or buy from the Beach House Providore across the road Depart Bonville Service Station 10.00am Undercover seated venue but bring chairs etc just in case.</b></p>	This is a BYO event so no need to book, just turn up. 	NA
<b>JANUARY 2024</b>				
* NO GENERAL MEETING IN JANUARY * COMMITTEE WILL MEET REMOTELY				
1st	Mon	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>SAWTELL FUN DAY</b> Members are encouraged to enter their club car in the street parade.</p> 	The street parade usually commences about 9.00am (time to be confirmed). Cars line up in Elizabeth Street and can be displayed after the parade.	NA 
10th	Wed	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>BYO Morning Tea at Red Rock Depart Homebase 9.30am Bring a chair, blanket, sunscreen etc.</b></p>	This is a BYO event so no need to book, just turn up. 	NA
28th	Sun	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Lunch at Nambucca Heads Golf Club</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tee-Off at Bonville Service Station 11.00am</b></p> 	Judy Phemister judenruss72@gmail.com 0407 937 327	<b>Sun 21st Jan</b>
<b>FEBRUARY 2024</b>				
5th	Mon	<p style="text-align: center;">COMMITTEE MEETING 6.00 pm GENERAL MEETING 7.00 pm</p> 		
14th	Wed	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Morning Tea at Bluebottles Woolgoolga Depart Home Base 9.30am</b></p>	Judy Phemister judenruss72@gmail.com 0407 937 327	<b>Wed 7th Feb</b>
25th	Sun	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Lunch at Emilio's Pizzeria Wooli Depart Home Base 10.30am</b></p>	Judy Phemister judenruss72@gmail.com 0407 937 327	<b>Sun 18th Feb</b>

## Chrome Bumper is at C.ex Woolgoolga.

Well it's official - Chrome Bumper is hosting our first event!

The event will be held at the CEX Woolgoolga.

For those of you that didn't catch it in our first magazine release click here: <https://www.chromebumper.com.au/> - and check it out!

If you would like to register your pride and joy and be apart of the first (of many) events we will be hosting, enter your details here: <https://www.chromebumper.com.au/registration>

FREE entry for all who would like to be apart of history. Get in quick - limited spots available!

Can't wait to see you all there!

- Chrome Bumper.



## The Chrome Bumper *Show & Shine*



January 21st, 2024  
Start At 10.00 am



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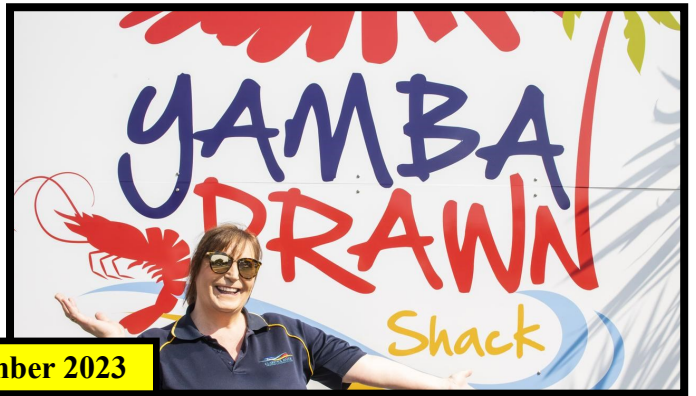
We are having our first event! Calling all classic car enthusiasts! Join us for an unforgettable experience at the Chrome Bumper Show & Shine, where rare and iconic vehicles from decades past take centre stage.

Free entry, pre-80's entries only.

*It's my club*  
cex.com.au

For more information and entry details, visit [chromebumper.com.au](https://chromebumper.com.au)







A very big thank you to our Christmas Party Co-Ordinator Pat who, with assistance from Judy and other Committee members, made our “Bigger Than Ben Hur” Christmas lunch such a great event for our members.



**Ladies Melbourne Cup Day Lunch Hosted by Gail Quinn**





## DID YOU KNOW.....



In the inaugural Indy 500 race of 1911, all but one of the 40 entrants carried a driver plus an observer, whose job was to warn the driver about other cars coming up behind. It was the normal arrangement in races of that era.

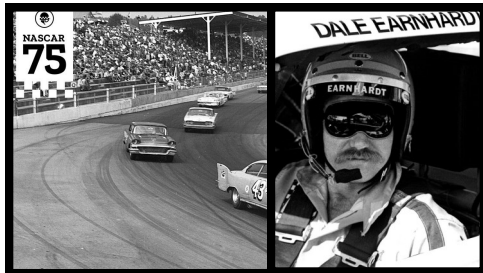
But in the 40th car was Ray Harroun, who took the outrageously risky decision to drive alone. Harroun drove a bright yellow car he had built himself and experimented with an eight-by-three-inch mirror on a stand fixed to his dashboard instead of an observer. It is believed to be the first use of a rear-view mirror. Being one person lighter and more aerodynamic, Harroun's car easily won the race by more than half a mile.



### THE TALE OF AUSTRALIA'S OLDEST RACING CAR.

They say over 70,000 people crammed into the Olympia Speedway at Maroubra in the Eastern Suburbs of Sydney in 1925. It was a big occasion, after all, featuring Australia's oldest surviving racing car.

That day in 1925 was the first Australian race meeting—dubbed our own Indianapolis. Those 70,000 spectators witnessed history that day, as two brothers wheeled out a vehicle that looked more like a warplane than a race car.



From a meeting at the Streamline Hotel in 1947 to the Cup Series taking on the Los Angeles Coliseum in 2022, America's top home-grown racing series has produced one wild ride after another over its 75-year history. Dale Earnhardt will forever be one of the biggest personalities in the history of NASCAR.



One of the oldest endurance road racing events, the Targa Florio was founded in 1906, by Italian race driver Vincenzi Florio. The race was held around a 72 kilometer circuit, the Circuito Piccolo delle Madonie, around the Italian mountains surrounding the city of Sicily. The first Targa Florio covered 3 laps, through treacherous tracks and mountainous curves, at heights that witness frequently changing and difficult climate. Alessandro Cagno won the inaugural race in 1906.



Billed as the Greatest Spectacle in Racing, the Indy 500 started in 1911, and is still held every year, typically on the last weekend in May. The venue is the perfectly oval Indianapolis Motor Speedway at Indianapolis, in the United States. This race, one of the most prestigious to date, sees some of the highest speeds achieved in circuit racing in the world, with cars virtually flying around, at speeds in excess of 320 kilometers an hour.



I love electric vehicles – and was an early adopter.  
But increasingly I feel duped

*Rowan Atkinson*

**E**lectric motoring is, in theory, a subject about which I should know something.

My first university degree was in electrical and electronic engineering, with a subsequent master's in control systems. Combine this, perhaps surprising, academic pathway with a lifelong passion for the motor-car, and you can see why I was drawn into an early adoption of electric vehicles. I bought my first electric hybrid 18 years ago and my first pure electric car nine years ago and (notwithstanding our poor electric charging infrastructure) have enjoyed my time with both very much. Electric vehicles may be a bit soul-less, but they're wonderful mechanisms: fast, quiet and, until recently, very cheap to run. But increasingly, I feel a little duped. When you start to drill into the facts, electric motoring doesn't seem to be quite the environmental panacea it is claimed to be.

As you may know, the government has proposed a ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030. The problem with the initiative is that it seems to be largely based on conclusions drawn from only one part of a car's operating life: what comes out of the exhaust pipe. Electric cars, of course, have zero exhaust emissions, which is a welcome development, particularly in respect of the air quality in city centres. But if you zoom out a bit and look at a bigger picture that includes the car's manufacture, the situation is very different. In advance of the Cop26 climate conference in Glasgow in 2021, Volvo released figures claiming that greenhouse gas emissions during production of an electric car are nearly 70% higher than when manufacturing a petrol one. How so? The problem lies with the lithium-ion batteries fitted currently to nearly all electric vehicles: they're absurdly heavy, huge amounts of energy are required to make them, and they are estimated to last only upwards of 10 years. It seems a perverse choice of hardware with which to lead the automobile's fight against the climate crisis.

Unsurprisingly, a lot of effort is going into finding something better. New, so-called solid-state batteries are being developed that should charge more quickly and could be about a third of the weight of the current ones – but they are years away from being on sale, by which time, of course, we will have made millions of overweight electric cars with rapidly obsolescing batteries. Hydrogen is emerging as an interesting alternative fuel, even though we are slow in developing a truly “green” way of manufacturing it. It can be used in one of two ways. It can power a hydrogen fuel cell (essentially, a kind of battery); the car manufacturer Toyota has poured a lot of money into the development of these. Such a system weighs half of an equivalent lithium-ion battery and a car can be refuelled with hydrogen at a filling station as fast as with petrol.

If the lithium-ion battery is an imperfect device for electric cars, concerns have been raised over their use in heavy trucks for long distance haulage because of the weight; an alternative is to inject hydrogen into a new kind of piston engine. JCB, the company that makes yellow diggers, has made huge strides with hydrogen engines and hopes to put them into production in the next couple of years. If hydrogen wins the race to power trucks – and as a result every filling station stocks it – it could be a popular and accessible choice for cars.

But let's zoom out even further and consider the whole life cycle of an automobile. The biggest problem we need to address in society's relationship with the car is the “fast fashion” sales culture that has been the commercial template of the car industry for decades.

Currently, on average we keep our new cars for only three years before selling them on, driven mainly by the ubiquitous three-year leasing model. This seems an outrageously profligate use of the world's natural resources when you consider what great condition a three-year-old car is in. When I was a child, any car that was five years old was a bucket of rust and halfway through the gate of the scrapyard. Not any longer. You can now make a car for £15,000 that, with tender loving care, will last for 30 years. It's sobering to think that if the first owners of new cars just kept them for five years, on average, instead of the current three, then car production and the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions associated with it, would be vastly reduced. Yet we'd be enjoying the same mobility, just driving slightly older cars.

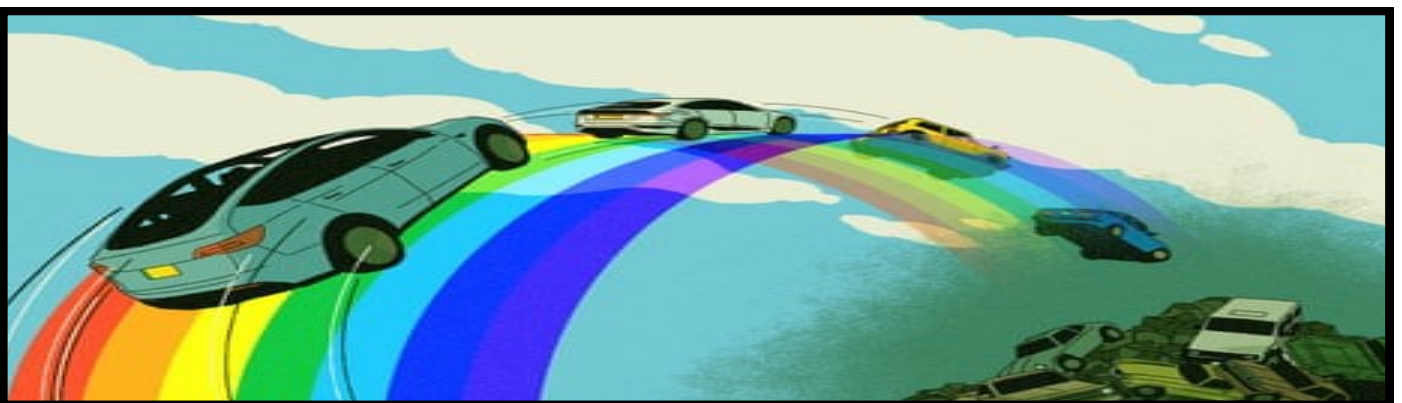
We need also to acknowledge what a great asset we have in the cars that currently exist (there are nearly 1.5bn of them worldwide). In terms of manufacture, these cars have paid their environmental dues and, although it is sensible to reduce our reliance on them, it would seem right to look carefully at ways of retaining them while lowering their polluting effect. Fairly obviously, we could use them less. As an environmentalist once said to me, if you really need a car, buy an old one and use it as little as possible. A sensible thing to do would be to speed up the development of synthetic fuel, which is already being used in motor racing; it's a product based on two simple notions: one, the environmental problem with a petrol engine is the petrol, not the engine and, two, there's nothing in a barrel of oil that can't be replicated by other means. Formula One is going to use synthetic fuel from 2026. There are many interpretations of the idea but the German car company Porsche is developing a fuel in Chile using wind to power a process whose main ingredients are water and carbon dioxide. With more development, it should be usable in all petrol-engine cars, rendering their use virtually CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral.

Increasingly, I'm feeling that our honeymoon with electric cars is coming to an end, and that's no bad thing: we're realising that a wider range of options need to be explored if we're going to properly address the very serious environmental problems that our use of the motor car has created. We should keep developing hydrogen, as well as synthetic fuels to save the scrapping of older cars which still have so much to give, while simultaneously promoting a quite different business model for the car industry, in which we keep our new vehicles for longer, acknowledging their amazing but overlooked longevity.

Friends with an environmental conscience often ask me, as a car person, whether they should buy an electric car. I tend to say that if their car is an old diesel and they do a lot of city centre motoring, they should consider a change. But otherwise, hold fire for now. Electric propulsion will be of real, global environmental benefit one day, but that day has yet to dawn.

## Rowan Atkinson

*This article was amended on 5 June 2023 to describe lithium-ion batteries as lasting "upwards of 10 years", rather than "about 10 years"; and to clarify that the figures released by Volvo claimed that greenhouse gas emissions during production of an electric car are "nearly 70% higher", not "70% higher". It was further amended on 7 June 2023 to remove an incorrect reference to the production of lithium-ion batteries needing "many rare earth metals"; to clarify that a reference to "trucks" should instead have been to "heavy trucks for long distance haulage"; and to more accurately refer to the use of such batteries in these trucks as being a "concern", due to weight issues, rather than a "non-starter".*



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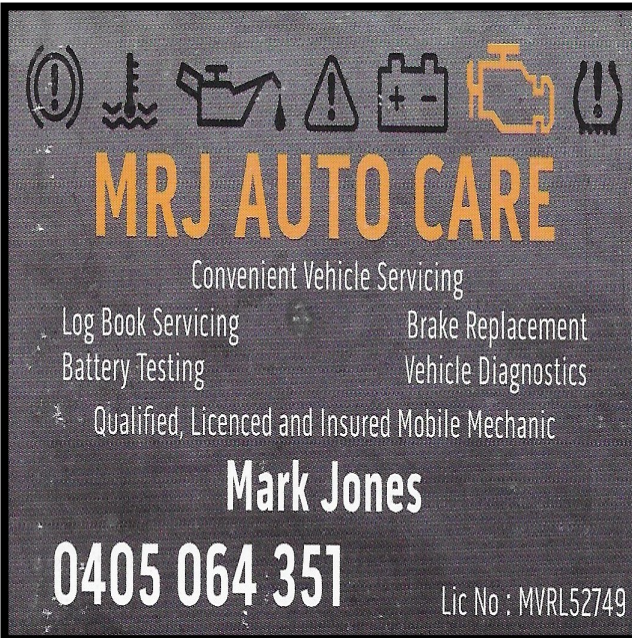
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