Editor’s Comment

I mentioned previously that Geoff Ward was working to get a pre-war tour organised in New South Wales and it seems to be gathering some pace now. I understand that Mudgee and Gulgong are on the cards as likely inclusions.

If you are interested in joining Geoff and others on this run based out of Sydney and scheduled for 13-15 April 2018, please make contact with him at gward1211@bigpond.com and get the full details. Sounds like another great pre-war run coming up.

Back in the November 2014 edition of Australian Pre War BUICKS we were treated to an adventure across NSW to collect a 1926 Standard Tourer and a 1927 Ute-d Buick. The adventurer was of course Peter Stone and the condition of the cars was such that Peter advised of an easy restoration for the ute and an almost do nothing restoration for the tourer.

More recently, albeit a little while back now, Peter provided three video clips of him driving the tourer around his property and I have to say that it not only looked the goods it appeared to go very well indeed.

The attached photo is an extract from one of the videos and shows Peter putting the 26 away after his short first run.

Of some interest was the second photo, below, which we were able to get our hands on and depicting a couple more Buicks for sale at Kalbeeba in South Australia. These two cars appeared on the autotrader.com website a little while back and are now sold. A 1926 Buick Tourer 98% complete and a 1926 Buick buckboard that is 95% complete. They came with a spare engine and other parts.

For a moment I thought that these may have been the Peter Stone Buicks but of course the tourer is a different colour and so not the case. More on Peter’s 26 Tourer in the near future.

What it does demonstrate is that these cars are out there if you want to go looking for them!

If you have a story about pre-war Buicks we would enjoy sharing your experience with the readers of Australian Pre War BUICKS.

Finally, our thanks go to Moko Photo for the cover shot this month. This is a spectacular take on the NZ parade and they have captured the reflections from the street with a great deal of artistry.

Perhaps a little off beat this month, however this YouTube clip of a Flexible coach prepared for new paint gives a good introduction to our story on page nine and regarding Buick powered buses.

This one is not one of those, but is an enjoyable couple of minutes of motoring on a grand scale.

For those of us who missed the annual get-together of the Flexible coach club, enjoy it HERE.
We had previously mentioned this event in the Australian Pre War BUICKS, however it took us this long to get a cover shot in place.

Well done to Harlem-Cruz Ihaia and well done to Neville Smith for taking the honour of transporting the candidate in one of his immaculate senior series Buicks.

Neville has become the go-to guy when transport of a superior style is required in and around Napier.

You’ll see Neville out again in February (15-18) when the Napier Art Deco Festival again comes to town. If you can get across the ditch, then this is thoroughly recommended Buick fare.
You may recall, check your records if not, that we featured a Buick moonlight Speedster in Volume 4, Issue 7.

The Buick featured at Motoclassica in 2013 and came with an interesting, if not wholly romantic, story of construction in Australia for Buick to race at Brooklands in the UK.

Reportedly, the Buick ended up in Mildura running moonshine to Echuca after this racing start to its life.

As part of the 2017 50th Anniversary Meet in Echuca, we attended the Shepparton Motor Museum and there, to our delight, was the Moonlight Speedster! This chance encounter gave us a great opportunity to get some detailed photos of the Buick, some of which we share with you here.

When considering that it was bulldozed into oblivion (a riverbed in fact) at one stage, the rescue and restoration commenced in 2010 is all the more amazing.

If you ever get to Shepparton, this is one not to miss.
“.. Not dissimilar to the dawn of the computer age. . .”

Over the last year or so Paul White from Sydney has been providing a stream of great Buick photos including the ones here that depict the day to day operations of the Flint plant.

We present them here for your consideration and perhaps to spare a thought for the tough life that went hand in hand with auto production in the pre-war era. Tough life, however an exciting time to be alive in what was a remarkable period of development and advancement, not dissimilar I expect to the dawn of the computer age in the latter half of the twentieth century.
We often come across the Wilkinson Brothers in central Queensland research. It appears that they operated a mail services in the Longreach area that covered towns such as Muttaburra, Winton, Barcaldine and Emerald and no doubt many others in between and beyond.

Of significance is that while other makes are also seen to be used by them it would appear that Buicks featured heavily in their fleet over the year.

No doubt many of those Buicks came through the Longreach Motors dealership which catered for not only General Motors products, but also carried Willies and Ford products also.

It is reported in the The Longreach Leader of Friday 9th December, 1927 that the Wilkinson Brothers were suing another carrying firm, Turner and Carroll, following on from an accident that occurred involving their Nash vehicle on the 5th November. If nothing else they could not complain about the speed with which the matter was heard by the local Magistrate. I doubt you would get service like that in these modern times.

In any event we have assembled here a couple of photos from the heyday of Joseph and George Wilkinson and their exploits in and around Central Queensland in the 1920s.

Joe Wilkinson and his Buick on the right and the Nash on the left which was the subject of the court case following an accident with another carrying firm.

Outside the Longreach Post Office in their four cylinder Buick sedan which has been converted to a utility and is driven by Joe Wilkinson Junior. The second Wilkinson auto is a Hudson also operated by the Wilkinson and this one driven by Les Wilkinson.
This early photo of a Buick in Australia is a 1915 CX54 Buick with body by Bishop. Also seen in Buick, The Australian Story and noted to possibly have a Dalgety body. This photo from the Melbourne University archives.

Bishop Body works was started by Joseph Bishop who arrived in Melbourne during the goldruses of the late nineteenth century. He ultimately established a coach building business at Beechworth and this was later transferred to Euroa. The family moved to Melbourne in the late 1880s and one of Joseph’s sons became the proprietor of the trade journal, “The Australasian Coachbuilder and Saddler”.

It was reported in the Sydney Morning Herald of 12th June, 1913, that J E Bishop was elected Secretary of the Coachbuilders, Wheelwrights and Motor Body Builders Association of New South Wales.

J E Bishop is also credited with the publication of The Coachbuilder Book of Designs published in 1909 and containing a treasure trove of important information regarding both horse drawn and early motor car construction. This book remains available on line and runs to over 240 pages with many photos and illustrations from the period.

The attached building photo shows the premises of J E Bishop, Coach Builder.
Regular readers will by now know that I have fondness for larger cars and possibly an even greater fondness for pre war buses. One of the joys of television is watching the period shows out of Great Britain as they always seem to be able to get a good pre-war bus into the show there somewhere. Sadly, never a Buick connection to be seen. So the issue is always how to get some of my bus fetish into the Pre War magazine legitimately. There has to be a Buick connection!

In 1938, the Flxible Company presented its first rear-engined bus, a 25-passenger streamliner with Buick straight-eight engine. Next year, the number of seats was increased to 29. You would all know that when Ansett established their bus lines just after WW2 they imported an Ansair Clipper powered by a pre war Buick straight eight. This became the template for a range of Clippers and the start of a great bus line empire. Many of these buses found service in the northern NSW area and this included Ansett #1 Clipper; generally known as MM-210. This being based on the number plate it seems.

Although the power plant was eventually changed the Buick connection is enough for me to include another set of photos of that very first (to Australia) Clipper!
The Aero Buick of 1921

Occasionally we come across some interesting novelty Buicks from across the world and this one is no exception.

It appears that around 1921 someone in or associated with the Howard Auto Company, once self-declared as the largest retailer of automobiles in the world, made the connection between aero engines and over-head valve engines and decided that the OHV Buick engine would make an ideal aero engine.

Perhaps the conclusion from this was that a Buick would make an ideal plane and thus was born the Buick Wind Storm. This prop driven aero car made an appearance at the Cotati Speedway in northern California in 1921 and also appeared in the LA Evening Herald of 8th October, 1921.

It appears that the motor has been lifted at least 600mm to enable a prop to have ground clearance. While we can’t determine with any certainty if this was the only means of propelling the Buick as claimed in the attached newspaper article, it is noted that the differential remains in place so there may be some method, possibly chain drive, to get power to the rear axle also.

The body work mirrors aero construction of the time with a canvas covering over some form of frame.

It is also noteworthy that in the newspaper photo (not too high a quality I admit) that there appears to have been installed a propeller guard, of sorts, that adds a level of safety. You will note that in the speedway photo the propeller is actually in action without any guard in place at all, so safety wasn’t always a high priority in the twenties.
Rare 1929 Model 24 Roadster

Model 29-24 Roadster on show at Shepparton Motor Museum
James Leslie (Les) Darcy was born to native-born parents of Irish decent at Stradbroke near Maitland NSW.

By 1907 Les had left his school, Oakhampton Public, working as a carter before being apprenticed at 15 to a blacksmith at East Maitland.

Darcy made his first money boxing at the age of 14 and in 1912-13 he won several fights in and around the Newcastle-Maitland area.

He first appeared at the Sydney Stadium in 1914 fighting against the American Fritz Holland. Holland won on points on this occasion and this result almost caused a riot at the stadium amongst his vocal supporters, many of whom had traveled in one of the two trains put on especially to attend the event.

He lost another bout with the American Jeff Smith, reportedly through a foul blow by the American and another flare up ensued. However this event did enhance his fame amongst the locals and then promoters also.

That was in 1915 and from that point on Darcy amassed a record of winning the next 22 fights up to 1916.

The attached photo, from the Australian Buick Bulletin of June 1916, shows Darcy seated in a 1916 six cylinder Buick which he received from McIntosh & Sons, Limited of Sydney.

His success enabled him to buy out his indentures and to amass some funds which he applied to the assistance of his family. He was earning 300 pounds per fight at this stage of his career. This was also the time he announced that he would accept an invitation to fight in the USA.

Issues with the war and potential for the introduction of conscription in Australia saw him jump a ship to the US with his promoter.

This moonlight flit, the day before the vote on conscription (which did not get passed) resulted in the cancellation of his first fight in the USA by the governor of New York.
In 1917 he took out US citizenship and while undertaking some exhibition bouts he planned for another major event, this time in Memphis, Tennessee.

However, before the event was staged he collapsed on 27 April and was admitted to hospital with sepsis and endocarditis. His tonsils were removed, however he developed pneumonia and died on 24 May.

His body was returned to Australia after a very large funeral parade in San Francisco and another in Sydney.

Les is interred in the Catholic section of the East Maitland cemetery.

His fighting record is extraordinary with only four professional losses in his career and he was never knocked out.

A folk hero and a man who drove a Buick!

Click [HERE](#) to see an interesting video of Les Darcy in action.

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What Next in the E-Magazine

Next issue, Madame Editor takes the reins so expect some interesting stories of pre-war suffrage. Perhaps not, but February always has an interesting twist.

We will be looking at some famous ladies and their Buicks but also we take a look at an interesting limousine that carried the Governor back in the pre-war era. The question we ask is whether it is a Buick or a Vauxhall or was it a bit of both.

A quick look at an interesting pre-war garage in Manly before we check out a restoration that has been in progress for a number of years and now, over two continents.

Some women who are clearly liberated finish off the February edition of Australian Pre War BUICKS.
The Garage is a photographic album of Queensland motoring containing approximately 500 images covering the period from 1900 and well worth a look if you have the time.

This photo was taken at Pialba, near Hervey Bay in Queensland on 29th September 1926 and may be considered one of the first of the many caravanners that frequent this seaside haven every year.

The inscription notes that the Buick is a 1923 model and that the body was made by a local firm, however I can find no more detail than that.

This photo comes from the State Library of Queensland and is one of the 500 that makes up their The Garage series.

The Last Word in Caravanning 1923

This e-magazine is produced under the auspices of the Buick Car Club of Australia Qld Inc. to cater for the needs of car enthusiasts with an interest in Pre War Buicks.

It is a medium created for the exchange of stories and ideas. Its aim is to support enthusiasts in the preservation and use of the Buick Automobiles built between 1903 and the end of 1941.

The editors welcome contributions at laurenejohn@bigpond.com

The editors reserve the right to include submitted articles or not at their discretion.

Previous editions of the eMagazine are available here: On Line Magazine

Web: buickcarclubaustralia.com

The Buick Car Club of Australia Qld Inc.

When Better Automobiles Are Built

Buick Will Build Them

1923 Buick with a locally modified body.