

THE AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIAN

October 2021

AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS AUSTRALIA INC

FOUNDING PATRON: Ron Tauranac AO

Hello members and welcome to the AHA Newsletter.

From the Secretary

Online Workshop Wrap

The Future of Automotive Collections and Archives in Australia

On 4 September we heard from speakers representing national, state, club and private archives and collections. They outlined challenges in areas such as skill shortages, knowledge transfer, access and research.

The day ended with a summary by Sarah Teasley proposing future actions that would be appropriate for AHA to undertake on behalf of this vast national resource.

One memorable moment of many that showed the extent of knowledge in the association occurred when Alison Wain asked about the woman sitting in the dragster in a photo Larry O'Toole showed during his presentation. Norm Darwin immediately informed us she was "Miss Valvoline" who presented the trophy on behalf of the major sponsor. Norm has since provided some further information and photos on this topic that I've included below.

The workshop will shortly be available to all financial members to view again or watch for the first time if you missed it on the day.

Congratulations to the convenors, Norm, Simon and Harriet, along with Jordan Hammill and Dawn Liu who provided great technical support and the presenters.

Annual General Meeting

Remember our AGM will be a zoom meeting on Wednesday November 24 at 6:00pm. A link will be sent to all financial members prior to the meeting, along with the agenda and office bearer reports.

In This Newsletter

There are links to feedback about the online conference, to the database of digitised magazines and to the Miss Valvoline story. And our 2019 conference videos are all now available on the YouTube channel.

Gary Luke has provided AHA with *The Steenbhom Ltd Story*, about his forebears who established a coach and motor body building business after the first family member arrived in Australia as a transported convict. It's an amazing story.

As we have been considering the issue of preserving archives and collections, it was timely that I was contacted by Kate Warren about her late uncle's collection of grand prix photographs. Check out the information below to see if anyone can assist with advice.

Russell Rolls has provided some interesting information about the Sir Henry Royce Foundation and their awards program.

We also have our first members based in Singapore, so welcome Eli Solomon and Daljeet Singh Sidhu. Check out more about Eli's website and Daljeet's MG NB tourer below.

There's also the full video of the Holden Heritage Collection cars that are on show at the National Motor Museum. Matthew Lombard showed a bit of this video at our workshop. Speaking of the NMM, some of us also took up the invitation from the Vintage Sports Car Club of Australia (NSW) to join a tour of the National Motor Museum conducted by Matthew. It was very enjoyable and thanks for the invitation.

I've also included a video produced by Castrol, now part of the BP Video Library, called *The Ringmasters*. It covers the 1967 German Grand Prix at the Nurburgring and features some brilliant race footage and interviews about a race that has special interest for fans of the Repco Brabhams.

I'd really like some more short videos from members - two or three minutes would be fine - or some photos, showing us some of your cars, items of memorabilia or other motoring-related activities.

Thanks again to all the members who have contributed ideas and information for the newsletter.

Tony Lupton
Secretary

President's Report

It is pleasing to report an outstanding success of our online conference. Feedback suggests participants found it a valuable contribution to our understanding and enjoyment of automotive history. Some of the positive feedback is included below.

Of particular note is the adoption of the call to consolidate our knowledge of historical automotive databases on a worldwide basis. Our overseas friends see this as an important project and are keen not to have duplications of effort. Members will see elsewhere a start has been made documenting Australian automotive magazine databases and I urge you to contribute if you know of one that is not listed. I think we could also consider putting private databases on-line if the owners are agreeable (with restrictions as necessary).

In developing the magazine database list it became apparent that we know little about the early editors of Australian journals. Horace Harrison was a pioneer editor of *The Australian Motorist* (1913-1952) and Keith Winser edited *The Australian Monthly Motor Manual* (1946-c1955). Unfortunately most journals failed to reveal their editors. H W Harrison will be documented in a future newsletter.

Norm Darwin
President

2021 Conference Feedback

We received terrific feedback about the online conference. We've collected some on the website.

From Louis F. Fourie, past president, Society of Automotive Historians (USA)

"Automotive Historians Australia kindly included me in a digital seminar on a common theme of the Future of Automotive Collections & Archives in Australia. Although I had to break away in the early hours of the morning, it was an excellent seminar. Thank you Norm and your team.

On reflection, I came away with the thought that there may be duplication of efforts by members of the AHA, SAHB and SAH, along with NAAM (National Association of Automobile Museums). We need to create an international network to appreciate the challenges we each face in an increasingly digital world that offers immense research opportunities."

[Read more here.](#)

Castlemaine Autoplex – Identifying Miss Valvoline

During the presentation by Larry O'Toole, an image of Ash Marshall's dragster, with a young lady in a gold one-piece suit was shown. The question was asked "who was she?" I recalled the day and the lady and was able to find in my collection a copy of the January 1966 Australian Rodding World. (I was the Vic. Representative for this magazine) - Norm Darwin

[Read more here.](#)



The cover and advertisement from Australian Rodding World, supplied by Norm Darwin, featuring "Miss Valvoline", Carol Forbes.

Database of Digitised Magazines

Subsequent to discussion of documenting collections that have been or are being digitised, a list of Australian sites was quickly developed. They are listed below. Should you know of others, please advise. This is now being extended to include a list of all Australian Automotive magazines regularly published and sold or distributed publicly.

[Click here to see the database of digitised magazines.](#)

CHALLENGES FACING PRIVATE ARCHIVES & COLLECTIONS OF AUTOMOBILIA

2021 Conference Presentations

These will be uploaded to the AHA website shortly in the form they were made. Prior to this there is an opportunity for presenters to provide a paper based on their presentation in either PDF or Word format and we will provide a link. Here's an example:

Paper presented by Norm Darwin and Phillip Schudmak at the AHA Workshop

This paper will discuss some issues facing collectors of archives, books, memorabilia, ephemera and magazines. The initial focus of our study was mainly centred on the physical identification,

location and storage of motoring collections. However, as the study evolved it became apparent that smaller collections are faced with Library Management Systems that are often not fit for purpose.

[Read the full paper here.](#)

2019 Conference Videos on YouTube

The videos of our 2019 conference presentations are available on the [YouTube channel here. Click and reminisce.](#) (And remember, the 2021 videos will be available soon).

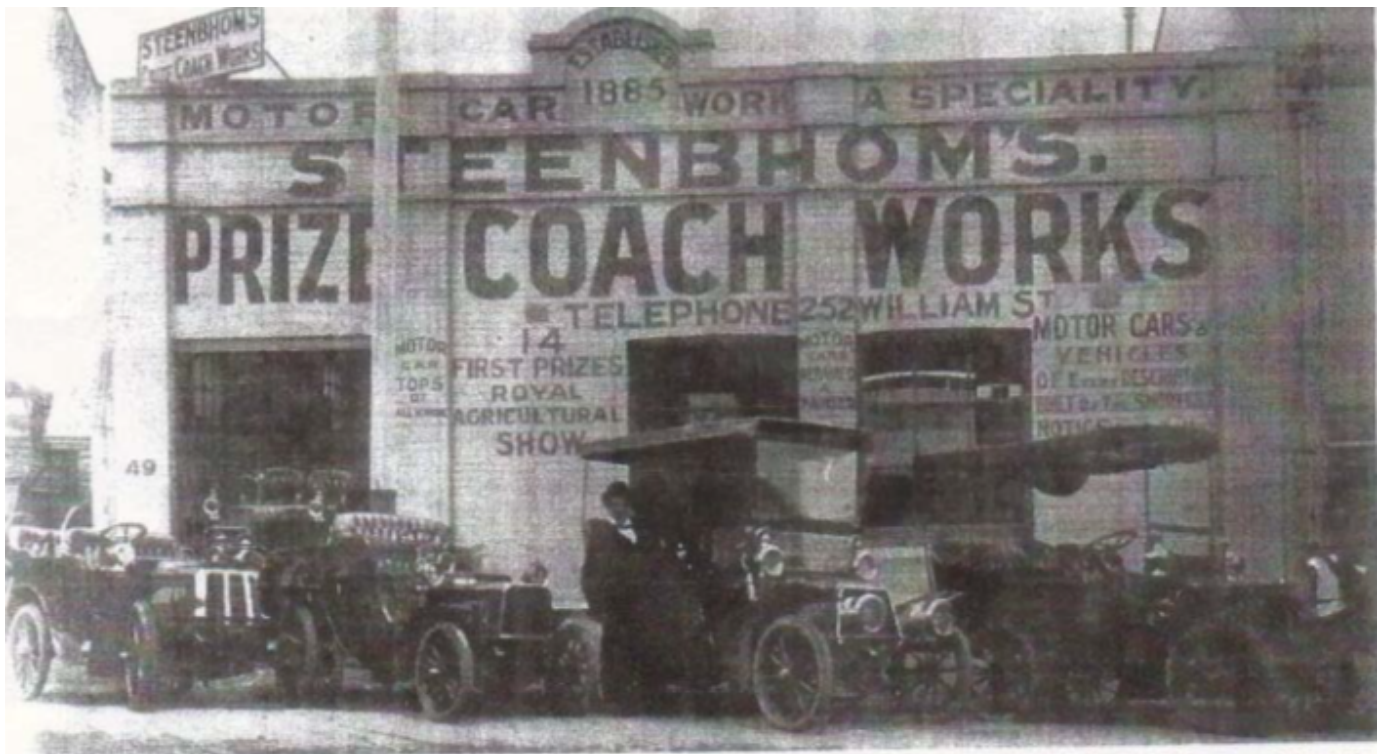
Members' Stories

Transportation and Coach Building

Gary Luke's Family History of Steenbhom's Ltd.

In 1851 a Polish born Jew was transported to Norfolk Island and Port Arthur as a thief, convicted at the Old Bailey in London six years earlier. His language was recorded as Yiddish with a speech impediment. That could explain the various odd spellings of his name, possibly some variation of Steinbaum or Sztaynboim, but recorded in British trial and convict records as Steinbourne, and when finally free and living in Sydney as Steenbhom.

He married in Sydney in 1859 and arranged apprenticeships for his sons, like many refugees and immigrants even today who attempt to place their children in university in this land of opportunities.



Abraham, his second son, established his own business as a coachbuilder in the 1880s, and very soon after 1900 turned his hand to motor body building. The timber import company of Davies and Fehon, who imported the first Ford cars, teamed up with Abraham Steenbhom to expand the company, dealing with a range of marques. Abraham's brother Jacob who joined the company was influential in the establishment of motor body trade apprentice training and the conversion of the disused Darlinghurst Gaol for repatriation technical training of returned soldiers from the Great War. Two other brothers joined the company in lesser roles as upholsterer and accountant.

The Steenbhom company, funded mainly by Davies and Davies, the national Ford importers, was dissolved in the mid 1920s when Ford installed their factory in Geelong and Davies and Davies withdrew their financial support to establish the financing company of AGC.

This study of the company is by Gary Luke, a grandson of Menasseh Benjamin Steenbhom, leatherworker and upholsterer, as part of a thesis for the Diploma in Family History Studies under the Society of Australian Genealists, published in 2002.

[Read the full story on the AHA website here.](#)

Singapore Report

AHA has some new members from Singapore.

Eli Solomon is a journalist based in Singapore who runs the Rewind Media website dedicated to South East Asian motor racing heritage.

[You can check out the website here.](#)

One article to get you going is about the 1957 race meeting at Changi airfield. As Eli wrote, there was strong Australian participation in post-war racing, as competitors and club organisers. Many of his articles reflect that. [Click here to read the article.](#)

Eli introduced his friend, Daljeet Singh Sidhu, to AHA. Daljeet is a retired surgeon and was on the editorial team of a motor sport history magazine Eli published. Importantly, he owns a beautiful 1935 MG NB tourer. Daljeet says it has a good turn of speed with its Marshall supercharger, along with cable-operated brakes and a Wilson preselector gearbox. It apparently came to Australia from the UK in 1982 and then to Singapore in 2004. Thanks for the photo of your car Daljeet.



Holden Heritage Collection Exhibition at the National Motor Museum

Join curator Mick Bolognese for a walk through of the **Holden Heroes - A Retrospective 1948-2017** exhibition at the museum in Birdwood. [Click here or on the video to watch.](#)



Information Exchange

1980s Grand Prix Photographs

I was contacted recently by Kate Warren, whose late uncle had quite privileged access to the European Formula 1 races and drivers during the 1980s as an amateur photographer. Her family has around two dozen photo albums along with memorabilia and she is seeking advice about what to do with it.

A couple of examples provided by Kate give a taste of the quality of these photos, the first showing Thierry Boutsen in the cockpit and the second Ayrton Senna and others listening to a briefing.



Please send any ideas or advice about the collection to Tony Lupton.

The Sir Henry Royce Foundation

Russell Rolls, Chairman of the Sir Henry Royce Foundation, has provided the following information for fellow AHA members.

The Foundation, a registered charity, produces a free quarterly e-news update – “Royce Voice”. All who are interested in Rolls-Royce and Bentley heritage are welcome to subscribe.

For subscriptions refer to The Foundation’s website – www.henryroycefoundation.com – or send an

e-mail to enquiries@henryroycefoundation.com.

The Sir Henry Royce Foundation Research Award

The Foundation's "Archive" at Bill Allsep House (Rowville, Victoria) has a significant collection of historical material on Rolls-Royce and Bentley in Australia. To encourage publication of research based on this important archive material, The Foundation has initiated The Sir Henry Royce Foundation Research Award.

This Award, with a prize of \$500, will be presented annually to the person who, in the opinion of the Trustees of The Foundation, has made the best use of The Foundation "Archive" to research a topic of Rolls-Royce or Bentley interest and who has published this research in the Rolls-Royce Owners' Club of Australia magazine "Praeclarvm" or in wider, publicly available media.

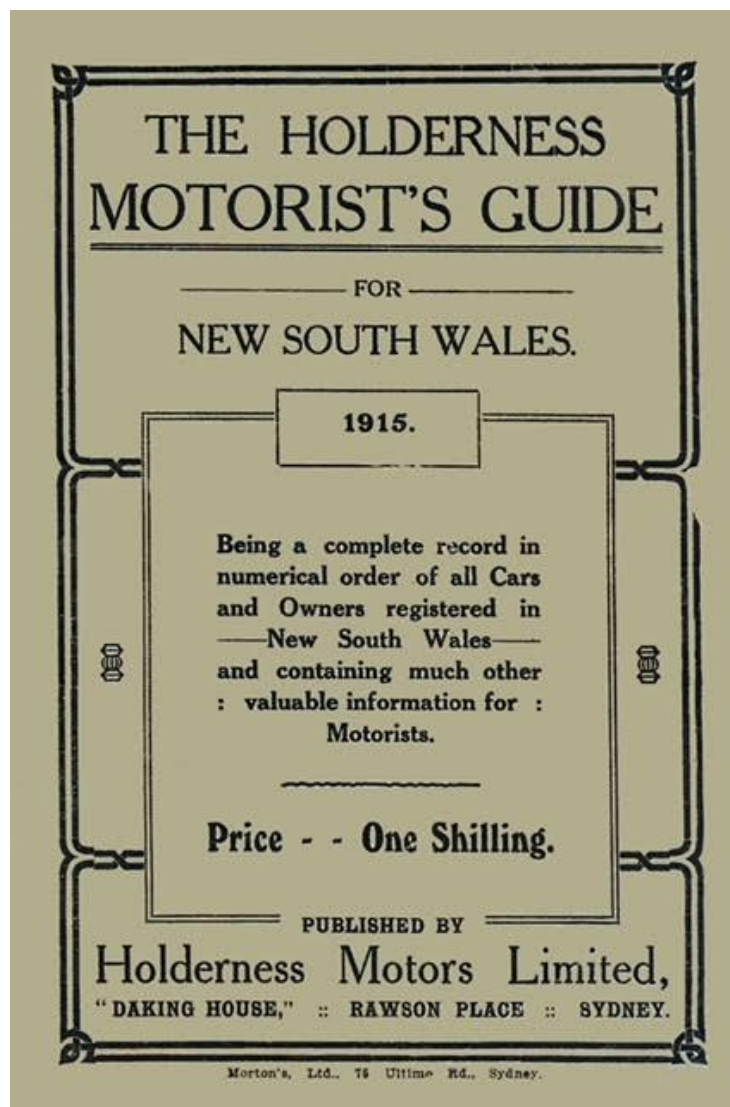
The key driver of this Award is the use of The Foundation "Archive" as the basis of the research and the published result.

Further information on the scope of the "Archive" collection and the details of the Award should be directed to AHA Member and Chairman of Trustees of The Sir Henry Royce Foundation, Russell Rolls, at enquiries@henryfoucefoundation.com.

Pre-1911 NSW Registration Information

Gary Luke has asked for information about any sources of records for pre-1911 vehicle registration and ownership in New South Wales.

Brian Caldersmith has advised that the Australian Motor Heritage Foundation has the NSW registration information for 1915, which may help identify some of the vehicles that were on the roads in the years preceding 1915. It is contained in *The Holderness Motorist's Guide for New South Wales 1915*.



Cover photo of the Holderness Guide 1915

If anyone has any information or helpful hints about any of these subjects please get in touch with Tony Lupton.

The Ringmasters - a Castrol film (1967)

This film about the 1967 German Grand Prix at the Nurburgring gives us a wonderful glimpse inside the world of 1960s Grand Prix racing.

It features footage of the teams arriving with introductions to teams and drivers and car specifications, a description of the circuit and interviews with Jim Clark, Dennis Hulme, Dan Gurney, Jackie Stewart, Chris Amon, Jack Brabham and Graham Hill about the circuit.



[Click here or on the video to watch the film.](#)

Harriet Edquist's

Dream Factory: GMH Design at Fishermans Bend

Exhibition Season Has Been Extended

Due to pandemic-related closure of the gallery, the *Dream Factory* exhibition season has been extended until the end of October. Check the gallery website for any updates.

In the meantime, you can read about the exhibition and listen to an interview with Harriet Edquist by following the links here:

https://www.whichcar.com.au/news/new-holden-design-exhibition-melbourne-town-hall?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=2021_05_24_UC&utm_term=list_uniqu_ecars_newsletter

<https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/drawingroom/the-dream-factory/13352792>



Opened in 1964 and scarcely known outside the world of GMH, the Technical Centre was a powerhouse of design and one of the most successful industrial design studios in Australia.

The drawings on display represent the work of nine designers covering a span of more than 50 years. Accompanied by quotations about style, technique and intent, the exhibition explores the activity of design and Australia's industrial design

history.

[Read more](#)

The exhibition is running **until 31 October at the City Gallery, Melbourne Town Hall**. Once restrictions are lifted, the gallery is open Monday to Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm.

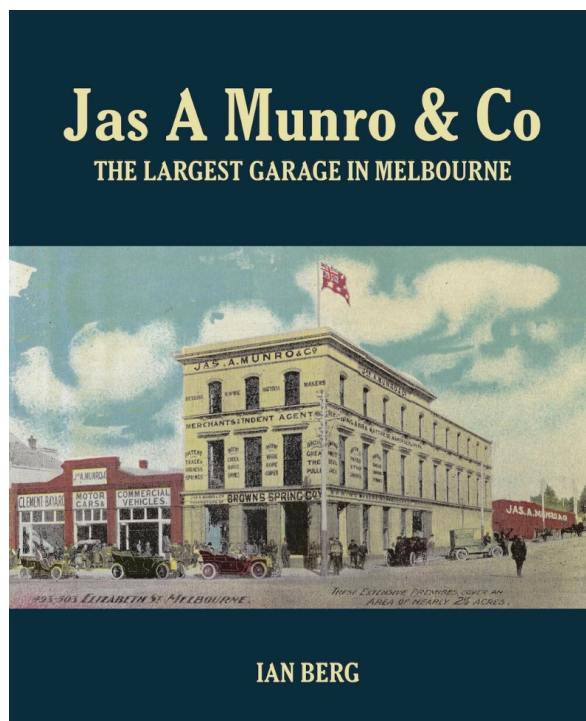
Books and Projects

Jas A Munro & Co

The Largest Garage in Melbourne

by Ian Berg

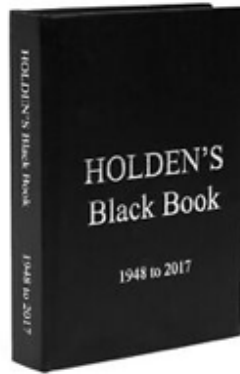
Veteran Car Club of Australia (Victoria) stalwart and AHA member, Ian Berg has written a fascinating story of early Melbourne in his work on Jas Munro. The foreword is written by AHA member Jon Faine.



Anyone interested in automotive history, the development of Melbourne and the place of Elizabeth Street in our history will enjoy reading Ian's book. Copies are available through Ian's website at: <https://www.ianberg.org/>

Warren Turnbull's Holden Histories

Warren Turnbull's contribution about his Holden history research resulted in Laurie Shine from Western Australia getting in touch. Laurie runs the Torana L34 Register and wanted to share some information about the Holden Production Broadcasts. It's hoped they have a productive discussion.



Members are invited to supply some details of their current work projects so other members who have any resources or information that might assist their research can contact them.

Newsletters on Historic Motoring Themes

Some of our members and friends produce very interesting and informative newsletters of their

own. Many cover events and history with a rural and regional focus.

Here are some newsletters you may wish to subscribe to.

Johannes “John” Schuurman produces ***The Australian Chrysler Narrator***, which focuses on all things to do with pre-1960 Chryslers in Australia, including Dodge, De Soto and Plymouth. John's email is plymouthpalace@gmail.com



David Vaughan produces ***Country Motor***. David's publication focuses on historic vehicles, collections, events and personalities in regional Australia. All back copies are available through a link on the AOMC website here <https://www.aomc.asn.au/country-motor-australia>. The email for subscriptions is countrymotor@aussiebb.com.au



AHA Resources Page

David Neely's History of Jackson, Jones & Collins

Automotive historian David Neely has provided our resources page with a history of [Jackson, Jones & Collins – A Sydney firm of motor body builders](#). [Click to read the article.](#)



Parramatta Road, Leichhardt, Sydney in the 1920s.

David, together with Tom Clarke, wrote *Rolls Royce & Bentley in the Sunburnt Country - the first fifty years in Australia*. It is a fine documentation of both marques that also contains many histories of motor body builders who were building motor bodies for both makes in Australia.

Sydney's First Gathering of Motorists

Jenny Fawbert has written a fascinating paper on Sydney's first motoring get-together. [Read the article on our Resources Page.](#)

GM on Designing and Planning Automotive Dealerships in Australia

Michael Bogle's paper on GM's approach to automotive dealership design is a very good read. [Read the paper on our Resources Page.](#)



Land Title Data as an Automotive History Research Tool

Norm Darwin has an interesting take on using land survey information in automotive research. [Read it on the Resources Page.](#)

If you have an article that needs publishing please forward it for consideration to info@autohistoriansaustralia.org

Changed Arrangements for Third European Conference for Automotive History, Turin

We have heard from Anders Ditlev Clausager, Secretary of the Society of Automotive Historians in Britain, that the conference in Turin will now be held in April 2022. Here's the new advertisement and call for papers.

Conférence Européenne sur
l'Histoire de l'Automobile



Torino 2022

Thomas Ulrich, AHG, Germany;
Anders Ditlev Clausager, SAHB, Britain;
Together with the AISA, Associazione Italiana
per la Storia dell'Automobile
And the FIVA Culture and Youth Commission



invite you to the
**Third European Conference for
Automotive History**
Supported and hosted by MAUTO



Torino / Turin—Italia / Italy / Italien
1-3 aprile / April / avril 2022
www.pan-european-automobile-history.com
info@museoauto.it

CALL FOR PAPERS:

Together with the Museo Nazionale dell'Automobile and the AISA, we are pleased to invite you to our third European conference for automotive history, to be held in the Mauto, Corso Unità d'Italia 40, Turin, Italy, from 1 to 3 April 2022, with invitations cordially extended to AHA (Australia), AHG (Germany), CONAM (The Netherlands), PHAF (France), SAH (USA), SAHB (Britain) and UIA (Serbia), as well as to other interested organisations and individuals.

To further international discourse, conference presentations will focus on subjects which have a cross-border European or International interest, or are of general interest to automotive historians.

The provisional programme is as follows:

Friday 1 April: arrival, informal dinner in the hotel.

Saturday 2 April: conference in the museum starting at 9am, with a break for lunch, followed by dinner.

Sunday 3 April: a morning session of further papers, finishing at midday.

Speeches should be made in English, with accompanying Powerpoint presentations. The length of each presentation is provisionally set at 30 minutes, with 10 minutes for questions and discussions.

Please note that the programme is subject to change. The organisers reserve the right to cancel any part of the programme.

The closing date for submissions of papers for consideration by the organisers is 1 October 2021, please supply an abstract or outline, including estimated length and number of slides. Please contact:

Anders Ditlev Clausager, 62 Viceroy Close,
Birmingham B5 7UT, England
Telephone +44 (0)121 440 4745
email: sahb.secretary@btinternet.com

Members are encouraged to send in contributions or ideas for inclusion in member updates. Whether it's something about motoring history you think members may be interested in, a project you're working on or have finished or a suggestion for AHA, let us know about it.

Local Links

Websites for some of our Australian motoring friends

[Association of Motoring Clubs](#)



[Veteran Car Club of Australia \(Victoria\) Inc.](#)



[Victorian Historic Racing Register](#)



[Royal Historical Society Victoria](#)



[Council of Heritage Motor Clubs \(NSW\)](#)



[Vintage Sports Car Club of Australia](#)



[Vintage Sports Car Club of Victoria](#)



[Historic Sports and Racing Car Association](#)



[Australian Motor Heritage Foundation](#)



[The Sir Henry Royce Foundation Australia](#)

Any other organisations wishing to be included are asked to contact AHA.

International Friends



The Society of Automotive Historians

In Britain

Information about SAHB is available at their website: <https://thesahb.com/>



Information about SAH (USA) and their events can be found on their website:
<https://autohistory.org/>

Automotive Historians Australia can be contacted by email at info@autohistoriansaustralia.org, by mail at P.O. Box 319 Balaclava 3183 or via our website at autohistoriansaustralia.org

AHA would appreciate you distributing this newsletter to your friends, networks, clubs and associations.

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