



Darlington Dipsticks

of Western Australia Inc.

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The Dipsticks' Rag

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The Darlington Dipsticks meet on the first Thursday of each month.

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Editor's Comment:

Check out the website at: www.darlingtondipsticks.com

The website is still basic but does have a link for those on Concessional Licensing to advise administration of a proposed private run. In the future the website will host administration details, vehicle registers, calendars and information, with varying privacy layers. There will be capability for members to upload photos and information for sharing with others. Our Dipsticks Rag will be uploaded for your entertainment also 😊

As always, thanks to those contributors who have put pen to paper for our enjoyment 😊



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*The Darlington Dipsticks &
Babtiscare Mundaring
Present*

CLASSIC

CAR SHOW



THURSDAY 23rd NOVEMBER

9.30AM to 11.30AM

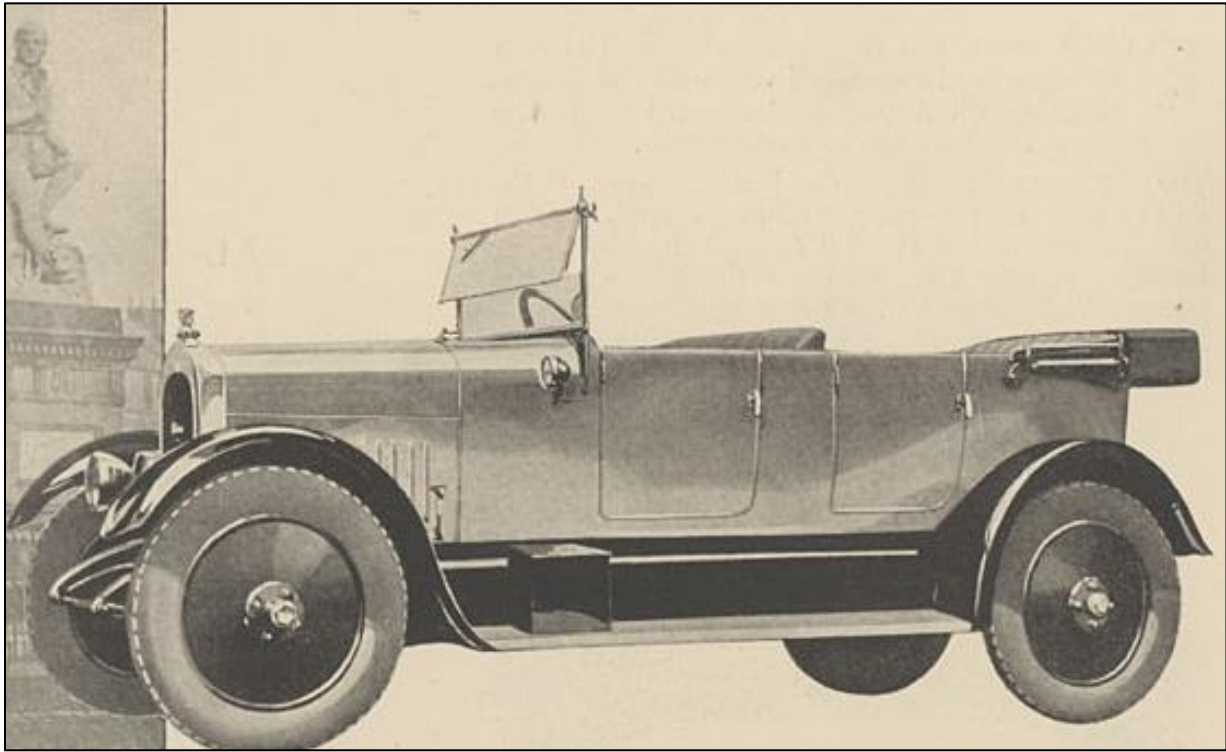
BABTISCARE YALLAMBEE MUNDARING

Please join us for a delightful morning filled with nostalgia, camaraderie, and the charm of classic automobiles. There will be tea and nibbles in the main carpark from 9.30am and a display of some beautiful old cars courtesy of the Darlington Dipsticks Car Club. We look forward to seeing you there.

Made with PosterMyWall.com

John and Marie: What make is this car?

After the last dismal effort at trying to find a car that no-one would recognise (the Marauder) I'm trying again with this photo taken from a sales pamphlet.



My Sassenach mother learned to drive in one of these when she was a teenager.



Bindy Datson: Darlington Arts Festival 2023



Two Mokes of Peter Harper's and Ben Smeeton's 1972 Alfa



Bindy's 1962 Mini and Glenys and Malcolm's Morrie Minor convertible



Richard Palmer's 420G Jaguar, Geoff Frost's Soarer, Andy Brown's MK2 Cortina, and John and Marie's Vauxhall Velox



Dipsticks Top left: Ion Jefferson, Andy Brown Top Right: Ben Smeeton, Dave Pole

Dipsticks bottom L to R: Dave Pole, Ben Smeeton, Patrick Connolly, Richard Stockwell, Karen Wallis, Mark Coleman



Dipsticks Top Left: Malcolm McNabb, Peter Harper
Dipsticks Bottom Left: Peter Harper, Peter Moore

Top Right: Glenys and Malcolm
Bottom Right: Dave, Mark, Bindy and John



Ion Jefferson's Holden Monaro



David Shimell's 124 Coupé Mercedes



John and Marie's Vauxhall Velox
– Miss Patti



Andy Brown's MK2 Cortina



Geoff Frost's Soarer

Richard Palmer's 420G Jaguar



Simon Faulkner's EK Wagon

Bob Simpson's MGB





Richard Stockwell's Range Rover 'Ralph'



Malcolm McNabb's Landrover Perentie – ex radio command vehicle



Malcolm's Rickshaw

John and Marie: Vehicles that we have owned.

Apart from cars we have purchased individually there have been one or two that were/are jointly owned by us.

The first one is the subject of this article.

In early 2011, after we had decided to give up our 9 to 5 existence and retire, we made plans for a touring holiday in the U.S.A.

Rather than hire a vehicle for many months we thought it would be a good idea to buy one outright and our search began in Las Vegas. We were looking for a camper van and thought that a VW Kombi might fit the bill but after looking at a couple (one almost derelict and one far out of our price range) we began looking on Craigslist.

In something akin to desperation, we looked at all possible alternatives, a station wagon, maybe a 4-wheel drive or a small RV? Then we saw it – a 3-line ad for a GMC Vandura camper van. Phone calls were made along with arrangements to see it and before we had time to think \$1250 USD had changed hands and we were the proud (?) owners of ‘Smelly Nelly’, our home on wheels for the next few months.

The previous owner, Kelly, was, quite obviously, not very houseproud (or mechanically minded). Judging by the food he left behind in Nelly, his staple diet was beef curry noodles and chilli beans (resulting in an overflowing sewage tank)! Thankfully, he also left behind a variety of tools and spanners which proved to be invaluable fixing up the many minor items that needed attention. So, after 4 days of cleaning and scrubbing - plus repairs – to get her ship (or should that be camper) shape we were ready to begin our adventure roaming the USA.



For the technically minded here are Nelly's vital statistics:

Make GMC Vandura 1 ton (?) dual rear wheel chassis with Shasta body.

Born: February 1976

Length: 21 feet. Width: 7 feet 10 inches. Height: 9 feet 9 inches (approximately).

Engine: 350 cu in GMC/Chevy with 4-barrel carburetor

Transmission: GMC/Chevy Turbo 350 automatic

Fuel consumption: 10 U.S.mpg (approximately) – try as we might, we couldn't get better than this.



Spring in Yellowstone National Park.

Over a total period of 47 weeks and 4 days we visited all 48 contiguous United States and travelled over 30,000 miles in Nelly. For the first couple of weeks, it felt like a holiday and then it became a very pleasant way of life.

We achieved quite a few things on our bucket list and had pleasure experiencing others that weren't on the list. We've also shared time with 'new' family and friends and learned a lot about the hugely diverse country called America and its people.

Surprisingly enough the experience also taught us quite a bit about ourselves while living in the close confines of Nelly.

By the end of the trip, she was starting to show signs of old age, but Marie was dead against sending her to the wrecking yard. So, we decided to donate her to a worthy cause. We tried Ronald MacDonald House first, but Nelly's age was against her. However, our second attempt came up trumps and we delivered her to 'TEXAS CAN' in Arlington where she was auctioned to raise money for the charity.

TEXAS CAN is a not-for-profit organisation that assists with the schooling of underprivileged 14-to-21-year-old students who have “struggled in a traditional high school setting for a number of reasons”. Their school academies will enroll a student at any time of the year, develop a personal plan for them to follow to graduation and assist them with planning for life after graduation.

In a quick ‘small world’ anecdote to the preceding paragraph, when we checked in to our hotel in Arlington, Marie chatted with the young girl behind the reception desk and discovered that she was a successful graduate of one of the CAN academies.

To our great surprise Nelly did us proud and the auctioneers hammer came down on a bid of \$800 USD.



Bindy Datson: Yallambee Residential Care Village Run

On Thursday 23rd November several Dipsticks visited the Yallambee Residential Care Village to show the residents their cars. The forecast was for a hot day, but the run was in the morning and the easterlies kept the temperature down for the visit. By all accounts the cars were well received, and both members and residents had a lovely morning. Everyone who went in Richard's Daimler limousine came back doing the Royal Wave 😊

The Darlington Dipsticks & Babtiscare Mundaring Present

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Bindy Datson: Last meeting for 2023 and Xmas Party

Our last meeting for 2023 was memorable for a number of reasons. It was the inaugural meeting at our new venue – the Darlington Lesser Hall, it was our annual Christmas party with Secret Santa and remote-control car racing (thanks Malcolm), and for me it was memorable because I wasn't there – having finally joined the Covid Club 😞 By all accounts everyone enjoyed themselves and I think enjoyed the new venue.









Dave Pole: Cars from the Past



My Grandmother's house in Bayswater – 1975 Fiat 124 Sports and 1970 Rover 3500



A true Dipstick with a collection even back then! LtoR - Rover P5, 1968 Transit, 1975 Datsun 280, BMW (flat mate's car), 1976 Datsun Sunny, ex RAAF Jeep – forward control



Mercedes 250 CE Coupe



1957 Rover P4 just after the top was removed to make it a coupe!



1975 Austin Threepenny bit cabin lorry, ex Boans. Lost in the Stoneville fire 😞



Bringing home a Mercedes engine in Holden Rodeo - 'mid-engine drag car' – Cool Man!



Holiday down South with Kawasaki GPZ1100 with Mikey



John and Marie: Article for the Darlington Review

Darlington residents and Darlington Dipsticks Marie Fennell and John Revill recently took their modified Vauxhall to Tasmania and have contributed their story:

Wyvonne, the Darlington based 1951 Vauxhall, is now an experienced Aussie tourer having recently driven across the Nullarbor and completed a 9,863km round jaunt to Tasmania where she participated in the Australian Street Rod Federation Central Coast Nationals. With over 400 cool cars and classics from across Australia converging on Ulverston Showground and cruising the north-west of the Island State, she was proud to represent W.A. and Darlington Dipsticks. This event also included a visit to Symmons Plains Raceway where Wyvonne took to the circuit and although she didn't set a new lap record her driver, John, thoroughly enjoyed the 'experience'.



Bindy Datson: My whoopsie at Levin and how I mistook Peter Brock for a doctor.

I was preparing for a weekend race meet at the Levin Motor Racing Circuit – one of the last meets before the circuit was to be closed in 1975. We had set out early – Graham, who was an employee and my son Geoffrey who would have been about four at the time. I didn't have many races under my belt yet and was pretty keen to get some practice in before the weekend racing.

My car was a green Mini 7 – a class popular at the time and I believe still going in the UK. Mini 7s began as 850cc minis – body stripped of everything except a racing seat, harness, roll bar and instruments - to lighten. The Mini 7 Class requirements for the engine were that other than bottom end strengthening the block had to be standard. The head, however, could be modified as much as possible. The inlets were polished, and bead blasted to give a 'shark skin' finish, which apparently gives better air flow. The head chambers were widened and polished, and valves were shaved – a fine line between optimum performance and bent valves. As all cars in the Mini 7 race were theoretically the same, it made a difference to your placing in the race having any advantage. There were seconds between first and last of the 30-odd cars in the race. Even among fellow racers, most people stopped what they were doing to come and watch the Mini 7s dicing.

We set out early and I readied myself for a couple of hours of enjoyable practice. The tyres on my car were racing slicks – no tread and made of a softer rubber than road tyres. For optimum performance and stickability one had to zig zag down the track before building up speed, to warm the tyres up, which I dutifully did. However, not enough, because at full speed I left the track at the first tight corner and rolled the car end for end into an embankment. I remember thinking “oh, I'm going to crash”, then the next conscious sound was “quick, get her out of there – there's petrol p...ing everywhere”. I was hanging upside down, held in by my harness.

Unfortunately for me, the regulations had harness mounts on the floor behind the driver's seat – the seat had broken from its mounts and the harness had pulled me down towards the floor, causing a crush fracture to my spine. There was also a large dent in the right-hand parcel tray from my knee and the steering wheel had made a bit of a mess of my chin. However, I was to find all this out later as I was drifting in and out of consciousness.

The track ambulance came, and the attendants carefully loaded me up to head for the hospital. Poor little Geoffrey was upset at seeing his Mum carted off with a bleeding face and was promised an ice cream when he and Graham got home – something he tells me he still feels miffed about not getting!

After x-rays at the hospital, I was told that I had to lie very still on my back, or I might never walk again – instructions I followed assiduously.

A few weeks later, I was back up and about, still being very careful about what I did – and we went to a Manawatu Car Club meeting – and a handsome intense guy was quizzing me about my accident – I thought he was a doctor because of the questions he was asking. Then I was introduced to him – it was Peter Brock who was in the country for a race meeting!

Peter and his crew took my Fiat Bambina (with the mid mounted 1275 Mini Cooper S motor) for a drive and scared themselves silly but that car is the subject of another story.

One positive that came from my accident was that the regulations were changed with harnesses to be mounted on the rear parcel tray to prevent the type of spinal damage I had suffered. And I was back in the driver's seat as soon as the car and I were repaired 😊



Top: Before the fateful practice

Centre: After the accident – a sad mini

Bottom: Racing at a later date – when I had my own permanent number – 28.



Bindy Datson: Levin Motor Racing Circuit

CIRCUIT OVERVIEW

The Levin Motor Racing Circuit was New Zealand's first permanent motorsport facility, small in scale but massively important for the development of the sport in the country, which had previously relied on temporary street and airfield circuits.

Located at Lake Horowhenua, around 95kms north of Wellington on North Island, the roughly kidney-shaped track operated for 20 years from 1956. Crafted inside a horse racing circuit, the track ultimately disappeared when its lease was not renewed, and the equine racing authorities wanted to expand.

By this point, there were plenty of alternative circuits operating and so Levin became a footnote in history, having served its purpose of New Zealand putting motorsport on a more sustainable footing.

CIRCUIT HISTORY

The driving force behind the development of the track was an ex-pat Englishman, Ron Frost MBE, who arrived in New Zealand in the 1950s. A motorsport enthusiast and part-time racer, he had been one of the early pioneers at Brands Hatch, when it was little more than a grass-track facility running in the opposite direction to today. His racing activities were curtailed by World War II, but after the conflict ended, he resumed on four wheels, racing a Formula 500 JBS to several podiums at Brands Hatch.

After setting up a garage in Bexley Heath in Kent selling Hillman cars and Shell fuels, he became disillusioned with the continuation of rationing, so emigrated to New Zealand. It was while looking for a house in Levin that he noticed a little-used horse racing track nearby and thought it would be an ideal location to create his own version of his favourite circuit.

He began discussions with the landowners and local authorities, forming the 'Levin Motor Racing Circuit Ltd' with the help of other local enthusiasts, such as Syd Jensen, Arnold Stafford, Vic Hudson, Les Burnham, Welwyn Wylde and Keith Wyness. After 18 months of discussions, all had been persuaded of the merits of the scheme.

Construction began in August 1955, featuring a design which unsurprisingly followed the template of Brands Hatch, with a rough kidney-shaped outline. This drew some criticism that it favoured the small 'cyclecars' of the 500 class (which of course was exactly what Ron Frost raced) but given the subsequent popularity of the motorcycle-engined racers, this was probably no bad thing.

The circuit was completed in January 1956, with its inaugural race held on January 14, organised by the Levin Car Club. The original layout was just 9/10 of a mile (although was described erroneously by officials at the time as being 1 mile). One of the advantages of being inside the horse racing track was that the circuit could benefit from the existing spectator facilities, although temporary grandstands also became necessary as the popularity of motorsport boomed. At its height, more than 20,000 people would swamp into the local area where the population was just 8,000!

The track surface broke up badly during the first meeting due its relatively poor construction and, despite a turnout of some 15,000 spectators, a bank loan was needed to effect the necessary repairs. Despite this early setback, the circuit soon settled into a rhythm of hosting three races per season (save for the 1969-70 and 1972-73 seasons which boasted four events).

The first 'Levin International' event in January 1958. Among the field were international drivers Jack Brabham (who won the race in a Cooper T43-Climax), Archie Scott-Brown, Roy Salvadori and Stuart Lewis-Evans, alongside home-grown heroes such as Bruce McLaren and Syd Jensen. Ron Frost had been due to race but did not start due to a practice crash.

By 1960, the circuit was lengthened and extended to 1.1 miles through the creation of a new Lake Corner and the sweeping Hokio Bend. This necessitated the moving of the pits and paddock area to the Beach Bend

end of the circuit. The track was also widened from 7.1 metres to 9.1 metres. The track now met international standards, allowing for the return of some of the big names from the sport, in what would become the legendary Tasman Series.

Sadly, the April 1961 race meeting saw the circuit's first and only fatality, when Duncan McKenzie rolled his ex-Jack Brabham Cooper-Climax at Hokio Bend during the third race. He was taken to Palmerston North Hospital where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

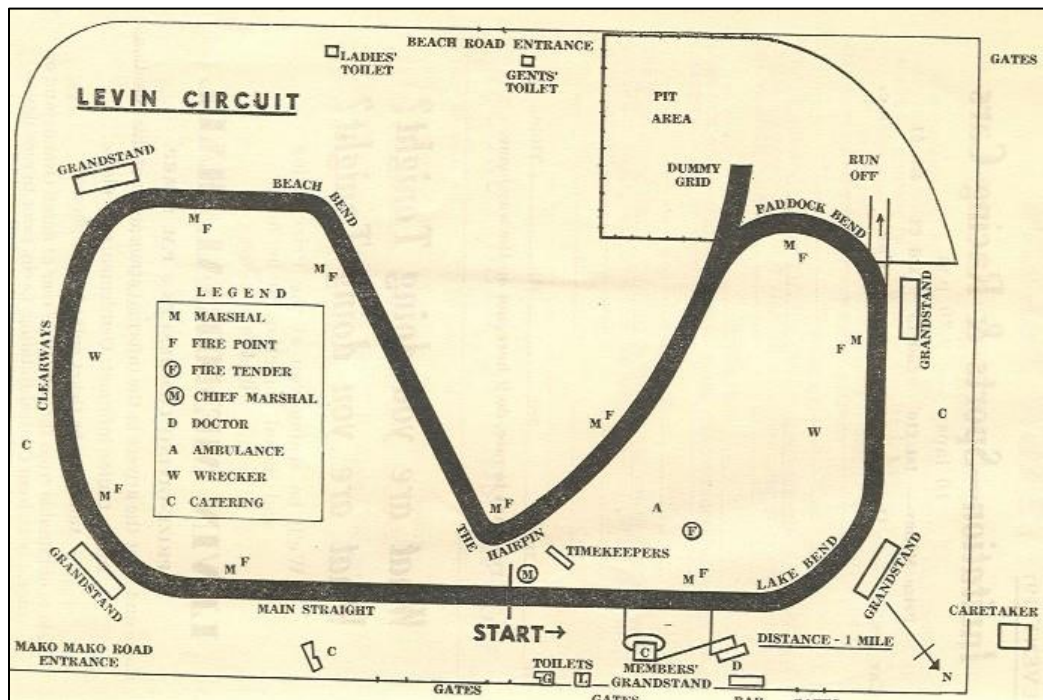
The first ever race of the Tasman Cup championship was held at Levin in 1964, in what was titled the Vic Hudson Memorial Race. Denny Hulme ran out the winner in a Brabham BT4-Coventry Climax from Timmy Mayer in one of Bruce McLaren's Coopers.

In 1966 the circuit underwent its final expansion, when the pit straight was lengthened slightly and the Clearways section was removed in favour of two new corners, Wills Corner (later named Rothmans Corner in deference to a sponsorship deal) and the sweeping Castrol Curve. In this form it would see out the remainder of its days.

The first race on the revised layout saw the record crowd of 23,000 turn out for the Tasman Series opener. Other significant events organised on the circuit were a 4-hour production saloons race from 1971, while many of the early events also combined motorcycle races, before two-wheel only meetings became more popular.

The last race meeting was held on 7 December 1975, as the 20-year lease was due to expire and the facilities needed an upgrade, which the car racing club had no money for. With the horse racing club expanding rapidly at the same time, motorsport at Levin was doomed. Part of the track, including the main straight was to be subsumed by an enlarged horse racing circuit, paddocks and other facilities, so the chequered flag finally fell on motorised sport.

With the new [Manfeild](#) circuit opening up on the outskirts of Feilding in 1974, there was at least another facility for racing to transfer to, with Levin left to live on in the memories of all those who raced or spectated there.



Bindy Datson: Code 404 Concessional Licensing Terms and Conditions

ATTACHMENT A: Summary of the CODE 404 Licensing Scheme Terms and Conditions

The objectives of the Veteran/Vintage/Post Vintage/Invitation Class Vehicle Licence Concession ('Code 404') scheme are:

- to encourage the restoration and preservation of historic vehicles, being vehicles no less than 25 years old; and
- to maintain the manufacturer's original specification of historic vehicles. The key principle of the Code 404 scheme is that the vehicle is not used for general transport or commuting, with use of the vehicle being restricted to:
 - any recorded event organised by an approved Club,
 - an impromptu event involving one or more vehicles over a one-day period which is recorded in the approved Club's 'Run Log',
 - rallies organised by approved historic motoring clubs,
 - closed road processions.
- being exhibited in displays, fetes and similar functions for religious, charitable or educational purposes,
- ceremonial purposes involving immediate family members, subject to Club approval and recording,
- preparing for, proceeding to, and returning from these activities, travel in order to have the vehicle repaired; and
- road testing within a 30km radius of the place of garaging or repair. Owners of vehicles licensed with a 404-concession code are solely responsible for maintaining their vehicle in an original unmodified condition and remaining a financial member of a Department of Transport (DoT) approved motoring club in order to be eligible for the concession. The above is a summary of the requirements and not a detailed comprehensive list. Detailed information on the Code 404 scheme can be found in the Information Handbook available for downloading on the Council of Motoring Clubs of WA website.

ATTACHMENT B: CODE 404 'Dot Point' Reminders

- Provide any new license vehicle details to the Club Registrar, particularly where the license plate has been changed (e.g., to an optional personalised or district plate).
- Advise the Club Registrar if you have disposed of a concessionally licensed vehicle.
- Advise the Club Registrar if your concessionally licensed vehicle is registered in your partner's name instead of your name.
- Advise the Club Registrar of your proper name as recorded on the concessionally licensed vehicle's
- Ensure that you remain a current financial member of your approved motoring club. There is no 'grace period' allowed by the Department of Transport; if you do not pay your club membership subscription by the due date, your concessional license will be deemed invalid until the difference in fees between the concessional license and a full license is paid.
- A concessionally licensed vehicle may be driven for road testing or maintenance related trips within a 30-kilometre radius from the place where the vehicle is garaged or repaired. The purpose of the travel must be to road test the vehicle for repair, restoration or maintenance purposes and not for any other purpose. Where a longer journey outside the 30km radius is expected the owner should record an Impromptu Run.



Tradespeople Listing

Name	Email	Phone number	Address	Function
Tavis - Vintage Classic and Custom	www.vintageclassicandcustom.com.au	0408 955 717	Shop 6 / 110 Briggs Street, Welshpool WA 6106	MG Specialist
Galloway Engines	www.gallowayengines.com.au	(08) 9531 1366	25 Baker St, Pinjarra WA 6208	Engine Reconditioning
Motteram Motors	www.motterammotors.com.au/	(08) 9250 3395	3 Elmsfield Road, Midvale WA 6065	Engine Reconditioning
D'Uva French Polishers	www.duvafrenchpolishers.com/	(08) 9274 4056	21 Elliott St, Midvale WA 6056	French Polisher
Peter - Holley Parts	www.holleycarbs.com.au	0455 602 618	49 Swan Street, Guildford	Carburettor restoration/parts
Kathy Arts - Badgemate	info@badgemate.com.au	(08) 9255 1577 Office, 0400 165 423 Mobile	4 May Street, Bellevue WA 6056	Badges
Alex		0411 550 250		Mobile Auto Electrician
Mike Holmes - Car Services and Electrics	Mva81555@bigpond.net.au	(08) 9274-6606	11 Bushby St, Bellevue WA 6056	Auto mechanic
Bruce Sharman	bruce@bygonerestorationsandspares.com	0408 889 279	PO BOX 1505 Toodyay, 6566	Car restorer, wiring looms
Tom Sharman	vintagetommy@icloud.com	0430 046 729		Car/bike restorer
Franc Fonte, FMJ Motors		(08) 9458 3433	U 8/35-39 Tate St, Bentley WA 6102	Jag Specialist
Paul at PowerBulbs	sales@powerbulbs.com			Headlight bulbs
Rob Sharman		(08) 9295 3360	Mundaring Smash Repairs	Rust repairs
Jeff Melville	jeff@crowncustoms.com.au	0406 080 677	Crown Customs	Upholstery
Sean Tumath	Vivid Finishing	0449 714 250	2/5 Church Rd, Maddington	Zinc-ing etc.
Charlie/Ralph	enquiries@kustomchrome	P: 08 9249 4423 M: 0484 325 821	Units 2-3 / 87 Holder Way, Malaga	Chroming