

# ***IDLE TORQUE***

**NOVEMBER 2022**

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

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NSW Historic Motoring Association

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



***“More  
than just a  
car club”***

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The Committee reserves the right to edit contributions for publication.

**JUDY PHEMISTER — NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

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# PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

First of all, I would like to mention the sad passing of our most senior club member, Charlie Smith, and extend condolences to Charlie's family, on behalf of our car club. Charlie will always be remembered as someone who lived life to the full and we were indeed fortunate to have had Charlie as a member of our car club.

Another busy month for our car club, starting with a very informative presentation at our October meeting by representatives of the upcoming Coffs Coast Festival of Motor Sport. This was followed with a very well attended coffee run to the Bellingen Butter Factory, always a favourite venue of members.

The lunch at the Nambucca Heads Island Golf Club saw a record attendance of 43 and this is one venue where we are always guaranteed good service and great food.

Unfortunately, the Coffs Coast Motor Show set down for Bellingen Showground on 15<sup>th</sup> October had to be cancelled due to the wet conditions of the grounds.

Some great events are planned for November, including a long awaited return to Anchors Wharf Café at Urunga and a breakfast at the Jetty Foreshores.

Also, don't forget the Coffs Coast Festival of Motor Sport, this is a big deal for our area and one which we must give our full support.

Looking forward to seeing you all at our next event.

Many thanks to those members who were able to attend Charlies Celebration of Life

***REGARDS, IAN WARD CLUB PRESIDENT***

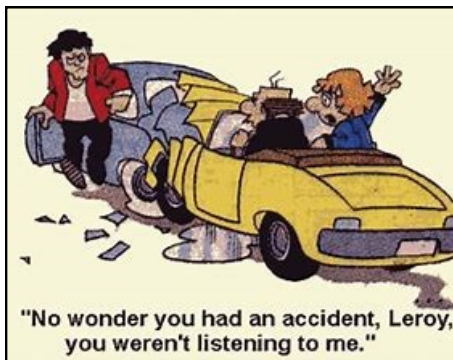
## Funny Story About Painting

One day, Jimmy knocks on the door of a home in an upper-class neighbourhood. The lady of the house answers. *'Pardon me Ma'* Jimmy says, *'I'm out of work and looking for any odd jobs that people need done. I'm very handy with everything from repairs to yard work, to paintin.'*

*'Painting?'* The woman jumped in. *'Oh, yes, Ma'am! I'm a very careful painter'*, Jimmy replied, his face brightening at the realisation that she could provide him some work. *'I'll tell you what. My husband just bought some green paint last week to paint the porch out back, but we haven't had any time. If you can do a good job, then you can paint it before he gets home and surprise him'. 'Now, do a particularly good job and paint the trimmings white as well, and I'll pay you an extra bonus.'* *'Oh yes, Ma' am, I'll do an excellent job!'*

She then told Jimmy where to find the paints around back in the garage. A few hours later, Jimmy returns to the door. *'That was quick, did you do a good job?'*

the woman inquires *"Oh yes Ma' am, two coats! But there's something you should know', Jimmy says. That car is not a Porsche, it's a Ferrari!"*



# EVENTS CALENDAR

		NOVEMBER 2022		RSVP
7th Nov	Mon	COMMITTEE MEETING 6.00pm GENERAL MEETING 7.00pm C.ex COFFS	NOTE NEW DEPARTURE SPOT !!!! 	
9th Nov	Wed	MORNING TEA ANCHORS WHARF CAFÉ Depart from the Aero Club De Havilland Way 9.30am	Judy Phemister <a href="mailto:judenruss72@gmail.com">judenruss72@gmail.com</a> 0407937327	Wed 2nd Nov
19th Nov	Sat	BREAKFAST AT JETTY FORSHORES –Southern end. Egg and Bacon Roll/Sausage Sanga for a minimum donation of \$2 per person to be donated to a local Homeless group.  From 8am. Bring chairs, tea/coffee/plates	Jeff Clancy 0428443464 <a href="mailto:jnbucca@gmail.com.au">jnbucca@gmail.com.au</a>	Sat 12th Nov
		DECEMBER 2022		
5th Dec	Mon	COMMITTEE MEETING 6.00pm GENERAL MEETING 7.00pm C.ex COFFS		
10th Dec	Sat	CHRISTMAS LUNCH FROM 11.30 AM JORDAN PAVILION See details in Newsletter P8	Judy Phemister <a href="mailto:judenruss72@gmail.com">judenruss72@gmail.com</a> 0407937327	Sat 3rd Dec !!!!
18th Dec	Sun	Picnic Morning Tea at Red Rock BYO everything . Depart 9:30 am Repco Homebase	NA	NA
		JANUARY 2023		
1st Jan	Sun	SAWTELL FUN DAY Parade down First Avenue commencing 9am and Car Display in the Reserve. Lots of activities and food vans.	Judy Phemister <a href="mailto:judenruss72@gmail.com">judenruss72@gmail.com</a> 0407937327	19th Nov
11th Jan	Wed	The Link Café Meet there at 10am 631 Hogbin Drive Toormina 	Judy Phemister <a href="mailto:judenruss72@gmail.com">judenruss72@gmail.com</a> 0407937327  Limit of 30 so RSVP early	4th Jan
22nd Jan	Sun	LUNCH - Eungai Creek Buffalo Farm Depart from the Aero Club De Havilland Way 11am 	Judy Phemister <a href="mailto:judenruss72@gmail.com">judenruss72@gmail.com</a> 0407937327	15th Jan



# Nambucca Island Golf Club

## 16th October

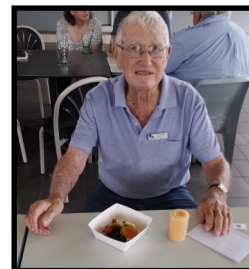


A great roll up of cars and 43 members to enjoy lunch at the Golf Club. Sandy got to be chauffeured in her “new wheels” after a bit of surgery .



Great food and good company 😊

## CHARLIE,      By Dick Willis



This is the story of a man, Charles George Smith, who crammed more excitement and adventure into his 94 years than most people would be able to do in ten lifetimes. For a little over a decade he was at the forefront of Australian motor sport which is the subject we will mainly be looking at here. However he was seriously involved in aviation for nearly sixty years after first obtaining his licence in 1955 and notably introduced Jim Clark and Graham Hill to aviation during one of their visits here for the Tasman series in the early 1960s. Charlie was licenced as a commercial pilot and instructor and made several trips in light aircraft across the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans to name just a few of his aviation adventures. About 10 years ago he even crewed on a yacht in the Sydney to Hobart yacht race.

Also water skiing, pistol shooting, various business ventures including a share in a large Northern Territory cattle property and another cattle property at Newton Boyd, west of Grafton where he and Betty lived for several years. He was also involved in car clubs, property development, a term as a Coffs Harbour Shire Councillor as well as a genuine love of the Australian outback were all part of Charlie's life, and all would warrant a chapter or two in the book of his life.



Charlie was born at New Lambton on 11/3/1928 and spent much of his early life on a small farm at Medowie before the family moved to Wentworthville from where he commuted, by train, to the Railway workshops at Eveleigh where he had obtained an apprenticeship as an electrician. On the train he met a young lady, Betty Knight, who he married in 1949. When he finished his apprenticeship he was posted to a country location which didn't fit well with him being newly married so he quit and soon after decided to "go out on his own" as an electrical contractor eventually having four vans on the road busily engaged in wiring new houses in the then newly developed Baulkham Hills area.

Charlie's first race was at the first post war motorcycle race meeting at Bathurst in 1946 riding a BSA. However, times were tough in the early post war period for a newly married man with a young family so motor racing plans were temporarily put on hold until the hype of the early RedeX trials captured his attention. Charlie ran in the 1954 and 1955 trials in a Peugeot 203 and FX Holden respectively and in the 1957 Mobilgas Trial in a Peugeot 403. In one incident the battery in his Peugeot failed in the backblocks of WA which would have grounded most competitors but, drawing on his electrical experience, Charlie melted the top off the battery, found the offending shorted out cell, isolated it, sealed up the battery and carried on.

By 1954 the family car was a Fiat 1100, a nippy little car of the period, so it was entered in some races at Mt Druitt and Bathurst plus some other club events. Next car was a Series 1 Morris Major which he modified and ran at the Easter 1959 Bathurst for a class win.

Later in 1959 the Series 2 Morris Major was introduced and Charlie obtained one of these which BMC specially painted for him in a distinctive yellowy/green colour, it was fitted with all the good bits available at the time and it was in this car over the next 3 years that Charlie really made his presence felt in Australian motor racing frequently outdoing many more powerful and highly fancied competitors. The Major was a regular class winner at Bathurst, Warwick Farm and Katoomba and as a young and enthusiastic spectator at time I really became a fan of Charlie and the Major delighting in his giant killing exploits. Given the favourable exposure the BMC product was getting it was no wonder BMC thought so well of him.

Consequently when the Austin Freeway was introduced in 1962 BMC ensured Charlie received one of the first, painted the same distinctive colour as the Major, at first it was raced in some production car races such as the Phillip Island Armstrong 500 in 1962 but it was soon modified utilising the principles learnt with the Morris Major, the engine being effectively the same as the Major but with the addition of two more cylinders.



It was thought this car would be more than a match for the class winning Holdens but it only raced a couple of times including Bathurst, Easter 1963 where it qualified an excellent fourth and recorded 127 mph down Conrod Straight which was faster than any of the Holdens had done at the time but it failed to finish because of clutch failure. By this time BMC had released a more effective production racer in the Morris Cooper as we shall see later in this story and Charlie was keen to move into more challenging machinery as by now he had a full time race mechanic, Ian Maudsley, working for him.

Early in 1962 the Major was returned to standard condition and traded in at John Martin's Neutral Bay Motors on a Lotus Eleven which Charlie only kept for a year although it brought some good class finishes At Bathurst, Warwick Farm and Katoomba. In 1963, after a test day at Warwick Farm, Charlie bought the green Elfin Formula Junior which Frank Matich had been racing so successfully. Success was immediate with an outright third and class win at Bathurst in 1963 and a win in the 1963 NSW Formula Junior Championships at Catalina Park against some strong opposition. Unfortunately it was with this car at the Hume Weir circuit that Charlie had his first serious racing accident when he locked wheels with another car and the Elfin rolled throwing him out.

Charlie spent the night in the Albury hospital, the car was quickly repaired by Bob Brittan and is now owned by Doug Anderson in Yamba.



By now Charlie had itchy feet and traded the Elfin on a Lotus 23 with Alec Mildren. The 23 was raced at the Easter 1964 Bathurst meeting to second outright and set a class lap record at Oran Park which was still intact when the circuit closed. That 23 was fondly remembered by Charlie as the best car he ever raced. Alec Mildren had also asked Charlie to do some races for him in a Brabham BT6 but Charlie crashed it into the fence at Reid Park, Bathurst so that was the end of that relationship.



In 1966 BMC were seeking a new dealer in Coffs Harbour and, because of his good standing with company, asked Charlie if he was interested so he sold his electrical business and moved to Coffs Harbour. This entailed building new premises which opened in mid 1967 with one Dick Willis employed as a mechanic. At that time BMC were enjoying a purple patch with their products selling very well, however life as a motor dealer wasn't entirely Charlie's cup of tea so when an offer to sell came about 18 months later Charlie was happy to move on. This proved to be a timely move as by then BMC had begun a downhill slide as the Japanese makes were then starting to take over BMC's slice of the market and some of the later BMC products certainly weren't very well received in the market. Later Charlie bought a disposal store and spent some time as a shire councillor before moving to his cattle property at Newton Boyd.

Dick Willis third  
from left



The move to Coffs Harbour had effectively curtailed Charlie's racing activities apart from his annual visit to Bathurst for the enduro but one meeting which is effectively etched in history is the 1966 Surfers Paradise 12 hour race. BMC prepared a Mini Moke for Charlie which was fitted with all the hot bits from a racing Cooper S plus some streamlining. Co-driver was Barry Seton and the pair acquitted themselves very well and attracted a lot of attention but failed to finish when the diff failed. The following year he was back again with a modified MG B co-driven by a fellow North Coaster, Noel Hall, they finished second in their class.

When the first ever Australian production car 500 mile enduro was held at Phillip Island in 1960 BMC entered a team of six cars, three Morris Majors and three Austin Lancers, all painted green. Charlie was teamed with Brian Muir but was unplaced. The following year he was back again in a Major teamed with Bruce Maher but retired after 141 laps with broken suspension as the track, by that time, was badly broken up. In 1962 he raced the Freeway there before it was modified but was troubled with loose stones damaging the radiator and finished seventh in the class.



With the move of the 500 to Bathurst in 1963 Charlie became a regular entrant teamed with some of the Sport's greatest contemporaries until 1969 ;

1963, co-driver, Ron Hodgson, Morris Cooper, class 12<sup>th</sup>, 115 laps (broken wheel)

1964, Bruce Maher, Morris Cooper, class 1<sup>st</sup>, 124 laps

1965, Barry Ferguson, Morris Cooper, class 5<sup>th</sup>, 115 laps (broken rocker)

1966, Ron Haylen, Morris Cooper S, DNF, Haylen crashed

1967, Barry Seton, Morris Cooper S, class 2<sup>nd</sup>, 127 laps

1968, Don Holland, Morris Cooper S, class 1<sup>st</sup>, 123 laps

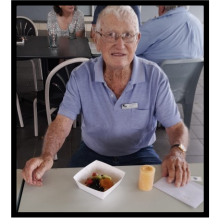
1969, Bill Ford, Falcon XW GT Auto, class 2<sup>nd</sup>, 126 laps

A bit over 20 years ago Charlie asked me “what’s all this Historic racing stuff” and could he come with me to a meeting, this started it, he was hooked, first imparting his advice to me, making suggestions for improvements etc. And then, he could no longer resist, he had to have a go himself, so in his mid 70s he bought a Series 4 Lotus Seven, got a Regularity licence and away he went, with Betty in tow and had a great time for about ten years. Reluctantly, he then sold the Seven and hung up his helmet for the final time.

He continued to accompany me as we travelled to all the Eastern State circuits, spending hours and days together travelling, the Charlie stories kept coming and we had some robust discussions and a few arguments which he invariably won. Charlie won the respect of all he encountered on these trips and we will miss him greatly.



“A remarkable Australian”.



Charlie changing his tyre while the race goes on.  
Bathurst 1963



Charlie ready at hand to do the seatbelt up  
Phillip Island 2016



Charlie as usual helping with the helmet



Charlie with his Falcon GT he raced at Bathurst in 1969, now restored to original.





# INVITATION EVENT

 **DORRIGO SHOW**  
25-26 November 2022

We would like to invite owners of vintage cars, motorbikes and tractors to join us at the Dorrigo Show, Saturday 26 November only. Please arrive at 9.30am and come through the main gate. A cash prize of \$160 will be given to the winner of the People's Choice Award in each category. Proudly sponsored by IGA Dorrigo.



Enjoy horse events, bush dog trials, rides, sideshow alley, ute challenge, beef and dairy cattle judging, a rodeo, music, fireworks and much more.

We look forward to you joining us!



dorrigoshow.com

## MORE THAN JUST A CAR CLUB “Mates for Life”



# CHRISTMAS LUNCH

**JORDAN PAVILLION**

**Saturday 10TH December**

**From 11:30 am**

**Bring table cloths and  
Decorations**

**Plates , dessert bowl, cutlery , drinks and  
glasses ,nibbles to share, coffee mug.**

**Lunch will be Chicken and Ham with  
Salads , Bread roll,  
Pavlova, Cheesecakes, Fruit Salad  
Tea / Coffee/Chocolates**

**Cost \$18/head to be paid into  
Car Club Account by **3rd December**  
BSB : 533000**

**Account number: 10652729**

**In the Reference field put in your Coffs  
C.ex number followed by your surname.**





# Christmas Party Organisation

To help with the organisation and running of the Christmas Lunch I will need volunteers to purchase individual food items, prepare it ready to serve and take it to the venue on the day.

Give the receipt to Ian Reynolds for a full refund.

I will issue quantities the week before.

Please contact Judy Phemister if you are willing to help.

407937327 judenruss72@gmail.com



HAM—Jeff

BBQ Chickens— Judy

Potato Salad-Michael

Pasta Salad-Sandy

Lettuce/tomatoes/ cucumber—Glenda and Pat

Tinned Pineapple rings- Ian W

Beetroot-Cynthia

Boiled Eggs –Merran and Andy

Cheese Slices—Cynthia

Dinner Rolls /Margarine-Lorraine

Cheesecakes-Ken Stanley

Pavlova/cream—Neville Hoy

Fruit Salad Platter from FRESCO — Mike and Kathleen

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