

Foy family's Holden roots

By Danielle Kutchel

Working at General Motors in Dandenong was a good job for a young lad like John Foy.

The long-time Narre Warren North resident worked in the factory for four years in the early 1960s as a spray painter.

Each day he would travel from Clayton to General Motors Station in Dandenong for his shift, as he didn't have a car when he first started the job.

"Having a house was more important than having a car ... I put all my money into having a house, not wasting my money on motor vehicles!" he quipped.

The spray painting job was ideal for Mr Foy as it allowed him to work seven days a week when he wanted to.

There was plenty of overtime too which helped him get set up financially.

His role came to an end though when Holden workers went on strike.

"They were out of work for a month, and when you've got a family and mouths to feed you can't be out of work for that much time, so I went hunting for a new job," Mr Foy explained.

"I never went back to GM."

Following the announcement of Holden's exit from Australia on Monday 17 February, Mr Foy told the Journal that Holden was, in a way, "an Australian icon".

He still owns a 1972 Holden which he hopes to one day get on the road again.

But that's not his only connection to General Motors.

The factory was actually built on Mr Foy's grandfather's farm.

The dairy farm used to stretch from where the freeway meets the highway, along the highway to Eumemmerring Creek.

Grandfather Foy also had land on the south side of the railway line.

A driveway led straight to the house, with the dairy down the back, and, despite all the change and upheaval in the area over several decades, Mr Foy said a big gum tree which once stood sentry at the entrance to the farm is still there.



Former Holden worker John Foy. 164864

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Nostalgia at end of line

The annual All Holden Car Show in Dandenong is a chance to commemorate the soon-to-close iconic brand, say organisers.

"After the sad news this week, it is now time to celebrate what Holden has meant to Australians," Rotarian Colin Byron said.

"You will see some amazing Holdens in all their glory."

More than 150 entries will span much of Holden's 67-year-history as a car maker in Australia.

The show has been run for 12 years by Rotary Club of Endeavour Hills. It also features food trucks, kids activities, car sponsors, car-owner prizes and a raffle.

All car show profits will be donated to Rotary's charities and bushfire relief.

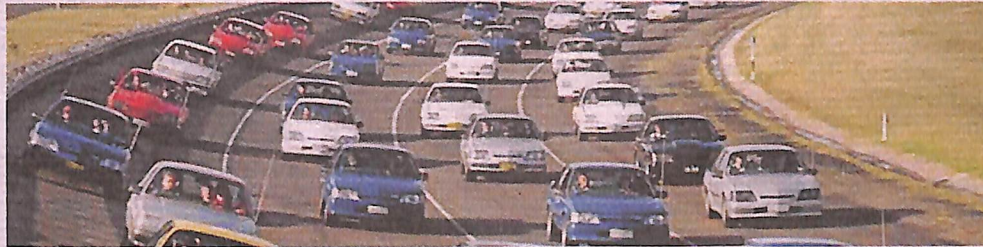
The event is at Dandenong Showgrounds, Bennet Street, Dandenong on Sunday 1 March, 7am-2pm. Entry \$5.

Details: 'Dandenong All Holden Car Show' Facebook site.



Rare Holdens will be on display at the upcoming car show at Greaves Reserve. 178884

Social history of Holdens



Researchers are looking for former Holden workers to document the company's history.

class communities in which they lived, played in Holden's business warrants thorough investigation, as does the effectiveness of the company's attempts to help its workforce transition to new jobs," associate professor Paul

Sendziuk from the University of Adelaide's School of Humanities said.

"Whereas most histories of Holden - and histories of automotive manufacturing in general - focus on the mercurial careers of senior

executives and the cars, this project puts manufacturing workers and places at the centre of the story."

Anyone who worked at any of Holden's Melbourne-based factories, including Dandenong, is eligible to be interviewed as part of the project.

Those with stories to share are urged to contact the researchers via the project website: www.ua.edu.au/holdenhistory, email holdenproject@adelaide.edu.au or telephone on 08 8313 6352.

The project is supported by Australia Research Council, GM Holden, the National Library of Australia, and the National Motor Museum.

Historians at the University of Adelaide and Monash University are searching for former Holden employees to interview about their working experiences for an oral history project to be housed at the National Library of Australia.

Holden ceased manufacturing vehicles in Australia at the end of 2017, ending more than a century of automotive manufacture in this country.

The research team will delve into the memories of those who worked at Holden between 1945 and 2017, in an attempt to unearth the remarkable history of this company and its workers who, for many decades, were so successful in manufacturing vehicles.

"The role that workers, and the working-

Car workers face stand-downs

ABOUT 7500 car industry workers could be stood down by Wednesday unless a dispute at a Gisborne parts factory is resolved.

About 400 workers at Flexdrive Industries meet today to decide if they will comply with an Arbitration Commission order to return to work by 10.30 am.

The workers are on strike over a superannuation claim of \$12.50 a week which is outside the 3 per cent wage guidelines.

One thousand Holden assembly workers in Dandenong were stood down on Thursday night.

Holden's public relations manager John Morrison said if the dispute was resolved today, the workers would return to work tomorrow.

But he said that if the dispute continued the company would have to consider stand-downs at its Elizabeth plant in SA.

About 1800 workers at Nissan's Clayton plant agreed to bring forward two rostered days off, scheduled for next year, to cover work at the plant today and tomorrow.

But Nissan, Mitsubishi and AMI Toyota doubt that stand-

downs can be avoided after Wednesday.

Ford spokesman John Miller said the shortage of parts was now extremely serious.

Flexdrive is Australia's sole supplier of control cables and ventilation parts.

Flexdrive has formally applied to take away the \$10 national pay rise awarded in March and has started the process of taking the union and its members to the Federal Court where \$1000-a-day fines can be imposed for industrial action.

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