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Preserving our Mechanical Heritage

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THE MT ALEXANDER VINTAGE ENGINE CLUB INC. COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES as of 3rd September 2018 NO 234

<p>President Stephen O'Connor 109 Yandoit Creek Rd. Yandoit, Vic 5476 4233</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PRESIDENT'S REPORT.</p> <p>Dear members, The club is impressive! Members are keen to do things on several fronts;- detailed planning for Mucklefest, organising the Vintage & Classic Tractor Pull for Sunday 28th October, improving the entrances to the Dave Bennett Reserve and planning for the Club Shed, all the while pursuing their own special interests in the world of vintage machinery.</p> <p>At the September meeting we heard again the NHMA Tractor Pull Guidelines, particularly as they relate to younger operators. Underage drivers fifteen to seventeen may participate under strict supervision of an adult club member within the fenced compound. Drivers must attend a briefing at the start of the pull. Always start a tractor with a qualified person, able to reach all the controls, in the driver's seat. Driver only during pulling. No passengers are allowed on tractors, drawbars, three-point linkages, carryalls , foot flats or sled.</p> <p>It is good that we can use these nationally-derived rules. It saves the club from developing its own rules at a cost of hours of meeting time.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Steve O'Connor</p> <p>Just a reminder; the next monthly meeting will be held at Muckleford Goods Shed at 7.30 pm Monday 1st October</p>
<p>Vice President Ray Rice</p>	
<p>Secretary Graham Mason, P.O. Box 71 Castlemaine Vic 3450 Ph: 03.54762481</p>	
<p>Treasurer Alan Burgess 0409762367</p>	
<p>Public Officer Secretary</p>	
<p>Committee Jason Williams</p>	
<p>Archives</p>	
<p>Reviewer George Milford</p>	

ATTENDANCE

No	PRESENT			APOLOGIES
1.	J Robinson	13	J Chaplin	P Rautman
2.	P Thompson	14	K Chaplin	D, K A & L Burgess
3.	G Milford	15	J Blake	G & B Tonkin
4.	J Hayes	16	A Chapman	L Williams
5.	J Williams	17	W Mein	E Harvey
6.	A Burgess			M Conn
7.	N Girvan			G Mason
8.	F Girvan			M Mason
9.	L Williams			R Rice
10.	T Dzoiba			L Rice
11.	S O'Connor			G & S McHugh
12.	J Conn			

Attendance/Apologies Moved. J Conn Seconded. N Girvan Carried

Meeting Opened At: 7.34 pm.

Meeting Chaired By:

Stephen O'Connor President

Minutes of Previous Meeting dated 6th August circulated in Newsletter No 233 confirmed. Moved T Dzoiba Seconded J Chaplin Carried.

DISCLAIMER – THE COMMITTEE AND MEMBERS OF MAVEC WILL NOT BE HELD LIABLE FOR ANY ITEM OF ADVICE, RECOMMENDATIONS, SUGGESTIONS, METHODS, FIGURES OR MEASUREMENTS APPEARING IN THE NEWSLETTER. ANY OPINIONS ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE COMMITTEE OR OF THE MEMBERS.

CORRESPONDENCE – Dealt With as Read

INWARD.

- Ballan 'Oily Rag', August 2018
- Royal Historical Society- Posters and renewal
- Baw Baw Newsletter August 2018
- Port Phillip Newsletter August 2018
- Wedderburn "Hit & Miss" June 2018
- Mount Alexander Shire Council re events exhibition.
- Central Goldfields 'The Manifold' August 2018
- Rev & Rec Car Club Newsletter August 2018
- Richmond & Assoc. Asking for signed Application for Insurance.
- Border Flywheelers Newsletter August 2018
- Mare Edwards MP Fuller details of grants on offer.

OUTWARDS:

- Mrs Maree Edwards Thanks for site visit.
- Mount Alexander Shire Council enclosing simplified site plan.

Moved J Blake Seconded J Hayes. Carried

REPORTS

TREASURER'S REPORT.

Alan reported the monthly receipts, payments and balances at bank.
Moved A Burgess Sec. N Girvan, Carried

METCALFE TRACTOR PULL

This is to be held on Sunday 16th September. Small engines will be welcome. Neil and Len Girvan will be taking their tractors. NHMA Tractor Pull Guidelines as they apply to teenage drivers were read and discussed.

Report by Neil Girvan

DRISCOLL AG, MARYBOROUGH

Ted Dzoiba reported that he had found Troy Driscoll, of 'Driscoll Ag', 43 Dunolly Rd, Maryborough, to be very helpful when he went to buy the Round-Up weedicide. Ted has donated 50% of the cost. Thanks Ted. Thanks Troy.

Report by Ted Dzoiba

SPEEWA

Those who attended the Speewa Rally were unanimous in declaring it a great event. There were some beautiful BSA bikes, an unusual Norton Motorbike, steam engines and an excellent display of historic Gardner diesel engines

Report by John Robinson, Jason Williams and John Hayes.

COROWA FUN WEEKEND

John Blake went to Corowa to renew his acquaintance with the tractor that he has stored there. The owners of thirty tractors took the opportunity to have a try-out pulling the sled in readiness for the dinky-di competition to be held next March.

Report by John Blake

MALDON VINTAGE MACHINERY MUSEUM

MVMM has been the subject of some pretty good publicity in The Weekly Times. Sandy Creek Clydesdales were featured in the previous issue. MVMM intends to re-arrange the museum site to make the entry point at the top of the hill, making it more visible from the main street. A funding application has been put together and is listed in the "Pick my Project" website . Peter asks all members to vote for the MVMM project before the closing date. "Big vote count equals big dollars", says Peter.

Report by Peter Thompson.

ROBINVALE RURAL LIFE MUSEUM

Robinvale's Rural Life Museum features a working 1897 'Hercules' Gas Engine (one of only 3 in the world) plus an extensive display of olden-day tractors, the majority of which are in working order, including a 1935 Lanz Bulldog and Fordson Dextas. The museum is open on Thursdays and Saturdays displaying farming tools and equipment, signs, Depression-era hand-made tools and implements, Travelling homewards from Mildura, Steven was attracted from his lunch by the sound of a hit'n'miss engine and he was particularly taken by a three-bag concrete batching plant.

Report by Stephen O'Connor.

MUCKLEFEST

Working bees to prepare the ground for Mucklefest are to be held on 15th Sept, 7th Oct and 21st Oct. It was resolved to upgrade the entry points by (1) building a crossing using , say, three lengths of concrete pipe at the gate nearest our containers and (2) to lay down some ballast at the car park gates with a covering of gravel over the ballast. (Suitable arrangements are to be made with VGR as to the ballast.) VGR will provide four twelve-foot gates to be set up at the entrances (on the rail allotment) on either side of the rail track on Muckleford-Walmer Road frontage. This will be a great help in controlling traffic on the big days.

Considerable planning has been done by the representatives of VGR, MVMM, Walmer CFA and MAVEC, with a lot of attention being given to ensuring decent flow of traffic. Public parking is to be north side of Chapman's Lane with trailer and exhibitor parking elsewhere. Distinct areas have been set aside for

- engine display
- trailer and exhibitor parking
- historic cars
- caravan display
- corporate displays
- working horse area
- entertainment
- Craft market with 42 stalls
- Tractor Pull
- MVMM
- disabled parking
- toilets & showers
- motorbike display
- Jumping Castle and
- food stalls.

The whole site plan is all set out on paper and agreed between the four promoter groups. Full marks to the planning committee! It may be possible to obtain the loan of a diesel generator to provide power for lighting and food stalls. (Some vendors will bring their own power) In the meantime John Blake and John Robinson are getting the fine detail ready for the Vintage Tractor Pull.

GENERAL BUSINESS

If you have something to sell or need a special part or treasure let Peter, Alan Or Graham know and we will put your request in the newsletter.

If you are going to display your treasures at a Rally that has not been through the Minutes of the Club meeting please let the Sec. know for insurances purposes.

THE CHAMBERLAIN TRACTOR TANDEM

It was resolved to obtain the services of Doug Parsons tilt tray to remove the last of this unit from Laurie Adams' paddock.

CHAPMANS LANE

It was moved P Thompson , seconded A Chapman, that a letter be sent to the Shire seeking the grading and re-sheeting of Chapman's Rd so as to be better prepared for events at the Club Reserve. Copies are to be sent to Crs Cordy and Niemann. Carried,

WATER TANK

It was moved J Williams, seconded T Dzoiba that the Secretary make application to FRRR for funds with which to purchase a 7,500 gallon poly water tank , pump and two tankers of water. The funding application is to be made by 28th Sept. Carried.

KITCHEN FOR CLUB SHED

It was moved K Chaplin, seconded T Dzoiba that the club acquire a secondhand kitchen, including benchtops, dishwasher, cooktop and oven, at the offer price of \$500.00. Carried

COMING EVENTS

WHEN	WHERE	
SEPTEMBER	8 th ./9 th . 15 th / 16 th 16 th . 22 nd . 22 nd . 22 nd ./23 rd . 30 th .	Wedderburn Twilight Rally Annual Spring Rally, Deniliquin Metcalf Vintage Tractor Pull Glenlyon Swap Meet Bendigo VACC Centennial Show n Shine Goldfields Rally, Dunolly Ballan Tractor Trek
OCTOBER	6 th ./7 th . 27th / 28th. 28 th .	Murtoa Vintage Rally Mucklefest Talbot Swap Meet
NOVEMBER	3 rd /4 th 17 th ./18 th .	Lake Goldsmith (<i>70 yrs of Land Rover</i>) Bendigo Swap Meet
2019		
FEBRUARY	17 th .	Ballan Rally (<i>Feature Ronaldson-Tippet</i>)
APRIL	13th/14th.	MAVEC Rally at Dave Bennett Reserve Meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

Next meeting 7.30pm Monday 1st. October at Muckleford

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HAVE A LARRFF

A fellow stuck his head into a barbershop and asked, How long before I can get a haircut? The barber looked around the shop full of customers and said, about 2 hours. The man left. A few days later, the same fellow stuck his head in the door and asked, how long before I can get a haircut? The barber looked around at the shop and said, about 3 hours... The man left. A week later, the same fellow stuck his head in the shop and asked, how long before I can get a haircut? The barber looked around the shop and said, about an hour and a half. The man left. The barber turned to his friend and said, hey, Bob, do me a favour. Follow that man and see where he goes. He keeps asking how long he has to wait for a haircut, but then he doesn't ever come back. A little while later, Bob returned to the shop, laughing hysterically. The barber asked, So, where does he go when he leaves? Bob looked up, wiped the tears from his eyes and said, "Your house!"

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LATE NEWS

There will be a meal provided by the MVMM on Saturday night, 27th October, at Mucklefest. Free for those who assist at the event. Those who would like to bring a Salad or Sweet to share would be welcome.
Entertainment; - Local talent, - will follow.

RIVETTING STUFF!

A major step forward in the construction of bridges, boilers, pipes and steel-hulled ships took place in the years 1922-1924 with the introduction of electric welding. Our local engineers Thompson & Co (Castlemaine) Pty Ltd were well to the fore in this development.

Prior to this, we are told, by Mike Williams in his thesis 'Thompsons of Castlemaine 1865-1925', "the noise of the boiler shop must have been frightful. Boilers of many types were fabricated there, and riveting, plate shearing and hole punching went on, often into the night. These noises would have been augmented by caulking of plate joints and the scream of grinding to chamfer plates to provide smooth fits for overlapping plates. Early hole-punching machines were gradually replaced by drilling machines and jigs to provide much greater accuracy of hole alignment in plates which had to be rolled into circular form and matched both axially and circumferentially to others. The rolling process was far from precise, and the cylinder of riveted plates had to be joined to a circular end plate, frequently ordered from a company in Melbourne, with its edges ostensibly bent to fit the inside diameter of this far-from-determinate aperture. It is difficult to imagine how this potential for misfits could ever have been resolved for one pressure vessel, let alone the hundreds that the company produced. Riveting progressed from hand-hammering - peening - the hot rivet to hydraulic and pneumatic riveting, which, if it reduced the physical effort, increased the noise level" ⁱ

In the early 1920s Thompsons became aware of the experiments in structural welding conducted by Mr J N Reeson on behalf of the Metropolitan Gas Co. Construction of a 3,000,000 cubic feet gasholder for South Melbourne in 1922 demonstrated novel methods for joining steel plates and evoked strong interest. Other gas holders and their framing, retort houses and other structures followed, using the new welding method. ⁱⁱ

However, in 1924 Thompsons & Co (Castlemaine) Pty Ltd took the plunge and erected a modern plant at its Williamstown works for the manufacture of large welded mild-steel pipes. The plant was designed to make pipes up to six feet in diameter and thirty feet long. The plant included heavy tools for planing, pressing and testing pipes of this size as well as a dipping and coating plant of the same capacity. The factory was opened by the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr Pratton) on 8th December 1924 when the new Cutler-Marsden electric welding machines were inaugurated. The Hon. Mr Pratton was photographed for "The Age" newspaper while admiring the application of the new technique to the welding of steel pipes.ⁱⁱⁱ

These Cutler-Marsden electric welding machines had been invented in Australia. The inventors guaranteed that their machines would give a weld of equal strength to the material being welded in plate in either built or lap joints, that the weld would be free of slag or oxide inclusions and therefore not liable to corrosion and would be four to seven times as rapid as hand welding while the weld would be of no greater hardness than the material being welded.^{iv}

At that time (1922/23) the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works called tenders for the supply of 24 miles of 46 and 54 inch diameter steel pipes. This was an exciting business opportunity. Thompsons & Co (Castlemaine) Pty Ltd found

that automatic electric welding of steel pipe had been trialled at the Walsh Island Workshops in NSW. Thompsons secured from the inventors (A E Cutler & P A Marsden) the sole right of manufacture and use in the State of Victoria. No similar welding machines had been used in any other part of the world. The new machines had been taken, early in 1924, to London and demonstrated, and the welds carried out were tested by the National Physical Laboratory in London with splendid results. Under test the plate had failed and not the weld, a result which, the testers admitted, would have appeared to be almost impossible.

It was believed there was to be a very great future for these welding machines, as they eliminated the human element. In the past electric welding had always been a very difficult matter, as there had always been the danger that a careless operator would make a faulty weld, but these machines were of such an automatic nature that an unskilled operator could make a perfect weld.^v Messrs. Thompson and Co. then manufactured a number of the Cutler-Marsden patent electric welding machines at their Castlemaine works. The machines were to be used at Thompson's new pipe works, Williamstown, which had been specially erected for the manufacture of welded steel pipes from steel plate.

The welding of the plates by the machines involved a fully automated process. For the longitudinal seams the machine traversed, fed and maintained a constant length of arc quite automatically and the arc itself was controlled by a magnetic field. For the circumferential welding a semi-automatic machine was employed, automatically maintaining a correct length of arc but traversing the pipe by hand.^{vi}

The adoption of this process by Thompsons was a pioneering step. Apart from the manufacture of gas-holders there had been little use of the technique in civil construction. It took some time for the process to be utilised in the fabrication of highway and railway bridges. In the early planning for the combined highway and railway bridge over the Murray River at Echuca it was estimated that over ten miles of welding would be required. This was to be the first extensive application of the electric welding process in bridge work anywhere in the world. The bridge was built, using this technique, in 1925. It was not until 1928 that welded building construction was initiated.^{vii}

It must have dramatically transformed boiler-making at Thompsons when they replaced the hot, noisy and imprecise art of riveting with the modern technique of automatic and semi-automatic welding. Residents of Mount Alexander Shire should be proud of the technological advances initiated or first put to practical use by imaginative and bold citizens of this Shire.

ⁱ Mike Williams, 'Thompsons of Castlemaine 1865-1925' unpublished thesis ,page 101

ⁱⁱ Dr J G Burnell "Industrial Development" Institution of Engineers Aust, 1934, page 411

ⁱⁱⁱ "The Age" 9th. December 1924.

^{iv} Booklet "Cutler-Marsden Electric Welding Machines" , by Thompsons & Co (Castlemaine)

^v "The Age" 26th September 1924

^{vi} Dr J G Burnell "industrial Development" Institution of Engineers Aust 1934, page 410

^{vii} Dr J G Burnell "Industrial Development" Institution of Engineers Aust 1934, page 411

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 864 Castlemaine Road
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 3463
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 Fax. +61 (0)3 54752929
 Mob. +61 (0)407 562871
 Mob. +49 172 7090866
 john@schwa.com.au
 ABN 46 408 270 040

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Parsons
 Motor and Body Shop
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 admin@parsonsmotorbody.com.au
 2 Langslow St / PO Box 447 Castlemaine, VIC 3450

ASQ
 GARDEN & LANDSCAPE
 ABN 63 089 515 659
 EAGLEHAWK: P 03 5446 1292 E reception@asq.net.au
 CASTLEMAINE: P 03 5472 4053 E castlemaine@asq.net.au
 W WWW.ASQ.NET.AU