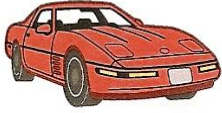


MarqueTIMES



The Official Newsletter of the
MARQUE SPORTS CAR REGISTER NORTH QUEENSLAND Inc.



OCTOBER 2010



THE EDITOR TAKES A RIDE IN ONE OF USA'S ICONIC SUPERCARS - THE CHEVY CORVETTE

See Wilf's North American Travelogue Page 5

IN THIS ISSUE : Office Bearers 2010 - A Note from The Editor - Events Calendar 2010 - CHRISTMAS PARTY AND TROPHY PRESENTATION DETAILS: RSVP BY 13TH NOVEMBER - President's Blog - Wilf's North American Travelogue.

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Back from the rigors of touring North America and looking forward to getting back into the club events. But first I have to clear the cobwebs from the old TC and TR 2 and replenish the fluids which have leaked out (like all fine British machinery) onto the garage floor while we've been away.

The story of our interesting trip has been written up in some detail and I trust members will find it informative. With a little bit of initiative, you can have a really way-out experience in the US of A.

Wilf Hardy.



HIGH END RADIO CONTROLLED

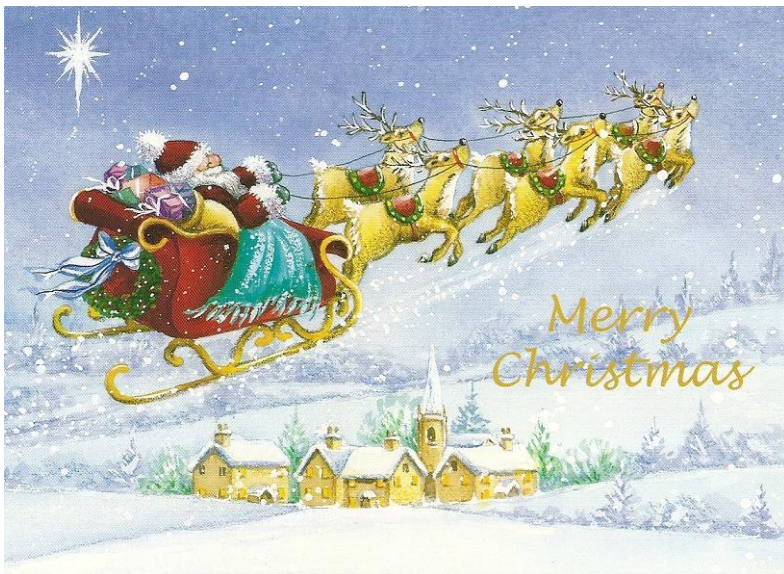
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EVENTS CALENDAR 2010

- OCTOBER** - Sunday 24th. Drive Day. **Meet at the Dalrymple Hotel car park 9.00am, drive to Hervey Range Heritage Tea Rooms for morning tea.**
- NOVEMBER** - Sunday 7th. Cruise for a Cause. **Starts at Willows Shopping Town 9.00am and cruise to The Strand for a car show until 2.00pm.**
Sunday 14th. Drive Day. Destination yet to be decided.
- Mareeba Bitumen Sprint Series.
Saturday 20th. Christmas Party and Trophy Presentation, NQ Club Denham St. City.
Sunday 28th. Drive Day.
- DECEMBER** - Sunday 11th. Christmas Lights Cruise.
Thursday 16th. Tavern Dinner.



**THE MOST IMPORTANT SOCIAL EVENT
OF THE YEAR**

**ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY AND
TROPHY PRESENTATION**

SATURDAY 20TH NOVEMBER

6.30PM FOR 7.00PM

NORTH QUEENSLAND CLUB

146 DENHAM ST. CITY

**RSVP TO SANDRA NO LATER THAN 13TH NOVEMBER TO PERMIT FINALISATION OF CATERING
ARRANGEMENTS - PH 47518113 OR malsanburgess@hotmail.co.uk**

Cost is \$30 per person after the Club has subsidised the cost of the meal. The Club will also put \$500 on the bar. Payment required by 13th November cash or cheque to Sandra Burgess 11 Margarita Ct. Bushland Beach 4818, or Michael Seymour WESTFIL, Unit 2, U2/32 Carmel St. Garbutt 4814.

As in previous years, members may expect a sumptuous feast. The menu comprises cold selection of potato and egg salad, Greek salad, green salad, bread rolls and butter. Hot selection, grilled fish with lemon-butter sauce, roast beef and gravy, ricotta tortellini in parmesan cream cheese, steamed green beans and carrots, roast potato, pumpkin and sweet potato. Dessert will be homemade apple crumble with brandy custard and also pavlova.



PRESIDENT'S BLOG

Once again we have had a very busy month, and it is not going to drop off at all.

We had our Pubs of Townsville dinner on 30th September, and once again it was well attended. 36 Marquers came along for a very nice meal, and the venue gave me an idea for one of our drive days later on. We will have a casual drive, followed by wine tasting and then we will stop for dinner. I will let all know when we will do this.



PHOTOS FROM THE TAVERN DINNER ON 30TH SEPTEMBER



We then had 2 drive days, one social and one charity drive. They were both fun, but the most satisfying part of the 2 drives was the assistance we gave Mal and Sandra Burgess in raising over \$1500 for Heart Kids Australia. The club gave a \$500 donation, with the rest coming from the visitors who went there for morning tea. And I will say, it was a lovely morning tea with both Donn and Michele telling me how good the cup cakes were. I am starting to think they felt I was fading away and needed to bolster my flagging stamina, or maybe my shrinking waist. Ha, I think they both need glasses.

Then last weekend we had the V8 track sprint. It was a great event, won convincingly by Grant Cooper in the mighty Godzilla. A great job was done by the team of officials and volunteers who helped to set up and pull down the track. I thank them all for the herculean effort they all put in.

Now, looking ahead, this weekend we have a social drive to Herveyø Range, followed by a charity drive / car show organized by one of our club members, David Soelberg, on the 7th of November. And just to round it out, another drive day on the 14th.

Then of course, we have our Christmas Party on the 20th. All should come along for a great night of socializing and enjoying the success of the last year.

See you on the road.

Zeds Rule

Michael

WILF'S NORTH AMERICAN TRAVELOGUE

This was our eighth trip to North America and we expect it will be our last, what with advancing years and ongoing health issues. As usual, we took the fasted way, i.e. Torille - Brisbane - LA, with the Brizzie - LA leg 13 hours non-stop, then an overnight stay in LA to help get over the exhausting flight. Fortunately, our hotel was well insulated, so we heard nothing of the police sirens and Puerto Rican riot which took place in the nearby down-town area. The next day we took the four hour flight to Calgary in Canada, to spend a couple of days with Helen's cousins. We were surprised to be taken to the opening night of the 2010 season of the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, something unusual for us, but surprisingly enjoyable.



Left: Banff village - very Swiss in appearance with the rugged Canadian Rocky Mountains in the background.

Right: The view out from the 100 year - old Chateau Lake Louise.

We drove to Banff National Park, only an hour and a half from Calgary and we will always remember the incredible beauty of those rugged Canadian Rocky Mountains and the beautiful lakes. It was only 10 days into Fall (Autumn) but the temperature did not rise over 10 degrees C - don't go there in the winter as it gets down to *minus 45 C!*



Left: Beautifully restored '71 Corvette Stingray.

I noted a Chevy Corvette parked in the driveway next to Helen's cousin's house and was introduced to the owner - he has *three* Corvettes and two BMWs! The newer *vette* has a 7 litre engine producing 550 BHP, gets up to 100km/h in 3.2 seconds and has a top speed of 320 km/h! We went for a short drive and although the potential of this incredible sports car was not demonstrated, I was left with no doubt it is a supercar. The view over the low carbon-fibre bonnet was excellent, the seats are deep, very supportive and set very low, with the door sill about hip height and the centre transmission tunnel quite a bit higher. As you would expect in a high performance car like this, the suspension was very stiff. I've never been that impressed with the older American sports cars, but am I ever impressed now - these new

vettes are an *express!* Inside the two car garage sat a '71 Stingray which was the couple's courting car, located and re-purchased about ten years ago and now almost completely restored. This guy is a rev head like most of us, garaging the two *vettes* and leaving the 5 Series BMW out in the weather! His other cars are kept garaged elsewhere.

We re-entered the US through Immigration at Calgary airport on the anniversary of 9/11 and the expected heightened security was fierce. The best way to handle this, is to keep your mouth shut and do exactly as directed - and don't even *think* the *no*-word! Shoes and belt off, pockets emptied, then through the metal detector, then the full body x-ray. You are told to raise your hands above the head, which was a problem as they still had my belt and I had to spread my knees to stop my pants falling down! We flew to Chicago's O'Hare airport, a huge centre, with the aircraft taxiing for ever to reach the American Eagle (American Airline regional airline) terminal - about as big as Brisbane domestic terminal just for the one airline, with about 40 aircraft parked around it. We then flew on to Hartford Connecticut, when son Mike and his family met us and we picked up our rental car, a *compact*+Chevy Cobalt.

Now I've driven many miles in the US, the first time being when I bought a used De Soto coupe in '65 when on a study assignment and drove it around the San Francisco Bay area for six months. On subsequent trips I've either had a rental or driven son Mike's cars. But it always takes a little time to get used to being on the wrong side of the road, the wrong

side of the car and the wild driving habits of Americans. The biggest problem is at intersections when I have to keep repeating *keep to the right, keep to the right, keep to the right*. I usually end up on the left at least once a trip and this visit was no different - it's a bit frightening to suddenly see a wall of cars coming straight at you! The other problem is keeping in the centre of your lane on those multi-lane highways. We are not used to lining up on the left lane marker from the left of the car and invariably drift to the right, until awakened by irate horn blowers. We drove on 10 lane highways this time (5 each way separated by either a broad nature strip of substantial wall), although a few years back I drove into Baltimore Maryland on an 18 lane highway, which was a bit daunting. The slow lane is the one on the right, but you don't dare stay in it as everyone is driving like a bat out of hell and you suddenly find yourself on an off-ramp, then have the battle of trying to find your way back onto the highway. The on-ramps have a short straight where you accelerate up to match the traffic, then merge - don't ask what happens if they won't let you in, with the end of the ramp racing up on

you! The speed limits are usually 40 mph minimum and 65 mph maximum. I only saw anyone driving at 40 mph once and that was an old guy in a '60s Jag Mk2 holding up everyone! No one drives at 65; they are all doing 75 - 80mph and with only about two car lengths separation. If you slow down to give yourself a margin of safety, some clown will change lanes and you're back to a two car lengths separation again. And they do this no matter if it's wet or dry. No wonder they have such spectacular pile-ups!

Left: The Chevy Cobalt rental parked outside Mike's house. The houses look terrific, but are very lightly built from mainly wood-chip board, ply and plastics - the imitation weatherboard walls are thin vinyl sheets.



Quiet Sunday traffic on the way North on I 91 (Interstate 91) from Cheshire to Hartford Connecticut.

I saw a few old Brits around, including a Spriget, Spitfire and a very nicely restored Healey 3000 drop-head. I passed a big enclosed trailer towed by a Chevy ute once, with the MG logo and *Safety Fast* on all sides. Most of the restored classic owners trailer their cars rather than drive them apparently.

Mike loaned me a Sat-Nav, which helped a lot in not getting lost too often as you just don't have time to read a map and on most highways, stopping is an absolute no-no. As anyone who has used these modern wonders knows, they are not fool-proof and after driving in circles at one stage and finally working out the darned thing was telling me to turn right instead of left, I lost some confidence in the thing, which then got me into trouble. I was trying to get onto the Massachusetts Turnpike at Springfield, ignored the Sat-Nav and ended up on the Pike okay, but going East to Boston instead of West toward Buffalo!

We made two side trips from Mike's home, the first being to Foxwoods Casino Resort, which is an Indian Reservation establishment. There are a number of casinos throughout the US on Indian land, not paying Federal taxes and set up to support the native peoples. Foxwoods is the largest casino complex in the world, with 6 casinos, 5 hotels, 30 restaurants, a 4,000 seat Bingo Hall and 7,600 slot machines, shopping arcades and entertainment. Apart for the obvious reason for staying in these places, the attraction is good quality, cheap hotels and restaurants.

The other side trip from Mike's home, was one we have made before and so much enjoyed; the 1,000 mile round trip to Niagara Falls. We drove North out of Connecticut, through Massachusetts, West into New York State, then by the Thruway to Buffalo. Interstate 90 runs roughly parallel with the border between the US and Canada, just South of Lake Ontario, bypassing the cities of Albany, Utica, Syracuse, Rochester to Buffalo. Turning North, it is then only about 50 miles to Niagara Falls. We broke the journey and stayed in the Indian Reservation Casino/Hotel of Turning Stone, a beautifully landscaped property with two 18 hole golf courses which hosts rounds of the PGA. The hotel was superb, although the casino is a bit strange being the only cashless casino we've ever been to.



Left: Turning Stone Casino/Hotel. Another Indian Reservation property situated near Syracuse NY State.

There is the town of Niagara Falls in New York State, which is a bit of a dump, or you can cross the border into the Canadian State of Ontario, where there is the Canadian city of Niagara Falls. This is where we went. The city is a major holiday spot and noticeably cheaper than the US. It rained for much of the day, although that was not an issue as we've been there before. The trip proved to be very pretty, as the leaves of the deciduous trees were turning yellow and red and falling to form a lovely carpet in the forests as the winter approached.



The incredibly beautiful Niagara Falls, the smaller American Falls on the left and the Canadian Horseshoe Falls to the right. The Maid of the Mist boats can be seen taking tourists to the base of the Falls.



Before we left Connecticut we did a little cultural touring, visiting the heritage listed house of Mark Twain (author of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn) and Harriet Beecher Stowe House (author of Uncle Tom's Cabin and a fearless anti-slavery activist of the 1850s). This was really fascinating as the former is preserved as it was in the 1870s.

Left: The preserved 1870s home of Mark Twain in Hartford Connecticut. Absolutely fascinating.

We also visited the New England Air Museum at Hartford airport. Now I've visited the Smithsonian Institute and the Nation Air and Space Museum in Washington DC on two occasions, but the Hartford attraction had me absolutely

spellbound. The WW2 fighters and bombers looked as if you could tow them to the flight line, start them up and fly them

away! Surprisingly, there were several cars from the 1930s parked under the wings of the older aircraft.



Left: Incredible! A 1936 Cord 810 Phaeton parked under the wing of a Sikorsky S-39 seaplane, New England Air Museum.

The New England area of the US is a very historic place. Driving North from Mike's home in Cheshire, you pass the now derelict Colt Firearm Company factory where the famous Colt 45 revolver of the outlaw days was made, then nearby in Simsbury is the original Noble Dynamite factory, still producing explosives, even though the village has grown right to the walls of the building! Just over the border in Springfield Massachusetts, the Springfield rifle of the Civil War was manufactured.

One of the things Aussies find difficult to adapt to in the US is the tipping. The service workers are paid a miserable \$6.50 per hour and they rely on tips to bring in an adequate income. You are expected to tip about 15% of the bill and it is something you just have to accept. If you don't tip the taxi drivers they are likely to throw your bags into the gutter! I guess on this trip we gave away about \$500. The other thing is the language. If you insist on saying *tomato* instead of their *tomayto*, you just get a blank stare. If you ask the whereabouts of the *toilet* you get the same reaction - you have to ask the whereabouts of the *baaaaaathroom* (using a hard *a* as in *bat*). A few years ago, I rang to order a taxi and when asked my name, rounded the *h* as they do. In fact I said my name twice. That was the last time I tried to pronounce my name as Americans do, as, when the taxi arrived the driver said he was looking for *Howdy Hardy!*

I've never seen so many grossly obese people in all my days! Of course they live off McDonalds; we tried to dine at Subway where we could for lunch, asking them not to flood the 6 inch sub with mayo or mustard. The trouble is, you get a nice looking sub of roast beef and carefully selected salad, with a little salt and pepper only to find it's about as tasty as chewing on a lump of cardboard! No wonder they flood everything with condiments. Every table has a bottle of A1 Steak Sauce on it. We got to the stage where, when we went to a restaurant for dinner, we'd only order one meal and share it, as it was invariably *huge*. One night we decided to share a genuine Southern Fried Chicken to see what it was like. The thing was so big I thought it had to be half an Emu! It was soon time to say farewell to Mike, Ruby and our three little US born Grandsons, return the rental after putting 1,300 miles on it and head to the fabulous city of Las Vegas.

Forget what you see on the TV; *Vegas* may be known as *Sin City* and there is some basis for that name, but it is much, much more. The city has not made its major income from gambling for some years. It is now a major Convention destination, a major up-market shopping centre, a stepping off spot for skiing, tours of Mojave Desert and Death Valley, The Grand Canyon, Lake Mead and Hoover Dam, a playground for kids with giant roller coasters and acres of kids shows. Drive a Ferrari, Porche or Lambo around a race track, fire a real sub-machine gun, see the million lights display etc. It is now home to many retirees in the massive multi-story apartment buildings lining Las Vegas Boulevard. It is the world show capitol; see *Phantom of the Opera*, where \$40 m was spent on the sets and the show will run for 20 years. Our favourite is *Jubilee*, a cast of 100, the guys dancing in top hats and tails, the girls in, well, not very much (I've seen it twice)! This time we chose to see the Cirque du Soleil production *Ka*, a fantasy set in the spirit world featuring much high trapeze; a fabulous circus based show. I flew over the Grand Canyon for the third time and I could never tire of that amazing sight. But for me, the real attraction is the Auto Collection in the Imperial Palace Casino.

I never tire of the fabulous sight of the 1.5 km deep Grand Canyon - my third flight over it, with the Colorado River below.

The Auto Collection has changed from a museum to a display and exhibition of classics for sale. At any time there are up to \$300 million of beautifully restored vehicles. Billed the largest classic car collection in the world, I could spend hours viewing the exhibits. I'm told Jay Leno and Wayne Newton may have more valuable collections, but that is hard to believe.

The following photos show just a small selection of what was there when I visited this time:

I've been to motoring Heaven.....





1937 Mercedes Benz 540K Special Roadster
\$ 7,500,000 - That's seven point five million !



1939 Mayback - 1 of 2 built - POA



1930 Isotta Fraschini Tipo 8A - \$950,000



Genuine C Type Jaguar NFS



1930 Duesenberg J - 1 of 4 built - NFS



1934 Morgan Super Sports - NFS

After twelve days in that amazing city of Las Vegas, it was time to return to Townsville. If that's our last trip to North America, then we've gone out on a real high.

Wilf Hardy

The Burgess Family would like to express a big **THANK YOU** for the donations given by the club and individual members to **HEART KIDS AUSTRALIA**. Also for sharing the morning with us and making it such a huge success. We raised a grand total of \$1,550. Once again thank you for your support.

Regards to all,

Sandra.

Cruise for a Cause

Diary date claimer:
Sunday, 7 November 2010

North Queensland regional car and bike enthusiasts will join together to drive home a message about safety on our roads and "Cruise for a Cause" to highlight Spinal Injuries Awareness Week on Sunday, 7 November 2010.

For more information, please phone:

David Soelberg on 0418 155 728 or
Darryl Henderson on 0429 424 746

- ◊ Road trauma is the main cause of spinal cord injuries in Queensland each year.
- ◊ Every year in Queensland around 90 people sustain a spinal cord injury, a disappointing average of around one person every four days.

Spinal Injuries
ASSOCIATION
Empowering people for 50 years



Cruise for a Cause is a free community event and will begin at Willows Shoppingtown at 9am, before the cruise to Strand Park from 9.30am where the cars will remain on show until 2pm.

Register online at:
www.spinal.com.au





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