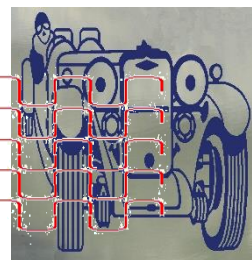


**SINGERGRAM**

**December 2023 Vol. 36 No.4**



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## POSSIBLY THE 2023 BAY TO BIRDWOOD'S YOUNGEST ENTRANT!



**A**GED not yet 3, at Civic Park, Modbury, this young bystander expressed interest in driving the Singergram's editor's 4A roadster all the way to Birdwood. His application was immediately accepted on the basis he had announced his favourite colour is green. However his wise parents only allowed him to explore the road from the driver's seat!

It was a cold, windy and rainy start at Glenelg for this year's Bay to Birdwood. I travelled alone as my intended young passengers had come down with COVID just a couple of days before (but they've booked in for next year, though!). The weather gradually brightened up along Anzac Highway, but I thought the numbers of roadside spectators were much thinner than 10 years ago. Moreover, there were fewer pre-1950 vehicles than post-1950. I estimated only about 15% of the vehicles starting at Glenelg were pre-1950. Encouragingly, there were a few interstate registered cars, but only one other Singer apart from mine, the driver's club affiliation was unstated, possibly a country or interstate driver.*[continued, page 3]*

# SINGER CAR CLUB OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA Inc

*(To preserve the marque and unite the owners)*

**Meetings are held on the second Monday of selected months at:**

Seven22 Bistro, 722 Port Rd, Beverley

Meet at 6.00 pm for a great meal or just attend the meeting from 7.00 pm.

## OFFICERS FOR 2023

<b>President</b>	<b>Jeff Vale</b> PO Box 572, Greenock 5360	0427 152 029 (M) singercarclubsa@gmail.com
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Ivan Margitich</b>	(08) 8295 5692 (H) singercarclubsa@gmail.com
<b>Secretary (incl minutes sec)</b>	<b>Stephen Bitmead</b>	(08) 8254 2716 (H) thebitmeads@gmail.com
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Rob Martin</b> 1 Thornton St Angle Vale SA 5117	0400 010 636 (M) singercarclubsa@bigpond.com
<b>Spare Parts Officers</b>	<b>Stephen Bitmead</b> <b>Stephen Schild</b>	(08) 8254 2716 (H) 0419 848 512 (M)
<b>Events Coordinator</b>	<b>Stephen Bitmead</b>	(08) 8254 2716 (H)
<b>Conditional Registration Officers</b>	<b>Rob Martin</b> <b>Ivan Margitich</b> <b>John Eason</b> <b>Peter Wright</b>	(08) 8284 7947 (H) (08) 8295 5692 (H)
<b>Editor, Singergram</b>	<b>Trevor Bailey</b>	0402 434 398 (M) singergramsingergram@gmail.com
<b>Media Officer</b>	<b>Stephen Schild</b>	0419 848 512 (M)
<b>Web Master</b>	<b>Stephen Schild</b>	0419 848 512 (M)
<b>Singer Car Club of Australia Secretary</b>	<b>Marilyn Threlfall</b>	0429 300 783 (M) rtmt@karalee.com.au
<b>Magazine Editor</b>	<b>David Howell</b>	0405 007 700 (M) david@kokodahistorical.com.au

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## SINGERGRAM EDITOR & CONTACT DETAILS

Editor: Trevor Bailey, tel. 0402 434 398

[singergramsingergram@gmail.com](mailto:singergramsingergram@gmail.com)

**Please send all material for the next edition to the above email address by 10 March 2024**

**Note, it is not necessary for articles to be about Singers — anything of interest to members will be considered.**

**Trevor**

*2023 Bay to Birdwood, continued: pictures at the start*





## CAPTAIN PROUD LUNCH CRUISE

**W**E COULDN'T have wished for better weather on Tuesday, 7th November. Not just for the Melbourne Cup, but for the more leisurely lunchtime cruise on the Murray, aboard the PS Captain Proud. Thanks to Winston and Mary Bryant from the Humber Club, this excellent cruise attracted 52 participants across all four clubs for a fantastic Combined Rootes Group event.



Guests arrived at the Murray Bridge Wharf around 10.30 am where friendly greetings, renewed acquaintances and new introductions were made. It wasn't long before we were ushered aboard the Paddle Steamer Captain Proud by Captain Josh and his helpful crew. After everyone settled into their seats and a brief but all-important safety message from the Captain, we departed the wharf with the steady and calming throb of the paddle wheels as the backdrop for lively conversation.



It wasn't long before our orders were taken for a very tasty two-course lunch with the bar doing a steady trade for refreshments. While the Melbourne Cup is purported to be the "race that stops the nation", there was no way it was going to interfere with our cruise! Yes, there was some chat about who was going to win and who had a bet on, but the main topic of conversation was the magnificent views of the river and the bird life around it. There were many comments on how the impact from the recent floods was hardly noticeable after such a short time. Several people, who hadn't been to Murray Bridge for quite a while also commented on the great changes and improvements that had taken place since they were last in the area.





Many of us took the opportunity to climb up to the top deck and view the wheelhouse and panoramic views of the mighty Murray. There was a lot of activity on the river with many boats, wake-boarders and kayakers enjoying the warm weather. I watched a group of youngsters having a go on standup paddle boards — not for me I don't think – I would spend more time in the water than on the board! It certainly looked like fun.

To sum up, I didn't hear a single negative comment about the cruise or the lunch, and Winston and Mary should be congratulated for organising an event that was so well received by all who attended.

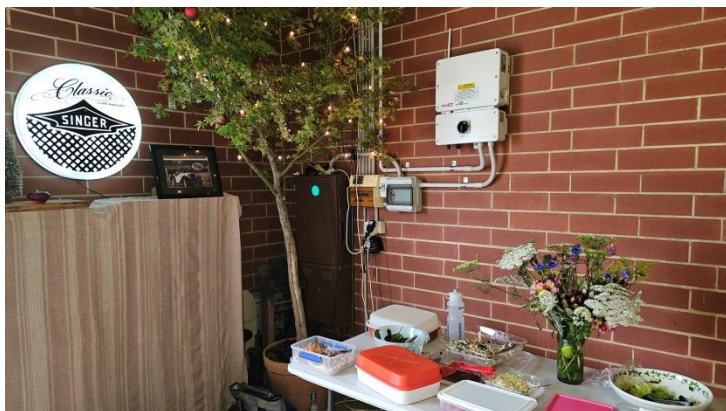
Jeff Vale, plus photos from Stephen and Wendy Bitmead





# SA SINGER CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY 10 DECEMBER 2023 AT THE MARGITICH HOME

Ivan and I are now regrouping after our Singer Christmas celebrations.



Our celebration evolved into an inside event as weather was unfriendly with the whole gamut of rain, wind and low temperatures. What started out to be a garden-type show was shelved to become a garage party. We thought we decorated out the garages quite well, evoking the Christmas spirit, turning a large potted Japanese Maple into a decorated Xmas tree. It helped cover our electric and solar installations and dangling lights hung from our beams. We did feel let down by the windy conditions as no way could the front garage doors be kept open to allow people to enjoy the front garden outlook and even if weather improved (Ha Ha!) and move out to sit under our large umbrellas. Thank you winds and low temps for your disruptive conditions.





Option three was for everyone inside and sitting at tables in dining room with eight or so gathering around, and another where ten could sit overlooking our side patio. Ninety-three year old Arthur Ackland brought his cold collation and was most happy to sit and observe us all in a lounge chair. It was great to see him attend. Everyone seemed to enjoy their closeness. Of course, they could still meander around the different areas and historic vehicle registration was still performed in the garage along with the BBQ. A few of the men enjoyed chatting over a beer after registration. I walked out and thought it had a bit of a 60's male vibe. The salads were also there and people stored their eskys so they took no space up inside the home. Most members brought cold cuts along with their shared salad or dessert. Our BBQ did not get used much but perhaps that was because friends thought it could be too hard to cook with the weather conditions.



Jeff Vale made an excellent speech regarding the 2025 Nationals to be held at McCracken Resort Victor Harbor. As President he also hosted the Kris Kringle gift presentations. They were well received and tea or coffee was available for all to help themselves. We were pleased to host the Singer Car Club of SA Christmas event and good to see a well-attended show.



Next day we were pacing ourselves. Hey! The storms Monday afternoon were much worse than Sunday's weather. Our climate at this time of year is most weird.

Everyone have a safe Christmas. May the New Year see a better, more peaceful world. We hope to see you in February 2024 at the AGM, second Monday of the month.

Susan Margitich

The Editor likewise extends his Merry Christmas and Happy New Year wishes to all SA Singer Club members and their families.





# WHAT A WAY TO TRAVEL - THOSE WERE THE DAYS!

*From Jeff Vale*

*I came across a couple of interesting pictures from a Facebook group the other day and thought I would research the pictures I found. Thanks to Google and Wikipedia, here are some interesting facts about the photos – probably the most stylish way to cross the channel . . .*

Silver City Airways was an airline based in the United Kingdom that operated mainly in Europe between 1946 and 1962. Unlike many airlines at the time, it was independent of government-owned corporations; its parent company was Zinc Corporation, an Australian company involved mainly in mining and mineral processing. The name "Silver City" originated as a nickname of Broken Hill, Australia – an area famed for silver mines, including some owned by the airline's parent company.

On 7 July 1948, a Silver City Bristol Freighter operated the first cross-Channel air ferry service, between Lympne near Folkestone in Kent and Le Touquet on France's northern Côte d'Opale coast, with good road connections from and to London and Paris respectively. The new service, which initially operated on a seasonal charter basis, became a year-round scheduled operation in 1949. In the beginning, there was a flat £32 one-way fare to take a group of four passengers along with their car across the Channel. Once opposition from British European Airways (BEA) to the carriage of passengers travelling without vehicles was overcome, a new fare structure was introduced. For example, a group of four travelling with a small car was charged only £27, while the comparable fare for four people travelling with a large car remained at £32.

By 1950, the number of cars and passengers carried on Silver City's cross-Channel services roughly doubled to 5,000 and 24,000 respectively.

To encourage further traffic growth on its Lympne-Le Touquet cross-Channel car ferry service, Silver City reduced fares with effect from 19 September 1950: the rate for cars up to 14 feet in length was cut from £27 to £19 while the rate for larger vehicles dropped from £32 to £25. This reduction left Silver City's fares only slightly higher than the Dover-Calais ferry fares of British Railways' Southern Region and, together with the service's earlier extension permitting the carriage of cycles and motor cycles, helped establish the airline's ferry services as a serious competitor to the railways.

The success of Silver City's Lympne-Le Touquet air ferry service resulted in subsequent introduction of additional routes across the English Channel and to other parts of the United Kingdom.

Over the coming years, Silver City pursued a policy of continuous fare reductions to fill the additional capacity on its growing air ferry network. This included new car ferry services between Southampton (Eastleigh) and Cherbourg as well as between Southend (Rochford) and Ostend and a DC-3 passenger service linking Gatwick and Le Touquet. Both of the former commenced in spring 1952, while the latter was inaugurated the following year. As a result, the number of vehicles carried doubled from 5,000 to 10,000 between 1950 and 1952 and quadrupled to 40,000 by the end of the following year.



*Above: A Singer SM1500 saloon is loaded aboard the Silver City aircraft while, below, a nice convertible Hillman (I think!) starts its cross-channel journey.*





## PROPOSED BORDER BASH – 15-16-17-18<sup>th</sup> March, 2024

In the tradition of past joint Singer Car Club events, it is proposed:  
we gather in Horsham, Victoria, which is approximately half way for members in SA and Vic  
and close to The Grampians and Silo Trail attractions.

-oOo-

Horsham has good accommodation as well as eateries.

Accommodation seems to be approximately \$400 TOTAL for the three nights, twin share and we will want  
to all be together if possible.

**PLAN: Friday 15<sup>th</sup>** – meet at accommodation in Horsham. Happy hour and dinner out TBA.

**Sat 16<sup>th</sup>** – Saddle up for a day touring: Grampians, McKenzie Falls,  
Quarry Town etc, Returning for Happy hour and dinner TBA.

**Sun 17<sup>th</sup>** – Saddle up for a day touring to Stick Shed, Silo Trail etc returning  
for Happy hour and dinner TBA.

**Mon 18<sup>th</sup>** Breakfast and goodbyes; return home.

It is proposed that the touring be very leisurely, not long distances apart from getting there.

The aim is to enjoy each others' company, our Singers, have fun and sightsee.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN IN PLEASE REPLY IMMEDIATELY**

**TO TREVOR 0414 520 441 by call or SMS; or email [trevor9999@tpg.com.au](mailto:trevor9999@tpg.com.au)**

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## SINGER NATIONALS 2025

**Location -** Victor Harbor – South Australia

**Venue -** The McCracken Country Club, McCracken Drive, Victor Harbor, South Australia 5211

<https://www.mccrackencountryclub.com.au/>

**Date -** April 7th to 10th 2025

As indicated at the 2023 National event in Goondiwindi, the SA Singer Club has, after much deliberation, made the decision to move our event away from the 'traditional' Easter weekend to a time when accommodation is more easily found and at a better price. Also the event locations will be less crowded.

We completely understand this may be disappointing to some but we felt that with the issues in finding a 'Nationals Headquarters' that can accommodate all attendees, to a standard befitting our event and at a price that was reasonable in these times of ever increasing costs, this was our only option. Many of our sister SA clubs have, over the years successfully moved their national events away from Easter for this very reason.

We chose mid-week dates, again for the same reasons of cost and fewer crowds at venues and on the roads. It allows interstate participants to travel there and back on the weekends either side, or extend their stay in SA if you so desire. The dates chosen are school holidays in some states (but not in SA), so this may assist those with younger families in attending, despite it not being Easter.

In addition, we decided to make the event 3 full days, plus arrival and departure days so that we can have a more relaxed event while still undertaking the activities we have planned. We also felt that this allows people to head for home in a more relaxed (and safer) way on the last morning rather than trying to decide what they can attend before heading off, as has been the case.



Victor Harbor and SA's South Coast (Fleurieu Peninsula) are famous for many things, including:

- It was the site of the 1936 South Australian Grand Prix (no Singers in this event sadly)
- Australia's FIRST Railway was run between Goolwa and Port Elliot (later extended to Victor)
- Nearly all produce from inland Qld, NSW and Victoria was shipped by river to Goolwa then sent to its next destination through Pt Elliot and later Port Victor
- It was a possible site for Adelaide, luckily for Victor, William Light decided the plains to the north were better suited
- American whalers and sealers operated here even before the colony was settled
- Humpbacks and southern right whales visit every winter, now the whalers have gone.
- It's great surf
- The southern vineyards are only a short travel away.

Planning is in its early stages, but we already have more great options that can be fitted into 3 days. Travel distances each day shouldn't be too long, maybe 40km maximum on the longest days, so it will suit even the oldest Singers, and there aren't too many hills. We are looking to have a range of activities to suit all ages and interests (not just cars I promise).

We will have a get-together on the first evening (Monday 7th), hopefully the usual "trading Tables" and possibly the start of the Rocker Cover Races and then we'll begin in earnest on the Tuesday. Our Theme night is likely the Tuesday with our Formal Presentation on Wednesday night and a more informal dinner Thursday to allow for an early night and "quick getaway" the next day. With people potentially wanting to leave sometime on Thursday we will likely make that evening a "pay your own way" event and not be covered by the event fees. But this is all to be decided. I am more than happy for feedback/suggestions. If there are no objections we could move the presentation night to the Thursday instead.

We are aiming to keep entry fees as low as we can, hopefully \$300 an adult, but we need a better idea of numbers and costs before we can finalise this.

Our venue – The McCracken Country Club has a range of accommodation options. See the attached "Registration of Interest" form for pricing. We have negotiated a "Fixed Price" for 2025 no matter what happens with inflation. The Resort facilities are of a very high standard and we have use of them all (there is a charge for golf. There is plenty of parking including for trailers in the resort grounds. The room price noted includes a "Buffet Breakfast" for 2 in the Resort's Bistro, when we will also have our morning briefings. If there are additional people in your room this will need to be added in, plus the additional person fee.

To allow you to start planning, the Event Theme will be 'Having a Whale of a Time' and our traditional 'Dress Up' night will be: come in a 'Nautical Theme.

We really hope you can join us in Victor Harbor in 2025. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions/feedback/suggestions whatsoever. We want to make this an enjoyable event for all.

Stephen Bitmead, 2025 Singer Nationals Coordinator, [2025SingerNationals@gmail.com](mailto:2025SingerNationals@gmail.com)

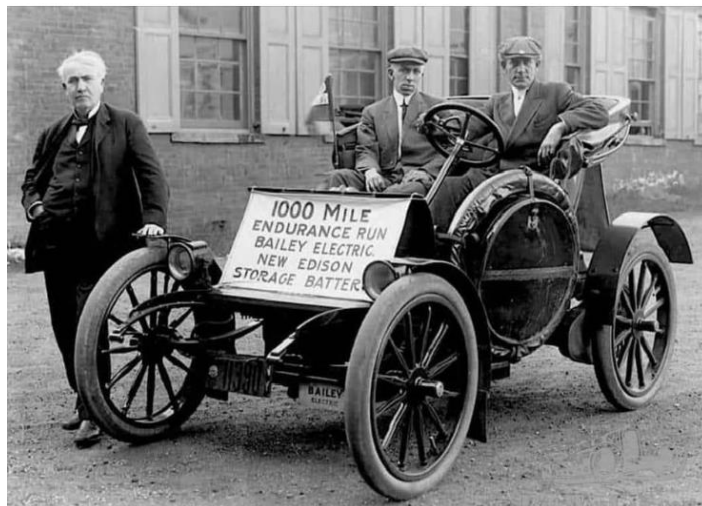


## A still-driveable 2023 Bay to Birdwood entrant!



**Consistent with the latest trend, perhaps the owner is planning on replacing his petrol motor with an electric one, as part of his restoration project. Electric cars have been around for a while!**

Thomas Edison with his electric car in 1910.  
Equipped with Edison's state-of-the-art battery, the Bailey Electric managed to make 100 miles on a full charge.  
In September 1910 the electric car competed with much bigger petrol-powered cars in a 1,000 miles long endurance run.



## Singer Badges (wearable)



Imported from England. Cost: \$6 each or \$5 each if buying more than one. Contact Stephen Bitmead: (08) 8254 2716 (H); [thebitmeads@gmail.com](mailto:thebitmeads@gmail.com)



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Please advise Stephen Bitmead (Events Coordinator) of any changes or additions to our Calendar of Events (see contact details on p. 2 of this *Singergram*).

<b>FEBRUARY 2024</b>	
<b>12</b>	AGM
<b>MARCH</b>	
<b>3</b>	All British Day, Echunga
<b>15-18</b>	Border Bash, Horsham; email <a href="mailto:trevor9999@tpg.com.au">trevor9999@tpg.com.au</a>
<b>APRIL</b>	
<b>8</b>	Monthly meeting
<b>TBA</b>	Possible Hillman "Combined Rootes Group Clubs" event
<b>14</b>	Gawler to Barossa Veteran & Vintage Run (pre 1930 cars); contact Trevor Unsworth, 0402 891 891, <a href="mailto:vvrn@gawlercarclub.com.au">vvrn@gawlercarclub.com.au</a>
<b>29 April to 10 May</b>	South East SA Safari: Federation of Historic Motor Clubs
<b>MAY</b>	
<b>JUNE</b>	
<b>10</b>	Monthly Meeting
<b>TBA</b>	Singer Club Annual Dinner
<b>JULY</b>	
<b>TBA</b>	Combined Rootes Groups Clubs – XMAS In July Dinner
<b>AUGUST</b>	
<b>12</b>	Monthly meeting
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	
<b>OCTOBER</b>	
<b>14</b>	Monthly meeting
<b>20</b>	Bay to Birdwood
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	
<b>DECEMBER</b>	
<b>APRIL 2025</b>	
<b>8-11</b>	Singer National at McCracken County Club, Victor Harbor