

## Autopia Set To Go

A lot of hard work and planning has all come together as our first major exhibition known as Autopia. Scheduled to open at Autoplex Castlemaine on Saturday March 20 and run until Sunday March 28, it is set to be a feast for automotive enthusiasts of all genres.

Autopia was conceived as an idea by our Executive Officer, Kim Micheltmore and has come about thanks to a lot of hard work by several dedicated members of CHRC over the past few weeks. A huge amount of work was required inside the trade building at Autoplex to clean, paint and

reconfigure the interior spaces to suit this and future uses.

One aspect that has made a dramatic difference inside the building is the removal of the wire cages in the corridor and automotive room. These cages were previously used by secondary college students for the safe-keeping of projects in progress in the woodworking and metal fabrication areas. Now they have been removed, along with the former maintenance/tool room, the corridor is an entirely free space that measures some 65 metres long and nine metres wide. The difference this single change has made to the feeling of space inside the building is incredible.

For Autopia, this area, the metal fabrication room and the automotive room will house the early Australian hot rods that form a major part of the exhibition.

Other aspects of the work done include extensive repainting of class rooms and the eastern wall of the corridor. Gas welding stations in the metal fabrication room have also been removed, opening up the floor space and making it much more usable.

Apart from the display of early Australian street rods that have been built for more than 40 years, patrons will see the Castlemaine Auto Model Show on Sunday March 21 (one day only), demonstrations of unique automotive artwork, pinstriping, photography and special model car attractions like slot car racing and restored mini hot rods and pedal cars. On display for the first time since it was received from the National Auto Museum in South Australia is a giant mural display of the story of Bluebird coming to Australia's Lake Eyre in 1963 for its attempt on the World Land Speed Record.

On Saturday March 27 there will be a T bucket Cruise-In to Autopia and a special display of these vehicles in the northern car park at Autoplex. The T bucket owners are making this a weekend-long get-together with their own activities on Friday evening and Sunday March 28. The Cruise for Cancer is also making Autopia their destination for a number of cruises from various points around Victoria on Sunday March 28. Castlemaine is in for a feast of specialty automotive activity like never seen before over the nine day period of Autopia.

There will be a special opening ceremony at 2:00pm Saturday March 20 by member for Bendigo West, Maree Edwards. All welcome, especially members of CHRC limited.



**ABOVE:** Peter Carpenter prepares scale models for the Castlemaine Auto Model Show that is part of Autopia.



**ABOVE:** Max Ellery's Model A Ford tourer is one of Australia's oldest rods.



## Channel Nine Morning Show

A request to gather a small group of hot rods together for a live to air piece on Channel Nine's Morning Show on December 16th 2020 resulted in some fantastic exposure for our hot rodding movement. Only a short opportunity was available to highlight Castlemaine's unique hot rodding history as a live cross during the weather report, but Chairman, Larry O'Toole made the most of that chance to briefly describe "Why Castlemaine is the Hot Rod Centre of the Universe" against the background of a display of five local street rods.

Con Soldatos' 1936 Ford coupe, Chris Soldatos' 1932 Ford roadster, Rod Hadfield's 1932 Ford roadster, Ross Harding's 1930 Model A Ford ute and Garry Ritchie's 1929 Model A Ford roadster were the rods featured in the live TV cross.

Six other local stories were highlighted during the show including the Mill Market, Shedshaker Brewery, the new cheese making business (Long Paddock Cheese) at the Mill and the Castlemaine-Maldon Steam Train.

**ABOVE:** Rods lined up ready for the live cross during the weather report.

## Gowar House Work

Work continues at the Gowar property where the house is nearing completion since it was relocated from Castlemaine in two halves. Most major structural refurbishment is now completed, the bathroom is largely re-instated, the rear deck rebuilt and steps added to the front and back. Soon it will be time to carry out repainting of the exterior and some parts of the interior.

At the same time, exterior works have included cleaning up the surrounding area, removal of scrubby bushes and blackberries from the front fence and the removal of the old broken fencing around the hay shed.

The sewerage treatment plant and water supply system is now fully operational and a major part of the electrical work completed.

Once again our appreciation is due to Pearl Kidman and those several member volunteers that have pitched in to get this project under control.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** The house is nearly ready for painting.

**RIGHT:** Board member John Lynch using his loader to clean up around the house and hay shed.



## 2021 Coffee Cruises

Since we have been able to resume the Castlemaine Hot Rod Centre Coffee Cruises after the relaxing of COVID-19 restrictions, the number of participants has grown significantly.

Three cruises since last November have resulted in 75-80 participant cars at each outing and the patrons have enjoyed travelling over Mount Alexander and back to Autoplex, a tour through Maldon to the Big Hill Winery and a cruise via Harcourt, Fogarty's Gap and Maldon to Newstead.

Our next Coffee Cruise will take place on Sunday March 21, 2021 and will convene as usual at the Castlemaine Visitor Centre in Mostyn Street Castlemaine from 9:30am and leave at 10:30 am. The Cruise will conclude at Autoplex where patrons will be able to enjoy a visit to Autopia and the Castlemaine Auto Model Show. Coffee and food will be available at Autoplex Castlemaine at the conclusion of the cruise and indeed all through the nine days of Autopia.



**ABOVE & BELOW:** Rods, Customs and Classics on display at the Big Hill Winery during the January Coffee Cruise.



## Future Meeting Dates

The next general meeting of the Castlemaine Hot Rod Centre Limited is to be held at Autoplex Castlemaine on Friday, March 28 at 7:30pm. The AGM for 2021 is Friday, June 25. Future meeting dates will be decided by the Board once COVID-19 restrictions are fully lifted. (Tentatively they will be September 4, 2021 and December 17, 2021 subject to confirmation).

■ For further information call Chairman Larry O'Toole on 03 5472 3653 or Secretary Vicki Farrell on 0418 510 352.

**NEXT MEETING  
Friday March 26  
at Autoplex  
Castlemaine**

# Visitors to Autoplex Castlemaine

The Castlemaine Historical Society holds their first meeting of each year at the home of another local community group as a way to expose their members to other organisations and learn a little of what they do. The 2021 CHSI February meeting was held at Autoplex Castlemaine where 25 of their members attended and heard a talk about Autoplex by Chairman Larry O'Toole, followed by a tour of the complex. All participants expressed amazement at the scope of our project and how much has already been achieved since gaining the lease on the Etty Steet site.

The first meeting of the year for Castlemaine Rods was also held at Autoplex after the club experienced difficulty gaining access to their usual meeting venue at Wesley Hill. Members commented on the good acoustics of the community meeting room at Autoplex and after the meeting Bob Duffy took a group of interested club members on a quick tour of the building.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** *Castlemaine Historical Society members inspect the facilities at Autoplex Castlemaine and listen to a description of the project by CHRC Chairman Larry O'Toole. (Images supplied by Lou Citroen)*



## Condolences

The Board and members of CHRC Limited wish to offer their condolences to Executive Officer, Kim Micheltmore and family on the passing of Kim's mother after a long illness.



## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

PO BOX 1080, CASTLEMAINE, VIC, 3450.

WEB: [www.hotrodcentre.com.au](http://www.hotrodcentre.com.au) Email: [info@hotrodcentre.com.au](mailto:info@hotrodcentre.com.au)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred method of newsletter delivery:

Email  Post

### SUPPORT THOSE WHO SUPPORT US

Do you have an account with Bendigo Bank? Yes/No

Do you have your vehicle/s insured with Shannons Yes/No

Would you like a quote from Shannons Insurance? Yes/No

Are you interested in accessing the Club Permit System through CHRC? Yes/No

What skills/qualifications do you have that could assist us to achieve our aims? \_\_\_\_\_

Sign: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

PAYMENT:  Cash  Cheque  Credit Card  EFT

Individual member: \$100.00 p/a payable June 30.

Take advantage of our extended membership offers:

3 years: \$250.00  6 years: \$500.00  12 years: \$1000.00

Make cheque payable to: Castlemaine Hot Rod Centre Limited

CREDIT CARD PAYMENT:  Mastercard  Visa  Amex

Expiry date: / CCV:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

EFT Bank Details:

Bendigo Bank – BSB: 633000 Account No: 131166829

PLEASE NOTE: Put your Initial and Surname as Payment ID.

Use your your credit card by phone: Call Kim Micheltmore 0412 276 772.

Comments/suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

All information remains confidential.