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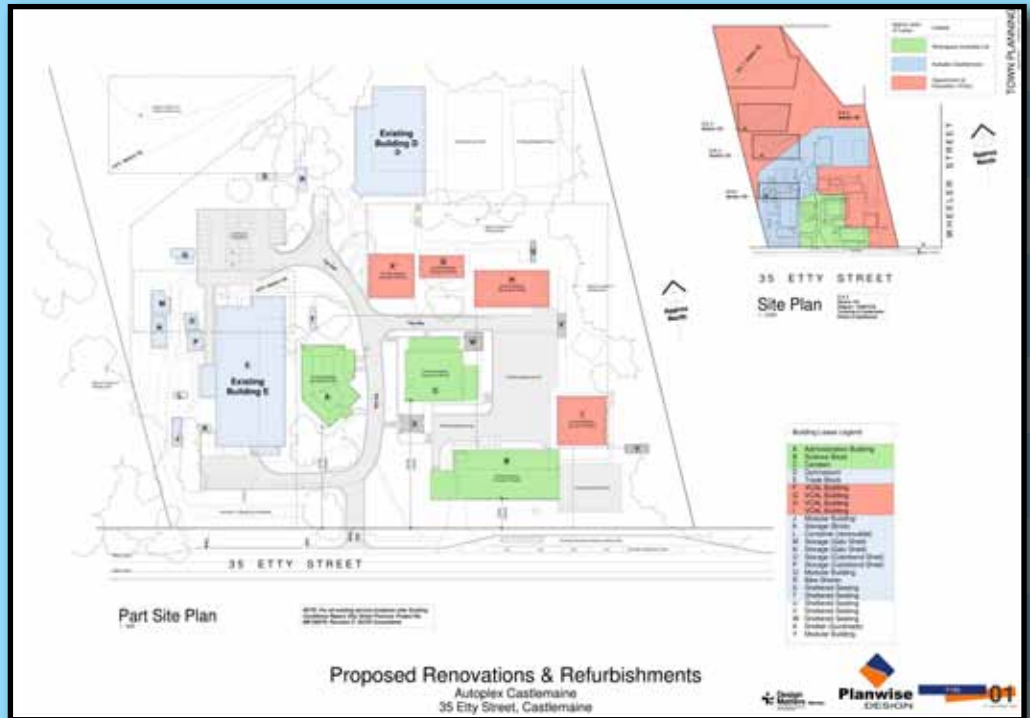
The Voice of the Castlemaine Hot Rod Centre

## Planning Permit Application

As this newsletter goes to press our planning application for the redevelopment of the Autoplex Castlemaine site has been lodged with Mount Alexander Shire Council for consideration. Bendigo firm, Planwise prepared and submitted the application on behalf of the Castlemaine Hot Rod Centre Limited.

Planwise are also acting for Workspace Australia, who share the former Tech School site (shown in green on the site plans) and whose planning application is currently before council. A decision on the Workspace application is expected any day. Hopefully the Autoplex application will follow close behind. Once the planning permit is approved we can proceed to make application for funding through Regional Development Victoria to get the transformation officially under way.

**RIGHT:** New site plans have been prepared for the planning application process by Planwise Bendigo. The top image is the overall site plan with the Autoplex Castlemaine area shown in blue. The bottom site plan shows current parking plan (left) and the proposed new plan that has been prepared as part of the Autoplex planning application.



**PLEASE NOTE**  
This newsletter usually acts as the reminder for our next general meeting but the COVID Lockdown meant we weren't able to have our September meeting. This meeting has now been abandoned and the newsletter delayed. The next general meeting will be our Christmas break up in December (see page 3).



# Chairman's Report 2021

**The keywords I would use to describe the activities of the CHRC over the past 12 months would be progress and consolidation. Having signed our lease on the Autoplex site in November 2019, it has been solid progress ever since in getting the place tidied up and fit for use again, something that has been achieved despite the interruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.**

A core group of members has steadily worked away every Thursday evening, carrying out painting and maintenance to get the venue looking quite good again. There is still plenty to do, but Autoplex Castlemaine is now a functioning centre that experiences more activity every day. During the past 12 months we have seen the Master Plan for the whole site completed and we are now deeply involved in finalising our planning application to Mount Alexander Shire, following which we can complete applications for funding to RDV and get on with the major changes to the infrastructure to allow us to operate individually and at a much higher level. Getting from there to here has been an interesting journey so far and one that we were only able to achieve with the co-operation of many others. Just at the right time we had Ewan Wood come along seeking space to carry out his dinosaur building exercise which gave us six months of cash flow from the rental of the Auto room and provided employment for about six people along the way. There have been several other users take advantage of the spaces at Autoplex and they too have added to our positive cash flow position over the past 12 months. The Castlemaine Theatre Group and Threes a Crowd are now well established within the drama area at Autoplex and Rotary are increasingly using their office space and the large meeting room for their board and planning activities. Very soon the SES are to temporarily move into the fabrication room and part of the corridor for a few weeks while their own building is renovated and extended. Since the easing of COVID restrictions last November, our Castlemaine Coffee Cruises have enjoyed very strong support, often attracting up to 80 cars and taking participants to various destinations for coffee and social mingling. It is obvious everyone is enjoying the chance to get their special old cars out and enjoy a few hours forgetting about how much COVID has changed our lives.

Perhaps the biggest success we have experienced in the past 12 months has been Autopia, combined with the annual Model Auto Show. This event, more than any other, gave us a taste of what we can expect at Autoplex in the future. How good it was to see excited, happy people enjoying nine days of auto based activity in and around Autoplex. The end result was beyond our expectations and once again contributed positively to our cash flow bottom line.

There have been many prominent visits to Autoplex this year with representatives of the Auto Historians Association taking the opportunity to check out the facilities that they intend to use for their 2021 Conference in September. We have also had Matthew Lombard, the curator of the National Motoring Museum in South Australia pay us a visit to see how the Donald Campbell display looked in position in Autoplex. He was responsible for sending us the display as they don't have anywhere they can display it permanently and it fits into Autoplex perfectly. Matthew has also been very generous in offering us advice for setting up our Australian Hot Rod Heritage Centre and archive.

Interactive work with the VCAL students resulted in a significant award being made to Autoplex by the acting Premier James Merlino in April for our partnership operations with the Castlemaine Secondary College. We are trying to maintain an ongoing relationship with the students and indeed a small group of them are about to undertake a new project exercise on a vehicle within Autoplex very soon.



Recently the Education Department arranged for the security system at the Eddy Street site to be reconfigured so that the VCAL/FLO area was split off and able to be operated separately. This left us with no operational system but it was fortunate that the contractor responsible for that work is also a local hot rodder, Adrian Lohse of Bendigo Security Systems. He kindly offered to re-instate our areas on a separate system that is now up and running. This was a very generous offer and one for which we are most appreciative.

It seems the house relocation project for the Gowar property has been going on forever, mostly because of the protracted arrangements required to gain all the permit requirements for the site. Since the house finally went onto its own new concrete stumps in May last year there has been steady if not always continuous progress. Doing the great majority of the work required with volunteer labour has meant a stop-start arrangement, but I am happy to report the project is now very close to finished. The CHRC owes a great vote of thanks to Pearl Kidman for her work on the major aspects of the reinstatement, along with Vicki Farrell, John Bright and our several working bee attendees that have gradually succeeded in getting things back in order again. The house is now externally finished, apart from painting the roof and filling in around the stumps to prevent ember attack in the event of bushfire, while internally there is only some plaster work and painting to complete before the floor coverings can go back down and it will be ready for use.

Even though the house project at Gowar has been long-winded it will ultimately be a great benefit to our organisation as rental from the house will help cover repayments on the farm and release more cash flow from the Community Enterprise Scheme that can be directed to the Autoplex redevelopment.

There is only one thing left for me to do as Chairman of our organisation for the 2020-2021 year and that is to express my sincere appreciation to those who contributed financially to our cause and those who have pitched in and worked so hard to keep us moving in the right direction through this period. Rather than focus on individuals, and there have been some outstanding efforts by some, I prefer to express our appreciation to all that have helped in any way whatsoever and encourage anyone who can step up to lighten the load on those dedicated workers to do so now that the workload is increasing.

Larry O'Toole.  
Chairman.



## More Hot Rod Activity at Autoplex

A generous donation of a damaged '40 Ford sloper body was received at Autoplex in July. Peter Wolfe has moved to Castlemaine and decided he would be unlikely to repair his accident damaged sloper, so he has donated it to Autoplex where it will be used as a demonstration and training model for students in the repair of such vehicles.

This sloper was damaged when the vehicle rolled on the way to the Bright Rod Run several years ago. It is quite a sound body other than the damage sustained by the roof, rear panel and in particular the driver's side door pillar. Peter supplied the body mounted on its own mobile trolley frame as shown in the photo that will make it easier to move the body around and to possibly use as a "square base" for realignment when repairs start. The chassis shown inside the vehicle is not from this car, but will also be used in training exercises when our Trade Training facilities are up and running.

Another hot rod project that has returned to its former home is the Model A roadster pickup project that was started by students at Sunbury High School and later transferred to Castlemaine Secondary College for use by the automotive students. This vehicle was moved to the new campus of the Castlemaine Secondary College at Blakeley Road but recent changes at that campus meant there is insufficient room for it to remain there.

The students working on the Falcon project (see below) have expressed an interest in turning their attention to the hot rod pickup next, so it looks like exciting times ahead for these eager young people.



**ABOVE:** The damaged 1940 Ford sloper body donated by Peter Wolfe is repairable and will make an excellent teaching module for how to do such repairs.

**RIGHT:** The school hot rod project has returned to Autoplex where plans are being formulated for renewed student participation.



## Student Project Under Way at Autoplex



Several Year 9 students have taken on their own automotive project using the facilities at Autoplex. Work on the EF Falcon sedan will form part of their year 9 assessment and if progress so far is an indication, they should all score well.

The car was delivered to Autoplex by one of the student's grandfather and they started work on it straight away. Over several sessions they have removed the front and rear suspension and replaced all the coil springs with lowered versions and cleaned up much of the undercarriage. Teachers are with the students at all times while they are working on the car with Castlemaine Hot Rod Centre members available for advice and mentoring when required. However, all of the hands-on work has been done by the students as they turn this tidy older car into a very nice, improved daily driver.

The car actually belongs to one of the students and it is destined to be his first car when he turns 18 and gains a driver's licence.

**LEFT:** Students get to work on the EF Falcon project.

## Future Meeting Dates

The next meeting of the Castlemaine Hot Rod Centre Limited will take the form of our Christmas breakup at Autoplex on December 19, 2021 combined with the December Coffee Cruise. The next AGM to be held at Autoplex Castlemaine on Friday, June 24, 2022. Future meeting dates will be decided by the Board subject to COVID regulations, but are typically March, AGM in June, September and December (with Christmas break-up).

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

**NEXT MEETING  
Sunday Dec 19  
Christmas Breakup  
at Autoplex  
Castlemaine**

# Vandalism at Autoplex

On at least two different occasions recently graffiti vandals attacked the Autoplex Castlemaine buildings, doing extensive damage to the exterior of both the trade training block and the Heritage Centre.

Most of the damage was in the form of paint sprayed graffiti on the north side of the buildings and one large tag on the south end of the trade building. All was photographed and reported to police who have since apprehended the culprits and they will be in court in due course.

One skylight over the female toilets was also broken and several dishes that had been left outside by the FLO/VCAL students were smashed.



## NEW SECURITY SYSTEM

Recently the Castlemaine Secondary College changed the security system at the Eddy Street Site leaving Autoplex and the Workspace areas without a security system to our sections of the site. CHRC supporter Adrian Lohse of Bendigo Security Systems has stepped in to reinstate the system in Autoplex as a stand alone operation exclusive to the Autoplex buildings.

This updated security system was commissioned in mid-June and will give all users of Autoplex greater peace of mind, knowing that the buildings are once again monitored 24 hours per day. The Board of CHRC wishes to acknowledge the generous assistance from Adrian.

To further strengthen our security arrangements and in light of the recent graffiti attack, infra-red cameras have also been purchased for deployment at various positions around the site.



## 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: \_\_\_\_\_  
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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 Larry O'Toole 0407 843 851.

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

All information remains confidential.