

Caravan Talk

Hardings Swift
Caravan Services

Family Genes Run Deep!



Recently a family member has been researching our Gallop family tree and as a result has uncovered an interesting story.

Charles Gallop (some 5 generations ago) was born in Bath in England around 1813 and is listed in the 1851 census as a Blacksmith & Wheelwright. To cut a long story short this chap is my great-great-grandfather and ended up moving to Melbourne and starting a coach building business in South Yarra!

Charles married in the Corfe Mullen area, near the well known Corfe Castle in Somerset and emigrated to Australia in 1853 with 8 children. Charles and some of his sons established the coach building business. The business was well located and would have supplied decorative carriages to the areas of Carlton, North Fitzroy and East Melbourne. As well, the business would have built commercial vehicles such as milk carts, bottlo' carts and baker's vans.

In due course some of the next generation worked in the business and continued the enterprise. A fire in 1882 (reported in The Argus 9 May 1882) which

partially destroyed the factory, appears to have been a turning point as the business was wound up, but was possibly relocated to Colac & Horsham. My great grandfather's role in this business was as a Coach Painter and Sign writer. My father has memories of him describing how he designed and painted the detailed scrolls down the sides of commercial vehicles, particularly Baker's carts - the precursor perhaps of decals on today's caravans.

What this story reveals is that in 6 generations of my family tree, 4 generations have been involved in some form of coach / cart / caravan manufacture or repair as their occupation. So this little snippet of genealogical research has intrigued the family and raised the question that in the complex interaction of nature & nurture influences in our upbringing, is there such a thing as a genetic disposition to career choice even if it skips a generation or two?

In June Dad (Ewan) visited the area where my grandfather 5 generations ago started his family in the Corfe Mullen area of Somerset.

Andrew Gallop

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Disclaimer:

The views expressed in this newsletter are opinion only and may vary for each person. It is your responsibility to verify any claims made.

The Argus, 9th May, 1882

A small fire occurred shortly after 8 o'clock last night in a smith's forge, stable, and out house at the rear of Mr Charles Gallop's coach manufactory, Cliff street, South Yarra On the alarm being given, the Prahran, Windsor, and South Yarra brigades promptly attended, and succeeded in confining the fire to the outhouses, which were completely de-destroyed, including three loads of ironbark wood, a load of hay, a quantity of horse feed, and some miscellaneous property, which were covered by an insurance of £100 The place had been locked up since Saturday afternoon, and the origin of the fire could not be ascertained.

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HOW LONG SHOULD IT LAST?

Everything has a useable life or use by date. One thing we have introduced in recent times is to have customers provide us an estimate on the total distance their caravan may have travelled. We'd love to have an odometer to clear things up, however when people start pondering all their trips they soon realise the van may be nudging 80,000km! By this time many chassis components in particular are probably well overdue for service or replacement.

We have drawn up a list below of almost everything on your caravan and/or tow vehicle and some suggested maintenance timelines.

The chassis is probably the main area on a caravan where we recommend regular servicing and best to have it serviced every 10,000km or 2-3 years.

This information is purely based on our opinions as a service centre for over 40 years, and the trends we have seen during this time. This is designed to be used as a guideline for your caravan maintenance, and many situations will require specific advice.



Tyres

The tyre industry quote around 6 years as the use by date of a tyre. Generally, on the side of quality tyres will be a date stamp that looks something like this; 2406. This indicates a batch number (24 - indicating the week of the year) in the year 2006. A tyre with this batch number theoretically should be replaced next year. It's fair to say we do a reasonable amount of insurance work on lower sidewalls of caravans where tyres have blown out. In virtually all cases the tyres are well out of date or they're low quality brands.

Unfortunately most caravans have periodic use, so the date comes due well before the tread is worn.

Our advice – tread carefully after 6 years!!

Electric Brake Magnets

When the magnet is magnetised it grabs the brake drum spreading the brake linings. As a general rule these magnets should last around 50,000km. Generally after 50,000km they start to wear below the wear indicators leading to short circuits as the magnetic coil windings start to make contact.

We sometimes change magnets well before 50,000km and this is generally where customers have the non-pendulum brake control units. Non-pendulum (solid state) brake control units output the same signal to the caravan brakes irrespective of the cars deceleration so the majority of the time the brakes will be getting too much power. Essentially the non-pendulum units are prone to wearing magnets very quickly, plus getting the brakes very hot. This causes other issues such as premature bearing failure.

Our advice – be ready to change the magnets at 50,000km. Make sure you have a pendulum brake control unit such as a Prodigy so you get a good 50,000km from your magnets.



Caravan Wheel Bearings

Some bearings seem to last 10,000km while others last 30-50,000km. Our approach has always been to change bearings as soon as we see early signs of wear. Generally they are a low cost item and it's not worth saving for another 10,000km. As caravans have no odometers, and people can lose track of the distances they've travelled, we find we need to be mindful we may not see the caravan for another 20,000km so leaving early signs of bearing wear can be detrimental by another 15,000km!

Caravan bearing wear cannot be compared with a car. Car bearings generally ride on smoother suspensions, carry less weight, plus if they start to wear they make quite a noise that the driver hears. In comparison caravan wheel bearings often ride on a rougher more crude suspension, have very



periodic use and cannot be heard from the tow vehicle when badly worn, plus on tandems endure a severe load on every corner. As an example a typical 16' caravan often has 'Falcon' front end wheel bearings supporting a load of around 1500kg. A Falcon has 4 wheels supporting virtually the same weight, so it's no surprise these caravan bearings show earlier signs of wear!

Consequently, it's hard to give a predicted life on bearings. The industry keeps upsizing the bearings used which has definitely increased the reliability and the Europeans now use a sealed bearing which is showing a lot of promise.

Our advice – change bearings when the early wear signs appear.



Tandem Rocker-Suspension

In our opinion this suspension is not the best option for touring caravans. It needs too much maintenance for the distances caravanners now typically demand. Unfortunately it's probably the most popular suspension on tandems. Whilst we keep rebuilding this suspension we encourage new tandem buyers to request a good quality independent system (Simplicity, Vehicle Components, Knee, Control Rider, Sugar Glider, Alko Rubber).



In relation to maintenance the shackle pins and bushes can often require replacement within 15-20,000km (not good is it!) We recommend replacing springs at 70-80,000km as after this point they become very prone to breaking. Sometimes money is better spent (once these systems need some significant maintenance) converting to the Rocker-Roller system. The Rocker-Roller is not an independent system, but a cost effective step-up from a Rocker system.

Our advice – ensure a rocker system is serviced every 10,000km, carry a spare spring and allow some \$ for maintenance.

Single Axle Leaf Springs

These systems are reasonably maintenance free. Eye-slipper springs are probably the most common single axle spring systems. They will wear the rear slipper guides and the front bush somewhere between 40-60,000km mark. The springs seem to flatten out at around 80,000km and the caravan can start to droop.

The other single axle system is the eye-to-eye springs which will also wear bushes at around 40-60,000km. If you have greaser pins keep them well packed with grease.

Our advice – change the springs at the 80,000km, plus monitor bush & slipper wear.



Independent Suspensions

Independent suspensions are a more sophisticated suspension. They put much less pressure on the springs as the trailing arm supports the wheel load so the spring is purely used as a 'spring'. They often need re-alignment from time to time but in good quality systems we see they either never wear bushes or only do once they're past the 100,000km mark!

If you have a leaf sprung independent system probably think about changing the spring between 90-120,000km depending upon the system. The coil spring versions need to be reviewed periodically in relation to the distance between the bump-stop and the chassis.

There is also a very popular rubber torsional system, used on many caravans and these don't need any toe-in adjustment but need the rubbers replacing when they start to droop.

Shockers are probably the main wear component on some coil independent suspensions and like a car they have a certain life time based upon their use.

Our advice – review the wheel alignment otherwise service at normal intervals, but generally a very low maintenance system.

Breakaway System

This emergency system is designed to apply the caravan brakes if the caravan breaks away completely from the tow vehicle. If your van is over 2000kg in ATM you will have this small cable and switch which you connect to your car on hook-up. The switches can only be checked when they are pulled out. From experience a lot of switches break when pulled out. They're not a high quality item plus the sun deteriorates the switch and causes the plastic to be brittle.

The other main issue is the batteries often run flat. The battery will either be run/charged off the 'house' battery or have its own dedicated battery charged off the car whilst towing. We often find when servicing caravans this battery is flat, so the breakaway system wouldn't work.

Our advice – change the breakaway battery every 2 years and have the switch checked regularly.





Chassis Fatigue

As part of our 10,000km Undercarriage Service we pay particular attention to finding cracks in the chassis from fatigue. Cracks where the cross members meet the chassis rails can be common after 100,000km and can be gusseted to repair. Stress rails under the A-frame often have breaks however this is partly due to weld positions. Generally chassis systems from the mid 90's onwards are a lot more robust and don't suffer a huge amount of fatigue.

Cracks in spring hangers can be the most critical and need to be monitored, and sometimes gusseted.

Our advice – regular servicing will prevent small cracks getting bigger!



Hot Water Services

The main maintenance required on the Suburban/Atwood type hot water service is the sacrificial anode. This is an aluminium rod that corrodes in preference to the tank, and once it's fully corroded it needs immediate replacement to prevent the tank corroding. 4 years is probably too long to wait however somewhere between 1-2 years seems an average life span for the anode.

Our advice – change the anode every 1-2 years

CARAVAN SEALS

Caulking

Caulking is rarely used for sealing caravans now, however prior to the 90's it was common place. The downfall with caulking was it became drier every year eventually cracking which then requires the caulking to be replaced. It also bleeds in the hot weather. If a caravan is being repaired where caulking is present we would now replace it with silicone to improve the lifetime of the seal.



Silicone

Silicone is our only approach to sealing caravans and one we take very seriously. It must be layed on then screwed down to pack it under moulds and squeeze it into all the gaps where water could enter. Silicones can potentially last a long time however like any seal they need constant monitoring. External seals in areas like roofs will always shrink so need ongoing review. It shouldn't become hard but in the long term it can suffer from delamination or fatigue through general caravan movement, so a long-term seal isn't always applicable.

Our advice – re-silicone a mould/window if water damage appears and review roof seals regularly.

External Caravan Lights

It's important that the lenses have good colour so they provide light in the proper shade. Once these have faded they need changing to be roadworthy. In particular side tail lights suffer from this colour fading often within 3 years. The plastic bases on these lights also suffer from degradation too. A lot of these lights are of medium quality so will need changing quite regularly over the life of the caravan. The festoon globe holding method of most of these lights is fraught with contact issues on the globes which causes ongoing intermittent connections which is hard to guard against.

LED lights have been a great advance as they get past all the festoon globe issues we've had for years. We do occasionally see water entry in some, plus when too many of the LEDs collapse the complete light can require changing. However on the whole LED's seem to suffer a lot less weathering plus are much more reliable for that early 6am start!

Our advice – learn how to fix festoon lights or change all the caravan lights completely to LEDS and be guaranteed of reliability.





Caravan Floors

Don't think we've ever had to replace an Australian built caravan floor. They virtually never rot-out and virtually never lose their strength. Floors in European vans are of a sandwich board construction and over time they can lead to delamination and floor flexing. Not common but there are fixes if it happens but it probably only occurs after 10-15 years of age.



Caravan Framework

Generally caravan framework should be reasonably free of issues. The main concern is water entry which can take away most of the framework strength (wooden frames).

The other concern would be the build quality of the framework. A quality framework will be heavily glued, have consistently spaced studs plus several horizontal sections to provide additional strength where cutouts such as windows exist. A well built roof will have proper support beams, good camber and look the same after 100,000km!! Essentially framework maintenance doesn't become known until the caravan is stripped for some sort of accident damage or maintenance.

Our advice – keep it dry if it's timber framed!

Caravan Aluminium Cladding

Dents are probably the most common cladding damage we see. The only other issue is corrosion of the aluminium which occurs in situations where the aluminium comes into contact with steel. Down the bottom of caravan walls the bolts used to hold the framework can lose their zinc coating over time and then the aluminium starts to corrode as it's so close to the steel (ie. With steel and aluminium close to each other aluminium will corrode in preference to the steel). Also if a staple is making contact with the underside of the aluminium and water is present small pin-prick holes can appear.

Our advice – monitor lower walls on older caravans for corrosion.



Hatches

The common 14" hatches found on caravans can suffer from UV degradation after about 7-8 years. This makes the lid quite brittle. Luckily the lid is reasonably cheap and easily replaced.

The European hatches which have become very popular have blinds and flyscreens, however they do seem to have a use by date of around 6-8 years because of all the moving parts. It's mainly the blinds that lose their tension and their shape so the complete bottom unit needs replacing. The hatch lids on these modern hatches seem to be reasonably UV resistant.



Roll-out Awnings

Roll-out awnings are now a standard item on caravans and you wonder how we ever did without them. They are fantastic but have lots of moving parts and do need maintenance. The cloth generally lasts about 10 years before it starts showing signs of fabric fraying. The ratchet system is also starting to be problematic at this age. We would generally recommend replacing the cloth and roller together when either one shows issues. If the awning is damaged in an accident, and claimed as an insurance repair, we will generally replace the complete cloth and roller including a new ratchet system.

The vertical aluminium awning arms need constant lubrication with a silicone type lubricant otherwise the moving parts bind and break. In particular the tension nut on the inner arm and its sliding rail always need lubrication and are probably the most common replacement parts on an awning.

Our advice – keep everything well lubricated, and possibly replace the cloth & roller after 10 years of age.





Windows and Doors

The huge improvement made to caravan windows was the introduction of acrylic (ie. like Perspex) during the 90's. In the 80's we would have the glass people visiting our workshops every second day to replace cracked caravan windows! Camec, one of the main door/window suppliers to the industry also revolutionised the caravan door a good 10 years ago when they released the 3-point lock that provides a great latching system, has the security door and is generally maintenance free.

Essentially windows and doors won't need much maintenance. A window catch may need replacing, a window corner stake may break, and the door handle gets a fair bit of use and may break, but apart from this they are reasonably maintenance free for all the movement they endure.

Rear windows travelling on dusty roads will often need the hinge de-dusting, plus these rear windows are hard to seal against dust. Front windows suffer from water entry and more manufacturers are fitting fixed windows to avoid leak issues.

We have developed several techniques to preventing water entering the window mechanism which we are happy to show you when your caravan is next in.



Gas Bottles & Regulators

The main symptom of a gas regulator issue would be puffy burners on your stove or possibly a fridge that's hard to start on gas. Otherwise it's probably better best left if it's all working, and compliant.

The Swap-n-Go system makes gas bottle compliance a lot easier.

Remember a licensed gas plumber must do any gas work and ensure your gas bottle is tested every 10 years!

Fridges

Caravan 3-way fridges used to be more problematic with their rear refrigerant units leaking regularly, however the modern units seem a lot less prone to these issues. Occasionally an element or thermostat may need replacing but generally these fridges are more reliable. Remember they do need to be fairly level to work efficiently.

If a 3-way fridge isn't working on 240V try it on gas. If it works on gas it's probably the 240V element. And if the reverse is happening it's probably the gas regulator. If neither work it could be the refrigeration cooling unit that will need repair.



Batteries

Remember what we keep writing in every newsletter; Batteries need constant charge and they'll last 6-8 years. Otherwise they sulphate and within 2 years you'll be buying another \$300 battery. When we say constant charge we mean a solar panel always left on or a smart charger permanently running.

For our storage customers we now offer a maintenance panel with an Andersen plug. It simply mounts somewhere on the A-frame and providing you have an Andersen plug it plugs straight in.

Our advice – keep batteries on charge permanently (with good quality smart chargers).



Battery Chargers/Transformers

Transformers are becoming somewhat redundant as more people go for the free camping. Since about 2001 caravans predominantly come equipped with all 12V lights and accessories (except microwave) which allows the caravan to be converted to a battery system without all the appliances and lights being converted.

Smart Chargers are now very commonplace with a deep cycle battery. This allows for a good mix of caravan parks and a few days of free camping as well. We find it hard to go past the C-Tek Smart Charger for reliability and performance. Plus as we keep quoting in newsletters; 'leave it turned on all year' and your battery should last 7-8 years.



Weight Distribution Equipment

The main wear item on a Hayman Reese Weight Distribution System is the trunnions that hold the bar into the head. They need greasing to prevent wear and that ghastly noise around corners that occurs when they aren't lubricated.

Hayman Reese released new versions of their Weight Distribution equipment in 2011 which is now lighter to carry, stronger, plus there is a greater variety of kits for different a-frame applications.

Our advice – ensure there is good pressure on the bars and lubricate the trunnions.

Brake Controllers

Prodigy brake controller seem to last years, plus have very few issues. In our opinion they have been the best brake controller ever released. The older generation pendulum units (ie, Voyagers, Kelseys) are now quite old technology, and setting the pendulum position is their drawback. We notice on our test drives these units can be very intermittent past the 6 year mark as the pendulums become erratic and you're constantly re-adjusting. Another reason why the Prodigy is such a winner as its pendulum is self-resetting (ie. It cannot be tampered-it's automatic)

Our advice like always is get a PRODIGY!

Towbars

Most towbars on cars need very little maintenance. Bolts coming loose or fatigue is generally rare. However, with caravans getting larger in recent times we do see caravan ball-weights exceeding the tow vehicles rating. The Prado (not current model) has been an example where people are towing big caravans, however some of these large vans have ball-weights well over the 250kg rating for this Prado towbar. This has caused a lot of these towbars to become loose.

The tell-tale signs of a problematic towbar will be the square tube loses its horizontal position and the pressure on the weight distribution bars starts dropping away.



Tandem Suspensions Conversions

If you've read previous newsletters you'll know we see the standard 'Rocker' suspensions as very prone to wear and maintenance. Whilst we designed our own low wear bushes for these systems we have found all the other moving parts are still prone to regular wear. After investing in a plasma cutter a few years ago we have found we are able to convert to the Rocker-Roller System more economically than we used to as we can remove the existing suspension quicker.

We do this conversion to Rocker Roller for around \$2000. To overhaul a rocker system and replace the springs can often easily amount to \$1500, so the Rocker-Roller becomes a more viable option. The Rocker-Roller does still wear, but not at the rate of the Rocker, plus it's a lot harder to crack springs on the Rocker-Roller system.

Brake Controllers-Solid State!!

We are seeing more solid state (Non-pendulum) controllers coming into the marketplace. We won't name brands but they tend to be small units that fit into small dashboard pockets. They look great in the car and all is fantastic until you use them.

As we are a large caravan service centre we see the serious downfalls these solid state brake controllers cause to caravan brakes. The common issues we see are melted bearing grease, grease in the brakes, magnets worn within 30,000km, cooked or glazed brake linings and extremely over-heated brakes on arrival plus generally much higher maintenance bills.

Whilst the Prodigy may be slightly larger than these solid state brake controllers it provides proportional braking in harmony with the car, enables the brake magnets to last a good 50,000km and provides smooth braking.

Storing your Caravan

Our advice is keep the caravan wound nose high or nose down so the roof sheds water easily. If there becomes an issue with the roof sealant this will generally help that issue become less of a disaster.

A classic example of this is the sandwich board roof systems found on some pop-tops. It has a central seam and from new they sit very flat (ie. not much camber). The issue is some of these roofs have suffered water damage on that centre seam, which deteriorates the central wooden beam resulting in the roof dipping. Once the roof starts to dip it holds more water weight and loses its flatness. Once these roofs start holding 10-20 litres of water it becomes a huge weight which the roof cannot support and then the roof can almost become unusable.

If you have a roof like this, monitor it for camber regularly! A roof that can hold water will unfortunately become worse and be an issue.

INSURANCE REPAIRS



A Hardings Built Roof

We now have several staff dedicated to insurance repairs. We do still have peak periods however if people need storage (at no charge) prior to the repair we can offer this service at the new premises

Having spent the last 3 years rebuilding hail-damaged caravan roofs, our bodywork staff pride themselves on the appearance and structural integrity of the roof. They have developed a unique seam sealing system, plus most roofs come out of our workshop with an increased camber so water shedding is improved.

Flat Panel Repairs

Flat panel walls (sandwich board walls) are found on some Australian and European caravans. We have now repaired several flat panel walls, whether it be flat aluminium, fibreglass or flat stucco profile. There are various techniques depending upon the caravan and we have no reservations about taking on these jobs. The repair techniques we are using have been used in Europe for many years and we have contacts over there to assist us learn the ropes on these new flat panel vans.





Caravan Insurance Companies

We have been repairing caravans for insurance companies for over 40 years. We do a lot of work for the following insurance companies, and Ed has a very good working relationship with all the assessors. CIL have been a specialist caravan repairer for many years and continue to offer a more dedicated service to caravanners.



Sliding Ball-weights

It's important to do the research when buying a tow car. Ideally to know the caravan ball-weight will help make this decision. Some tow cars suggest a tow rating of say 3000kg, with a 300kg ball-weight. However, the fine print reveals that if you tow a caravan with a 300kg ballweight you can only tow a total caravan weighing 2000kg, so this may not be the right car for the caravan. Also some tow vehicles require the overall load of the car (ie less passengers) to be reduced if towing heavy loads.

For large caravans over the 20' mark it's hard to go past a vehicle such as the Landcruiser as it can tow 3500kg with 350kg ballweight, and each of these 2 ratings are irrespective of the other (ie. If the caravan ballweight is 350kg you can still tow a caravan ATM of 3500kg).

Jayco Camper Tips

- Get the windup system serviced every 6-8 years to prevent a broken cable destroying a good holiday
- Only move the bed ends once the roof is fully erected otherwise you'll tear the canvas
- Remember to put the bed stays in before hitting the sack!
- Whilst the modern campers have roof cut-out switches, checking the roof lights are switched off before lowering is always a good thing!
- Keeping the rear jacks wound down will help keep the door closed and door-catch work more accurately
- Once the roof hold-down clamps are on (when roof lowered) wind the winch very lightly clock-wise to keep a small amount of tension on the cables so they're not loose and floppy whilst travelling and jumping of their guide wheels.

Sway Controls

We have always encouraged the use of sway controls at Hardings. However as A-frames and couplings have become more complex there has become 2 obvious choices of sway units.

There is a fundamental issue to remember with swaying. A caravan with a lesser ballweight (often under 8-10% of the ATM) can be more likely to sway. It is important to never load too much weight well behind the axle of a caravan as it can make the van unstable at speeds and vulnerable to swaying. A classic example is a caravanner fitting their own jerry can (weighing around 20kg) on a rear bumper then pondering on why they have a massive sway without warning!! Too much weight at the rear of the van and not what the manufacturer fitted!

The only exception to this typical ball-weight range is European type caravans where the overall van is designed with a lighter ball-weight, however the complete caravan is manufactured from lighter materials plus they have special anti-sway couplings. Again it's important not to load too much down the rear of the van but these European vans typically have 5% ball-weight, and are designed with these weights in mind.



Hayman Reese Friction Sway Units

Need to be used on A-frames where the coupling is mounted on the top of the A-frame. They provide very effective sway control through the application of friction between van and car. They cannot be used on couplings mounted under the A-frame as the small ball on the tow vehicle will collide with the caravan A-frame.



Dual Cam Sway Units

These are to be used on large vans or caravans with underslung couplings (ie coupling mounted off the bottom of the A-frame). These type of under-A-frame couplings are becoming commonplace as caravan heights increase. These sway controls are very effective but will need experienced people to install.

Hardings Open Day

Our Open Day last year was a huge success with about 300 people attending. We had Hayman Reese doing live demonstrations, the Vintage Caravan Club, several caravan industry suppliers and well regarded manufacturers such as Evernew, Trakmaster and Track Trailers. It ended up being like a mini-show.

This year we aim to have double last years exhibitors with several technical demonstrations on suspensions and various maintenance aspects of caravans plus some interesting demonstrations.

SATURDAY 10th NOVEMBER, 10am-2pm. (at 114-142 Colchester Rd, Kilsyth)

Odd Spot



A hollowed out log became the company's mobile office...



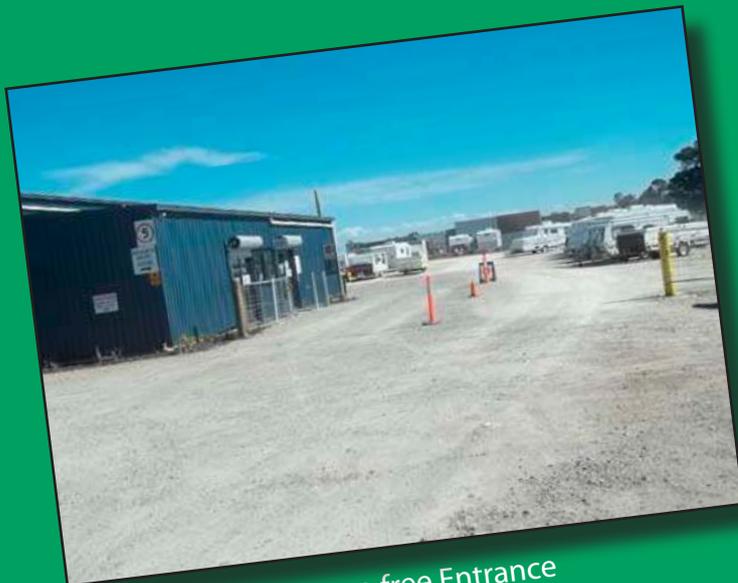
Hollowed out logs were also used to house and feed the crews...

Just look at the length of the hand saw they needed...





Remember we moved in 2010



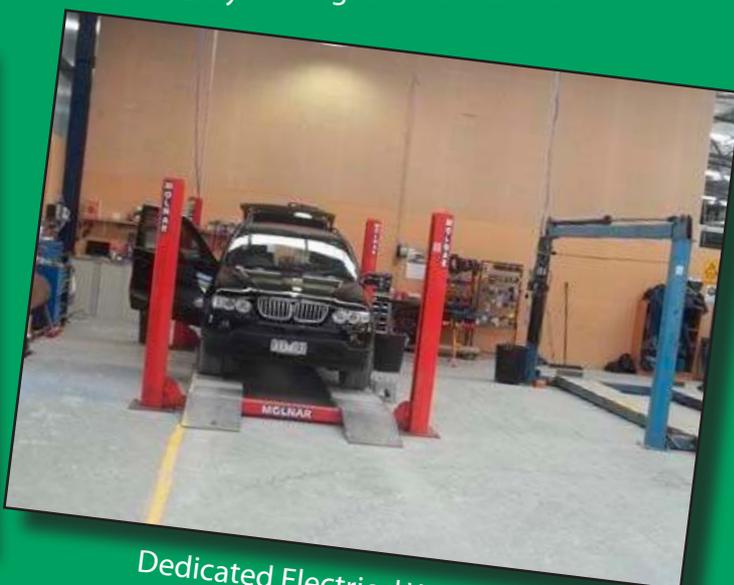
A Stress-free Entrance



Easy Parking for Your Caravan



Several Hoists for all Service Work



Dedicated Electrical Workshop



8-Bay Body Shop



Dedicated Drive Through Bay for Weight Distribution Setups



Staff Profile

Ken

Ken is one of our mechanics. Ken is a man of detail and is very fussy about his finish. Ken has a mechanical background, was originally qualified as a tool-setter, plus ran his own printer repair business for many years prior to joining us. Ken is a Citroen car enthusiast and still drives his late model Citroen to work. Ken and his family own the kiosk at the Lilydale Station so if you're a commuter from Lilydale you may know the face.



Ken



Aaron

Aaron

Aaron has recently joined the mechanical team as we have grown. Aaron started his career as a motorbike repairer and then spent many years in the motorbike parts industry. Aaron has a solid mechanical background and is about to embark on a mechanical/plumbing apprenticeship with us. Aaron has just returned from a 6-week trek through central Australia with his Nissan Patrol on the Tanami Track, Gibb River road and after all that came back engaged too! Congratulations. Whilst a 4WD enthusiast Aaron also has a soft spot for HQ's being the proud owner of an original!

Stuart

Stuart is the new face in the office at Hardings. Stuart quality checks every departing job plus manages the hand-over with the customer. Stuart has worked in our mechanical workshop prior to this so has the hands-on experience. Stuart is a diesel mechanic and has a background in the Bus Industry both as a mechanic and driver. Stuart is kept busy with his 10 acre country property, and as a musician either performing or recording in his home studio. Stuart lacks a 'sense of fear' with his background as a competitive motorbike and speedway side-car racer.



Stuart