

IT TRAVELLED 850kms BUT DIDN'T RECORD 1 MILE.

This is the story of picking up my low mileage 193960 special Cadillac from Bathurst N.S.W.

How did It all start?

In 1995 a group of Cadillac enthusiasts on the way to the Cadillac National Meet at Penrith stopped to look at this very special vehicle at Ted and Fay Baker's picturesque property at Bathurst. In fact we had our picture in the Weekend Advocate on April 22nd 1995 showing Ted and his 60 special (our new car), Eric Senior driving his 1950 Cadillac convertible (now Gary & Jan Hazeldene's), Brian Morris driving his 64 Cadillac Coupe and John King and his 1937 Cadillac Coupe. In the background was my ex 1966 Pontiac Parisienne which Bev and I and our American friends Fred and Penny Bausch travelled in. When I mentioned my purchase of the '39 to Fred he said "wasn't that on the property where you could see all of Australia." I must say it is one of the most imposing views I have seen and I can see why Fred responded with that quote.

We now move to 2007 and a little earlier when I heard on the grapevine that Ted may be considering selling this car and that Peter Ratcliff had sold his very nice 1939 LaSalle convertible coupe. Peter sadly missed out on his dream car a 1939 Caddy coupe once owned by the late Neil Staples and Peter had mentioned he would like to get a factory R.H.D. Cadillac coupe to replace the LaSalle. So I suggested why not buy Ted Bakers car. Peter would have been interested if it was a coupe but he wasn't interested in a 4 door sedan.

Time moves on to around June and we make our bookings to go on next years Cadillac Club Rally to the Barossa Valley in SA. In fact we get even better news when Fred and Penny from San Francisco consider coming to Australia and attending the S.A. Rally. I started to think what

Cadillac vehicle I can use to transport all of us to S.A. One option was to get the 1966 Deville convertible re registered but in the back of my mind is my daughters comment "I no longer want the '66 dad I would love the '64 Red and white Mustang" which I purchased a couple of years ago, which is a fantastic looking collector car but not a patch on the Cadillac for luxury, ride and options. Our first '66 Cadillac which I sold to Neil Gray was Mandi's favourite and she was very sad when it went, but further down the track we were able to buy another '66 Cadillac and when the time came we used it as Mandi's wedding car.

Well, I thought that owing to the fact that I was starting to restore my 1938 V16 convertible and didn't have the time to do the 1938 75 Imperial Limo Caddy or the 1937 LaSalle Sedan plus the fact that we really love the 1940 Caddy Coupe which is Beverley's favourite. However, it is very difficult for Bev or James to get into the back seat if all three of us go out together (I certainly have no desire to sell it and Beverley wouldn't let me anyway), what was around to replace the '66 Deville with?

My thoughts kept going back to Ted's 1939 60s and I decided to give him a ring and see if it was for sale.



The '39 Cadillac 30 years ago!

Well I was happy to learn that Ted was considering selling this car and after

pondering on it I asked Issy if he wouldn't mind bringing his '39 60 Caddy out to our place to see if there was plenty of room for Bev and James to get in and out etc. which he did a couple of days later. After this trial I decided that Ted's car would be the car for us and the car to take to the National meet next year. I rang Ted back and organised the purchase. I sent a deposit and organised to pick it up approx 4 weeks later.

I had already started checking the '66 Caddy, things like renewing the braking system etc. to get it ready in case it was the car we used for the SA rally. At the Dandenong Valley Historical Car Club Presentation Dinner meeting June 1st I mentioned I was considering selling the '66 Caddy Convertible and possibly the '37 LaSalle. Two people enquired at the end of the evening about the Caddy and Dennis Jones subsequently agreed to come and see it and has since bought the 66 Caddy and its many tons of parts.

During the School Term Holidays June/July this year we had booked to visit our friends Ivan and Rita Bengie in Foxton Beach, New Zealand and I wanted to pick up the '39 before we left. The last week of school I was not rostered on the Thursday and I swapped the Friday for my day off Tuesday and this meant I could leave on the Wednesday night after tea to get the car and be back to fly to New Zealand the following Tuesday morning.

John Jenkins kindly offered to use his Toyota Diesel Caravan bus to tow a heavy duty 6 wheel trailer which was loaned to me by a D.V.H.C.C. member and friend Peter Lafrank. John had used his bus and this trailer successfully in the past when picking up his lovely '36 Cadillac Sedan from Robert Haby who lives at Loxton in South Australia.



John & Joy bring home the '36 Cadillac

John suggested he would like to do a little sight seeing along the way to Bathurst and back which sounded fine to me.

Well Wednesday 27 June 2007 finally arrived. I came home after work, John and I had an early dinner together and we left to pick up the nearby trailer and head for Bathurst. I had agreed to pick up the '39 on Friday the 29th so it meant we had to cover the 800km plus journey fairly directly. If you remember Wednesday 27 June was particularly wet and it flooded heavy rain all the way to our night stop at Chiltern. We intended to get as close to the border as possible on the first night. We got up early had a walk around this historic old town and headed off to our next stopping point for Thursday night, Cowra. We stopped that night at the old War time prison camp for Japanese, Italian and Indonesian. We have visited this historic camp once with the Caddy club years back. After setting up camp, there was a knock on the door and a young guy introduced himself and gave John his business card (no not Avon calling) he was a professional Ghost Chaser and Photographer. He told us not to worry if we saw flashes of light tonight as he will be taking ghost photos. Yes we did see many night flashes but sadly no ghosts. He was adamant that they were out there.

The next morning we had a little walk in the old P.O.W. prison site and then headed off to Bathurst. Well it took us longer than anticipated because there were hills, hills and more hills. We did arrive in Bathurst around mid day and set off to find Ted's place. We had an excellent map that Ted's wife had drawn and faxed to me but sadly we missed his gate and went a little further down the road. A quick phone call and a turn about had us on his property in about 10 minutes and Ted met us at the gate. We followed him along the long driveway to his property and there in the paddock I spied for the first time since April 1995 my newly acquired 60s Caddy. It looked a picture with the rolling hills and scenic view in the background.

The car was loaded onto the trailer along with its 4 original but perished road tyres

and we were then invited to share a lovely pumpkin soup and garlic bread lunch - just the thing for two weary travellers. We did the business side of things and Ted gave us a tour of his fabulous collection of radios, radiograms, record players etc. We saw a lovely 1930 vintage Chev sedan (fully restored) which he is also selling. After several photos, picking up some new parts Ted had purchased for spares, we said our goodbyes and thanks and headed back to Cowra.

It was a much slower trip as the added weight considerably slowed us up on the hills. In fact most hills we were down to a speed of around 15 km per hour. We arrived back at Cowra around 5pm and decided to spend the night in the same P.O.W. spot where stayed coming up. We had a quick look around the Japanese gardens which are outstanding. We saw several things we wanted to see before leaving Cowra. Firstly was a local museum on the main road that had cars, trains, military uniforms and vehicles, tractors and more signs for both automobile and railways than I have ever seen in my life anywhere. It also had thousands of items both small and large from the Cowra Military prison.

We spent several hours there and enjoyed every minute. Sadly the museum might have to close as the local government red tape is forcing him take down any signs advertising the museum and his business has dropped from \$70,000 take two years ago for 12 months to \$15,000 the last financial year. Such a pity as the museum would draw a lot of visitors to the town. We went to the local railway museum workshops and looked at their historic engines, carriages etc. and then it was time to move on with the '39 following to our Saturday night stop.

I must say along the way the car created a lot of interest and many questions were asked about it by curious onlookers. We also got the thumbs up by cars passing us. Saturday night we stopped in a truck roadside stop en route to the Victorian border. We had stopped for several hours at a place called The Rock. We attempted a

long mountainous hike to the top but I pulled out about 0/4 way up to let John sprint ahead to achieve his aim to get to the top. We got to Glenrowan and camped there Sunday night. It was getting late and dark and we felt it was safer to be off the road as there were a lot of transport trucks. Monday morning we had a walk around this historic Ned Kelly town and visited a couple of newly set up historic sites before heading home. We had a good run arriving home at Narre Warren just after mid day, we unloaded the car, washed the bus and took the trailer back to Peter Lafrank's place then home for a late lunch.



The '39 Cadillac today



The '39 Cadillac's Interior

Many thanks John for accompanying me and a big thank you to Joy for lending him for the trip. I would like to thank the Bakers for selling me this beautiful car and thanks Ted for being such a good custodian of this rare vehicle.

Bev and I did a little last minute shopping, I had a hair cut then after dinner finished

packing and went to bed early to be ready to rise at 4:00am Tuesday morning to arrive at Tullamarine airport to fly to New Zealand. We were to find out after our big early rush that the plane was delayed 1½ hours anyway.

INTERESTING FEATURES AND HISTORY OF THE 1939.60 SPECIAL

When I first talked to Ted Baker he said you know this car has a lot of history. Well on the back seat was a work shop manual, and a folder of the best collection of history I have ever seen for a motor car.

Original Victorian registration number 87765.

Engine and chassis number: 6292574

Date of purchase when new: 23 May 1939.

Dealer: Rhodes Motors Ltd. Melbourne.

A Marmon straight 8 was traded in on the Caddy when purchased new by Miss Lurline Lesbia Allee of 166 Wattle Valley Road, Camberwell Victoria. She died in September 1958 at the age of 74. She left property, the 1939 and £87,997.00 cash. I believe £800 would buy a house in 1939.

I have the original Victorian owners papers, its workshop manual, its full history of owners, letters between them, disposal notices and an original newspaper add for its sale. I have documented mileages between owners, its original sale receipt when sold by the Trustees of Miss Allee's estate for £871/4/0 plus stamp duty. I have transfer of registration papers between owners etc. etc.

MAIN THINGS OF INTEREST ARE

- Original owners papers (Victoria)
- Complete history of vehicle owners
- 4 original perished road tyres (not fitted)
- Original new spare never been on the road in the boot.
- Original Rhodes motors sticker in the back window in good condition.
- Mint interior and sill plates.
- Mint steering wheel and horn button.
- Original push button radio with Melbourne stations such as 3LO and 3UZ, 3AW etc.
- A documented history of mileages when sold by each owner.
- A Speedo now showing 14,728 original miles.
- Original Cadillac script mirror behind sun visor.
- Original R.H. drive factory made car.
- A body plate showing S.O. special order trim and NO paint number for its special order paint two tone blue/silver grey.
- Very good original chrome plating.
- Most of the body with original paint, guards were touched up.
- Original news paper add.
- Original tool kit.
- Original wiper blades (need replacing) .
- Interior Glove Box lid has transfer of radio licence on it, plus crayon RH (for RHD factory identification).
- Original factory build sheet.