

## MY 1929 BUICK IS COMPLETED!

I am now the extremely proud owner of a complete 1929 Buick Model 44x Roadster. It has taken me 27 years to restore, which equates to half my life. Probably the greatest joy to me is finishing the project and the many people I have met, not only in Australia, but also around the world.



It is not possible to formally thank all the people who over the years helped, encouraged and talked me out of the times I felt like selling or abandoning the restoration. There is however three people I would specifically like to mention who have been with me since day one. These are Les Smith, Bill McLaughlin and my wife Josie.

Les, because of his help in the early mechanical phase, encouragement and valued advice throughout the entire project. Without his enthusiasm I may not have reached the stage I have.

Bill, for his time, suggestions and willingness to answer questions or find out the answer through his many contacts. A recent example was fitting the rear window. I think it took about six emails from Bill, including a canvas pattern, before the window was fitted.

And finally Josie for retaining her sanity, her immense patience, encouragement, turning a blind eye to the money I was spending and her faith and confidence in me to finish the car. I may have to take her out for a nice meal and bottle of wine.

My interest in vintage cars started with a desire to own an A-Model Ford. I could relate to these because there was a couple in our town during the time I was growing up.



I purchased the Buick by accident. It was advertised in our Sunday newspaper and not far from where I live. Not having much to do that morning, I decided to go and have a look. My initial attraction was the size of the car, the nearly complete roadster back and the large wire wheels.

The car was a wreck and had been dismantled by the previous owner in a somewhat haphazard way. There were parts scattered over his entire back yard. After loading the car on trailers, we used garden rakes to gather up several boxes of small parts spread around and hidden in long grass. Major parts missing or in poor condition were all the panels from the doors forward. There was no engine, lights or instruments.

When I arrived home Josie, who could not see the potential of my purchase, considered I had wasted my money on a “pile of junk”.

However that is all she said because quite fortuitously and unknown to me, she had earlier scratched the entire side of our car in a car park.

Over the years and spending a lot of time looking at vintage car part ads, talking to dealers, following up leads, swapping parts and a great deal of luck, I was able to acquire many of the parts I needed.

There is nothing more exciting or exhilarating than finding a desperately needed part or one I had only seen pictures of. Other components I needed were machined or fabricated from either damaged items I had or parts lent to me. Professionals carried out the major areas such as the woodwork, panel work and painting.

Probably the most memorable and enjoyable phase of the restoration was the people I have met, both in Australia and overseas, many of whom have become good friends. The Buick has certainly opened many doors and provided much fellowship through hours of talking about cars, usually accompanied by a beer or two or a nice bottle of wine.

There are two episodes I would like to share with you and which are often recalled during discussion concerning my restoration.

Josie and I hadn't been long married when I purchased the Buick. As with many young couples, money was in short supply. To buy parts I had accumulated some cash and had it hidden away in a safe place. On the first occasion I needed to draw on my funds, I went to my hiding place and discovered my cash had gone and there was an IOU in its place. Josie had taken the lot.

The second time involved an engine I had stored under our patio on a wheeled trolley. Due to its weight and available space, I had nowhere else to put it. This day we were having a party at our house and Josie thought she would gain more space if she could move the engine slightly. As she pushed, the whole thing started to move and she couldn't stop it. It gathered speed and tipped off the patio, down through the garden towards the neighbour's fence. Luckily it crashed into a tree stopping the fall. It required ten of us to get the engine back under the patio.

Finally, to finish the car and be able to drive it has given me an enormous sense of achievement and satisfaction. I probably won't restore another car because I don't think I will live long enough.

Thank you again to all the people who have helped and encouraged me along the way. Thank you also to the Buick Owners Club of Western Australia for their patience waiting for me to finish the car.

Josie and I are now looking forward to driving the Buick in as many events and as often as we can.

Paul Dickson (WA Buicks)