

THE CARRIER PIGEON



**BULLETIN OF
BALLINA CLASSIC VEHICLE CLUB INC.**

Celebrating the Spirit of Classic Motoring



Our Events Manager Therese Crollick is proud of her red 1970 MGB Roadster

ISSUE 1 | 2026 | EDITION 416



PRESIDENT: Ian Cummins
✉ ballinaclassicspresident@gmail.com



VICE PRESIDENT: David Felcsh



SECRETARY: Dianne Vickery
✉ ballinaclassics@gmail.com

EVENTS MANAGER: Therese Crollick



TREASURER: Russell Kelly



CLUB REGISTRAR: Santo Pennisi
☎ 0427 299 338



WEBMASTER: Bruce Key
✉ Ballinaclassicsweb@gmail.com

PUBLIC OFFICER: Gary Faulks

As we turn the pages of this edition, it's clear our club continues to grow and not just in numbers, but in stories, experience and enthusiasm. This issue highlights what makes the Ballina Classic Vehicle Club such a vibrant community. We welcome new members Peter Hatfield and Brent Harrison, whose motoring journeys bring fresh perspectives to the club. We also feature Justin Whicker, whose mechanical knowledge and willingness to assist members plays an important role in keeping our classics on the road.

We revisit Christmas 2025, the Northern Rivers Show 'N Shine and our monthly breakfasts — reminders that while cars bring us together, it is the camaraderie that

keeps us connected. Therese Collick's feature, the Lindsay Smith article, a précis of minutes, and our trivia and jokes round out this packed edition. Be sure to check the Events pages and see how you went with the trivia answers.

Thank you to all who contribute photos and stories. Every submission helps make this magazine a true reflection of our club.

Warm regards, Janine



EDITOR:
Janine Cullen
✉: janine
@jcmedia.net.au
☎: 0418 425 255

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE IAN CUMMINS

I read with interest the Australian Motor Heritage Foundation's Economic Impact Survey*, kindly forwarded to us all by our Secretary Di. It makes for fascinating reading and it's reassuring to know that, through our hobby, we are all making a positive contribution to the economy.

Anne and I are certainly doing our part at the moment, having discovered an exhaust leak at the manifold on our Chrysler.

Further investigation revealed two issues: firstly, a crack in the brazing that had been carried out prior to our ownership of the car, and secondly, uneven exhaust flanges where the original three sections had been brazed together.

We sought assistance from a local machine shop but, unfortunately, while the flange was being milled flat, the brazing failed completely at a critical point. A welding specialist

subsequently advised that the manifold was beyond repair.

As a result, we are now having new flanges laser-cut by another local business, after which a third local company will weld new 'steam pipe' to the flanges. I doubt there will be much change from \$2,000, but at least the end result should be a permanent solution, with no need for another extractor in the future!

Finally, a sincere thank you to Santo and Mark for their help during this process. Their knowledge and support have been greatly appreciated.

I look forward to seeing you at the next event.

Cheers, Ian



Our President Ian Cummins and wife Anne hosted the 2025 Christmas Luncheon at Che Bon Restaurant in Ballina

* Australian Motor Heritage Foundation Economic Impact

Survey <https://tinyurl.com/56fbftw>

LIFE MEMBERS:

Santo Pennisi, John Mooney, Geoff Wiseman,
David Felsch, Russell Kelly

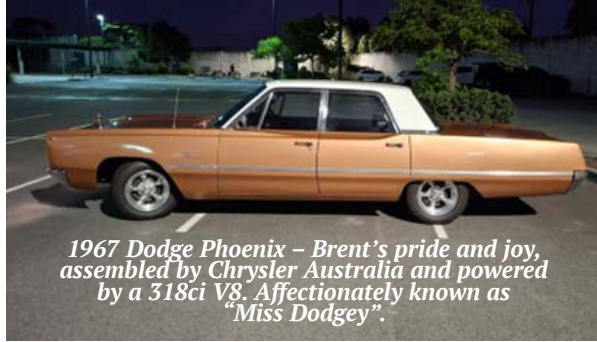
FROM BUS STOP DREAMS TO CLASSIC CHROME

NEW MEMBER PROFILE: BRENT HARRISON

Brent Harrison's love of cars began long before he ever sat behind the wheel. As a schoolboy, he would sit at the bus stop on the way to school, close his eyes and try to identify passing cars purely by the sound of their engines. It's a habit that hints at a lifelong fascination — one that never really faded.

After an online search, Brent discovered the Ballina Classic Vehicle Club and decided to attend a meeting in early 2025, even before owning a classic. The social side of the club immediately appealed, particularly the passing around of parts and items, and the chance to talk cars with like-minded people. For Brent, it confirmed that the club was as much about people as it is about vehicles.

That journey eventually led to his current pride and joy — a 1967 Dodge Phoenix, assembled by Chrysler Australia and powered by a 318ci (5.2L) V8. While the engine had already been modified by a previous owner with a warmer cam, inlet manifold and carburettor, Brent's focus since purchasing the car has been on compliance, reliability and safety rather than heavy modification. Aside from changing the wheels to suit his taste, the car has been carefully preserved rather than reinvented. After more than a year of searching, thousands of kilometres



1967 Dodge Phoenix – Brent's pride and joy, assembled by Chrysler Australia and powered by a 318ci V8. Affectionately known as "Miss Dodgey".

travelled and several disappointing leads, Brent finally found the car on Facebook Marketplace in Warwick. An honest seller made all the difference.

Along the way, Brent also uncovered the Phoenix's original rose-gold metallic lower body colour, though he admits he's grown quite fond of its current bronze-gold finish.

"I'm not really into modifying cars — I just like making them as good, safe and reliable as they can be."

Brent describes his enjoyment of classic cars as hard to define. He has always wanted a "special" car, even if life — marriage, children and changing priorities — meant that many years were spent driving standard vehicles. A VC Commodore became his longest-running project, constantly improved with thoughtful upgrades rather than radical changes.

Some of Brent's strongest motoring memories come from childhood, learning to drive in his family's Ramblers. His first attempt behind the wheel came at just twelve years old, reversing his mother's 1970 Rambler with more enthusiasm than finesse — a lesson quickly followed by a firm reminder from his father. Later came steering from the passenger seat, centre-seat pedal control, and eventually proper driving on back roads around Coffs Harbour. Over the years, the family owned a succession of Ramblers, including Classics, Hornets, Rebels and several Matadors.

Although Brent spent forty years working in IT, he joins the club for the social connection, the excuse to get Miss Dodgey out for a run, and the opportunity to learn from others — particularly when it comes to finding good local tradespeople. His advice to anyone thinking about joining a classic car club is simple: attend a meeting, talk to people, and see if it feels right — socially as well as mechanically.

DREAM GARAGE



1962 Dodge Phoenix



De Tomaso Pantera

If reality and lottery wins aligned, Brent's dream garage would include a 1962 Dodge Phoenix and a De Tomaso Pantera, with an XT Falcon powered by a 302ci engine rounding out the list nicely.

A final fun fact: despite standing 6'4", Brent once owned a Mazda 121 "bubble" for eight years and loved it. From Chrysler to Holden, Peugeot to Toyota, his motoring journey has covered just about every corner of the automotive world — but the passion has always stayed the same.

KEEPING CLASSICS ON THE ROAD

CLUB MECHANIC PROFILE – JUSTIN WHICKER.

Growing up on his parents' macadamia and avocado farm in Alstonville, this long-time Ballina Classic Vehicle Club member developed a strong connection to practical, hands-on work from an early age. He attended Alstonville Primary School and Alstonville High School, and at just 17 years old was offered a mechanical apprenticeship by a local Alstonville workshop..

That opportunity set the course for a lifelong career as a mechanic.

Alongside his working life, he has been deeply involved with the Wollongbar/Alstonville Rugby Union Club for many years, including time spent travelling and living in the UK to play rugby. He describes himself as fortunate to have a beautiful wife and two daughters.

Together, they have owned and



operated Hilltop Auto Centre for the past 19 years. Over that time, the workshop has seen everything from the latest model vehicles through to the earliest of classics.

A passion for older cars is what naturally drew him towards classic vehicle servicing and restoration. He believes older cars hold a timeless charm that modern vehicles simply don't possess.

Through his work, one of the most common issues he encounters with classic vehicles is ignition-related problems, something owners frequently underestimate.

When it comes to different makes and models, he notes that every vehicle has their own quirks and unique differences. This variety is part of what makes working on classic cars both challenging and rewarding.



One of the most demanding repairs he has tackled was on one of his own vehicles, a regulator charging issue on a 1942 Ford GPW.

Sourcing parts for older vehicles can be time-consuming, which is why he often encourages owners to source parts themselves. He is always willing to offer recommendations, pointing members towards social media, car clubs and specialist parts suppliers as the best places to look.

A member of the Ballina Classic Vehicle Club for around ten years, he says one of his highlights each year is the annual RSL Car Club Show Day.

He believes having a mechanic within the club community is valuable, as it allows knowledge to be shared and information assessed to help members wherever possible. He is always happy to assist those who enjoy doing their own tinkering.

Among the many vehicles he has worked on, one that stands out is a customer-owned 1934 Ford Cabriolet that was brought in from South Africa following the Queen's tour of Australia.



For him, the greatest reward of working on classic cars is keeping history, nostalgia and style alive. His advice to classic car owners is simple: don't be afraid to drive them. Regular use allows vehicles to go through heat cycles and keeps everything lubricated and moving.

Looking ahead, he believes the classic car scene remains strong, with plenty of knowledge and parts still accessible. While the retirement of older mechanics risks the loss of hands-on experience, he sees YouTube

and social media playing an important role in helping preserve that knowledge for future generations.



WELCOME TO THE CLUB, PETER HATFIELD

Peter Hatfield's enthusiasm for cars began in childhood, following visits to the Giltraps Auto Museum on the Gold Coast during the 1960s. That early interest developed into long-term ownership of a range of vehicles, particularly Mitsubishis. Over the years, Peter owned a Mitsubishi Colt in Papua New Guinea, a very original Cordia hatchback coupe in New Zealand, and several Magnas. He has always appreciated Mitsubishi vehicles for their solid feel, rugged handling and stylish design, especially the Cordia.

In 2020, Peter joined the Summerland Sports and Classic Car Club while the Ballina Classic Vehicle Club was suspended during the pandemic. Living in Ballina and with his vehicle now eligible for historic registration, he decided it was time to join his local club.

Peter currently owns a 1996 Mitsubishi Lancer MR coupe, the top-of-the-line model in the Lancer range at the time. Fitted with the more powerful 1800cc engine, firmer suspension and sharper steering, the MR is a particularly enjoyable car on winding roads.

Peter's Lancer was purchased from its original owner with just 40,000 kilometres recorded. Always garaged and completely unmodified, it retains its original



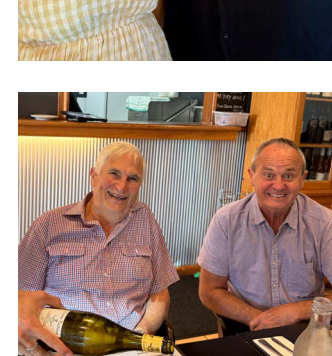
paintwork and factory accessories, including floor mats, dash mat and light covers. Period-correct aftermarket additions include an early TomTom and a reversing camera.

Rather than restoring or modifying vehicles, Peter prefers to maintain originality. What he enjoys most is driving his Lancer and chatting with other owners about their cars. He also has a strong interest in researching automotive history and the social stories that surround it.

Peter hopes to gain advice on maintaining his MR, enjoy social events and club runs, and assist with club activities. His motoring memories include extensive road trips throughout Australia, New Zealand and Indonesia, with one particularly memorable journey from Jakarta to Borobudur and Yogyakarta. His advice to prospective members is simple: find a car club with vehicles like your own. As a fun fact, Peter once stayed in a California hotel room occupied by actress Jessica Lange the night before he moved in.



Our Christmas Party 2025 Che Bon Ballina



FEBRUARY BREAKFAST - SUMMERLAND FARM



TOOLBOX TIPS: ADJUSTING DRUM BRAKES

Most historic vehicles use manually adjusted drum brakes and require periodic setup to maintain proper pedal feel and stopping performance.

Drum systems use brake shoes, wheel cylinders and a manual adjuster (star wheel or cam). Correct adjustment keeps the shoes close to the drum without dragging. Too much clearance gives a long pedal; too little causes overheating and wear.

Before adjusting:

Ensure the vehicle is safely supported, the handbrake is released, wheel bearings are correctly set, and there are no fluid leaks.

Adjustment:

Rotate the wheel and tighten the adjuster until the drum locks. Back off slightly until the wheel turns freely with light drag. Repeat on all wheels.

Pump the pedal to centre the shoes, re-check if needed, then adjust the handbrake. Road test at low speed to confirm even braking.

CLASSIC OVERSEAS CARS – AUSTRALIAN FAVOURITES

1. Which British sports car, often nicknamed the "hairstylist's car," became one of the most affordable convertibles in Australia during the 1960s and 70s?
2. What German car, first sold in Australia in the early 1950s, went on to become one of the best-selling vehicles of all time worldwide?
3. Which American V8 coupe, officially imported in small numbers, became an Australian cult classic thanks to its appearance in motorsport and film?
4. What Italian brand made its name in Australia during the 1960s with small, stylish sports cars that appealed to young drivers?
5. Which Japanese sedan helped change Australians' views on reliability and fuel efficiency during the fuel crises of the 1970s?
6. What British luxury marque was commonly associated with diplomats, executives, and police vehicles in Australia during the 1950s and 60s?
7. Which French car, famous for its unusual suspension system, gained a loyal following among Australian farmers and rural drivers?
8. What Swedish car brand earned a reputation in Australia for safety innovations such as early seatbelt adoption?
9. Which American pickup truck, originally designed for farm use, later became a popular restored classic at Australian car shows?
10. What compact German sports coupe of the 1970s became highly sought-after in Australia for its handling and build quality?
11. Which Japanese sports car, launched in the late 1960s, became a performance bargain in Australia and later a classic collector favourite?
12. What British off-road vehicle, originally designed for agricultural work, became an Australian icon on farms, beaches, and in the outback?



Before it's time - a joke from Peter Hatfield's Grandfathers 1930 magazine



Ballina Mayor Sharon Cadwallader announced Elton Walker's 1957 Chevy Nomad Wagon as the Car of the Show. Elton also took out the top trophy at the Lennox Byron Ballina Historic Car Club's car show the previous day.

The Show 'N' Shine on February 22 raised more than \$40,000 for the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service, bringing their total donations to the helicopter service to more than \$120,000.



THERESE CROLLIK – A LIFE OF SERVICE, COMMUNITY AND CLASSIC MOTORING

It's dedicated members like Therese Crollik who help keep the spirit of our club alive by working steadily behind the scenes, organising events and staying connected with members. Therese reminds us that the heart of the club isn't just the cars — it's the people and the friendships we share.



Born in Sydney and moving to the Lismore/Ballina area in the early 1980s, Therese has called Alstonville home for the past 11 years. Her working life was spent as a Medical Scientist, serving in pathology laboratories from 1976 until her retirement in 2017 — a career dedicated to helping others long before many of us met her through the club.

Therese's love of classic cars has always been there, but it was her late partner, John Felsch, who truly drew her into the local motoring community.

John collected vintage Mercedes and joined the club in the early 1990s, and Therese happily accompanied him on runs and events in their old Mercs. After John's passing in 2013, she decided to join the club in her own right and

soon after purchased the car she still treasures today — a beautifully kept 1970 MGB Roadster.

She says she loves driving something completely different from her everyday car, and nothing beats the simple pleasure of dropping the roof and heading out on the open road.

As the club's Events Coordinator, Therese plays a key role behind the scenes, organising runs and outings that keep members connected and active. For her, it's about creating opportunities for people to enjoy themselves and share their passion.

But classic cars are only one part of Therese's busy life. Her commitment to community service is remarkable. She volunteers as a trainer, first aid officer and patrol member with the Ballina Surf Life Saving Club, serves as President of Alstonville Rotary, contributes to St Vincent de Paul, plays with the Ballina Concert Band, supports her church's pastoral council, is a Life Member of Masters Swimming Queensland, and now also serves the wider community as a Ballina Shire Council Councillor.

For Therese, clubs like ours are about much more than vehicles. They provide connection, friendship and shared experiences. "Anything you do is always better when shared with others," she says — and usually more fun too.

Looking ahead, she hopes to see more women and younger people join the club, noting that while busy family and work lives can make participation tricky, our activities are family-friendly and welcoming to all.

Her message to prospective members is simple: if you love old cars, bikes or working vehicles and want to preserve a piece of history, come along. You'll find friendly, like-minded people ready to share advice, enthusiasm and plenty of great drives together.

SURVEY REVEALS AUSTRALIA'S HISTORIC VEHICLE OWNERS SPEND OVER \$9.9 BILLION ANNUALLY

- **Over 6,000 respondents across 800 motoring clubs in a nationwide Automotive Heritage Economic Impact Survey confirm close to \$10 billion in annual expenditure on historic vehicles**
- **An estimated 970,000 historic vehicles in Australia with owners spending close to \$10,240 per vehicle per year**
- **Australian Motor Heritage Foundation: "In carrying out this study, we have shown that the historic vehicle movement is a large and vibrant part of Australia's society and economy"**

The Automotive Heritage Economic Impact Survey of well over 6,000 Australian respondents, distributed to over 800 motoring clubs nationally, was conducted for the Australian Motor Heritage Foundation (AMHF) by The Mercurius Group (TMG). The Foundation is champions of Australia's motor heritage, and an organisation dedicated to promoting and preserving Australia's motoring history.

COPY THAT @ PROFSEC

249 River Street Ballina 6686 7006

This newsletter has been formatted and printed by Copy That @ Profsec.

LESSONS LEARNED THE HARD WAY

By *Lindsay Smith*

My second car was a Volkswagen Type 3 Fastback, which is still a design of car that I think is very good, but unfortunately the one that I purchased back in 1975 was not a good example.

The car was a bitzer made up of different models assembled to make one registerable car. The original engine had the heater flaps on the engine, but the replacement engine had the flaps on the body, so there was no way of turning the heater off and the previous owner had left the heater pipes disconnected.

As I was going to university in Armidale, I felt a heater would be beneficial so connected them back up. For summer I thought that disconnecting them may leave too little cooling air for the engine, so had the brainwave to roll up some

carpet off-cuts and block the pipes.

All worked well for weeks until one day driving home to my grandparents place in Epping in heavy traffic I noticed the smell of smoke entering the cabin. The heat from the engine had been slowly burning the carpet stuffed into the heater pipes. Eventually it burnt through and the force of the fan fanned it into a full on fire.

The car did not catch on fire but all the air vents were belching thick acrid smoke. Being on Epping Road with nowhere to stop, I put my head out the window for the rest of the trip while other drivers shouted that I was on fire.

I sold that car later that year after many other issues of equal disappointment.



Volkswagen Type 3 Fastback

DIARY DATES

Ballina Classic Vehicle Club Monthly meetings are held at 7pm on the first Tuesday of every month at the Ballina RSL.

Our breakfasts are held on the first Saturday following our monthly meeting at 8am at various locations.

All members, visitors, and members of other car clubs welcome.

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

- March 15 Classic Motor Show National Transport Museum 69 Rifle Range Road Inverell
transportmuseum@bigpond.com
- May 31 North Coast Classic Motorcycle Show & Swap Meet, Alstonville Show Ground
- June 7 Mid Coast Motorfest 26. John Wright Park Tuncurry. Hot rods, motorcycles veteran, vintage and classic cars, street machines.

SAVE THE DATE:

Northern Rivers Vintage & Veteran Car Club Inc. Annual Rally
Calling all vintage, veteran, classic, and historic vehicle enthusiasts!
Mark your calendars and get ready to celebrate the beauty, history, and craftsmanship of motoring heritage at the Northern Rivers Vintage & Veteran Car Club Inc. Annual Rally. Date: Thursday 20th – Sunday 23rd August 2026 Location: Lismore, NSW

B-LINE AUTO
AUTO PARTS STORE

Need Parts?
Purchase your parts at B-Line Auto
to receive trade pricing.
Just show your membership card.

BALLINA
02 6681 6877
6/46 De Havilland Crescent
Ballina

Trivia Answers
 1. MG MGB. 2. Volkswagen Beetle. 3. Ford Mustang. 4. Fiat. 5. Toyota Corolla. 6. Jaguar. 7. Citroën 2CV. 8. Volvo. 9. Chevrolet C10. 10. BMW 3 Series (E21). 11. Datsun 240Z. 12. Land Rover Series I, II & III

FEBRUARY 2026 MONTHLY MEETING – PRÉCIS

The Ballina Classic Vehicle Club monthly meeting was held on Tuesday 3 February 2026 at the Ballina RSL Club, chaired by Ian Cummins, with minutes recorded by Di Vickery. Visitors Lawrence Cunial and Jan were welcomed, while apologies were received from Chris Pearl and John Mooney. The December minutes were confirmed.

The Treasurer reported steady income from membership renewals and vehicle registrations, with expenses including CHMC fees and printing costs. The club's fixed term deposit remains secure and growing. Two new members, Peter Hatfield and Brent Harrison, were welcomed,

with one additional application in progress. Members were reminded that full financial status is required for historic registration eligibility.

Upcoming events include the North Coast Show & Shine, a twilight run to the Eltham Hotel, the North Coast Classic Motorcycle Show, and the Toowoomba Swap Meet. Editor Janine outlined cost-saving measures for the club magazine while maintaining local printing support. General business included insurance experiences shared by Russell Kelly and discussion of potential future club runs. The meeting closed at 7.50 pm.

DECEMBER 2025 MONTHLY MEETING – PRÉCIS

The December monthly meeting of the Ballina Classic Vehicle Club was held on Tuesday 2 December 2025 at the Ballina RSL Club, chaired by Ian Cummins, with Di Vickery as minute taker. Visitors Brent Harrison and Peter from Palm Lakes were welcomed, and apologies were noted from Mark Prouse and Barry Blanch. The November minutes were confirmed.

Treasurer Russell Kelly reported insurance expenses totalling just under \$1,000, while income from registrations and memberships was increasing. Concerns were raised regarding rising magazine printing

costs, with Editor Janine tasked to seek clarification and cost-effective options without compromising quality.

Event updates included the Christmas party at Che Bon, a Summerland House meeting, and planning for a late February twilight run. Registration numbers were tracking steadily ahead of Rego Day. General business was minimal, with members informed of a potential Show & Shine opportunity in Lismore through Baptist Care and the Salvation Army. The meeting concluded at 7.55 pm.

A LOOK BACK AT WHAT WAS NEW IN 1938

From a magazine brought to our last meeting by new member Peter Hatfield who has a collection of pristine editions handed down from his late grandfathers 1930's magazine collection)

In this November 1938 issue of Motor, it is fascinating to see what was considered cutting-edge in the 1939 model cars. The emphasis was clear: better vision, smoother styling, improved gearshifts and greater driving comfort.

One of the most noticeable changes was the move toward wider windscreens and slimmer pillars to improve driver visibility. Manufacturers proudly promoted "greater vision" as a major safety advancement. At the same time, body styling was becoming more streamlined, with integrated headlamps, flowing guards and the gradual disappearance of external running boards on some models.

The article highlighted new six-cylinder offerings positioned as affordable yet stylish alternatives to larger eights. Meanwhile, Ford introduced its new V8 "Mercury," slotting between the Ford De Luxe and Lincoln-Zephyr, offering increased wheelbase and interior space. Even then, manufacturers were carefully filling market gaps — something that continues today.

Technical improvements were just as significant. Column gearshifts were increasingly adopted, replacing floor-mounted levers and giving front passengers more space. Linkage systems were engineered for smoother

engagement, while some models introduced over-centre spring mechanisms to improve shift feel.

Dashboard design was evolving rapidly. Push-button radios were proudly featured, and speedometers were now fitted with coloured lighting to improve safety — green up to 30 mph, amber to 50 mph and red above that. What seems basic now was innovative in 1938.

Underneath, manufacturers refined suspension and steering components, working to reduce vibration and improve ride comfort. Hydraulic brakes were becoming standard across more ranges, marking a steady move away from mechanical systems.

Reading this 1938 feature reminds us that the late 1930s were a period of remarkable automotive progress. Many of the engineering solutions introduced then — improved ergonomics, better visibility, smoother gear selection and enhanced safety features — remain fundamentals of car design today.

For classic car enthusiasts, these developments represent more than period styling; they reflect the ingenuity and ambition of an era determined to make motoring more refined, safer and more enjoyable.



HILLTOP AUTO CENTRE

Services Include

- Mechanical Repairs • General Servicing
- Registration Inspections • Classic & Vintage Vehicle Care

Call Justin Whicker

753 Ballina Road, Goonellabah NSW 2480
6624 2100 • 0423 285 807 • hilltopautocentre@bigpond.com

Quality workmanship you can trust

Proud Supporter of the Ballina Classic Vehicle Club



BALLINA CLASSIC VEHICLE CLUB INC.
POSTAL ADDRESS: PO BOX 555, BALLINA 2478
EMAIL: ballinaclassics@gmail.com
WEBSITE: ballinaclassics.com.au