

welcome

I recently had a phone conversation with a member who was referring to an article that had appeared in *samotor*. Nothing too out of the ordinary, except that the article in question was published in 1975. Then just the other week I had another member who desperately wanted to track down the first car review RAA ever ran on the Toyota LandCruiser, back in 1949.

It's easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the present and forget about the prestige and history behind the publication, and behind RAA. While searching for the 1949 car review in ghosts of *samotors* past I came across some fascinating trivia that would be otherwise hidden within these archived pages. So we've decided to bring these historical gems out of hiding and share some with you in a new series on page 16, flashing back to a particular year and finding out what RAA was getting up to. First year in question: 1958.

Also in this bumper summer edition, flick to page 38 to read who walked away victorious from this year's Australia's Best Cars awards, and then head online to see our very own Australia's Best Cars Chief Judge Mark Borlace talk about what's involved in the rigorous judging process. In other stories supported by online content, experience Western Australia's south west by road on page 68 or by rail at www.raa.com.au/samotor

Thumbing through old editions of *samotor* I realised just how far we've come, having recently witnessed the evolution of *samotor*'s online addition. These are exciting times for *samotor*, and for RAA, which is why I'm happy to leave on a high note, as I sign off on my last edition.

Kim

Kim
Willmer
Editor

The views expressed
in this column do not
necessarily reflect the
views of RAA.



letters

ROADSIDE RESCUE

I recently called for roadside assistance due to an immobiliser failing to start my car. I ended up having the car towed but during the afternoon I received a phone call from the RAA mechanic who had done some homework and suggested a remedy to get the car started, which I later tried and by crikey the car started. However, in my excitement, I locked my keys in my car. Another RAA mechanic came to my rescue using a remarkable gadget to open the locked car and I was eternally grateful, on both occasions.

T Gladdis

OUT OF THE BLUE

I'm concerned about the blue-white headlights that are appearing on new European cars and being retrofitted to other vehicles, because they're seen as trendy. Although these lights are legal, and apparently offer greater illumination ahead, I find them to be a hazard when approaching from the opposite direction as they dazzle and glare, providing an unsafe driving environment.

J Gates

Self-levelling, original factory-fitted xenon or HID lighting meets current requirements and will only cause discomfort to other drivers when they are fitted unprofessionally and the adjustment is not checked after installation. RAA offers members free headlight-aiming at the Mile End workshop.

WASTE OF SPACE

Why is it necessary to use a so-called 'space-saver' spare wheel on the majority of small cars? Even though the suggested 80 km/h is adhered to, it seems to me that safety is being compromised. Also, after fitting the spare, the replaced tyre will not fit in the spare wheel well. We choose to live at Coober Pedy, and in good faith purchased the Suzuki Swift for economy and reliability. So here's hoping we don't have a flat tyre in the middle of the outback.

C Kruger

For vehicles with large-dimension rims and tyres and limited boot space, the 'space-saver' may need to be part of the design. However, we encourage anyone purchasing a new car to barter for a full-size spare wheel if it can properly fit in the vehicle.

OVERTAKING ETIQUETTE

My wife and I have done a fair amount of touring with our caravan. On more than one occasion I have seen caravans accelerating to prevent a truck from passing – an extremely dangerous practice. When allowing a semitrailer to pass you, firstly contact the semi on the UHF (channel 40) and tell them you've seen him and ask them to let you know when he's about to overtake. Then when he pulls out, ease off the accelerator but do not brake.

F Reilly

JOURNEY BEYOND ROAD TRAUMA

Congratulations to all involved in the RAA-sponsored seven video stories on the *Journey Beyond Road Trauma* website. The stories should be obligatory viewing for all secondary school students when receiving their L-plates and should be part of the essential learning process.

P Cowan

Write in and WIN

With the *UBD 2011 Adelaide Street Directory*, weaving your way through Adelaide's streets has never been easier. Featuring more than 300 new streets, subdivisions, proposed developments and freeway extensions, you'll never have to stop and ask for directions again.

In this issue, the author of every letter published has won a *UBD 2011 Adelaide Street Directory*, which can be purchased from an RAA Shop at a discounted member price.

This edition's featured letter on driver training for learner drivers has also won a handy *samotor* merchandise pack.

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