

LYNNE TRANSFERS

Lynne Huntting, our loyal Officials Gazette colleague from San Francisco California USA, will be emigrating to Australia in April to marry long term fiancée Dr. Hugh Mer.

Lynne has been a long-term stalwart of the Australia Grand Prix as chief storyteller and all-round nice person for well over 52 years. Lynne started the Gazette after listening to stories from officials all around the world; and Lynne wanted to share their stories with all the other officials.

Talking all day long until their stories are told, nothing gets in the way of getting the story; but nowadays a golf cart is required to reach the outer sectors. Lynne also coined the phrase "Because We Can."

In the US, Lynne is currently President of the Incline Development Society where she helps retiring marshals ease their pathway away from the track. It is difficult work, as most marshals are reluctant to stop when their time is up. In Australia we are more direct with the cut, but the fear of litigation in the US is the chief motivator.

Lynne met Dr. Mer at the 2012 F1 COTA race meeting at Papasoyitos, opposite the Drury Inn in North Austin, and both fell in love. Both are set to move to the prestigious Portsea area in April after Dr. Mer recently sold his share in the Toro Rojo Stud outside Austin, Texas.

Please join me in wishing Lynne at the best for 2023, and Motorsport Australia is set to appoint Lynne to the position of Officials Lists replacing Joe King. April Fools.





THE PRES

Andrew Fraser, Director of Motorsport Australia, is also President of the Board of Directors. We met with him Thursday after the Australian Motorsport Hall of Fame induction. He expects growth in the area of sustainability. Technical capabilities will be a big part of our society, and Motorsport Australia can be part of the movement, including electrification. "But I'd also say, there will always be a role for this sort of motorsport - road racing. We all grew up since the horse and cart days loving the sounds, the smells, the noise, and the sights; and we need to do that in such a way that recognizes their value."

Recruiting and maintaining new members is a universal problem. One-way new marshals and officials were recruited to AGP was via those who loved motorsports but found tickets sold out. It was pointed out that coming in as a marshal is the best seat in the house that money can't buy. And the real secret, ... it doesn't cost to get in. Then ensure that the newbies have a good experience and made to feel welcome, treated with respect, given what they need to make their weekend enjoyable,

As leaders at the pro events, Fraser goes to the Sunday night gatherings, meets the volunteers, helps serve the food, stands behind the bar and hand out the drinks, thanking them for their participation. "If it's good enough for our volunteers to work all weekend, then it's good enough for me as a leader to attend and volunteer at the event gathering. The job I do is because I have passion and commitment; and I recognize our volunteers have that same passion and commitment."

Going forward, Fraser doesn't anticipate deleting any categories. When there are low participation numbers, events will combine categories or classes. During Covid with low car counts, different sedan categories were combined into one TinTop category. One area Fraser thinks Australia is exploring and promoting is E Sports.

Australia wants to be the leader in this field. This is a good starter for those who are too young or can't afford to go racing. "We can provide that entry point into motorsports. We must think creatively and laterally."







CAROL ARMSTRONG

To say Carol Armstrong is a well-travelled official is an understatement. Born and raised in Ireland, Armstrong is now a proud Australian citizen who has been all around the world volunteering at Formula 1 events. Last year alone, she attended five rounds of the FIA Formula 1 World Championship, with visits to the inaugural Miami Grand Prix and the picturesque Azerbaijan Grand Prix featuring in her busy schedule.

And having been an official in Australia for a decade now, this weekend's Formula 1 Rolex Australian Grand Prix will be the 39th Grand Prix she has volunteered at. Living up to the Irish Traveller reputation, unsurprisingly the charismatic Armstrong has made friends at many of these events, which results in her convincing them to come and volunteer here in Australia.

These international friendships have also helped build an unofficial exchange program for Armstrong, allowing her to travel to other countries and experience a variety of Grand Prix events. Despite having been to so many Grands Prix, in her eyes, it's her newly adopted home which she considers as one the best of the lot. "Australia's pretty much up there with the best I have to say," Armstrong said. "Last year I was lucky enough to do Azerbaijan and that was fabulous. They take care of all their officials just like we do here, so it was good to see. "Honestly, it was great to see because a lot of Aussies came over with me last year.

"Over the years, I have been able to get a lot of internationals to come over and do motorsport and I have been able to get to a lot of different countries where we help people train up. "We get to share our experiences, which in turn helps these people learn how to be proper officials. So that's great. In fact, I have quite a few people coming this year as well, which is exciting."

Whilst it may come as a bit of surprise as to how much Armstrong has travelled for motorsport has come from, there is a much simpler equation as she hails from a family entrenched in the motorsport community. Born to a father and mother who formed a formidable rally duo in Ireland, Armstrong grew up racing karts with her biggest competitor being her brother. As she got older, the level at which she competed in improved until 20 years ago she made some big decisions that would have a life changing impact. "I used to race karts at semi-professional level back in Ireland but eventually decided to give up racing and become an official instead," Armstrong explained.

"When I gave up karting, I still had an awful lot of love for motorsport, and I still wanted to be involved but not behind the wheel. "My dad suggested I become an official and I loved it, so I haven't looked back. Since then, I have recruited quite a few people and just showed them the way. "I also made the decision to move to Australia 20-years-ago and have been

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involved with Motorsport Australia as soon as I could. “I have no regrets over coming here. Obviously, the weather is better and there is the Formula 1 event, but it has also opened a lot of doors for me to train as a scrutineer, as well gain a lot of opportunities to go between different divisions and teams, which is really good. “For me, this is like the nearest you can get to the action without actually being in the action and working with the same team for the past decade – It’s like my home away from home.” Find out how you can become an official at motorsport.org.au/officials.



REX IS BEST

For fans of rallying or street cars, there aren't many cars more iconic than the Subaru WRX. The legendary all-wheel drive vehicle first came into existence around three decades ago and instantly became a fan favourite due to its slick design and powerful engine. Not long after its arrival into Australia, several owners in Victoria decided to get together and form a club dedicated to the car and Impreza WRX Club of Victoria was born.

For more than 20 years, the club has been a place where fans, owners and members can get together and celebrate the iconic car and as it stands, more than 400 passionate members form part of a strong club. Hosting a variety of motorsport events throughout the year, the club's most notable occasion is the annual REXMAS, a Come and Try day that welcomes almost 200 participants, 50 special cars on display and crowds of almost 1000.

Slowly recovering after what was a difficult period during COVID-19, the car club is now on a positive trajectory with new members joining every month. Committee Member Brett Isbel was a proud member of a club that celebrates the iconic car.

"There are plenty of things that make this type of car iconic," Isbel said. "The fact that it's all-wheel drive, the fact that it started as an economy car, that Subaru eventually put a big motor and turbo into it to turn into an amazing rally car and the sound of it is what makes this car amazing.

"It's a very unique car and there isn't a lot around, which would highlight why the club was created not long after the first Impreza came out." The club is one of the many car clubs to be on display at the Formula 1 Rolex Australian Grand Prix this week and Isbel believed it was a great benefit. "The club has been doing this for quite a while and we were one of the first clubs to do it," Isbel added.

"There are many benefits to doing a display at the Grand Prix, and one of them is the exposure we get to people, and although we don't have the biggest display, we certainly have a presence here. "There are some cool looking cars here, but we're very popular and lots of people will wander past and stop to admire. "Some of the cars as part of the display include the classic bug-eye STI, a limited edition RS40 model where only 300 were built and the latest model, which is the VB WRX." [Click here for more information on the Impreza WRX Club of Victoria.](#)









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MAKING YOUR MARK

The FIA Formula 2 Championship and FIA Formula 3 Championship is running at the Formula 1 Rolex Australian Grand Prix for the first time this year, and there are four Australian drivers flying the flag this weekend. Photos: Revved Photography

Competing in the Formula 2 Championship will be Jack Doohan, who is also an Alpine Academy driver, while Hugh Barter, Christian Mansell and Tommy Smith are in Formula 3. Both championships form part of the FIA's Road to F1 pathway, with a handful of current Formula 1 drivers having progressed through F2 and/or F3, including Charles Leclerc, Mercedes' George Russell and Australia's own Oscar Piastri.

Having raced in Formula 3 in 2020 and Formula 2 in 2021, Piastri ended up claiming both championships in each of his rookie years – highlighting his remarkable rise into the premier racing category.

Doohan joined Piastri on the Formula 3 grid in 2020 and had a challenging opening year before finding his feat 2021 where he finished second in the championship. The Queenslanders then had a strong debut in Formula 2 last year, picking up three wins and three further podiums to finish the year in sixth place overall.

As for the three Formula 3 drivers, each took on different routes to get to the third tier of Formula 1 racing. Barter spent two years racing Formula 4 in France and Spain having initially won the Richard Mille Young Talent Academy in 2020. The teenager went on to finish second in the French F4 Championship on his first attempt in 2021.

The Victorian again ended up in the same position in last year's French F4 Championship, while also finishing second overall in the Spanish Formula 4 Championship. Like Barter, Mansell has enjoyed a solid rise up the ranks having picked up plenty of success and been in contention for titles.

The Newcastle born driver picked up British Formula 4 Championship Rookie Cup honours in 2020 before graduating to GB3 where he placed third outright for the season. Mansell continued his good form the following year, finishing third in the 2022 Euro Formula Open Championship courtesy of three wins and a further 10 podiums. Rounding out the list of F3 drivers is Smith, who raced against Mansell in the 2021 GB3 season, having competed in a few rounds. The Victorian contested the full championship last year, with his highlight being a victory at the famous Spa-Francorchamps.

Ahead of the Australian Grand Prix, Smith is the only one out of the four Aussies to have experienced this track, having raced in 2019 as part of the Australian Formula 4 Championship.

While all four drivers are now well into their international careers, all four started off with racing in a number of Karting Australia events. Both categories will have practice sessions and qualifying on Friday, before the reverse-grid Sprint race on Saturday and the main Feature race on Sunday. The quartet all caught up with Motorsport Australia President Andrew Fraser and spoke to media on the first day of the Formula 1 Rolex Australian Grand Prix.

Jack Doohan - Virtuosi Racing

"It's going to be a super special weekend. I have been driving on this Albert Park circuit on PlayStation since 2011, so to be doing it in person, it's not going to sink in so soon. "Every track for me has been away from home. I have never raced a car on home soil so it's all the same sort of thing. Never thought about where I am and where I am driving, but to be driving in Australia and on home soil, it's going to be unbelievable for me. "I want to treat it as normal as I can. I don't want to think of it as too special. It's one of those one-off events like Monaco or Macau, where if you make too big of a deal of it, it could have a bad effect, so I'm just going to embrace the atmosphere and treat it as a normal weekend."



Tommy Smith - Van Amersfoort Racing

"This is the first time I have been home in two years, so it's nice to be back. I have driven on this circuit before, it gives me a bit more confidence as we only get one practice session. However, the track should be a bit easier than when I was here last and will be less complicated. "It's super cool to drive Formula 3. There is still lots to learn, but I have a quick teammate and as long as I improve with every session, I will be happy."

Hugh Barter - Campos Racing

"Obviously, I grew up in Melbourne, so it's a very surreal feeling to be racing in not only my own nation, but where I grew up. It's an amazing feeling and I need to make the most of the weekend and treat it as if it's a home weekend. Really nice to be on home soil. "Formula three is very different to Formula 4 as there is a lot of attention and eyes on you – it adds to the excitement. "Coming into a track like this where no one has any data, it means you must maximise track time. You must work harder than we did at other tracks like Bahrain to find the best set up for Qualifying and make the most for the weekend."

Christian Mansell - Campos Racing

"I am very excited to be racing on home soil. I am looking forward to having passionate fans. I am really happy to be here, and I can't wait to get on it. "The first experience in Formula 3 was very cool. I enjoy it a lot. It's hard not to when you're in the peak feeder series when it comes to the F3 standard. The first round was a very positive weekend for us in the opening round, so it gave me the confidence to think that we can get a result in future events."

Andrew Fraser - Motorsport Australia President

"It's great to have an Australian contingency this weekend welcoming Formula 2 and Formula 3 to the Grand Prix for the first time. Looking forward to what these guys can do on the track."

"A couple of years ago, Oscar Piastri was in these championships, and we know he will be racing in Formula 1 for the first time. That's the pathway and what these four guys demonstrate is the future of Australian motorsport. I think the future of Australian motorsport is in good hands. I wish them all the best."











HALL OF FAME

The Australian Motorsport Hall of Fame inducted four new members on Thursday at AGP. Mick Doohan, a Hall of Fame Legend and five-time World MotoGP Champion was the VIP Presenter. They join 84 other HOF members, which represent achievements over 123 years of Australian motorsports, mainly in competition, but also seven administrators, promoters, and broadcasters. The inductions are capped at five annually, but the selection criteria is stringent. The Australian Hall of Fame was started by the Australian Motorsport Council which includes Motorsport Australia, Motorcycling Australia, Karting Australia, ANDRA, and Speedway Australia.



Three of the four inductees were present. The fourth was the late Joan Richmond and was represented by Dr. Laina Hall from the National Museum in Canberra. The other three inductees were Victor Bray, six times National Top Doorslammer drag racing champion; John Goss, race car driver - the only one to win both the Australian Grand Prix (1976) and the Bathurst 1000; and Remo Luciani, seven-time Australian National Karting Champion. The three inductees and the representative all received medallions.

Victory Bray won his first six National Top Doorslammer Drag Racing Champions consecutively. The family that plays together stays together. His son races and wins, and now his grandson is racing. Bray was the first driver to break the six-second sound barrier in his class (245.77 mph/395.53 kmh.) In 1996 his group called the Wild Bunch convinced ANDRA to ratify Doorslammer demonstration division as a Group One category. Bray is known for racing 1957 Chevy's - now purpose-built Doorslammers with Chevy shells.

John Goss OAM twice won the Bathurst 1000, and throughout his career as a racer - and well-known engineering mechanic, ran mostly as an independent, rather than being factory-supported. He raced touring cars and open-wheel cars. He won the Australian Grand Prix in his second year of competition. Goss designed and built sports cars, raced aircraft, and in the last 30 years has been project engineer on a privately-owned schooner, Adix. His motto was "I did it my way."

Remo Luciani is still actively racing at 62 and won his Karting class last year. He said he was a 'late bloomer,' starting karts at 21. He is well-known as a chassis builder, engine builder, and mentor for youngsters using Karting to get into racing. Luciani races #17 in honour of Dick Johnson, who had won his first Australian Touring Car Championship the year (1981) with that number, which was also the year of Luciano's first race.

Joan Richmond, who died in 1999, road raced in Australia, the UK and Europe and won races. She drove overland from Melbourne to London, was a works driver for seven different British manufacturers, and was part of the MG class-winning LeMans in 1935. She won seven Monte Carlo Rallies. Her medallion will join many of her other trophies, mementos and photographs in the National Museum.

After the presentation on the Fan Forum Stage, the four joined Doohan to pose for photographs with the 1928 Riley Brooklands/1931 Riley, like the one in which Joan Richmond placed fifth in the 1931 Australian Grand Prix.













