

and winding road to motoring enthusiasts' poc

stretches of our national highway are still two lanes.

In the meantime it only took eight years to fly some blokes the 384,400km from America to the moon, eight years to build the Sydney Harbour Bridge and 60 years to build 11,000km of autobahns (with a few small distractions like Allied bombing going on).

Look, you know as well as I do, polities of all persuasions see cars (except for electric ones) as big mobile ATMs. When they get a bit short of the readies they push the excise, rego, tariffs and luxury car tax buttons and the electronic hand goes into your sky rocket, removes your hard earned cash and sends it to Canberra or your local capital — where about 4c in the dollar is spent on roads and the rest goes to important projects like VIP planes from America, submarines from France (remember the Rainbow Warrior), ministerial cars from Germany and supporting an efficient and high performing public sector through providing leadership to commonwealth entities through team-building exercises at expensive restaurants.

Of course that money would be better spent with my friend and race coach Phil Alexander at raceawaytracktime.com.au, who does super team building in non-embarrassing but politically correct cars.



MICK WALSH

The Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow ute

Australia's top motoring organisation, the Australian Automobile Association, estimates that over the next five years readers of this column and the majority of other drivers who would not be seen dead in a battery-powered car will pay \$72.5bn in fuel excise and import duties.

They also had a few quiet words for the chauffeured persons who gave us our budget this week. "The AAA is disappointed that the government has not seized the opportunity presented by improved economic conditions to abolish redundant import taxes on vehicles. The budget shows that Australians will pay an extra \$5.1bn for newer, cleaner and safer cars over the next four years.

The government needs to explain to voters how it justifies continuing to add \$1.3bn every year to Australian car prices, in order to protect an industry that no longer exists."

And the Australian Historic Vehicle Interest Group, a group of enthusiasts from all over this great land with crook roads, made their own budget submission. Like many of us they are justly concerned about the damaging impact various federal laws are having on our motoring heritage.

In their submission they said that three laws are at the crux of the problem: the luxury car tax on the import, or reimport, of cars over 30 years old; the way the asbestos ban is enforced on the im-

port of classic cars, and the proposed new import rules for cars over 30 years old, with the existing as-of-right entitlement to an import permit to be replaced by a ministerial discretion.

The group's chairman, former heavy duty lawyer and classic car tragic Doug Young, says the luxury car tax has irreversibly depleted Australia's once-great historic car fleet.

"For instance we have lost half our vintage Bentleys in that time with none returning. The same applies to Vauxhall 30/98s.

"This acts as an almost complete barrier to the importation of historic cars, resulting in the loss of opportunities for Australian businesses, deprives Australians of jobs, and prevents the replenishment of Australia's once-great heritage motoring fleet.

At least Doug and his team had a bit of a win. In Tuesday night's budget the Treasurer told the nation that the LCT is now to be removed in its entirety on cars reimported into Australia following refurbishment overseas, from January 1, 2019.

As Doug says: "It's not everything we hoped for, but it's a start." I think we need Doug and the AAA to get together to lobby the government to finish the Pacific Highway before 2818.

Talking of the world's oldest race car driver, 90-year-old Her-

shel McGriff Bill McNally Camry last first half of Twin 100 at

Before he Hershel had over and the anthem on officially open ings. Then he hall of fame more races th sendon have And what a ra chequered fla hero was only winner in 18th

Finally, no on refurbished I'm selling my the Porker and a Rolls-Royce Built by Steve Clark and Car ford (you have Bamford). Ton Excavators Li digging equipn in 150 countries More impor Fezzer 250 G world's most be tray that is a w dream.

I have made includes throw four spare tyres

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