

1996 Panel – Leyland Badger Restoration

Patron:	Jim Crawford (CMV Adelaide)
Leader:	Neil Weidenbach
Coach Builder:	Aynsley Rowe
Electrics:	Dr. Don L McNair
Metal Work:	Charles Stevenson
Engine reconditioning:	Tom Kruse

Contributors, volunteers and supporters:

Tom Agnew, The Copley Crew, Neil Mansell Transport, Bone Timber, Eric Deer, John Clifton, Frank Eckert, Colin Hamp, Bob Lee, Marlon Geach, Russell Newton, Bob Kenny, Mark Metzger, Ajax Motors, Bridgestone Tyres, Shane Grover, Don Warner, Dave Burge, Reg Donoghue, Tom Fitzsimmons, Bryce Carroll, Phillip Kruse, Jack Koehne and many others.

Arrived at Northfield:	Saturday 30 th March 1996
First Test Run:	Tuesday 14 th July 1998
Cab Completed:	Monday 19 th November 1998
Tray Completed:	Saturday 17 th March 1999
Restoration Completed:	Friday 2 nd August 1999

The restoration of the 1936 Leyland Badger was a major undertaking. It was made possible by the thousands and thousands of hours of volunteer labour and the skill and dedication of a small group of enthusiasts lead by Neil Weidenbach and assisted by Aynsley Rowe.

When the Badger was transported to Northfield from Copley in 1996, Tom was eighty-one years old. He made significant contributions to the truck's mechanical restoration and he reconditioned the engine. He didn't shirk any of the manual labour. The average age of the restorers was around 70.

The Northfield shed became an important social gathering point. Lots of tea was brewed and cake and lamingtons consumed during the more than three-year restoration.

Some parts were scrounged from Tom's 'jewellery boxes' along the Birdsville Track. These were discarded vehicles left behind sand hills in case of an emergency. In 1996, ABC TV's *Australian Story* produced a story about Tom and Dave Burge travelling up the Track in search of parts for the restoration.

Tom and Valma bequeathed the magnificent and fully restored vehicle to the people of Australia in 2008. It's permanent home is in the National Motor Museum at Birdwood in the Adelaide Hills.

Photo credits: Leon Mead, Mark Metzger and Neil Weidenbach Collections.