

Sidney Raymond Ferguson

A real Aussie bloke.

Sid was a lifelong resident of Sydney NSW. Born June 1879. As a young lad his education would best be described as average. He left school at about the age of 14 or 15 to follow in his father's footsteps as a bootmaker.

Sid started as an apprentice bootmaker which he applied himself to for a short while, but found the work uninteresting and not to his liking.

At this point he made a decision to quit and broaden his horizons by travel, and this he did. He travelled to New Guinea and cruising up rivers in an old steam boat and traded with natives for we think a couple of years. It was at this time that he contracted Malaria which he suffered for some years.

A short while later he travelled to Fiji, a period of his life which we know little or nothing about.

On his return to Australia he saw an advertisement in the Sydney Morning Herald for a Fitter and Mechanic for the Canada Cycle and Motor Co situated at Broadway in Sydney.

We understand he was asked during the interview if he knew how to operate a lathe and other associated machinery and had a good knowledge of mechanics.

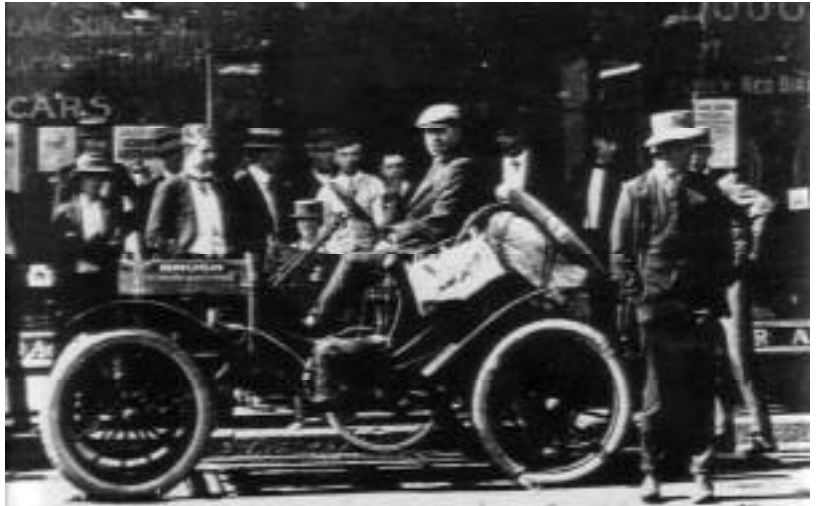


A handsome young Aussie.

Of course he confirmed that he had all the knowledge and skill required to undertake the job but in fact had never seen a lathe and had absolutely no mechanical knowledge at all. However he got the job. From then on he was totally self taught.

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Sid in the 1910 Brush in William St. Sydney outside the Company's Showroom prior to shipment to Fremantle.



During his time at the Canada Cycle and Motor Co he was approached by management who had an interest in importing and marketing the Brush motor car in Australia to test drive and evaluate the Brush motor car's suitability for Australian conditions. A major test of the car's durability was required and a plan hatched to be the first to cross Australia from west to east. Sid was asked if he was up to the task to drive this vehicle all that distance in very unsuitable terrain. He would be equipped with all the necessary food and fuel and he would be accompanied by a navigator called Francis Birtles.



Sid frying eggs for breakfast



Sid & Rex Brush ing downhill !

Sid & Rex driving on the railroad near Coolgardie



The 1912 Heroic First crossing of Australia by Sid Ferguson, who drove all the way, and Francis Birtles in a 1910

SRF continued 3 Brush single cylinder automobile is now of course is a matter well documented in Australian history and has been reported in many ways since event. National newspapers, magazines, advertising brochures and the radio interviews all followed this historic event and are actually being reported on from time to time in books and periodicals even to this date. In 1912 Sid married Helen Robottom – presumeably after the completion of the heroic crossing

Subsequent to these events Sid decided that he wanted to go it alone and made the



decision to start his own business. He opened a mechanical workshop

known as Kensington Garage telephone number Randwick 27. This business was situated for many years in Kensington just off Anzac Parade quite close to a home he



had built at 26 Grosvenor St Kensington. It was at this time he also owned and operated a taxi in Sydney plate number 99. As mentioned earlier in 1912 he married Helen Robottom with whom he spent the rest of his life at the above address. They had two daughters. The eldest Mabel has subsequently passed away and the younger daughter Irma now aged 88 years resides in the Lake Macquarie area.



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Some years later he decided to move his business to the rear yard of his home where he had a large workshop and mechanics pit and all the machinery from his business was installed there. At this time he was well known in the district and often repaired or made hard to get parts for cars for all and sundry. Often a job required a tool you couldn't get so he made it !!

There's probably much more to tell about this amazing Australian but unfortunately I was only six when he died and this is about the sum of my knowledge.

Sid and Helen - 1952



Sidney Raymond Ferguson died peacefully at his Grosvenor St Kensington home on 14th September 1952 aged 73 years.



Based on memories from Irma, Chris, Marilyn and other relatives of Sidney Raymond Ferguson – an Australian Hero.

Francis, Rex and Sid in the 1910 Brush on the 1912 Heroic First Crossing of

Australia from Perth to Sydney – 4,100 km in 28 days – with very few roads !