



# Media Release

Wednesday, 28 January 2015

## 110 Years of RAC

Today marks 110 years since a small group of motoring enthusiasts gathered at the Peppermint Grove residence of German-born Richard Strelitz to form what is now known as the RAC.

RAC President Esme Bowen said the club has come a long way since 1905 when horse and cart were moving Western Australians around.

“Cars were a novelty and even considered a nuisance by some. The founding members of RAC were motivated by far more than the need for a social club, they saw the need to champion and protect the interests of car owners,” Ms Bowen said.

“It took a lot of courage and commitment to venture into often harsh landscape and survey remote roadways in our vast state in order to produce detailed maps and trusted information for members.

It was this sense of civic duty that encouraged club members to erect some of the State’s first signposts, to campaign for better roads and push for greater protection for all road users. The RAC has also been a proud sponsor of the State Emergency Rescue Helicopter since its inception in 2003.

“110 years on, the pace of life has changed considerably, but the essence of RAC and the unwavering commitment to its 800,000 members remains paramount.

“The key priority for RAC is to help provide safer, sustainable and more convenient travel options for our members and the wider Western Australian community.”

In the club’s centenary year (2005), the names of those who had made outstanding contributions to the motoring industry were etched on the pavement outside RAC’s West Perth office, labelled the Walk of Fame.

In July this year, RAC will unveil new additions to the Walk of Fame to honour those that have made a significant contribution to how Western Australians move around WA for the better.

### History Snapshot:

A desire to extend and improve WA’s road network was balanced by a need to promote driver safety and environmental preservation.

- **1920s:** RAC introduces roadside assistance to WA, and is responsible for an area around the Nannup-Warren road being declared a national park.
- **1930s:** The Club joins the new WA Safety First Council.
- **1940s:** RAC Insurance commences operation.

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- **1960s:** A campaign for the compulsory use of seatbelts is launched.
- **1970s:** RAC works to raise awareness of the danger of drink driving.
- **1980s:** RAC lobbies the Federal Government for an increase in road funding.
- **1990s:** The club backs the Australasian New Car Assessment Program which is formed to test and rate the safety of vehicles.
- **2000s:** RAC develops a public campaign to seek feedback on WA's riskiest roads in order to campaign for improvements, and begins sponsorship of the RAC Rescue helicopter.
- **2010s:** The State government directs 100% of speed and red light camera fines to be spent on road safety, following more than 10 years of lobbying from the RAC.

For more information visit [rac.com.au](http://rac.com.au)

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