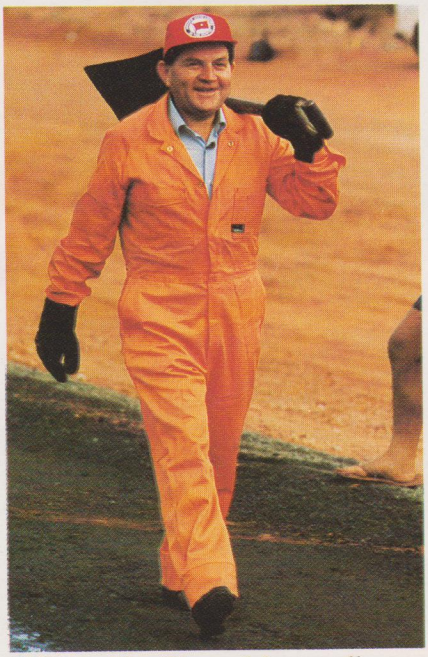
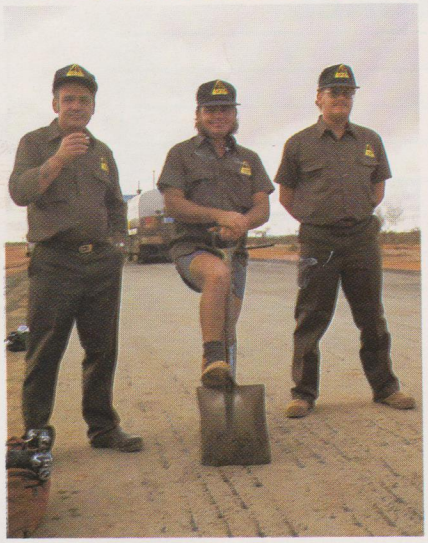
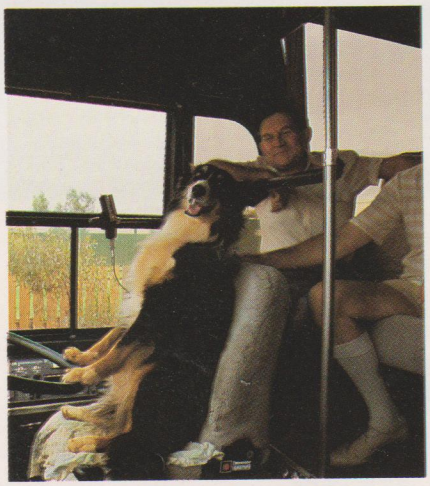
A New E



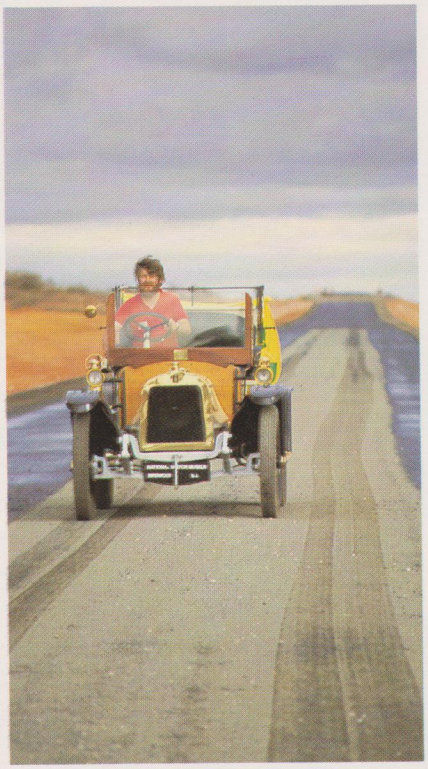
"Hi Ho – it's off to work he goes." Federal Transport Minister, Peter Morris, helps with the final section.



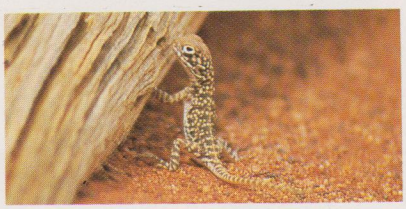
A job well done lads!



Everyone and his dog (could this be a Drover's Dog?) was at the opening.



Birdwood Museum Curator, Allan Chittleborough, puts the Talbot to the road-test (see story page 14)



Even the locals turned out in full force.

Marla (1100 kms north of Adelaide) was the scene of celebrations for the "first" official opening of the Stuart Highway. The highway's completion opens a new era in Australian trade, tourism and transport. It is a milestone in the nation's development – with particular significance for SA and the NT. SAM staff were

Down goes the black top on Australia's north-south link.

"One hundred years ago it was a single strand of copper wire – today a black ribbon through the centre."

With these words, pointing to the equal significance of the Overland Telegraph Link in 1872, Federal Transport Minister, Peter Morris, marked the sealing of the Stuart Highway – in 1987.

Both of course brought the rest of the world closer to the people of Australia's remote Outback.

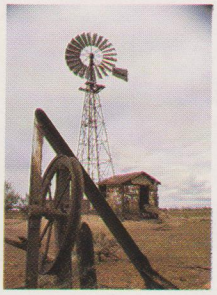
The $140 million project heralds increases in tourism and trade on the state and national levels and a reduction in the cost of transport to the NT.

The significance for SA and the NT cannot be overstated.

According to the SA Chamber of Commerce and Industry economist, Rod Nettle, the new road link will add considerably to the development of the Territory and, through that, to the growth in SA.

"More and more in the future our eyes are going to have to be focussed on

ra Opens



The original Marla Bore.

And another closes

there and have compiled this special 22-page feature commemorating the bitumen linkage of north and south. We profile life in the centre, introducing you to some well known, some unsung heros and heroines. Their stories are guaranteed to whet your appetite for the adventure of the Great Outback.

This is the "adventure" which will now be absent for regular users of "the track".

Territory development. It is Australia's last, and possibly richest, frontier."

He says the growth of the NT since Cyclone Tracy in 1974 has been of direct benefit to SA.

"In the last five years alone, our trade with the NT has nearly trebled to a value nearly twice that of SA's overseas trade.

"When we appreciate that SA's trade with other States and in total over the same period, has only grown by two-thirds then the growing importance of this region to SA is easily understood.

"The completion of the Stuart Highway will see a further acceleration of these well-established trade links to the benefit of SA."

He says too the establishment of a reliable transport corridor will bring the NT another step closer to becoming a major distribution centre for trade between S-E Asia and Australia.

And undoubtedly it will also be of major benefit for SA and the NT through the growth it will promote in tourism

(continued page 10)

Bitumen highway – now over all 3000 kms from Adelaide to Darwin.

ALICE SPRINGS TOWN COUNCIL

A New Era

(Continued from page 5)

and related development (for every $55,000 of tourist expenditure, three new jobs come into existence.

According to the NT Tourist Commission Chairman, Robert Doyle "there is just no question" about the tourism benefits the sealed highway will generate for the NT.

As the sealing proceeded over the past five years, there has been a 20 per cent increase in tourism.

"Add the road and there is plenty of reason to be optimistic of greater growth, particulary among international tourists who are very interested in campervan touring."

And the European market has turned "the Alice" into a round-the-year destination. "Where Australians head for the beach in summer, Europeans have no preconceived problems with temperatures," he says.

Chairman of the NT Tourism Advisory Council, Barry Bucholtz, says the summer of 1987 has been the Territory's best off-peak season.

"There have been fantastic numbers of overseas people through," he says. And on the domestic market, family holidays to the centre are on the increase.

Massive Engineering Feat

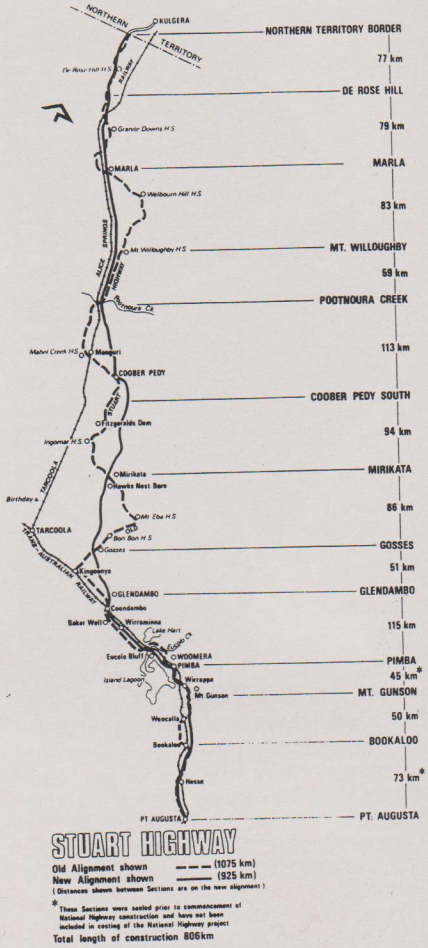
The last section of the road to be sealed – 80 km between Marla and De Rose Hill – crossed some of the most inhospitable terrain in the world.

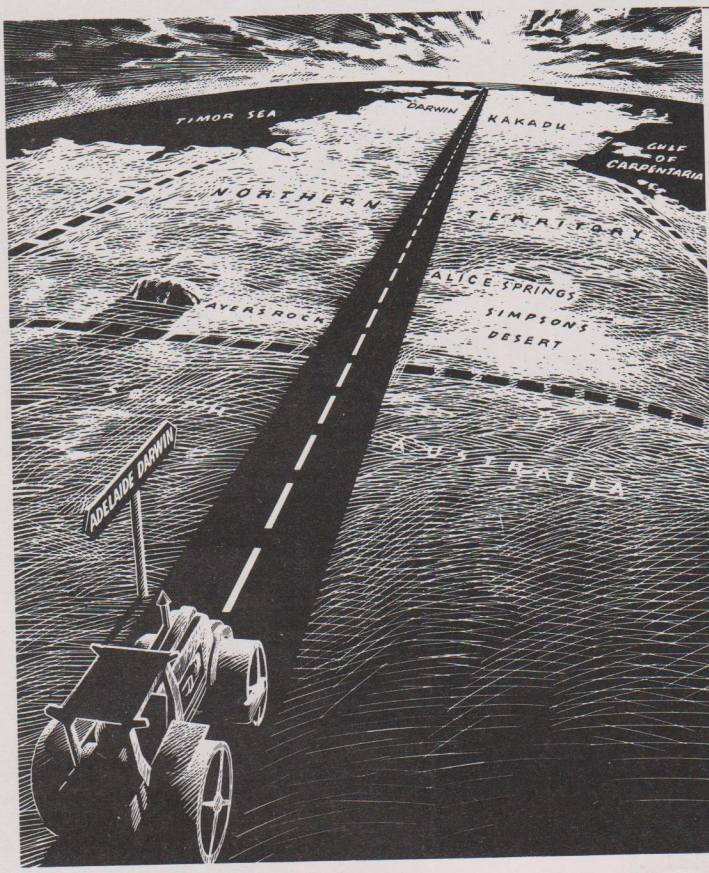
New technologies had to be developed to allow roads to be built skirting the fourth largest salt lake in Australia. As well, road builders had to use all their powers of ingenuity to minimise the use of one of the scarcest commodities in the outback – water.

While funding was provided by the Federal Government, the SA Highways Department, supervised the design and construction, which has been in progress continuously since 1979.

Where locally available rubbles were suitable (and an extensive laboratory testing program was undertaken to determine suitability and to develop appropriate construction techniques), they were used. Additionally, thousands of tonnes of crushed rock was produced at various centres to build up the road to avoid, ironical as it seems, major flooding and washaways.

The technologies developed in the process are applicable in arid climates around the world – and of course are likely to be exported.





WE'VE IRONED OUT ALL THE ROUGH SPOTS

At last a fully sealed highway all the way from Adelaide to Darwin.
It started as a track following the Overland Telegraph line, which in turn followed the route of John McDouall Stuart, who made the first South-North crossing of the continent in 1862.
It is one of the great outback adventure holiday drives, and now one of the easiest.
The sealing of the Stuart Highway opens up romantic places like Coober Pedy, Alice Springs and Ayers Rock on your way to the Top End, Darwin, Kakadu and beyond.
Ask at your local Northern Territory Government Tourist Bureau or South Australian Travel Centres for maps, brochures and full details.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA Enjoy!

AUSTRALIA'S NORTHERN TERRITORY

NTC/131