

Efforts to seal the highway began in Norseman, WA in 1960 with the section to the SA border completed in 1969. The South Australian section was finished in 1976. Further improvement works have been undertaken since the 1980's including widening and reconstructing sections of the road. The Eyre Highway is a 1,660 km road linking Western Australia with South Australia via the Nullarbor Plain. Signed as National Highways 1 and A1 it forms part of Highway 1 and the Australian National Highway network linking Perth and Adelaide. The Eyre Highway runs from Norseman in WA past Eucla to the state border, then continues to the SA town of Ceduna before crossing the top of the Eyre Peninsula and reaching the city of Port Augusta.



UNDER TOW

Along with his younger brother Clive and dog 'Bowser' Francis Birtles set out from Melbourne in a 1913 Model T Ford on a 10,000 mile (16,093 km) trip to Perth via Sydney and Darwin. Francis Birtles died in 1941 at the age of 60.

It would be very easy to fill this publication with the incredible stories of Birtles motoring achievements but, suffice to say, that he set the bar for motoring adventures across the world and was most definitely the inspiration of all who attempted to follow his example. His influence is written all across the now famous London to Sydney Motor Rallies and, if he could have lived to see the inaugural rally of 1968 at the age of 87 he would still have been a force to be reckoned with.



SUNDOWNER BEAN CAR

Francis Edwin Birtles 1881-1941

Australian adventurer, photographer cyclist and filmmaker Francis Edwin Birtles, set many long-distance cycling and driving records, including becoming in 1928 the first man to drive a car from London to Melbourne.

In 1905 Birtles attracted much attention when he left Fremantle to cycle to Melbourne and in 1907-08 he cycled to Sydney and then via Brisbane, Normanton, Darwin, Alice Springs and Adelaide back to Sydney.



By 1912 he had cycled around Australia twice and crossed the continent seven times. Birtles turned his attention to the motor car and in 1912 completed the first west to east crossing of the continent with Syd Fergusson and a terrier, Rex, in a single-cylinder Brush car and, of course, with the help of the (now fallen) telegraph poles to winch his car out of the bogs as required.



HARD YAKKA

MAKING CAMP