

# Hills layover for 103-year-old car



**LEFT:**  
Trudy and Dirk Retger stopped into Finch Restorations last Monday as part of their charity drive around-the-world.

By Nick Grimm

A Dutch couple undertaking a charity drive around-the-world in a 103-year-old car stopped into Australia's oldest car restoration business in Mt Barker last Monday.

Dirk and Trudy Retger from the Netherlands are in the fourth year of their self-funded 80,000 mile (129,000km) worldwide trip in a 1915 Ford Model T raising money for SOS Children's Villages, the world's largest orphan charity.

Mr Retger said they chose the foundation because orphaned children were a worldwide issue.

"Some illnesses are isolated to certain places, but orphaned children are all over the world," he said.

"It was a fitting charity for us to donate to because of the scope of this trip."

Taking a short break from their trip, the Retgers stopped to take a look through the Finch Restorations workshop on Oborn Road, a place Mr Retger said was "quite cool".

"It's wonderful to see a shop like this and see the vehicles being restored with such care," he said.

## Interests

"One great thing about the trip is all of the places like this that we see and meeting people who have similar interests to us."

Mr Retger performs all of the daily maintenance work required on his Model T during a pre-drive morning routine.

"Being so old, the car always needs love and care to get from point to point," he said.

Since setting off from their home in Edam, near Amsterdam, in 2012, the Retgers have trekked across Europe, from Egypt down to Cape Town and across North and South America, and have raised nearly \$80,000 to



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date. The current leg of their journey is taking them around Australia before travelling through Asia and back across Europe towards their home.

Having never been to Australia before this trip, Mr Retger said they felt lucky to see so much of the country.

"The Model T is such a good way to take in the places we're driving through," he said.

"This area is beautiful and has been wonderful to visit – and the people are so very friendly and accommodating."

The Retgers spent 2012, 2013 and 2014 travelling before spending 2015 back in the Netherlands to spend time with their family.

During their time off they attended an event in Luxembourg in 2015 where, during the drive home, the Model T and an accompanying Land Rover were hit by truck.

The cars were "basically destroyed", Mr Retger said.

"We then spent the next two years rebuilding them and getting them ready to take off again," he said.

"I don't think we ever considered stopping our trip because of the incident."

Mrs Retger said they would next cross the Nullarbor heading towards Perth, before travelling to Asia.

To follow the Retger's trip and to donate, visit [www.fordworldtour.org](http://www.fordworldtour.org).