

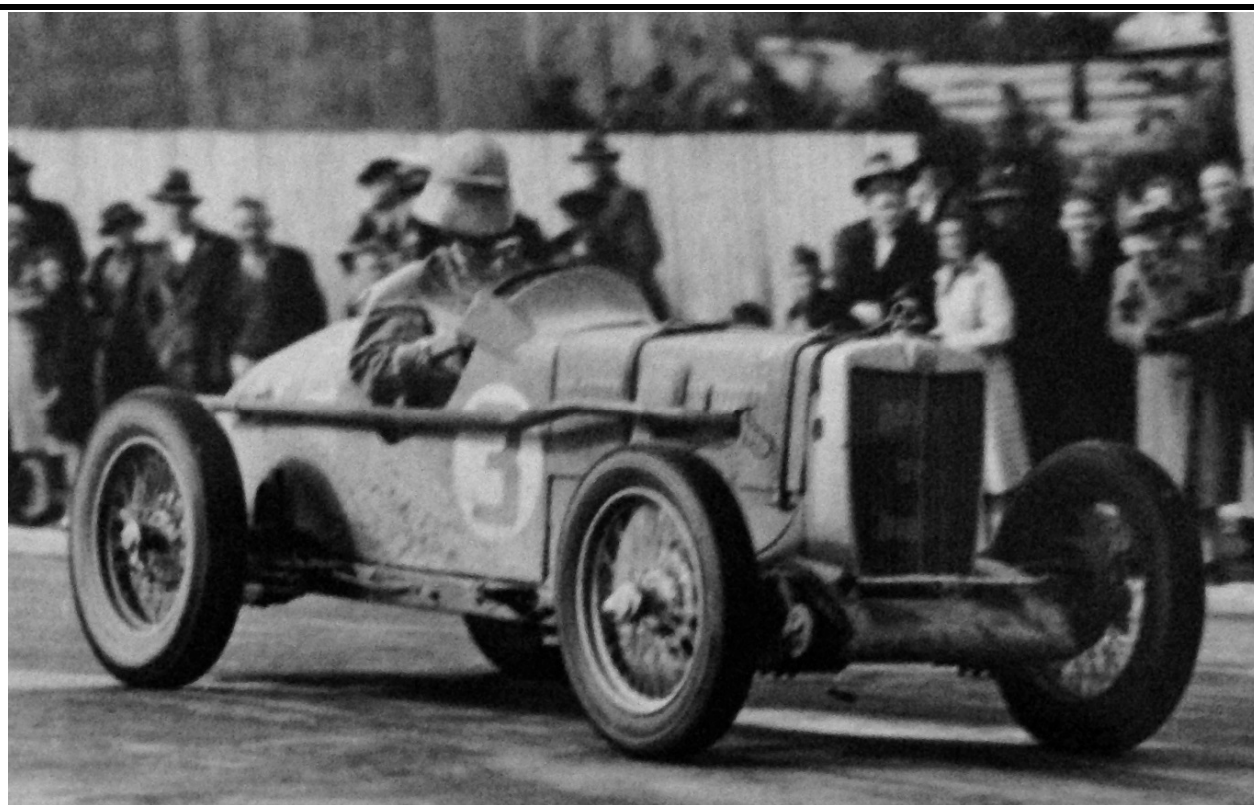


# THE PRE-WAR MG REGISTER OF AUSTRALIA

Established 1965

ISSN 1447-803X

**NEWSLETTER No. 3/2016: November**



*Norm Kestell driving TA1947 in Western Australia. See our Letters section.  
Photo from Paul Kestell*

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*Plus all our usual columns.....*

***Subscriptions for 2017 are now due! Don't forget to renew...***

## Your National Executive

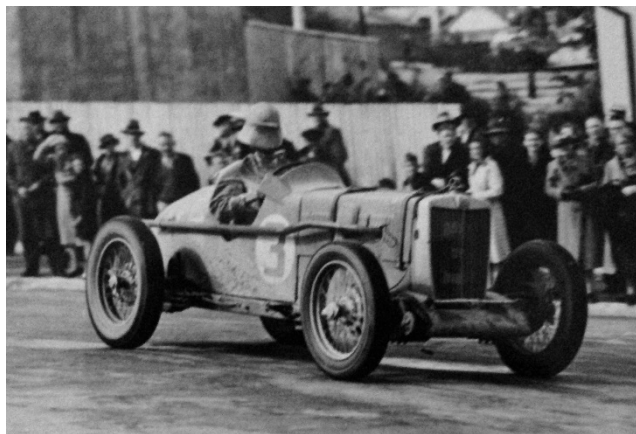
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The Newsletter thrives on news. You enjoy reading about what the others are doing, the miseries that befall them and the fun they have, so why not ring or email your local correspondent with your news:

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### COVER PICTURE...



### Cover Photo

Norm Kestell was a seriously fast driver in Western Australia in the late 1930s. Our cover photo shows him at Bunbury or Albany driving his monoposto MG TA (TA1947), but he also competed at Lake Perkolilli. We hope to find out more about Norm's exploits for a later Newsletter as his car still exists in its monoposto form and, as you can see on our Letters page, his nephew Paul Kestell has a Pre-War MG connection and remains interested in his uncle's racing history.

## STOP PRESS

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## Editor's Soapbox

Hello Everyone



Welcome to our November 2016 issue. I hope you enjoy what we have for you in this edition, especially some interesting "new" content which demonstrates the maturing of our little national collective. I'm referring to the announcement on page 7 of two new perpetual awards initiated by our Bathurst organisers, Tim Shellshear and Rob Dunsterville, for contributions to Pre-War MG activity in Australia. One is for spirited use of a pre-war MG, the other for spirited contributions to our collective memory through our Newsletter. We are looking forward to the inaugural presentations at Yamba next October.

The other "new" content, flowing on from our Patron the Younger Walter's comments in his column in the July issue, is a *From the Archives* article by Tim and Graeme Jackson which we hope heralds more similar material synthesised from the wealth of archived stories and articles about "our cars" in the libraries and other institutions around Australia. In the scheme of things, pre-war MGs were only on the scene as contemporary cars for a very short period in our Nation's history, the mid-1920s to 1939. Yet in that period they managed to secure a lasting spot in our social fabric which we enjoy today and endeavour to keep alive with our activities. Bringing to light some of those original activities and anecdotes is a wonderful way to remind ourselves of MGs deep heritage in Australia and I hope more of you will follow Tim and Graeme's lead with similar articles.

Many of you will have read about the amazing long-distance exploits of Dave and Laurel Godwin in the international MG literature and cannot help but be amazed. Well, we are fortunate that Dave and Laurel have now officially joined the Pre-War MG movement with their purchase of the TA from Allan Lim Joon in Melbourne. Dave is so keen, he has even agreed to be a co-ordinator/correspondent for the TAs and TBs for us, so if you have one of these fine Pre-War MGs, get in touch with Dave and let him know what you are up to. Details are in his article starting on page 8.

And don't you love the innovative Darth Vader-style helmet being worn by Norm Kestell in our cover photo! Apparently it was designed to protect him from flying stones at Perkolilli and on other tracks.

Malcolm

## Patron's Comment – Walter

*Walter muses on stature, age, cars and all that...*

This epistle is not for everyone.



**First stature** - now we all know about tall drivers and small interiors of many sportscars. The seats won't go far enough back, the steering wheel is too close, the pedals are too small and too close together, and perhaps worst of all, there is not enough headroom. Cecil Kimber was not a very big man and when he okayed our cars, particularly the Midgets (M, J, P, etc) he was not thinking of the big bronzed Aussies. I certainly don't fit into that category. For those of us who are vertically-challenged, we have another set of problems. The top of the dash is too high, the pedals are too far away, we look through some steering wheels which are too close and the seats are too low while the seat back in the case of bench seats won't come forward enough.

However, much worse than all these problems is that when the seat is fully forward, there is insufficient room to easily get your feet out. Denise's MGA is particularly hard to get in and out of. I solved the problem on my door-less NA Magnette years ago when I had a door cut into the driver's side with the bottom of the suicide door cut well forward. Now it is a very easy car to get in and out of, except for the passengers, but the less said of that the better.

My new toy (more on this anon) has many of these problems but these will be fixed in due course with the exception of the getting my feet in and out with ease.

**Aging** - I am now 83 and have enjoyed a long life and have been privileged to own some very interesting motorcars, a few "dogs", many secondhand and including many MGs. They have given me immense pleasure, some headaches and I am still enjoying them. As I age, I seem to be shrinking (the dashes are getting harder to see over), I am losing some strength, but worst of all, I am stiffening up. I seem to be spending more on body maintenance than I do on my cars - this is serous!

Once it was easy to crawl under a car to look where I dropped the boggle pi, adjust the brakes, clean the chassis for a concours, etc, but not any longer. Getting down is hard enough (I am pretty close to the ground already) but getting back up is another matter. If I drop something, I check my shoe laces, etc, at the same time.

**Cars** - recently Ian Mawson restored a delightful two-tone TA (we saw it at Bathurst last year) and he decided to

sell it. It appealed to me greatly so I decided to sell my J3 and add the TA to my garage. What ensued was a weird "Chinese deal" involving Ian purchasing an excellent XK150 in Western Australia, selling me the TA and Marguerite and George Morgan taking the J3. This may sound no big deal except we all seemed to be short (temporarily) of funds (read income tax, etc) and the Morgans needing to sell a reconditioned aircraft on the world market to complete the deal.

Yes, it was a bit hard deciding to sell the J3 as it has such a wonderful history, but I have now had it for 29 years. I have had some wonderful moments in it, particularly in muddy events (OSTs, etc). It has had its down moments and at times seemed to have a permanent parking spot next to John Gillett's K3 in Ray Skewes' garage. It always draws a lot of attention.

I particularly wanted it to have a new owner in Australia, and as Marguerite has on several occasions dropped hints it was easy to find someone to offer it to - an easy done deal. However, I know there will be times I will surely miss it but it has been wonderful owning a car that set three world records at Montlhery in 1932, competed at Le Mans in 1933 and came to Australia in 1934. Its complete history could fill a small book - see the books "Combat" and "Circuit Dust" to start with.

What am I hoping for with the new TA? To start with, a car that is reliable, easier to drive over long distances and much more comfortable with even room for some luggage. Does this sound a bit like the heading of this column? I suppose it does, but as I said, I am now 83 and still have an undiminished passion for old MGs. We are even hoping to drive the TA to Adelaide for the National Meeting next Easter.



OOE

## From the Registrar

*Tony Sloan reports...*



The best laid plans etc... Since the last Newsletter I have been to Adelaide (twice) and last month had open heart surgery which has been lurking for some time. So...no work in the garage and no attendance at events. But... I haven't been entirely slack and am progressing quite well on the 2017 Register. After the multitude of changes mentioned last newsletter things have been a little quieter. The new owner of TA1553 has come to light and there is an informative article on its activities in this Newsletter. Still no word on the whereabouts of PA1026 so any help would be welcome.

Graeme Davies is having a bit of a clean out at the moment and PA1677 was advertised on the web page at a bargain price. It sold immediately to Ian Prior, a stalwart of the MGCC for decades and I have no doubt that we will see it out and about shortly.

One of the lesser known models produced by Abingdon was the F-type. Up until the last decade or so it was one of the most underrated of the Pre-War cars. On the Register we have a wide selection of F's ranging from Tim Shellshear's N-engined car to many standard and original variations. Seen out and about lately has been Brian Oxley's F0428, Barry Broom's F0525, John Hurst's 0581 (hopefully well again), Brian Harpers F1316 and F1317 is now resident in Geelong. Rumours abound that F0546 may soon change hands. Of all the models in the Register the F have the highest, or near to, number of cars on the road with only three or four awaiting attention.

What a wonderful example they are setting.

## A Mystery Solved...

*Malcolm is pleased to have solved one of life's little mysteries...*



Regular readers will remember that back in 2005 I visited Vernon Pearson in Deniliquin to see his P-type that he has owned for ever. On the dash was a tiny MG badge set in a pair of wings with a small crown on the top. Vernon had no idea what it was from or what it might have signified. So I asked the readership if they knew what the badge was from, but no response. Just recently I was searching eBay for MG badges for my modern MG (they don't make badges to last anymore) and among the many on offer were these tiny tinsplate collectors lapel badges from the 1950s, exactly the same as on Vernon's dashboard. The seller says they were available in cereal and bubble gum packets.



## From the Archives: The LCC Women Drivers' Reliability Trial - 1937

Graeme and Tim Jackson have been reading the old magazines again. A report in "Table Talk" on the Light Car Club's Women Drivers' Reliability Trial held on Sunday 21st November 1937 caught their attention. Here is their edited report...



Mrs Cohen and Miss Wilson - MG

A day of fine driving, good sportsmanship, some thrills and lovely routes was provided by the second annual Reliability Trial for women drivers, conducted by the Light Car Club of Australia, and sponsored by Table Talk. The competitors, and their 72 passengers played the greatest part in making the event succeed. From the very start at the Bouverie Street weigh-bridge, it became obvious that all competitors, and passengers, would prove themselves good sports and good mixers.

**The Morning Section** - From Bouverie Street, with 60 minutes allowed for the cars to traverse 24.3 miles, the contestants drove at one minute intervals to Box Hill, Blackburn, to the Warrandyte control. With the weather warming up, the only obstacle was dust. Later, this became denser, and on the highroads dust was often lifted into high vertical pillars as the cars crossed exposed, unsurfaced sections.

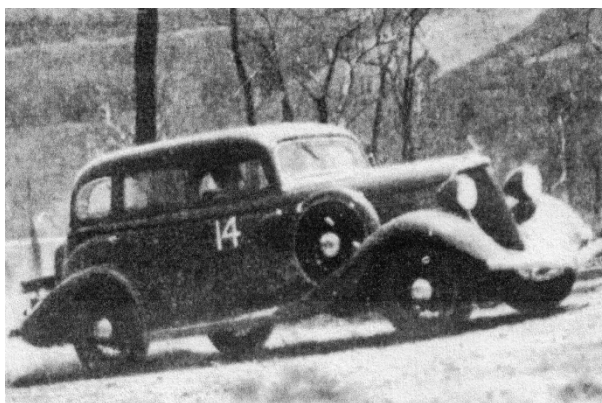
Crossing the Yarra at Warrandyte, the cars went next almost to Kangaroo Ground, then headed across rolling country, in places a sea of ripe wheat, in others already cut and loosely stacked in fields of yellowing stubble. It was beautiful going now, with many of the narrow roads having an almost English appearance with grassy ditches and deep grass bordering them or fences hidden under wild roses in profuse bloom and great masses of Hawthorn.

Through Research and Eltham went the cars, through St Helena and Hurstbridge where the second control was set, 15.8 miles from Warrandyte. They then took the trial through more lovely country including Yarrambat, Diamond Creek and Kangaroo Ground. Then came the last morning control and the winding drive down and around the natural amphitheatre at Rob Roy at Clinton's Pleasure Grounds, the big hill climb, and an excellent and pleasingly served lunch.

**Terraplane Equals Ford** - On the hill Mrs Gaze in her Ford V8 coupe met an unexpected equal for fastest time honours in Mrs J. Ware whose Terraplane, although a sedan, also took only 35.2 seconds for the difficult climb. Equally obvious was the very close match between the drivers of sedan Studebakers, Chevrolets, Plymouths, and the keen fight that was in progress between the Hillman Minx and the two Fiat Balilla sedans. Very good pace also was being shown by Miss Syme's Chevrolet utility, but it seemed that Mrs K. Halley's Chevrolet had an edge of pace on all other cars of that make.

**Fashions for Drivers** - It was here at Rob Roy (after the dust coating gathered in the morning had been washed and brushed away) that the neat and sensible frocking of the contestants and passengers could best be seen. Generally blouses in light tones, sports skirts, and tiny hats were the rule, but a few colourful ensembles provided relief, and Miss K. Thornburn and her passenger in the scarlet sports Singer made a neat team in sporting riding kit. Very attractive too was Mrs Forbes McKenzie's very young passenger in the Austin 7 in her scarlet sweater and shorts and white sun helmet.

**The Puzzle Section** - With lunch over, contestants faced the novelty events established by Mr. A. Terdich, race and trials driver. On a grassy slope overlooking the main dam and hill, roped off lanes and beflagged lanes had been made to form "The Pendulum" (an acceleration and reversing test), "The Infernal Triangle" (reversing round three sides of a triangle with sides of 25 yards), "The Shandy Gaff" (quarter circle reverse, stopping between flags, then acceleration to a set mark) and the "Stone the Crows" (accelerating round a square with stones to be thrown into tins at each corner). From the start, with contestants all cheering or criticising their rivals from vantage points, the four tests proved far from simple, and until the two M.G.'s of Mrs Cohen and Miss Kenny, and the two Balilla Fiat sedans got into the swing of things.



Mrs Nobelius - Studebaker

There was a thrill when Mrs Cohen trod hard on the accelerator of her low back M.G. and did the triangle in reverse in 27 seconds. But hardly had the cheers ended than Miss Kenny swept around in her yellow M.G. in only 25 seconds. The next thrill came in "Stone the Crows" with Miss McLachlan's M.G. holding best time with 20.6 seconds (and all four stones in tins). Miss Rennie, with a brilliant drive in the smart black and green Balilla Fiat put the record at 20.4

seconds and appeared a winner when Mrs Cohen, M.G. clocked at 20.6. Last through the test came Miss Kenny, and again magnificent handling of the fleet yellow M.G. gave her victory, her time being 0.1 second better than the Balilla's.

Then the trial moved on again, but now with only maps and clocks as guides, and with drivers allowed to choose their own routes, but required to be in certain townships at certain times. Along hill roads, now often lined with cheering spectators, or picnic parties, the cars threaded their various ways to Yarra Glen, to Mount Slide Landing, to Tommy's Hut, to Janefield and then back to Melbourne, and the finish at the club rooms in Brunswick Street. There with the cars waiting to check in 15 minutes and more ahead of time, the 120 mile most enjoyable event ended, only two of the starters failed to clock in.

### Footnotes, 79 years on...

For the record, the 27 competing motor cars included two Austin 7s, six Chevrolets, two Fiat Balilla, two Ford 10, two Ford V8 coupes, a Hillman Minx, M.G.J3, two M.G. P types, a Morris 8/40, a Morris Minor OHC, a Morris, a Plymouth, a Pontiac, Two Singer Sports, a Studebaker, and a Terraplane.

J3767, the M.G. J3 owned from 1935 until the war by Hugh Syme, whose family published *The Age* newspaper, had been successfully driven in the previous year's 1936 LCCA Women's Reliability Trial by his sister Miss Barbara Syme navigated by his other sister Miss Maisie Syme. For 1937 Hugh had lent the car to Mrs Geoffrey Cohen who is photographed with Miss Joyce Wilson and the driving Miss Maisie conducted the family Chev. Utility. The J3 is now owned by the Batkin family.



P0595, the Aspinall bodied P type had been then Lane's Motors team car during 1935. Then following a crash at Phillip Island the car was repaired, equipped with full swept mudguards and sold on to Colin Mc Lachlan, a committee member of LCCA who used it extensively in trials and speed events including an appearance at the first Rob Roy Hillclimb in March 1937. For this 1937 women's event, the M.G. was well driven by Colin's sister, the back of whose head is depicted in the photograph. A subsequent owner removed the mudguard set from P0595 and sold them on to David Price and they now adorn the familiar F/N special campaigned by Tim Shellshear. The now cycle guarded P0595 M.G. belongs to the Jacksons.

The identity of Miss M.A. Kenny's winning "fleet yellow" P type is thought to be Tony Sloan's PA1299 which was imported new by Lanes in October 1934 and initially sold to a Miss Narrie. Mrs I. Gaze who made equal best time of 35.2 seconds up Rob Roy in her Ford V8 coupe, is also of great interest. She is Freda Gaze, wife of Irvine Gaze and mother of Tony Gaze. Freda and Irvine were keen, active participants in motor sport in Australia between the wars, and with their two sons Tony, then eight, and Scott six, attended the first AGP at Phillip Island in 1928 to witness a winning Austin 7, the mortal remains of which now resides in the Graeme Steinfors stable.

Irvine had joined Shackleton's third Antarctic expedition in 1914 and sailed aboard the *Aurora* to establish a base at Ross Island to support Shackleton's traverse of the continent via the South Pole. It all went wrong for Shackleton whose ship *Endurance* became entrapped and crushed in the ice. He and the crew floated around on an iceberg for five months before rowing 1300 miles to South Georgia in the South Atlantic Ocean. Meanwhile Gaze's party lost three men, their ship the *Aurora* suffered damage, but repairs enabled a safe return to Australia after being stuck in the Antarctic for two years. Irvine immediately sailed to England to join the Royal Flying Corps and flew Bristol Fighters on the Western Front. He was shot down twice, both times by German aircraft of the Flying Circus commanded by Manfred von Richtofen, The Red Baron, and later by Hermann Goering. He spent the remainder of the war in a prisoner-of-war camp. On return to England he met and married Freda Saddler, a RFC driver.

Their son Tony Gaze attended Geelong Grammar, and on 13th June 1938, just before going to Cambridge University, met a wealthy young Englishman, Peter Whitehead at Rob Roy Hillclimb where Peter was competing in his ERA setting a new record of 31.46 seconds. A long standing friendship developed until Whitehead's death in a rally accident in 1958. Tony flew Spitfires through WW2, "an exceptional fighter pilot", flew with Douglas Bader, owned an MGJ2, became a Squadron Leader, and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. Following the family tradition he was shot down over occupied France, but escaped with the help of the French Resistance. After the war Tony established an impressive motor racing career debuting in 1952 at the Belgium GP driving a HWM-Alta no doubt drawing on the skills acquired during his J2 ownership. Through his friend Lord Freddy March, Tony was the driving force behind the establishment of the Goodwood Motor Racing Circuit, now-a-days much visited by travelling Australian car enthusiasts.

Now for those few readers whose minds have travelled from Bouverie Street, Carlton to Rob Roy with the women, to Antarctica with Shackleton, have been shot down by the Red Baron, flew Spitfires with Douglas Bader and built Goodwood, but wish to read some more, Tony Gaze's biography, *Almost Unknown* by Stewart Wilson, published by Chevron Publishing Group in 2009, ISBN 978 0 9805912 1 7 is highly recommended.

*Table Talk* (1885-1939) was a weekly social magazine for men and women that included articles about politics, finance, literature, arts, and social notes. Its gossip style attracted readers with articles about local notables and famous people from overseas commenting on, among other things, their fashion, relationships, and social engagements. It was most popular during Melbourne's boom in the 1880s.



## ***The Memories of the Bathurst Rallies Live On...***

*Bathurst Rally organisers, Tim Shellshear and Rob Dunsterville, introduce two new awards for Pre-War MG owners...*

To commemorate the two successful National Rallies at Bathurst in 2013 and 2015, we have set up two new biennial awards to stimulate greater participation nation-wide in the Register's activities.

The first is to be called the "Spirit of Bathurst Award" which will be awarded to the Pre-war MG owner who participates with his or her car in historic racing or other competitive events and who in our opinion best represents and demonstrates the continuing competition traditions of the pre-war MGs. The winner will not necessarily be a top place getter, but will certainly demonstrate *joie de vivre* and a passion for the active use of his or her pre-war MG.

The award will be a perpetual trophy of a mounted original connecting rod from the engine of QA0257, which in itself has done many fast competitive laps of Bathurst when new, and has been kindly donated by Richard Moore, who restored this historic racing MG.

Now, Pre-war MG enthusiasts own them, restore them, drive them, race them, fettle them, display them and even write about them. It is those in this latter group that we also wish to acknowledge with the second award. It is their well-chosen words and diligent research that provide information which is both revealing and enjoyed by many readers. This "Literary Award" is to recognise the best written piece, as a report or researched article, which principally covers one or more Australian pre-war MGs. It can be printed in this Newsletter or any other publication between the dates of the Register's biennial National Rallies.

The award will be a book relating to MGs from a selection that has been kindly donated, again by Richard Moore. We will select the winners of these awards which will be announced, and the presentations made, at the closing dinner of each of the Register's biennial National Rallies - starting in 2017 at Yamba.

Our grateful thanks, and those of all Australian pre-war MG owners, are extended to Richard Moore for his generosity in donating the con rod and the books.



## ***...And the Promise of Yamba Calls...***

*Murray Arundell reports on our Yamba Rally next October - yes, only a year away, so get working on your cars...*

Friday 13th - Monday 16th  
Presentation Dinner Monday 16th October 2017  
Angourie Rainforest Resort - Yamba NSW  
[www.angourieresort.com.au](http://www.angourieresort.com.au)

Organisation for this event is well underway with only a few finishing touches to be finalised. Full details including Registration and Accommodation cost and bookings forms to be made available in the New Year. Please note, that all accommodation bookings will need to be made on these forms. In a break with tradition this Rally is going to be a slightly longer format weekend, with festivities kicking off on Friday night and finishing up with the Presentation Dinner on the following Monday evening. This will leave us with plenty of time to enjoy our fabulous Pre-War MGs on the byways and laneways of the fabulous Lower Clarence region. There will also be time to kick back and enjoy the fabulous facilities of the Angourie Rainforest Resort and Spa.

If you've not already done so, please register your interest via [prewarMG2017@gmail.com](mailto:prewarMG2017@gmail.com). Keep an eye on our Facebook Page: "PreWar MG Register of Australia National Rally". <https://www.facebook.com/PreWarMGRegisterofAustraliaNationalRally/> and click on "like" to be kept up-to-date with what's planned and have your appetite whetted with a selection of fascinating pre-war MG photos!



## The Story of “Brum” - So Far...

Queenslander and globe-trotter Dave Godwin flew to Melbourne earlier this year to pick up the MG TA he bought from Allan Lim Joon, his first foray into the world of Pre-War MGs, a world he is finding fascinating...



*Brum* is the name that Laurel, my lovely wife, has given to my red, 1937 MGTA. Laurel names all our cars. By a way of introduction, this is how *Brum* got a foot in the door!

Not being mechanically minded at all, I decided to delve into the “old car market” in 2004 and bought a restored MGA, a red one. Registration “RIP” – Rest in Peace, or Retire in Paradise, according to my concerned children! One thing led to another – as it often does – and I decided to drive RIP from Peking to Paris in 2010. Why not? It rolls off the tongue easily. In fact, I decided that being the first ever to drive an MG from the MG factory in Shanghai, China to the MG factory in the UK, Longbridge would be even better. Well, to cut a long story short, over a six year period, once completing the “Along the Silk Road” trip, we took RIP to Nordkapp, Norway, and on down to Sicily; we drove RIP from Cape Town to Cairo and on to Longbridge; we drove RIP from Ushuaia, the southern-most city of the world in Argentina along the Pan America Highway through Central and North America to Skagway, Alaska; and lastly, we drove RIP across Canada from Vancouver to Newfoundland, thus circumnavigating the world both longitudinally and latitudinally, if there is such a word! Excluding the Poles, of course! These things just seem to get out of hand! 150,000km out of hand!

In 2009, Murray Arundell kindly offered for Laurel and me to join him in his newly acquired MGSA at the Pre War Register event at Beechworth. Jeff Newey and Ross Kelly gave us turns in their J Types, L Types and N Types – the seed had been sown! I could see myself driving one of those Pre War MG beauties one day!

With Triple-M MGs being over my self-imposed budget, I figured that the TA was the sensible choice – after all, I am a serial driver so long trips around Australia – or dare I say, the World - are a distinct possibility! Seven years later, Murray guided me to one that was for sale in Melbourne and the deal was done – over the phone, sight unseen! All of ten minutes and *Brum* was mine... There was no time to mess around; I was off to Canada in four days' time and didn't want to miss out!



We picked up TA chassis 1553; engine 1885, from Allan Lim Joon in Somers on the Mornington Peninsular on a trailer, along with a few extra parts, and brought our prize home. She looked splendid in red, with 8” chrome headlights, a long bonnet, a Brooklands screen, ribbed rear mudguards and outside-laced silver wheels. That was late August, 2016.

TYme, in Canberra, was set for early October and a few of our Gold Coast MG Car Club members had decided to drive down, so the decision was made to prepare *Brum* for the 2500km drive along country back roads to meet other members of the T and Y Type groups. I had 5 weeks to look her over. Not that I knew what I was looking at! I had never even sat in a T-Type, let alone knew what was under the bonnet! Nor did I know how to “double declutch!

Allan had bought *Brum* in 1964 – also sight unseen – and, in his own words, it was a mess! Over the next twelve years, Allan's work took him to the UK each year, so he slowly but surely bought parts and rebuilt his acquisition. Being an engineer was a distinct advantage! As is often the case, the chase was more interesting than the kill and Allan only managed to put 4150 miles on *Brum* in the 39 years he had her on the road.

Here are some of my learning experiences. I wonder how many Square Rigger owners can identify with me. Opening and closing the bonnet without damaging the paintwork was a lesson hard learned. Crime No1 was forgetting to do it up and ending up with a large mark on the mudguard from the handle. I guess everyone makes that mistake; once! She was an easy starter but running was rough – until I realised that *Brum* was running too rich. New needles and seats didn't resolve the problem, so, in my naïve way, I lowered the needle by 1mm to “fill the gap between the needle and jet” and whalla! The plug colours are now perfect at town and open road speeds... I wish everything was that easy to fix!

The first comment from anyone who knew T-Types was that a brake booster had been fitted in the engine compartment on the passenger side. In your face, so to speak. As Allan is in his late 80s, I assumed that it was a safety decision. I have relocated it under the dashboard on the passenger side.

The brakes were a major concern. The brake pedal was extremely hard to press and both the brake master and booster were blamed. I had them rebuilt but there was no improvement. Removing all wheels revealed that oil had seeped onto the rear shoes – apparently a common problem! Replacement of the shoes and further cleaning improve the braking considerably but now *Brum* kept pulling to the left. On closer inspection – by one of my “new” Pre War friends - the booster was not connected to the right front wheel! That was rectified and the brakes are now as good as any car without ABS!



*Brum* was shod on brand new Dunlop Special tyres - manufactured in 1975! 41 years ago! Needless to say they were extremely slippery in the wet, so Blockley road/race tyres were sourced and fitted. Problem solved!

Having replaced all fluids and greased every nipple I could find – and there are a good few – I packed *Brum*, joined the other Gold Coast MG Club members and headed down the New England highway, across Wiseman's Ferry and over back roads to Budawang National Park and Canberra. Other than oversteering when turning to the left, *Brum* behaved impeccably. I'll come back to the oversteering problem in a moment. Others will have written about the TYme event so I won't bore you with the details, only to say that it was well run and was a pleasure to meet so many lovely, interesting and knowledgeable MG people.



***Brum is fettled prior to leaving for Canberra***  
Photo from Dave Godwin



***Robbie Bayliss holds the broken pushrod***  
Photo from Dave Godwin

On leaving Canberra – 50km away – *Brum* started misfiring and I pulled over immediately to investigate. Pulling each plug lead off did not make a huge difference to the idle (remember I am an amateur at this kind of stuff!). One of the GCMGCC chaps suggested we look at the rockers and found No 7 pushrod missing! It had broken in two and both pieces were sitting on top of the follower. Removing the side cover removed the problem but it took Malcolm Robertson (host and organiser), Joe Micallef (machinist), a length of 5mm piano wire and another pushrod was manufactured and *Brum* was on the road again by 4pm, same day. I caught up the others at Gulgong at 11.30pm under a clear and warm sky. What a challenging and lovely drive – I didn't see a single kangaroo or wombat! And Lucas excelled the whole time!

Mentioning my oversteering, I was given lots of very good advice. Check the spring slides are not worn. Check the steering is equal each side from lock-to-lock. Check the bushes on the front and rear springs. Have the wheels aligned. Once home, on the hoist, no-one had asked if I had tightened the four bolts that attach the rear springs to the axle! The passenger side was completely loose – four threads were showing between the nuts and the spring plate! This had allowed the spring to swivel so that 1" of the front bush of the left rear spring was visible! No wonder I was hanging on for dear life around left-hand corners on the return trip! Also, on the hoist, I again realised how lucky I had been to complete the trip relatively unscathed! The fan belt was cracked in two place right through to the cloth backing! Someone must have been looking after me...



***Laurel, Dave and Brum - a distant continent calls...***

The 'To Do' list is still longer than I care to admit but I enjoy tinkering so am sure that *Brum* will be the source of many happy memories in the future...

**Footnote:** TA owners - Dave wants to hear from you! Email him on [murphgod@hotmail.com](mailto:murphgod@hotmail.com) or ring him on

## Aussies Abroad - the Triple-M Ulster Tour, June 2016

Arthur Ruediger from Adelaide was on the Triple-M Register's tour of Northern Ireland...



In June the Triple-M Register organised a tour of the area where the hill climbs and road races were held in the pre-war years. I read about the tour on their web site and decided that I would enquire about the possibility of getting a ride as passenger /navigator in one of the pre-war cars. In response to my enquiry I was offered a ride in John Emmett's 1933 J1 Midget. John trailered the J1 up from his home in Richmond upon Thames, England.

The tour was centred around the Dunadry Hotel, Antrim, where most of the entrants stayed, but by the time I had organised my ride with John the hotel was booked out. Simon Johnston, the tour organiser, got me into a B & B less than a kilometre from the hotel. This was most convenient, John picked me up each morning and drove me back to the B & B each evening after the day's events in his J1.

Tuesday 7th June was registration day at the hotel followed by a pre-dinner reception and welcome dinner in the evening. My first sighting of John Emmett was as he drove the J1 into the hotel car park after unloading it from the trailer. After introductions he said hop in and take her for a spin while I organise a bucket and sponge to wash the road grime off. So I had my first drive in a J1. I also took the opportunity that morning to introduce myself to Dieter & Julie Haupt from Berlin, who were driving the only ND Magnette on the tour. It was great to compare their car with my ND, both cars having the ENV pre-selector gear box. I also caught up with John and Helen Gillett, who had shipped the K3 over from Australia. The ex-Otto Stone K3, now owned by Howard Maguire from Essex England was there, plus two other K3s both from Germany. It was a rare sight to see four K3s together.

Wednesday 8th June, our 100 miles of touring took in historical Ballyclare circuit, used in 1937 for the International County Down TT, the Red Brae hill climb, scene of the first recorded competition appearance of an MG in Ulster in May 1931, and the Caincastle hill climb, the longest hill climb in Britain at 1.65 miles.

Thursday 9th June, approximately another 100 miles, over the route of the Craigantlet hill climb and then we drove 4.4 miles along part of the original Ulster TT circuit stopping in Conway Square Newtownards for a static display. Prominately located in front of the Old Town Hall is a three-sided granite sculpture engraved with the winners of the Ulster TT, including "Norman Black MG C type 1931, Tazio Nuvolari MG K3 1933 and Charlie Dixon MG NE 1934". The TT cars, the four C types, the four K3s the J4 and the L2 were parked directly in front of the Old Town Hall with the rest of the cars formed up in the square. At 11.15 am we attended a Mayor's reception in the Old Town Hall, after which we departed and drove another 5.5 miles of the original circuit. Lunch was at the Carriage Rooms on Montalto Estate, from there we travelled to Hillsborough Castle, the official residence of the Queen in Northern Ireland. Following afternoon tea and a tour through the castle, we continued our tour and drove around the Dunrod circuit, venue of the Ulster Grand Prix for motor cycles, billed as the "world's Fastest Road Race" where the current lap record is 133.977 mph. After leaving the circuit it was a 13 mile drive back to the Dunadry Hotel.

Friday 10th June, we head north along the Causeway Coastal Road, stopping for morning tea at Drumadoon House and then driving through the "dark hedges" as featured in the tv series "Game of Thrones" on the way to our lunch stop at The Causeway Hotel. John and I stopped at Bushmills whiskey distillery for a tour and sampled some of their product, after all it was my birthday so I thought a slight indulgence was in order! After lunch we visited the site of the Giant's Causeway and the Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge before heading back to the hotel.

Saturday 11th June, the final day of the tour was an invitation to display the Triple M cars at The Cultra Hill Climb, and to participate in a parade lap up the hill. The Cultra Hill climb was first established in 1905, and apart from several breaks during its history, it is recognised as the world's oldest active hill climb. Eight of the Triple-M tour cars including John Gillett's K3 entered the hill climb, a 640 metre twisting course running through the grounds of historic Cultra Manor. After a quiet dinner at the hotel that that evening John drove me back to my B & B before heading off himself to catch the ferry for the start of his journey home.

I cannot find the words to describe how much I enjoyed the Triple-M tour, the collection of magnificently presented MGs, the friendly owners, the lovely country roads we travelled on, the historic race tracks and hill climbs - they all added up to an unforgettable experience. I was really appreciative of the opportunity to travel each day with John Emmett in the J1, which he was not afraid to drive in the true spirit of what MGs were made for.

*Triple-M cars on the tour: six M type Midgets, one D type Midget, four C type Montlhery Midgets, two F1 Magnas, one J1 Midget, ten J2 Midgets, two L1 Magnas, one F2 Magna, one J4 Midget, two L2 Magnas, two K1 Magnettes, four K3 Magnettes, nine PA Midgets, two NA Magnettes, one ND Magnette, two KN Magnette, two NB Magnette, six PB Midgets.*





**Four K3s, two with Aussie history, in Conway Square, Newtownards, on the Triple-M Ulster tour, June 2016.**  
 Photo from Arthur Ruediger



**Henrik De Vries lines up his K1 Magnette for his run through The Dark Hedges, Triple-M Ulster Tour, June 2016**  
 Photo from Arthur Ruediger



## Pictorial Feature



*The three Pre-War MGs on the George Green rally in NSW line up in a suitably rustic setting - John Lackey, Q-type, Royce Read, VA Tickford, Tim Shellshear, F-Special.  
Photo from Tim Shellshear*



*Patron the Elder Ray Fowler's J2 Special is currently for sale in Switzerland. Price will make Ray's eyes water, but unlikely to phase one of our more benevolent collectors - we need this car to come home!  
Photo from Pre-War Car with acknowledgement and our thanks*





**Beauty in Blue - Allan Herring's stunning NA Special (NA0445) is finally ready to be shown**  
 Photo from Allan Herring



**K3030 "laid up" for the winter at the Brooklands Museum in the UK alongside prime exhibit, the Napier Railton**  
 Photo from John Gillett



## Pictorial Feature



**Prescott 2016 - The next generation of Pre-War MG enthusiasts enjoying the hill.**  
Photo from Colin Murrell



**John Gillett driving K3030 at Preston, with Aston Martin owner Andy Fraser from Hamilton Victoria as passenger gaining "first-hand experience of an old MG at speed"**  
Photo from Colin Murrell



## Pre-War Prescott - July 2016

*Ted Hack reports on a fabulous annual event, a must for pre-war MG visitors to the UK...*

Prescott Speed Hill Climb is, as the name suggests, a hill climb course and is situated in the beautiful Cotswold countryside near the town of Winchcombe, Gloucestershire.

Pre War Prescott is an annual event each July and is described on the official programmes as 'a day to celebrate cars that survived the war'. It is run as a garden party type event with virtually unlimited untimed runs up the hill. It is organised and run by Ian Grace under the auspices of the Vintage Minor Register. It is primarily aimed at the 'bread and butter' road going pre-war cars; Austin, Morris, Riley, MG etc. Amongst other hill climb championship events Prescott hosts a vintage event in August for the even older vintage cars and 'racers', and in May one specifically for classic post war cars.



The inaugural Pre-War meeting was held in 2011 after a Vintage Minor Register Tenth Anniversary Rally foray to Prescott in July the year before. As the Morris Minor shares virtually the same engine as the M Type MG many owners of a M are also members of VMR; and now in recent years D Type owners, who also have virtually the same engine, have been joining. In fact, the D Group, with its own marquee have supported the event each year; and this year had a record turnout of no less than eight D types!

This year's event held on the 16th July had almost 200 entries and of those no less than 55 were MGs from Ms to TAs and including 2 K3s; one of those was John Gillett's K3030! The weather was kind and picnics were the order of the day but The Club House restaurant served breakfast, lunches and the evening Bar B Q complete with dance band. Camping is permitted on site and on the Sunday there is an optional navigational run round the local scenery.

Ian Grace the organiser, works in the aircraft industry so little surprise that the charity supported by the meeting is The Royal Air Force Charitable Trust. Ian is able to organise some impressive war time aircraft 'fly overs' each year and this year we had some swoops from a Spitfire precisely on time.

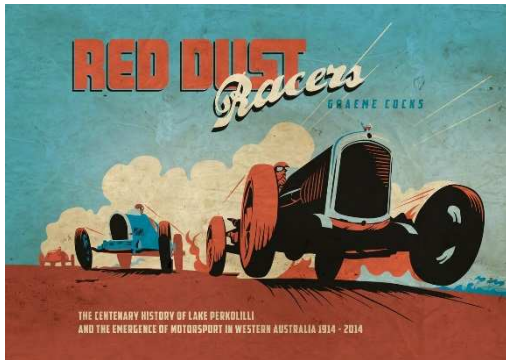
It is this famous hill climb that also enjoys a special 'association' with the equally famous hill climb at Rob Roy, just out of Melbourne, Victoria. The 'link' was established in 2008 'To support and promote the interests of speed hill-climbing between the UK and Australia'. The two hills have a lot in common; the first event at Rob Roy was in February 1937, just a year before the first Prescott event in May 1938, and both hills are run by car clubs, Prescott since the beginning by the Bugatti Owners Club, and Rob Roy since 1992 by the MG Car Club Victoria. There is now a bi-annual 'challenge' where teams from both hills compete for the 'Brake Shoes Trophy'. In 2013 this was at Prescott, in 2015 at Rob Roy; next year back at Prescott. So far the 'home' team in each case have taken the trophy. I am indebted to John Passmore, who first made the 'link' proposal, for this information.

Further information: [www.prewarprescott.com](http://www.prewarprescott.com) and [www.prescott-hillclimb.com](http://www.prescott-hillclimb.com)



**Eight D-type MGs at Prescott**

## Book Review - Red Dust Racers



Perth author Graeme Cocks' last book, *The Mighty MG Magnettes of 33*, was highly acclaimed around the world, being shortlisted for the International Historic Motoring Awards sponsored by Octane magazine. Now he has a new book which tells the story of a forgotten motor racing track near an abandoned ghost town and the edge of the Great Victoria Desert, where Australian speed records were broken again and again, and Australasian motor car and motorcycle championships were run. The place is called Lake Perkolilli and the book is called *Red Dust Racers*.

The race track had its fair share of MGs racing in the late 1930s, including Norm Kestell winning the four miles Miniature Grand Prix in September 1937. Allan Tomlinson, who famously won the Australian Grand Prix in his MG TA at Lobethal, got his race start

at Lake Perkolilli driving a Ford V8. Clem Dwyer was a part of Tomlinson's team which went to South Australia. In 1934 they participated in the across Australia rally run by the RAC of Western Australia. They drove Dwyer's J2. Dwyer's first race at Perkolilli was in 1936. In 1936, Duncan Ord raced an MG PB at the track, winning the Under 1500cc 10 Mile State Championship.

*Red Dust Racers* tracks the rise and fall of Lake Perkolilli from 1914 to 1939 when it was consigned to oblivion, the grandstand removed and the bush free to grow back over the track, and then its re-discovery.

In the annals of world motor racing there has only ever been one Lake Perkolilli. It was a phenomenon unique to the goldfields of the Australian outback where people made the best from what little they had. Lake Perkolilli is near the location of Kanowna where even the ghost town is gone, and 23km from Kalgoorlie. It has survived the gold mining booms and busts and it is probably the only race track in the world which is basically the same today as when it was first raced on in 1914.

Western Australia's isolation from the eastern states on the other side of the Nullarbor encouraged an independent attitude and a form of motor racing with big displacement cars and motorcycles which raced flat out on the clay pan. In the late 1920s, straight eight Auburns battled big Chrysler specials at speeds exceeding 90mph in blinding dust. There were exotic European cars, too. Names such as Bugatti and Lagonda were also tried out on the rock hard clay pan.

The local Triumph dealer, Eric Armstrong, encouraged small displacement cars during the Depression era, opening the events up for cars like MG.

For a quarter century, motorcar and motorcycle racers would tackle the horrendous track from the coast, 640 km from Perth to the isolated clay pan to spend a week camping in the bush, tuning their mounts and then racing in an annual carnival which attracted up to 10,000 visitors. It was called the "Brooklands of the West", Australia's equivalent of the world's first motor racing circuit near London. Bicycles also were raced on the clay pan and an air race was even conducted from Perth to Perko.

*Red Dust Racers* traces the arrival of the motor car in Western Australia in 1898, then the rise of motor sporting events, including the first motor race between motor tricycles in Perth. The first motor car race was held in the Goldfields in 1909 at the Boulder racecourse - a horse track. In the USA, the first race was conducted at the Indianapolis track in the USA, and less than five years later, Western Australia had its own motor racing track at Perkolilli. The difference was: nothing had to be done - nature had made it perfect for racing!

For *Red Dust Racers* author Graeme Cocks, the book represents a search over two decades to unlock the mysteries of the clay pan. He scoured archives and interviewed countless people to find out more about the people and the cars and motorcycles that raced at Lake Perkolilli.

*Red Dust Racers* is 488 pages in coffee table format with 1,200 images (most never before published), and the results of every event held on the clay pan. Only 1000 books have been printed, every one numbered.

Copies of *Red Dust Racers* are available from the publisher, Motoring Past at: [www.motoringpast.com.au](http://www.motoringpast.com.au).



In 1936, Duncan Ord raced an MG PB at the track, winning the Under 1500cc 10 Mile State Championship



## Your Letters

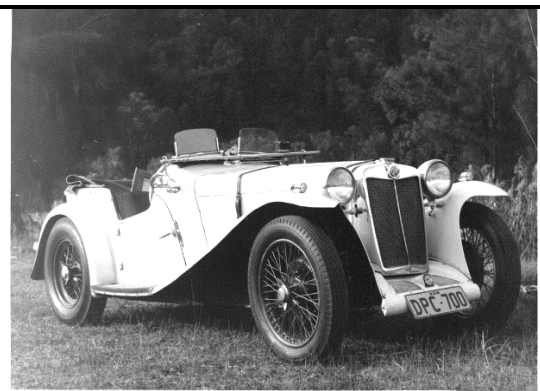
*Paul Kestell writes from Western Australia...*

Paul Kestell has written to tell us about his ownership in the 1960s of the two seater L type, L 0594, the car now in the custody of James Earl. MGs were a family tradition and Paul had a great uncle, Norm Kestell, who raced TA1947 as a supercharged monoposto before the war. Paul has had a lifetime passion for sports cars and still enjoys motoring in his Austin Healey 100 Le Mans and Bug Eye Sprite. We let him tell his story:

"In 1963 I was transferred from Sydney to Melbourne with my firm and decided to drive my Healey 100. I eventually sold the 100 because I had a company car. As happens in time I missed it, and went looking for a replacement. Well, I found this 1933 MG L type registered and going well. It needed some help body wise and apparently, according to the guy I bought it from, it had had a motor exchange with Otto Stone's K type sometime in the past. I am trying to find the current owner so I can pass on some pictures taken in Melbourne, as well as my towing it back to Sydney single handed on an A frame. A copper in Albury asked me to demonstrate how the A-frame worked! The MG was white with red upholstery, registered GPL 638 and I had it registered in NSW DPC 700 in 1964. I sold it in 1965.



**L0594 on the A-frame behind a troublesome Holden.**  
*Photo from Paul Kestell*



**L0594 in Sydney in 1964**  
*Photo from Paul Kestell*

I was born in Sydney but a lot of my family came from WA including a great uncle, Norm Kestell who I never met. He raced a MG TA S/C fitted with a monoposto body in 1938/1939 in WA, photos attached. It has been found and runs again. I have been in contact with Graham Aldous who tells me that the current owner of the MGTA is Keith Choice, the grandson of Ron Blowes whose daughter had it after it had been refitted with the standard TA body. He was able to tell Keith where the monoposto body was on a farm near Koorda. Keith then reunited this body with the TA chassis and has the standard TA body in storage. Graham has driven the car at Albany and also at the last Adelaide GP in 1995. The MG was in the Whiteman Park museum a few years ago.



**TA1947 racing at Dowerin...**  
*Photo from Paul Kestell*



**...and again at Bunbury or Albany**  
*Photo from Paul Kestell*

I have owned our Austin Healey Le Mans for 31 years and know the original family owners and have all its racing history in NSW. I am now up to my 53rd car and at least half have been sports cars. I have a very tolerant and loving wife over our 48 year journey together, and have worked out how to buy something without mentioning it. Get a friend to arrive in the car that you have just purchased and look surprised when you are asked, "What's that doing in the driveway?" "Oh you remember that car that we talked about and the owner needing some ready money, well this is the car and it will be great." For example Sunbeam Alpine, Lotus Cortina, and a one owner Ford Galaxy 390. That was the biggest shock to her, she said it looked like an Undertaker's mourning car."



*John and Helen Gillett write from the UK...*



I know you get a lot of updates of news from the UK, but I thought you might be interested in the enclosed pic of K3030 at the Brooklands Museum in London (see our colour centrefold), where it has been safely laid up to display over the coming winter. The museum have given the K3 a proper location next to their prime exhibit, the Napier Railton.

Helen and I have been in England, Ulster, Wales and France with the car during the summer. We joined the Ulster Triple-M rally and Cultra Hillclimb in June, then a number of other UK events throughout July and August, then September in France where our last event was racing at Angouleme, where the challenging track runs through the old city.

We have made a number of new MG friends and renewed many old friendships. The Triple-M people and the VSCC have been very welcoming and the organisers in France helped us greatly. The Brooklands Museum is delighted to have Bira's K3 back there after 81 years, and we have been really pleased with the way people have responded to seeing the car.

*Dave Godwin writes from Queensland...*

Ted Loversidge, starting on page 25 of the November 2015 Pre War MG Newsletter, states that, "... but I am told that Castrol is now owned by BP and that all oil now sold in Castrol containers is simply BP engine lubricating oil."

This is incorrect. I have been associated with BP for many years and Castrol's oil range and offering was far superior to that offered by BP, so BP bought Castrol out. Pre-War MG owners should rest assured that the oil in Castrol containers remains Castrol oil and not BP oil from the 1980s.

## **Reports from Correspondents**

*Ross Kelly reports from Queensland...*



Dino Mattea blew the cobwebs out of his languishing L Type with a busy month of events. Starting with a long Day Run to represent the Club at the Peak Crossing Charity Day.

Margaret Mattea braved the rain to act as riding mechanic and co-pilot to for the L type to attend All British Day. I seem to recall Margaret in similar circumstances in Beechworth and through the Italian countryside. Finally the L type took out Class C at the MGCCQ Concours at historic Ormiston House the new venue for the annual concours and display day.

My record of arriving home from the club concours in the same vehicle has been somewhat problematic over recent years. At one stage history looked like repeating itself once again when the Monthery Midget failed to proceed after stopping at the traffic lights halfway home. Fortunately George Diggles came to the rescue with a clean rag and a plug spanner. A little cleaning of plugs and we were away again. A slight readjustment of driving technique to include the magic figure of plus 4000rpm saw us home in quick time and no more fouled plugs.

Tony Slattery has been sleuthing out the location of the M Type Midgets in Queensland; so far the tally is six with a couple more possible leads to follow up. After the MGCCQ Concours on Sunday, Tony drove M1524 around to Bill Fuller's at Raby Bay for a photos session with M1523. These two cars were shipped to Australia as chassis only imports and were bodied here. As you can see they are very similar, but not quite the same. Both cars were "restored" many years ago, so could have been identical once – we may never know.



**Ross Kelly's J3 and C-type.**  
*Photo from Ross Kelly*



**Matching pair, sequential numbers- two pristine M-types.**  
*Photo from Tony Slattery*

Bill is going to Yamba, but wants to do a quick re-build of M1523 before then. Tony also met Brian Goodall and his Dad at the Concours. His Dad has 2M1468, and he is building an M-Type 12/12 Replica.

Dave Godwin, an experienced long distance MG driver, has extended his exploits with his new acquisition TA1553. Soon after purchase he made the long trip down the T-Tyme event in Canberra. Despite having a broken pushrod, David the master of running repairs managed to re-joined his fellow club members for the return journey to the Gold Coast.

*Brian Oxley reports from Canberra...*



The highlight for Canberra since my last report has been the successful running of our local Club's biennial rally for T-types and Y-types, an event called MG TYme. From a pre-war perspective, the event attracted three interstate TAs, Claude Harris's car from the Wollongong region, Philip Dadd from Sydney and David Godwin from the Gold Coast. Locally Malcolm had both his nearly finished TB Special and his SA on display, while I had the F1. The two older pre-war cars were used at the main entrance of the National Museum of Australia to promote the MG display to the visiting public while the balance of the cars, some forty in all, were lined up on the foreshore of the Lake adjacent to where the Museum moors its paddlesteamer, the *Enterprise*.

It was a delight to have Claude Harris with us for the weekend. Claude has recently received an OAM in the Queens Birthday honours list for service to the community of Albion Park. His citation reads that his service includes: Member, Albion Park Brigade, New South Wales Rural Fire Service, since 1960 and Life Member. Member, Albion Park Show Society, 'for many years'. Patron, Tongarra Heritage Society, current. Volunteer, Tongarra Museum, since 1988. Publicity Officer, Marshall Mount Association and Old Time Dance Member, since 1979 and Life Member. Parishioner, St Paul's Catholic Church, ongoing. Industrial Arts Assistant, St Joseph's Catholic High School, Albion Park, 1989-2013. I am always amazed at what MG people get up to in their spare time.



**Claude Harris OAM with his fabulous TA.**  
*Photo from Malcolm Robertson*



**Brian's F1 and Malcolm's SA on the NMA forecourt**  
*Photo from Malcolm Robertson*

Claude's son Ross travelled with Claude and they shared the driving to make sure the TA was able to attend all the MG TYme functions and events. Malcolm and I also brought out our cars when the local Club organised a morning tea to greet a couple from the Italian MG Car Club who were on a visit to Canberra. They were very complimentary about the range of cars our Club was able to showcase.

*Graeme Jackson reports from Victoria...*



**Springtime Rally** - The 50th running of the Springtime Rally saw active participation by Ed Taylor J3, Bruce and Robin Morrison VA saloon, and Jennie and Graeme Jackson MGTB who scored 6th outright just shy of Cam and Rhys Timms 4th in the TD. Brian and Suzanne Smyth left SA 0891 and the low mileage TB 0551 in their Eltham shed, Ray Skewes and Kevin Leishman chose the TC, as did Alicia and John Nobel who broke their TC crankshaft so that they could win the hard luck prize. Neil Cooke with the entire 50 rallies under his belt, drove the lovely cream Toofa. A narrow Springtime victory by the Priors, Pam and Ian, inspired them to go out and purchase Graeme Davies' P type, P 1212 so they can win next year in a pre-war car.

**South Oz** - Tony Basham tootled down from Cairns to Adelaide in the Tiddy to pick up his niece Sarah to participate in the Bay to Birdwood run. It was a week of desperate clutching. Tony's MG popped some clutch springs making cog swapping a bit difficult, but once fixed the red machine eventually make it home to its new Cairns garage via Alice Springs. After the drive across from Melbourne, Ed Taylor, had to replace a clutch throw out bearing in the J3 in Adelaide, with the able help of Bob Bazzica, but still had time to visit Martin Barrett who is closely supervising his house demolition to protect the motor stable and his clutch of desirable MGs. And Graeme and Jennie Jackson MGTB joined Ed and Tony for a week of MG motoring.

The latter part of the field of the 1,200 cars doing the 2016 Bay to Birdwood traffic jam experienced three hours of slipped clutches and heated engines and waving crowds of enthusiastic roadside drinkers. But a grand display in the



grounds of the Birdwood car museum and a chat with Arthur Ruediger beside his gorgeous and rare MG ND compensated a lot for the frustrating dawdle.

Yorke Peninsula is the lump of land that pokes out into the ocean west of Adelaide. Three MGs spent a delightful five days touring, exploring, and staying in posh rented houses. The J3, TB and TD did not get challenged by the cyclonic winds or the nearby toppling pylons which lead to SA being without electrical power for a day or two. The TB took on enough wind-blown sand in its oily/greasy departments to build an executive sand pit, and the torrential rainfall caused the J3's front apron mounted woo foo box to take on water, causing some richness of mixture from the charger that was not all that super.

Back in the Barossa the exhausting series of social functions with all the associated compulsory wining and dining and chatting is designed to enfeeble the interstate competitors for Collingrove Hillclimb on the following Sunday, October 2nd but somehow we survived. Ed Taylor climbed the difficult hill in the J3 still with an ailing woo foo, Neil Cooke steered the PB achieving a creditable third in class behind a Railton and a GP Amilcar, Arthur Ruediger drove the ND well, Lindsay Hick the fast, fierce special bodied P type, and Douglas Potts a TA. Neil Murdock's TB racing special ran splendidly, outpacing Doug Keith who left the N type at home with the kelpies and the unseasonably wet wethers in favour of the TC, and brought the lovely Jaci. A smiling Graeme Steinfort happily pedalled his Austin 7 special in lieu of an Abingdon product.



**Jacko looks for spares in a wreck on the beach**  
Photo from Tony Basham



**Collingrove competitors rugged up against the cold**  
Photo from Tony Basham

**Motorclassica** - Then on 22nd October the magnificent Melbourne Exhibition Building was packed with an impressively wide diversity of gleaming, over-polished examples of automotive art. Judges Matthew and Walter Magilton fussed over some Fords wondering whether flat head V8s had alternators, and whether hot rods are worth the effort. The concours d' elegance called for an originality of condition which curiously carried no points on the judges' sheets. Judge not and be not judged, I say. Our Harry Hickling had fitted his displayed bodiless, veteran Mercedes Simplex, with Cathy's horses' blue hay bailing string in the space where the missing jack shaft to the chassis-mounted gearbox usually sits. He who supports horses must take financial short cuts. The only pre-war MGs to be spotted sat, washed by the periodic rain showers, in the MGCC display in the outside court yard. Robin Page J2, Andrew Fock PA s/c, Tim Jackson L1 tourer, and Graeme Jackson MGTB sans sand, parked over mandatory oil drip trays, and gave the periodically great unwashed crowd something worthwhile to photograph. Meanwhile we appropriately joined the rest of the dinosaurs in the adjacent, warm and dry Museum.

**Rob Roy** - A report of the August VSCC Rob Roy meeting noted that Neil Cooke MG PB, Ray Skewes MG PA, John Lackey MG TA Tomlinson Special, Walter Magilton MG NA, and Neil Murdoch MG TB Special kept the early octagonal flag flying, while pre-war MG owners Allan Tyrell, Graeme Steinfort and Tim Jackson exercised Austin Sevens, and Tristan Jackson competed in the Bob Booth billycart.

PB 0301, Neil Cooke's red machine, charged up Rob Roy on 13 June 1938 in the capable hands of J Williamson, recording a creditable 42.4 seconds, and held this class record for some time. Williamson had borrowed the MG from the owner, Claire Lyle. Williamson stripped the car of mudguards, doors, petrol tank, screen and bonnet to achieve maximum performance. How Claire fared is not recorded. Now, after many attempts to better the 1938 elapsed time, Neil stormed the hill in 40.82 seconds making him the youngest man in history to ascend Rob Roy in PB 0301 in under 41 seconds.

We inspected the pewter mug trophy displayed in the trophy cabinet, newly acquired by MGCC, won by Peter Whitehead in the ERA R10B at the first Australian Hillclimb Championship at Rob Roy in 1938. Peter Whitehead also won the AGP at Bathurst that year. 2017 marks 80 years since the first running of the Rob Roy Hillclimb and 25 years of MGCC custodianship of the site which has seen the remarkable transformation of the track and facilities. If you, dear reader, can place your right ear to the ground without toppling over, you will detect the hubbub of excitement as dignitaries from a number of clubs associated with Rob Roy discuss the best way to mark these milestones next year.

**Bug Eye** - The august Allan Reid, a great supporter of our old car movement, generously favoured this August members' meeting by presenting his superb Primrose Yellow bug eye Mk 1 Austin Healey Sprite. Allan has owned the car for 25 years and has more recently carried out a substantial rebuild, with the help of Sprite/MG Midget expert Simon Gardiner.





**Sunday Social Run and Garage Tour September 4th 2016** - Many members of the MG fraternity have managed to maintain the breeding whilst maintaining the breed, despite all the physical effort and time spent away from the garage. So a trendy breakfast on the main drag at Williamstown with car club friends, a drive in our gorgeous MG motor cars, an inspection of Graeme Davies' collection, then an afternoon at home being pampered by an adoring family and the dog, makes for a perfect father's day. This Sunday gathering of Pre-War and T type MG s attracted some interesting modern machines whose drivers also joined the fun.



**Graeme Davies - MG collection**  
Photo from Robin Page



**Latte and tart - Hobson's Bay**  
Photo from Robin Page

Looking out over the latte and tart to Hobsons Bay, we could observe amongst the numerous yachts and pleasure craft, the restored World War 2 minesweeper *Castlemaine*, and the tall masts of a square rigged training vessel. Andrew Barnett has spent a life time messing about with MGs and wooden hulled boats and he informed us that the tall ship was constructed in England to instruct people with disabilities in the art of sailing, and as such has wheelchair access to the crow's-nest. To achieve a similar elevation, to get that brief sea gull's eyed view of the world, you would have to drive your cart sprung MG at full chat over a speed hump. The tall ship is called *Tenacious* presumably because the crew hang in there, hopefully not left dangling for too long.

Across the pavement we noticed Robin Page's green MG J2, Tim Jackson's four seater L1, Tim, Ann-Marie, Mireille, and Tristan's transport, Andrew Fock PA s/c Black Beauty, the record breaking Neil Cooke with Ed Taylor PB, Graeme and Jennie Jackson TB, Aubrey Paverd plastic K3-TC, Paul and Dorothy Acfield Y type, Andrew and Rhonda Barnett's trusty B, Peter Jackson in the sheep mustering, hay dispensing MGBGTV8, and Bruce Heal's MG RV8; lovely cars. Ralf Stewart parked his attractive TF amongst the café tables, and there, rejected by the machines from Abingdon, sat a sad dejected Jaguar XK150S, the latest acquisition of Ian and Loris Mawson. The Mawsons had been sent to Coventry, but came back with a car! Beautifully presented with the red leather seats displaying just the correct amount of that elusive patina, the handsome white coupe is comfortable, fast, and essentially British.

A quick blast mixing it with the Sunday suicidal simpletons in SUVs, to Graeme and Shirley Davies' factory where, to our collective delight, we spied Bruce and Robyn Morrison in the VA saloon, and Ray Skewes with Kevin Leishman in the TC preparing for the Springtime Rally. Fran and Nigel Willey brought the Riley Kestrel and chatted about the trials and tribulations of restoring their 1933 MG L1 four seater, and received free trauma counselling. Anthony Fagan also sought inspiration for his rebuild of the ex- Bill Thompson PA 1424, together with Ian Northcote who has succeeded in buying out of long term storage the ex-Peter Gostelow PA 1341. This very original MG wears an unusual sports body whose doors in profile have an unusual minimal cutaway, and unlike the factory cars, are sensibly front hinged to prevent the accidental maiming of the occupants. The car is thought to have been clothed by a coachbuilder based in Sydney, the city where the MG first arrived new and self-consciously naked to the chassis.

Spicy sausages sizzled on Shirley and Graeme Davies' barbeque in their cavernous factory building, spreading a snaggy aroma through the lines of enormous machines; mills, lathes, vertical borers, huge fork lifts, all remnants of Australia's vanishing heavy industry, and destined to be sold overseas to countries who will instead make stuff for us Australians to consume. And there in a special glass partitioned area parked in neat rows, sat Graeme and Shirley's unique and distinctive collection of fine, interesting MGs. Their original TF is displayed, a TD, then the ex-Billy Bugg sewer roter plumbed, plastic K3-TC. An MGA twin cam, C type, MGBGTV8, RV8, TF modern, and some V8 powered MGB specials, were on view, together with the pre-war MGs which include the well-known black VA tourer, the F types F0303 and F0546 presented in F2 configuration, and the ex-Lister MG PA 1212. Graeme explained the fascinating history of each MG and expounded about each car's particular appeal to him. We examined the work on the attractive blue cycle guard equipped P type which is now well advanced, and we eagerly anticipate it joining the ranks of the active, early overhead cam shaft MGs.

The pre-war mob and the T party, very much appreciate Graeme's long term contribution to the MGCC and to our registers through his efficient maintenance of the web site, an essential but largely unsung activity. Graeme's and Shirley's generosity in hosting our garage tour was acknowledged by the gift of a bottle of eminently drinkable wine, (the Grange was a bit too old to risk) and the traditional jar of Jennie jam. Lovely people and an interesting collection of MGs made for a most enjoyable prelude to father's day.



Well as usual not much to report on the SA pre-war scene. Arthur Ruediger has written a report on his involvement in a pre-war rally in Ireland, which should make interesting reading. The pre-war Collingrove hill climb was held with quite a few interstate visitors. Ed Taylor brought over his supercharged J3 for the event, and was unfortunate to have a clutch release bearing fail. We spent the morning driving around Adelaide trying to find one and ordering or purchasing one in the hope of getting one by the next morning. As fortune would have it, we purchased one at twelve o'clock, went back to the car and had the gearbox mounted before lunch was served. This carry on of finding the part, repairing the car, back on the road or circuit as quickly as possible is all part of the old cars ownership, especially if your touring mates have left you behind!

Malcolm Robertson made a pastoral visit to pre-war owners in Adelaide in July while here for his daughter's dancing eisteddfod at the Festival Theatre. He managed to catch up with Bob Schapel, myself and Arthur Ruediger, and I'm told he had a quick phone conversation with Martin Barrett.



**Bob Schapel promises that the SA is next!**  
Photo from Malcolm Robertson



**Arthur and Bazz with Arthur's K2 ND (N0333)**  
Photo from Malcolm Robertson



Having been away for a contribution to the 2/2016 July edition, I must now gather some thoughts on the WA scene for the last 6 months, not much however, so this may be difficult. I have not been out and about too much this long Perth winter, and even of the recent combined MG clubs "Safety Fast Run", I cannot comment on at all, as we were not involved at all this year. It would be nice next year to have a convoy of Pre War cars as we have already been reminded that next year is the 25th anniversary of this event, which has been a successful amalgamation of the three MG clubs here in Perth.

From my point of view, this long winter here in Perth has seen a continuation of projects outside the garage, however, I did manage to make a cover for the supercharger on the NA, and have only just in the last few days, been able to paint and finish it, the weather has just been too wet and cold to spray paint, as I only have the outside world as my climate control. I was toying with the idea of hand cutting out the MG badge for the front of the blower cowl, it's the octagonal version, but then decided to take the easier way and have it cut out. An MG mate drew up the "MG" to scale and I emailed it off to a local firm who has a water jet cutting facility. A few hours later, the badge was complete and requiring almost no final trimming; a very satisfactory result. I also eventually got around to replacing the old sump with a new one which I had purchased over the last couple of years; his should make things a little tidier down there.



On car movements, I can only offer that I recently found out that we now have a 4-seater PA in WA, recently brought here by Brian Wilkinson, who will be known to the Registrar as Brian has become a member since acquiring the car, which was formerly owned by Peter Myer. I am also aware that engine components have been arriving for Ian Burston's J2, so this would seem to be progressing towards a goer sometime soon. I have further learnt in the last day or so that this J2 engine is now in Melbourne being worked on, so certainly action is current. I shall catch up on the Martin Swan PA shortly when we visit Denmark on the south coast, hopefully it is close to running again after major engine work.

What a great picture of John Gillett in the K3 in the centrefold of the Triple-M Register Bulletin August/September 2016 (UK), I have fond memories of Pre War Prescott some years ago. I tend to omit our TB from mention in this bulletin, as I have been living in the Triple-M world of the UK with the J2 and NA and of course, the TB is not part of that register however it is very much part of our Pre War Register. As mentioned previously, our TB 0620 was one of the very last being completed and despatched from the factory on the second last day of car production prior to WW II. However, now that the NA is complete, I have actually started, albeit somewhat piecemeal, on TB bits and pieces. I recently had a few small items for the NA to the chrome platers and thought I would boost the quantity by having the TB headlights stripped in readiness for refurbishment and thus re-chroming. Fortunately, they are in reasonably good



shape, but it would have been in about 1966 that I had them re-chromed before, this time I have dismantled them totally so that the mountings are not also chrome plated. In those days, I didn't know about such details and really didn't give it a second thought then. All the instruments have been refurbished in the last couple of years as well. Beware all TB owners, I will be on the lookout for correct mudguard profiles as the ones on the car are not in really good shape, being nudged on a front corner, and rear ended by a well-known celebrity in his Rolls Royce in England before I bought the car in May 1965. As a result of the latter, the rear mudguards have always been very wide and flat, and out of shape.

As I am not about to call up all owners in WA for snippets of news, I would ask that you send me any articles of interest for the next bulletin. Perhaps a story of past experiences with your car(s) or even a technical article?

*Tim Shellshear reports from NSW...*

The VSCCA George Green rally was held recently. Royce Read and Julie Craig in their new VA, and Tim Shellshear and Margaret Edmond in the F type, drove the round trip of 1,200kms from Sydney and John Lackey trailed the Q type to Dubbo then drove about 600kms on the road. All did the trip without any problems although the state of country roads leaves much to be desired after the very wet season. Numerous deep potholes, dips and causeways all added to the occasional excitement. The truth is the roads were bloody awful and it's amazing our little chassis didn't snap in half on some of the worst unmissable potholes. However, we all had a sort of masochistic fun

The VSCCA's 40th Anniversary of Historic Racing was held at Wakefield Park on the 16 and 17th September. Three pre-war MGs participated in the racing with Rob Everett in L 0533, Rob Phillips in John Lackey's TA 2034 and Tim Shellshear in F 1254 all running in the pre-war regularity class, and with John Lackey in the TA in the racing divisions. Stuart Schofield also entered in L 0595, but couldn't make it on the day. The VSCCA started the all historic racing movement in 1976 at Amaroo Park so this provided an appropriate reason to celebrate. The event, limited to pre-1961 cars and bikes, was a huge success and is planned again for next year. This will almost certainly become the northern version of Historic Winton providing our pre-war MG owners yet another great venue to properly exercise their cars. The weekend had a perfect sunny Saturday, but the Sunday provided good British weather of heavy rain to suit our cars. Rob Everett was seen to execute a very neat full spin at one stage as the track became extremely slippery.



**Rob Everett discusses the L-type**  
Photo from Tim Shellshear



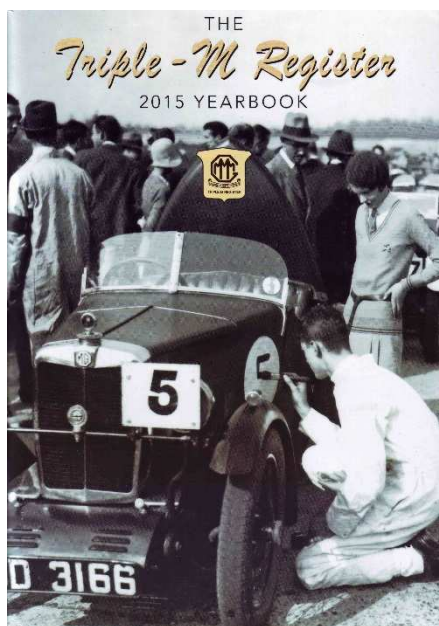
**Tim's F-type on the Wakefield Park dummy grid**  
Photo from Tim Shellshear

## Market Place

- For Sale:** Genuine 1929 M-type, Oxford midget, chassis 582. Complete but laid up. Campaigned by my late father in regularity trails at Amaroo Park and Oran Park over a 30 year period. Extensively rallied with the VSCCA including 3 International V & V Rallies. Car rebodied in the slab tank style in Sydney in the 1950s. Could be easily converted to pointed tail. Good free runner in its day. Ring for photos. Best acceptable offer. Ian Heather, email [mgheather@hotmail.com](mailto:mgheather@hotmail.com), or 0404 014 098.
- For Sale** SA saloon - The body has been fitted up with all panels, new timbers where required, in primer and paint stage. All mechanicals were rebuilt on purchase. All interior timber cappings and dash made to original finishes. All instruments rebuilt, dash centre in black chrome. Most chrome work is done. Front seats, rear seats and rear arm rests re-upholstered. New sunroof made and fitted. The car is an easy restoration for anyone handy as the hard work is done. Price \$35,000.00. Ron Taylor 0418 413 613
- For Sale** SA Tickford - The body is a mess and requires a full restoration but the following is included: New inner rear guards, new outer rear guards, new wiring harness, new timber body kit. All gauges rebuilt. All interior door caps and dash refurbished. Headlights re-chromed. Many spares included and a lot of new small parts. I understand when I purchased it that all mechanicals were rebuilt. The bonnets are in good condition and straight. There are 4 front guards, the originals are salt rusted from USA. Price \$35,000.00. Ron Taylor 0418 413 613
- For Sale** P type octagonal instrument panel, original Guarantee Plate for PA/ 1394 (only available to owner of that car), J2 woodwork plans, various J2 brake parts, M type front water outlet pipe, P type brake pedal bracket to chassis, J2 alloy water manifold (small leak where welded but fixable), J2 alloy inlet manifold, raw castings J2 windscreen supports, P headlight plus some bits, pair of rare early M type Rotax headlights, missing one rim. Any reasonable offers accepted. Brian Oxley 0412 188 409
- Wanted** MGNA/NB hood bows for factory 2 seater, any condition. Also I have just made a Burgess replica muffler in Stainless Steel inside and out. If anyone is interested, I can make more from \$250 each plus postage or can bring to Yamba meet. I need to know if as per factory or shorter length, round diameter and inlet and outlet pipe size. Steve Foldhazy [mgcqtfs@yahoo.com.au](mailto:mgcqtfs@yahoo.com.au)



## **The Triple-M Register's Yearbook for 2015**



I have been enjoying the Yearbook since 1979 and each issue has been of very high quality. The 2015 issue continues the very high standard both in quality of production and in the articles. It would be hard to find a better annual car publication.

From the very start, the cover provides an evocative view of the pre-war competition era and sets you in the mood for a great read.

Mike Dalby contributes an excellent article that covers M-type competition in the early days and demonstrates his deep knowledge of the model that really started it all. The article goes beyond just a history of competition and gives a good feel for the characters involved at that time. Also a great collection of period photos.

Colin Butchers' article moves the scene to "Metro-land", a narrow strip north-west of London, which played a significant role in the development of competition motoring in the 20s and 30s. Again, a fascinating look at MG competition history with some nice photos of the time.

Mike Allison gives a great snapshot of the export records of our cars which is of particular interest to we Australians. We certainly played a significant role in the UK policy of "export or die".

It is always good to see articles on maintenance and restoration and Barry Foster's article on copper gaskets is his usual thorough and clear explanation. This is followed by a very useful discussion on M-type side screens with very clear photos.

Then comes the regular competition report. A very extensive coverage of the year's activities with great photo coverage.

If I had one constructive comment it would be that I would like to see a better balance between competition and technical/restoration articles, but that of course is up to us the readers to correct with contributions, including myself.

Brian Oxley



*C J Fryer competes in his M-type at Metro-land, 20 May 1933*

**Haven't got your copy? You can buy the 2015 Triple-M Register Yearbook from the Register's shop - £12 plus postage:**

<http://www.triple-mshop.org/>

***Deadline for March Issue:  
Friday 24 February 2017***