

The Octagon

The Official Publication of:
THE MG CAR CLUB OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

March 2018



Some of the eager participants before the start of the Twilight Run



Affiliated with The MG Car Club (UK)
and member of the
Confederation of Australian Motor Sport



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General Meetings held at the Clubrooms on the third Tuesday of every month
(fellowship from 7:30, formal proceedings commence at 8:00 p.m.)
All members and visitors are welcome.



Not a lot of words needed.

*One very happy female chocoholic.
Happy wife, happy life*

Huge thanks to Iain Trainor

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CASTROL CLASSIC OILS



CASTROL CLASSIC OILS



President's Piece

It is just 5 years since the Bush families two classic MG's were delivered to our new home in Henley Brook. The cars were the catalyst for us to continue involvement with the MG Car Club and meet many new people who have over time become our friends. Having been a member of the MG Car Club since 1966 and 'active', in England, Scotland, South Africa and now here in WA, I consider myself to be a genuine enthusiast of the 'Marque of Friendship'. The MGCC is in reality, one big worldwide family and no matter in which country you find yourself, you will be made welcome at any gathering of the local members. On the MGCC UK website at: www.mgcc.com you will find all the worldwide contacts information.

This month on Sunday 11th, the club has organised the annual Show n Shine at Bayswater Riverside Gardens. It will include the Annual Concours event, that is open to any member to enter their MG. Equally all members are encouraged to come along and display their MG to the membership and public at large. Plus it also provides a great opportunity for socialising with other members and being able taking a close look at the many other models of MG. Thus, I appeal to members to get their MG's out of the garage and join the others at Bayswater.

I have been reading a fascinating book, being the autobiography of James Harwood, titled 'Life's a Hoot'. It has lots of snippets on the Classic Car movement and of the York Flying Fifties series from 1980 to 1997, including a full list of competitors for those years. A significant number of MG's were listed in all years and many of the driver's names were familiar to me, the new boy on the block. The models entered varied from 'M' types to MGB's, with even a 'Y' tourer in 1995. I will donate the book to the Club library as a recommended read.

Moving on, in this Month's [February] UK MGCC Safety Fast magazine, there is an advert for the new MG ZS, which is a very good looking 5 Seater, with all the bells and whistles of a modern car, including a 7 year warranty and a combined MPG of 49.6/4.8 L /100Km. They are offering a Manual and Automatic version, with UK prices starting at £12,495 [\$21k]. Unfortunately, there is still no news on when we will get a dealership in Perth.

Later this month, Christine and myself along with a number of other Club members will be heading with our MG's to Tasmania for the 2018 Natmeet. Most cars are being shipped to Melbourne, picked up there and on the Ferry to Devonport for a great weekend of MaGic fun and festivities. We will be driving back along the Gt Ocean Road and the Nullarbor in convoy with the Fry's, who are trailering their MGB both ways.

Ray Smith is also driving both ways in his MGB, with a few diversions en-route. 'You can do it in an MG'

Finally, I extend a warm welcome to the following new members:



Welcome to New Members



James & Erin Holbeach - 1975 Blue MGB Roadster
Phillip & Judith Redman - 1955 Dark Red ZA Magnette
John McCallum - 1951 Brunswick Green MG TD

Doug Bush

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Brunch Run

1st February 2018

At least on this run we all started from the same point so there was no dividing up of the group as in the previous Dwellingup run. I decided that I should start with a full fuel tank for the drive to Beverley and return, which took longer than expected so I was the last to sign on at the start, hence the requirement for me to report the run.



A total of fifteen MG's left the car park in Armadale driving through some lovely MG country past Araluen Park entrance to finally arrive at Brookton Highway in Karragullen. We were joined at this point by three MG's who were at the starting point but went a different route to meet us at Brookton Highway and one MGB left the group at the Araluen Park entrance.

Once on the Highway it was an easy drive in convoy to the Beverley turn off and another easy drive along Westdale Road, through farming country which was unusually green for this time of year, and into Beverley.

There were MG's parked on both sides of the Beverley high street as most arrived at the café where the sole shop assistant quickly phoned for





additional staff to feed the hungry travellers.

Rather than wait in the queue at the café I walked down the main street to the bakery and bought a very nice Steak and Kidney pie, which was consumed on a seat provided beneath some shady trees.

The MG's on the run were: four MGA's, six MGB's, two MGF's, one Magnette and two RV8's. (quite a good turn out)

The planned return route was via The Lakes and Great Eastern Highway, however I returned via the Brookton Highway in quite hot weather so I hope all other members had no problems on their return journey.

Kerry Malone





VP's Chin Wag

TECHNICAL GARAGE VISIT

Saturday morning 1000 hours 14 April 2018 is the proposed date for the next Technical Visit.

The Clubhouse now has the Technical Interest Request Forms, which you can use to advise what technical aspect interests you and it will be covered during the visit.

To date ONE person has advised they will be attending and we need at least 20 to make it worthwhile for the people involved. These events do not just occur, we don't have an "EVENT'S FAIRY" who waves her magic wand and things happen. Usually an individual arranges all the details and then awaits for a response from members. In the case of the Garage Visit we must have an idea of numbers for catering and validating the efforts of others on a Saturday morning.

If you want a TECHNICAL MEETING as per your survey let me know if you are going and it will happen. Please email m7rs@icloud.com. It will be a pity to lose our current relationship with the garage and what they are providing.

EXTENDED TRIP OF FOUR DAYS

There have been questions regarding an extended run starting about 10.00 hours on a Monday and finishing on a Friday morning back in Perth.

The number of cars is limited to six to assist in organizing and the cars must be able to maintain the speed limits of 110 and 100 kph. Accommodation will be reasonable at pubs and small hotels where necessary and evening meals of a reasonable standard with suitable libations. The run will go south taking in whale-watching, special points of interest, trip down a mine, flight in a balloon or whatever the participants' desire. Naturally the people who brought up the idea will have first choice if it eventuates; however please advise me if there are interested parties.



Concours d'Elegance 2018 Entry Form*

** Only required if you wish your vehicle to be judged*

Gates Open 12:00 pm

Event Details

Date:	Sunday March 11 th
Start Time:	1:30pm - Formalities done and car in place by then please
Prize Giving:	Approximately 4-30 pm
Location:	Bayswater Riverside Gardens. Entry off Milne Street
Entry Fee:	Gold coin donation is requested for all cars. [Concours Entry \$5-00]
BYO:	Picnic
Judging:	Can you help on the Day? <input type="checkbox"/> YES
Marshals:	Can you help on the Day? <input type="checkbox"/> YES

Please enter my MG in the "MG Concours d'Elegance"

Name:			
Phone Home:			
Phone Work:			
Email:			
MG Model:			
Rego No:			
Year:			
Colour:			
Class:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-War MG's	<input type="checkbox"/> MGA SERIES	<input type="checkbox"/> MGB SERIES	
<input type="checkbox"/> MG MIDGET SERIES	<input type="checkbox"/> MG's 1995-2018	<input type="checkbox"/> MG SPECIALS	
<input type="checkbox"/> MG CLASSIC SEDANS	<input type="checkbox"/> TC's/TD's & TF's	<input type="checkbox"/> MG RV-8's	
Are you a member of:			
<input type="checkbox"/> MG Car Club of WA	<input type="checkbox"/> MG Owners Club	<input type="checkbox"/> MGTC Owners Club	

If you are NOT a member of the "MG Car Club of WA" you must sign the Honorary Day Member Sign-on Sheet on the day.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please Post or email your entry form to Doug Bush, 29 Horseshoe Circuit, Henley Brook, 6055, or e-mail to: dougmga@msn.com. Helpful hints: 1) to email: save form to a separate file in your computer before completing it and then email to Doug as an attachment. 2) To fill in check boxes on your PC, Double click on a check box and select "checked"
Concours Entry will be \$5-00 payable on entry [please have a \$5-00 note ready.]

SOCIAL EVENTS IN MARCH

All Club members are welcome to participate in all these social events!

MGA Register Brunch Run - Sunday 11th March

Meeting point at the Mundaring Shopping Centre (Stoneville Road entry) at 08:30am for an 8.45am departure to Masonmill Gardens Café in Carmel for breakfast, then via Guildford to the Show'n'Shine at Bayswater Riverside Gardens. Organiser is Tony Ford, mobile 0400 202 474 or email tonyford@westnet.com.au – please advise Tony if you intend to join the run as meals need to be pre-ordered!

See <https://www.masonmillgardens.com.au/food-menu> for the breakfast menu.

Show'n'Shine & Concours – Sunday 11th March

Sunday 11th March at Bayswater Riverside Gardens Commencing at 13:00 with a Concours and general display of MGs from our Club as well as the MG Owners Club and the MGTC Owners Club. All members are encouraged to come along to this prestige event to show their cars and enjoy some MG fellowship with other owners.

Vehicle entry is by 'Gold Coin' donation.

Club General Meeting – 20th March

For 2018, the Club's General Meetings will generally incorporate a presentation organised by our VP Mike Smith, in addition to the normal presentation of reports from Committee members and the convivial post-meeting nog'n'natter. General Meetings held so far this year have therefore included a demonstration of the defibrillator installed in the Clubrooms and a DVD of the 1968 London to Sydney Marathon. Presentations at future meetings will include the showing of interesting DVDs from the Club's extensive collection and a technical Q&A session with Tim Harland.

Supper will, of course, still be provided!

Shannons Classic Car Show – Sunday 18th March

The Council of Motoring Clubs of WA is again holding its annual Classic Car Show at Ascot Racecourse. More than 40 clubs will be there showcasing over 700 cars and assorted vehicles. There will also be displays by automotive traders as well as exhibits of vintage radios, prams, clothing and collectables. Our Club has booked a site and if you take your MG along to display please let Doug Bush know dougmgwa@msn.com), as space is limited. Cars for display need to be in place before 9am.

MGF Register Run – Sunday 25th March (DEFERRED)

This run has been deferred until Sunday 22nd April as the Register Convenor, Iain Trainor, is overseas and a number of Club members will be in Tasmania for the 2018 Natmeet.

SOUTHERN CHAPTER

South West British Auto Classic – Saturday 24th March 2018

This is an annual display of all classic British cars. An area will be set aside to display our MGs. Meet on site at Signal Park, Queen Street, Busselton by 10am to 10.30am.

Contact details: Colin and Karen Bell 0417 212 140.

NOTICE BOARD

Eddie Preston would like to know if anyone maybe requiring a car trailer to be returned from the Eastern States to Perth sometime around April, I will tow it back if they do not mind that it is loaded with a car of mine as I shall be departing from Melbourne around that time with a camper with towing capability. I do not mind travelling to another State to collect if necessary.

My contacts 0402 135 090, 9450 2888 & prest100@iinet.net.au



The annual Come 'n' Try Motorkhana



Is just 3 weeks away (.Sunday, March 18th)

This event is an opportunity to introduce friends and family to Motorkhanas, so start spreading the word. Of course you can also use the event as a practice or shakedown in preparation for the Championship Motorkhanas.

The format is the same as last year's event, with two sessions;
one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

For more information go to the Motorkhana-WA webpage (www.motorkhana-wa.com)
or Facebook (www.facebook.com/MotorkhanaWA)

Please register your intent to enter and choose your preferred session on or before Thursday, March 15th by e-mailing motorkhana@minicarclub.com.au. At the same time, please take time to read the Supp Regs . The Supp Regs contain important information that needs to be understood; there is also a new declaration that needs to be signed. Please print off a copy of the declaration and entry form, complete them and bring them with you to the event.

For newcomers (that have never held a CAMS licence), the entry fee (\$30) will include a one-day CAMS licence.

If you already hold a current licence you'll be required to produce it along with your car club membership card at registration. Please take time prior to the event to get these items in order.

AM Session

Scrutiny	8.45
Drivers Briefing	9.15
Event Starts	9.30

PM Session

Scrutiny	12.45
Drivers Briefing	1.15
Event Starts	1.30

Twilight Run

16th February

Meeting up in the hills at Kalamunda were 30 members in 17 beautiful MG's for what proved to be a fascinating drive.

We went up hill (more than once) and down dale.

Or as they would say in Yorkshire "upt 'ill un downt dale"



The route traversed twenty suburbs- Yes I know "who on earth would count them?" well I did and can name them. Kalamunda, Bickley, Wallliston, Lesmurdie, Wattle Grove, Forrestfield, Maida Vale, Gooseberry Hill, Hazlemere, Bellvue, Swan View, Stratton, Middle Swan, Herne Hill, Millendon, Baskerville, Brigadoon, Henley Brook , West Swan, and Middle Swan (*again*).



I believe the editor said this had to be 500 words so it seemed a good idea to list these just to fill up space. We also crossed rail lines eight times if you stuck to the directions or ten times if you played "follow my leader" and went the wrong way crossing over the lines doing a U turn and

crossing back. And we also drove past more wineries than I could count. That brought tears to my eyes.

But seriously it was a lovely pleasant run from Kalamunda into the delightful Bickley Valley back down the hills only to climb again and descend via the Zig Zag. Always a clench your teeth and close your eyes drive for me. Especially if I am not driving. Then over those darned railway crossings into and out of the Swan Valley and onto our picnic spot at the Middle Swan reserve.

This was a tranquil spot on the river and a time to chat and chew with long standing friends and, hopefully make some new ones.

Thank you Doug and Chris for all the thought and time you had put into the route and the beautiful spot to finish.

Pat Shaw

(This is still less than 500 words :)





Your Club Needs You!



The Club Calender for 2018 is full of activities for members to enjoy. Resources are needed to provide those enjoyable events for you. Help is needed in particular organising social runs. Below is a simple skeleton of the elements involved in designing a run. Detail, with much more support and encouragement is freely available to all members volunteering!

1. Choose Destination
2. Choose Starting Point
3. Choose Route Using a Map
4. Drive the Route with "Navigator" to Record Details.
5. Choose Route Instructions Format
6. Create Draft Instructions
7. Check Drive the Route 1 Week before Event
8. Print Final Route Instructions
9. Attend Event/Short Briefing of Drivers
10. Distribute Route Instructions

Arranging a CAMS permit via President or Social Co-ordinator and completion of Event Attendance Forms are a couple of formalities, plus ensuring your run receives good promotion via the Octagon and our Website.

A good suggestion is to team up with a fellow Club mate and organise a run jointly.

In itself, there is a lot of satisfaction to be enjoyed being an organiser and contributing personally to your Club plus connecting with other members is good too.

Please think about it and give me a call.

Tony Ford 0400 202 474

Winning a raffle

Winning a raffle, or anything else for that matter, is not something that happens every day so when I bought tickets, on the last night of the Safety Fast Weekend, in the raffle to support the riding for the disabled, I thought I was making a donation to good cause.

So, you could have knocked me over with a feather when the first prize was called and I checked my numbers to find I had won.

Before the evening had begun I had said, in jest, that if I won I would give the ride to my two grandsons. So that was what we did. Arrangements were then made with RDA Capricorn, who were delighted that the prize was going to be used, for a ride in mid January.

Arriving at the stables, on a cool overcast day, we (our son Tim, his two sons and I) were met by our coach for the morning, Tilly. We were kitted out with hats and boots mounted our horses and were instructed in basics of how to get the horses to walk and stop. We then walked them to the arena where we spent some time learning to steer the horses stop them and get them to start walking again. The latter is quite hard to learn at first especially if the horse has found some juicy grass on the other side of the fence. Anyway, we soon got the hang of it and our faces began to break out into smiles as we settled into the rhythm of it all. A few rounds trotting around the arena and we were ready to try the great outdoors.

What a delight to relax and let the horses follow each other around a well-known route and have time to take in the scenery and hear the birdsong. The two hours past by too quickly and all agreed it had been great fun.

Thanks must go to Ian and Angela Hudson for providing the prize (it was especially nice to have Ian join us for a while on the day) and to the RDA Capricorn for being so generous with their time and patient with four very unskilled riders.

If you are lucky enough to win the prize (which I am sure will be offered again at the Safety fast this year) please make use of it - it is well worth it.

Pat Shaw

PS There would have been pictures except my computer ate them.

The Deadline for articles to be included in the April edition of the Octagon will be Thursday 29th March 2018

Thank you M & G Editors



WACKY RACES

with Peter McGrath

With no real competitive action to report on in February, we have a glut of events available for us in March.

There is the Twilight Sprint Event round 1 at Barbagallo on 25th February, but unfortunately, I got the information on this event a little too late. I'm now in communication with the guys at the WASCC so will give more notice in future to their organised track days and evenings.

So, to March, there are a lot of options to get your MG out on the circuit:

3rd/4th March - Collie Icebreaker Sup Regs - Collie Motorplex

15th March - Come and try day - Barbagallo race track - organised by WASCC

18th March - Motorkhana Have a try day - Tiger kart club (Barbagallo) - organised by Motorkhana WA with the Mini Car Club.

28th March - Jaguar Track Day - Barbagallo race track - organised by JCCWA

In the next few months we will have some more exciting events available for us to attend including:

8th April - Northam flying 50 - part of the motor sport festival running 7th and 8th April

22nd April - State Motorkhana round 1 - Tiger Kart Club

2nd June - Albany Classic Hill climb

2nd June – State Motorkhana round 2 - Albany

3rd June - Albany Classic Round the houses (classics only - MGB and older).

If you need any further information on the above events, please drop me an email.

If you are interested in trying out your MG in a more competitive environment, then March is the month to do it. Especially the “have a try” and “come and try” days.

The Jaguar track day at the end of March is well worth participating in. A lot of our regular competitive drivers will be away for the Nat meet, so I'd like to encourage as many new or lapsed racers as possible to register for this. It means taking a day off work

on a Wednesday, but let's be honest who wants to work, when you can be dashing around Barbagallo in your MG! We've still got a few weeks to confirm numbers, so please have a think about it and let me know if you are interested - you only need to go as fast as you are comfortable with.

There's plenty of opportunity to attend motor shows as well over the next month or so, including our very own organised Show and Shine / Concours at Bayswater on the 11th March, the Shannons Classic Car show on 18th March at Ascot Racecourse and the Curtin Radio Classic Car Spectacular at Trinity College, Waterford on the 15th April.

For us motor sports fans, it all kicks off this time of year. The F1 GP season starts in Melbourne on the 22-25 March, which should be a closer competition than in recent years (I'm hoping for McLaren as the dark horse this year). The Supercars also kicks off in March in Adelaide on the 1 - 4 March with support races at the Melbourne F1 GP three weeks later.

Finally, good luck and best wishes to all those attending the National Meet, have fun over there. Hope you have a rapid and fun time.

Peter McGrath
petemcgarth76@hotmail.co.uk



GENERAL MEETING. 20 February 2018: Minutes

Meeting opened at 20.00pm.

Club President in the chair.

Visitors: Richard & Elizabeth Cruthers from Scotland Red MGB (son's), Peter & Pla Dover

Apologies: Patrick Reed, Neale Cooper, Chris Hart, Peter & Sarah Fry, Terry & Wanda Banton, Peter Mittler

Minutes of previous meeting: 16 Jan 2018 published in the Octagon: Motion to accept Minutes: Proposed by Alley Mulcahy seconded by Don Wylie agreed as a true record.

Business arising: Nil

REPORTS:

VP's Report: Nothing to report

Secretary's Report: Doug Bush advised Alley Mulcahy received an email from someone asking to see if they might be able to help out with a surprise drive for up and coming birthday or two people, if you can help please speak to Doug Bush.

Treasurer's Report: Doug Bush on behalf Chris Hart advised that the club funds Year to date, total of all accounts is \$xxxxxxx

Doug then advised that the following cheques be proposed for payment; Allsports – Badges \$150.00, D Pitcher – Raffle prizes \$33.60. Approval moved by Ian Trainor seconded by Val Goff and approved by the meeting.

Membership Sec's Report: Richard Gusterson advised renewals outstanding reduced from 85 last month to 29 and hope those members do expedite payment – paid renewal 214, Lapsed 21.

Richard also has three new members to nominations –

James & Erin Holbeach 1975 Blue MGB

Philip & Judith Redman 1955 Dark Red ZA Magnette

John McCallum 1951 Brunswick Green MG TD

3 out of the last 6 new members own blue MGB's.

Competition: Peter McGrath advised there is a competition on Sunday 25th Feb Twilight event registration open till Thursday at Barbagello Raceway Lots going on in March

Collie ice breaker 3rd & 4th March registration open till 28th Feb - 2 day event

Have a go day Motorkhana 15th March, a full circuit Barbagello organised by WA Sporting Car Club

18th motorkhana Barbagello - Have a go day

22nd April is when round 1 competition starts

18th March – Shannon's Classic car show Ascot

28th March – Jaguar track day

If you require any further information email Peter McGrath

End of April there is a Cape to Cape

Northam Flying Fifty 7th & 8th April – Doug Bush advised due to some members attending Natmeet we are requiring someone to organise a run to this event.

Social Report: Tony Ford advised he has volunteered to take on this role for the year and presented the following events –

Show n Shine 11th March – starting at 1pm

MGA register 11th March – starting in Mundaring, Lunch at Mason Mill, then through to the show n shine.

Tony asked if you are interested in attending please advise at least a week before for pre order brunch.

Shannon's Classic car show, we have 10 passes for this event cars to be in place before 9am on the day.

MGF register 25th March – Tony will be away and they are looking for someone to organise run otherwise they will defer till 22nd April.

Southern Chapter – Busselton British Classic Show 24th March – contact details Colin & Karen Bell also published in Octagon.

Tony also mention to support then new format of general meeting to make it more interesting with DVD's and Tech talks etc.

Doug Bush advised on the Show n Shine that the grounds have been organised and hoping for some more entries to be forth coming as we have only received 8 so far.

MGOC & TC clubs have been invited and details on our website & Octagon.

Editors: Graham Mitchinson asked if someone could assist with pick up of the Octagon from printers, Ian Trainor has volunteered on behalf of Graham & Moyra. Colleen Hardie to fill in for editors while they are away.

Safety Fast Run: Nothing to report.

Club Captain: Neale Cooper sent apologies, Mike Smith presented new name badges of behalf of Neale.

Cam Mart, Peter & Pla Dover.

Mike Smith also advised request forms on table regarding tech support meeting in garage.

Regalia: Nothing to report

Librarian: Nothing to report.

Webmaster: Nothing to report.

Any Other Business: Nothing to report.

Meeting closed at 20: 25pm



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Birthday Calendar

If you aren't on the list please send through your information to the Editors.

So for those celebrating a March birthday,
the committee would like to wish you a **MaGic Day**

March Birthdays



Thursday **1st**

Richard Gusterson

Sunday **4th**

Ian Campbell

Tuesday **13th**

Ernie Whitehurst

Monday **19th**

John Bennington

Friday **23rd**

Kerren Stokes

Saturday **24th**

Heather Forbes

Tuesday **27th**

Lis Campbell

&

John Hagarty



Wishing you all a very happy time
On your special day



Happy Birthday

MEMORIES

The DVD of the London to Sydney Marathon 1993 shown at the club general meeting last night made me recall my own encounter with the 1968 rally 25 years earlier.

At the time I was leading a geophysical exploration party on a large Temporary Reserve that the company I worked for had in the area surrounding Youanmi town site which is about 90km south of Sandstone in remote semi desert country. Youanmi is old gold mining town which I think closed down in the 1930's

Our base camp was not in the old town site but some distance away at a bore with some water tanks.

Whilst in the field carrying out our surveys during the morning, we heard a call for some help in amongst our own chatter on our two way radios, the caller said that they were unsure of their whereabouts and could we assist them.

As we were out bush with very little contact with the outside world we were unaware of the rally and were surprised to hear from them. We didn't know about the checkpoint in the town site. One way or another we ascertained where they were and guided them into our camp via radio. Racking my brains I can't recall (nearly 50 years later) what sort of car it was or who the crew were, however we were able to point out their position, where the Youanmi town site was and how to reach it. We gave them some fuel (all our vehicles were petrol in those days) to help them on their way. One question that they asked floored us!

"We are quite close to Southern Cross aren't we?" (They had to travel south from Youanmi to Marvel Loch via Southern Cross as the next part of their route)

"No, not sure of the distance but guess it has to be 100-150 miles away"

"Oh, we thought that it was only about 7 miles from where we saw the sign"

"Where was the sign?"

On a windmill that we passed, it said 'Southern Cross 7' "

Of course they had been looking at a Southern Cross No. 7 mill

Bill Hildebrand

David Pitcher would like to inform the members that we have in our library a DVD of the original 1968 "London to Sydney Rally"

In this edition of the Octagon we have had several contributors who have taken photographs or supplied articles that were used throughout the magazine.

**David Pitcher, Kelly Malone, Maxine Robins, Pat Shaw,
Bill Hildebrand and Doug Bush**

Thank you

The First London to Sydney Marathon Car Rally

November December 1968

Compiled by Richard Ashton

The London to Sydney Marathon event started in London Earls Court November 24 1968. One of the entrants was an MGB No. 47 being entered and driven by Jean Denton and co driven by Tom Boyce.

Jean was no newcomer to long distance racing and rallying. She as a member of the BRDC racing in Cooper formula 3 racing in 1966, became British women racing champion in 1967 and 1968, and driving an MGB in the Nürburgring 1000 km sports car race in Germany.

The Rally was route through Europe. Paris, Turin, Belgrade to Istanbul across the Bosphorus by ferry, then on to Asia via Kabul, to Delhi on its way to Bombay India. On December 5, they were transported by sea to Fremantle, arriving at 10 am December 13. The MG had had an uneventful run through to Fremantle.

Here in Fremantle, just about all the member of the MG Car Club met the ship and convoyed the MGB to Winterbottom's service division. Later the MG was driven to Gloucester Park trotting ground ready for the restart the next day at 6 pm.

Earlier in 1968 a call from the MG Car Club headquarters in England had come to the club, could we help entrant no. 47 while in Western Australia. The Club had enthusiastically agreed to be of service and provide assistance if required at check points for them all the way to the WA border. Here they where handed over to members of the South Australian MG Car Club to help them on their way to the finish in Sydney. In each state MG members followed the cars progress and maned check points at each of the rally stages.

We divide up the crews depending on the time they had available. The first check point was at Youanmi a deserted old mining town, 7 hours away from Perth. Some of us went there to be on standby. The second group were split into two and three. One group were to go to the end of stage two at Marvel Lock for 5 am onward the following morning for an expected 7 am arrival of the MGB.

The second group would go on to Norseman, to be on stand by from an anticipated 10 am arrival. Although it was not an official check point, it was a stop for fuel and a service point, before the big crossing through to Ceduna in South Australia on the old road, a journey expected to be some 6 hour and 18 minutes.

From the start at Gloucester Park at 6pm for the first cars, it would be 1 am for the MG to reach Youanmi. A further 4 hours to Marvel Lock by 5am. Then on to Lake King by 7am.

Considering that it would take the field about an hour to get on their way, we had adjusted times for us to be in place.

50 kms after leaving Lake King on the way to Norseman, Jean and Tom and the MG became briefly air-borne over a "jump" section, they were going a little too fast and applied the brakes too suddenly, when the car hit the road, the engine kept going and the fan went through the core of the radiator.

They patched up the radiator as best possible, and sent forward a message to us who were anxiously waiting at Norseman. Finally the message came through via another competitor that they were in trouble half way across from Lake King.

At the toss of a coin which I lost, my radiator was sacrificed to the cause, and quickly removed from my car. Away we went; about six suddenly MG Car Club radiator experts were sandwiched into two cars, complete with a dripping radiator a toolbox and water. We found them about 30 miles into the Lake King Norseman track. Jean and Tom were running slowly toward us, after having blocked off the engine water pipes, they had had no success with trying to patch up the radiator. They had crawled along mile after mile with the heater going full bore. When the engine frequently got too hot, they would stop and wait for things to cool down and slowly move on again.

Found, the radiator team were happily greeted, and Tom who got quickly into action.



MG Car Club President Peter Briggs talks to driver Jean Denton as co-driver and mechanic Tom Boyce fits my radiator. Standing at right is club member Pat Reid, John Keenan at the water supply canisters.

With repair quickly made, MGB No. 47 was quickly on its way. We also reversed and made our way back the way we came.

Back at Norseman, with Jean and Tom well gone; we caught up with our remaining MG crew. They had seen them through on their way to cross the Nullarbor.

Ronda and I in my 'radiatorless' MGB were towed through to Esperance, after receiving promises that a new radiator would be sent down on the overnight trucking service from Perth. It's amazing how cold a car can become with no engine heat from up front.



MGB No 47 got through to Sydney and finished in 42nd place.

After leaving Ronda and me to wait for the radiator, the rest of the MG Car Club team drove back home to Perth the next day. We had a forced but happy break at Esperance, even though we were on shanks pony and forced to live frugally owing to not having much cash with us, waiting for the R&I bank to open. Three days later a new radiator turned up after much telephoning through to Perth. Radiator fitted we were on our way back home.

.....

The holed radiator is resting against Jean Denton's legs; it had been un-successfully repaired with Plastibond. Tom Boyce continues fitting my radiator to the MG. Next to Jean in the bright shirt is Club Treasurer Jeff Cohen

In April-May in 1970 Jean Denton entered the six weeks long World Rally London to Mexico Rally driving a Morris 1800. She and her two other lady crew were placed first women drivers and 18th place overall.

Jean Denton's title was Lady Denton of Wakefield. After motor racing and rallying, she became business woman in promotion and publicity companies with Heron Drive a car leasing company and marketing director Huxford Garages.

She became marketing director and external affairs director for the Austin Rover Group, and also connected with Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon. Amongst other appointments she was a board member of British Nuclear Fuels.

Always interested in the women's movement she was honoured with a CBE in 1990 was appointed Baroness Denton in 1991.

After a life in business world she entered political life for a short time appointed Government Whip in the John Major government. She became Minister for Northern Ireland in the House of Lords

Jean passed away 2000 aged 65 after a long battle with cancer.

Compiled by Richard Ashton

Originally Overseas MGCC member, Local MG Car Club No. 31, Committee member, Competition Secretary, Vice President, President, CAMS State Councillor, Life Member.

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