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*An evocative photo of a well-dressed Lou Schapel in his TA on the Victorian/SA border in about 1946. Lou owned the C-type MG (C0291) in Adelaide at about this time. Read his story on page 5...
Photo from Bob Schapel*

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Plus all our usual columns.....

Subscriptions are now due for 2019!

Renewal form enclosed, if you need it...

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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

Lou Schapel in Adelaide had a long history with MGs. Along the way he owned the TA he is shown with in our cover photo, but perhaps more importantly, he owned a C-type (C0291) for a period.

See Bob Schapel's story about his father on page 5.

STOP PRESS Wonderful Winton 2019

The Winton Historics weekend in 2019 will be a week earlier than usual. Make sure you check the website and plan accordingly. A display of pre-war and racing T-series MGs is planned, so dust off your cars, even if you don't intend to enter.

17, 18 and 19 May 2019

Editorial Contributions to:

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Editor's Soapbox

Hello Everyone



Welcome to our third Newsletter for 2018. We can congratulate ourselves that we have made it to the end of another year of pre-war MG activity across the nation. I hope your year has been as successful as my own with the end of the creation of my *Blue Streak* MG Special now firmly in sight. Brian Oxley reports on the car elsewhere and you will have to forgive me for running this silly but euphoric photo taken in the car on its first drive down my street a few short days ago. I promise to return to more sedate editorial photos taken with the SA next year.

In this edition of your favourite Newsletter we have several personal stories which I always enjoy receiving. Mark Alsop talks about the family M-type, catalysed by our cover photo for our last edition, Bob Schapel talks about his father's ownership of C0291 when it was in Australia many years ago, and Elliott Burns has something to say about New Year's Resolutions. There is also a terrific "interview" with Mr Pre-War MG in New Zealand, Frank Langridge, by our reporters Desna and Denis Jury in the North Island. Top these off with some fascinating adventures by our intrepid drivers, some interesting comments in the letters pages and a swag of fantastic photos of our cars in action in Australia and overseas, and you have several evenings worth of reading to keep you entertained.

Speaking of New Zealand, Geoff Broadhead is currently keeper of the Triple-M data in New Zealand and he has advised that he has updated several of the NZ Triple-M Register documents on the Auckland club's website: www.mgclub.org.nz/Information/Registers/Triple-M or directly via: www.mgtriple-m.nz. Geoff would appreciate any new material that could be added. He can be contacted on the email: geoffbroadhead01@gmail.com.

Our new webmaster, Bob Somerville, asks that you avoid the website for the time being. His newly-built site using a well-known software package has unfortunately been infected with a malware virus that redirects visitors to other less favourable sites, ones that might upset delicate constitutions. Several experienced website IT gurus in Melbourne are working with Bob to correct the problem and hopefully we can introduce both Bob and the new site in our next Newsletter. In the meantime, you can keep across pre-war MG activity via our Facebook group forum (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1096291360515664/>) provided you can answer the three simple citizenship questions to prove your *bona fides* and be accepted by the moderators (Andrew Fock and myself).

On behalf of all of us involved with the Newsletter, we hope you have a safe and happy festive season and we look forward to bringing you more pre-war MG stories and news in 2019.

Malcolm

Patron's Comment – Ray

Ray Fowler brings us up-to-date with his new Fowler J2...



I believe you like to read about how the new Fowler J2 is coming along, and I'll get to that in a moment. But first, and in my view more importantly, I wanted to share with you some of my thoughts on our small band of enthusiasts in the Pre-War Register.

The more I see of what our little club does, the more I am astounded. Enjoyable as this group is, I am so impressed with how it runs quite smoothly and its influence extends right across Australia and New Zealand with contributions from all States and from the North and South Islands. As Malcolm said when we were discussing what I might say in my column, "we have no constitution, no committee, no meetings and no structure"! So maybe that's the secret. Anyway, I congratulate you all for running a great little organisation which brings so much pleasure to us all through the Newsletter and the events you hold.

And speaking of Malcolm, I'd like to say that over the past several years since I took on this Patron mantle, I've called in to see him in Canberra and watched with great interest as his MG special has slowly come together. What a huge amount of satisfaction it must have given him recently when it started and ran for the first time. Malcolm's experience is not unique of course, as many of you have made the same sort of achievements, but it demonstrates nicely why I think our little band is so important to us all.

Which brings me to the new Fowler J2. Since my last report, I have been working on the chassis. In my search for creating the absolutely lightest car possible, I had planned to stamp out new chassis rails in a lighter gauge of steel and had bought a press for stamping out TA, TB and TC chassis rails. In the end I decided the amount of work to create a new chassis was just not worth it and I've sold the press to John Lackey in Springwood. So, I have been busy renovating the existing chassis instead. I'm now focussing on the gearbox and am looking at options. It would be nice to fit modern gears and synchros, and a multi-plate clutch, into the old J2 box and bell-housing, but I might end up with a modern six-speed alternative instead. However, as the new Fowler J2 will be a single-seater, I have installed a fixed drive below the seating position by lowering the cross tube at that point. This will drive a

quick change gearbox at the rear of the car, along the lines of those pioneered by Halibrand in the US, with one drive in and one drive out to the rear facing differential. This will allow me to change the final drive ratio quickly and easily if I find I need a different ratio at an event. It should only take about 15 minutes to change - easier than swapping crown wheels and pinions! More on this in my next column.

Ray

Biennial Rally - 2019 Planning...

Organiser Murray Arundell brings us up-to-date with what's happening...

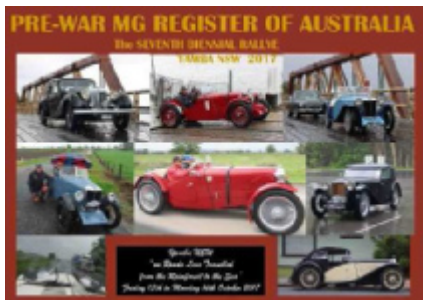
Pre War MG Register of Australia National Meeting Friday 6th September to Monday 9th September 2019



Planning is afoot for the 2019 Pre War MG Register's National Meeting. The dates are a little earlier than last time so we don't clash with Motorclassica or the infamous Northern NSW Spring Monsoons. So mark down these dates, starting with Registration and a Noggin Natter Friday September 6th 2019, finishing with the Gala Dinner on Monday 9th 2019. The venue will be the same as our previous event, the Angourie Resort in Yamba. When booking, and many of you already have, remember to book direct and to mention the Pre War MG Register event. Also the resort is offering a further discount of their rates if you choose to stay for seven nights.

We're planning to do a few things differently (and drier) from the previous event. We'll be holding the display day across in Maclean in 2019. We're sure you'll be impressed with the town centre as the back drop for our cars. We're still looking at different options for run destinations and we expect to be able to release full details, costings and entry forms with the next Register Newsletter.

Murray, Robbie & Ross.



Yamba Rally Booklet Now Available

If you ordered and paid for the Yamba 2017 Rally Souvenir Booklet, yours will be in the mail shortly. It is a fabulous memento of our first northern rally with 44 pages chock full of stunning photos from our official photographers, Kimberley and Amy, as well as from our participants and their friends. Definitely a "must have" for your coffee table or bookshelf. If you haven't ordered one but would like one anyway, whether you attended or not, email the booklet production team (grkelly@bigpond.net.au) with your name and address and they will give you the BSB details to ensure you get a copy.



It's on again! If you missed the last one, make sure you don't miss this one. The enthusiasm for another event at Lake Perkolilli outside Kalgoorlie in Western Australia has been incredible. Enquiries have come in from South Australia, Queensland, the Northern Territory, New South Wales and even from the UK. Already more than fifteen vintage motorcycles are booked in, and there are just as many cars on the list.

More information from: Graeme Cocks: gacocks@inet.net.au

www.motoringpast.com.au

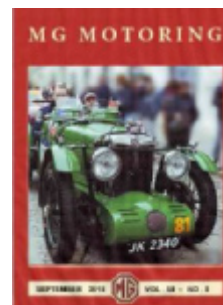
**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION -
Friday 22 February 2019**

HISTORY - From Le Mans to Victor Harbour

Bob Schapel documents the history of C0291 during its early days in England and Australia...

Wayne Hough's magnificent photo of the 1932 MG on the cover of the September edition of the South Australian MGCC magazine, grabbed my attention. The photo gave me a few clues, but a bit of research confirmed that it was the car once owned by my father, Lou, about 75 years ago. This car won its class at Le Mans. I remember Lou's stories and have read about its early history in John Thornley's book, "MAINTAINING THE BREED".

The car started life as a C-Type in 1932, having chassis number C0291. As such, it was designed for oval track racing, such as Montlhery and Brooklands, where brakes and gears were little used. In fact "Montlhery Midget" was Thornley's title for his chapter on C-Types. The car originally had 8" brakes, a pointy tail and perhaps a number 6 Powerplus supercharger. Sadly, the owner Harry Leeson, was killed while racing a C-Type (presumably this car) in the 1932 "JCC 1000 Mile Race" at Brooklands.



Early in 1933, the car was bought by race-drivers John Ford and Maurice Baumer. They had it modified by the MG factory to J4 specifications so it would suit road racing at Le Mans and "Mannin Beg" (Isle of Man) later that year. I distinctly remember Lou telling me that the changes included a large capacity slab fuel tank in place of the pointy tail, 12 inch brakes, a Laystall crankshaft and the bigger (number-8 Powerplus) supercharger. John Thornley, who was Director and General Manager of the MG Company, actually calls the car a J4 in his book. He states (in the chapter about J-Types) that Ford and Baumer took their J4 to 6th place at Le Mans and 3rd place at Mannin Beg in 1933. Anders Ditlev Clausager also calls the car "The supercharged MG J4 Midget" in his book titled "Le Mans". I understand why Lou

often called the car "The J4 Prototype".

A class win and sixth place outright at Le Mans was quite an achievement for the 750cc MG. Nuvolari, in his only Le Mans race, drove the winning 2.3 litre supercharged Alfa, followed by two similar cars in second and third places. Fourth was a 1.1 litre Riley and fifth a 1.5 litre Aston Martin. I don't know any C0291 history during 1934, however, Ford and Baumer, both went on to race K3 Magnettes. Baumer bought K3 028 in 1934 and Ford bought K3 027 in 1935.

In about 1935, John Dutton, whose family owned Anlaby Station near Kapunda, bought C0291 and a Vauxhall 30/98 in England. He shipped both cars to Adelaide and planned to select one to drive at Victor Harbour in the South Australian Centenary Grand Prix on 26th December 1936. (Later, this race was retrospectively re-named "The 1937 Australian Grand Prix".) Several months before the race, John Dutton driving the Vauxhall near Mount Gambier, crashed off the road and into the Blue Lake. Fortunately, John survived the accident as he was caught in bushes and saplings on the steep slope down to the water, but the Vauxhall continued into the Blue Lake. It remained submerged at a depth of about 75 metres for more than a year and was not recovered before the Victor Harbour race. Recently, on August 6th this year, "The Advertiser" published an article regarding cars crashing into the Blue Lake and included a photo of the Vauxhall being salvaged.



With the Vauxhall unavailable, John Dutton drove C0291 in the Grand Prix and finished 10th in a field of 27 cars. Three K3s were starters but none of them finished the 250 mile handicap. The race was won by Les Murphy in a P-Type MG, which started 35 minutes before the Ford V8 special that actually set the fastest race time. A few years later, Lou bought C0291 and the repaired Vauxhall from different sources. I don't know when Lou got to know John Dutton, but I do know that they became good friends and did some "spotlight shooting" at Anlaby. I assume the cars were the catalyst for their friendship.



Lou (left in his Y-tourer in about 1980) told me that when he had C0291, the body was quite rough because it had been deliberately damaged to prevent duty having to be paid when it was imported from England. He said large holes had been cut in the sides. Repairs had been made, but the scars were still evident. Australia at the time did not have a car manufacturing industry, but it did have a car body industry to protect. Lou had two cylinder heads for C0291. I think one was for use with supercharger while the other was for "normally aspirated" use. During his ownership, Lou wrote to the MG Factory for information about the car. The reply he received was the source of his detailed knowledge of the 1933 factory upgrade. I remember Lou telling me that every time "M.G." was mentioned in the factory letter, a single key was used, and it typed the octagonal MG logo. He passed

the letter on to a subsequent owner, Gavin Sandford-Morgan. Lou told me that he since asked if the letter, or a copy, could be returned to him, but unfortunately, that never eventuated.



Gavin Sandford-Morgan bought C0291 in 1947 (I think directly from Lou) and sold it about a year later. Gavin bought it again in 1965 and after several years, restored it to magnificent condition, with a pointy tailed body. In about 1999 the son of Ford and Baumer's mechanic sought to find the whereabouts of the car which his father helped maintain. He eventually traced it to Gavin in early 2000. Russell Garth, our own Register Secretary at the time, was one of the links in the Englishman's successful search. Gavin sold C0291 back to the U.K. in about 2001. I notice that its English registration number, JK2340, is the same now as it was in 1933.

You might have noticed that I have not called the car a "C-Type" or a "J4" since mentioning its 1933 upgrade. I have referred to it by the chassis number, C0291. That is because I now pose questions for our philosophers to discuss. Is the car a C-Type or a J4? Should the car have been rebuilt as a pointy tailed C-Type, as it was for a few months after its first emergence from the MG factory? Or should it have been rebuilt as a slab-tank J4 as it was for the next sixty years, during which it forged most of its history? I imagine this issue would have been a dilemma for Gavin Sandford-Morgan. These are "historical continuity" issues (thanks Terry Wright for that terminology) for which there might be no definitive answers. Gavin chose the pointy tail option and the car is commonly referred to as a "C-Type". But I do notice that the photo that set me off on relating this tale shows that it still has the 12 inch brakes of the J4.



*C0291 as it is today.
Photo courtesy Triple-M Register*

M-type - 90th Birthday Commemorative Grille and Lapel Badge

These new badges are now ready for production. Robin Page apologises for the badge appearing so late in the anniversary year. The project commenced early enough but the original manufacturer had a factory problem and Robin had to go to another manufacturer and repeat the design and set up process. It will be worth waiting for though.

Prices are \$50 for the grille badge and \$12 for the cap/lapel badge, both plus postage and handling. Email your interest to Robin at: mg0045@gmail.com



BUCKET LIST - the Le Mans Classic 24 hours race

D-type owner and official home MG Car Club photographer Colin Murrell shares his passion for Classic Le Mans...



Le Mans is located on the Sarthe River, part of the French Pays de la Loire Region and has been home to the Le Mans 24 hour race since 1923. There are two race circuits at Le Mans, both based at the same location. There is the well-known 24 hour circuit; "Circuit de la Sarthe" which is mostly made up of public roads which get closed for the 24 hour event. One lap covers about 8.5 miles (13.6km) There is also the lesser known "Bugatti Circuit", which is a much shorter permanent circuit used throughout the year for racing. The first French Grand Prix was based at Le Mans in 1906, using a circuit where one lap was 64 miles (103km). The "Le Mans Start" is famously associated with Le Mans. This is where, in former 24 hour races, the drivers at the start of the race had to run across the race track to their car opposite them, get into the car, start the car and then go racing! Probably not as easy as it sounds either!

Le Mans Classic takes place every two years. 2002 saw the first "Classic" event and according to Wikipedia "was the first time since 1923 that the full 24 hour circuit, part of which is public road the rest of the year, was closed specifically for an event other than the annual running of the 24 heures du Mans with contemporary sportscars and prototypes, thus allowing car owners and gentleman drivers to experience what it must have been to race these cars on this circuit. The event consists of a series of races for cars which have competed at the 24 Hours of Le Mans or for similar cars of the same model. Only cars from prior to 1981 are allowed, with all cars being broken into six different eras. To compete in the races, a driver must own an FIA International Competition licence, meaning the drivers are of a professional level" and entrants come to Le Mans Classic to compete from all over the world. The classes are split as follows: 1923-1939, 1949-1956, 1957-1961, 1962-1965, 1966-1971, and 1972-1981.

To give some idea of the size of this great event, this year saw (according to a recent Press Release) 135,000 spectators and over 8500 cars on display, with 180 car clubs attending (including a club stand from MG Club de France). Over 700 cars competed, with more than 1000 drivers including from 30 nationalities. This event gets bigger with each edition. 2016 had 123,000 spectators for example. For any car fan or motorsport fan, a trip to Le Mans is a must (a bit like Spa in Belgium, or The Ring in Germany). My first visit to Le Mans was back in 2002, and it was great to see the works MGs competing at Le Mans in 2002. My first visit to Classic Le Mans, was back in 2004. It was a great event, and we both preferred it to the 24 hour event as you can recognise and relate to most of the competing cars as well as enjoy the sights, sounds and smells, especially of the pre-war cars competing. I was totally hooked, and have been back to every Classic Le Mans since.

2018 was therefore to be my 8th Le Mans Classic event, and the tried and tested overnight weekend ferry from Portsmouth to Caen, followed by a short scenic drive on the Sunday enjoying the scenery. The route there on Sunday from Caen was very quiet, with no lorries and very scenic down the old N138 etc, avoiding motorways and passing through scenic towns and villages. We soon arrived at my friend's house, just inside the circuit between Mulsanne and Arnage and set up the tent in the large garden. This year we took the ZT V8 MG down there, having previously towed (with an MG ZT) the D-type down to the previous Le Mans Classic. Driving the road sections of the circuit in the D-type was a lot of fun.

As ever, the locals were very friendly. (Some have told me in the past that they still don't understand why the Le Mans racing is so popular with us from the UK) I smiled as the local bakery remembered me from two years ago (and before). A daily visit there for fresh bread and some nice deserts was routine!. Arriving several days before the event gives the opportunity to enjoy what Le Mans and the surrounding area has to offer. There is so much more than just the racing links! The Museum at the circuit entrance is always worth a visit, and we go each time we visit, there are always new exhibits to see and enjoy. Arnage is close by, and it is well worth noting that Soupizet, the old MG Rover Dealer, is still there should anyone need help, and still displays some MG Le Mans memorabilia on the walls from the early 2000s.



A visit to the centre of old Le Mans town is a must, with lovely old buildings and lots of culture, with several eating options there as well. We also found a local wine producer and enjoyed some great red wine from there in the evenings that followed. On one evening, we walked from Indy corner along Porsche Curves, the next thing we knew we were on the start line heading for the Dunlop Bridge. Not planned, but quite an experience.

MG has a long tradition of racing at Le Mans starting in the early 1930s with the M, C, J, PA and PB Midgets, the K3, TD mk2, TC-based George Phillips special, MGA, MGA Twin Cam, and MGB all the way through to the MG Lola EX257 which brought MG back to Le Mans to race again in 2001, and then in the stunning XPower livery for 2002 and beyond. This year we were blessed with MGs competing in four out of the six main grids including two Triple-M PAs in Grid 1.

I already look forward to Le Mans Classic 2020, and for anyone that has not been but is thinking about it; GO in 2020, but be prepared to get hooked on it! The 2020 edition will be the tenth edition of Classic Le Mans, probably the first weekend of July, and no doubt will be very special, and is also a very special MG Anniversary, marking 90 years since the first MG competed at the Le Mans 24 hours.



TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS - Our 1929 M-type, chassis no. M0402

Mark Alsop chronicles the colourful history of his M-type (M0402)...

Imagine my surprise when I opened The Pre-War MG Register's Newsletter of July 2018 and realised that the superb 1932 photo on the cover was our M Type! Inside, Mike Sherrell from Perth had written a brief historical summary of this car with yet another photo I had never seen. So began a flurry of emails with enthusiasts in the West and the story of our car came together.

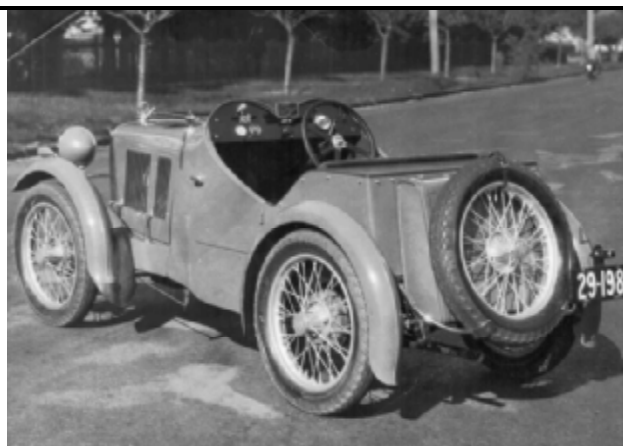
The lovely photo of the car parked precariously across the road (such a common setting for owners to do in bygone days) shows a young Neil Baird in his newly acquired M Type. Neil had bought the car while on honeymoon in England circa 1932. We understand he discarded the original canvas body before importing it in chassis form to Perth where it was the first Midget MG in Western Australia. It may be the first MG imported, however a bullnose MG and a 14/40 were early imports but it is unknown exactly when. Neil had a new body built in Perth by Boltons based on the lines of the then newly released J-type.

Neil Baird was part of the Baird family that was Bairds Ltd, which owned large department stores in the West and were subsequently bought out by Myer in 1969. Neil was born in 1909 dying in 1989. He had a keen interest in motoring becoming one of the founding members of the WA Sporting Car Club. We understand that he drove the MG in competitive events but a program or photo has eluded us so far. He did go on to bigger and more powerful cars.

Boltons (1888 until closing in 1972) had a good reputation as car body builders in the early part of the century, but were better known in WA as coachbuilders of buses, trailers etc.



Neil Baird in M0402 in Perth in the early 1930s
Photo from Mike Sherrell



M0402 in Perth.
Photo from Mike Sherrell

Back to the present and Mike Sherrell was in touch with his friend Bob Dethridge who has an incredible knowledge of MG 'doings' in WA. He had obtained these early photos from Neil Baird's widow which were apparently taken at Mt Lawley. According to Bob the next owner was a Mr McCandlish, an ex-motorbike racer who lived in Townsend Road, Subiaco.

Following him was Ralph Siers who was an ex official starter at Caversham owning the car during the 1950s. I have a grainy photo of him in the car that Vic Longden sent me in 2003. Vic was also a keen motoring enthusiast but unfortunately he died a few years ago. At one stage Ralph was living in Freemantle and involved with marine engines.

Ralph then sold it to Robbie Nesbit of Serpentine who promptly seized its engine. Robbie was planning a trip to Northam, about 60 miles east of Perth and checked with Ralph if there were any precautions he should take. Ralph suggested increasing the oil pressure but it appears that Robbie turned the oil relief valve the wrong way lessening the oil pressure! During Bob's sleuthing he actually spoke to the man who went out and towed Robbie back to town! Apparently the car was yellow at this time. Robbie allegedly moved to Taree in NSW but my enquires recently in that town with a local Nesbit revealed that no Robbie Nesbit was ever known to him.



I can now take over the tale. In 1959 John May bought the car, presumably from Robbie Nesbit, as a potential restoration project but not much happened. In 1967 he moved to Box Hill in Melbourne bringing the car with him. Unfortunately in 1982 there was a severe fire in his garage at home and the M Type was extensively damaged. The car was well known by a number of Triple-M members and I was told that it could possibly be bought. By this stage I had acquired a number of Morris Minor parts but a genuine M Type had eluded me. I went to see the car and met with John but he was very reluctant to part with the car. I persisted over a period of 10 months and he finally agreed to sell it to me in 1996. There really wasn't much that was usable - body badly distorted and heat affected, instruments gone, cam cover melted (sump ok as it had oil in it) etc etc.



Over subsequent years we rebuilt it using a number of Minor parts and simple cycle guards. Naturally we warmed it up - twin carbies, hot cam (hotter than the "Double 12 M Type") extractors, raised compression and Phoenix crank etc. We kept the three speed gearbox (with Derrington remote control) but with three new good ratios. It's so good I wouldn't swap it for a 4 speed! It was such a shame that the body couldn't be reused - I consulted a number of restorers specialising in bodywork but the heated treated metal was unworkable. Now knowing its history it probably deserved a replica of the original.....

However with the enthusiast help of Peter Fleming we built a replica of the original fabric body – actually two, the other is on John Fincher's car. We followed exactly the boat tail style using the original technique of timber framing (we had some framing members from an original car) with thin plywood and vinyl over a foam underlay. Peter was (and still is!) a fountainhead of knowledge of all things M-Type and was able to provide all sorts of information and practical assistance with the many little details.

The car was finally registered in 2000 after five years of restoration – not bad after juggling a busy consulting practice and raising a family! However there was disaster around the corner. The next two years saw a cracked block, a failed stitching repair, yet another block and then a gudgeon pin damaging a bore necessitating a sleeve!

Since then it has been indestructible, providing enormous fun in competitive and touring events, and always managing to leave a smile on your face! Our two children have grown up with it and also enjoy the experience, although one has been known to remark that you need a stiff drink and a Panadol after a long "blast"!

Ownership since 1932:

Neil Baird	1932
Mr McCandlish	
Ralph Siers	
Robbie Nesbit	
John May	1959
Mark Alsop	1996 to present



Mark with M0402. No stiff drink and Panadol needed this time...
Photo from Mark Alsop



Mark's daughter Holly and her husband Jonathan participating in the Florence Thomson Rally
Photo from Mark Alsop

Our daughter Holly and her husband Jonathan recently participated in the Florence Thomson Rally which took part west of Ballarat. They may have needed a stiff drink and a Panadol. The rally was promoted by the RACV for only female drivers of classic and historic cars. Holly drove the M-type which performed faultlessly all day. Florence Thomson was the only female entrant in the 1905 "Dunlop Reliability Motor Contest" from Sydney to Melbourne which the RACV considers worth celebrating. It is an annual event and extremely well organised with good roads and many points of interest.

My thanks to the following who assisted with compiling this history: Malcolm Robertson – Pre-War MG Register Newsletter editor, Michael Sherrell, Robert Dethridge, the late Vic Longden, John Lambie (source of the two original 1932 photos), Terry Walker (author "Around the Houses"), Terry Julien.

TOURING - the Jolly to Collingrove and Kangaroo Island

Ed Taylor tells the tale of the hardy Victorians' trip to South Australian trip...

For a few years now, a handful of hardy Pre-War MGs, their drivers and passengers have book-ended a scenic tour of South Australia with the Bay to Birdwood rally and the Vintage Collingrove weekend and hill climb. This year the team comprised Jennie and Graeme Jackson with the TB, George (without Marguerite for the trip over only) Morgan with the F1, Jim Thomson Brescia Bugatti "Butterfly", Tony Basham, "organiser par-excellence" from Cairns with the pea green PA and yours truly driving the J3. Unfortunately, our dear friend Peter Davey was directed to a hospital bed rather than the Bugatti's passenger seat at the last moment but was with us in thoughts all of the way.

The tourists departing Melbourne, Gippsland, and the Gold fields finally all met for a late lunch at the highly recommended Dunkeld bakery on the Friday. This was convenient as we had been invited to visit James Earl's garage on the way to inspect the progress of the refurbishment of his L type. It was hard to keep George's fingers off all of the 6 cylinder goodies scattered about the garage, but James managed with a watchful eye until we all departed for our overnight destination at Frances just over the SA boarder.

So, this started our adventure. Fortunately, our chief organiser had arrived and was at the start line for the B to B early. Bay to Birdwood on the Sunday was declared by all team members to be our last. Long gone are the fun closed roads up through the Adelaide hills, now replaced by hours of long grind in low gear and with engine temperatures to the max. Negotiating numerous breakdowns in unsafe locations is most definitely not fun. In contrast, our mid-week tour of Kangaroo Island was superb, great roads (mostly) good accommodation in two historic stone built dwellings, and generally kind weather. Fortunately, no kangaroos were hit by low flying pre-war machines.

The lure of the Barossa then beckoned, and we all arrived safely on the Friday afternoon, cars washed and checked then off to the pub to catch up with a very noisy bunch which included all of the other Victorians (plus some locals!). Between the VSCC and MGCC of Vic, we must have provided 50% of the social/competition entry. The locals, as usual, put on a well run and enjoyable event. The Saturday run was not long, but as usual it is always enjoyable driving around the back roads of the Barossa. Lunch and plenty of tyre kicking followed. The "formal" dinner was nearly as rowdy. A continuous video was running of a past event where there was what looked like the biggest Victorian/Pre-War MG contingent ever.



This year the entries were down (about 28 drivers in total) and the spectator crowd was very small. Such a pity for a lovely spring day in the Barossa. From our team, competing were George in the F1, Jim in Butterfly, and Ed in the J3. Despite fuel problems and only one run, Jim and the Bugatti beat us all! As for the other MGs, Doug Keith sent the TC up the hill in fine style and Arthur Ruediger in the ND and Lindsay Hick in the ex-Alistair Clark P special, both from SA, completed the Pre-War MG round up. Unfortunately, Arthur's engine suffered a massive oil loss (with bushfire like clouds of white smoke ensuing) when the front housing became loose and broke an oil line. The P type went and sounded terrific. Alistair will be pleased.

Jim and I held up the team's end at the closing dinner which was well attended and very friendly. As in the past, a very successful and well-run event. A must for anyone who likes driving their MG (uphill) in a spirited fashion.

Our group was saddened to find on our return to Melbourne that our missing mate, Peter Davey, who we thought was only in hospital for some minor repairs, was seriously ill with cancer and not long afterwards succumbed at the youthful age of 67. We will miss his entertaining company and carefree approach to life, and we offer our condolences to his family and friends.

Don Walker adds...



I had a surprise visit at Goolwa Beach from Tony Basham in his PA. After a look at my SA Tickford progress we set off to see Peter Shipperside's WA Tickford, a few streets way. Tony was gracious enough to let me drive...

OK, I started in 3rd, I forgot the reverse gate on these gearboxes. And yes, I crunched the first changes until I got the 'feeling'. We finished off with Tony giving it a squirt down the Victor Harbor Rd. I was surprised how well it went and how tight it felt. Thanks Tony!

Editor: Don's comments come from our Facebook page. If you haven't joined yet, you are missing a steady diet of interesting comments and fascinating contemporary and period photos. Check it out and ask to join: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1096291360515664/>



*The four Pre-War MGs (F1, J3, PA, TB) and one Bugatti on Kangaroo Island, September 2018.
Photo from Ed Taylor*



*On his way to Birdwood, Ed Taylor crawls through the Adelaide Hills in his J3 with his own personal fire engine for company and back up...
Photo from Paul Simmonds (vk5pas)*

Pictorial Feature



*Brian Oxley rushes in his F1 (F0428) to join fellow enthusiasts on the shores of Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin for their regular Tuesday lunch...
Photo from Scott Watson*



*Allan and Jeanne Herring wired for sound and conversation in their NA (NA0445) on the 26th annual MG Clubs of Perth Safety Fast! Run in October 2018.
Photo from Ian Campbell*



*Peter Cundy's N-type, Arthur Ruediger's KN and Bob Bazzica's K1 at the South Australian MG Car Club's concours, September 2018.
Photo from John Phillips*



*Col Schiller has added the ex-Alf Najar TB Special (TB0342) to his growing collection of interesting MG racing specials. Current coachwork was designed and fitted when Paul Samuels owned the car during the 1950s.
Photo from Col Schiller*



Graeme Jackson TB0508
Photo from Robin Page



Walter Magilton NA0281
Photo from Robin Page



Tim Jackson PA0595 - fastest pre-war MG
Photo from Robin Page



Cold, damp and wet - the paddock at Rob Roy with the MGs in their favourite conditions and Graeme Jackson supporting the cause with his rainbow umbrella
Photo from John Hurst

Pictorial Feature



*MGs at Prescott for the annual Pre-War Hillclimb (see our letters pages)
Photo from Ted Hack*



*David Godwin's TA (TA1553) at Mt Hotham with Murray Arundell's TC and two other MGs in bleak conditions on their boys own adventure (see page 24)
Photo from Dave Godwin*

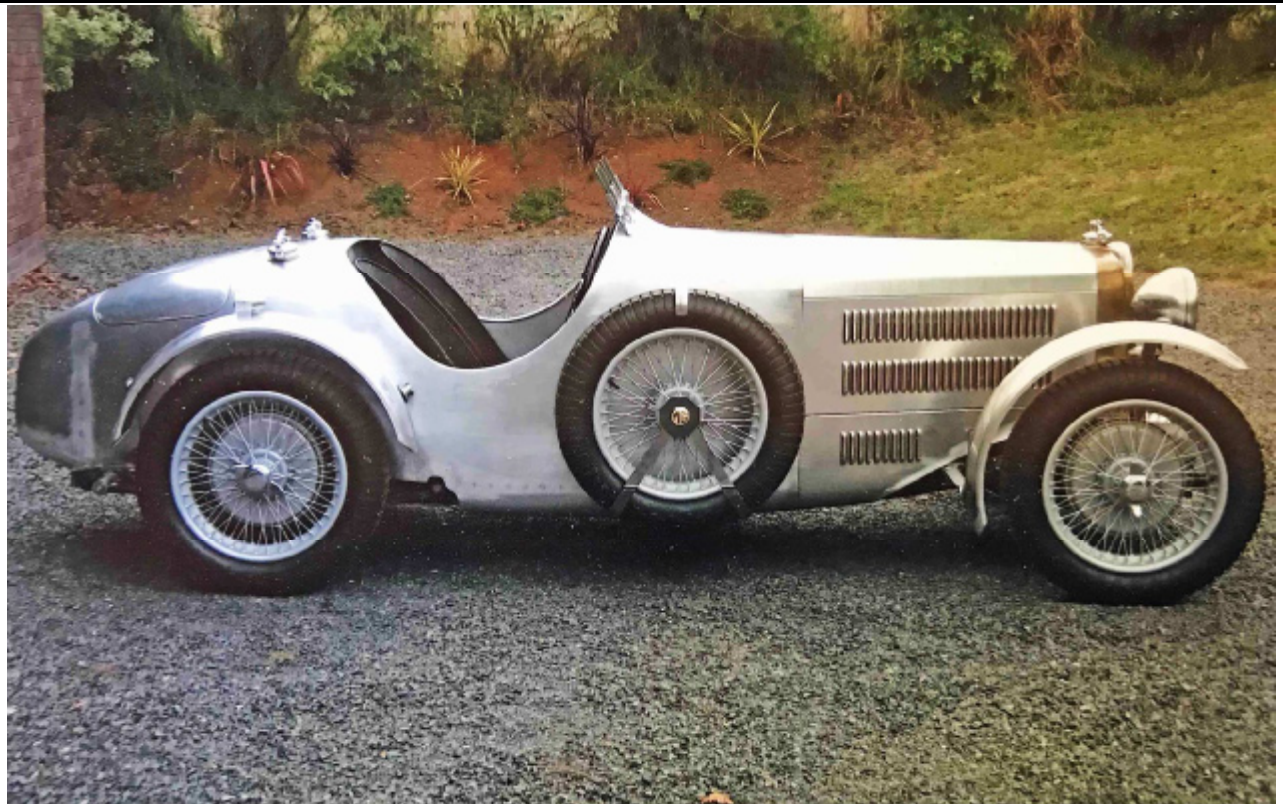


The participants at the Cootamundra Sprints in July 2018: Rob Phillips with John Lackey's TA, Tim Shellshear (F1), Allan Wettenhall in the ex-John Lawson-L type, Ross Kelly (NA), Michael Carr (K1), and Todd Barker (SA). Photo from Tm Shellshear



A newly-discovered photo of J4417 in its Bolwell number 2 form in the 1950s. This car is now restored to factory MG specifications and has recently been bought by Ian Head (see our letters pages). Photo from Graeme Jackson

Pictorial Feature



*Frank Langridge's NB Special before painting
Photo from Frank Langridge*



*The 1935 PA of Pierre Julien and Jacques Egurguy at Le Mans Classic earlier this year
Photo from Colin Murrell*

Conversazione - A Chat with Frank Langridge



In a departure from their usual reports from New Zealand's North Island, Desna and Denis Jury enjoy a day with one of New Zealand's icons of the MG movement, Pre-War Frankie, Frank Langridge...

In this bulletin we are reporting on a recent visit to Frank and Coral Langridge's park like country estate in Pukekohe. Below are some of the notes from our talk to Frank about his magnificent collection of pre-war MGs which are housed in an equally magnificent workshop. We spent the day with Frank and Coral, and below is just the essence of the talk - you can read more on the NZ Triple-M web site (www.mgtriple-m.nz).

Frank has owned many vehicles, and he has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the marques and everything about them, design, engineering, manufacture, and then their owners and the various quirks of vehicle history. He has tracked down vehicles and components, his remarkable collection of pre-war driving and pillar lights, together with various parts he has crafted superbly, often looking more like something destined for a high-end a swiss watch. Additionally, Frank has been active in all the car communities he has been associated with; MG, Alvis and Riley.

In Frank's workshop are three beautiful vehicles: a TB, an SA and an NB special - each unique and notable in its own way. The TB is an outstanding restoration which won the 37th Master's Class at the Ellerslie Concours d'Elegance in 2007. Frank was very proud when the judges said it was the best pre-war restoration they had ever seen.

Frank found the TB in pieces under a house in Mangere in 1976. The chassis was hanging from the wall on four nails and the engine was half buried in the earth of the basement floor and the body was outside. It took him until 2005 to completely rebuild it. He made a complete new body with help from the late Max Mumby, who wheeled shape to the door panels while Frank did the hammering and welding. He repaired the chassis at night school and made new cross members, power rivetted wrought iron rivets and with the assistance of an ex fitter and turner made the rivets, snaps and dollies "it was very difficult, heating the rivet with a gas torch, ram with a hydraulic rammer and snap on the other side". Coral would help Frank out on occasion, but she said that Frank was a very demanding supervisor and she wasn't good enough!



Frank loves the craftsmanship of making with metal and wood from scratch and he especially enjoys working with the beautiful timbers like the English ash he has acquired for the body building. Doing the handwork fascinates him and he says he feels tickled in making something that no-one else would attempt to do - or perhaps couldn't do. This is certainly evident from the exquisite detail on the TB (and the NB Special), including making the TB grill from scratch (with the help of a friend). As testimony to his patience and fortitude he also did this for the NB but his friend said "never again" so he had to go it alone that time.

We all have workshop stories that remain 'highly classified' for all time, but Frank is different. Frank's stories are hard to

beat, and what's more, he shares them! He reduced us to tears of laughter as he regaled us with the story of how he had managed to reduce a favourite jersey with his buffing wheel to a bundle of wool still attached to the remaining neck and shoulder, looking like the Incredible Hulk in the words of his daughter, and wondering whether Coral would be able to rebuild it. That vicious buffing wheel also attacked one of his prized NB Special handcrafted C-Type style stone guards, leaving it in a knot which took Frank three days to untangle and rebuild.

Frank has been dreaming about cars, drawing and restoring, and rebuilding them all his life. As a school boy he would spend his time in biology drawing up pages and pages of car designs and creations, getting himself into a lot of hot water when his lab book didn't look particularly biological - his teacher Mr Bean refused to teach him, and he had to stand outside the classroom. He designed the trolley that won the New Zealand trolley Derby in 1955 - the NZ Championship. His very first car was an Austin 7 which he bought before he even had a driver's licence, and replaced the body on in it (for a week's salary; £5). Those were the days when you could go to a local car wrecker and acquire the body of your choice. He continued drawing and stylizing vehicles and when he was in advertising as a junior artist he would spend his lunchtimes drawing new car designs.

It was his drawing that led him to the SA, as a friend who lived in the South Island wanted to put new bodywork on his SA and change it into a tourer asked Frank to check out a tourer in Auckland for him... "You used to be an artist Frank, would you please draw up the SA and take all the dimensions." When Frank went to see the car and do the drawings the owner said he was hoping to sell the car... perhaps to Frank's brother... but Frank said "don't sell it to him! Sell it to me".



The SA tourer is rare indeed, with its Charlesworth body and cut-away door design. Only a few survive in this configuration. Frank's car is in totally original condition, with a beautiful patina and it has never been touched, true Wabi Sabi (a Japanese view of the world that celebrates the beauty of originality and imperfection). Frank says it has never been restored and everyone he talks to about it admires its unique originality and urges him not to touch it. Frank and Coral have used it as a family vehicle and have toured the South Island in it at least four times. His daughter says she grew up being packed into the back of old cars.



When Frank found the NB and the body was "completely knackered". He says he felt OK with building a special – that the state of the vehicle gave him the license to pursue his dream "What I always wanted was to design and build my own design ... I drew the car up full size to create the design... I was focussed on the creation of the car's lines and the fluidity of the movement. I thought now, if I was drawing this at the time – if money wasn't an issue what would you design?" And he is satisfied that he has come close to that. In his designing, Frank noted that the factory bodies were "quite austere" and some of the lines looked "abrupt and crude" and the bodies did not "roll around the chassis rails". And he also noted that he had always liked a pointed tail and he spent a lot of time crafting the shape for the NB. Frank's NB truly reflects his designer's eye and

aesthetic judgement. He loves the pre-war cars that were "really, essentially bespoke – where the designers shrouded the mechanicals with coachwork that flowed and where hand built craftsmanship" was the order of the day.

On being an individual: "... if you weren't an individual what would you be?" Frank Langridge, October 2018

IMPORTS - Lanes Motors and P&R Williams

Rob Dunsterville summarises some of his research into MGs imported into Australia pre-war...

It is important to understand that while these figures are taken from authentic records that have survived over many decades, their accuracy is still only as good as the data originally collected and should not be taken as exact.

The largest importers were Lanes Motors in Melbourne and P & R Williams in Sydney. The former was MG Distributor for Victoria and the latter for New South Wales. It is known that other importers and agents imported pre-war MGs into Australia through ports in other States, but details are scarce. The MG Factory records show a larger number of overhead camshaft Midgets, Magnas and Magenttes (MMM cars) were exported to Australia (probably around 111) than the combined totals shown below for Lanes and P&Rs.

Lanes imported 26 Triple-M cars before P&R was appointed probably in 1935 and effective from January 1936:

Earlier Imports (Lanes only)		Later Imports (Lanes and P&R Williams)		
Type	No	Type	Lanes	P&R
M	2	P	35	1
J	9	NA	12	1
Q	1	SA	10	10
F	2	VA	-	9
L	9	WA	-	5
K	3	TA	12	52
Sub-total	26	TB	6	16
		Sub-total	75	94
		Earlier Imports	26	
		Overall Total	101	94

So, while the overall numbers of pre-war cars imported were much the same, more overhead cam models (Triple-Ms) were imported by Lanes but more SVWs and T-Types were imported by P&R. The 68 TAs and TBs imported by P&R

pre-war paved the way for the vast number of TCs, TDs, Y-types and TFs it imported in the forties and fifties. Lanes imported 73 Triple-M cars and P&R imported 2 totalling 75 which when measured against the Factory records indicates that 36 Triple-M cars were imported by other agents or privately.

It is important to understand that while these figures are taken from authentic records that have survived over many decades their accuracy is still only as good as the data originally collected and should not be taken as exact.

Your Letters

Simon Johnston writes from England...

I was pleased to see Brian Oxley's review of the 2017 Triple-M Register Yearbook in the Pre-War MG Newsletter. It's nice to see that our efforts are appreciated. Brian is, of course, perfectly entitled to have his own views on the layout and style of the front cover but if I agreed with him then we'd both be wrong! I feel I must respond, however, to his implied criticism of the weight given to the MG Car Club on the cover. The Triple-M Register is part of the MG Car Club and without the Club, there'd be no Register. Furthermore, the MG Car Club was at the heart of MG's activities during the golden Triple-M period in the 1930s and the historic links to the factory are a very important part of what we might call the DNA of both the Club and the Register.



So it was a very conscious decision on my part as editor, and one taken with the full support and encouragement of the Triple-M Register Committee, to emphasise the fact that the Register is not a stand alone institution, which many people seem to think, but an integral part of the MG Car Club. This was in part because in recent years it has become increasingly common to hear people to say "I'm not a member of the MG Car Club, but I'm a member of the Triple-M Register". Not possible, I'm afraid, as membership of the Register is limited to members of the MG Car Club. Inclusion of a car on the Register listing does not in itself make its owner a member of the Register. Hence the need, in our view, to make it clear that the Register is part of the MG Car Club and the Yearbook is, in effect, an MG Car Club publication.

Our Previous Mystery Pre-War MG Identified

Rob Dunsterville writes from Newcastle...

With reference to Bob Somerville's letter in the last Newsletter, I have just looked through Barry Lake's "Spotlight on MGs Downunder" book and on page 36 is a picture of John Sherwood in his J2. The number plate is not in the photo but the 'canvas' door is a 100% give-away!. The windscreen is laid down on the bonnet. It is described as probably a publicity shot for Shell as the tank is being filled at a service station. He has a helmet on. The "MG" on his overalls is identical. I am no expert on what JS looked like but in your photo the right hand man has the bottoms of his trousers tied up to prevent the cuffs getting caught up in the pedals indicating he is the driver (JS) and the other man his (riding?) mechanic.



Also on page 36 is a photo of JS doing a road test in a J2 in Dec '33. Although stripped down, the louvres on the bonnet are different and the apparent colour tone in the B/W photo. So I suspect this is another J2. Maybe one that's arrived CKD and fitted with just the bonnet and bonnet sides and a seat of course!

A third photo on the page shows JS in his J2 lined up with Ron Mackeller in his L-Type. The J2 sports a horn and badge similar to those in Stuart Schofield's photo if you look closely! Rego number is too indistinct to read.

Now the question is where was your photo taken as there are a number of options to review and I'll leave the choice to others more knowledgeable about competition venues.

Tony Sloan writes from Melbourne...

The best laid plans of mice and men... Way back in Newsletter 1 this year I advertised my PA for sale. That might have been a little premature! During a close look-over and tidy up I discovered that the gearbox cross-tube bushes were almost liquid. Original rubber and 50 years of oil don't mix. So...replace them with readily available nylon bushes. Easy said, but it involves gearbox out which also means floors, seats, tailshaft out. The upshot is the gearbox went back in mid-October followed by all of the above. My apologies to those who expressed interest way back in March but a combination of lack of enthusiasm and a cold Melbourne winter severely slowed progress. The car (and also the trailer) are still on the market and I have a first "right of refusal" on PA1299 - hopefully it will find a good home. Tony Sloan aj.sloan@bigpond.com 0400 288 841.



STOP PRESS: Tony reports that the P-type has now been sold and is on its way to Tasmania!

Bill Atherton writes from Melbourne...

PA1278 is finally on its wheels with engine and gearbox installed. It should be ready for the Winton Historics next May. Readers will remember the recent mystery photo of me at Mallala in 1969 in the ex-Simon Ramsay F-type wearing the original body from the Les Murphy Q Type (QA0256). That original MG factory body for QA0256 will now be going onto this PA1278 and will be a "track racing midget" sporting a magneto and supercharger. It has been a 50 year dream and, thanks to Greg Smith, the dream is starting to become a reality!





Engine and gearbox from PA1278...
Photo from Bill Atherton



...installed in the chassis and awaiting the Q body
Photo from Bill Atherton

The background to PA 1278 as supplied by the Triple-M Register is that it was first purchased on the 6th December 1934 by Mr R.E. Hagenbach of Edgbaston in England. It was a 4-seater and I purchased it as a rolling chassis from Graeme Steinfort around 1981. Graeme said that I either sell the Q 0256 factory body to him or I purchase PA1278's rolling chassis. Naturally I chose PA1278. The aim was to build a 1934 track racing Midget.

After an encouraging start with getting the P type chassis lengthened to take the Q body (the Q type's wheel base is nearly 7 inches longer) work got stalled due to the restoration of my other love, Brian Morrell's Elfin Streamliner that won the 1501-2000 class in the 1962 Australian Tourist Trophy. Having got her fully operational (right), now we are full on getting the P/Q project done. Our resident cammy MG expert, Greg Smith, has been brilliant in bringing it back to life. The aim



is not so much to have a Q-type replica, but more to show an operational Brooklands track racer of 1934 showing the MG P type OHC supercharged engine in a P type chassis lengthened to take a very rare original MG factory aluminium body originally made for QA0256, known here as the Les Murphy Q Type. The factory-made body will be left in her original unpainted state to show off all of her battle scars. This is the same body that was on QA0256 when Humphries earned his 120 MPH car badge at Brooklands in 1938 before being shipped to Australia.

Les and Rod Murphy had decided to have a new body made for the Q some fifty years ago. I knew them both well, my Dad had been Les's riding mechanic at Phillip Island LCCA races in 1938. I asked Les "what are you going to do with the old body" when I saw it lying abandoned at the back of the garage at Esquire Motors in Elsternwick. Les said that they would probably send it to the tip. I told him that you can't do that and asked if I could buy it! Les said only if your father paid for it! The price was \$25 and I gave him my cheque and took it home and put it on my wardrobe in my bedroom. We put it onto F0546 and raced it at Mallala Easter meeting in 1969 and now it will adorn PA1278.

I have painted the chassis white as a memento to Les Murphy as all of his racing P-types were white, including the Q-type when he bought it from Stan Jones per Otto Stone. After his crash at Bathurst in the mid-50s they painted it maroon. I have taken the old paint off the body but left a patch to show the original factory Hawthorn Green, Peter Vennermark's blue, Les Murphy's white and then maroon.

So now work is in progress to complete the engine and install it into the chassis with the blower and transmission. Hopefully we will have it operational by next Spring, 2019.

Ian Head writes from Melbourne...

I'm enjoying ownership of the ex-Don Smyth J2 (J4417) immensely. It is a superb restoration by Nick Langford. Enclosed are a few photos. Don was obviously very dedicated to oversee such a thorough restoration. I was amazed to hear from Graeme Jackson that the car has had such an interesting history, first as a Britannia Motors car in the 1930s and then as Bolwell number 2 in the 1950s. I put great store on the provenance of my cars (as I know we all do) and what Graeme (and Tony Sloan) has told me will get me started on compiling its full history. The J2 makes me smile every time I look at it or drive it and since talking to Graeme at Winton in May I'm pushing it harder, but not too hard yet. Tony Sloan suggested a reunion of all the Britannia cars which would be amazing. J4417 keeps company with a 1963 E type (Glenn Olsen's first restoration before he set up business), a 1991 Lotus Esprit, and a 1958 XK150S (held long term on behalf of a friend who is short on storage space).



Ian Head's newly purchased J4417...
Photo from Ian Head



J4417 started life in the Britannia Motors team
Photo from Ian Head

Tim Shellshear writes from Sydney...

An interesting follow up on the history of F1254 in the last newsletter. History sure is an unreliable thing! Since 1945, every Vic Roads document I have obtained under the Fol laws has referred to the original engine, 1512 AF, being given a new police engine number in 1945. A note in the police files in 1945 is: "Apparently the previous owner of this car had to have the engine repaired and it was welded over the engine number. On inspecting this vehicle I found that only the 'AF' was visible so I caused Departmental Engine No V.45226.P to be stamped on the block. Owner's Certificate Amended. Stamped on right side rear across (?) pipe." Thereafter the Vic Roads registration files follows this new police number on what was natural to assume was the original engine which presumably remained in the original chassis F1254. As F1254 was broken up and its various components spread in different directions in 1962 and my car now fitted with an NB motor, the location of the original engine with the police number was a matter of only passing interest. I was pretty surprised therefore, after the publication of the car's history in the last newsletter, to receive an email from George Eagle of the Triple-M Register in the UK, to advise me that an Australian owner had an F Type engine with apparently 1512 AF stamped on it.

I was then put in touch with Ron Taylor who provided me with a photo of a very nice engine block with clear factory stamping 1512AF. Ron has inspected the block in detail and there is no sign of welding repairs or police number. George Eagle is of the view that these letters and numbers are an original factory stamping. Ron acquired this engine from Victoria some years ago and being the best of three he had has fully restored it to fit into his F2 nearing completion. So, no chance of it being reunited with other parts of F1254. But what to make of this strange turn? The only plausible reason I can think of is that the engine was swapped in 1945 by taking the good one out, installing a damaged one with possibly a deliberately welded over number and then persuading the police it was still the same block. Possibly the owner was kept in the dark too. Not really the response I was looking for from the published history, but a bit more quirky history nevertheless. It would be very interesting to know if anyone else has an F type block with those police numbers on them.



Ted Hack writes from England...

Pre-War Prescott 2018

Prescott Speed Hill Climb in Gloucestershire here in the UK, is owned by The Bugatti Owners Club and is the venue for various hill climb championships covering all eras of cars throughout the year. However, two meetings allow anyone to use their own car and make untimed runs up the hill. One is in May and is for 'Classic' cars the other is in July and is for pre-war cars. The pre-war event is organised by Ian Grace, an Englishman residing in Seattle, USA, under the auspices of The Vintage Minor Register which looks after the early Morris Minors.

This year's meeting was in fact the tenth and was as popular as ever made even better by the good weather. There were approximately 200 entries of which a good third were MGs supported by Morris, of course, and Austins, Wolseleys, Rileys and various other marques including a couple of Bentleys and even some Veteran makes. The atmosphere is that of an English garden party with first class facilities on site together with The Bugatti Trust Museum immediately next door which was open for the day. Camping is allowed on site and many make a weekend end of it as on Sunday there is a light hearted navigational run round the Cotswolds which finishes at a suitable hostelry for lunch!



Reports from Correspondents

Graeme Jackson reports from Victoria...



Rob Roy Historic Hill Climb 19th August 2018 - This column could be headed "Mad Marsupial Mangles MG Midget Mudguard", but I'm sure our editor won't let me. However, as Neil Cooke was serenely proceeding towards Rob Roy Hill Climb, enjoying the powerful purr of the MG PB motor and the sweet song of the differential, in an entirely unprovoked fashion, a deranged kangaroo sprang from the roadside undergrowth and thumped the rear mudguard of the gorgeous red machine. Dislodged from the wheel arch, the dented guard looked quite wallaby. The pouched fender bender, uninjured by the impact, was later found fatally strangled by a normally placid Neil. A spokesperson from CAMS' *Committee Against Marauding Skippies*, said "Is this what Kangaroo Ground has become? This is a left (rear) wing plot. I am afraid to go out at night to a restaurant"

Luckily with the mudguard shoved back into place, the PB passed the scrutineers sympathetic inspection, so Neil was able to compete against the four other pre-war MG entries for the day's honours, in the wet chilly conditions. The torrential rain mixed with dumps of hail made for a slippery track, great for wheel spin off the start line, but causing the cars to drift, particularly on the off camber curve to the finish. As a consequence Ed Taylor J3, Neil Cooke PB, Walter Magilton NA, Graeme Jackson TB, were all just pipped for the most rapid ascent by Tim Jackson driving the

red Aspinall-bodied PA, a car which had competed against the Cooke PB at Rob Roy in 1937.

Despite the inclement weather, which caused the non-attendance of perhaps one third of entrants and substantially thinned the spectator crowd, we hardy octagonalists had a most enjoyable day sloshing about in the wintry conditions. Graeme Steinfort pedalling his Austin Seven, his hood was erect but little else, missed the stimulating experience of the topless MG punters, of icy water dribbling off the crash helmet down their necks, to traverse the length of the spine. The trickle-down effect can chill your nether regions and rot your jocks. The thunder from a massive cumulus cloud saw us head for the shelter of the Octunda for a chat. Famous photographer and MG M and J owner, Robin Page, dried his camera, and John Hurst, who had travelled from Sydney, told us about how well his MG F type runs following the engine rebuild. We were informed by Bill Atherton that his P1278 racer with the original body saved from the Murphy Q0256, continues to advance as he collects scattered parts, and likewise, Steve Denner is making worthwhile progress on his rebuild of P1223. Cooking scrumptious salmonella sausages and synthetic burgers for the peckish throng, Jennie Jackson and Wayne Rushton assisted VSCC's Kerry and John Lakeland; grillers in the mist.

The smooth running of Rob Roy Historic Hill Climb 2018 by the VSCC members and by the sizable, experienced, good looking team from MGCC, treated drivers and spectators to the pleasing spectacle of wonderful old motor cars in action, and to the delight of gossiping with old friends with a mouth-full of sausage. And Rob Roy is not in drought. Our thanks to all those people involved, only Neil Cooke will rue the roo.

Robin Page's stunning photos of MGs in action are presented in our colour centrefold (see pages 14 and 15).

Murray Arundell reports from Queensland...



South East Queensland is a hive of PreWar MG activity at the moment. First up is the exciting news of yet another Pre War MG joining the Queensland Fleet. Col Schiller has acquired the Alf Najar TB Special. Looking forward very much to seeing it in action soon. Col advises that he was at the Leyburn sprints in August with the Jack Nind TB (ex Dick Willis) and his J2 (ex John Payne) whilst Ross Kelly took his NB special and Max Stephenson used his 1933 Aston Martin. Apparently Ross took the honours beating Col by 3 hundredths of a second with Max a close third. The photo below shows the TB and the J2 at Leyburn. John Crighton advises that there's been small progress with the M Type while Tony Slattery has been beavering away on Ellen Wilson's SA tidying up a few issues which have been making their presence felt. Neil Anderson

has had the lads busy on F1048. John acquired this car approximately twelve months ago and since then it's been undergoing a complete body off rebuild. Ian advises that body (tub) was in a poor state and has undergone major frame attention. Additionally, a new bonnet plus front and rear wings have been sourced from the UK. Ian plans to have the car ready for the 2019 Pre War MG Register National Meeting. From the photos he looking like he's well on track. Up on the northern end of the Sunshine Coast Tony Slattery advises that his M-Type has temporarily moved into a new Motor Museum at Coolum while Tony is busy on other projects. One of these is Ellen Wilson's SA which is undergoing a forward of the dashboard refresh and rectification of issues concerning brakes, engine, cooling system, front suspension, steering and electrical systems (instruments included). Tony's plan is to hand it back to Ellen in time for this coming Christmas. Meanwhile Frank Hiscock now has his TA engine running and is aiming for full completion before the beginning of 2019. Bill Fuller is charging ahead with his TB restoration which he is planning to finish in time to have the car at Yamba 2019. Brian Goodall is also moving along with restoration of his 12/12 M-Type restoration.



Finally, It seems that Peter Kerr's M-Type has broken cover and made an appearance at a display at the Maroochydore Homemaker Centre. Reports are that it's looking good and attracting plenty of attention.

Dave Godwin adds...



As is often the case, the journey to and from an MG event can be more eventful, exciting and enjoyable than the event itself. This was certainly the case on the way to and returning from the TYme event in Canberra during October 2018. Not that the TYme event wasn't enjoyable! It was! It's just that the trip consisted of ten days of magical driving along B and C roads in all weather conditions with MG friends with similar interests. Do I need to say more? The short story! Before heading to the UK with my MGA race car, Birdcage A, for a race season, early April 2018, I performed a major service on my 1937 TA and parked it facing the garage door, ready for a quick getaway on my return. The intention was to leave for Canberra with Murray Arundell and his group one hour after arriving home - jet lag and all! Six months later, my return flight was delayed two hours. This meant that Dan Casey and I were two hours behind the forward group already!

They had taken the New England Highway route to Glencoe, NSW and by the time night fell, Dan and I had reached Tenterfield, which now put us one and a half hours behind.

At 5am next morning, Dan and I were up and chasing. We met the forward group for breakfast at Uralla and the six MGs headed further down the New England highway to Tamworth, before taking bumpy and pot-holed back roads, with beautiful vistas due to the recent rains, to Gulgong, Cowra and finally, Canberra, mostly in full sunshine. Of concern was the number of dead wombats (marked with a red "X" on their stomachs) along the inland roads! Apparently, this is done once they have been checked that any babies they may have been carrying have been assessed! Very sad!

Other than suffering fuel vaporisation driving up Cunningham's Gap (I had removed the carburettor heat shield, thinking it wasn't necessary!), the TA was simply humming along at 55mph to 60mph; eating up the miles... Having caught up

with old friends and making new ones at the TYme weekend and having visited the War Museum one more time - which is never enough - the Queensland-owned TA, two TCs and two MGAs headed south towards the Victorian Alps, this time in inclement weather. Again, the back roads were bumpy and, at one stage, I smiled to myself wondering what an observer might think seeing Murray and Robbie bounce out of their seats over a particularly big bump, only to see me do the same a few seconds later! Our route southwards took us to Cooma, Jindabyne and Mt Hotham/Dinner Plains, through the Alpine and Kosciusko National Parks, before continuing south to Orbost through the Snowy River National Park, which is only a stones-throw from Bass straight and Tasmania! The roads remained bumpy but also became steep and winding, which challenged the Allen Lim Joon-built MPJG motor more than ever before. Allan drove 4500 miles during his 39 year custodianship and I have added 9000 miles in two years, so, in effect, the motor is only just run-in! Being a newbie to MG TAs, I was advised to keep the revs below 4000rpm - preferably around 3500rpm - in an attempt to avoid cracking the head internally, which in effect, renders them scrap! Needless to say, I had to select second gear a good few times and third gear down the steeper and more challenging sections while working within these self-imposed rev limits. The steep climb up to Mt Hotham in rain and mist was scary, to say the least, as visibility reduced to around 30m towards the top. There were still pockets of snow on the ground and the breeze was quite chilly, but, as we were all well attired in preparation for this trip, the hoods of the T-Types stayed down! Needless to say we enjoyed the log fire in our chalet after a meal at the only open bar/restaurant on the mountain! The Southern Alps is a beautiful part of Victoria. It is hilly with lush farm lands and tree-topped mountains and appears very profitable for the farming community, judging by the full dams and large number of sheep and Angus cows per acre! Green grass, fat sheep and fat cows are hopefully signs of good times.

On reaching Orbost, our southern-most point, we headed back inland towards Bega through the Coopracambra National Park, Tilba Tilba and Kiama, before sprinting for home over two days via The Putty Road, Tamworth and Grafton. Sometimes in rain; sometimes in overcast weather; seldom did the sun make an appearance! However, the hoods stayed down! Trips like these tend to deepen existing friendships and are opportunities to make new ones, and this trip was no exception. Murray's choice of pub accommodation was educational and entertaining and the success of "most" MGs made it all worth while. Most of us had a few maintenance issues to resolve along the way:



One of the TCs snapped its drive shaft, unfortunately, and had to be shipped home. But, on the plus side, we met Peter, a lovely MG owner, at morning tea in Bright who we later tracked down and he offered to store the TC until the RACQ arrived to take it home. Apparently, there is no truth to the rumour that the TC owner was trying too hard to keep up with the TA! The TA and the other TC's prop shaft bolts came loose, which is weird, but that is what happened! This was an easy fix once we had found a hoist! One of the MGA's ignition switch failed, but that was no bother for the mechanic on the trip - it was able to be started in the engine bay. On trips like these, it's the fun you have along the way that brings you back again: the people you meet, the hotels, coffee shops and pubs you find to have breakfast, lunch and dinner, and having the opportunity of touring this wonderful country of ours.

Would I do it again? Yes, I certainly would, but I'm not sure that I would leave the day that I return from overseas and have to put up with jetlag all over again! Also there is talk of us going north next time, which is an area I have not traversed in my TA before, so that would be interesting. However, as with most long trips in classic MGs, I have a long list of "things to do." that need attention before such a major trip is undertaken again. Is this not normal for our old cars?

Brian Oxley reports from the ACT region...



Our Canberra MG Car Club runs an event for T-types and Y-types every second year here in the National Capital. MG TYme they call it, and it is nicely out of step with the Pre-War Biennial Weekends. The most recent was held in early October and there were three pre-war T-types present, Dave Godwin's TA, Phillip Dadd's TA and Malcolm Robertson's TB (re-birthed from a derelict TC chassis), plus a good collection of TCs whose owners also have pre-war MGs back home. There were two highlights for me. Firstly, Dave Godwin drove his car from the Gold Coast again, a sterling effort in anyone's mind, but more than that, in company with Robbie Bayliss in his ex-Murphy TC Special, Murray Arundell (in his TC) and Mike Irwin (in an MGA Twin Cam), they continued on from Canberra after our event to tour the high country around Bright before plunging down to the coast to drive back to Sydney and home. They had plenty of adventures including a broken half shaft, but arrived home safely, tired but fully re-charged. The TA didn't miss a beat. I took the J2 out on the Sunday morning to wave them off on their lunch run to Gundaroo.



First drive-Amelia Starkey and Jeremy Robertson
Photo from Malcolm Robertson



Malcolm Robertson's Blue Streak Special in Sydney
Photo from Malcolm Robertson

Secondly, it was great to see Malcolm's *Blue Streak*-engined Special finally nearing completion. The engine runs, the brakes work and the wiring is now complete, so it should be registered for club runs soon and Malcolm can get this "I must own a K3" idea out of his head. This means he can finally start work on the old derelict SA Tickford, once owned by past VSCC presidents Jack Jeffrey in Sydney in the 1940s and Laurie Rofe in Victoria in the 1950s, a far more worthy project in my mind. Malcolm took the Special to Sydney for the MGCC Display Day at Silverwater where his offspring Amelia and Jeremy enjoyed driving it into place in the pre-war line-up, its first official drive.

My F1 is still for sale if anyone would like to talk to me about purchasing this lovely car. I really enjoy driving it, especially the smoothness of the engine compared to the J2, but room has to be made in my garage for the Amilcar I'm currently restoring.

Allan Herring reports from Western Australia...



Well, there were events in September and October and I was hopeful that this time there would be plenty of news of other Pre War cars to write about, but alas, this was not to be. However, I guess I can take a few lines to explain the woes and non-appearance of these other cars which left our J2 and NA as the only Pre War MGs to enter both events. I really do not like to write about our own adventures but with the absence of others, it gives me little option.

Oh.....before I do, must mention that we caught up with Tony Basham and the well-travelled PA whilst in Cairns, it's easy to find a rendez-vous when you see a P Type parked out the front; thanks Tony.

Firstly, we attended a four day tour run by the Pre War Sports Car Club of WA to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the club. This event was based out of York from the 6th to the 9th

September. I have mentioned on previous occasions that this club provides the best outlet for events with others, not only of similar interests, but also who bring along their early cars. Some of you may remember the early "Round the Houses" events in WA were held in York from 1980, and this was, and still is, the home of the York Motor Museum which is now owned by the town. There was the potential to report on no less than five Pre War MGs, however, these did not materialise as already mentioned. Firstly, Tony Bagshaw's PA, (see Tony's article in the July Bulletin), was refusing to charge, so no show. Lou could have shown in either the P or K but unfortunately he himself was not firing on all cylinders so we did not see Lou or Melody over the weekend. The Kilcullen's appeared at the start in the SA Tickford, and then.....well, just disappeared at the first stop. Somebody said that they had turned right when they should have turned left, however, the truth lay in a very slippery clutch and so the car had to be trucked back home and they appeared in a modern late in the afternoon of the first day. Ken and Mary Ann Stewart-Richardson chose the Amilcar over the NA for the weekend.



Day 1 took us from Caversham to El Cabello Resort/Reception Centre (on the Great Eastern Highway towards Northam) for lunch and then to Beverly before arriving in York for the first of three nights. Day 2 took us from York to Cunderdin for an interesting visit to a museum based in and around one of the former Kalgoorlie pipeline pumping stations, before lunch at the Ettamogah pub there. Day 3 took us on a short run out to the Greenhills pub for lunch. This pub is quite a monument of previous times in a town of less than ten people today. The final day was a brunch at a charming place just out of York on the Perth road before our return home. The J2 did perform well however, after 26 hard years, there are a few tired bits under the bonnet. The country side was truly magnificent, benefitting from a wetter than average winter, and at this time, the canola fields were in full yellow bloom.

Fast forward to October 20th, when we gathered at the Ravenswood Hotel, near Mandurah, for the start of the 26th annual Safety Fast Run. Just to refresh memories, this event is a combined event run by all the MG Clubs in Perth; namely the MGCC, the MG Owners Club and the TCOC. This year there was around 70 entries but lo and behold, only one Pre War car supported by only a very few Ts and Ys. We took the NA on this occasion and even though it was a bit showery on the Saturday, this did not dampen our enthusiasm TOO much. Starting at the Ravenswood Hotel for breakfast, we departed via Dwellingup, Harvey, Gnomesville (so named for the large roadside collection of garden gnomes), Ferguson Valley and a lunch stop in Kirrup. After lunch, we were taken on a reasonably direct drive to Margaret River for two nights.

The Sunday drive was, as requested by the voting participants the previous year, a lot shorter and included visits to local beaches from Margaret River Main Break down to Hamlin Bay, which is almost down to the south western most town of Augusta. A good CWA catered lunch was provided at Alexandra Bridge approximately 45kms south of Margaret River. Both the Saturday and Sunday evenings were sit down meals in the motel convention hall which was the base of the event, and where most people stayed. Our return trip to Perth on the Monday was not in the company of other entrants and was a straight forward 320kms long run with some stops for road works, petrol and a lunch snack. All in all, a great weekend where we met new faces and arranged dinner table settings with familiar faces for two great evenings. A shame that "old" MGs were not there in numbers, and I also observed that there seemed more interest in the current range from MG? Are we looking down the barrel of SUV rallies in the future?



Now a quiet run to the end of another year and hopefully some productive TB panel work so far as I am concerned. We will also have to make a decision on the NZ Pre '56 Rally in Cromwell before too long.

PROGRESS - A New Year's Resolution

Elliot Burns shares some thoughts on his recently unearthed P-type (PA1499)...



I don't usually make a New Years' Resolution and 2018 was no different to other years. However, in March I realised I had owned the remains of my P-type MG (PA1499) for two years and progress on its restoration had slowed. While the photos of the car as found have a nice rustic feel to them, I had hoped that my car wouldn't remain rustic forever. My resolution was to try and do something (even something small) on my car each day. Sometimes it's quality hands on shed time, other days it's a phone call, email or other task, usually chasing up missing parts.

My car had been stored outside under a tarp on a property in far north Queensland. The previous owner had owned the car for about 40 years. He bought it as a reasonably complete car but with no engine fitted, and a second chassis and engine to use for spares. The trip home from Queensland in the trailer managed to shake apart almost all of the timber in the body, so most of my work up to this point has been trying to remake the timber body frame. I have made most of the major timber components and started fitting them together. I am still working up the courage to attack the doors. I have remade rough timber door frames, but at the moment these are standard size timber sections screwed together, awaiting shaping to the correct size and profile.



Recently I have taken on board advice from Robert Gibson and started trying to assess what mechanical parts I have (and most importantly have not!). The motor that came with the second chassis for my car was originally fitted to the second chassis and it seemed a pity to separate them after all these years. No one seems to have records of where the original engine for my car ended up (if it has survived). If anyone happens to have MG PA engine number 1705AP sitting at home, I'd love to hear from you!



I was following up an advertisement in the USA for a suitable second-hand crank shaft, when I was fortunate enough to be contacted by an MG enthusiast in Germany. A friend of his had decided to uprate his P-type for racing and had bought a new block, crankshaft, pistons and conrods. The original parts from his car were for sale if I was interested. A couple of weeks later a very red-faced courier was bringing a couple of heavy packages to our front door and I am now the proud owner of what was until recently the major components of 2395AP which were part of a fully functioning P-type motor.

My plans for the remainder of this year are to obtain enough original and replacement parts to get work started on the rebuild of the motor. Machining and some of the assembly work for this are beyond my capabilities, so hopefully these parts will be away at an engine reconditioners soon. While all of this is happening, I need to keep moving on the timber frame and repanelling of the body tub. My aim is to have the tub assembled with doors fitted, by the end of this year. Watch this space for progress!

Market Place

For sale: 1931 MG F1 Magna. Chassis No F0428. Only 900 miles since full restoration to original specifications. Black with green Collingburn trim and wheels. Award winning car in pristine condition. Selling to make space for a new project. Located in Canberra. \$85,000. Brian Oxley 0412 188 409, oxley@netspeed.com.au



For sale: Almost unused (one trip to Adelaide) professionally built tandem trailer. Tailor made to suite the P-Type or any other MG Midget. Fitted with brakes and 5 new tyres. Powder coated yellow and has a solid bed to allow use for other than car purposes. \$2800. Tony Sloan aj.sloan@bigpond.com 0400 288 841

For Sale: 1933 MG J3 (J3 3763) "The Australian J4". Ground up rebuild to 1934 Configuration in 2015. 4 cylinder OHC, 746cc engine. ENV cross tube crash gearbox, Marshall 100 Sc, Outside Exhaust, larger brake drums. Cream with red leather trim. Full and half tonneau covers. No wet weather gear. Extensive documentation of history & rebuild. Race history in UK (Brooklands & Shelsley Walsh) and Australia (Rob Roy, Ballarat, Phillip Island, Benalla) Qld Reg MGJ33. Ross Kelly: Mob: 0411 746215 Email: grkelly@bigpond.net.au



Wanted: Wanted MG PA Oil Filter Bowl Lid. Will purchase the complete bowl if required. Martin Swan. 0416 298 298. brownswns@hotmail.com

Wanted: MG PA parts to keep the restoration of PA1499 progressing. At the moment I am looking for an oil filter assembly, oil pump, generator, distributor, amp meter & tachometer/speedometer. Any condition or location considered. Elliot Burns 0478 415 405 (02) 4957 4921.

Wanted: I'm looking for an MPJG head, or similar, that is NOT cracked, to complete a rebuild of my spare motor, in case I have a catastrophe in the future. Dave Godwin 0412 029 277, murphgod@hotmail.com



White and Steamy and comes from Cowes...



Your correspondent and lady navigator motored down to Phillip Island early this year in the MGTB to be part of the car display at the most entertaining Wooden Boat Festival at Rhyll, and consequently nautical thoughts were at the front of our minds. We recalled those days before World War 2 when swarms of MGs heroically contested motor races with a great deal of success, around the rough, dusty, unsealed closed public roads which formed the Phillip Island race track. Motor racing on public roads had been declared illegal in Victoria but somehow the Victorian Light Car Club and the Council were able to side step the regulations and the first road race in Australasia, the 1928 Australian Grand Prix over 100 miles, was

conducted on March 26th, won by an Austin Seven. By 1934 and for the next five years, with the races conducted on a handicap system, saw MGs making up almost half the field on occasions. For example, the 7th Australian Grand Prix run over 200 miles in March of that year attracted a huge crowd of 11,000 spectators, many of whom travelled on the race day by special train from Flinders Street railway station to Stony Point near Hastings, and then by ferry to Cowes on Phillip Island where it was a short walk to the track.

From 1933, until 1943 when a bridge was constructed at San Remo, the SS *Killara* provided the necessary transport service from Stony Point.

The vehicular ferry *Killara* had a 38 car drive on/drive off capacity, and was built in 1909 at Balmain, NSW for Sydney Ferries Limited for the Milson's Point to Point Macquarie run. The twin ferries *Killara* and *Kedumba* made their last trips on Sydney Harbour in April 1931 due to the forthcoming completion of the Harbour Bridge. The better of the two mechanically, *Kedumba*, was bought by A.K.T Sambell, a business man and prominent Phillip Island Councillor, and left Sydney for Western Port on 20th December 1932 under tow, but began taking water and foundered near Montague Island the next day. The *Killara* was then bought by Sambell and reached Western Port under her own steam in March 1933, under the command of Captain James Rutledge, after being storm bound for several days in Waterloo Bay on Wilson's Promontory's east coast. She commenced commercial operation in November 1933. After a decade of service, her boiler needed major repairs. With patronage declining because of the recently built San Remo Bridge, and the difficulty of the owners finding materials for repairs because of the war, it was decided to take her off the run. She was auctioned at the Maribyrnong River Warf in March 1944. *Killara* was eventually broken up in Launceston.

The Phillip Island Historical Society has been most generous in providing some great photographs of *Killara* at work.

