



THE PRE-WAR MG REGISTER OF AUSTRALIA

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*Bathurst - 1946: Wally Feltham's P type at Quarry Bend
Photo from the VSCCA archives, courtesy Tim Shellshear*

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Plus all our usual columns.....

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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

Wally Feltham's P type lies upside down after coming off at Quarry Bend on Mt Panorama at the October 1946 Bathurst races. The Bathurst National Advocate reported that after getting into difficulties by taking the corner too fast, Feltham just managed to jump clear of the car before it somersaulted twice and hurled over the hillside to crash about 80 feet below. Feltham broke his collarbone, but was otherwise OK. Feltham went on to compete several more times at Bathurst in his Magna/Magnette special and then an Alta. The P type is generally assumed to be PA 1424 currently owned in Melbourne by Anthony Fagan, although some doubts have recently arisen about that due to this car's colourful and complex history. From the VSCCA Archives.

STOP PRESS

In just four months we'll be in Bathurst! So if you haven't finalised your plans don't delay a moment longer!

Download your registration form from our website and ring the hotel to make a booking (www.rydges.com 02 6338 1888).

There is also alternative accommodation of all kinds in Bathurst. (www.visitbathurst.com.au 1800 681 000).

Editorial Contributions to:

The Editors
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Editor's Soapbox

Hello Everyone



Welcome to our winter offering this year. I hope you find lots of interesting reading in these pages to keep you entertained as you huddle in front of your fires or radiators as we are doing at editorial headquarters at the moment.

The Early MG Society is an active group in the UK and seeing photos of their escapades always makes me want to rush out and buy a nice Tigress so I can join them. Their Magazine is full of fascinating material and I am in awe of their editors over the years who seem to have a bottomless drawer of fabulous old advertisements with which they illustrate their publication. Recently they ran an article on the imports of early MGs into Australia, and with current editor Chris Keevil's permission, I have reproduced it for your enjoyment.



Also featured in this issue is a fabulous letter from Ted Loversidge detailing the history of NA0540. As readers would know, it began life as an Airline coupe but ended as a very fast racing special before being sold to the US a few years ago. It is now being restored back to an Airline. I wonder how many other MGs have such a colourful history worthy of similar stories being written about them? If you know one, write it down and send it in!

There was absolutely no room in this issue for several contributions, our regular Pointed Tails end piece, nor for SVW News, so those of you looking for these will be disappointed. However, Rhys Timms and James Stone's effort in SA0945 in this year's Peking to Paris Rally must not go unremarked. Battling the usual rigors of the appalling roads and gruelling special stages, the car and its crew managed a very creditable fourth place in their class, seventh place overall in the Vintageant Category for pre 1941 cars, and a gold medal finish. Congratulations to them all.



See you in Bathurst...

Malcolm

Patron's Comment

Walter Magilton reminisces on how it used to be...



My first memories of motor sport that included MGs were probably the races at Fisherman's Bend where people like Otto Stone and Les and son Rod Murphy were showing off the K3 and Q type. What lovely exhaust notes! In my student days in the early 50s, I was mobile on a BSA250 and then a side-valve Morris Minor – both capable of 64.5MPH in good conditions! With very few exceptions (such as the class acts like the K3 and Q) most of the MGs that we love today were in a pretty sorry state. Those that were running (many were usually in pieces) were often owned by university-type students who certainly didn't have any money to maintain a car. Vintage cars were often parked around the Melbourne Uni where I inhabited – a very interesting assembly. Originality was not a word that entered our vocabulary till many years later. I think many are the people that bought a rough-edged TC only to find it to be a TA or TB. As many of us will know, cars in the immediate years after WW11 were in very short supply (new or second hand) so keeping the old ones running was essential. This probably caused many classic cars to be absolutely run into the ground in the cause of everyday transport.

When I bought my NA Magnette in 1963 I had no real idea of what model it was except that it had been advertised as a K3 replica. I just loved the look of it. It was totally worn out! It cost £200! I was newly married! I was having a house built – nuff said. A few very old people still refer to my car as the "Fogerty Car". Fogerty was a butcher and the Magnette was his everyday transport for several years. It is no wonder that the car was converted to hydraulic brakes and a modern generating system.

When Fred Gray and Bill Lockington (recently deceased) did superb restorations on their NEs they were both forced to use Holden engines in them as the originals were unavailable – one I believe was a boat anchor in WA. Both eventually had NA motors installed in them. The all-polished aluminium Lockington car is overseas while the cream and brown Gray car is in the Briggs collection in WA. Fred and Bill were well-established businessmen who could afford the best.

Spare parts was an interesting issue. When I first bought the NA I was terrified I would break a vital part and never get it back on the road and at that stage I had no network of like-minded friends but that was to change fairly quickly. The Triple M register started up in the early 60s and did wonderful things for the keen cammy owners around the world, and in October 1965 we had our first meeting of the Pre-War Register here in Melbourne.



Twenty plus people turned up and there were three eligible cars parked in the car park. The worldwide Internet, the Australian Pre-War Register newsletters and specialist dealers and manufacturers were still a long way into the future. Things like new rubber gaiters for the trunnions were unobtainable and were likely to remain so. Many people (maybe most people) that had an old MG or an Austin 7, whether the car was in usable condition or not, also had sizeable collections of parts and breaking up a car was not really frowned on. Fortunately many of these collections are now integrated into whole cars. I was once offered a really nice WA saloon that only need a bit of TLC and a repaint to be a top car. It was broken up but its parts have survived.

A nice thing about owning a car like ours is that other owners can be most helpful and swapping or selling excess spares is part of the game. When I bought my first P Type from Ross Williams (recently deceased) it came with virtually a truck load of spares – wheels (5) pistons (about 24) camshafts (8) conrods (12) plus innumerable other bits – carbs, generators, starter motors etc. Many of these parts found their way into other cars. TA bits also came my way like windfalls under an apple tree. Of course modern technology has improved our cars out of all sight. Oil seals keep our generators generating and most of us can keep the oil and the water in our engines in the right places most of the time. It is no longer compulsory to leave a pool of oil under the car when we park.

I like the TC Owners in WA's philosophy – the cars are not precious! Everything that breaks or wears out can be replaced so ... *drive them till the roads wear out!*

PS Yes, I am a little proud to have owned my Magnette for 50 years this September 2013. Actually, I am amazed.

From the Registrar

Tony Sloan comments...



A rather sad tale but maybe there will be an happy ending... I recently had an email from Kevin Horsfield who lives in Bangkok and is an avid reader of our Pre-War website. Amazingly there is purportedly an "original" Pre-War MG for sale just down the road from him. It has been assembled from all manner of bits but from some of the photos taken early in the "restoration" it appears to be a P-type. The chassis frame is definitely P-type and the dumb iron stamp indicates conclusively that it is PA 1842 (on the assumption that the frame pictured is the one used). The body looks quite good and the tub looks like PA with a J-type windscreen and sectioned and narrowed TC guards. The engine is BMC A-Series and the brakes appear to be J-Type mechanically operated. The guy who owns it has it for sale as a "1932 NG" for quite a high figure (\$A50,000) and is convinced that it is all original (that may be true of the components – original Austin-PA-J-TC etc etc.) I have attached a couple of photos that Kevin sent me and it may be a challenge for members to identify components. Kevin will keep me posted on the movements of this sad little car.



"1932 NG" for sale in Thailand



Coachwork looks nicely done, but is it original?

From the Webmaster

www.prewar.mgcc.info

Graeme Davies offers some sage advice ...



Using the internet can be a frustrating experience. Have you ever been told by someone that there is something on the web you should see only to find it is not there. You have been to that page before and this time it's the same page. Typical is a call to me with a request to change the ownership of a car, then a follow up call later insisting the name has not been changed. Well computers play games, often when you return to a page you have been to before, to save time the computer just reloads the same page, and to the frustration of many it repeats the same problem over and over. There is a cure.

At the end of the address line (where you type in the www.etc), is a small circle with an arrowhead, clicking on this reloads the page from the internet not your computer memory. This solves this issue unless your computer is off line. Off line problems can usually be solved by removing the power from your modem for 10 seconds, or a computer restart.

Why is it drug addicts and computer aficionados are both called users?

Bathurst 2013 - the 5th Biennial Pre-War MG National Meeting 25-27 October

In just four months we'll be in Bathurst! So if you haven't finalised your plans we suggest you don't delay a moment longer! Tim Shellshear and Rob Dunsterville report...



Organisation of the Weekend Rally is now all sorted and detailed arrangements for the three evening activities, the huge car display in front of the historic Court House and the scenic drives through beautiful countryside are all set in place. Registrations are ahead of our expectations and the strong national support indicates there could be as many as 75 Pre-war cars as well as some post 1945. If you think you won't know anyone that situation won't last long! The regular participants will give you an especially warm welcome and will be delighted to involve you in all the activities and share some memorable times together. Fraternity is one of the great benefits of owning and driving a Pre-War MG

Given the long distances many participants will be bringing their MG on a trailer to Bathurst, drive it over the weekend and trailer it home for peace of mind and maximum enjoyment. There is plenty of trailer parking. There are two levels of undercover parking for all MGs at Rydges, and, in the event of bad weather, that's where the Car Display will be.

Examples of all the major types will be represented with many of the rarer sub-types and body styles. Among all these cars there will be some that have not been seen in recent times and even some appearing for the first time. What a spectacle of sight and sound they will all make not only on display but also circulating the Mt Panorama circuit and touring the beautiful Bathurst region!

CELEBRATION!

Remember we are celebrating the 75th anniversary of the 1938 Australian Grand Prix at Bathurst, the first event ever held on the Mt Panorama racing circuit, and for which an NE was specially imported by John Sherwood. The sight of Peter Briggs driving this very car around the circuit again is going to be a very nostalgic experience for us all!

Circulating with Peter, there will be a number of pre-war MGs that raced at Bathurst both pre- and post-war including the P-Types raced by Les Murphy, the K3s driven by Jim Fagan and Colin Dunne, the Q-type entered by Hope Bartlett, the N-Type in the hands of Len Golding/Fred Elbourne and the L-Types campaigned by Gordon Stewart and John Summers - all of which are confirmed entries.

We have identified a number of others and we are in touch with the owners to encourage them to attend.

We are also paying tribute to the K3's first major success with its class win and team award in the 1933 Mille Miglia – 80 years ago. One of the actual team cars will be present with the probability of six or more beautifully constructed and presented replicas. All of them will perform with much gusto and provide their owners with an experience second to none around the Mt Panorama Circuit. Such a spectacle will be reminiscent of Brooklands in the 1930s!

The past Beechworth Rallies have proved what a wonderful harmony exists between the owners of the sports cars and the saloons, tourers and drophead coupes of the SWV range. Ten of these elegant MGs with their 'space, grace and pace' attended, in 2011 and there'll be even more in Bathurst including two partly restored examples stimulating discussion and assistance among the cognoscenti!

PRE-WAR MGs FOR SALE

Through our interaction with pre-war MG owners it has come to our notice that there is a considerable number of cars on the Register that are for sale or their owners have their disposal currently in mind for a number of valid reasons. The cars vary from running and registered to lapsed registration and restoration projects of all kinds. Therefore we are recommending these owners bring them to Bathurst and display them (on wheels or trailer) where there will be a well targeted audience of perspective buyers. If we are alerted to some of these cars for sale in advance, we will publicise their availability through appropriate media to a wider audience of motoring enthusiasts. We believe this will greatly assist both sellers and buyers and the latter are most likely to become active members of the Register.

SOUVENIR PROGRAM

This will be produced before the weekend and will include every car registered for the Rally, details of all the events and an article on the Pre-war MGs that raced at Bathurst even into the 1950s. It is very important that, in advance, every owner sends in details of their car(s) attending the rally so that it is included with accurate information.



REGALIA

Again we've taken a different tack here. Rather than offer clothing and other items (which may or may not sell) we have decided to produce a "Bathurst 2013" cloth badge and 100mm x 90mm white backed sticker. These low cost items can be sewn or glued onto any clothing/caps or stuck onto anything of your choice! They are available now only as a pack of one each for \$10 including mailing to you in Australia. Cash or cheques, made out to "Pre-war MG Register Rally Bathurst", should be mailed to Rob Dunsterville, 85 Green Point Drive, Forster NSW 2428 or monies can be paid by bank transfer to that account name at the Bendigo Bank with BSP 633108 and account number 147973960. Your name must be on the transfer and a confirmation email sent to Rob with your address at robertanddenny@gmail.com.



REGISTERING

On the Register's website (<http://prewar.mgcc.info/>) you can read previous Rally bulletins and download a registration form. Remember \$65 per person is all that is required at this stage to register and then all those who have registered will be sent a request in early September to pay for the evening functions in which they wish to participate.

However, if you have not yet done so, we do suggest that you make an immediate hotel reservation. Rydges Mount Panorama Bathurst on Conrod Straight is the Rally Headquarters where the activities are centred and we have block booked rooms, so mention the Rally when booking (www.rydges.com 02 6338 1888). There is also alternative accommodation of all kinds in Bathurst. (www.visitbathurst.com.au 1800 681 000).

PRE-WEEKEND TOUR TO BATHURST

As advised earlier we are not organising a post event tour this Rally. Instead we are suggesting that owners form groups to travel to Bathurst together for support, safety and camaraderie on the road. To assist in the formation of groups, a coordinator in each state has kindly agreed to act as a central point for information of what others are planning in terms of departure place, date and time, comfort/meal/refuelling breaks and maybe overnight stops. The coordinators are:

NSW	Richard Moore	enmor@bigpond.com	0419 267 106
Vic	Graeme/Jenny Jackson	g.jackson01@optusnet.com.au	03 9876 1452
SA	Barry Bahnisch	barrybahnisch@bigpond.com	08 8296 3202
Qld	Ross Kelly	grkelly@bigpond.net.au	07 3352 4151
WA	Ed Farrar	edhfarrar@gmail.com	08 9386 4107
ACT	Malcolm Robertson	musgrovemedia@netspeed.com.au	02 6288 9343

PROGRAMME FOR THE WEEKEND

An evening Welcome Party will kick off the weekend on a high and relaxing note and on the other two evenings there will be an informal barbecue and a formal dinner with a guest speaker. An additional highlight is the opportunity for all drivers and their passengers to navigate themselves around the actual Mt Panorama Circuit whenever, and as many times, as they wish as it is made up of public roads - the usual speed limits apply. Rydges Hotel, Rally Headquarters, is located on Conrod Straight just before Murrays Corner.

Friday 25 October	1400 - 1800	Registration and collection of information packs at Rydges Hotel. Check in at accommodation. Drive the 6.2 km Mt Panorama Circuit at your leisure. Welcome Party at the National Motor Racing Museum next to Rydges.
	1800-2000	
Saturday 26 October	0900 - 1230 1230 - 1330 1330 - 1700 1830	Display of all Pre-war MGs in Russell St Bathurst "75th Anniversary of 1938 AGP" Circulating on Mt Panorama for all Pre-war MGs. Scenic drive to Historic Hill End (150 km ret). Informal barbecue at Rydges Hotel.
Sunday 27 October	Drive the Mt Panorama Circuit at your leisure. From 1030 Start the scenic heritage drive. (160 kms return). 1230 -1400 Lunch in the School of Arts at historic Carcoar. 1400 -1600 Travel different scenic route Carcoar to Bathurst. 1800 National Rally Dinner at Rydges Hotel.	
Monday 28 October		Breakfast and farewells



Ken Tubman contemplating his wide wheelbase K3 in the 1949 Bathurst races at the top of Mountain Straight - VSCCA archives

Major Cowper's Morris 8/40

Kent Brown and Rob Dunsterville comment on our March Newsletter's Pointed Tails...



In the March Pointed Tails, Malcolm Robertson asked if anyone could add any information about Gerry Cadogan-Cowper and his racing Morris 8-40. I've scoured all my books on historic racing cars in Australia, the history of Phillip Island, Bathurst etc, including a new publication "Optimism" written by Dick Willis in NSW. Dick's book on Australian Specials features 100 cars from the Golden Age of Australian Motor Racing. I have been in touch with Kerry Kaehne, a Morris historian in South Australia, and he has sent me the attached photo of an 8/40 taken at Phillip Island (with a couple of Bugattis). Kerry says that "he strongly suspects it's Major Cowper, but I have no proof. This time driving a '38 Morris 8/40 Series II Roadster, maybe the Grand Prix car. It has a Morris 8/40 Club of Victoria badge on the grille".

I did a little other research and it suggests to me that Gerald Audrey Cadogan Cowper (no hyphen shown), born on the 4th March in 1883, raced without a lot of success from 1935 to about 1939 although he seemed at least to be a regular finisher. "Gerry" left the earthly grid for the motor racing circuit in the sky on 2nd July 1963. The events Major Cowper competed in that I can find reference to were generally "support" races to other major (sic) events. However G.A. Cowper in a Morris 8-40 was a definitely a competitor in the South Australian Grand Prix meeting at Lobethal on the 3rd January 1938. The GP itself was run over 100 miles but there was also a 50 mile race. Major Cowper was given a 30 minute handicap in the longer race and 15 minutes in the shorter, the biggest handicaps of the field. Later in 1938, March to be precise, "Cowper (Morris 8-40)" was given a handicap of 22 minutes by the Victorian Sporting Car Club for the interstate Grand Prix held at the Wirlinga circuit, Albury.

But Gerry also participated in trials. The Argus (Melbourne) of 1 August 1938 reported under the heading "Baby Cars Do Well" that "Only 16 of the 34 cars which started in the Victorian Sporting Car Club's annual north-eastern championship trial finished..... The route led through Healesville, Whitfield, Bright, the Kiewa Valley, Wangaratta, Yea and Campbellfield. Snow north of the ranges made the trial the hardest yet..." Drivers who finished included Cowper in his Morris 8-40.

On a personal note there appears to be some discrepancy in his war record but that could be cleared up I'm sure with a little more work. The AIF nominal Roll has Cowper, Gerald Audrey Cadogan, Lieutenant, Estate agent, 151 Grey Street, East Melbourne, as joining E company of the 8th Infantry Battalion on 28 August 1914. It seems the Lieutenant at some stage transferred to the Australia Flying Corps (AFC) while serving overseas, as did one of my great uncles who started the great war as a driver on the Western Front but who was killed when he was shot down over Belgium in a Sopwith Snipe on 5 November 1918. Major Cowper commanded the 8 Training Squadron AFC in 1917 and then 6 Training Squadron on 1918. It appears he may also have served in the Boer War.

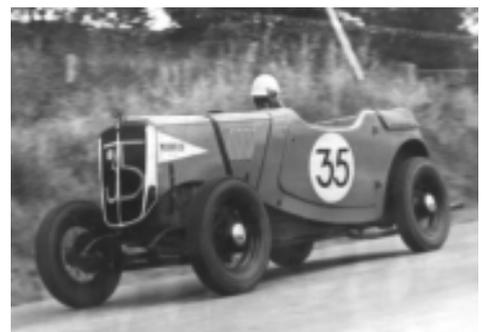
To finish this rambling note, Major Cowper was elected Secretary of the Morris 8-40 Car Club at its inaugural meeting held at Lanes Motors Pty Ltd in November 1936.

Rob Dunsterville adds...

I haven't concerned myself with this information before as I'm mainly interested in MGs and not Morris's, but the Cowper Morris 8/40 may have had a bearing on the history of MG in Australia. When I was talking to P & R Williams family members many years ago, I heard that a Morris based 'sports car' was produced by Percy and Reg just before Morris himself arrived in Sydney in about 1935. I think he came to buy the land to establish what became the Zetland factory. When P & R's car was presented to him as a prototype/concept for local production, he is supposed to have said to them "you don't need to develop that just become the MG importer for NSW!!"

Which is what supposedly happened and explains, by way of timing (mid 1935), why P&R did not import Triple M cars and started with TAs, SAs and VAs. I am not certain about that as a few Triple M cars came into NSW, some if not all as chassis, and their import could have been prior to or after P&R's appointment. Percy Williams took the importing business seriously and used an SA and then a WA for personal use. Lane's Motors in Melbourne was appointed earlier and hence more Triple M cars were imported into Vic.

Could this Cowper 8-40 be the P&R car? I suspect there is only a scant chance of my recollection and Cowper being connected. Morris cars were extensively exported as Nuffield Exports was well set up by the 1930s, so it is more likely to be a car of this origin.

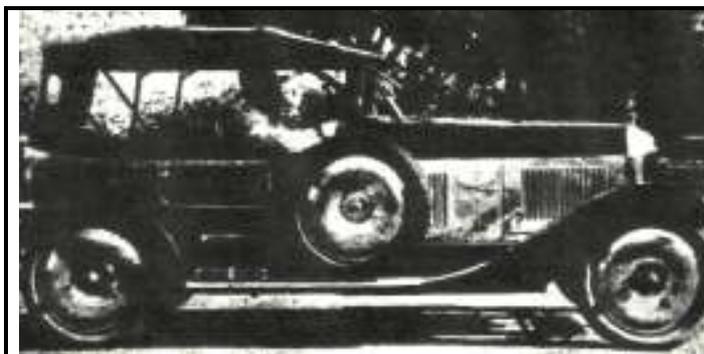


Early MG Imports into Australia

Chris Keevil is a well-known member of the Early MG Society and a regular visitor to Australia. Here he reports on the imports of early MGs into Australia...

Robin Barraclough recently drew my attention to the National Library of Australia's archives web-site www.trove.nla.gov.au. This archive includes a newspaper section in which one may search by date or keywords.

Robin began to search by the keywords 'Morris Sports', and came up with some interesting finds. Post World War 1, it was the practice of the Australian Sunday newspapers in State capital cities to have a motoring section – not unlike our weekend papers today. Motoring was just beginning to appeal to the general public, and potential purchasers were hungry for information on just what was available. In addition to advertisements from car dealers and manufacturers, there was usually a round-up each week of notable purchases of motor cars in the region, giving the name and location of the purchaser and the car model acquired. One of Robin's first searches brought forth a page from The Sunday Times of Perth, Western Australia, dated December 27th, 1925. A Super Sports Morris Oxford was pictured, with a caption to the effect that the car had been specially imported by Mr. E. J. Darley, the Morris agent for Western Australia, for Mr. Tom Darcy who lived in Belmont – a Perth suburb.



Tom Darcy's Super Sports



The Medlin's 18/80 with tourer coachwork

E. J. Darley was the Perth agent for Morris cars until about 1927, then the agency passed to Coventry Motors Ltd., and subsequently Comet Motors took over the agency from May 1933. Comet Motors supplied the Mk 1 MG 18/80 (now owned by Peter Partridge) to Mr. D. Medlin but this sale is something of a mystery, as it is said to have taken place in 1931 – prior to Comet acquiring their agency. Furthermore, the Medlins assumed that they had bought a brand new car – whereas in fact it is a 1928 chassis no. 6268 which originally carried a Fabric Saloon body. When the Medlins bought the car, it had a new 4-seater tourer body manufactured by a local coachbuilder.

At that time there was a hefty import duty payable on complete cars imported to Australia. This duty was introduced in order to encourage the Australian coach-building industry into manufacturing car bodies, and was not applicable to imported rolling chassis. In fact, Holden, Australia's best known car maker, was a harness manufacturer prior to becoming a car body maker. European and American car makers began to export their products in chassis form, to be bodied on arrival down under. There are reports of car bodies being removed from their chassis on board ship, and dumped over the side, just in order to avoid the import duty.

Anyway, to return to the Super Sports specially imported for Tom Darcy, this would have been an expensive purchase by the time shipping costs and import duty were applied. Tom Darcy was well able to afford the car, as he was a well-known and very successful jockey who rode many winners not only in Western Australia, but also in India and later in jump races in Sydney. Tom died in the Western Australia gold mining town of Kalgoorlie in November 1937. He had many falls during his jumping career, and at one time was convalescing with a broken leg and whilst having a few drinks with some pals at a hotel in Belmont, a lorry ran out of control and ran onto the veranda where Tom was sitting – resulting in a further leg fracture! As can be seen in the picture, Tom Darcy's car was fitted with Ace wheel discs, presumably over artillery wheels. This would suggest that his car was built prior to the change to wire wheels in about October 1925.

Coincidentally, a Bullnose Super Sports that survives today in Australia came to light in Perth in 1958, and its chassis number and other particulars match Tom Darcy's car perfectly. This is Julie Craig's 4-seater Super Sports and it is virtually certain that is Tom's car. The chassis of Julie's car was dispatched from the Cowley factory on 21st October 1925. The usual build-time for these cars was about four weeks, and with another four weeks transit time to Australia, it would have arrived just before the end of 1925.

This Super Sports was discovered in 1958 by Gilbert Ewers in a dilapidated condition in a brick yard, in the Perth suburb of Maylands – only a few miles from Belmont. The previous owner apparently "drove the car for about ten years". Gil Ewers began to restore the car, and it was displayed as a restored rolling chassis at the Perth Motor Show in 1968. The car was then still on artillery wheels, but lacked the Ace wheel discs. (See below)



Gil Ewers' MG on display in Perth in 1968



Eric Langton

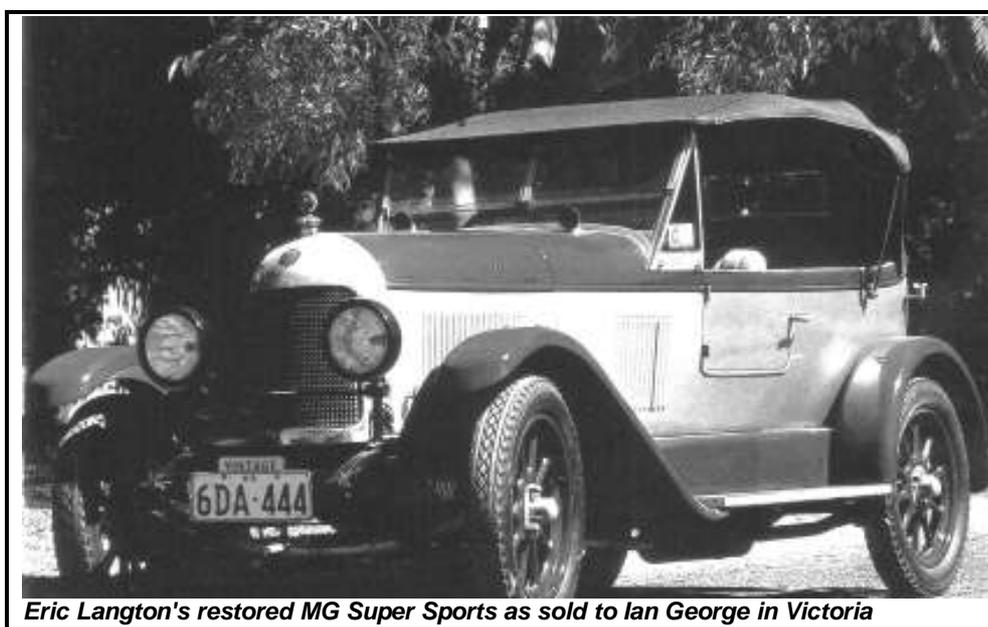
For some reason, Gil Ewers didn't complete the restoration, and the car passed to Eric Langton, an English ex-pat who had relocated to Perth in his retirement. Eric Langton had been the World Motorcycle Speedway Champion in the 1930s. He had been a talented road-racer and trials rider prior to speedway becoming popular in England. The quiet, deep-thinking and unsmiling Langton really was, for most of his career, "Mr Belle Vue" – the name of the famous Manchester speedway team that he captained. He was an innovator both in the design of speedway bikes and in riding style – he virtually invented the 'foot-forward' speedway riding style. During the 1920s, he and his brother Oliver used a Bugatti with a cut down body to transport their motorcycles to races. The Bugatti was subsequently replaced by an Alfa Romeo, then a Bentley and finally an Invicta. The top speedway riders in those days commanded salaries akin to Premiership footballers today, so these 'supercars' were easily afforded.

He built speedway bikes to his own specification after he stopped racing, and these machines were used by racers all around the world. Eventually he emigrated to Australia and during his retirement in Perth, restored several vintage cars, including Rolls Royces.

A young MG enthusiast in Perth – one Peter Partridge – got wind that a very early M.G. was being restored locally, and made it his business to call round in his M.G. TC to introduce himself. Peter became a regular visitor, and eventually Eric completed the car and moved on to other projects, but kept the M.G.

Perhaps there was something about Bullnose Super Sports that appealed to racing motorcyclists named Eric – after all, Mike Hannigan's example, PF belonged to Eric Fernihough who also was a famous racer on two wheels, and who held the lap record for motorcycles at Brooklands. Fernihough was content to transport his motorcycle via special brackets on-board his Super Sports, rather than resorting to such exotica as did Langton.

Perth's climate must have agreed with Eric, as he was 94 years old when he died in 2001. Prior to his death, the car was offered for sale, and crossed the Nullabor Desert to Victoria, and into the ownership of Ian George.

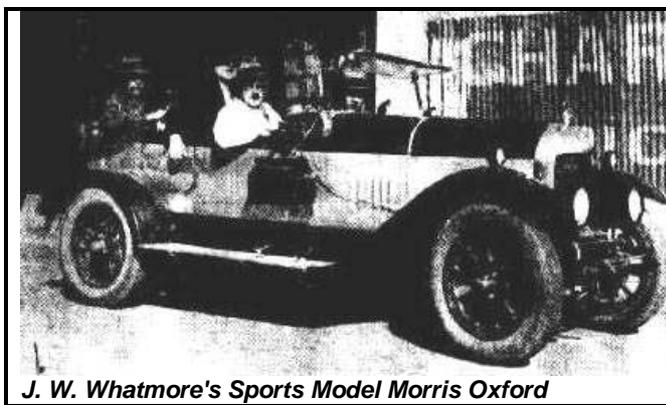


Eric Langton's restored MG Super Sports as sold to Ian George in Victoria

In January 1986 the car was the subject of a road test by Bill Ingham, the editor of a local motor club newsletter in Victoria, called 'Vintage Driver'. Mr Ingham seemed delighted with the brisk performance of the car, compared with its Morris counterparts, but not so with the "4-wheel DeWandre servo assisted stopping gear, which needed some attention." An under-bonnet photograph reveals that the vacuum pipe for the brake servo is indeed attached to the Solex carburettor. In the text of the road test, Mr. Ingham refers to the good instrumentation, which included a tachometer. An addendum by Ian George says that the car had been restored with Sankey wheels, (Aussies call all artillery wheels 'Sankeys'), but that he hoped soon to have some more correct wire wheels made for the car. This assumption that the car should have wire wheels was an easy mistake to make, given that it might have seemed to be a car produced when wires were standard fittings. However, the production date was right on the cusp of that change in specification, and if it truly is Tom Darcy's car – then, with the benefit of hindsight, Ace wheel discs on artilleries would probably be more correct.

The car didn't stay with Ian George for many years, and was eventually prised away in the mid-1990s by Ron Craig, an avid collector of Bullnose cars in New South Wales. By the time Ron Craig acquired it, it had gained its wire wheels, but unfortunately, lost its DeWandre brake servo and tachometer! Ron Craig was known as 'Mr Bullnose' in the Morris Register of New South Wales. He had nine Bullnoses – all with original English bodies. Sadly Ron fell ill and passed away in about 1998. He had time to arrange his affairs before passing, and his wife Julie asked him to dispose of all the Bullnoses – apart from the beloved MG Super Sports, that they'd christened "Muscles". Julie still campaigns the Bullnose today, driving it to rallies and just for days out.

Meanwhile – back at the newspaper archive web-site, Robin had found reports on two other cars, one in Brisbane, Queensland and the other in Hobart, Tasmania.

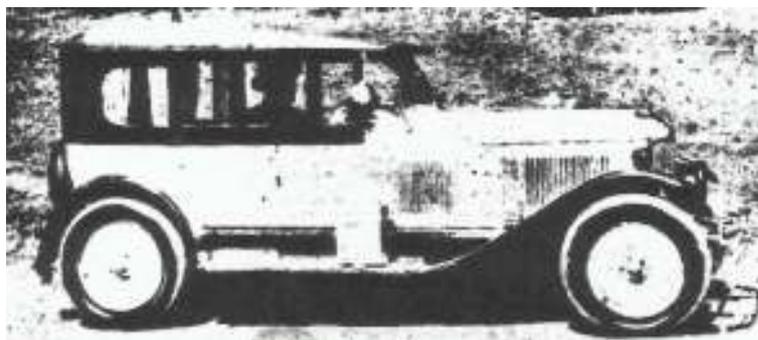


J. W. Whatmore's Sports Model Morris Oxford



J. W. Whatmore's MG 14/28

Pictured above, from the Brisbane Courier of 7th July 1925, is "Mr. J. W. Whatmore in his Sports Model Morris Oxford in Saturday's RACQ Petrol Test. Driving in competition for the first time. Mr. Whatmore made a splendid run, taking third place in his car". Whilst this car might be an MG, we think it's more probably a 'look-alike', because although it has certain MG features, it appears to lack the triangulated MG windscreen pillars. Mr Whatmore subsequently changed his Sports Model Bullnose Morris Oxford for a 1927 MG 14/28. With apologies again for the poor resolution, it is pictured above in an extract from the 27th September 1927 edition of the Brisbane Courier. The caption reads : 'RACQ Reliability Touring Contest – Mr J. W. Whatmore, Morris Oxford' – although this car seems definitely to be an MG 14/28, which were then of course still sold as Morris Oxfords.



Finally, the car in Hobart is pictured left, taken from the Hobart Mercury of Saturday, 11th February 1928. This MG 14/28 Super Sports looks almost as though it has a hard-top, rather than a hood – but again the image is rather indistinct. A shadow cast onto the ground at the front of the car shows that bumpers – or perhaps early 'roo bars' - have been fitted. The spare wheel has been moved to the rear of the car, rather than the normal position on the running-board – as incidentally, has Julie Craig's car. The caption reads: 'Personifying British motor

construction – engine and body – at its best, this beautiful Morris Oxford Special Super Sports is the only one of its type in Tasmania. Particularly speedy and possessing artistic "lines", the car is the property of Mr. C. J. Shannon, who, owing to his departure from Tasmania, is offering it for sale. Particulars are obtainable from His Majesty's Theatre.'

The World Wide Web has many pitfalls, but as a research tool for historians, it can often provide fascinating data. We are grateful to Robin Barraclough, Peter Partridge for their input, and for access to the information held in the Early M.G. Society archives in the production of this article.

Editor's Note: Chris Keevil is editor of the Early MG Society's Magazine, an excellent and comprehensive biannual hard copy production to which keen members might like to subscribe. He also produces regular electronic EMGS Updates which can be found on our own website (www.prewar.mgcc.info) under the news and reports section.



*Early MG Society participants on their Loire Valley tour line up at Chateau Monpoupon in June 2013
Photo from Chris Keevil*



*MG 14/40 (No 2750) from the estate of the late Neil Cuthbert at the Victorian MG Car Club Concours in April
Photo from Robin Page*

Pictorial Feature



*Ron Clarke's VA tourer (VA 0922) nearing completion in the Sleeping Beauties workshops in Queensland
Photo from Ron Clarke*



*Ross Kelly's L type (L0638) at home and up for sale in Queensland - June 2013
Photo from Ross Kelly*



*Gleaming engine bay of Andrew Fock's PA1294 at the Victorian MGCC Concours in April
Photo from Robin Page*



*Len Golding and Gordon Stewart's L Magna racing at Mt Druitt during the 1940s. The remains of the car have now been rebuilt by Stuart Schofield on L0595 (see page 20)
Photo from Stuart Schofield*

Pictorial Feature



Graeme Jackson's J3418 at Historic Winton - June 2013
Picture from John Hurst



NA0540 in 1960 racing in New Zealand, Doug Herridge driving (see story on page 16)
Picture from Ted Loversidge

Winton Historic Fun - 25 and 26 May 2013

Graeme Jackson reports...



The Winton organisers failed to mention that this year marked the 50th anniversary of the invention of the Lava Lamp, a device which gives a colourful, psychedelic representation of what happens when radiator water gets into the MG sump. However lots of other significant motoring dates were recognised at Winton. On the track, Ed Taylor's J3 and Graeme Jackson's J2, still recovering from their 80th birthday parties, circulated in regular fashion, Jacko being the first to be third in the second, and Ed leading the third for most of the contest. Neil and Jeff Murdoch enjoyed themselves sharing the TB Special in races and regularity, while John Gillett whizzed past the field in the K3, but retired gracefully at the top of the tight circuit due to diminished oil pressure after a weekend of enthusiastic racing. John Lackey, down from Sydney with the Alan Tomlinson replica TA, suffered misfortune at the same spot when his supercharged mount erupted in a cloud of steam, sadly John had to exchange his helmet for a cup and a teabag. But Patrick Ryan is a man to show us how to do it. The XPAG powered TA special also previously driven by John Nobel and fettled by Conner, achieved the blow up of the meeting in Patrick's hands. The poor, hardworking crankshaft broke and exited the bottom of the motor, disintegrating the sump in spectacular fashion, and landed in two bits on the track amidst the oily bits of cast iron and shattered aluminium. Two connecting rods with pistons attached and the clutch and flywheel hung on to one piece of crankshaft on the tarmac, some distance from the front portion, still with con rods dangling.

Tim Shellshear's N powered F type is an attractive car which goes very well, and Tim liked exercising the MG on the Winton track. We introduced him to Glen Bishop who is a cousin of David Price the former owner and the man who helped David collect the bits and build the car. This was back in those innocent days when the trading of body parts was still respectable. Tim's F has the discarded body tub from Ian Mawson's P type, and the modified swept mudguards from the Jackson P. Tim has thoroughly researched and documented the history of his MG but was delighted to meet Glen who sprayed it red many years ago.

Jim Thompson drove Lou Molina's old yellow Type 23 Bugatti "Madam Butterfly" in a regular manner. There in the display area stood his M type MG now wearing a fresh new aluminium body crafted by Richard Stanley, the Blockley tyre man. The car looks splendid, but features new experimental shatter proof windscreens manufactured entirely from ply wood. Jim, can we make a plea for transparency? Lou Molina's other car, Ian Mawson's Vulgarilla, circulated sweetly in J&K racing, but back in the pits Maws decided to pull the SU carburettors to bits to find out why the MG was running so well. As Loris looked on knowingly, he fiddled float levels and needle heights until it threw a tantrum and would not start. Also in the fair dinkum racing, Stuart Steinfort steered the cream PA ex Murphy AGP winning MG with great nerve and skill on the Saturday, but was far more restrained when Graeme Steinfort arrived on Sunday. Warwick Anderson also had the Offenhauser powered MGL in action, and Aubrey Pavert abandoned his SA and J in favour of an MGB, helped by Rene.

The punter can spend a couple of hours browsing the Winton car park and pits which always have an amazing display of interesting and often rare motor cars and motor cycles. Ken and Evan Catlow were spotted examining the Vauxhall 30/98 display, the wonderful belt drive cycle cars, the factory racing cars, a replica D type Jaguar and a host of Australian racing specials of various confections. They were accompanied by Bruce Ellis in wonderland. Not surprisingly I found Ernest Litera behind the wheel, this time one of the twenty one inch Rudge Whitworth variety attached to a quite superb vintage sleeve valve Minerva Doctor's Coupe. He was admiring the car and saying how he experiences valve bounce at 7000 rpm in second gear in his MGA when he goes down to the shops for a quick café latte and to get the Sunday papers. Maybe a sleeve valve car with its reciprocating jam tins could be the solution to the problem, and he could sell his considerable stock of valve grinding paste at a swap day.



Neil Murdoch's 1939 TB special
Photo from John Hurst



Dick Willis's newly finished ex John Nind TB Special
Photo from John Hurst

In the shadow of the start finish line the MGCC had erected a tent containing an engaging display of photos to publicise club activities, manned by our most attractive diplomat Wayne Rushton. Ray Skewes, Kevin Leishman,

Mick Donnelly and Peter Fleming were observed having an animated exchange about something that was important to them at the time. Meanwhile Tim Jackson watched the motorsport from the fence with son Tristan who showing great excitement whenever Stuart Steinfort or Grand Pop went past on the track.

Genial John Hurst came all the way from Sydney to tell us how much he is enjoying driving his F type MG Magna, a car that he fairly recently purchased from the Ross Williams estate. Peter Scott travelled across from Tasmania to inform us that the refurbishment of the MGTA is making good progress now that he is spending less time at work, but he needs to know the proper length of a steering column.

Your Letters

Ted Loversidge writes from New Zealand...



It's good to see continuing interest in NA0540 in the letters recently, so I thought I would jot down a few historical notes while they were fresh in my mind. I first saw and sat in the Airline Coupe NA 0540 in Winter 1951. I was with Maurice D Hendry, a name that would be familiar to anyone who read American Motor Cycle magazine in the 50s, Veteran & Vintage in the 60s or who subscribed to Automobile Quarterly. In the car sales yard at the time were a speed six Bentley Saloon, a 5 ½ litre Sunbeam Saloon and a 1949 Ford Mercury. The Bentley I believe is now in Australia, the Sunbeam has disappeared and the Mercury is still around. Why I should have noticed all this is a mystery as at the time I was more interested in sailing.

By 1953 my interest had changed to motor cars as all my friends were either in the MG car club or the Vintage car club. The NA was then owned by Doug Herridge. In 1956 he ran a big end bearing crossing the Rakaia river bridge. This may sound odd but this bridge is exactly a mile and tenth long and the done thing at the time was to start from a dead stop at one end and try and cross in under one minute. The catch was that the bridge was concrete with numerous expansion joints filled with pitch which grew into pronounced ridges which as the speed increased tended to make the axles airborne with a subsequent increase in revs.

Just at this time Pete Stevens who was in the RNZAF returned to Christchurch from a stint in Fiji retrieved his PA and awaited the arrival of a 112A Marshall supercharger which he had bought from England. Pete had only been home for a few months when the Air Force sent him to England for three years. Pete sold his PA and bought RA 0253 when in England which is now in the Southward Trust. The blower went to Doug Herridge.

At this time Doug worked in the instrument section of the local airlines and also at this time specifications for materiel and aircraft components were changing frequently which meant that the rubbish bins at the airline were filled with new out of spec interesting stuff. Work on the NA progressed from a simple engine overhaul and replacing rotten woodwork into a full blown racing special. Doug laid out the instrument panel aircraft fashion; at main road cruising speed all the needles were vertical. He made the 0 – 8000 tachometer and the boost gauge. All the switches were ex DC3 with a three position switch in the brake light circuit (normal, off, on) to fool anyone watching for braking when racing closely. The special was finished in 1958 and its appearance at the local motor sport scene was sensational. Its first event was an MG Car Club standing quarter where it did only one run (18.56 secs) and sheared the blower drive part way up the run. This was replaced with a DC3 drive quill shaft.

The first years use resulted in four sets of broken half shafts and two wrecked crown wheel and pinions. This was fixed by grafting a Ford V8 diff centre in the MG rear axle complete with Ford half shafts and modifying the hubs to taper and key fittings. Anyone with experience of Ford diffs will understand the difficulty of machining the half shaft taper so that the hub pulls up exactly on the MG outer bearing set up. This was to cause problems later on. Some time in this period Herridge competed in a Canterbury Car Club Littleton Hill Climb. He came second to Pat Hoare in the 3 litre GP Ferrari. He was faster up the straight bits but was loosing out on braking. After this the brakes were converted to hydraulics with the hand brake still operating on all four wheels. In February 1961 Doug entered the sports car race in the Dunedin Festival road race meeting and after fixing brake problems in practice Doug got second place lapping several slower modern sports cars (TR2s, MGAs) twice. This seems to have caused a major upset so much so that the organiser only published the name of the first place winner.

I bought the car from Doug in 1961 and used it for everyday transport and MG Car Club and Vintage Car Club events. In the early 1960s a long 365 miles night drive home in pouring rain from a race meeting at Invercargill's Teratonga Park convinced me that a slightly cosier cockpit and a windscreen may not be a bad idea. In the 70s, the VCC acceptability years were extended which meant that the NA was eligible for more events, but not with the boy racer body. So I drew up a new body and got rid of some of the bits that had been causing anguish. The radiator, made up by Doug, was always leaking particularly at the bottom hose connection.



Ted Loversidge in NA0540 (new body) in 1972 - VCC International Rally - 24 hour relay race
Photo from Ted Loversidge

This highlighted the problems with the three piece bonnet which had to be removed to get to the bottom hose. The Ford diff had given no problems but 4.1 to 1 was a tad too high geared. There had been problems with the hub fittings so I grafted the centre of a Standard Flying 14 back axle into the MG axle. This was an ENV unit, very strong and at 4.541 to 1 a much better ratio. Doug had used a set of 16 inch Michelin wheels that had come from an F1 Magna (Schivener Special) that had been raced on local speedways. These were starting to break up so I replaced them with 16 inch Dunlop wheels and hubs ex Triumph Southern Cross. I also had a set of 19 inch Riley wheels which I used for touring. There were two other modifications that I carried out which were disasters. The first, I converted the brakes back to the original mechanical set up. The second, Doug had modified the steering completely using I think a vintage Wolseley steering box with 3 ½ turns lock to lock which I thought was too low geared. I swapped it for a Riley 9 steering box and column. This gave 1 ½ turns but no matter what I did I could never eliminate play in the straight ahead position. Worst of all it used to load up on long sweeping fast bends so much so that it took all my strength to turn the wheel. The brakes, well yes often when they were most needed they were out for lunch. I got rid of the first blower cover and the replacement was much prettier. The only other mod was to remove the Rotaflo shocks from the front and fit the original Hartfords.

In the late 80s early 90s vintage racing started to get more rules and more expensive and approaching retirement made me decide to build a new body more suitable for touring with a bit more space for bodies and luggage and a door. I started doing a set of body drawings using the original petrol tank that I had found in a friend's back yard. I even made a new set of cycle guards but with a small valance at the rear end similar to the front guards of NE/NA0518.

Then sanity prevailed. Clearly the Magnette was worth more than the other MG projects I had and selling it would finance some rebuilds. So I put it on the market and sold it in three days. Eight months later I still had no payment so I put the price up, gave it to a friend Gavin Bain to sell through Fazzaz and even then it took many months to sell eventually being bought by a local who sold it to the States as a K3 replica!

Of my project cars one is rare but one I won't do. It's an MG D type (D0351) the first D type with a 7 ft 2 in wheelbase, the first D type Foursome coupe and the only remaining D which originally carried a coupe body. The problem, part of it is subject to an ongoing deal with a friend agreed 40 years ago and still on, but I fear won't happen. Of the Allingham Coupe there must be precious few people who would know what one looked like or what the interior was like. Doug Herridge I believe is living in Northbridge, Sydney.

Harold Hastings' Diaries

Peter Kerr concludes Harold Hastings' reminiscences about life with the diminutive M-type MG Midget...

As for the mud flaps, these were very much needed for two reasons. With no running boards and close-up front guards, the body sides and leading edges of the rear guards were bombarded with mud and grit from the front wheels, much to the detriment of driver's and passenger's clothes as they entered or alighted, and much to the detriment too, of the paint-work of the side valences and the rear guards. Repainting required removal of the body bits, as a quick spray was insufficient in most cases. The fabric covering on the body was really very good and remained free from blemishes as was the chromium plating.

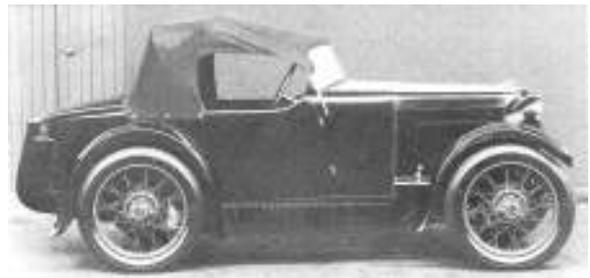
Decarbonising was necessary and regular decoking at intervals of around 4,000 miles. The battery was repleted after 18 months and the brakes relined and new cables fitted – as a precaution – after 20,000 miles. Later, at around 28,000 miles, a gradual increase in oil consumption accompanied by a corresponding decrease in oil pressure, suggested that the sump should come off for a general inspection – especially as reboring was commonly required at around this mileage. The bores were, in fact, somewhat worn, but not beyond the capacity of new pistons and rings to restore the status quo. Whilst the engine was stripped down, the big ends, front main bearing and valve guides were replaced – in each case because some wear was present and it would have been false economy not to replace them, although they could have given considerable further service if left alone. Otherwise, little was done other than routine maintenance and the fitting of new tyres as required. The Dunlop Forts of the day gave around 20,000 miles apiece.

In use, the tonneau became more of an asset than first expected because, for solo driving, it was only necessary to unbutton the driver's half to have a very companionable little single seater. Despite its small size, the M-type body was surprisingly comfortable. Modern reclining seats had yet to appear, but the angle of the Midget squab could be varied with little trouble and there was no shortage of leg room. In addition, the seat cushions were of a now-defunct type which has never been bettered for long-distance comfort – as those who remember Moseley Float-on-Air upholstery will agree. The basis was pneumatic, but instead of simple air bags, each cushion consisted of a series of inter-connected cells so that, although the seat adapted itself perfectly to the contours of its occupant – and his attitude – it did not wobble about as a simple cushion would have done. To get the best results, correct inflation was essential. Too high a pressure and the ability of the cushion to mould itself exactly to its occupant was lost; too low, and the occupant bottomed – quite literally – on the floor below. A further advantage of this type of cushion was that it gave a lower seating position than any other type of upholstery since a bare half-inch of air between the occupant's person and the floor was all that was required. Of course a little periodic maintenance with a bicycle pump was necessary and a puncture was possible, though rare – which is probably why pneumatic upholstery faded out.

One point in which those original Midgets were sadly lacking was in accommodation for luggage, which had to share the space in the tail with the spare wheel, tools, hood bows, hood fabric and side screens, not to mention a quart tin of oil, supplied with the car. The logical answer was to move the spare wheel to another position – but where? Two choices were offered by MG specialists. One was to re-enforce the extremity of the pointed tail and mount the spare transversely in a vertical position, where it was not only vulnerable but also added to the overall length of the car. Harold chose the not-very-pretty alternative of mounting it on the top of the tail, which was internally strengthened to take the load. The conversion, which was done properly, cost 22 shillings.

These were just a few of the modifications and additions to 'WL 9229' in the course of 32,000 miles of ownership by Harold Hastings and, looking back, one of the charms of cars in those days was the way one could personalize them at a very modest expenditure of cash and effort. Amongst other ways that Harold was able to add pleasure and satisfaction at the wheel of this M-type was the fitting of a radiator thermometer, a hand throttle, a fog light, a vacuum screen wiper (none were supplied with the car), a McEvoy remote-control gear change, a separate switch for the off side headlamp, and mud flaps for the rear of the front guards.

Harold took WL 9229 to A. F. Ashby of Hendon, who was a well known Brooklands driver and engine tuner. He polished the ports and fitted the later camshaft. Oddly enough, this made little difference to either the fuel consumption – normally about 35 mpg overall, or to the maximum speed, which remained at around 62 mph, but performance in the gears was very much better, the maximum on second going up from 42 mph to 47 mph – at which point valve bounce intervened. Double valve springs were considered, but 47 represented 5,200 rpm, which at the time, seemed 'quite enough for any motor car that one has to rely on for everyday use'. The same revs gave 24.4 mph in first gear. This performance just gave Harold's MG the edge on most other M-types. As for cruising - an easy 50 mph could be maintained at around 80 % of maximum which, as a rough-and-ready yardstick, was a good speed to adopt for continuous cruising then as it is now. In those days, too, anyone who cruised at 50 mph was seldom overtaken and, thanks to the better traffic conditions, could put up averages that are not discreditable today for journeys not involving motorways. For example, Harold recorded a journey from an inner North London suburb to the centre of Leeds at a running average of 41.7 mph. The London to John O'Groats run was a single-handed effort which says a lot for the comfort of the M-type seating described earlier. On this holiday, the list of steep hills from the A.A. handbook of that year made the basis of the tour. Some proved extremely rough, but none bothered WL 9229.



Small wonder in view of these things that the M-type gained such a strong and immediate hold on the attention of sporting motorists of the day and proved to be the inspiration for the now-world-wide MG car club. As a founding member, Harold had even more fun helping in the organisation of its early trials. Yes, the M-type certainly had a magic about it.

*Contributors Footnote: The diary notes were courtesy of Mike Hawke to me. I have lots of Mike's files and they are worth publishing.

Reports from Correspondents

Ross Kelly reports from Queensland...



The MG National Meeting has been done, dusted and reported upon. As the organizer of the Concours, I would like to thank those Pre-War owners who made the effort to attend and help make the meeting such a success. Robin Page, Tony Williams and Tony Basham must be singled out for travelling from Victoria and Far North Queensland to attend. Having made this effort travelling south over the last few years, I know the cost and time required to attend these events. Personally I find the effort well worth it for the social and competitive events and the camaraderie of MG owners. Unfortunately, without Pre-War owners attending the National Meetings these events lack that part of MG history that made the marque punch above its weight in the Pre-War racing events. The MG tradition needs to be continued. The Gold Coast MG Club will be hosting the National Meeting in 2104 and the MG Club of Victoria in 2015, so make the effort and attend one of these great events.



Many Pre-War MGs remain locked away in their garages in Queensland. There are however many stalwarts who are keen to venture out. For example Peter Kerr's NA is a regular attendee at events on the Sunshine Coast, such as a school visit recently. Tony Basham's in his PA epic trip from Cairns to Adelaide and "Grace" the Slattery/Schiller TA Airline is not afraid to show off her desirable chassis in public at many events. The Lakeside Car Festival attracted an eclectic mix of cars of all shapes, makes and models. The TA Airline was complemented by the NBs and Monthléry Midget driven to the event by Norm Goodall, Jeff Newey and Gavin Fry.

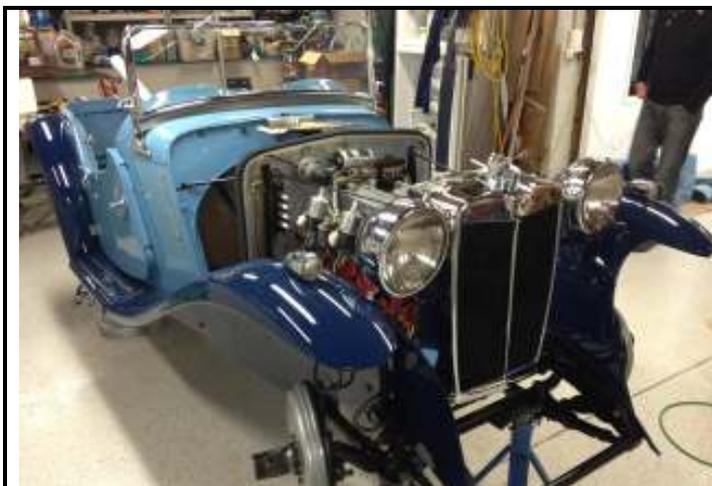
Mt Cotton Hill Climb hosted the Queensland Hill Climb Championships recently and saw the course record lowered to an incredible 36.51 seconds by Brett Hayward for an average speed of 93.27 kph. Unfortunately not by my NB which only managed to complete the course in 60.72 seconds, a second off my best time.

Fresh from competing in the Kelly NB at the MG National Meeting in Toowoomba, Duncan Freedman married my daughter Skye in country Victoria recently. They chose the K1 tourer as their wedding car and despite my reservations as to seating space in the back, the car performed superbly transporting all the wedding party to the ceremony. The children when seated in the back wanted to know where the seat belts were and were concerned when told there were none! Fortunately all the driving was on farm tracks.



Ross Letten has been progressing with the PA restoration and plans to have the car ready for its debut at the pre-war meeting later this year. The quality of the work that Ross has achieved is superb.

Tony "Yorky" Williams had the misfortune to miss most of the National Meet through injury. His P type, which also fell ill during the National Meeting, has been receiving some TLC from Norm Goodall. The engine has now been rebuilt and is being fitted to the car this week. Hopefully Yorky will decide to leave the car in Brisbane and take it onto the Bathurst event.



Ross Letten's P-type restoration is making good progress
Photo from Ross Kelly



Norm Goodall in his office
Photo from Ross Kelly

Richard Moore reports from NSW...

Profile: Stuart Schofield's 1933 MG L1 Magna Special racing car:



John Hurst and I were invited by Wendy and Stuart to Burradoo to talk and report on the Magna. The MG Magna L Type was purchased as a joint venture in 1947 between Len Golding and Gordon Stewart with Gordon rebuilding the mechanicals and Len creating the boat tailed body on to the L1 chassis. It was raced by Gordon and Len at Bathurst at least nine times as well as Mt Druitt, Lobethal, Port Wakefield and numerous circuits from 1947 to 1953. During this period Gordon obtained the full ownership by buying out Len. The MG was timed at 88.6 mph on Conrod Straight in 1950. An interesting note is that whilst the MG raced at Mt Druitt it was fitted with six Amal carburettors. Gordon Stewart then sold the MG (to build the Wheel of Fortune MG) to Steven Baker of North Parramatta who continuously tried to improve the performance of the MG by dismantling and rebuilding to obtain better track times at the Mt Druitt circuit. Maybe this is a good example of "A Moveable Feast". During this period Steven Baker procured numerous parts including a treasured NE cylinder head, rocker cover and the exhaust

extractors to name a few. Apparently he lost a little interest and the car found its way to a North Parramatta bomb yard. It was saved by the Schroeder brothers and over time they modified the car substantially by installing a cigar shaped body and removing the original sliding trunnion suspension and fitting coil springs and telescopic shock absorbers. The MG was gradually transformed into the NOTA Consul. During its racing life with the Schroeder brothers it was pranged and the chassis was a write off. The NOTA Consul was entered at Bathurst in 1958 which "had bits of the L Magna on it".

Tony Edwards then came on the scene by purchasing all of the MG parts and with the help of Otto Stone an L type chassis was located and some chassis reassembly work was performed. Tony decided to off-load the MG as he was disappointed that it was not a K3. Stuart purchased the MG in 1970 completely in bits and chassis L0595 and undertook the tedious mental and physical task of recognising the bits and placing them in some sort of order. Gradually the car took shape over some years and the MG started to hold some recognition. Stuart used the NE parts that are mentioned above in the rebuild. The double piped set of NE exhaust extractors was modified to the single unit by Gordon Stewart and this unit is installed on the car.

Stuart informed me that it was a shame that Gordon passed on prior to seeing the completed rebuilt MG.

The complete rebuild by Stuart included:

- Rebuild the motor and the gearbox.
Stuart has a tale to tell regarding the integration of the motor to the gear box!
- Install and integrate the Marshall Supercharger.
- Design and manufacture the body and paint the magnificent blue.
- Original sliding trunnion suspension has been fitted.
- Plans for dark blue wheels are forthcoming.

It will be in Bathurst in all its splendour.

In early June, I was invited to Mrs Judy Lesslie and the late John Lesslie's home by their son Robert (HSRCA member) to cover the latest news of their MG NA 0789. Unfortunately, John passed away recently and had been unwell for some time. The MG had been tucked away in John's shed, actually more garage than shed, and it was a pleasure to walk down the driveway and behold a lovely pre-war MG.



John Lesslie's NA0789 in Sydney
Photo from Bruce Richardson



Cockpit of NA0789
Photo from Bruce Richardson



The Magnette is red and black and is painted in the correct two tone livery. The period photograph of the NA 0789 came from Keith Portsmore and was taken in the UK in 1934 and when it was apparently owned new by a Mr Brierly. The registration plate BNF 304 is original and it has been authenticated by the MMM Register. The MG was brought to Australia in 1970 by Pat McBride as the typical basket case. Pat was a member of the MG Car Club in the 1970s who also owned a delightful black and green MGTD. Pat purchased the NA from the Sussex MG specialists Terry and Barry Bone for £165.00. I can recall in the 1970s Pat procuring many parts and treasures for the car from Barry Walker and Mike Dowley. The correspondence between these guys and Pat is amazing. Mrs Lesslie has a complete file on all of these snail mail transactions. What a great record to have on the car! A delightful little bit of gossip: George and Susan Tuck as friends have visited Mr and Mrs Lesslie's home. Mrs Lesslie showed me a thank you card from the Tucks.

Pat did not work on the car, however his diligence in procuring all of the treasures is a credit to him and this exercise certainly helped with the future rebuild by John Lesslie. Pat advertised the NA in mid-1988 and John came across the advert whilst in Port Douglas and promptly asked Robert to go quick sticks to Glebe and buy it. The purchase was done on the 22nd August, 1988. What a great Bi-Centenary present. John commenced the rebuild almost immediately and in typical engineering fashion the NA is beautiful and straight with an excellent red and black finish and tan leather trimming. The guards, bonnet and doors fit perfectly. Robert indicated that his Dad had so much pleasure tinkering in the shed and he was most proud of the result and so he should be. The MG has not been used recently, however it has been well stored in the garage and now requires minimum TLC plus completion of the minor jobs such as the weather gear, wiper blades etc. It is the perfect pre-war MG for the enthusiast who could purchase a going car and have the opportunity to stamp their individuality. Robert has indicated that the MG NA is for sale to a good enthusiast's home. The car needs to be loved, maintained and be on the road as part of the pre-war fraternity. Robert's interest among others is Historic motor racing and as much as he would love to keep his Dad's car he believes that it needs to find a new home.

Footnote: I have just returned from Western Australia where I attended an Ed Farrar "training program" on the Zoller supercharger that I am fitting to the Q. During a quiet moment, he drove me to visit John Hunting. We arrived at John's workshop where he was tinkering with his stunning cream and green supercharged MG TC and naturally the subject and discussion was TCs. After some time, Ed and I were invited to the garage and behold there were three truly magnificent Pre-War MGs parked and "tucked in" and keeping one another company. It was impossible to pick a favourite car as John's workmanship is outstanding.

- The blue MG K1 (K3) 0420.
- The cream and tan MG NA (NE) 0297.
- The red MG L Type 2048.

The subject of the Bathurst event was raised and John was asked whether he was attending and which car he may present. Ed and I then personally invited him to Bathurst and we hope that it will be his pleasure to attend. Also during the weekend both Ed and I visited Mike Sherrill to learn more about TCs. Mike will attend Bathurst.

Barry Bahnisch reports from South Australia...



A few days ago, after taking my little M-type for a run "around the block", I returned home and coming up behind my XJ6 stood on the brake pedal but must have pressed the accelerator as well and ended up getting a lot of unhealthy noises from "up front"! Taking off the head I noted that number two piston had entirely disappeared! The block had been bored 40 thou oversize (before I bought the car) and since I have a set of plus 60 thou pistons I will enquire about boring the block to suit them! All of that has to be on the back-burner right now as I am putting my ZB Varitone back together. In the meantime the Welch plug at the back of my TC block started leaking so I have replaced that! This MG enthusiasm is becoming a bit of a chore! Its just as well it is winter time and I hope to have all of the cars going again when the weather improves.

I have been driving my M-type for over fifteen years now and, at the risk of repeating myself, I must say what wonderful little cars they were! If nothing else, they set the scene for the more sophisticated models that were to follow. Its no wonder that they were so popular and sold in such numbers that took everybody by storm!

The Pre-war Rally at Bathurst should be great, but right now we have no plans to attend. It's a bit too far for us "crow eaters" but will be a great event. There seems to be a record number attending but alas I don't think we will be there.

Robin Page reports from Victoria...



Victorian Concours d'Elegance: Jacko sent me an email asking if I would do the Pre War Report for him as he was stuck at the ranch sans computer. Knowing how much he and Jennie both put into their Pre War MG activities how could I refuse this little request. Two events of note. Firstly, the Concours. Those who went along had a perfect day to give their cars a run and the opportunity to see Andrew Fock's beautiful Aspinall PA restoration gleaming in the warm Flemington sunshine. The lads at Historic and Vintage and Andrew had worked incredibly hard to get the car there and it obtained its Permit on the Friday - really down to the wire. You can see the effects of this on Mr and Mrs Fock in the photograph; excitement, exhaustion and the warm autumn sun combined well. A highlight of the Conkers for all concerned, and the Pre War end of the Club particularly, was the attendance of the Cuthbert Family 14/40 that Concours Director Doug Morrissey coaxed out of dusty retirement for the enjoyment of all.

Third in Class was Andrew's PA1294, Aubrey Paverd's lovely luxury limo SA1965 took second place and my M Type, WAAF Winsum, picked up the certificate adorned with a 1. Others seen in Pre War corner were Ed Taylor's J3762, Graeme Jackson's TB0508 and Ken Catlow's PA0484.



WAAF Winsum enjoys a moment with the Cuthbert 14/40
Photo from Robin page



Concours stress and autumn warmth...
Photo from Robin Page

About 20 folk came along to the Clubrooms for the Pre War meeting on 2nd May. Ray Skewes has been arranging a car for these meetings. He excelled himself this time with 2 cars! George Morgan brought along K0282, ownership of which was revealed to us some considerable time after the fact. Crafty characters the Morgans because Marguerite also revealed her own little bit of skulduggery - backed up with photos, George driving on the Brooklands banking no less - a beautiful C Type still ensconced in the UK but no doubt to be snuck into the country some time hopefully soon to make a surprise appearance at some special event. George's K is in Mille Miglia configuration and the work of Peter Gregory - and yes - red! It has been fastidiously put together and is a benchmark recreation. George told us that it drives beautifully and is fast! Marguerite loves the gearbox because it doesn't make all those crunchy grinding noises.

The other car brought along for our enjoyment was Andrew Fock's PA1294 first seen at the Concours. This car is a credit to the Aspinall operation in Armadale where it was bodied in 1935. Andrew has provided me with a detailed history of the car which I am sure Malcolm will be pleased to include in a future Pre War Register Newsletter. Space constraints limit me to saying that the car has a fascinating provenance that includes several bodies, a variety of mechanicals and a close shave nearly ending in a trip to the tip where it would doubtless have disappeared for ever.



George Morgan faces the adjudication panel
Photo from Robin Page



Ed Taylor's NA0303
Photo from Ed Taylor

It is a very pretty car and as Australian Pre War MG folk we can feel proud of the fact that it was originally bodied here in Melbourne and many years later born again in our fair city. I find the finely sculptured scuttle particularly attractive. The car is still to have the interior completed and this should be achieved by the end of June. Congratulations to Andrew for investing in this project and seeing it through so successfully. It will be a joy to be out on the road alongside this car when Andrew brings it along to future Register runs.

Ed Taylor has been beavering away on his N Type and it is starting to look like a car. See for yourself in the attached photo taken recently at Historic and Vintage Restorations. My new Baynton Jones J2 head finally arrived enabling Ray Skewes to finish the engine rebuild and I am now enjoying running J2186 in. This car is such an absolute joy to drive and could well end up as my favourite. As the engine frees up it is proving to be quite nippy!

Victorian Register members are all looking forward to the big bash at Bathurst which is shaping up to be spectacular.

Allan Herring reports from Western Australia...



Under directive from the Editor, I was relieved from writing for the March issue as we were away in Tasmania and New Zealand up to the submission deadline; so there is now a long period to look back on. Perhaps best not to reflect back to the summer months as not a great deal happens here in Perth during the hot summer months, and the MGCC Concours, which I normally attend for social reasons, was moved back to late March this year, so perhaps a good place to start. Only three Pre-War cars were there, the Kilcullen SA Tickford, Davenport J2 with modern Midget engine and our J2; no surprises there, although in past years we have seen the Hadaway J2 and Martin Swan's PA along as well. It was of course a big year for the MGBs, a special turn out of MGAs, and also it is the 50th year of the MGCC WA centre.

We did take advantage of our timing in New Zealand to attend the Pre '56 Rally in Taupo. In the 2 weeks prior to this event, we spent time in the Bay of Islands area and then the Coromandel and Bay of Plenty. Event organiser John Hancock had generously offered his K1 to us for the Rally and so we were able to park the rental for a few days. We were joined in our lakeside apartment by Lou and Melodie Symes (KN), from Fremantle, and so we set to enjoying a wonderful several days at the Rally. I had visited John and Brenda a couple of weeks prior to the rally to get a feel for the K1, and as a bonus, to catch up with Frank Langridge's NA project. This is very similar to my NA project in that both cars came without bodies, and whereas mine is an accurate replica of the NE, Frank has designed and constructed his own very attractive two seater body which is a delight in its current unfinished state. The rally concours on the Sunday aired a great variety of Pre '56 cars and a good selection of Pre War cars. Judging was carried out by each entrant for the cars in their class, a system which lessens the load on a few, or perhaps one judge. The scatter rally on the following day gave us a good look at the surrounding countryside of Taupo and covered some 180kms. The day was very warm, in fact in the low 30s if I remember correctly, so for us from Perth, an ideal way to pass the day scouring the countryside for answers to some very obscure questions, although as accustomed as we are to hot weather, we admit to being quite warm during that day. The following day at the Taupo motor racing complex included a circuit sprint and motorkhana. I was in close company during the day with Mike Sherrell who was in a TB Tickford and although missing the handbrake turns of his TC back in Perth, still managed to take the first place for the day for the "T" Types. Mike was noticed going off the sealed surface on to the grass in order to encourage the TB sideways for the tight turns.....it worked well!! The final night dinner and presentation was "red, white and blue" themed with also "the best of British", a great night with the very memorable presence of "Er Maj Queen Eliz 'erself" mingling amongst all people MG. At the end of the night, Mike Sherrell had taken the first place overall T Type in the Douglas TB Tickford, and I had claimed 2nd place in the Triple M Class. Having experienced this rally and wonderful NZ hospitality, we would easily be tempted back for another dose in the future.

On return to Perth, and including our family commitment of four weeks in Tasmania, we had been away for seven weeks so picking up the threads took a few days. However, the NA now has a full set of new wheels and tyres and progress has been in the wiring and fuel system directions. I bought a two brush modern generator conversion a few years ago as (a) I didn't have a generator at all for this car, and (b) I was quite happy to search for more amps charge than the three brush system could provide. My recollections of the first Grand Prix Rally we did from Melbourne to Adelaide in the J2, and particularly a very stormy and very dark first night out around Geelong and the Bellarine Peninsula when we became "disoriented" and the battery failed to power the headlights, is always a good enough reason to seek a higher charge rate! This conversion has tested my mechanical brain as I am incorporating a VW regulator shoe-horned into the original control box and part of a VW wiring scheme into a 30s MG scheme, but also changing that to suit the switching and dash arrangement of the NE. Subject to testing, I believe that I have now succeeded with help from others. The engine is still not back at home but is getting very close with only the line boring of the bottom end to complete. I did finish the head some time ago however, this cannot be finally assembled until I have carried out an alignment check with the block, front housing and generator. The brakes are now totally complete and operational now that I have made the two actuating rods connecting the brake cross shaft to both the foot brake and the handbrake. I tried for some time to purchase these from suppliers in England however the difficulty of this finally emerged when I received a reply saying that the N Type ones were not available as they had the clevis on the end of the threaded rod, whereas most others had the eye at the end of the threaded rod. I did read somewhere recently that someone had simply brazed a standard clevis onto a length of all thread rod which was on my mind at one stage. I finally bit the bullet and machined down some EN36 steel and the resulting threaded actuating rods were well worth the trouble.



On the local "wot's happening" scene, I understand that a supercharger has recently changed hands and that it is now in the hands of Martin Swan and will be seen on his PA before too long. The Briggs' K3 was being prepared for

the Mille Miglia Retro at the completion of its recent rebuild. I do not know details of this but do know from our being at the start of this event in 2008 and 2012, that there can be, and most likely are, very long days and nights over the three days of the event.

I did read recently in a VSCC magazine of a new member Daryl Stephens with a 1937 TA. I believe this to be the TA special which was put together some years ago by Harry Pyle and more recently was with Joe Ricciardo. I also understand that the J2 of Ian Burston is undergoing some refurbishment work; I will endeavour to catch up on this. Ian and I discussed the purchase of this car many years ago whilst I was doing work at a gold mine in the goldfields and Ian was Mine Manager, he has had the car for some years now however it has not been seen at all, by me anyway! Perhaps this refurbishment will see it out and about more. As a matter of trivia for the history pedants, this car is reported to have a spare tyre branded "Davies Balloon Tyre Co."; is this original equipment or not? Not in my scope of interest however the question has been put!

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	6.	XPAQ.	879.	20-10-39
	7.	XPAQ.	880.	
	8.	XPAQ.	881.	
	9.	XPAQ.	882.	
TB. 0630.	XPAQ.			

Davenport J2 at the WA concours
Photo from Allan Herring

Factory despatch log for the last TBs
Photo from Allan Herring

I recently had a discussion regarding the last days of the TBs as our 0620 was one of the last. I had been sure the last days were in August 1939, but this sent me searching for a copy of the despatch clerk's log which I obtained when in Abingdon some years ago (see photo). In fact, the last day was 20th October 1939 with our 0620 being the second car of seven on 19th October. It is interesting to note that the last entry is incomplete, it is for TB0630 which of course never eventuated, the question was therefore asked, did this car become a pre-production TC?

Market Place

- For Sale:** NA two-seater. The negotiable asking price is \$68000.00 which includes numerous treasured spares, books, photographs and important historic correspondence. Robert Lesslie email: robert.lesslie@gmail.com or 0418 409 850
- For Sale:** Half shafts for MG SA, brand new heat treated. \$895.00 each plus postage. Contact Col Schiller email: colin.schiller@bigpond.com
- For Sale:** Two 2.5 x 18" 48 spoke centre laced wheels, plus two 3.0 x 18" rims, un-spoked \$250 the lot. Malcolm Robertson 0408 627 685
- Wanted:** MG J2. Must be good condition, original and running with original English body and cycle guards. Interstate cars considered. Contact : Paul Acfield phone: 03 9726 4319 email: pcafield@optusnet.com.au
- Wanted:** F,L,J or P front axle in repairable condition. Robert Gibson 02 4968 4696
- Wanted:** Beechworth 2007 Review to make up my set. Rob Dunsterville 02 6557 6400



Cars for Sale on the Website and elsewhere:



Ross Kelly's K1 in Brisbane



Terry Sanders' NA in San Francisco
Email TATERRY@aol.com for more info



Harry Hickling's F1 in Canberra

Deadline for November Issue: Friday 8 November 2013