



THE PRE-WAR MG REGISTER OF AUSTRALIA

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*Hope Bartlett driving QA0257 at Nowra in 1946
Photo from the VSCCA archives, via Richard Moore*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Tribute to Rod Hiley - page 5
- How Original are our Cars? - page 6
- Pot, Parma and P-type - page 7
- Book Review - the NE Archives - page 9
- Melbourne MG Car Club Concours d'Elegance - page 10
- Colour Pictorial Feature - pages 11 to 14
- Tribute to Ken Catlow - page 16
- SVW News - WA0271 - saved from the brink of extinction - page 22

Plus all our usual columns.....

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COVER PICTURE...



Cover Photo

Hope Bartlett driving QA0257 at Nowra in 1946.

Richard Moore has sent in our cover photo for this issue. It comes from Rex Robinson who confirmed that his father Fred, who spannered for Hope Bartlett from c1933 to 1948, took this photo of Hope racing QA0257 at Nowra in 1946. Note that the Zoller Supercharger is not installed.

From the VSCCA Archives.

STOP PRESS

If you didn't order a copy of the Bathurst Rally Book, this splendid publication is now available from Rob Dunsterville.

They are \$25 including p&p anywhere in Australia. Payment by Paypal to Rob's email robertanddenny@gmail.com but please remember to send Rob a separate email with the address to send it to.

Editorial Contributions to:

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Editor's Soapbox

Hello Everyone



Welcome to our first Newsletter for 2014. And what a great start to another year of Pre-War MG motoring with events involving our cars taking place across the Nation. The most recent of these, the Melbourne MG Car Club's annual concours at Flemington Racecourse being a huge success with over twenty Pre-War MGs on display, including the freshly restored NA belonging to Ed Taylor. It will be strange to see Ed at events in something other than his J3 which he has been driving for as long as most of us can remember.

The big news for the Register at the moment is that we now have a new Patron to fill the spot left by the death of Allan Tomlinson. Ray Fowler's name will be familiar to us all as he has been a member of the Register for several years and has featured in these pages before, particularly when we wrote up his J2 Special several issues ago. He was guest speaker at the Bathurst Biennial Meeting where, despite his modesty about his exploits on the Mount in the 1950s, he nevertheless enthralled his audience with the sheer driving skill, mechanical talent and outright bravery needed to race in those far off, pre-commercial days. It was following our Bathurst meeting that several of our number raised the possibility of Ray becoming a Patron of the Pre-War MG Register and so it has come about. On your behalf, I welcome Ray to the position and look forward to bringing you more of his tall tales and true of the legendary past.

It is a fact of life that we all grow older every day and eventually we need to pass on, but it is always sad to have to report the passing of one of our number. We have two well-respected members who have died recently and tributes to their lives and contributions to the MG movement are included in this issue. Rod Hiley in particular will be remembered for his passion for MGs which undoubtedly started out as a bit of a hobby but quickly grew into a business and a deep interest in the MG marque. Many cars are alive today thanks to his role in their preservation.

And speaking of the preservation of MGs, it is always pleasing to read about completed restorations and you will find reference to quite a few in the pages of this issue. One of these is QA0257, the racing MG first brought to Australia in 1934 by Cec Warren and which eventually ended its days by being "rescued" in the 1970s by Ed Ison, another man without whose commitment to MGs many of our cars would have disappeared into oblivion. After a long and meticulous restoration by Richard Moore in Sydney, this car is now finished and we celebrate its completion with a period photo on the cover and a studio portrait of the car in the centrefold. In our next issue, we will begin to bring you more information on its history and extensive racing record.

And finally, special thanks to Barry Bahnisch who has been our correspondent from South Australia since the Newsletter went National in 2000. Barry has decided to hang up his pen in favour of spending a bit more time in the garage. We will miss his inciteful anecdotes and interesting MG history and we wish him well with his spanners.

Malcolm

Patron's Comment

Walter Magilton comments...



As Patron I must say what a very pleasant surprise it was when I received my copy of the Register's Bathurst Rally book. I feel very proud to be associated with such an organisation that can stage a colourful event like we had at Bathurst last year. Naturally I dips me lid to Tim Shellshear and Rob Dunsterville for continuing, with the help of other contributors, to add even more glamour to an outstanding event. Well done chaps! To any enthusiast, whether you were at Bathurst or not, this publication is an essential addition to any collection of MG lore, and I believe copies are still available (see Stop Press on page 2 for details). I sent a copy to our friend and enthusiast in England, John Passmore. He was delighted and impressed that so many English supply houses took out sponsorship and advertisements.

Many years ago, John lived in Melbourne and restored several MGs, including the J3 that I currently caretake. He was one of a very small number of enthusiasts besotted with early MGs, particularly the cammy models. Eventually we formed a group known as the Pre-War MG Register, and as they say, the rest is history!

With the passing of Allan Tomlinson, our joint Patron, some time ago, a number of people post-Bathurst have said it would be nice if the Register had another Patron, someone like Allan who actually did drive Pre-War MGs in anger. Allan was probably the last link with direct competition prior to the War and his exploits in the fabulous TA racing car are well known to us now. Could we all not grow old as elegantly and with such an acute memory as Allan? Altogether a terrific person to have as Patron. We were so lucky.

The name being suggested is Ray Fowler and all who heard Ray give his excellent after-dinner talk at Bathurst would agree that he is an ideal candidate. Many of us enjoyed chatting to him in private - he is a quiet but impressive person. So, I am pleased to be able to announce that Ray has been approached and is honoured to

accept. Our editor is talking to Ray at the moment with a view to capturing more of the flavour of his amazing exploits in his J2 Special during the 1950s. More on this in the next Newsletter.

With sadness I report that one of our long standing members, Ken Catlow, has died recently. Ken and his wife Judy attended the Bathurst Rally in their cream and pale blue P-type, and although not very well, loved the event and the speeds attained in the car (see page 7 of the Rally book)! Recently the Melbourne group visited his place to see his collection of fine cars while on a garage tour. Unfortunately I missed the event owing to the extreme fire danger on that day (three houses burnt in my home area of Warrandyte, none too close though). We all pass on our condolences to Judy and two generations of Catlow descendants.

On a personal note, when I was restoring my NA fifty years ago and designing a new dashboard as the old one was derelict and didn't resemble a true NA one, I decided to include a cut-out for the horn. My very young son, Matthew, was at the stage where he could climb aboard and discover the horn button, which if he did would drive everyone crazy, me included. I don't think he knows where that switch is yet and he has now just had his 50th birthday. I'm left wondering where those 50 years have gone and I know that I better tell him soon as I won't be able to remember where that switch is for much longer...

OOE

From the Registrar

Tony Sloan solves another mystery...



There are some mysteries in the Pre-War scene that I never have expected to resolve and one has been the identity of the Waltham/Feltham Special. We have had tantalizingly few photographs of this car and the only description has been that it was a Magna special. It had (from the photos) a six cylinder MG engine and a slim single-seater aluminium body and was fitted with an ENV Pre-Selective gearbox. The car had a very short competition career and an ignominious end by falling off its trailer on the way to an event in 1950. After this it disappeared. During research into the identity of the Jennings F-Type I tried to establish which chassis was used for the Waltham/Feltham Special to no avail.

This was the limit of the collective knowledge on this car until last week when Andrew Fock forwarded to the brains trust (Tim Jackson, Matthew Magilton and yours truly) copies of a series of photographs that he had discovered on the State Library website. Amazingly, these photos showing a partially complete racing car are of the Waltham/Feltham Special and show quite clearly that the search for a chassis number was entirely in vain as the car is constructed on quite an elegant fabricated chassis with MG running gear. The engine is either L or K-Type; brakes are also K-Type (from K0421?) and the Pre-Selective box probably from PA0595.



This interesting car deserves a more detailed write-up and I hope that this can appear in a later copy of the Pre-War Newsletter.

On the subject of Pre-War research, some years ago I was in the process of investigating the identity of the five J-Types in the Britannia Motors team which were the subject of the well known photograph taken at Phillip Island. One of these cars was J4211 which at that time had been bought by Geoff Broadhead in New Zealand. The car had been restored by Ron Wilson in Melbourne with a standard J-Type body. Geoff had the car for sale and rumour has it that it was purchased by a dealer in the UK who has subsequently sold it on to a purchaser in Australia; it must be one of the most travelled J-types and look forward to establishing who is the new owner.

Finally I must congratulate Ross Kelly on his determination to restore the original chassis to J3 3763 and to return it to its configuration as in the 1930s. This not inexpensive activity can only be applauded and we keenly await the final outcome.

VALE - Rod Hiley, an Icon of the MG movement

We are sad to report that Rod Hiley died recently after a long battle with cancer. George Diggles comments...



I first met Rod in 1962 as a seventeen year old proud owner of a 1947 second hand black TC, which was generally looked upon by the MGCC members then as rather unfashionable. MGAs and MGBs were the fashion for the well heeled (Peter Rayment had yet to join the Club with his TC) and Trevor Bassett was the only other keen TC owner with a beautiful supercharged green one with a special aluminium bonnet.

Rod was the noted guru of TCs and pre-war MGs at the MG Car Club (Qld) meetings on Friday nights at Wickham Street the Valley. He had just sold his TC, which apparently was THE TC in Brisbane, but I had bought mine a month later.

Rod or ('Blue' as was his nickname) was a few years older than me but already was collecting wrecked or tired TCs and was dealing from under his parents' home, on a corner next to the tram line at Camp Hill. His happy smiling demeanour hid a sharp mind for the value of all things MG and he was already then the 'go-to' man for their parts, which you paid for!

In 1964 I unfortunately ran my TC under the back of a semi one dark rainy night at Jimboomba (bald 19 inch tyres), severely bending the chassis and front axle (as well as grille, guards etc). When Rod found out about this the next Friday night at the meeting he sought me out and said 'come over to my place tomorrow and you can have a chassis'. He actually GAVE me a chassis (from Bruce Neville's racing square rigger TC). So I was forever grateful and from then on was a regular customer so he knew how to develop his business connections.

Over the years, I remember going to Solway Street Morningside buying various bits and admiring his special MGs, which he always seemed to produce from some secret hideaway. We fellow enthusiasts never knew how many he had at any one time! When he moved his business 'Abingdon Spares' to its present position at Dutton Park he always had a small advertisement in the 'Courier Mail' about a 'Noggin and Natter' at his premises each Saturday morning. These were very popular in the early days and another good way to sell MG, stuff. One memorable morning he had three genuine K3 MGs displayed outside the business and that was the first time I met Peter Kerr who arrived in his NA.

Rod always had a smile on his face when we arrived at 'Abingdon Spares' (which became 'Abingdon Motors' then 'MG City') whether it was for business or for the Saturday 'noggin and natter', and it was always interesting to see what cars he had for sale and what was under restoration. 'MG City' was and is still the place for the 'T' type spares in Brisbane and the team there deserve much credit for maintaining Rod's exacting standards. Rod always maintained his cheerful demeanour, even throughout his long battle with his illness and we never heard him complain of it once, other than he may be a 'little tired'. He gradually cut back his hours at MG City but the parts were still always available and his team maintained the same standards he kept.

Rod Hiley is a legend in MG circles, is sorely missed and will never be forgotten.



How Original Are Our Cars?

Peter Kerr shares some more thoughts from the late Mike Hawke ...

I appreciated member comments following my column on Michael Hawke and his MGs in our November Newsletter. In particular, the originality of J2396 came into question as it is the holder of two International class "I" records. I can say we just tried to keep our MGs on the road and did whatever was needed at the time. I will let Michael tell his story as follows:

"How original is any car? It may look exactly as it should but how many of the components on it actually left the works with that car and not on another one or as separate spares? Here is a tale of three (or maybe four) front axles. When I bought my J2 in 1953 it had an ordinary-looking front axle, keeping the front wheels more or less where they should be. This may have been the original front axle but there is evidence that the car had a severe biff in 1937 or so. This state of affairs lasted until 1964 when I rammed the bank at Lodge Corner at Oulton Park. A chastened Hawke drove a crooked car home north up the M6 at 25 mph (imagine doing that today!). Charles Shepstone furnished a spare and we were soon mobile on the road again. The bent axle languished in the garage (they said you could not straighten them). In 1968 I rescued a REAL-bodied J1 from the Kings Arms. The front axle on this car looked a bit sturdier than the one which was fitted to the J2, and which was getting a bit knock-kneed anyway. So we did a swap. The replaced axle turned out to be from a D-type and went to Ken Rees eventually.

In 1977, I looped the loop and bent this front axle. Now I had three bent axles (including the knock-kneed one) and spares were not to be found, at least not without a bag of gold. So I nipped off to see Donald Day. He had the metal analysed and straightened and heat treated them. The metal appears to be a pre war version of EN7, a bit outside the specification so far as impurities are concerned, but treatment as EN7 and you should not go far wrong. Donald must have been right for the "1953" axle which he straightened and treated has done duty for over 25 years ever since and the car is back to square one, at least as far as my ownership is concerned.

The first time I took my J2 racing in 1954, the R.A.C. Scrutineer looked a bit hostile when he tested the steering. "I will pass it this time sonny, but you'd better improve it before I see it again," was the gist of his verdict. Now, in those days you could get a reconditioned steering box from Bill Thomson in Wimbledon for 3 pounds 50 s. The snag was that I was in Plymouth and the J2 was needed on a regular basis and you had to send Bill your old steering box before he would send the reconditioned job.

I was moaning about this at a Plymouth Motor Club natter and was overheard by Mike Gaudin who ran Wrangaton Motors. "I've a brand new one you can have," he said, "yours for the cost of a recon-job." So I became the proud owner of a new steering box all wrapped up in pretty paper with MG octagons all over it. This must be the genuine part. Well, the thing I unwrapped looked nothing like a Marles Weller. I had to fiddle things like hell to get it to sit on the chassis cross-member and then neither the drop arm nor the steering wheel would fit. I nearly threw the lot away but had gone too far to turn back. I found a P-type steering arm in the rubbish (sorry, "spares") bin in the hangar and that fitted. Then I found a nice piece of stainless bar stock which turned up into a nice boss with a taper and a keyway, not a parallel fitting as on a J2 steering column. Then the damn thing had the wrong fitting for lubrication and I had to fit a separate oil nipple cut out of the centralised chassis lubrication pipe.

But what a steering box! Light, positive with 1 ½ turns lock-to-lock. I went out to tell Mike that his name had been accursed for a few hours but he was back in my good books. "Oh," he said, "was it not right? That was a J4 part and I did not realise it was different to the J2's." More than forty years later it is still as good as new and generous libations of gear oil, daily if necessary, have kept it so.

But what was a J4 steering box doing at Wrangaton Motors? A man called Don Quale who was a bank manager in Plymouth, had been rebuilding a J4 and had asked Mike to obtain some spares for him. Somehow the steering box had got itself left behind. By 1954 he was into Bentleys but the question I have never been able to answer was, "which of the nine J4s was this one?"



Mike Hawke in 1958 at Brands Hatch...



...and in 1968 at Silverstone

Pot, Parma, and P-Type

The continuing saga of PA1677 and the Don Moore Special. Graeme Jackson reports ...

'Twas in a Wagga Wagga pub, on the journey to Bathurst, over a pot of beer and a parmigiana built on a platform chassis of flattened chicken, that Graeme Davies mentioned that the MG PA he had recently imported from Texas America has now been identified by the MG Triple M Register in the UK as carrying the chassis number of the Don Moore Special, a highly successful racing MG in England during the 1950s. Cambridge based Don Moore who built and raced the car is also intrinsically linked with Lister Jaguar, the predominant sports racing cars of the same early post war period.

Don Moore had owned a succession of MGs before the Hitler war; a couple of J2s, a PA and two M types, one with a Jarvis body, and in 1939, PA1677 registered MJ 5703, which he energetically enjoyed in competition. In that inevitable search for higher performance, the original body was lightened, the swept mudguards removed in favour of J2 cycle guards, and a long series of mechanical modifications carried out. Then the original body was removed in favour of an ultra light low profile special alloy body built on a steel angle frame. At one stage, the tuned motor, unblown and depending on the standard crankshaft, poked out 72bhp at 7,500 rpm before further modifications were carried out. It is reported that six engine transplants later the then PB block was over bored 80 thou to 1030cc and extremely potent. Don was described as possessing a particularly "hairy" driving technique. The lightweight Don Moore Special P-type MG had achieved twenty-two outright competition wins and many class awards by 1953 when Don rolled the car at Prescott hill climb. It may have been during the short time when he was inverted that Don resolved to build a better handling competition car.

The new car, constructed on a space frame incorporated independent suspension, and, wearing an unpainted aluminium body in the style of a two-seater clubman, appears to have retained little, if any, P type components, but carried the registration number MJ 5703.

Don swapped the motor from the Special for a lathe with a man who fitted it to a J2 MG where it reportedly still remains. In about 1957/58, Don gave to an employee at Lister, the original, but modified body, presumably including the removed bits, plus the rolling chassis PA 1677 and gearbox. From these components, the car experienced reincarnation in the form of a standard swept guard P type, registered BWL 44. There is no evidence to suggest that all the available parts were not used in the rebuild of the MG and it cannot be taken that this lack of evidence demonstrates the invalidity of the assumption. The writer has not a clue what this means but it is included in the narrative to demonstrate how simple it would be to become a lawyer.

After early export across the Atlantic, the restored MG went missing to the eyes of the English pre-war MG fraternity until being purchased, imported and positively identified by Graeme Davies. No doubt the Yankee vendor told Graeme that an elderly lady had driven the MG to church on Sundays, as they do.



PA 1677 carrying standard PB coachwork
Photo from Graeme Davies



Duo blue coachwork suits the PB nicely
Photo from Graeme Davies

Like any MG melodrama there are more (or should we say Moore?) twists to the tale of Don's special. The sight and sound of the MG on the track, together with the spectacle of Don's entertaining win-at-all-costs driving style, had fired the imagination of Englishman Andrew Bradshaw who contributed an article about the car to the MG Triple M Register 1986/87 Yearbook. Following publication, through an MGCC contact, Andrew was able to discover and purchase the lightweight body removed from the Don Moore Special. These components had been stashed in a garage since the car was dismantled not long after the Prescott misadventure. Andrew, utilising the body frame and panels, over a twelve-year period was able to achieve his ambition of replicating the Don Moore Special on a spare P type chassis using a collection of P type bits. The MG, registered BMH 34, first saw action in 2006, some 55 years after Don's original special took to the track. After some use, Andrew sold the car and the new owner again has the MG for sale. Naturally when the news of the "discovery" of PA1677 became known, the current owner of the recreated Don Moore Special informed Graeme Davies of its possible availability. Photographic images of Graeme Davies' PA 1677 in 1939, and in restored form prior to export to America are

reproduced in a further article by Andrew Bradshaw in the MG Triple M Register Yearbook in 2006.

As mentioned, Don Moore's achievements as a talented engineer and engine-tuning expert go beyond his remarkable achievements in the P type MG. He, with Brian Lister and racing driver Archie Scott-Brown, were three of the most significant members of the Lister Jaguar works team. As with Don, they had raced MGs, Archie a TD and Brian a TA. Following Jaguar's successes at Le Mans, William Lyons sold his remaining stock of D type Jaguar engines and gearboxes to Brian Lister who designed and built the Lister Jaguar, the most successful sports racing car of the 1950s. Lister employee Don Moore's role was as specialist tuner. In 1958, the gorgeous-looking Knobbly Lister Jaguar could accelerate from 0 to 60mph in 4.3 seconds, which is not messing about. The history of Lister is well documented in several excellent books.

At Cambridge in November 2013 the formation of the Lister Motor Company was announced, a new organization which has been formed to bring together the original jigs, bucks, plans, drawings, and intellectual property rights associated with the design and manufacture of Lister cars of the 1950s, particularly of the Lister Jaguar Knobbly. Don Moore died in 1996 but would have been delighted that Brian Lister and some of the original team of workers have commenced to build new Lister Knobbly cars to meet current FIA regulations using new 1958 race specification D type Jaguar engines. The reader is able order her/his Lister Jaguar on line, though it is not clear which Credit Cards are acceptable.

Due to a lack of garage space, Graeme Davies will have to maintain his links with Don Moore and Lister by making do with the mortal remains of PA 1677, now a beautifully restored P type MG appropriately in a Cambridge blue hue. And naturally Graeme will still partake of the occasional pub pot and parma and P type palaver.



*The "recreated" Don Moore Special, BMH 34
Photo from Graeme Davies*

Deadline for July Issue: Friday 27 June 2014

BOOK REVIEW - *The MG NE Archives*

Graeme Jackson reviews Pete Thelander's new book "*The MG NE Archives - 1934-2013 Birth and Triumph to Oblivion and Resurrection*" ...

Just seven road-racing NE model MGs were built in haste at Abingdon in 1934 to contest the 1934 RAC Ulster Tourist Trophy Race on the public roads which form the Ards circuit near Belfast in Northern Ireland. This was in response to the new formula banning supercharged cars, and excluding the use of any of the standard MG bodywork on competing cars, which meant that the J and K3 model MGs could not be raced in the TT as they had been in 1933.

The MG Competition Department constructed the NE using components from the production MG NA. The compression ratio of the 1271cc N type engine was raised to 9.8:1, larger carburetors and modified camshaft timing gave 74hp at 6,500 rpm, gear ratios were changed, and the sleek alloy shell body had a 16-gallon fuel tank blended into the tail.



History records that despite the short time available to design, build and test the NE, the car proved immediately successful and Charley Dodson driving NA 0522 won the race by just seventeen seconds after a six hour duel with Eddie Hall's Bentley. This is the stuff of legends that further added to the considerable international prestige enjoyed by the MG Car Company. Dodson's average speed of 74.65 mph was only 4 mph slower than that of Nuvolari driving a K3 in the previous year's TT. Dodson later wrote "I liked it better than the old K type Magnette. The N type is longer and the track a little narrower that seemed to make it more suitable for easy steady handling during fast road work while the steering feels absolutely perfect."

The author of *The MG NE Archives*, Pete Thelander, purchased his MG NE, chassis NA 0518, in 1972 and set about tracing the history of his car and, as a consequence, accumulated a great deal of data about the seven NE models produced. This is the car which was painted red for Tazio Nuvolari to drive in the 1934 TT, but this was not to be, due to difficulties with Nuvolari's contracted sponsorship with an oil company. Instead Bill Everett drove in the race but retired with a collapsed wheel. If you are going to own a racing MG NE it might as well be the red one. Pete has carried out a beautiful restoration of his NE and uses it regularly at events on the west coast of the USA where he lives.

His investigations also followed the fates of the pointed tailed bodies removed by the factory after the race when three cars were fitted with alloy P type bodies to become the Three Musketeers MG trials team. The Dodson NE survives in this configuration as Aramis. NE copies are relatively easily built from NA components, so for the record, the author has collected the photos of seventeen NE copies including the cars of Australians Doug Keith, John Hunting, and Allan Herring.

The unravelling of the histories of the two MG NEs, which came to Australia before the war proved a particular challenge to the author. NA 0516, the prototype NE, and NA 0520 were raced extensively in Australia, sometimes against each other, and each was campaigned by John Sherwood and John Barraclough and of course many other owners. Luckily NA 0520 remains in Australia in a fully restored state, owned by Peter Briggs, and was recently seen in action at Bathurst by the large mob of MG enthusiasts who attended last year's Pre-War MG Register of Australia National Rally.

At this point the reader must forgive a personal indulgence. Your book reviewer, as an eighteen-year-old 1938 Morris 8/40 owner, (8hp, terminal velocity 40 mph) worked in an office next to Bill Lockington, the then custodian of NA 0516 when he was restoring the car in the early 1960s. Bill used to allocate about two hours each day to talk to all and sundry about the NE and each month lent me his copy of *Motorsport* magazine. Seen in action at Lakeland Hillclimb, NA 0516 had a profound influence on an impressionable lad and triggered a life-long passion for the MG marque. I was saving up to buy the NE and had over \$25 in the bank when Bill sold it to Rod Hiley in 1978. Rod sold it overseas in 1990 and it now resides in Germany.

The MG NE Archives is a distillation of 50 years of Pete's research and meticulous sifting of the facts from eighty years of myth, legend and hearsay. Mike Allison in his Foreword to the book describes it as "probably one of the most detailed histories to date, skillfully extracting the fiction to leave the facts exposed". The well-presented book of 195 pages is arranged logically in four sections. Part 1 details the Origins of the NE Magnette, Part 2 Individual Chassis Records traces the history of each car and includes many pages of excellent period photographs, Part 3 covers Reproductions and Copies and includes photos of seventeen cars, then Part 4 records References, Bibliography and Appendices.

The book is highly recommended and is available from the author, Pete Thelander. themgarchives@earthlink.net

MGCC Concours d'Elegance - Melbourne

Graeme Jackson reports ...



Once again the Club joined the AOMC all European day, where all those crude, vulgar American contraptions are quite properly excluded, at the ideal setting at Flemington racecourse to stage the annual MG conkers D shiny. Of the 220 MG cars proudly paraded, 21 were conceived and built by the MG Car Company Ltd at Abingdon before the European war halted production. The quality, presentation, style, diversity, the demonstration of the evolution of MG design through the 1930s, and the sheer beauty of the MGs were all on display; each car a credit to its current custodian.

Two new MGs have joined the Victorian group. Marguerite Morgan and her works driver George drove the lovely two greens K1 tourer recently liberated from the Queensland-based Blue Dog Racing Team of Ross Kelly. It is reported to have excellent performance and when it raced the blue dog, it usually won. A very rare and desirable MG it had been cobbled up by Ross from a complete original K1 survivor and was not one of those K1s built up on a discarded K3 chassis. Ross last used the car for his daughter's wedding where he was a Flower Girl (Queensland is a bit different), and Marguerite had to clean the confetti and champagne corks from beneath the preselector change pedal before George could operate this splendid MG.

Ed Taylor has been busily beavering away since 2006 on his two-seater NA that he secured as a real basket case of components. Ed's determination, skill and meticulous attention to detail to complete the daunting task of restoration have been rewarded and the MG, resplendent in Oxford and Cambridge blues, is quite magnificent. It won the prize for the best 1930s European car at Flemington, cleaned up the Pre-War MG class at the Concourse, but was pipped for outright concourse winner by a modern MGC, probably because the NA was missing side curtains. Them's the rules, judge not and be not judged.

Loris navigated Captain Ian Mawson in the fierce little M type followed by David Ogg in the seriously supercharged Maws PB. Aubrey Paverd had well-prepared the J2 and was rewarded with a third place in the Pre-War section of the concourse. The Jenny and Robin Page J2 and Ed Taylor J3 cars contrasted with the ex Ray Delaney J2 with distinctive painted windscreen frame on sale at a nearby commercial stand. For \$72K, dear reader it could be yours. The Jackson P type driven by Tim, celebrated its 80th birthday the day before. We sang Happy Birthday and For She's a Jolly Good Chassis, and shared a lemon seed cake with goeey icing. Looking on in disbelief were the Tony Sloan PA with a new functioning vertical generator, Ray Skewes' beaming PA, Alan Reid's black blown PB, and Andrew Fock's gorgeous door less Aspinal bodied PA. As always Richard Millington presented well, though his much loved TA was shy of a wash, Bob Somerville drove Graeme Davies' VA tourer, the only SVW car present, and Jennie Jackson had polished the TB so that Tony Basham could experience negotiating Melbourne's traffic. Tony had Frequent Flown all the way from Cairns to share in the Flemington fun and thoroughly enjoyed himself looking at the cars and having time to chat with fellow P people.

The interesting range of six cylinder cars of OHC persuasion included Graeme Davies' F1 two seater, his special bodied F type brought by our mate Mick Donnelly, Graeme Jackson L1 tourer, and Walter Magilton NA. Jude has mastered the Fock family NA and drove the four-seater with impressive aplomb. These, with the aforementioned K1 and NA, made for a splendid MG display, but alas there appeared not one example of the big six SA or WA models.

Good day, sunshine, good effort.



MG Car Club Concours d'Elegance - Melbourne: Aubrey Paverd (J2); Graeme Davies (VA Tourer); Graeme Jackson (L1 and PA)
Photo from Robin Page



MG Car Club Concours d'Elegance - Melbourne: Andrew Fock (NA and P-type); Ian Mawson (P-type and M)
Photo from Robin Page



The shapely tail of Ed Taylor's class-winning NA is the result of many hours craftsmanship in his workshop
Photo from Tony Basham

Pictorial Feature



*Brian Oxley enjoying the Canberra autumn sunshine in his J2 (J 4294)...
Photo from Malcolm Robertson*



*Corinne Dany
Photography Design*

*Floating on Air - a studio picture - the restoration of Richard Moore's QA 0257 is now complete
Photo from Richard Moore*



*...and in his recently restored F1 (F0428)
Photo from Malcolm Robertson*



*Definitely "her" car - Marguerite Morgan's K1 tourer, recently repatriated from Queensland
Photo from Robin Page*

Pictorial Feature



*The Paterson –Brydon TC (Richard and Lori Townley) and the ex-Bira K3030 K3 (John and Helen Gillett) at Phillip Island Historics, March 2014.
Picture from John Gillett*



*Two MG J2s in the park with Diamond Head in the background. The green and cream J2 is owned by Bob Dewitz of Honolulu and was restored by Martin Hveem. The two tone blue J2 belongs to Willie Williams.
Photo from Willie Williams in Hawaii*

Your Letters

Ray Fowler writes from Sydney...



Just a quick letter to add to the notes about the cover photo on the November edition of the Pre-War MG Newsletter where I am recorded on page 2 as lapping Mt Panorama in 3 minutes and 19 seconds. In fact, my fastest officially recorded lap time is 3 minutes and 8 seconds, and my absolute fastest unofficial lap in the J2 Special is 2 minutes and 58 seconds. To achieve this time I was definitely going too fast down Conrod!

Could I add how delighted and honoured I am to be invited to be the Pre-War MG Register's Patron following on from Allan Tomlinson. I have no idea what a Patron is supposed to do, but whatever it is, in the spirit of always trying to go that little bit faster, I will be delighted to give it a go.

Editor's Note: Ray and our NSW Pre-War MG owners will work together to bring you some of his Patron's thoughts as well as reminiscences from his racing days. "I'm a driver not a writer" he reminded me recently, so it will be a team effort...

Julian Beville-Anderson writes from Queensland...

I enclose some photos of two TAs owned by the family of a man I worked with at Airships Australia in the 1980s, John Read. Knowing I had an interest in MGs, he passed the family photos on to me. W T Read owned the Tickford bodied car in Sydney in the early 1940s while his brother J C T Read owned the sports version in the mid to late 1940s. The Tickford was registered WR331 while the sports car was VY435 and later NR888 (or maybe there were two sports cars, the photos aren't entirely clear on this point!). It would be great if we could link the photos to modern day owners.



W T Read in 1940 - pleased to have just joined the RAAF
Photo from Julian Beville-Anderson



W T Read's Tickford T-type
Photo from Julian Beville-Anderson



JCT Read with his niece Patricia Read and his TA in about 1946
Photo from Julian Beville-Anderson

VALE - Ken Catlow



**Ken and Judy enjoying the P-type over Mt Panorama on the Bathurst Rally last October
Photo from Col Poore**

Ken joined the MG Car Club shortly after he purchased his MG TD. Touring was Ken's passion consequently he joined the Touring Register Committee at its inception. Here he made significant contributions to tour organisers in recommending roads suitable for MGs and destinations not on the regular tourism schedules. It was often said that Ken must have driven every road in Australia such was his vast knowledge of our continent. The Lucky Starr hit tune "I've been everywhere man!" surely was his theme song. Ken's MG collection at one stage included the TD, a PA, and a 2003 MG TF, while he also enjoyed a vintage Rolls Royce and more recently a pre war SS 100 Jaguar sedan.

When diagnosed with cancer I recall him telling me that for the first six months he worried about dying and then he said "this is stupid", so he focussed on living. And wow, did he pack in some living. First he purchased a sheep and wheat property at Bunnaloo in southern N.S.W. where he introduced pivot irrigation like it had never been seen before, then in collaboration with some MG friends and some printing industry colleagues he purchased "Avenel Station" a 300,000 acre property where the S.A. and N.S.W. borders meet.

He went caravanning with Judy all over north western W.A. and even purchased a yacht and went sailing at Blairgowrie. His most recent MG activity was to participate in the PA in the Pre War Register's Bathurst get together where he told me the other day that on one stretch he managed to coax the PA to just over 60 mph. Ken was always cheerful and friendly, and would lend a hand to anyone. Courtesy was his middle name.



Farewell Ken Catlow – All round good guy – We'll all miss you.

Doug Hastie

Reports from Correspondents

Ross Kelly reports from Queensland...



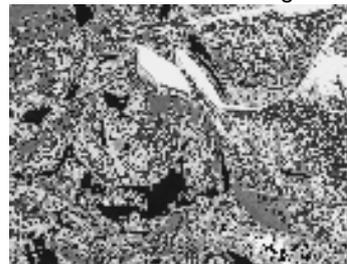
I regret to inform you that Rod Hiley passed away recently after a long illness; the MG movement has lost one of its best. To commemorate Rod's contribution the MG movement in Australia, the Pre-war MG Newsletter and the MGCCQ Octagon Magazine will be publishing a Tribute written by George Diggles. A memorial service will be held for Rod at the Cleveland Courthouse restaurant on Tuesday 22nd April at 2:00pm.

To see and hear about Tony Basham's travels in his PA should be a lesson to Pre-War MG owners that they are not driving fragile cars, they are cars to be used and enjoyed. Such delightful cars deserve to be used, they don't melt in the rain, the terrifying tropical heat can be avoided by getting up earlier and believe it or not the general public love to see the car out and about.

Dino Mattea has been taking the 1933 L type to Gear days where it always creates a great deal of interest. Tony Slattery has been enjoying the delights of MG driving in NZ for the Napier Art Deco Festival.

The MG Car Club of Queensland was running a hill climb last weekend. The Kelly NB was dusted off and prepared for the storming the hill on the Sunday. For Bathurst the diff ratio was changed to one more suitable for road use. The hill climb start was great but the first hill seemed to go on forever, the downhills were a bit more exciting as I thought I could make up for lost time. Heading for the Nuts at the bottom hairpin soon made me realize that this was not a good strategy. Will be prepared next time with the correct differential ratio for Mt Cotton.

Tim Jackson has been keeping an eye on the rebuilding of the original chassis for J3 3763 at Historic and Vintage Restorations in Melbourne. As part of the work they have now completed fitting doors to the body as it is being rebuilt to the same specifications when owned by Derry George and used extensively for motor sport in the thirties..



Ross Kelly locks up the brakes heading for the Nuts
Photo from Ross Kelly



New doors for the J3
Photo from Ross Kelly

Richard Moore reports from NSW...

Some News on Pointy Tails: Stuart Schofield called in yesterday for a general nag on MGs and to see the Q tucked into its new garage in Bowral. The Q is basically complete except for the HT leads and I am procrastinating with this little job as once the wires are installed then I will have no excuse but to enter into the scary part of actually starting the car. As many of you would appreciate that having rebuilt a car from grubby old bits, notwithstanding that they are treasured antiques, I can only hope that these bits are in the correct sequence!



Sometimes interesting news is incidental. We were having drinks the other day with our new neighbours and naturally hobbies were discussed and amongst men it is usually cars and motor bikes. Sam my neighbour who collects motor bikes commented that the Q must be the only car of its type in Australia and then I informed him that there is another Q in the Wollongong area. His comment was – only two in Australia and so close to one another. A photo of the two completed cars together would be grand. The only photos that I have of the two Qs together were taken by Rod Dunsterville whilst both cars were in Phil Vickery's custody. However I believe that the real incidental news is that there are three pointy tailed Bathurst cars within 50 kilometres of one another. The L0595 - ex Gordon Stewart, QA0256 - ex Les Murphy and QA0257 - ex Cec Warren and Hope Bartlett.

Thanks to Allan Herring: It is always pleasant to receive some feed-back on news. Allan you are correct. The L Type with the three Amals is L0595. The mechanic in the photo is Gordon Stewart. Stuart was quite excited with this news and the period photo and he has requested a copy. Please scan and email the photo and I will pass it on to Stuart. The ding in the original grille is interesting!

Ted Loversidge reports from the South Island of NZ...



Len Harrington was a keen motor cyclist competing in motor sports events pre war. In 1937 he bought a J2 recently imported from England (J2701). Post WW2 he used this car in competitive events, mainly sprints, but I think he may have raced it in the Wigram meetings. His flying quarter speed was 82.5 mph. The J2 was in standard trim but was well set up, the only modification was a change of axle ratio to 5.375. In the late 40s or early 50s Len acquired a P type (PB0252) and set about developing it for motor sport. To this end he removed the body and a local panel beater (Ernie Ransley) built a lightweight body very similar to the 1951 Le Mans TD. He raced this at Wigram doing clutchless snap gear changes up and down for the whole race. Later he entered this

car in a flying quarter and recorded a speed of 94.6 mph at 6,400 rpm in top. He sold the car to a farmer who lived in Le Bons Bay, one of the bays on Banks Peninsula all of which have steep access roads. Le Bons has a steep pinch at 1 in 5 ½, but it survived.

The next owner was a young girl and then it disappeared until about 1957/58 when it turned up in the hands of Bill Pooley, a mechanic at the local Ford dealership. A strip down showed a small hole in one bore so I went a Ford 10. I bought the engine. The next I heard about the car was in the mid 60s when I was offered a PB minus engine in Ashburton for 25 pounds. I was living in a flat with a single garage and nowhere to store it. Next it was a chassis at Autoparts a local wrecking company from where Gavin Bain bought it. He got the engine from me and set about replacing all the other missing bits, got a new body built at Auto Restorations and then sold it to Brian Milligan when he was offered a more exotic project. Brian completed the car and then sold it to someone in the North Island hoping to form a car museum.

Len Harrington either gave or sold the original body off PB0252 to a friend who made up a chassis out of Morris bits & Ford T side rails, Morris front axle and Ford 8 engine, gearbox and back axle. It looked the part apart from tin wheels and was owned for many years by a young lad with the surname of Rainbow who simply used it as everyday transport. Eventually it disappeared until some time in the mid to late 70s when I heard the exciting tale of someone discovering a rare PB (it is always a rare PB) in a garage in town and who managed to buy it cheaply because it was just an old car! Two or three months later it was advertised in a local newspaper and promptly sold for a high price. Six months later the story is repeated.

The third person to buy it cheaply was Ian Harper, a panel beater. Ian set to and made a new chassis for it based I think on a J2. He also imported lots of bits from England for it, axles, hubs, trunnion bush carriers etc. I think he fitted a BMC/MG Midget A series engine and gearbox and fitted a set of 15 inch wire wheels. He used it for daily transport and used to park it outside the workshop where he worked. Of course someone spotted it, had to have it and made an offer he couldn't refuse. The last person to buy this car is a member of the local Vintage Car Club and he has had it now for a number of years.

In the 1940s, 50s and 60s just about every house built in New Zealand was financed with a Government mortgage. The design and construction of these houses were governed by a very rigid set of rules. One of these rules required the house to have a flat floor with no stepping down on a hillside. Those on steep hillsides ended up with two thirds of the house sticking out into fresh air and supported on tall pillars. The only room allowed in this void was a laundry with outside access only. Wellington was such a town where this was common. In the mid 60s owners were allowed to enclose these spaces and it was at such a time at a Vintage Car Club noggin that I was introduced to a visitor from Nelson who owned an F Magna. During the evening's chatter he told me that many years before he had lived in Wellington where he had owned a J2 which had been wrecked and had left the chassis and back axle casing under the house. He gave me the address and said I could have it if it could be recovered. At the time I had a commercial traveller friend who lived in Wellington whose sales run included the South Island. He went around only to be told "there's no old chassis under there but you had better have a look because we are closing it in tomorrow".

Such is the stuff of legends it was there and is now in my garage, J2701 Len Harrington's J2. Most appropriate, for it was Len who taught me so much about assembling, tuning and setting up OHC MG engines. I even have Len's copy of Blower's manual to go with it.

Barry Bahnisch reports from South Australia...



Regrettably much of the Pre-war action seems to have tapered off in SA at the present time so it is time to hand over to someone who is closer to the action and who may be able to get it going again! Perhaps it is time for me to reminisce!

My first "vehicle" was a 1925 Velocette motor cycle which I rode home on the night of my 16th birthday. It had belonged to my uncle (who kept most of the vehicles he had ever owned!) but it was a reliable old thing which I rode to the motor racing at Pt. Wakefield once or twice. Still 16 I bought a PA (with money borrowed from an aunt!) and promptly had an accident. Not knowing whether the other driver (who was a prominent lawyer, later a judge!) was going to "cough up" (he later did!), I tried to fix it myself and that must have been the start of it! Anyway, I kept the P-type for some years and I dare say that got me involved with pre-war MGs as the MGCC of SA was formed at that time.

In due course I was able to buy my F-type (which came third in the 1933 AGP at Philip Island) and, later, my M-type. So, it has been a long story as I am now 76. The little M-type goes very well (although now off the road due to a broken piston) and so does the F-type (now F2 configuration).

Over the years I have had much enjoyment with MG's and my everyday car in the future will be an MGB-engined ZB Varitone Magnette (if, and when, I finish it). I still have the TC that I bought over 50 years ago and a couple of MGA's, a coupe and a roadster (which we took to the UK in 1996 for the World Rally).

So, MGs have figured prominently in my life and I have derived much enjoyment from them.

This is my valedictory, I hope that the editors can find someone to take over.

(Barry, thank you for all your notes and contributions over the past many years. Your wit, wisdom and words have been a joy to include in each issue. - Editors)

December 1st Christmas Break-up Party

Oh what fun it is to ride,
In an eight horse open J



Jennie Jackson had arranged with Medhurst Winery's Sally, for a yummy Christmas brunch at the most pleasant outdoor winery restaurant, opened for our exclusive patronage. The forty-four octagonalists who enjoyed the day expressing massed passion for MG, also demonstrated that Australia is in the middle of a dining boom. Ian Mawson with Loris in the familiar Riley Special plotted a route through the delightful fresh green Yarra Valley, on roads of smooth disposition and datposition in order that the Hartfords hardly budged. As always Ed Taylor came in the dependable MGJ3, but this time collected Lesley on the way through to balance the machine. Graeme Steinfort (TA) and Phil Cassie with passenger Ali (TA) all Austin Seven nuts in real life, admired and discussed Tim Jackson's LWB Ulster Austin at the start, but genial Richard Millington (TA) showed more interest in Roger Watts' spectacular Argentine Bugatti, Eve, and Roger's navigator Carolyn. Ray Skewes transported Mick Donnelly (hoodless PA) so that Kath and Trish could appreciate traversing the Gruyere hills searching for the road sign that was not there, and observing all the MGs going in the opposite direction. Neil Cooke's PB's sparking plugs became all sooty, so he whipped home en route and reappeared in the TF 1500 with appropriate sparking gaps, arriving with Tony Sloan and Celia in PA all creamery crackery.

Andrew Fock had a hide. His and Judy's bottoms initially obscured the brand new burgundy red leather upholstery adorning the bucket seats of his gorgeous black door less pre-selective blown PA, and we had to wait for them to clear the cock pit to admire the carpets, as you do. The venerable MG NA with Walter Magilton and Denise aboard had no room for Walter's paints and easel so that he could not paint the terraces of grapes flowing to the valley floor from the elevated restaurant, attractively framed by the blue undulating line of distant hills. Good thing, we would have been there all day. In the rear seat of the Aubrey Paverd's MG SA, Gwen Bennett wafted in style down the back roads savouring the car's Grace Space and Pace, and Rene's face in the passenger's window. Jennie and Graeme Jackson motored in the MG TB.

And there was a TC (Dot and Paul Acfield), three Tiddies (Ken and Judy Catlow, Kevin Leishman, and Jenny and Perry McNeilage) and the evergreen MGB (Andrew and Rhonda Barnett who are restoring a P type). The clever design of the XPAG engine incorporated the built in feature of total loss of a measured quantity of engine oil from the timing chain case in order that the chassis of the TB and TC models are liberally coated with oil to protect from rusting. And the tail light is lubricated. Bruce Ellis' TC has the defect that a small area at the front of the chassis escaped the escaping Penrite and has a little corrosion. Consequently the car is under going a proper MIGing at Ray Skewes' establishment. Bruce and Rosalie had to bring the modern MG TF.

George was over seas but this did not deter Marguerite Morgan who bounced out of her Gippsland hammock at 5.30am to join the octagonal fun. We were all nice to her because we want to have a drive of the C type when it arrives in Oz. The man who built the Medhurst Winery eatery, almost single handed, Luke Nobel, brought along mum and dad, Alicia and John who agreed that it has been built at least to the standard of John's TC. Nigel and Fran Willey are proud and enthusiastic owners of the black four-seater L type MG featured in the Richard Monk book *The MG Collection* (MG Owners Club 1994). This highly original, rare and desirable MG is a bit unwell in the engine department and needs the 6 cylinder motor rebuilt on a new block. Fran and Nigel much enjoyed their first outing with the pre-war fraternity, in their splendid six light Riley Kestrel.

Stimulated by a couple of Lattes, Captain Mawson addressed the throng recalling the successes of many of the pre-war MG events of 2013 in particular the Bathurst meeting, and anticipated the busy 2014 program which provides ample opportunity to use and enjoy our pre-war cars. We were all inspired, and impressed that he has not become repetitious by being repetitious by repeating himself over and over again.



Register Meeting Thursday 6th February: The car on display, a beautifully presented 1934 MG NB special, NA 0963, was lent to us for the night courtesy of Historic and Vintage Restorations who had built the car, and the generous owner Bryan Frost. The car's makings came to Australia as a pile of bits about ten years. Now wearing a green painted well proportioned, pointed tailed body in the style of a K3, the front cowl hides a large Roots type supercharger. As on the K3, an ENV 75 preselector gearbox is fitted, and the bunch of bananas exhaust pipes that poke from the bonnet side continue into a large exhaust pipe down the side of the door less MG terminating in a large fish tail. The N type Special starts easily and runs very well indeed, going brm brm. We all liked it.

Social Run and Garage Tour 9th February: Due to the ambient air temperature not falling below 30 degrees the previous night, the MG was easy to start and reached optimum-operating temperature quite quickly. Feather duster Robin Page arrived in the J2 at the start wearing a pith helmet and busting for one, and Ed Taylor in the J3. Ray Skewes brought Mick Donnelly in the PA, Graeme Steinfort Aspinal PA, and Alan Reid's blown PB parked away from the Ian Mawson Q type look alike PB which emitted puffs of oil smoke from the bonnet gaps, despite the Total Fire Ban. John Gillett drove the lovely black four seater NB from Geelong, hood furled, into a howling northerly headwind

and waited for the midday weather change so that he could drive home into a howling southerly headwind, such is his dedication. Richard Millington in the Boy Racer TA, Graeme Steinfors TA, and Graeme Jackson TB, had the pre-war T types. There were no TCs because a sweating John Cochrane unwisely came in Quentin Sykes' Austin Healey 100/6, a car designed to utilise under floor exhaust heat to cook the passenger, but Dot and Paul Acfield MGY, Kevin Leishman TD, Jenny and Perry McNeilage TD, and Neil Cooke proper TF 1500 demonstrated the attractive nature of square-riggers. John Nobel, MGBGT, bought Alisha a medium sized cappuccino but not the promised breakfast. Andrew Barnett with passenger David MGB, Aubrey Pavard MGF, Bruce Ellis MGF, Walter Magilton Morgan, Peter Norton Triumph Dolomite, Graeme Davies Porsche, Phil Cassie, Tony Sloan, Peter Fleming, and Tim and Tristan Jackson were all pretty modern.

Our garage tour hosts, Bev and Peter Briese have widely used each of their impressive, immaculate, very desirable motorcars both in Australia and in Europe, Bentley 4.5 litre, Bentley 3 litre fitted with 4.5 litre motor, Jaguar SS100, Jaguar XK120, Jaguar V12 E type, Alvis Speed 20 Charlesworth Drophead, De Dion Bouton Grande Tourer, and the DM Delage fabric bodied saloon that Lord Casey drove on his honeymoon filled the motor house. Ray Skewes found a Vincent Rapide motorcycle. and a water-cooled Scott Flying Squirrel (watch out for your nuts) Bev gave a short talk about each car, her favourite is the SS100. Then around the corner to Ken and Judy Catlow's house went the octagonal mob, for an expertly sizzled snag with dead horse, courtesy of cooks Belinda, Max and Evan, and to inspect the kelpies, the MGP type, SS Saloon, MG TD and Graeme Steinfors' Austin Seven Chummy, Lancia Aprillia, MG PA and MG TA.



Garage Tour - what colour was the XK Jaguar?
Photo from Robin page



Pre-War meeting. Ian Mawson's P-type...
Photo from Bob Somerville

Pre-War Register AGP Meeting 14th March 2014: Near on forty passionate octagonalists, including one octogenarian, listened and helped from the floor as Ray Skewes recalled the success of the Garage Tour and chatted about the cars we had seen in the magnificent Breese collection and at Ken and Judy Catlow's barbeque. He was convinced that the white Jaguar was an XK140 but others thought it an XK120. The register thrives on mutual respect and on our collective ability to negotiate differences and to amicably reach an acceptable compromise to accommodate individual opinions. We agreed that it was a Jaguar XK130 painted either red or green or both.

Ken Catlow's funeral appropriately celebrated the life of a charming, interesting, remarkable man who loved his MGs and adored the company of fellow enthusiasts. Lots of pre-war and later MG s and their owners turned out as a mark of respect to a friend we all wished we had known for a much longer time. Ken, we miss you.

Neil Cooke, piloting the PB in competition during 2013, managed to beat off a gaggle of highly desirable post vintage thoroughbred motorcars to win the prestigious VSCC PVT Trophy. He was warmly congratulated. You can do it in an MG.

Bob Somerville has complemented author Leon Sims' work by proof reading and searching out photographs to illustrate the manuscript of the new book documenting the first 50 years of MGCC Victoria. According to Bob, who is reported to have an intimate understanding of ins and outs, this Who Dunnit does have a happy ending, because even though we dunnit and can't remember, we are still doing it. To prove the point, Bob spruiked about the Conkers de Shiny, and a show of hands indicated that the targeted twenty pre-war MG motorcars might well front up at Flemington. This, for the 90th anniversary of the first of the MG marquee, a tent brought to us by courtesy of Microsoft Word spell check, which can't recognise the word marquee. (It also rejects gudgeon, but accepts without whimper, my high dudgeon).

Many of the MG mob had been to the entertaining historic race meeting at Phillip Island on the previous weekend and had cheered John Gillett on the track in the K3. John reported on the fun and games at the Oz AGP where K3030 was again in action in company with Ed Taylor's J3. Tim Jackson, having worn out the family PA, had a drive of Ed's J3 on Friday, together with Richard Townley in the Curley Brydon TC, Ian Mawson in Vulgarilla, and also Ian Edgar who made no missed steak in the ex-Forde Brothers TC Meat Safe Special.

The car on display in the club rooms was PB 0749 Ian Mawson's blown P type, Q type look alike, which after an

active six decades on the race track, is now road equipped with cycle guards and lights, the majority of which actually function, albeit sporadically. New South Welshman Geoff McGrath purchased the dismantled MG in the early 1950s, complete with its English two-door body. He fitted an under bonnet Marshall J100, Rootes type blower driven by belt at 1.5 times engine speed. At 16psi boost this produced a considerable improvement in performance and would run to 8,000 rpm. The head was mildly worked but the flywheel was given a severe haircut to give the standard P type crankshaft a fighting chance. The front axle, located by radius rods, Q type style, carried larger hydraulically actuated brakes, as did the rear, and the differential was strengthened.

Geoff McGrath campaigned the car very actively in the 1950s and 1960s in all manner of events. This sporting activity was curtailed by the 1956 Police Act NSW, which resulted in the closure of a number of circuits, restricting NSW drivers to hill climbs and sprint meetings, until vintage circuit racing began in the mid 1960s. To be competitive, the original body was removed in favour of the Q type copy ultra lightweight frameless shell that it wears today. Tim Shellshear's FN/P special now utilises PB 0749's discarded factory body from the recycle bin. Having shed a great deal of weight the shiny P special was hard to beat. It won at Hume Weir, held records at Collingrove, Mallala, Oran Park and Warwick Farm. In the early 1970s at Warwick Farm a gudgeon pin broke liberating a connecting rod and seriously ventilating the engine block. The car languished until Ian Mawson acquired the MG from Geoff McGrath in May 1983, minus engine and gearbox that had found another owner due to an unpleasant contractual dispute.

The engine owner would have no dealings with Ian Mawson, so Maws asked his mate, Jacko to write a letter to innocently enquire whether he had any P type bits for sale. The man was not fooled, and he wrote back advising that the parts were for sale but for a huge sum of money. The story had a happy ending because the MG parts were subsequently sold on, together with a veteran car and other stuff, to a Queenslander who two years later found the Jacko letter neatly filed away under the P type seat. Following contact, Ian Mawson was able to purchase the engine and gearbox for the car. Jacko is still waiting for the payment of a spotter's fee and for the reimbursement of the cost of the postage stamp.

In the last three decades Ian Mawson has sprinted, hill climbed, raced, engaged in tours, trials (as a member of the famous Octagoons trials team) and used the hard working PB 0749 over a squillion trouble free miles and even more kilometres. At Mt Tarrengower Hillclimb perhaps twenty years ago he took to a roadside channel in the P type at high speed and spectacularly broadcast some bales of hay, but with relatively little adverse consequences to him or the car. Ray Skewes thanked Ian for his entertaining contribution to the pre-war MG register meeting.

Brian Oxley reports from Canberra...



Canberra's three active Pre-War owners, Harry, Malcolm and me, have continued to keep the flag flying in our own ways. Malcolm's SA has been seen at events, including Canberra's annual Wheel's Show where all the local car clubs combine to put on big display of over 500 cars. This year the display included 35 Silver Ghost Rollers, many from the UK and the US, who were on a rally along the east coast of Australia. Malcolm photographed a nice Derby Bentley drophead, also on the rally, in his favourite colour of BRG in anticipation of starting work soon on his SA Tickford restoration. Brian uses both his J2 and F1 regularly, especially for our Tuesday lunches along the shores of Lake Burley Griffin.

In an impromptu early Kimber's Birthday event, one of the local annual Pre-War events, if not the only annual event, Malcolm and Brian and their respective other halves enjoyed an outdoors lunch in leafy Yarralumla with Richard and Eileen Moore, visiting from their new home in Bowral in the NSW Southern Highlands. There was much talk about Q-types, F-types and J-types, but, in Harry's absence, SVW discussion was politely off the agenda...



Allan Herring reports from Western Australia...



Looking back on summer, I realise that I have spent a majority of the time away from Perth and so have not been in touch with the MMM brigade much at all. This realisation came to light last weekend when the J2 battery was too much rested to start the car and take my annual trip to the MGCC Concourse. Never mind, progress is continuing forward on the NA albeit at a slow pace given absences from home. The engine is now within a week or two of completion however, I know there will be many other pieces to put together and/or find, before it will run, and also some other ancillary items such as the dip stick adaptor, which are not critical to running, but nonetheless are needed.

As there are normally only one or two Pre War cars which attend the MGCC annual concourse, this year was well attended with two J2s, a PA and an NB. The J2s were the Alan Davenport Midget-engined car and a recent import to WA, being the green J2 now belonging to Phillip Wells, a member of the TC Owners Club. Even though I spoke to Phillip, I did not get too much detail of the car other than the body is not a factory original but built in Australia based on a car that had been laid up for quite some decades. The PA belongs to Tony Bagshaw, (PA 0482). The NB was the Stewart-Richardson car, which became so familiar to those at Bathurst last year. Ken and Mary Ann are in the final stages of organising an extended stay in the U.K. for the next nine months or so and are finalising "need-to-do" items on the NB before it gets shipped away. Perhaps they are missing the SA which recently went to England and has featured in photos on page 82 of the February "Safety Fast" from the Home Centre. Late news says that the NB is now not going to be taken to the UK as it needs some engine work. A campervan will take its place.



J 2646 in Perth owned by Ian Burston
Photo from Allan Herring



Phillip Wells' newly arrived J2
Photo from Allan Herring

Since the last bulletin I have now seen Ian Burston's J2 (2646) which I knew of as I discussed the purchase with Ian at a mine site, probably some 15-20 years ago. This was formerly the Owen McNeill car from Queensland. As the attached photo shows, it is now in a workshop and looking like some serious engine work will be carried out which looks much overdue, as I would say that it has not run since coming to the West. I am being asked sources of much needed engine parts so this is encouraging.

There was also a small turn out of Pre War cars at the recent TC Owners Club Concourse held in Matilda Bay on the banks of the Crawley Bay adjacent to the Royal Perth Yacht Club. I quote from an email forwarded to me from Lou Symes: "The Pre War category saw the immaculately restored NB of Ken and Mary Ann Stewart-Richardson take first place, with the PA of Martin Swan, now sporting a supercharger in second, and the newly arrived J2 of Philip Wells in third." I believe that Martin Swan is now a supporter of supercharging having had this addition only recently.



Tony Bagshaw's PA at the MGCC Concours in Perth
Photo from Allan Herring



Alan Davenport's J2, also at the MGCC Concours
Photo from Allan Herring

SVW News - WA0271 - Saved from the Brink of Extinction

Gary Wall describes how he saved WA0271 from the brink of extinction...

WA0271 - This car started life on 14 December 1938, the factory issue date, the date the engine QP1G 0510 was first installed in that chassis. It was a saloon. It was painted black. It was first registered on 6 January 1939 with the number BMO137. In 1951 it was owned by Harold Edward James Bull living at Cranbourne Hall, Winkfield, Berkshire and it was still in his ownership in 1956. After that, nothing is known until I discovered the chassis, springs and axles in Devon in 2005. So what happened to the car during these 50 years?

Digressing for a moment, in 1999 I purchased WA 0251 which was the first WA but also a Tickford. It started life as a grey car with red upholstery. I kept it in the UK and used it most years as my rental car covering about 3000 miles each year on average. The owner before me was a fellow called Nigel Hough. He purchased 0251 in about 1970, so when he died in 1995 he had owned it for 25 years. He owned a garage in Chudleigh a few miles south of Exeter and just off the A38. His garage had the agency for MG. His son Robert inherited the car when his father died. Robert did not want the car and planned to put it to auction. Terry Bone heard about it and told Robert he had a "private buyer". Guess who? And so it was mine.

When I was going around locating all the WAs I came across a fellow called Richard Knibbs. He owned a lovely WA

Tickford the he had restored by SVW in Hull. Just after meeting Richard, I discovered that he had been married to Margaret Hough, Nigel's daughter. But no, he did not find his WA via his father-in-law. It came from Bristol. Richard owns a cider bar in Newton Abbot not far from Chudleigh. But he resides and keeps his cars at a village called Throwleigh which is where I often called to visit him. Some years I did not get to Devon and one of those was 2005. So I used to talk to Richard on the phone. That year we had a good chat and about to hang up he said by the way I have a spare WA chassis. Was he willing to sell it? Yes. I said I'd be down to see him tomorrow. And sure enough, there it was leaning against a stone wall with a plastic cover over some of it. I asked if he knew the chassis number. No. Did he have a mirror and a wire brush? Yes. So we set to work and got the number. A new find for the Register. And yes, it had come from Chudleigh. And where was the rest of it? Some of it is in my shed. But the most important item was missing. The bulkhead. Richard has tried his best but it cannot be found.



Gary Wall with the chassis of WA0271
Photo from Gary Wall



Sproings and axles fitted
Photo from Gary Wall

The following year I returned to Throwleigh with my good friend Richard Holl. We got the thing off the wall and fitted the axles and sproings and a set of old wheels that Richard had. Then I got Terry Bone to collect everything and take it to SVW in Hull. It is still there and Peter Ratcliffe is virtually finishing the car off for me as far as the body tub goes and will place the body on the chassis for shipment to NZ. I have the bonnet, wings, running boards, radiator and grille, engine/gearbox, dashboard/instruments and all the lights, windscreen/wipers (ex WA 0404 that Australia lost), wheels etc here. It should arrive later this year. I then have to refurbish the chassis and one of the two spare engines I have. And when it is all together get it painted. So, if you come over for the Pre-56 in 2017, you just might see a two-tone blue or a blue/black WA DHC. I said just might, but I am forever hopeful!

Market Place

- For Sale:** PA four-seater. PA0819, two-tone green with new green-trimmed black weather gear. Aluminium-bodied, new framing and new low profile battery. Rebuilt engine, new tyres. Ring for photos. Best acceptable offer. Peter Meyer, email: peter@meyer.id.au or 03 9439 7278
- For Sale:** J3 parts ex-J3770R (Peter Briggs): bonnet, no side panels, genuine exhaust extractor, one door panel, no wood. Replica parts to suit J2: undertray in aluminium, Brooklands style w/screen with MG cast on ends, requires finishing, alloy quick fill petrol caps, semi-finished. Two K3 replica headlamp/guard stanchions, require polishing, Smiths shock absorbers marked Morris, same as fitted to Vintage MGs; one pair of Australian-made cycle-type guards very close to original, J2 will suit any square-rig MG, as new unpainted. Offers wanted on all bits, or consider exchange on Riley 9 or 12/4 good mechanical parts including preselector gearbox. Bob Hadaway 08 9276 4620
- For Sale:** MG KN 4 door pillarless saloon body. As many of you know I have in my custodianship the remains of a 4 door pillarless saloon body, fuel tank, interior trim, dash components, hubs, etc. I would be pleased to move these onto a new custodian for the prices I paid for them to keep them off the MG Scrap Heap. I'm sure that I could bring them to Sydney or Melb on a suitable trip. Harry Hickling harry.hickling@apvautomotive.com Ph: 0419 011 092
- For Sale:** MG SA tourer, MG ND, F-type Stiles. I have a complete MG SA tourer, or more reluctantly the MG ND, or MG F1 Stiles chassis and running gear. They are in many respects surplus to our immediate needs. Both the SA and ND are in advanced stages of restoration. The SA is running and has heaps of power - it is fully rally prepared for Peking to Paris. The ND is of course at Historic and Vintage Restorations in Melbourne - I am open to reasonable offers on one of the cars Harry Hickling harry.hickling@apvautomotive.com ph: 0419 011 092
- For Sale:** SA alloy sump. Appears sound, complete with plug but with one chipped flute. It is marked MOWOG 20108 with, it looks like, a 1939 cast date. Robert Sands: robert@robertsands.com.au ph 0417 380 281
- 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:** P-Type tailshaft with original 6-bolt universal joints. David Harrington, 9 St Georges Road, Upper Beaconsfield 3808 Ph 03 5944 3512
- Wanted:** Any literature on spare parts or repairs to J2, any item new or second hand or whatever. Bob Hadaway 08 9276 4620
- Wanted:** Luvax shock-absorber from TA or P-Type. Urgently required to replace a cracked one. Tony Sloan ph 03 9844 0919 0419 359 708 aj.sloan@bigpond.com
- 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: pcacfield@optusnet.com.au
- Wanted:** Beechworth 2007 Review to make up my set. Rob Dunsterville 02 6557 6400

Pointed Tails - Lake Perkolilli Centenary of Speed - October 2014

Graeme Cocks has some exciting news...



It's my pleasure to tell Pre-War MG owners about the Lake Perkolilli 1914-2014 Centenary of Speed. The Centenary of Speed will be held at the old Lake Perkolilli motor circuit near Kalgoorlie from 16 to 19 October 2014. It will be on the weekend before the National Veteran Rally being held in the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder. The Veteran Rally is expected to attract 100 cars and motorcycles constructed before 1919. So why celebrate Lake Perkolilli? The claypan has a remarkable history which goes back almost as far as the motor vehicle in Western Australia. The first racing began at the claypan in 1914 and continued right through to World War II. A grandstand was even erected to cope with the crowds. It is our own Brooklands or Indianapolis.

Lake Perkolilli has always been a legendary part of our State's motoring history and we think that it is appropriate to celebrate this history. The cars which competed at Perkolilli were not just racing cars – vintage sedans and tourers, even taxis raced for many years. Every year, cars and motorcycles would be driven from all over the State, shipped on trucks or loaded onto the express train to get to Lake Perkolilli for the September event timed to coincide with the Goldfields horse racing round. The teams often arrived at the claypan a week before the event to tune their machines. On race day, thousands of people arrived by car, truck, motorcycle, bicycle, charabanc and often aircraft. A line of cars stretching a kilometre along one side of the claypan would be full of picnickers and the races would begin!

Our plan is to welcome pre-war cars and motorcycles on the claypan just like the good old days and recreate the race days of long ago and plans are now taking shape for the Lake Perkolilli 1914-2014 Centenary of Speed. Ross Oxxwell from the Vintage Sports Car Club and Graeme Cocks have been working with CAMS to develop the event. The event will be limited to cars built before 1940 or after 1940 by invitation. The aim is to re-create the feeling of race meetings from the 1920s and 1930s. If you have a car which is a little bit later, but has a pre-war look about it, let us know and we might fit it in. (yes, MG TCs do look like pre-war MGs). Of course, motorcycles also raced and owners of early motorcycles are also encouraged to participate. The current plan is for activities to begin at Lake Perkolilli on Thursday 16 October. The first two days will be for free practice and trials to test and tune and to work out elapsed times. The claypan is a unique circuit with a rock hard and flat clay surface. The track is defined by the saltbush which grows on the areas which are not driven on. If you have ever wondered what motorsport was really like in the 1920s and 1930s then Lake Perkolilli is probably the only race track in the world where truly nothing has changed. You will be driving on the exact same surface as those days -- no new bitumen tarmac, no kitty litter run-off areas, and no concrete barriers. It is just the hard red dirt and the blue sky. Yes, even the dust is the same! As there is no need for barriers the only danger from losing grip is to slide out from the racing line.



Saturday and Sunday will feature a program of demonstration events where cars are released onto the track at intervals depending upon their speed with the timings designed to achieve massed finishes for up to six cars on the track at any one event. The aim is to make participation in the Centenary of Speed as economical for participants as possible. We had had good discussions with the City of Kalgoorlie/Boulder and we are confident that the event will be well supported locally. When we have conducted events at Lake Perkolilli in the past, people have either camped at the claypan or stayed in Kalgoorlie and driven out past Kanowna every day. With the extra interest in the Centenary, discussions are currently underway to see what the current requirements are for camping.



For more information, visit: www.motoringpast.wordpress.com or contact the Event Organiser: Graeme Cocks
Email: gacocks@inet.net.au Ph: 0438 980 859

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