



TORQUETUBE

Newsletter of Riley Motor Club Qld Inc.

December 2008



Next Meeting: 8:00 pm Thursday, 11th December
Queensland Sporting Car Club
206 Montague Road
West End 4101

Editor: Linden Thomson (07)32696426 lindenthomson@optusnet.com.au

Minutes of the OGM of the Riley Motor Club, Qld., Inc. held at the Brisbane Sporting Club, West End Thursday, 14th November 2008

Meeting opened by President Alan Hill at 8.10pm with 24 members and guests present.

Apologies: Brian & Lyn Jackson, Delma Thomson, Pat & Betty Elliott, Mike Bramwell, Bill Donovan, Ken Lonie, John & Eve Romer, Shirley Ellwood, Bill Short, Robin Hull, Kiara Rizzo, David Schoch and Dick & Earla Self.

Minutes from previous meeting:

Moved, Graham Ellwood and seconded by Dorothy Cameron that minutes be accepted. Carried.

Business arising from minutes:

Date of December Meeting should be 11th December.

Inwards correspondence:

1. Letter from Queensland Raceway;
2. Invitation to Bayside Vehicle Restorers Club Australia Day Rally 26th January 2009;
3. Membership Application & cheque from Mr Jim Scott, Highfields;
4. Thank you card from Robyn, Barbara Hull and Family;
5. Mobile phone Plan from Dodo;
6. Invitation to Café on the Park;
7. True Brit Magazine;
8. Copies of Blue Diamond, Riley Gazette, Riley Crank, Riley Newsletter WA, Riley Rattles.

Outwards correspondence:

1. Membership Application to Mr Jim Scott, Highfields;
2. Get Well card from the Riley Club to Lyn Jackson.

Moved by Gary Britton seconded by Ray Perryman that the inwards be received and the outwards be endorsed. Carried.

Treasurer's Report October, 2008

Balance as per Bank Statement, 30 th September, 2008			\$3,999.82
Deposits Made	Membership Fees and Donations	\$ 305.00	
	Interest	<u>0.50</u>	
		<u>\$ 305.50</u>	\$4,305.32
Expenditure			
	Brisbane Sporting Club Room Rental October	\$ 55.00	
	L. Thomson Newsletter Expenses October	<u>\$ 165.25</u>	
		<u>\$ 220.25</u>	\$4,085.07
Balance as per Bank Statement, 31 st October, 2008			\$4,085.07CR

Moved by Ross Phillips that his report be accepted, seconded Matthew Schooneveldt. Carried

Club Captain's Report:

Details for the November 16th run as per the Torque Tube. No run identified for December.

Spare Parts Report:

Jack suggested that the Club should invest in a set of Riley Woodwork so that any members

rebuilding a car could obtain a sample from spare parts for a deposit to manufacture a similar piece. To be further investigated.

Registrar's report:

Matthew advised that Chris Stafford has picked up all the parts for the RMC. Chris Stafford has purchased Peter Dahm's Pathfinder while Mr Jim Scott has purchased Peter Dahm's 1½.

General business:

Matthew French is looking for control box parts as fitted to a 1935 Riley Falcon. If anyone can help please contact Matthew on (07)3353 0532 or email mgwfrench@bigpond.com.

Neil Brandt brought along a front door chrome strip and associated fitting for an RM Riley and offered them to Club Members.

Queensland Raceways has advised that they expect to have an official opening ceremony of Lakeside on the 15th February 2009 and have indicated that if the Riley Club wishes to be represented at the opening, the Club should advise them. Part of their plan for Lakeside is to make it available to car clubs as a destination for breakfast and lunch runs. They believe the combination of the monthly changes to the displays in the museum and the Bistro will make it a very desirable destination for all people who love their cars. From March onwards, the refurbished rooms should be available for annual awards dinners. Will have seating for 200 people.

They also intend to organise four "Carousel Canters" to be delivered once per season. The Carousel Canter is a one kilometre combination hill climb and sprint event that starts at the kink, goes around and up through the Carousel and the bus stop to finish at the bridge. This promises to combine all of the best features of short street sprint events like Speed on Tweed and a bit of the flavour of the Mount Cotton Hill Climb. It has been designed specifically for those who wish to compete in a social atmosphere.

Secretary's Email: Redpath@aanet.com.au

Meeting closed: 8.45pm.

Next Meetings:

Thursday, 11 December, 2008.

Thursday, 12 February, 2009.

BRISBANE SPORTING CAR CLUB

Unit 1, 206 Montague Road

West End Q 4101 (UBD map 21 (P8) approximately opposite Donkin Street.

MEMBERSHIP FEES are due and payable on 1st January 2009

for all members except those recently joined (October on).

Please use the Vehicle Details and Fees form included with this TorqueTube and forward your payment promptly to the Treasurer.

Club Events Programme:

Wendy Judd



ABOUT THE NOVEMBER RUN—

There was a good roll-up at Anstead to see Mike O'Sullivan's Supermarine Aircraft operation. Trevor has prepared some notes for the TorqueTube:

VISIT TO SUPERMARINE AVIATION

*When the Club met at the Wellington Point Hotel earlier this year, Pat Elliott mentioned that he had been to Mike O'Sullivan's, so it was arranged for the Club to visit in November.

*As Mike is often away at airshows it was great to be able to find a Sunday that coincided with a normal Club outing date.

*Apart from six Rileys there was a Hudson, a DeSoto, a Mercedes, an American sports car that I couldn't identify and four moderns. All up, there were approx 32 people.

*It was great to see Mick Thatcher looking in good fettle.

*The non-Riley vehicles were mainly members of the South West Brisbane Motoring Club and friends although the DeSoto owner is also a Riley Club member. Can you identify him?

*Supermarine Aviation build 90% scale Spitfire replicas that are sold all over the globe. All you need to buy a kit is \$370 000 and the patience to wait 12 months for delivery.

*As they don't make Rolls Royce Merlins anymore you have a choice of either a Honda-built Isuzu V6 or a Chev V8.

*Mike O'Sullivan kept the males engrossed with technical details and answered many questions.

*After the visit Riley Club members had lunch at the Tarampa Hotel where we were joined by Betty Elliott.

*These notes written by Trevor Judd as Wendy was visiting an injured grandson at Toowoomba Hospital.

(You can find more information about Mike and the Spitfires on their web page:

www.supermarineaircraft.com/About.htm)

COMING EVENTS—

There is nothing left on our 2008 calendar except the **Annual/Xmas Dinner** at the Southbank Institute – COTAH Restaurant at **6:00 p.m.** on **Tuesday 16th December.**

Before our first meeting for 2009, members could consider the Bayside Club's Australia Day event. See the flyer later in this TorqueTube.

Editor's Notes:



Feeling a bit of a goose at the moment—last month I prepared some notes for the November TorqueTube, with the background to writing the Motoring to Europe article, and then forgot to include it in the magazine! There was an empty page too! Guess that's what can happen at 3 a.m. on the morning the newsletter has to be printed, enveloped and posted. Anyway, here it is:

I think I may have written previously about the little coincidences and connections that lead us off on a drunkard's walk that takes us unexpectedly to new and interesting places. A few weeks back Ross Phillips phoned to ask if I knew of a Riley Drivers Club that existed in Brisbane in the Thirties. He had been approached by a chap who had found a reference to this group holding a hillclimb meet on Mt Cotton on 18th November 1933. From the description, it was definitely not the current track owned by the M.G. Car Club. I had not heard of this group, but it apparently included J. W. Downing and Cyril Tritton, both well-known Rileyites of the time.

With my curiosity piqued, I started Googling for relevant information, firstly on Mt Cotton (found nothing useful), then on Cyril Tritton. The results of this search included a couple of links to a really useful National Library of Australia site <http://ndpbeta.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/home> which is an online fully searchable database of digitized Australian newspapers (not all titles yet) from 1803 to 1959. Well, that was boy in lolly shop time for me, so I did a search on "riley" and got about 15,000 hits—too many to handle. There are many tools available on the site for refining searches, e.g., by newspaper title, type of reference (news, classified ad., &c.), decade and then year within decade, and so on.

I selected the Thirties decade within the "riley" results (gave about 1600 references) and eventually found some Cyril Tritton references but nothing about the Mt Cotton hillclimb. I did find however many references to newspaper reports of the activities of the group who drove their Rileys from Melbourne to Europe in 1931-2 and competed in the 1932 Monte Carlo. The article that occupies most of this issue of the TorqueTube is the result. I hope you find it interesting reading. If not, please indulge me this time. I'll try to come up with something to interest you in future issues, but I'm sure the NLA database will be very useful and a lot of fun. Take a look yourself, if you're into computers, and see if you agree.

Well I received no complaints, even a few commendations for the article, so I thought that with the planned Antill re-enactment next year I'd try the same resource to prepare a similar article on press reporting of his record-breaking drive in the Nine in '29. So I searched the database for "peter antill" and was disappointed that the only references were all post-war, mostly relating to ReDeX Trials and such though also including an obituary for David Mackay (his

brother-in-law) of Aston Martin and other racing fame. How could this be? Then I recalled that Peter Antill was actually Dickson Harley Antill (D. H. Antill was the author of the article in *The Car* that described the record-breaking run). But a search using those names yielded no better results.

Next step was to try "fremantle sydney record" which produced more than a thousand hits, only one of which was relevant—*The Argus*, Wednesday 24 April 1929:

FREMANTLE TO SYDNEY.

Attempt to Break Record.

FREMANTLE (W.A.), Monday.—At half-past 4 o'clock to-day Messrs. D. H. Anthrill and B. McGee left the Fremantle post-office in an attempt to lower all light car speed records from Fremantle to Sydney. Their car is one of nine-horse power and they expect to reach Sydney on Saturday next at midnight.

We know that they achieved their goal, arriving in Sydney 39 minutes past midnight; but since the journalist managed to spell the name so badly wrong, it's no wonder that a reference to the record attempt was hard to find! 'All light car speed records' means Fremantle-Adelaide, Fremantle-Melbourne, Fremantle-Sydney, and possibly other subsets. As far as I can determine, this is surprisingly the only reference to the Antill run in the newspapers so far included in the database—not much to base a TorqueTube article on!

However, while researching the 'Motoring to Europe' piece last month, I came across a number of references to the motoring activities of the Misses Robertson and Howell, two of the Riley touring party, including a record Fremantle-Adelaide run in 1928. This suggested there could be something of interest there, so that's what I've used to prepare the the two-part article beginning in this issue. I was (and still am) a fan of James Burke's TV series *Connections* of 30 or so years ago (it still gets repeats on cable), and reckon the story I've pieced together would just about suit a new episode. You may be surprised, as I was, at some of the links.

By the way, I have been quite careful in transcribing the newspaper content for these articles though some of the images are very indistinct in parts. So nearly all the typos and mistakes are as they appear in the original and not the result of my, admittedly very poor, typing.

Also this month I have included Bertie Beatson's final report of the Australian touring party's travels as published in the January 1932 issue of *The Riley Record*, written and published before the Monte Carlo Rally was run.

Would love to get more feedback, and more of your contributions. I have a couple of things from members in the bank at the moment that will require some effort to prepare, but original articles would be much appreciated.

Some Remarkable Connections—
Part 1: The Motoring Misses.

Linden Thomson



Kathleen Howell and Jean Robertson

(Photo from *The Riley Record*, February 1932)

Like Joan Richmond, Jean Robertson and Kathleen Howell were well known in motoring circles before they became participants in the 1931 overland trip to Europe in three Riley Nines. Unlike Miss Richmond, until that trip their motoring did not involve a Riley but was done in Jean Robertson's Lancia Lambda. There were hints and references to their activities in the research in the National Library of Australia's beta-test newspaper database that was used for last month's 'Motoring to Europe' article, so I thought it might be interesting to use that resource again. As you will see in Part 2, I've also used Google to tease out some of the connections that I hope you will find interesting.

The Argus of Monday 21st March 1927 has a photograph under the heading "R.A.C.V. TRIAL", captioned:

Miss Jean Robertson, the only woman driver in the R.A.C.V. 1,500 miles dependability trial, at the wheel of her car before the start on Saturday.

This photograph shows a second woman in the front passenger seat, almost certainly Kathleen Howell. It would have been very useful to have reproduced this and the other photos referred to later, but unfortunately the photographs in the scanned page images in the database are not suitable for printing.

On Saturday 26th March, *The Argus* had a progress report by their 'Special Reporter' filed from Bendigo the previous evening which read in part:

Dust was more troublesome to the 43 competitors in the dependability trial of the R.A.C.V. to-day on the run from Kerang to Bendigo than on any other portion of the 1,300 miles already covered.

(...several paras. and text omitted...)

After leaving Rochester unmade roads were traversed, and dust was very bad. On stretches where the wind was head on to the procession drivers were obliged to crawl through a blinding cloud of red dust raised by the cars ahead of them. Practically every member of the party muffled up nose and mouth in handkerchiefs and scarfs, but in spite of these precautions the driving dust penetrated beneath goggles and all other protections. The hundreds of people who lined the streets of Bendigo to welcome the party found considerable amusement in the begrimed condition of all travellers. Bathroom accomodation at hotels was taxed to the limit a few minutes after the travel-stained motorists arrived in the town.

Two Lancia cars which had given an excellent account of themselves all through the run met trouble at the start this morning. Miss Jean O. Robertson had to change a wheel immediately she had pulled out of the control, and A. Barber, jun., in another Lancia in the same class, had difficulty in starting his engine. Miss Robertson will not be penalised in respect of the tyre trouble, but Barber will probably lose several points under the heading of mechanical penalties.

(...rest omitted...)

The following Monday (28th March) *The Argus* summarised the trial:

DEPENDABILITY TRIAL.

END OF 1,434 MILE TOUR.

Severe Hill Climb.

(BY OUR SPECIAL REPORTER.)

With their arrival at the Haymarket on Saturday evening the 43 cars, which started from Spencer street a week previously, completed the

1927 dependability trial promoted by the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria. Competitors travelled 1,434 miles, and the tour embraced the Western and North-Western districts of Victoria, from Shepparton to Mount Gambier (South Australia), and to Mildura and Balranald (N.S.W.) in the north. Several drivers covered more than 1,500 miles through mistaking the route and having to retrace their tracks. All sorts and conditions of roads were traversed, but with the exception of the last day's run the country over which the trial was plotted was flat to undulating. As a test of dependability the trial was most severe, and it redounds very highly to the credit of drivers that they brought their cars safely through the deep sand drifts of the northern plains and the quagmires of the blacksoil country in the Wimmera.

(... 2 paras. omitted ...)

The run from Bendigo on Saturday, by way of Ballarat and Geelong, was the most interesting, the most varied, and the most strenuous of the trial. The route took in the magnificent mountain scenery over a spur of the Dividing Range between Daylesford and Ballarat. By-roads connecting the the main highways running north and south were followed, and the high average speed of 30 miles an hour for the large cars and 25 miles an hour for the light machines called for a high degree of driving skill and judgement.

The second hill climb of the trial was held at Maude Hill, 18 miles from Geelong. This hill is about 42 chains long and, starting with a gradient of one in five, finishes on a double curve, with a rise of one in three and a half. So difficult was the climb that two or three of the lighter cars could not surmount the crest under their own power. They slowly spluttered to a standstill, and had to be pushed to the top by spectators. At the start the back wheels of the cars were "choked" by large stones. For the first 20 chains the hill was straight, then it took a left-hand turn, and at 28 chains it began to curve. There were five turns in the road, three of which occurred in the last five chains. Honours again went to Chrysler cars. The best time was that put up by J. H. Dudley in a 23.88-h.p. car. His car was moving when he received the signal to start, but his time 1 min. 8 1-10sec., was 7 9-10sec. faster than the second driver, W. H. Kier, in a similar machine. Both these cars were in the 3,300 c.c. and over class. Miss Jean O. Robertson, the owner-driver of a 15.83 Lancia, was the winner of the class for cars between 2,200 c.c. and 3,300 c.c. cylinder capacity. Her time was 1 min. 18 2-5sec. A. Barber, jun., in a Lancia of the same horse power, was second with 1 min. 21 1-10sec. A. J. Terdich, in a 7.33-h.p. sports Schneider, put up the best performance in the light car class with a time of 1 min. 24 1-10sec.

(... rest omitted...)

Next our motoring duo appear in a photographs under the title 'ADVENTUROUS WOMEN MOTORISTS' in *The Argus* of Thursday 2nd June 1927. The caption

reads:

At 7 o'clock this morning these adventurous young women, Miss Jean Robertson and Miss Kathleen Howell, with their dog Barney, will leave the home of Mr. F. Howell, Carmyle avenue, Toorak, in their motor-car for Darwin. Miss Howell is seen rolling a ground sheet for camping, and Miss Robertson is tying on two spare tyre. Leaning against the car are a rifle and shovel. Inset: Miss Robertson at the wheel of the car.

There was an anticipatory reference to this journey published in *The Northern Territory Times* on Tuesday 7th June:

LADY OVERLANDERS COMING TO DARWIN

Miss Jean Robertson and Miss K. Howell, Melbourne motorists on holidays, who are making a camping trip from Melbourne to Darwin in a Lancia Lambda car arrived at Adelaide on Friday night and resumed their journey at two o'clock on Saturday. From Darwin they intend return to home city by way Western Queensland Brisbane and Sydney.

The slightly cryptic text suggests this may have been a barely edited cable.

A month later, *The Argus* (Saturday 9th July) reported their arrival in Darwin:

BY CAR TO DARWIN. Melbourne Women's Feat.

DARWIN, Friday. — Miss Jean Robertson and Miss Kathleen Howell, who are touring Australia in a motor-car, arrived at Darwin to-night from Melbourne. They met with no difficulty on the journey, except on one occasion, before entering Central Australia, where heavy rain fell, and the car became bogged. They dug around the wheels with a shovel and pulled the car out with a small winch.

That the trip wasn't quite as effortless as implied above is suggested by a group of three photographs in *The Argus* of Friday 22nd July 1927 headed "ADVENTUROUS GIRL MOTORISTS", and captioned:

Miss Jean Robertson and Miss Kathleen Howell, who left Melbourne on June 2 on a motoring tour across Australia. In drift sand they laid and relaid 40-yard lengths of coir matting, as shown in one picture. They are also shown effecting repairs and riding on a camel at Oodnadatta. They sent these photographs to the British Imperial Oil Co.

Our intrepid travellers must have made it safely back to Melbourne, though I could find no further contemporary references, the next being in *The Argus* on Tuesday 1st May 1928 listing entries in the 1928 R.A.C.V. Trial, which was reduced in duration and distance to 24 hours and 500 miles. There were 45 entrants listed in four classes based on engine size, with the three larger

classes having two divisions—owner-driven and stock standard. One of the entries for the team's prize was:—"Lancia Team—Consisting of Miss Jean Robertson, Mr. Anthony Barber, and Mr. Jack Barber, jun." There were also three Chrysler teams entered. Miss Robertson is listed in C Class—Owner-driven Division in a Lancia Lambda, 15.83-h.p.

On Saturday 5th May, *The Argus* had a column describing the start of the trial:

**500 MILES TRIAL.
Motor Reliability Contest.**

From half past 8 o'clock until two minutes to 10 o'clock last night, motor-cars taking part in the 24 hours' reliability trial conducted by the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria, left the Bouverie street weighbridge, Carlton. Only two of the entrants did not start. The route taken by the cars was through Bacchus Marsh, Ballarat, Skipton, Hamilton, Port Fairy, to Warrnambool, where breakfast will be provided. The first car is expected to reach Warrnambool at nine minutes past 6 o'clock. The "flying half-mile test" will be held about 18 miles from Warrnambool. From this point the cars will travel to Apollo Bay, where one hour will be allowed for lunch, and then to Melbourne by way of Forrest, Colac, Geelong, and Werribee. The first car should arrive at Victoria Market at half-past 8 o'clock to-night. When the trial is finished the distance travelled by the cars will be a little over 500 miles.

There were 43 starters listed including Jean O. Robertson in the Lancia Lambda, though paradoxically with F. W. Tolla shown as driver. This was explained in the report of the trial in *The Argus* on Monday 7th:

There was to have been one woman competitor in the trial — Miss Jean Robertson. A few days before the trial, however, she broke her arm while cranking her car.

In contrast to the 1927 trial, this one was complicated by unforecast rain and much mud which caused problems for many competitors, which may have been some small compensation for Miss Robertson's missing the drive.

She was obviously not deterred by the mishap, because on October 10th 1928, *The Argus* published a very fine photograph headed "WOMEN RECORD BREAKERS." with the caption:

Miss Jean Robertson, of Armadale (at wheel), and Miss Kathleen Howell, of Toorak, in the Lancia Lambda car in which they have driven from Perth to Adelaide (1750 miles) in the record time of two days and 10 hours. They reached Adelaide at half-past 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon, and are due at the Shell corner, Melbourne, today.

The ladies seem quite diminutive seated in this long-wheelbased (134.6 inches) vehicle, but are shown in full body close-up seated on the back of the front seat, surrounded by well-wishers, in the photograph in *The Argus* two days later. This was headed "WOMEN MOTORISTS ARRIVE", the caption

recording that after leaving Adelaide "their car became bogged on the way to Melbourne."

The next day, Shell ran this advertisement in *The Argus*. It is instructive to compare their time with Peter Antill's six months later of 3 days 8 hours and 30 minutes in the smaller-engined Riley. Their time of 2 days 10 hours was still "the fastest yet recorded" when H. B. James was suggesting a cross-Australia race (Perth-Adelaide-Darwin-Sydney) in 1936 (*Canberra Times*, Wednesday 15th January 1936, quoting the *Dunlop Perdriau Bulletin*) as an event that would attract world-wide interest. He suggested that such an event should receive support from car manufacturers because "Australia today ranks as one of the best markets in the world for the sale of new automobiles."

1750 MILES
in
58 hours

**Perth-Adelaide
Record Broken**

Driving a Lancia Lambda car at the rate of over 700 miles per day, Misses Jean Robertson and Kathleen Howell completed the journey from Perth to Adelaide in 58 hours.

This amazing performance — eclipsing the previous record by over 5 hours — was triumphantly carried through on SHELL OIL and SHELL SPIRIT.

Follow the Leaders — Standardise on
SHELL Motor OILS
and SPIRIT

THE SHELL COMPANY OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED

The Canberra Times of Wednesday 17th October has some of the story of their drive from Perth and their greater but unfulfilled ambition to set more records on the trip:

ACROSS AUSTRALIA Women Motorists' Attempt

Two well-known women motorists — Miss Jean Robertson and Miss Kathleen Howell, of Melbourne, who were frustrated by terrible weather conditions in their attempt to break the existing car record from Fremantle to Sydney, arrived in Melbourne last Thursday. They left Fremantle at 1 o'clock on the morning of October 7 and arrived at Adelaide at 3.30 p.m. on October 9, thus taking 2 days 10 hours for

the journey of 17334 miles. This betters the record for this route, previously held by Norman Smith (Sydney) by 5 hours 12 mins. Continuing their record drive, they left Adelaide after only an hours' rest, on their way to Melbourne, but floods on the Coorong South Australia, caused by recent heavy rains, resulted in their becoming bogged at Wood's Well, where they were compelled to wait for daylight. A further determined effort was then made to get through, but misfortune still dogged them, and they were held up again at Strathdownie (Vic.), and after losing many hours, they decided to give up the attempt. Miss Robertson and Miss Howell distinguished themselves last year in competitive events held in Victoria, and also by driving from Melbourne to Darwin and back.

To top off Jean Robertson's year, after being physically assaulted by her motor car and being only partially successful achieving long-distance motoring records, she lost her dog:

LOST, somewhere in city, Black Long-haired
Sheepdog, white spot on chest. Reward.

Jean Robertson, Orrong rd., Armadale. Win. 3988

(Classified ad. in *The Argus*, 2nd November 1928.)

This wasn't Barney from the 1927 trip, but one hopes this one was returned.

I have so far been unable to find further motoring references to either of the two until the 'Great Riley Adventure' in 1931-2 as covered in the last *TorqueTube*. They must have been quite busy, and certainly both learned to fly before setting off for Europe and it is the aviation connection that propels the rest of this story.

In *The Argus* 'Woman's Realm' of 25th June 1932, Jean Robertson and Kathleen Howell are reported speaking "of their experiences in England, both motoring and flying." I reproduced the motoring content last month, but omitted the flying, partly because it set too many hares running in my mind and partly because some of it seemed frankly fantastical. Here is some of it:

... Miss Howell spent some time in Yorkshire, at Sherburne, where her experience strengthened her belief that Australia is a wonderful country for flying. Out of five weeks she only got about six hours' flying because of the weather and the terrible gales of wind, blowing sometimes 70 miles an hour. One of the difficulties she experienced which would not, probably, she says, trouble an experienced pilot, was picking her landing places. "All those tidy little fields, with their hedges, looked exactly the same from the air, and one's only hope was to pick up a cathedral spire or some similar outstanding landmark."

It was at Sherburne that Miss Howell met the Hon. Mrs. Victor Bruce,

who is at present, presumably, engaged with her husband in an attempt to break the world's endurance record, cruising above England, to and from London. Their intention was to spend a month in the air. Miss Howell said that the machine, which is a triple-engined monoplane, is very comfortably fitted up with bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, and sitting-room. The arrangements were that food should be taken up to them twice a day, in the morning and evening, dropped in a basket from a 'plane manoeuvring overhead. Refuelling will also be done twice daily by means of a hose connection from aerial tankers. Part of the money made by these records comes from the councils of large towns, like Bournemouth, which arrange for refuelling to be done above the town in view of the crowds of people who are expected to foregather for the purpose of seeing it done. Miss Howell describes Mrs. Bruce as a delightful person and an excellent lecturer. She heard her give a lecture on her flight around the world last year. Mrs. Bruce used to devote herself to motor-racing, but she has apparently deserted the road for the air.

See what I mean? There's a rabbit hole to burrow down (pardon the mixed metaphor). Who was this Hon. Mrs. Victor Bruce? Who was her husband? Time for Google and the discovery of some amazing stories and connections that will feature in Part 2.

On the Cover:

Original Nuffield 1953 publicity photograph for the RME (negative number 50959). Pasted on the back is a duplicated note reading:

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND NOT FOR PUBLICATION

BEFORE WEDNESDAY 14TH OCTOBER.

RILEY 1½ LITRE SALOON.

Extensive body restyling of the latest Riley 1½ Litre Saloon enhances its appearance and gives greater ease of access for the occupants. Front and rear wings have been redesigned and the running boards dispensed with in favour of sill panels.

With the compliments of the Nuffield Organization,
Central Publicity Department, Cowley, Oxford.

From *The Riley Record*, January, 1932:

Riley Overland Tour

Australia to England (1931-1932)

PALERMO.

January 11th, 1932.

" I thought you might be interested to know how we and the Rileys got on after leaving Baghdad till our arrival here, where we start from next week for the Monte Carlo Rally.

" The Syrian Desert crossing was most strenuous. The track was very bad in places, deep depressions of sandy dust which rose up and smothered us, and miles of loose stones which made it very rough going.

" You can only cross the desert twice a week—Monday and Thursday, on which days the police patrol the route (500 miles).

" We travelled all day and through the night, and it was bitterly cold. We had all arranged to pull up about 50 miles out from Rutha Wells, which is a fort in the middle of the desert, and where we had stopped for dinner. We did this, and on starting off again, the self starter of one of the cars got jammed, and it was left behind owing to the heavy dust which obliterated everything. The rest of the party did not know of this, and after going on for hours without seeing any sign of the other cars, the driver and his companion got on the track, which consisted only of wheel marks, and in trying to right themselves became lost, and so decided to stop and wait until the sun rose and so give them their direction. After waiting for some time they heard one of the cars in the distance returning to look for them. They switched on the lights and went to meet it, very thankful to be rescued by one of their own party.

" We arrived in Damascus very dirty and very tired having travelled five hundred miles in twenty-seven hours, the only damage being one broken spring leaf, the cars behaving splendidly. After a few days stay in Damascus, which we all enjoyed very much, we made for Beirut. Calling in and spending a night in Baalbeck, which was a few miles off the main route, to see the famous old ruins, and where it was snowing. We continued our journey next morning over the Lehamm Mountains, where there is some of the most beautiful scenery in the world, and which has the second highest motor road. We had only got half way over the mountains when we had to turn back, as the snow was so deep no motor vehicle could pass through, so we retraced our steps to Damascus and round via Haifa, arriving at 2 a.m. when we were promptly put into quarantine, as we had been in Basra which was a Cholera infected area. After three nights spent there, and where we were well treated, we started off for Jerusalem.

" All that country is very mountainous and was wonderful test for the cars. We arrived at Jerusalem, very glad to have a couple of days' rest before starting on the Sinai desert crossing. We put in a day going to the Dead Sea

over very steep mountains the whole way, 30 miles. Some of the party bathed in the Sea where the salt is so strong you cannot sink.

" We had breakfast at 6 o'clock the morning of the 15th of December and started off for Suez. It took us one and a half days crossing the Sinai desert, with a stop for the night at Kasima, a police outpost and an oasis where gum trees and waltles (?) grew in profusion.

" It was far more attractive than the Syrian desert with very high mountains and wonderful colourings, lots of low growing salt bush and many wild flowers just coming out, but very desolate the greater part of the journey.

" There were the remnants of an old Turkish railway which were on our route for very many miles, and so we neared Suez trenches and miles of barbed wire entanglements.

" We reaches Suez in time for a late lunch and there had to report to the health customs and passport officer. The passport official, who was an Englishman, would hardly believe us when we told him how we had come. He kept saying 'by Kantara.' When he really grasped our meaning he said he had been at Suez six years, and he had only known very few cars to cross direct from Jerusalem to Suez.

" After a stay in Cairo, where we went from Suez, across part of the Arabian Desert, we took ship from Alexandria for Brindisi.

" We thought our troubles were over when arriving in Italy, but did not reckon on the heavy snow which had fallen.

" We left Brindisi for Naples on December 30th, and spent New Year's Day on the Appenines, where we were bogged for some hours.

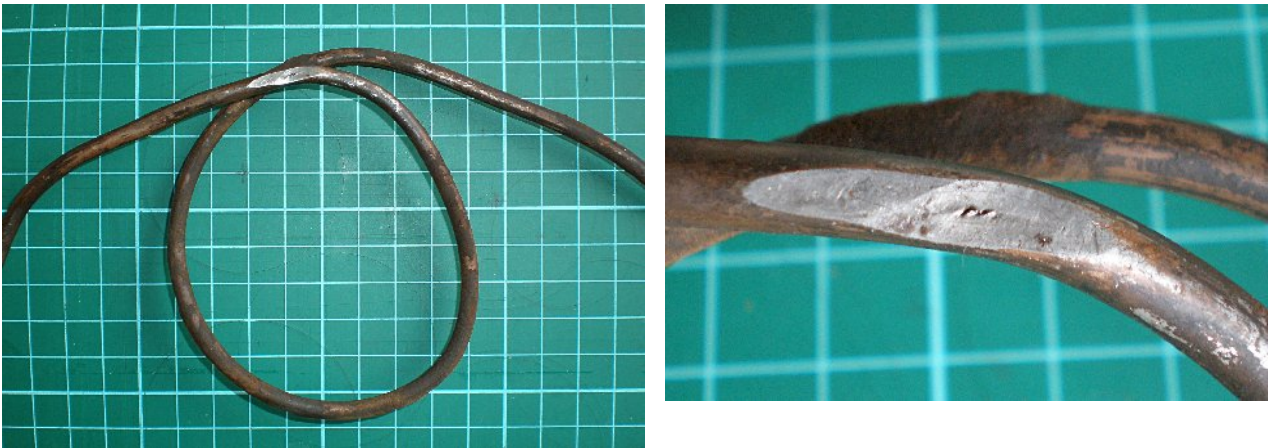
" The roads were nearly all under repair, and were just strewn with loose metal which had been left without any screenings, and in trying to avoid a bad part, one of the cars skidded into some soft clay on the side of the mountain and went down to the axle. It quickly set like so much cement, and we had great trouble in getting her out, but eventually were successful without any damage, thank heaven.

" It was black darkness and quite late, so we had to stop in a small village for the night, and started off early to reach Naples where we should have been that day. The snow was fairly thick, but we managed to reach our destination without any more trouble. Vesuvius was white with it, and we were told it was the coldest spell they had had in Naples for years. We were also told we would not get any more snow, but soon after leaving Naples we ran into the mountains again, where there were innumerable hairpin bends. We were 3,000 ft. up and still climbing when we struck very heavy snow. There was no turning back, we just had to go on, and all three cars settled into it and refused to move. After hours of delay we managed to get out with all hands pushing and digging and cursing and crawled down through the snow into the plain country. We then ran through some most beautiful scenery all along the coast, with just a few hills, and after crossing in the Ferry for Messina, made good way to Palermo, where we are all working on the cars in preparation for the Rally, and hoping and praying the snow will all have melted before next week."—*Beatson*.

Things You (May Very Well) Learn The Hard Way: LT

I had reason to remove the oil-pressure gauge line from a spare 2½ engine the other day—you know, the pipe that emerges vertically from the depths at the rear offside of the engine, mostly invisible below the carbs, air cleaner and stuff. It is a steel pipe with brass fittings brazed to the ends, and with an anti-vibration loop beside the rear of the block. It is also something we take for granted.

However, take a look at these photos of said pipe:



The wear has just broken through to the bore of the pipe. Maybe the leaking oil would reduce the rate of further wear, but would you like to drive the Nullarbor with this on your engine?

Next time you have the chance, it might pay to check the one on your car.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Club's A.G.M. will be held on 12th February 2009
at the Queensland Sporting Car Club
206 Montague Road, West End, 4101
at 8:00 p.m.

It will be followed by the first O.G.M. for 2009.

All Committee positions will become vacant.

Please give consideration to helping the Club by nominating
yourself or another Member for a position.

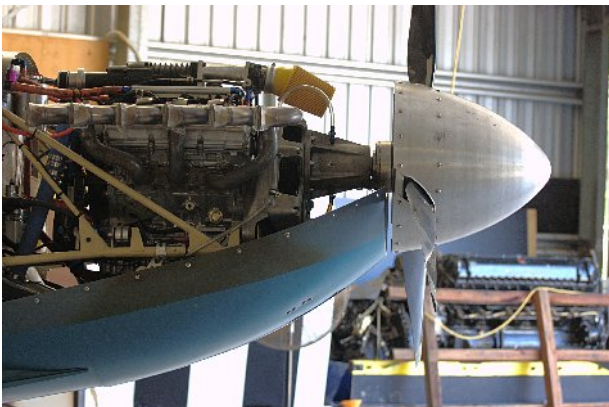
Supermarine Aircraft Visit.



Above: Scale fuselages under construction.



Right: Mike O'Sullivan describes operations.



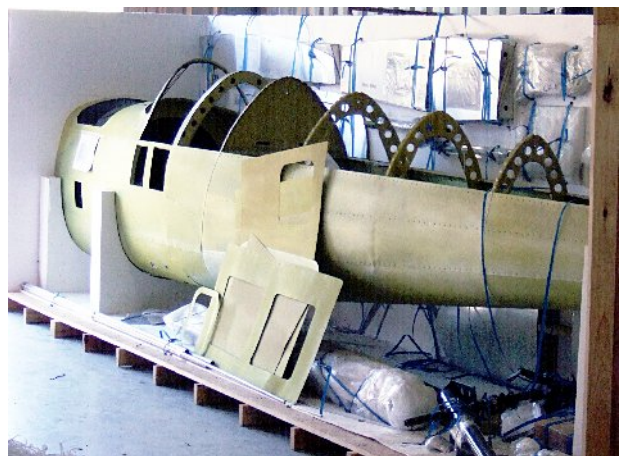
Should be a Merlin in there! There's one in the background.



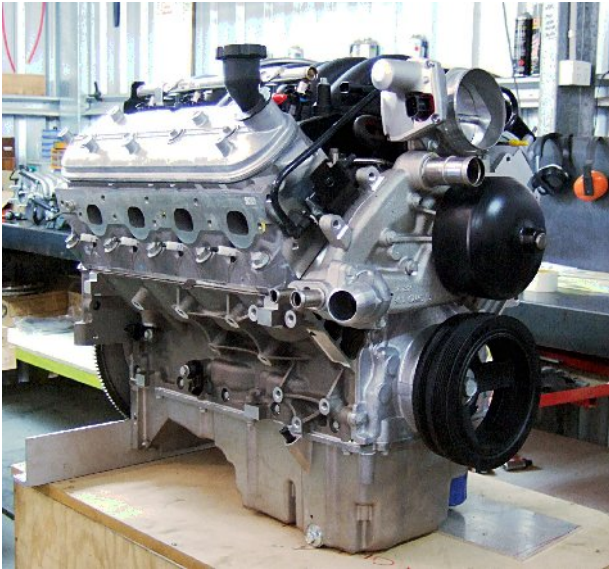
Honda-built GM Isuzu V6 in position.



Mike describes powerplant choice and modification.



Kit being assembled and crated



Above: V6 with propellor drive fitted.

Left: GM 6-litre V8 engine as received.



Tailpiece.



Pathfinder and Recovery Vehicle
(Playing it safe, Ray?)

(Photos. — Linden Thomson)

For Sale

1949 Riley 2½ Saloon. Fully re-conditioned engine, carbies, steering box, diff, brakes, hand- crafted wooden steering wheel. Re-wooded. Body and chassis sand blasted, primed. Chassis painted black. Four spoked rims with good tyres. Seats at upholsters but not started yet. Has to be put back together, painted and upholstered.

Thousands of dollars in receipts.

The wife says the Riley goes, or me!

Make me an offer!

Graham Jones 07 55982 576 gjonespaint@aapt.net.au

**Travelling through Adelaide en route to or from the Porongurup Party
AND/OR are you a participant in the Antill re-enactment
April 2009?**

Billeting by SA Club members

Some members of the Riley Motor Club of South Australia have indicated interest in providing accommodation for interstate or overseas Riley folk as they pass through Adelaide.

A Riley Get Together on 21 April 2009

The Antill re-enactment group is scheduled to pass through Adelaide on 20 and 21 April. As Tuesday 21 April will be the regular meeting night for The Riley Motor Club of South Australia we are extending an invitation to all interstate and overseas Riley visitors to join us for dinner that night.

There will be No cost to participants.

We are planning a late afternoon start at a venue close to the South Eastern Freeway which is the main exit to the Eastern states.

Other Accommodation options

For those not interested or unable to be billeted for those nights, we suggest that a number of motels along Glen Osmond Road, which leads on to become the freeway, would be most suitable. For convenience, these are also near to the probable dinner venue. If you are interested in this option, and we have an indication of numbers, we will check out which ones provide the best parking and other facilities and we will negotiate to have rooms reserved in advance.

Emergency towing

One of our Club members will be taking a car trailer across WA. While it is expected that all drivers will have appropriate roadside assistance insurance cover, there may be emergency situations that are not covered.

Motor repairs

Hopefully no-one will need them but, if you do, we have members who are prepared to help.

Mobile numbers for various South Australian contacts will be provided closer to the event.

In the meantime, to register your interest or obtain more information on any of the above contact Leigh Johnson on 08 8271 8638.

Beverley Wilson,
President, Riley Motor Club of SA

CC NEWS

November 2008

Queensland Transport Meeting Agenda and Outcomes:

1. Retention of Club Membership to Register SIVS Vehicle.

Outcome: *QT advised that whilst Club membership is a requirement for first registration of a SIV it is also an operator responsibility to ensure currency of club membership at all subsequent registration renewals. QT policy and intent is that SIVS users retain club membership because QT agrees that club membership fosters a responsible adherence to SIVS guidelines. QT's*



recent circular reinforced the need to retain club membership. QT intent is now clear that we 'must retain club membership' to register or reregister a SIVS vehicle.

2. The Ceremonial Purposes (weddings, formals) Use Clause, "immediate family members" definition.

Outcome: QT guidance is that interpretation of the requirements should be done in a broad sense to encompass both traditional and modern-day family situations, e.g. to include as immediate family the spouse, parents, grandparents, siblings, children and grandchildren of the SIVS registered user, plus in-law, step and de facto relationships to the same levels, but to exclude extended family members such as nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles and the like.

3. Weekend Use of SIVS-Registered Vehicles.

Outcome: QT advised that current SIVS requirements and restrictions must be applied as a 'one rule for all'. SIVS guidelines currently allow individual running for repairs and for limited distance testing, but as there is no kilometre restriction for attending club or sanctioned events that are regionally located, SIVS operators in isolated regions are not disadvantaged under the current system. QT made it clear that any relaxation of the current guidelines to allow individual freedom of use on weekends will not be approved. Clubs are reminded that the remedy is in their own hands to educate their members as to the multitude of events available across the entire old vehicle movement and to ensure that their own club events calendars provide sufficient opportunities to use and enjoy their vehicles with other like-minded SIVS Operators.

COMBINED COUNCIL RALLIES: - Entry forms are available for the 2009 RACQ CC Rally organised by QVVA at Bribie Island, contact Graham Porter Ph 3206 1812 or 0407 257 440.

COMBINED COUNCIL NAME CHANGE & REVISED CONSTITUTION PROPOSAL:

CC Committee has proposed a name change to "**Queensland Historic Motoring Council Inc.**" and update our constitution to reflect the current "Model Rules" published by the Dept of Fair Trading. The proposed name positively and succinctly reflects what QCCHVC does and is a more manageable name in everyday use. The proposed constitution changes ensure that our constitution reflects the Incorporations Act which overrules our old constitution. Delegates will be asked to vote on the name change and on the adoption of the updated Constitution at the January 2009 meeting. Make sure that your club delegate knows how your club wants them to vote.

CLUB EVENTS & RUNS: CC will add selected individual club events to the CC events calendar with a view to promoting interclub activity. Clubs are encouraged to provide CC with dates of runs where your club would like to have members of CC affiliated clubs participate in those runs. CC is not

planning to add your full club calendar to the CC calendar, just a few dates from each club each year where your club would like to see members from other clubs attend. All clubs are asked to consider if they have any upcoming club runs that they would like opened up to other clubs. Just let CC know three or more months in advance for the word to get out to other clubs and you could have a bigger rollup at your events.

PLEASE NOTE – Next Bi - Monthly Committee Meeting Thursday 22nd January 2009

Combined Council is now holding bi-monthly general meetings (odd numbered month) with the Committee meetings on the alternate month (even numbered month).

Bayside Vehicle Restorers Club Australia
 Day Rally
 26/1/09
 Free Breakfast from 7.30am at Ormiston State School
 Wellington Street, Ormiston.
 Followed by a navigational run around the picturesque
 Redlands
 Finishing at the lunch venue, the Alexandra Hills Hotel.
 Classic, vintage, yet historic vehicle

(Sorry this image is not quite right! The date is 26/1/09, and the breakfast is free.)

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