

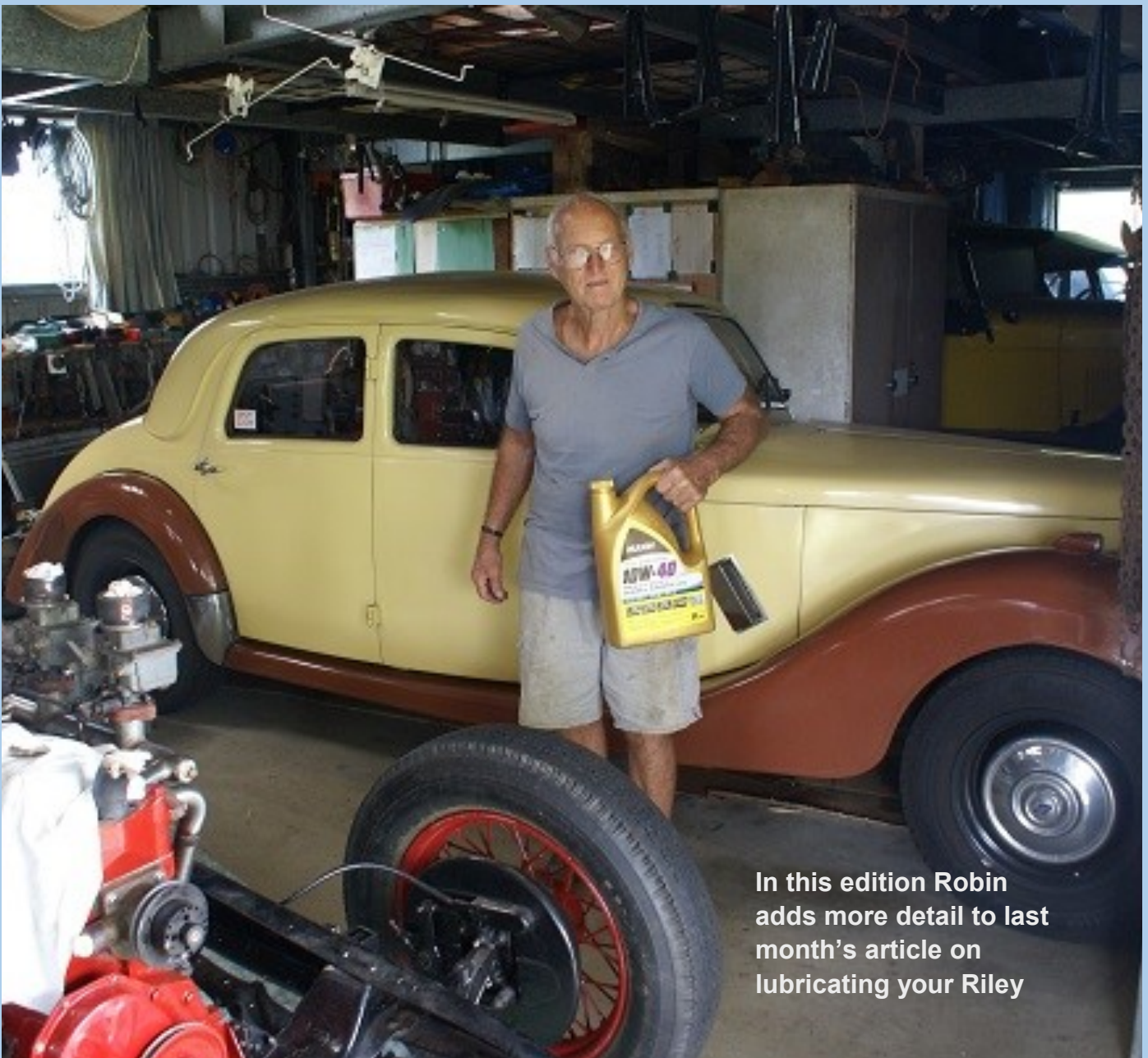
*Happy Christmas*



# TORQUETUBE

**Magazine of the Riley Motor Club, Qld, Australia Inc.  
December 2018 and January 2019**

[www.rileyqld.org.au](http://www.rileyqld.org.au)



In this edition Robin adds more detail to last month's article on lubricating your Riley

*Robin Hull in his garage*

## Editorial

Happy Christmas to all Queensland Riley enthusiasts. Have you already purchased a special Christmas gift for your Riley? The Club Parts store has many gift ideas and our Spare Parts Officer, Mark is available on Tuesday morning to exchange that special gift for a small amount of money.

This is your last Torquetube for 2018 and the first one for 2019 will be published in time for the Annual General Meeting on the second Sunday of February. Thank you to all of those who contributed to the magazine through the year. Your contributions have made the magazine interesting and informative. Thank you also to Peter Lee who has offered many suggestions while proof reading each magazine.

## The editor appreciates receiving articles by the 21st of the month

In this month's edition special thanks to Robin Hull who has expanded on his excellent article about lubricating your Riley.

Do you remember a story told last year about getting a roadworthy certificate for Albert? He failed at his first attempt because the brand new front shock absorbers were 'too soft' for the old boy. I had to swap them for another brand. This year Harold, a 1948 RMB failed his roadworthy. Why? Because the brand new brake shoe linings had not bedded in to achieve a strong enough reading on the brake analysis machine. The mechanic said he needed to be driven to bed the brakes in but how can I drive him until I have the roadworthy certificate? Maybe Edward will get through because he has blue eyes?

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## Contents

### Cover page

Robin Hull with his Riley

### Happenings

Editorial and disclaimers .....	page 2
'A Riley morning tea with VVCQ' .....	page 3
'Never a dull day' by Wendy Lonie .....	page 5
'November 1 Club run' by Peter Lee .....	page 6
Christmas lunch at the club house .....	page 7
'November breaky run' and 'Upholding a wedding Tradition' by Trevor Taylor.....	page 8
Coming events and letters to the editor .	page 9
President's Run advertisement.....	page 10

## Technical subjects

'Further thoughts on lubricating your Riley' by Robin Hull.....page 11

### In the Garage

'Jack Warr visits Albert and friends' .....	page 13
'Ripaults petrol gauge' .....	page 14
NZ Riley Club librarian's report .....	page 16
'Riley's curse' by Phil Soden and 'Not so speedy 'speedy seals' .....	page 17
'Recovering an RM roof'.....	page 19

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## *An October Riley Motor Club Activity*

The Riley Motor Club of Queensland was host to the Vintage Car Club of Queensland for morning tea at the club house on Sunday morning 21<sup>st</sup> October. Prior to that date Bill White telephoned and reported that there would be a special guest in attendance. On the day several beautifully restored vintage cars parked outside the club house and Riley enthusiasts enjoyed meeting with a number of the Vintage Car Club members. The occasion was an opportunity for the President of the Vintage Car Club to give a talk on various issues of interest to both clubs and her speech was well received by our club members.

Beryl Young was the special guest and in his telephone call Bill said that she was well known to older members of the club. In her younger days, Beryl was Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen's pilot, It is understood from Beryl that Sir Joh was a competent pilot as well and often some negotiations were required about who would pilot the aircraft. Beryl took the then Premier to many parts of Queensland and participated in numerous official visits to schools, hospitals and special events. On occasions at school presentations Sir Joh would ask stu-

dents if they could guess which member of the team was his secretary and who was the pilot. Students were surprised that a woman was the pilot and Sir Joh would use the moment to point out that anyone irrespective of gender could attain to any position if they worked hard enough to achieve it.

Besides her day time job, Beryl enjoyed driving her Rileys and was a regular participant in Riley outings. It was good to meet her at the club house and although the editor of *Torquetube* tried to draw her into telling some stories about Sir Joh she steadfastly maintained confidentiality. Currently Beryl enjoys playing golf regularly and many social outings including her first visit to the Riley Motor Club House. Club members enjoyed her visit as well as the visit of the VVCQ.

Following the morning tea visit, the VVCQ continued on their outing and later invited Riley Motor Club members to share lunch with them at the Samford Pub.

**Below: A photograph of Beryl's Rileys; a Post War Roadster and a Riley 9. The photograph was sent courtesy of Trevor Taylor.**





*Pictures from the VVCQ visit to the Club House courtesy of Chris Reynolds*

*To the right: A line up of some beautiful pre-war vehicles*



*And above some of our Rileys in the background completing the picture*



## Never a dull day for Riley Folk by Wendy Lonie



In October, there was an opportunity to showcase our lovely Rileys at the Pelican Waters Tavern Family Day on the Sunshine Coast. The Lonies were joined by Mark Baldock and Ken and Helen Porter and thoroughly enjoyed our day, swapping stories and enjoying an excellent lunch on the terrace of the Tavern. It was a magic day overlooking the calm waters and watching the sea birds and boats enjoying the perfect weather. Our cars, 3 x RMB's, 1 x Monaco and Kens Sports Special created a lot of interest along with an assortment of jet skis and marine vessels

**Above: Rileys at Pelican Waters and adjacent: Wendy and a tall superhero friend and below Ken and Helen Porter**



We received a warning that a serious weather front was approaching with the threat of hail, so we left a little early. Not early enough for the Lonies!!! We were 30 minutes from Maleny when the sky unleashed its fury. Wendy was driving the RMB which leaks at several points and Ken was driving the special. With no "top" he was absolutely battered by torrential rain, thunder & lightening overhead, roads were running with water, extremely poor visibility, and cars parked up either side of the road, it was far from ideal! Both the RMB & the Special limped home slowly but safely with both drivers drenched. There were 2 inches of water in the wells of the Special and the rain gauge recorded 55mls in 40 minutes but thankfully, no hail!

*(A leaky Riley?? Editor)*

## November 7 run - westward ho! By Peter Lee



The rest headed off through Brisbane's food bowl to the Gatton Cultural Centre where the combination of a transport museum and an art gallery catered for most tastes.

A well restored 1950s three cylinder Berkley sports car was on display along with some interesting buses and trucks that spanned most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Above: Early arrivals at Amberley in front of the F1-11.**

The run to Gatton via Amberley on Thursday 1 November attracted a good roll up and clearly showed that the Club membership strongly supports weekday events.

While the group was assembled in front of the F111 at the base's entry, the Club Captain was approached by the RAAF staff member who had previously informed him that we had to provide documentation prior to our arrival. He came with good news and was able to process those who wanted to do the Amberley Heritage Centre tour.

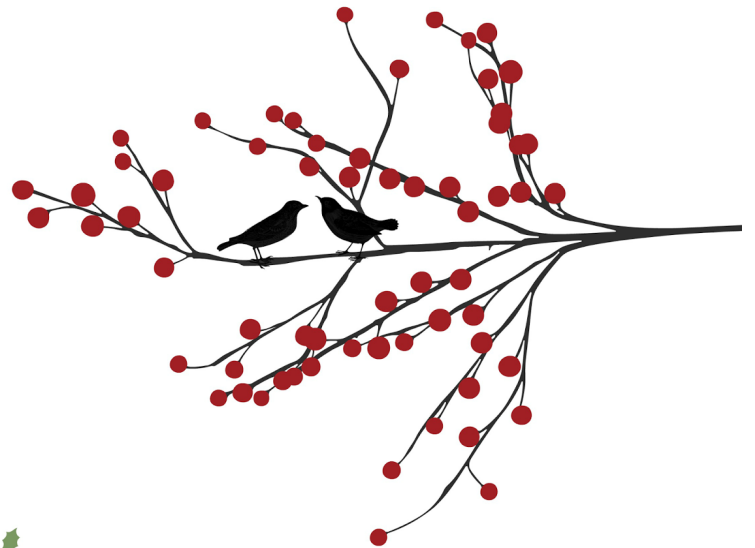
### **Below: Ian, Mark and Ken marvel at a much more simple type of motor-ing.**



Graham Bourne, who elected to tour the Amberley Heritage Centre, then joined us for an excellent lunch overlooking Lake Apex. He said he could heartily recommend the Amberley tour so it might appear on the outings list again for next year.



**Above: The adventurers at lunch and a good day was had by all**



Merry Christmas!

## *Riley Christmas Lunch*

2<sup>nd</sup> December 2018 at 12.30pm

*At Queensland Riley Clubhouse, Samford*

*The Club will supply the ham*

*Members are asked to bring a salad and a dessert to share and BYO drinks*

*Please ring Wendy Lonie 0417 857075 re attendance and “what to bring” prior to 25<sup>th</sup> November. **R.S.V.P’s essential for catering purposes.***

*...o0o...*



## Breakfast Run in November



**Above: Chris Reynolds with the sun to his back on a glorious morning in SE Queensland in front of cars that attended the breakfast event**

On Sunday 25th Nov the breakfast run to Mt Nebo attracted 3 beautiful cars and the occupants Mike and Jodie Ferguson, Chris Reynolds and Trevor Taylor enjoyed a wonderful day view of the Samford Valley.

## Riley members upholding a Wedding tradition

Trevor Taylor and Bill White combined to make a Samford bride very happy recently. Trevor took them to Jolly's Lookout for the ceremony and Bill in his recently refurbished drop-head did the



home run from Ferny Grove to the reception in Samford.

**Adjacent: Trevor's Jaguar and above Bill's Drophead**



## Coming Events Riley Motor Club

### December

**Sunday 2nd** Riley Motor Club Christmas at 12.30 PM in our newly airconditioned Club-house. For further details see the advertisement in this edition of Torquetube.

**Tuesday 4th and 11th** Riley Tinkerers at the Club House, Samford Show Grounds. Restorers activities, friendship and technical advice. BYO lunch and drinks. Tea and Coffee provided.

**Thursday 13th 8 PM. Monthly General Meeting of the Queensland Riley Motor Club,**

### Samford Show Grounds.

### January

**Sunday 20th** President's run Meet at 9 AM at the North bound BP petrol Station on the Bruce Highway. For further details see the advertisement in this edition of Torquetube.

### February

**Sunday 10th** Monthly meeting and AGM at the Club house. Further details about timing will be e-mailed to you prior to the meeting. Who will you nominate for committee positions next year?

## Letters to the editor

I'm up to looking at my RMB air cleaner, which has been laying around the workshop for far too long and subject to sundry attempts to take it apart to re-paint it and maybe update the filter end of the business: as you know its more silencer and large rock restrictor than air cleaner as we know it today. For the life of me I can't see a way into it except with a tin opener, [the nut on the intake end doesn't appear to do anything useful: it just rotates] so I wondered if anyone has had a serious crack at dismantling one in a manner that allows re-assembly in the "looks like its new" condition?

Cheers Iain

PS had a great time visiting the clubrooms for the Tuesday gathering and subsequently the club meeting on Thursday evening. Very convenient having the caravan park on site: we loved it.

*The solution to your request is written in the October 2017 Torquetube. There is a small debate about the required size for the paper air filter. A small one inch thick version may restrict air flow and therefor produce an unwanted rich fuel mixture. (Article provided by the Editor)*

Importantly, I now know its time to cut metal to dismantle.

Interesting comment about the size of the filter: my Pajero diesel air filter for a 2.4 litre engine with similar engine speeds to an RMB has a

filter approximately 100 square inches and is replaced every 45,000 km. This vehicle lives in a hills area similar to the clubrooms environment and uses a short 1/2 km dusty when dry [which seems to be most of the time these days] unsealed road, daily, and the filter looks really scruffy at replacement time. So my view would be that Albert's filter is definitely on the small side, so I'd think it would have a shorter life, and maybe the way to check on this would be to run the engine at say 1500 rpm no load with and without the element in place, and if engine speed changed more than say 100 rpm, it's time to change the filter. Be interesting to correspond with Albert's owner about his experience subsequent to his conversion.

Cheers **Iain Robillard**

I found the November TT to be an excellent read and well worth the effort. I particularly liked some on the amusing accounts of past events, Greg Morris for example. At the Club Monthly meeting last night, we asked for comment on what the members thought about future editions. It was generally thought that the decision on whether to repeat the exercise next year was really one for the editors to decide as they end up doing the work. It was also thought that maybe the magazine at the national rally each year should become the combined edition, but that one each year is adequate.

**Ken Lonie**



## - 2019 Presidents Run -

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> January.

*Please join us on our first Rally for 2019*

*The more the merrier*

9am, Meet at Northbound BP service station on the Bruce Highway – park up at the northern end, where there is usually ample parking. Leave the servo at 9.15am, head north, take the Steve Irwin exit and continue towards Landsborough. Ken will lead us to our morning tea stop at the Twinnies. Cost \$10 pp, payable on the day, please have the correct money.

11.30am, we leave the Twinnies and drive to Kens new work/storage shed in the Moffat Beach Business park to check out the shed, meet Zacky (his not so new 1924 Rugby Ute) and have BYO lunch. Tea, coffee & soft drinks will be supplied. There is ample parking.

Sunshine Coast attendees can come directly to the Twinnies, 2147 Steve Irwin Way, Landsborough for morning Tea at 10am.

***RSVP necessary for catering purposes by 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2019***

***Wendy Lonie, Mob: 0417 857075***

The Twinnies are amazing 42 year old twins who have devoted their life to the rescue, care and rehabilitation of birds, mainly seabirds. They have had wide TV and media coverage and are incredible as they talk in sync. Occasionally they get a bit of Government funding, but mostly rely on their own resources and donations. They are very passionate about their work and very welcoming to visitors.

After the publication of my previous article on lubrication, the thought came to me that there is a lot more information that could have been included to shed a brighter light on the subject. Such information may assist Riley enthusiasts to make more informed choices about what oils to use. The basic principles of lubrication have not changed since Leonardo Da Vinci (1452 – 1519) wrote a treatise on this subject during his life. However, the ingredients in lubricants have changed considerably since then and of course also since the manufacture of our Rileys.



**Above: A Penrite improved reproduction of oil from the 1950s**

The latest lubrication technology is so proficient that it enables engines to operate so as to travel a vehicle for over a million kilometres without the engines exhibiting any signs of wear! Unfortunately, however, the parameters of the latest oil classification are controlled by environmental concerns rather than the motive of providing our engines with the ultimate in protection. A further factor affecting oil quality is that we are all supposed to be driving cars that are at most only a couple of years old. This is because most, if not all modern cars are fitted with roller cam followers. This drastically moderates if not eliminating the requirement for the extreme pressure ratings generally provided by the additive ZDPT. What this means to all of you lesser mortals who choose to drive older vehicles (Rileys) tuff luck. The oils marketed in the 1950s had little if any ZDPT and a typical oil offered in the 1960's

had about 500 PPM of zinc and a little less phosphorus. The reduction in phosphorus content (the additive causing environmental concerns) started with the classification SG where the levels of the upper limit was set at 1200 PPM and with a further reduction to 1000 PPM with the classification SJ. The latest classification of oil available today the classifications SM and SN in these the level of phosphorus was reduced to 800 PPM.



**Above: The important detail is Ci4/SL and the technical information on the back of the container**

One consideration for debate is about using diesel oils in petrol engines. In these oils, the classification 'C' comes before the 'S'. For example, in your auto shop you will find diesel oils with the classification CH-4/SL or CI-4/SL. Oils with a CH-4 or CI-4 classification have 1200 to 1400 PPM ZDTP with no upper level of the additive specified! The later CJ-4 has a maximum level of 1200 PPM. The higher levels of ZDTP equate to greater protection for your cam gear.

At this point, let us look at the difference between 'mineral oils' and 'full-synthetics'. An oil such as a 10 W 30 in the mineral version is a 10-weight oil at 40 degrees Celsius. This oil has been treated with viscosity improvers to make it act like a 30-weight oil at 100 degrees Celsius. A full synthetic oil, however, is a 30-weight oil at 100 degrees Celsius and it acts like a 10-weight oil at 40 degrees. Another consideration is that fully synthetic oils are much more grade stable and they do not have

the same tendency to shear down out of grade as mineral oils do. As well as that, the base oil has a far higher extreme pressure rating.



**Above: A fully synthetic oil complete with the all important technical information**

A further consideration is that it can be quite difficult to discover what the real properties are in different oils. There are generally many flowery words on the container that don't really mean anything. It is like the wording on a \$4 bottle of wine suggesting plum flavours with a hint of chocolate but in reality, the wine tastes like vinegar. The truth is that there is very little information about the qualities of the oil on 'the product information sheet'. The desired information to know is first the viscosity index (VI). The higher the VI the less the viscosity changes as the oil increases in temperature. As well



the total base number (TBN). This is the measure of the reserve alkalinity in the oil that combats the various acidic compounds that attack the oil. The higher the TBN the better.

The viscosity at both 40 and 100 degrees Celsius. The viscosity limits at 100 Celsius are set by the grade but it can be at the very top or bottom for the grading or almost out of the grade.

Although the API may set the maximum levels of ZDPT for the particular oil that you are using, the level can be exceeded for certain viscosities and no minimum levels are set.



**Above: Note the advertised extra Zinc**

Another consideration is that the oil that you buy can vary significantly in price. In a recent supercheap catalogue, the prices range from \$9.39 for 4 litres of 20W-50 API SL/CF (presumably a mineral oil) to \$86.99 for 5 litres of OW-40 SN/CF fully synthetic oil or \$84.95 for 10 litres of 10W-40 CJ-4\SN fully synthetic oil.

To conclude, using diesel oils may be a consideration for our old engines because the higher ZDPT provides additional protection. I trust that this additional information may be helpful and not just a further muddying of the already murky waters of package information, arguments about synthetic versus mineral oils and what could be the blurring of product information provided by the suppliers.

## Jack Warr Visits Albert and friends

What does Jack Warr and a two and a half metre Python have in common?



**Above: Miss Python reclining on the back seat of Albert**

You may ask, 'Is this a trick question? Well, no, not really. The answer is that they are both Riley enthusiasts and second they both visited Albert, Edward and Elspeth on the same day. True, only Miss Python got a seat in a Riley but I am left wondering whether the new constitution has a provision for Pythons to join the Queensland Riley Motor Club since she has taken such a shine to that make of vehicle. Jack wisely decided not to join Miss Python in the back seat of Albert.

**Below: Miss Python alighting from Albert**



Robert and Lynn Woodward (nee Warr) and Jack took the opportunity to visit my garage during a recent trip to attend a wedding. Just prior to their visit I noticed that Miss Python had entered Albert through an open window and was sleeping off a fairly large meal of possum. She looked very relaxed, so I did not disturb her. When the Warr and Woodward clan arrived, I jokingly asked Lynn if she had any snake handling skill and to my surprise Rob said he would move the snake and that he had plenty of previous experience at their property on Mt Tamborine. After a few minutes Rob had woken Miss Python and gently encouraged her to depart the Riley through the driver's door. She is now hanging about in the rafters looking down on three Rileys as part of her domain.

One other interesting thing that came out of their visit was that we passed a pre-war Serck radiator. Previously I had googled Serck and found out that he was a Russian industrialist. Prior to the first World War the article stated that he carried a revolver when supervising work in his factory in case the workers caused a disturbance. It was just prior to the Russian revolution. I pointed it out to Jack and he said that Serck was his uncle! He had migrated from Russia and met Jack's Aunty, they had married and set up business in Birmingham making radiators. Jack told me that he always had a row of cigars in his top pocket and he often offered one to those he talked to. Today the Serck company makes radiators for many makes and models of motors.

After departing the garage, we sat on the back veranda for morning tea and were delighted when Wayne Prowrie and partner Louise dropped in to say hello. In all it was a delightful morning. However, I am left wonder whether any of the readers of Torquetube would like to provide a home and share a Riley with Miss Python? She is very good at possum and rodent eradication and would make a positive contribution to protect the security of your Rileys.



**Above: Jack Warr and Lyn and Rob Woodward**

### *Ripaults Petrol gauge for a Riley 9 Roadster*

It didn't really take that long to make. Under the bench was a post war Smiths Ammeter body that seemed to be a suitable donor body for the fuel gauge. Fortunately, it was of the same diameter as the Ripaults gauge, it had a chrome Bessel and a clear lens that ran around it's side to allow light from a globe behind the dash to illuminate the gauge at night, not that I was ever likely to drive after dark. The base of the gauge was made from Bakelite and by pushing the body tabs apart the ammeter came apart quite easily. After removing the dead working parts, the glass face, body and side lens was set aside, and the pointer and the ammeter face was examined. In the end the pointer was discarded as it was damaged prior to my ownership and it was decided to flip the face over and use the other side to paint a replica 'Ripaults' fuel gauge face on it.

My artistic skills are quite limited so Robert Spiers (previous Club Captain, calligrapher and owner of a remarkable RMA) was asked if he would have a go at replicating the gauge face. No go. The brass surface and the pen-

manship required was too great a challenge, but Robert did suggest the way forward. 'Why not photograph the face of a genuine gauge with the pointer in different positions and photoshop the results?' Following a conversation about this possibility a very kind friend loaned me his genuine fuel gauge, it was photographed at 'Beerwah Print' (the same printer who did our National Rally magazine) photo-shopped and the result was printed onto a nylon surface that has a sticky back. I now have about twenty Ripaults fuel gauge faces, half of them with off white print to imitate the aged sample that had been borrowed.



*The borrowed Petrol Gauge*



**Ammeter body and chrome bezel**

The next step was to make a brass bush that would fit into the Bakelite base and into that a small brass spindle was turned up that it had a head the same size as that on the sender unit. This was made with a shoulder to fit neatly into the bush and at the shoulder extend through a small opening in the bush and through the brass gauge face. At the end of the spindle a 2 BA thread was cut to accept a screw-on pointer. A lot of thought went into making a pointer and ultimately a minute hand of a clock was cut to shape and painted white. That was written easily but cutting and filing a very thin clock hand required two attempts and a couple of hours of careful shaping and squinting through reading glasses. Eventually a satisfactory result was achieved, and a tiny hole was drilled through the centre of the pointer base and a 2 BS tap was used to make it possible for the pointer to be screwed into position. This done a hole was bored through the Bakelite base for the brass bush to be pressed into position.

The last step may seem to be simple, but some care was exercised in not fitting the gauge face up-side-down or even slightly skewed. This done the fuel gauge was assembled with the pointer screwed into position and at the rear of the gauge a slot made for a cross piece at the end of a rod that would pass from the sender gauge, through the scuttle and into the back of the dash board fuel gauge.



**Above: The pointer**

About the rod, it was fitted through the scuttle into the back of the gauge and between the scuttle and the sender unit a sleeve was made to fit over the 1/8<sup>th</sup> inch brass rod with a 2 BA bolt to lock the sleeve into place on the rod. Another rod was made to fit into the other end of the sleeve and into the sender unit making the rod telescopic and enabling it to be locked into position with another 2 BS bolt. This allowed the fuel gauge to be 'calibrated' to the sender unit exactly.

**Below: The end product. As you can see the pointer needs to be shortened**



**Above: The brass shaft with the pointer attached**





## Librarian's Report. November 2018

For some time I've had the text for a number of books without illustrations good enough to allow reproduction. This situation arises because photocopied text is easy to fix but illustrations on the same copy usually have insufficient detail.

Inter-Club cooperation has fixed this problem on two books this month with *The Riley Register* kindly providing original illustrations for two books on the Wilson Gearbox.

**The Armstrong Siddeley Preselector Gearbox** book has been useful over the years to Riley 12/4 and 14/6 owners fitted with Wilson boxes. Riley used an almost identical but down specified version of the same gearbox (e.g. bronze bushes in place of needle rollers) but Riley did not issue an instruction book.

**Book No.157** is a reproduction of the A.S. book with good illustrations of assembly and parts.

**Book No.158** is a reproduction of a book published by the Wakefield oil company (CASTROL) on the **Lubrication and Care of the Wilson Gearbox**. This is a generic book and does not specifically cover the gearbox used by Riley but offers a good layman's guide to the Wilson gearbox and of course recommends Castrol oil for its lubrication.

**Book No.161** is a reproduction of **Saving Service by Slingsby** a book I have never come across before which has been kindly provided by Leigh Johnson of the South Australia Riley Club.

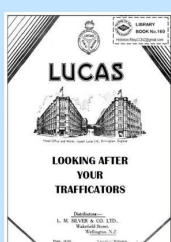
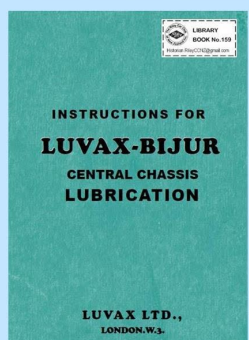
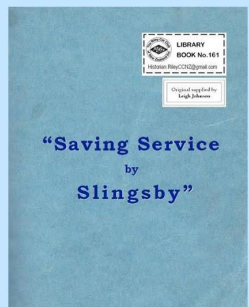
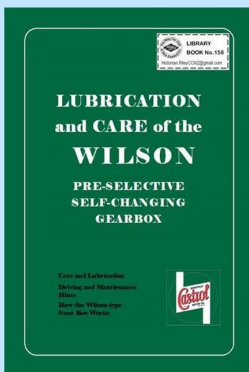
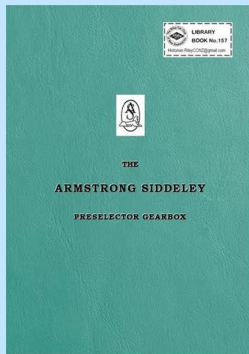
T.W.Slingsby was I assume in charge of after sales service at Riley Coventry in the early 1930s and in that capacity used the then Company magazine *The Riley Record* to publish his replies to owners' cries for help. This book is a compilation of those replies and will be of interest to Riley 9 and 14 H.P. cars of that era.

T.W.Slingsby is mentioned as a 'Head of Department' at the 1930 London Distributor's Lunch and as a 'Social Secretary' in *The Riley Record*. If anyone knows his history I'd appreciate hearing from them as I suspect he was an interesting character.

If anyone still has such a thing in working order they may be interested in **Book No.159** which is a reproduction of **Luvax-Bijur Central Chassis Lubrication** instruction book.

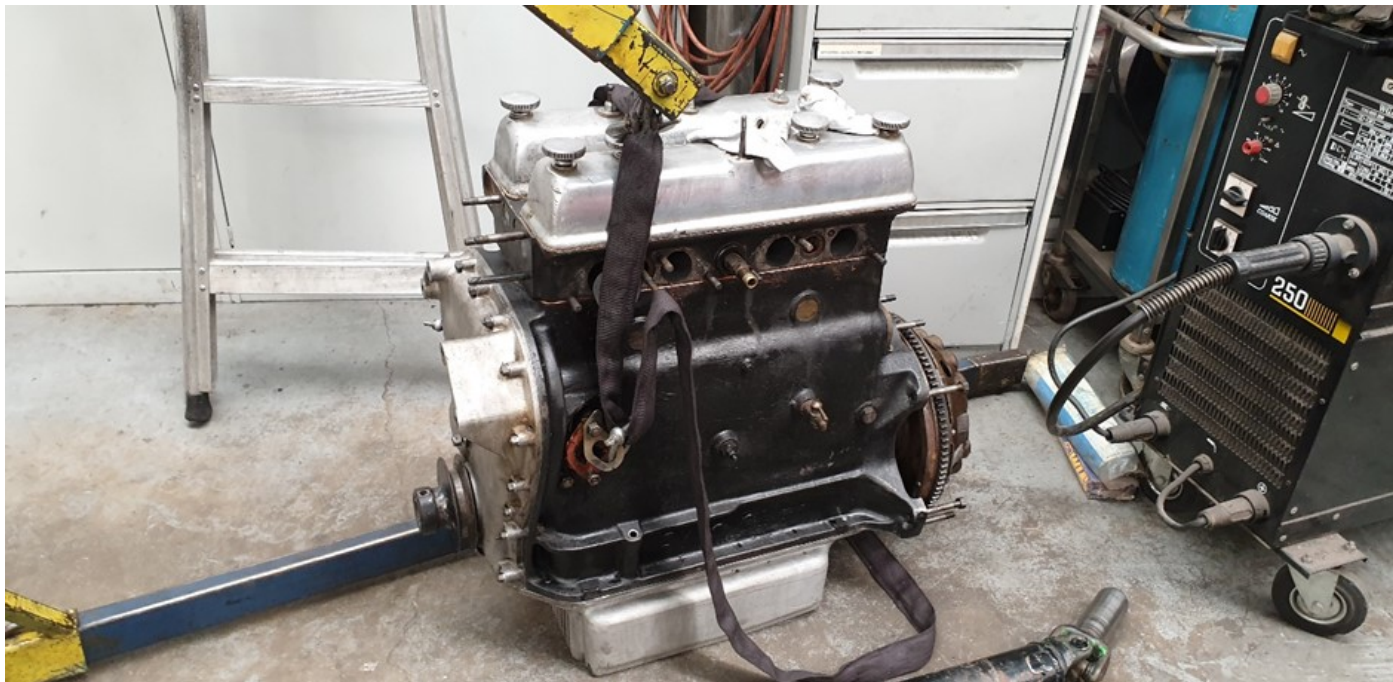
Likewise, **Book No.160** is a booklet on **Looking After your Trafficators** published by Joseph Lucas.

Lindsay Stephens  
Historian.RileyCCNZ@gmail.com





## Riley's Curse by Phil Soden



Last month Phil Soden (Editor of the Riley Gazette) told how he had worn out his Riley engine. The following is a continuation of the tale

The Riley engine eventually went together. Shiny new cams machined to modern timing, shiny new cam followers, shiny gaskets. All together... time to heave that sigh of relief!

The engine was trolleyed slowly across the floor towards the engine hoist which would reunite it with the car. With a tiny distance to go the trolley catches on something.

The lofty (and extremely heavy) Riley engine topples off the trolley. It crushes a mechanics leg.

This, of course, saved it from doing irreparable damage to itself.

The mechanic wasn't as impressed by this as I was.

The distributor shattered when it fell. No, not a Riley distributor but a much modified Ducellier. It was fitted with Lumenition optical points and modified advance springs for the Riley.

Paul Bae once again saved the project by instantly providing a replacement Ducellier distributor. We belong to a great car club, don't we!

## Not so Speedy, 'Speedy seals'

Sometimes also called quick seals, speedy seals were the topic of conversation at the monthly general meeting that was held during the day on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> August. I had asked if there was a solution to a pitted seal surface on a half shaft. Robin Hull suggested a 'speedy seal'. Brian Jackson added that he knew them as a, 'quick seal'. So, during a recent visit to Brisbane CBC Bearings were visited on Kingsford Smith Drive and the shop assistant was presented with two requests, 'May I purchase some Dowty washers and three speedy seals

to fit this half shaft, please.' Two sizes of banjo bolts and a half shaft were then placed on the counter, the attendant measured the diameter of the sealing surface on my half shaft and said that their Dowty washers came in a packet of mixed sizes, so I bought the speedy seals and the plastic container with the different sized Dowty washers.

Dowty washers are a little diversion from the main story, but Ian Henderson had mentioned them to me because the external plumbing to

recommended Dowty washers. Then more recently Ken Lonie was visiting my garage and recommended them for the rocker box retaining bolts on my Roadster. They are thin copper washers with an in-bedded 'O' ring guaranteed to stop any weeping oil. Well, I have not road tested that yet, but I have fitted them to the external plumbing on one of my RMs as an experiment.



#### Above: The product

At CBC the attendant presented me with three small boxes, each containing a 'speedy seal' and on the box was proudly proclaimed, 'wear pro Sleeve' and it had a nice picture on the front of a speedy seal or was that a 'quick seal'? I think it was William Shakespeare who coined the phrase, 'a rose is a rose by any other name'. Anyway, it was what I wanted – well almost. Next day, they were out on my work bench and each seal was accompanied by a short cap for 'belting' the speedy seal over the seal surface. It was useless as there was a small thing called a half shaft in the way. So, the first task was to find a tube just larger than the speedy seal to push the speedy seal over the seal surface.



The seal has a collar for the tool cap to push it into place. After trawling through all my under-house treasures, I came across some three-inch plastic drainage pipe. It fitted perfectly so I put it in the lathe and made a clean straight surface for it to sit against the quick seal.

Just when it appeared that the job was going to be quick, it was noticed that the speedy seal was longer than the seal surface on the half shaft and that if not shortened the speedy seal would foul with the bearing. Ouch!



#### Above: The long and the short of it

So, the speedy seal went onto the outside teeth of the lathe chuck and using a sharpened and narrowed parting tool the, by then not so speedy 'speedy seal' was scored and cut through to the appropriate length. The end was then cleaned up and all of the tiny shards removed. The steady as you go, speedy sleeve was then tapped into place over the sealing surface and the half shaft was reassembled. Job done.



#### Above: The job completed. In this case the speedy seal was a friction fit over the seal bearing surface

But then, another half shaft belonging to Wayne Powrie was put on the bench, another speedy seal was cut to length and when fitted over the half shaft, it fell over the seal surface with a couple of thou clearance. Hmm, maybe, the seal surface had been reground because it was pitted? And maybe the reground surface

was too narrow for the seal? Anyway, if fitted as it was, it would still leak so another solution is required. That solution came with another conversation with Robin Hull: Lock tight; the gap would be taken up and the pitted surface would be filled with a generous application of lock-tight. Thank you Robin.

## *Re-covering an RM roof*

The new custodian of my long-time friend and 1948 RMB asked me to change the colour of the Riley and replace the black vinyl roof with a maroon vinyl. He also wanted new seat coverings and door cards. That was fine because he was paying for it. The gutter had been fitted into place with brass screws so it was easy to remove and after that the rear window came out without issues. But at that point a sad situation revealed itself. The rubber window seal had hardened over the years allowing water to penetrate and the bottom passenger side of the timber frame had rotted. It was a good thing that the roof covering was being exchanged, but not so good that re-covering the roof of Harold meant that the roof had to be removed and the rear window frame replaced. At least it was good for the new custodian. He was getting a sound body with a new rear window surround and a water proofed rear window. I should also mention that he has renamed Harold, 'Arold' in deference to his Cockney origins.

To speed the process up Bill White was asked if he would allow me to have the rear window surround that I had made for him only a few months previously. No problem was his response. I was grateful. A few days later he brought it to my home while attending a run to Wayne and Louise's home at Kenilworth. After removing the roof, the window frame was fitted, the roof went back on and the car repainted. Much to the new custodian's disappointment however, we both needed to wait for what seemed like a very long time before the vinyl roof covering became available. It was a distinct contrast to the quick help of a Riley friend who by the way sagely commented that

upholsterers are notorious for making and braking promises about finishing at a certain time.



A roof vinyl synthetic underlay was chosen instead of the heavier cotton underlay that was used previously because the synthetic wouldn't hold water (another lesson learned the hard way). It was made from polyester and was laid cross wise and loosely sewed so that it would hold together and fit the shape. The day chosen to fit the vinyl was hot with full sun, a good day for getting any wrinkles out of the cover and not so good for me. I don't know if there is a 'correct' way for fitting a roof cover, but in this case the front of the vinyl was pinned with short stainless steel flatheads from the centre and after a half a dozen had been hammered into place, the vinyl was stretched across to the sides along the top window rail and further spaced nails were hammered in just deep enough to hold the fabric. The vinyl was then stretched towards the back of the roof while other nails were tacked into the cant rails. Finally, the rear of the vinyl was stretch back and tacked into place.

As expected, there were wrinkles in the rear corners and there were some slight stretch wrinkles running from the front of the vinyl to the back where it had been stretched from the



**Above: tacking above the front windows**

in place. The rest of the day was spent removing a few nails at a time and stretching the vinyl towards the edges of the roof and then re-nailing the vinyl into place. The rear corners are always the hardest to get flat and by the time they were looking close to the mark the Riley had been moved so that the rear of the car was facing the lowering sun.



top flap of the aluminium extrusion was hammered over to hide the screws. There was only an inch or two of material to trim from the sides and rear of the roof and even less at the front and this was trimmed with a cutting blade purchased at the local newsagent. Finally, the gutter was repainted black.



**Above: Getting there**

The maker of the roof covering only just gave me enough material for me to grip it at the back and pull it into shape. If he ever does another one for me, he will definitely be asked for an extra two inches of material so that my sore hands could get a better grip. By the end of the day, the material was stretched into place, my hands were hurting, and the Riley was driven back into the garage.

Next day, the Riley and the new vinyl roof covering had cooled, and the roof covering had taken the shape of the roof even better than the evening previously. The gutters were then replaced with stainless steel screws and the

PS. After fitting the roof lining the rear window was refitted but the rubber purchased for the job was the too small! It was narrower than the original so the window with its rubber was smaller than the timber frame opening, and the lip of the rubber was too short to cover the vinyl edge and so it created a valley where rain could collect. Oh dear! To solve the problem, another rubber was purchased over the phone and a request was made for express delivery but after five days, it had not been delivered and I was told it would take another three working days to arrive. Hmm, I wonder what lesson is being learned here?

PSS. At the time of writing the seats are still unfinished.



PSS. The source of the rear window rubber extrusion is Scott Old Auto Rubber (Melbourne) 03 9545 3222 or Old Auto Rubber (Sydney) 02 4721 1414 and catalogue number 218.001 and you will need 2 metres of it.