

GOBLINS' GAZETTE

The official publication of the
AUSTIN HEALEY SPRITE
DRIVERS' CLUB INC



MARCH 2023



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MONTSALVAT JAZZ NIGHT
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AUSTIN HEALEY SPRITE
DRIVERS' CLUB INC



PO Box 248, Box Hill Victoria 3128

www.ahsdc.org



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The AHSDC meets on the first Friday of each month (except January).
The meeting is at the clubrooms at 19-23 Rosalie Street, Springvale (Melway 80 A8).

DEADLINE FOR GOBLINS' GAZETTE IS THE SECOND FRIDAY OF EVERY
MONTH except December - **no mag in January**
Articles and photos can be sent to mandypj@optusnet.com.au
Please send photos as separate files DO NOT embed in word documents

Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editor, the Austin Healey Sprite Drivers' Club Inc or its committee. Information is published in good faith and we do not accept responsibility for any loss, damage or disruption caused by errors or omissions, whether such errors or omissions result from negligence, accident or any other cause. All rights reserved.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

CALENDAR FOR MARCH 2023

Date	Event	Organiser
3 Mar	AHSDC General Meeting 23 Rosalie Street Springvale 6.30pm	AHSDC
9-12	Phillip Island Classic Festival of Motorsport See page 14 for display and ticket information	PI
11 Mar	Avalon Motorkhana More information see competition pages	MGCC
16 Mar	Jack's Drive See page 10 for details	AHSDC
18 Mar	MSCA Sprints Sandown www.msca.net.au	RACV
18-19 Mar	Rob Roy Revival See page 18 for details	MGCC
26 Mar	Jazz at Montsalvat See page 5	AHSDC
30 Mar- 2 Apr	Australian Grand Prix See page 14	AGP

Please note dates are subject to change. This calendar is not a comprehensive list of events, there may be other events held on the same dates in other locations. Check out the club's website, it is regularly updated www.ahsdc.org

AHSDC 2023 COMMITTEE

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Tony & Nancy Young 9890 7530

MSCA Delegate

Bob Lomas 0418 382 299

Motorsport Australia Delegate

Mike Welsh 0416 254 599

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Warren Reid 9870 9442

cpsadmin@ahsdc.org

AOMC Delegate

Bob Lomas 0418 382 299

Webmaster

Dave Wallace 0438 856 353

Club Solicitor

Stratton Langslow
205 William Street, Melbourne.

The AHSDC Inc is affiliated with Motorsport Australia and is a member of the Marque Sports Car Association & the Association of Motoring Clubs.

What a week, and I assumed that I had not made much progress on the the important things such as walking the dog, finding lost Sprite parts, walking the dog, ordering Sprite parts, (working) and walking the dog.... Im exhausted and the dog isn't yet!

But Mandy waits for no man and I'm late with the president's report, so on bended knee I type hasitly to appease and appologise.

So what a great start to the year, first class dinner at the club, great list of racing events posted and a social whirlwind is approaching.

Like all activities get in early and register your interest as it makes our organisers' work a little easier.

I love jazz and am looking forward to "Jazz is back at Montsalvat".

There is a full booking already for

the display cars at the Formula One. Well done, it's important to show the flag.

Talking with David our new VP about Rob Roy and he is thinking of getting involved in the hillcimb events and it seems others are showing a renewed sense of competition vigor.

Out and about this week I was at the Healey Factory and ran into an old club member (David Halliday) who has started work there and he sends his regards to all (I encouraged him to rejoin).

I also spoke to Greg this week and we are sorry we missed the Corbins at our first meeting, but there will be other opportunities.

There have been a number of discussions about the possibility of resurrecting the Sprite Nationals and it is likely that we will engage with

other State clubs to consider a revival next year, with lots of planning from all the states to ensure it can happen.

We are sponsoring a race at the Winton Historics again this year and we are looking forwards to a good turn up of cars to display.

Looking forward to a great year of events and social activities.

Get your gear in order, engage with the club, your friends and let the good times roll.

Have a Great Year

*See your wheels in motion soon ...
Regards Jules*

JOIN US FOR JAZZ AT MONTSALVAT

The club is organizing an afternoon of jazz on 26 March at Montsalvat followed by a meal at House Of Salad in Eltham.

The concert will be in the Barn Gallery which features not only Montsalvat's best piano, but a bar in the corner to keep you refreshed.

The music begins at 5pm but keep your eyes peeled as we may be getting a tour of Montsalvat prior to the concert.

After the concert we will all head to the House of Salad where you can BYO wine or purchase it from the restaurant.

Who is Joe Chindamo?

Joe Chindamo is a musical polyglot whose art defies classification. While forging an international career as a brilliant jazz pianist – producing 23 CDs, topping the jazz charts in Japan, winning a slew of awards (including being inducted into the Bell Award Hall of Fame in 2016) and touring the world with the genre's leading figures.



He was working as "first call" pianist on more than 60 film soundtracks and performing and recording with a plethora of leading artists from the worlds of opera, jazz, theatre and pop.

So why not join us, Joe, and the other jazz performers? All you need to do is book online at <https://www.trybooking.com/CFHVF> and then email or text Bib, Sue or Trish that you are joining us. If you aren't good at booking online then contact a member of Team Social and we will help. Cost - \$55 concession.

Montsalvat Jazz is Back

Montsalvat, 7 Hillcrest Avenue, Eltham

Possible tour of Montsalvat 4.30 (TBC)

Concert run time 5pm – 7pm

Cost - \$45 concession through **trybooking**

(email social@ahsdc.org and we will advise when bookings open)

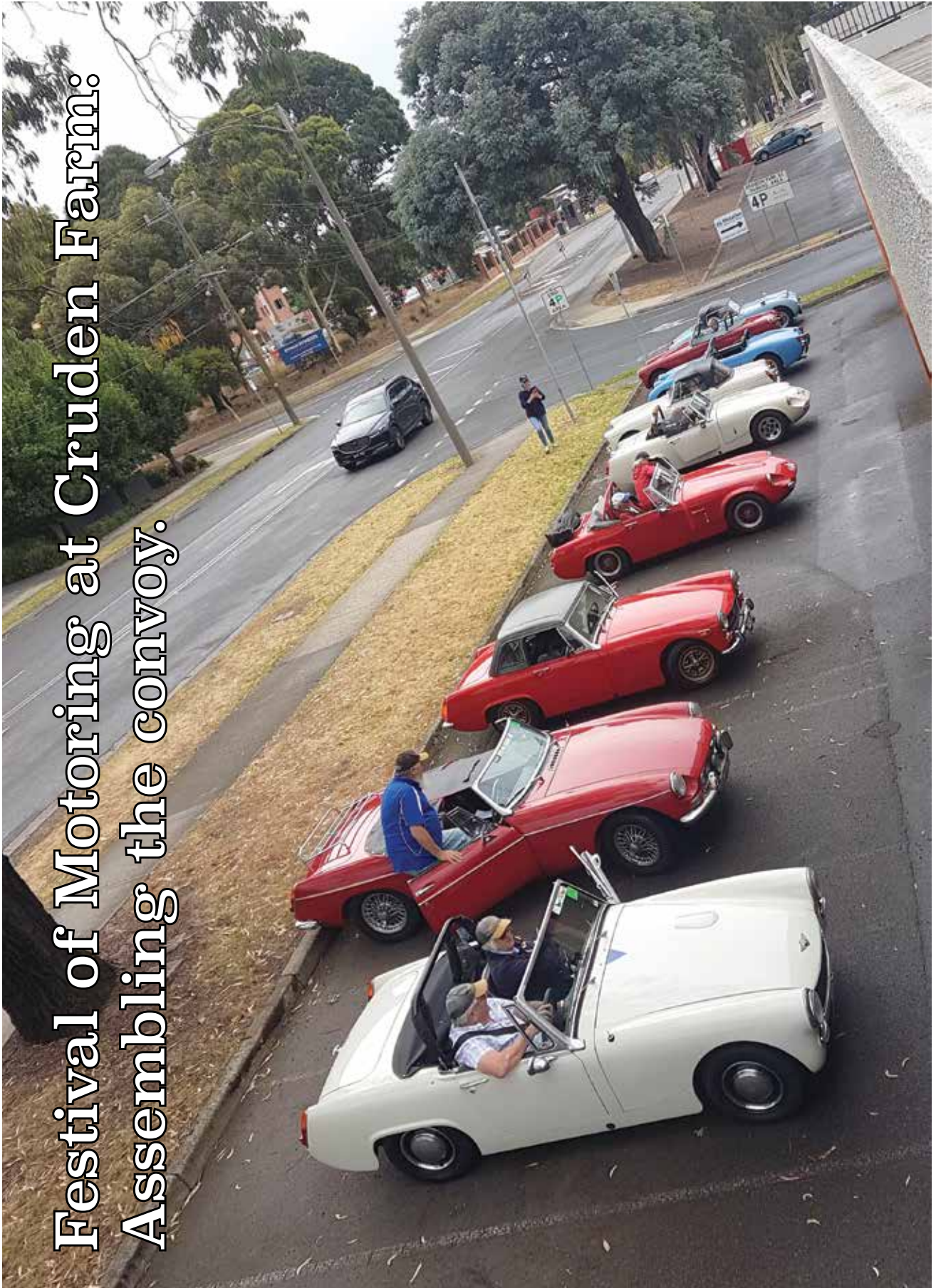
House of Salad (BYO & licensed)

4/61-67 Beard Street, Eltham - 7.30 pm

The Social Secretariat:

Bib 0412 937 379 Sue 0499 968 472 Trish 0408 109

**Festival of Motoring at Cruden Farm:
Assembling the convoy.**



Competition had already kicked off at PI, and now social was bursting into life – all before the first meeting of the year.

The day of the Festival of Motoring at Cruden Farm started with cloud cover, which was a welcome relief after Saturday when the temperature hit 39 degrees. The cooler weather is so much kinder on drivers and vehicles.

Owen and I were the first to arrive at the appointed spot, as marked on the maps that were emailed out. Followed by David and Valerie, which gave us time to catch up on all the news within the club.

At 8.15 sharp the director for the event arrived, and again we had time to catch up on a bit of “chit chat” before we started to wonder where the rest of the party were – maybe held up in traffic, maybe thought they’d go direct to

Cruden Farm, or surely not, not lost.

With the wonder of the mobile phone, we located them – Jim and Chris, Bib and Gerry, Wendy and Denis, Brad Martin, Gary and Lorraine, and Terry and Jade were found.

No worries, without too much fuss they arrived and after a quick photo session Kaz fired up her trusty Sprite and led the way to Cruden Farm using her published route instructions.

Owen and I did not join in as we had other commitments (like breakfast in the park) so we elected to wave the flag as the Sprites took to the road.

At Cruden Farm they were met by Mike and Sue, John and Trish, John and Jacqui who elected to go straight to the event.

Chris Crombie



At 8.45am on 29 January a merry band of members set off from Brandon Park. Led by Kaz we jauntily wound our way through back streets, up hills and down dales to Cruden Farm. The weather was great for driving with hoods down and this, combined with the cappuccinos that were still warming our bellies, made for a great convoy.

Kaz had carefully designed the drive so as to ensure that we got a variety of roads, not just a jaunt down the highway.

While we were touring, Sue Dore and Trish Niemann, aided by their husbands, Mike and John, had begun setting up the club flag and pergola to mark our place.

We rambled through the Cruden Farm gate, waved through by officials when they saw our green stickers, and lined up with the other AHSDC cars.

Next came a flurry of activity as bonnets were lifted, cars were emptied and cleaning cloths employed to get the cars tarted-up for display.

It was delightful, a circle of chairs appeared in front of the pergola which shaded cheese boards containing a deli-

cious array of Australian and French cheeses.

Cruden Farm is a 54ha property south east of Melbourne. It was a wedding gift to his 19-year-old bride from Sir Keith Murdoch.

After his death in 1952, Dame Elizabeth moved from town to live permanently at the farm, and began in earnest her work establishing the gardens. This greenery provides a dramatic backdrop to all the historic cars and indeed, would be worth a visit without the vehicles.

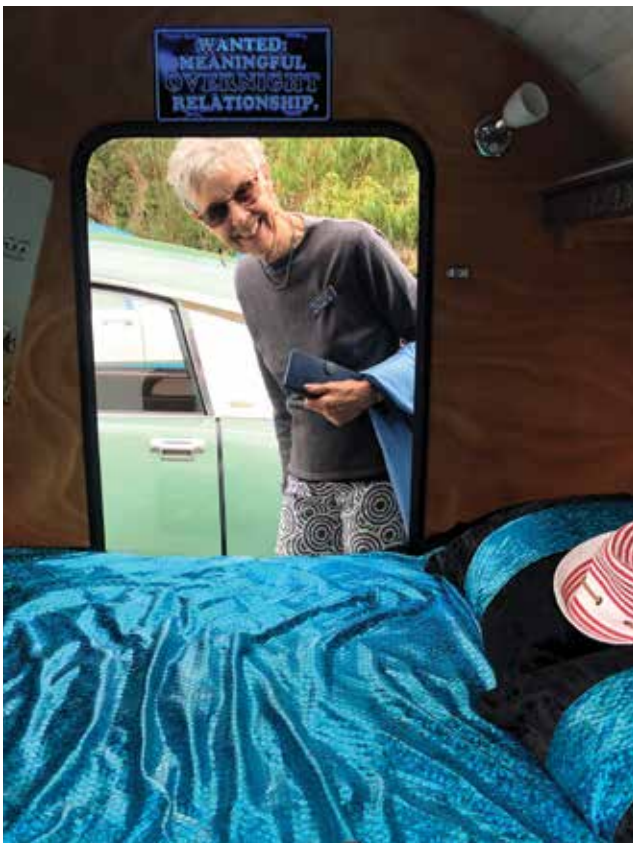
Our club displayed 13 cars and they were much appreciated by the people who came to admire, discover or reminisce about Sprites and Spridgets. Common comments and questions were “Isn’t it cute! ... Is the 948 nicknamed a bug-eye or frog-eye? ,, Surely you’re too tall for that car?” Our new members Terry and Jade Robison drew attention with their left hand drive Midget.

It was a friendly, fun day and we look forward to the next event. Thanks to Frank Bujega, Gary & Lorraine Boyd, John & Jackie Connor, Jim & Chris Dewar, Sue & Mike Dore, Darryl Griffiths, Denis & Wendy Hough,

Team Social

Valerie & David King, Brad Martin, Gerry van Oosterom and Kaz Postill for exhibiting their cars, plus Trish and John Niemann, Simon Browning and Dennis Varley joining us, and of course Chris and Owen Crombie for waving the convoy off at Brandon Park.

*Team Social
Bib, Sue and Trish*



Team Social Coming Events

Our year has begun well with a convoy to Cruden Farm to display 13 cars near the shade of some beautiful oak trees. The cheese and crusty bread were a hit and everyone had a very pleasant day touring the farm and admiring the vast array of cars.



26 MARCH IS JAZZ AT MONTSALVAT

Our next social event is Jazz at Montsalvat. We have had an excellent response to this event, which means that a free tour of the property is on the cards. We will be in touch with those who have purchased tickets just as soon as tour details have been finalized by Montsalvat. In the meantime, be prepared to be at Montsalvat at 4pm for the tour rather than 5pm for the jazz show.

After the Jazz we will be going to The House of Salad for dinner. If this doesn't suit you, please let Team Social know and we will adjust the booking numbers.



If you haven't booked but want to come, there may be some tickets left so it's worth a try. The main feature is *The Joe Chindamo Trio* and they are performing in The Barn at Montsalvat, a venue with a beautiful piano and a bar in the corner to keep you refreshed.

The cost is \$55 concession booked through <https://www.trybooking.com/CFHVF>

Please email social@ahsdc.org or text Bib, Sue or Trish to let us know you are coming.

17 & 18 JUNE IS M.O.V.E MUSEUM AND WONDERFUL ART GALLERY:

This should be a great event in June. The world class MOVE Museum contains cars, motorbikes, trucks, buses and much more.



One of the vehicle exhibitions is the Kenworth Dealer Pavilion which houses trucks and other commercial vehicles of varying ages. This pavilion also features the legends of the local trucking and transport industry, telling the story of their lives and their businesses. It is fascinating.

For those who aren't interested in vehicles there is an extensive Loel Thomson Costume Collection. This collection takes a journey through 200 years of Australian fashion in clothing, jewellery, accessories and more. 7,500 objects, collected over 40 years, tell the stories of everyday Australians from Federation up to the present day. With pieces you've never heard of alongside the familiar, old and new and everything in between, there's something to interest everyone.

If you are interested please contact Bib, Sue or Trish for details.

1 & 2 SEPTEMBER IN APOLLO BAY



We are really looking forward to this leisurely weekend of winding drives, interesting places to visit, and sitting on the dock of the Bay sharing a wine and perhaps some of their famous seafood, which is delicious.

The motel we have chosen is Apollo Bay Best Western, which has all accommodation on the ground floor. This means you just have to alight from your car (or unfold from your Spridget) and take a few steps to your room. Simple! The motel is also very central so we are hoping that most can simply walk to dinner. It should be a lot of fun and we would love you to join us.

Team Social:
Bib 0412 937 379
Sue 0499 968 472
Trish 0408 109 624

Team Social

Mid Week Drives 2023

Starting 16 March we are off and running for another year. All the drives are on a Thursday starting at 10am sharp from Beasley's Nursery, 195 Heidelberg Warrandyte Road, Warrandyte.

Hospitality is still struggling with staff problems, so please book in before the Monday night prior to the drive.

Please let Jack de Bruijne know if you are coming either by email to jdebrona@gmail.com or phone or SMS to 0403 323 584.

The dates and end venues are as follows, but subject to change.

16 March	Grand Hotel - Yarra Glen
20 April	The Hill - Berwick
11 May	Dudleys - Olinda
1 June	Home Hotel - Launching Place
22 June	Bridges - Hurstbridge
13 July	Warburton Hotel - Wesburn
3 August	Micawber Tavern - Belgrave
24 August	Alpine Hotel - Warburton
14 September	Grand Hotel - Yarra Glen
19 October	Kinglake Hotel
2 November	Diamond Creek Hotel
16 November	Cunninghams Hotel - Yarra Junction

The drives are approximately 70 miles long with half completed before a morning tea stop, and the other half before lunch.

Lunch normally finishes about 2.30pm and then you make your own way home.

Come along and give your car a run and meet up with the friendly group. The roads are usually fairly quiet on a Thursday too.

Just so you can see how much fun the drives are and that everyone in every car is welcome here are photos from the last Mid Week Drive for 2022 held on 24 November.



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ROUND AND ABOUT REVISITED

What do people get up to when they are not following Jeff or Jack down some long winding road, or racing at Phillip island, being regular at Mallala or standing around the bar before the monthly meeting.

Most of us have come to know many club members over the years and are keen to know their news, celebrate their milestones, and support them in times of need.

It is for this reason that we are resurrecting *Round and About*, a newsy column that publishes anniversaries, marriages, births, big trips, gossip, and of course illnesses wherein we get the chance to wish that person well.

If you have any items, or know of someone who needs support, please email social@ahsdc.org

If you know something, spill the beans!

Bib van Oosterom

To get the ball rolling here's a few snippets of news.

- Matt vanO has joined the club. Many of us who have been in the club for years and years will remember little Matt, the eldest of the four VanO kids. He has joined bringing with him his Torana and he is not so little now.
- Sue and Peter Brice should be back from their trip to Europe by now having spent a very enjoyable time skiing in the Alps, travelling to northern Italy and then across to Slovenia.
- To keep things in the club Bryce Young has been working on the Gardiner/PJ Big Healey fitting out the interior with carpets, seats and all manner of trimming.
- Jeff's Cruze Nights have been up and down with the weather with one week hot and the next cold. But you better get your skates on as the end of the Cruzes is looming as they finish in March. Nobody cares which car you come in just come and enjoy the drive and company.
- This year has a whopping 23 Formula One races on the calendar and a new Aussie to fly the flag with young Oscar Piastrri in the McLaren. He won the 2019 Formula Renault Eurocup, won the 2020 FIA Formula 3 Championship and the 2021 Formula 2 Championship. He is only the sixth driver to win the GP2/Formula 2 Championship in their rookie season, and the fifth driver to win the GP3/Formula 3 Championship and the GP2/Formula 2 Championship in consecutive seasons. Let's hope we finally get another F1 world champ, we haven't had one since Alan Jones in the '80s.



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COMPETITION CORNERED

A DAY AT THE ISLAND



Rod Vogt at The Island



2022 Sprite Drivers' Champion Brendan Crombie

Sunday 22 January was the opening round of MSCA Sprints and Regularity at the Phillip Island circuit and we had no less than 10 members competing, of which four were in Sprites.

Fastest on the day was Linton Coombs in the Honda S2000 with 1:52.2770 ahead of his father on 1:55.6732. Splitting them was Bryce Rogers in his RF86 Van Diemen with 1:54.7341 before setting a scintillating time of 1:56.8551 in his Mk3 Sprite.

Rod Vogt turned in his usual polished performance at 1:59.6854 in his Mk1. Iain Johnson in his supercharged MX5 produced a time of 2:02.6919 but declared himself

unsatisfied with that while Bob Lomas in his Sprite now detuned for driveability finished with 2:03.5602. Peter Clarke managed 2:06.9161 to finish ahead of Peter Harrison in his Sprite at 2:07.6819.

The Coombs Honda S2000 seems to keep on getting better so I wonder how long before Linton is looking below 1:50?

Meanwhile Bryce Rogers time was certainly noteworthy but his goal appears to be to take on the Meyer brothers from Sydney, which means another second or two to find. Watch out for interesting results at the historic races at the Island in March.

In the Regularity section of the day Tony Hannan in his Sprite with a very accurate first run of the day, conceded only four points to finish ahead of Steven Rogers in the Mk3 Sprite.

Great to see such a cross section of members for the first event of the year.

COMING EVENTS

On 26 February a Sunday is a khanacross run by Gippsland Car Club at Bryant Park. This event utilises the sealed pit area plus sections of the hillclimb track albeit with witches hats to limit speeds. It does require helmets and you can enter via Motorsport Australia the event entry cost is around \$30.

On 11 March a Saturday is a motorkhana at Avalon using the Geelong Motorsport Complex and it is a sealed surface event run by the MG Car Club who are very happy to have participation by our members. Enter by MA event entry.

On 18 March a Saturday is Sandown Sprints and Regu-

larity run by MSCA

On 26 March a Sunday is a Motorkhana at METEC in Kilsyth run by the MG Car Club. A very accessible venue in the eastern suburbs so if you are unsure about competing come along and have a look.

These are the events designated for championship points in March. There are of course many other events available to members for their enjoyment.

As you will note elsewhere in the magazine there is an Historic meeting at Phillip Island on the 11/12 March which will have literally hundreds of historic cars competing and for which the club has discounted tickets available and an opportunity to display your car with other club members.

Mike Dore

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 2023

Designated events for championship points

1	22 JANUARY SUNDAY	PHILLIP ISLAND SPRINTS / REGULARITY	MSCA
2	26 FEBRUARY SUNDAY	BRYANT PARK KHANACROSS	GCC
3	11 MARCH SATURDAY	AVALON MOTORKHANA	MGCC
4	18 MARCH SATURDAY	SANDOWN SPRINTS / REGULARITY	MSCA
5	26 MARCH SUNDAY	METEC MOTORKHANA	MGCC
6	15 APRIL SATURDAY	WINTON SPRINTS / REGULARITY	MSCA
7	16 APRIL SUNDAY	ROB ROY HILLCLIMB	MGCC
8	7 MAY SUNDAY	SANDOWN SPRINTS / REGULARITY	MSCA
9	7 MAY SUNDAY	MALLALA REGULARITY 6 HOUR RELAY	MSCASA
10	13 MAY SATURDAY	ROB ROY MOTORKHANA	MGCC
11	25 JUNE SUNDAY	ROB ROY HILLCLIMB	MGCC
12	16 JULY SUNDAY	METEC MOTORKHANA	MGCC
13	6 AUGUST SUNDAY	MACEDON OST	MGCC
14	13 AUGUST SUNDAY	WINTON SPRINTS	MSCA
15	20 AUGUST SUNDAY	ROB ROY OST	MGCC
16	24 SEPTEMBER SUNDAY	BRYANT PARK HILLCLIMB	GCC
17	14/15 OCTOBER SAT/SUN	WINTON REGULARITY 12 HOUR RELAY	AROCA
18	22 OCTOBER SUNDAY	SANDOWN SPRINTS	MSCA

Regularity scoring: Events run by MSCA are sorted over four laps per run with a starting score of 1000. One (1) point is lost for every 0.50 seconds over the nominated time and two (2) points lost for every 0.50 seconds under the nominated time.

For regularity relays the scoring will be the percentage of bonus laps of total laps driven.

Please refer any queries to Mike Dore (0409 256 564), Bob Lomas (0418 382 299) or

Barry Payne (0418 547 903)

COMPETITION CORNERED

COMING MOTORSPORT

PHILLIP ISLAND CLASSIC FESTIVAL OF MOTORSPORT MARCH 9-12

The AHSDC has received a number of tickets which will enable us to allow members to not only gain admission to this prestigious event at a reduced cost, but will enable us to display our cars there.

Several of members will be competing, and others of course will be supporting them. Sadly none have been selected to do demonstration laps in the six ex-Formula 1 cars which are scheduled to be there.

Warren Reid has kindly volunteered to herd the cars, aka organise the AHSDC display. So, to take advantage of this please contact him well in advance on 0432 604 076, bearing in mind that he both works and sleeps.

AUSTRALIAN FORMULA ONE GRAND PRIX 30 MARCH -2 APRIL

We will be able to display our cars at this event, but

even though it is not far away the exact format for such a display is not yet clear but all spots are already taken.

If you want to be listed as a possible spare contact Frank Bugeja on 0411 293 984.

46th HISTORIC WINTON 27-28 MAY 2023

In previous years we have sponsored a race and so also received a number of complimentary tickets which have enabled us to put on an AHSDC display.

As yet we have no co-ordinator for this event, so the committee would appreciate a volunteer to direct the club's efforts over this significant weekend ... the 65th anniversary of the Sprite!



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In accordance with a long standing tradition, the first meeting of the year has a social theme with food, usually a BBQ and drink from the bar, and this year was same same but different.

The Life Members rallied to provide the food and raffle prizes, and were ably assisted by many other members who volunteered to help with moving tables, cutting up burger buns, arranging salads, as well as bringing along a few little extra tasty treat surprises.

I personally noticed the efforts of Mandy, Debbie, Lorraine and Bob in the kitchen, but I am a little hesitant in even making this short list because it appeared that at one time or another almost everyone willingly lent a hand! Thank you to you all.

It was a bumper night with around 70 in attendance, which is jolly close to one third of all our members, a truly epic effort by all those able to attend.

Due to weather anxiety, only three Sprites got there though, and as it happened it did not rain anyway!

Luckily the caterers (the aforementioned LMs) had factored in by some telepathic method the food requirements, so there were even a few leftovers.

We then departed from the previous pattern by having a Monthly Meeting Lite, which was held to the backdrop of the many trophies which the club had awarded in days of yore for participants in Sprite Championships since 1966.

This was followed by the presentation of the last Sprite Championship to Brendon Crombie, who in accepting the award alluded to his hope that the new Drivers' Championship will result in a renewed interest in competition within the club.

The raffle prizes, again donated by the LMs, were won as follows: 4th Jack De Bruijne, 3rd Terry Robison, 2nd Kath Warne and 1st Mike Trathen.

Next month's major prize valued at \$100 is a Trydel "EZIUP" emergency air and repair kit, the precise technology many luxury vehicles are equipped with instead of a spare wheel.

For those who hanker after tradition, the next meeting will be along the more customary lines of socialising from 7pm, guest speaker and then formal stuff, followed by raffle and light supper.

The guest speaker will be long time AHSDC member Mike Trathen recent winner of the State Race MG Series



in a Sprite, which he has been continuously developing for rather a long time. While not giving away all the secrets to his success, he can offer some insights into dead ends to avoid in the quest for performance, as well as some of the more rewarding areas to explore.

Again it would be gratifying if we could have a good number of Sprites out on the night!

Thanks also to the AHOC, who held their annual BBQ February meeting the night before and left the tables, tablecloths, and some salads for the AHSDC.

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MEMBERSHIP MATTERS



New members
Terry and Jade
Robison

Great to see a good roll-up of members at Cruden Farm recently and I add what a great job the Life Members did with the catering.

We have one new member this month or is he a previous member re-joining or is he a younger member now older re-joining? However described, Matt van Oosterom has

joined the club. He lives in Diamond Valley and has a very nice 1977 Holden Torana. Welcome Matt and we hope to see you and your Torana out and about.

We now have 204 financial members so there is about 25 members from last year still contemplating membership renewal. I remind members participating in the VicRoads Club Permit Scheme you need to renew your annual CPS Admin Fee as well- It may hold up your permit renewal if not paid.

For those who do not have the ability to renew their membership online, talk to me and we will easily resolve the situation. If you have any problems with the system also contact me anytime.

I drew your attention to a question about the Goblins' Gazette in the renewal process. One hundred and one members indicated they wanted to continue to receive a hard copy of the magazine, 47 said no and the remainder are still deliberating. The committee will digest this in due course and we will let you know of any changes.

I am a fan of the Australian F1 GP and have displayed my Sprite, along with many other members, at each opportunity. It is disappointing that this year we were only been allocated five positions (we asked for 10) due to a AGPC restriction to the total number of display cars.

Nevertheless, the club is on display to a huge audience and that makes it worthwhile. Come and say hello if you are at the GP!

Remember, if you have any potential new members, or any issues with receiving the Goblins' Gazette, not receiving regular emails from the president etc please let me know.

And as always, I look forward to meeting you all at next monthly club meeting or at some other club event somewhere...

Frank Bugeja
Membership Secretary
0411293984 or membership@ahsdc.org

Cruze Nights Every Wednesday

EVERY WEDNESDAY NIGHT meet at the corner of Dorset & Canterbury Roads by 7.30pm SHARP for a drive and dinner – no need to book.



GILLIAN HARRIS - THE POWER BEHIND THE THRONE

By Mike Jones and Andrew Fawkes

Towards the end of 1956, David Brown promoted John Wyer from Racing Team Manager to General Manager for Aston Martin and Lagonda.

Wyer was a fastidious character, who insisted that the race team follow his methods religiously. Each race was analysed, any equipment failure was noted, expenses were listed and driver performance was recorded, in a detailed report.

This approach had paid significant dividends.

By contrast his successor, Reg Parnell, was a larger-than-life character at the end of an illustrious driving career. According to Wyer, he had 'no use for paperwork, preferring to rely upon intuition, the spoken word and memory'.

Although Wyer had huge respect for Parnell's leadership qualities, he was concerned that his seat-of-the-pants approach to management could undermine the systems he believed were a key foundation for success.

Wyer decided to recruit a secretary/admin assistant to support Parnell and, he hoped, preserve his own legacy.

That person was Gillian Harris, a 21-year-old secretary, who (in Wyer's words) went on to become Parnell's 'Chief of Staff'. The role required daily contact with management, drivers, engineers and mechanics both at the factory and the racetrack.

Gillian quickly found her feet and came to be highly respected by her male team-mates, including Stirling Moss:

'Gill Harris is a girl who revels in this kind of organization ... What does she have to do? In a few words - know all the answers and anticipate most of the questions concerning the day-to-day administration of a racing team 40 strong'.

Parnell's biographer, Graham Gauld, went even further, describing her as 'the real power behind the throne'.

No other woman held such a key position in a top 1950s racing team, as Gillian later reflected: 'It was a full-time job and, at that time, a unique one. There wasn't anyone else doing what I did, but then there weren't

many teams operating on the scale that Aston was, with the big convoy, the fleet of cars and the large team of people'.

A woman in a man's world

How did a young woman achieve so much in what was, at the time, very much a man's world?

Gillian attended her first motor race, at Crystal Palace, with a friend, whilst studying for her A-Level examinations. She was immediately thrilled by this exciting new experience.

'We were right there close to the track ... as we were walking, I looked ahead and there was an outstandingly attractive racing driver named Peter Collins. I stared at him and thought to myself: I would like to go to lots and lots of motor racing, then I could see super people like that!'

Shortly afterwards Gillian decided that, rather than go to university, she would complete a secretarial course and find a job as soon as possible.

Her sister, Julie, suggested that studying shorthand and typing in two languages, English and French, would 'undoubtedly open the way to qualification for an unusual and useful job.'

Gillian took her sister's advice and enrolled for a one-year course at the Lycee Francais in London. She passed her exams and soon afterwards secured a position with Standard Triumph, helping military personnel avoid purchase tax when exporting new cars to the continent. Her role was to complete the 'carnets de passage', which were written in French.

Gillian gained valuable experience and was pleased to be working in the car industry. However, what she really wanted was a job in motor racing.

When a Standard Triumph colleague showed her an advert in Autosport for a competition secretary at Aston Martin, Gillian knew this was her big opportunity. Candidates had to be able to type and speak French (the



principal language for rules and regulations). She applied for the job and was interviewed by Wyer and Parnell.

The experience was daunting, but the young Miss Harris made a big impression on the senior man, who thought she was 'an extremely intelligent girl.'

Partnering Parnell

Gillian started working for Reg Parnell in January 1957. She found the facilities at Feltham rather primitive; the ladies' loo was a long way from the office, but Gillian was inspired:

'This was a world where things were happening, the cars were tremendously exciting and beautiful and the skill, dedication and precision that went into them wiped out all the inconveniences. I know it never occurred to me to complain about the primitive facilities and I don't know of anyone who ever did - we were all happy to be there despite the poor conditions and poor pay.'

Later that year, she experienced the thrill of her first race win, when Tony Brooks and Roy Salvadori finished 1 and 2 at Spa. The Belgian GP was Gillian's first overseas event and the first international victory for the DBR 1.

This was heady stuff for a 22-year-old!

As her role expanded, Gillian used her language skills to check the regulations for each event and negotiate



Above: Gillian at Nuremberg in 1958, where the race was won by Stirling Moss partnered by Jack Brabham

starting money with race organisers.

She planned the movement of cars and personnel; arranged ferries, flights and hotels, while ensuring the appropriate customs and immigration clearances were obtained.

In those days, a trip across Europe required separate paperwork for each border crossing!

There were also no debit or credit cards, so Gillian had to take sufficient cash to cover the team's expenses. As currency controls were in place, she had to get advanced permission from the Bank of England to take money out of the country!

During race meetings, she ensured that equipment was where it needed

to be and helped out with timekeeping. When back in the UK, she would write the race report, in collaboration with Reg Parnell.

Gillian was completely professional in her approach and, although she enjoyed the glamour of international motor racing, avoided any opportunities for romance:

‘It was in many ways a very lonely job. When I first started, I realised that there would really be no time for personal involvements because I had a job to do.

Looking back, I think I carried that too far, because I never, ever did anything, other than teamwork when I was away at a motor race. If anybody asked me out to dinner well, no, I was there with the team and that was it.’

Gillian was thrilled, and immensely proud to have been a member of the team that won Le Mans and delivered the first World Sports Car Championship for Britain in 1959; Aston Martin's ‘Marvellous Year’.

Her racing life changes direction

Sadly though, all good things must come to an end.

The company's withdrawal from sports car racing at the end of that year, followed by the disappointment



Above: At Le Mans in 1958, Gillian watching the action from the back of the pits whilst Stirling Moss gives instructions to another driver.

of the DBR4 in 1960, signalled that she would soon have to consider her career options.

Keen to retain her, John Wyer offered Gillian the role of publicity manager when he finally called time on the racing program. However, ever loyal to Reg Parnell, she decided to go with him to the Yeoman Credit Racing Team.

After some soul-searching, driver Roy Salvadori agreed to join them:

‘When Reg went to Yeoman Credit, he had complete control of everything, and fortunately for him he took Gillian Harris with him, because he was the worst organiser. If he had to organise anything it was a complete disaster and it was Gill that held the team together. Without Gill the whole thing would have been a complete shambles.’

Despite now having his own team to manage, Parnell decided to go to the 1961 Le Mans race, to support the Border Reivers, who had entered a privateer DBR1 for Ron Flockhart and Jim Clark.

Gillian helped out as a stewardess on a charter flight to the race and was then roped in to help in the Border Reivers’ pit. While there, she met Bib Stillwell, an Australian who was racing a DB4GT Zagato for the Essex Racing Team, in the adjacent pit.

Romance enters the fray

When Bib’s car retired with gasket failure, he asked whether there were any spare seats on the return charter flight.

There were. For once, Gillian’s ‘professional’ guard was down; no doubt because she wasn’t present in an official capacity. Bib and Gillian got on very well and starting seeing each other.

Their relationship was complicated by the fact that they both had busy travel schedules. Bib was also married, with three sons.

In January 1964, fate dealt an unexpected twist; Reg Parnell died suddenly, leaving Gillian without a job. Bib and his wife divorced later that year. Gillian, perhaps for once following her heart rather than her head, emigrated to

Australia and married Bib in June 1965.

They were a formidable team.

Gillian focussed her energies on family life; raising Bib’s three sons from his first marriage and having a daughter and son of her own. She believed her experience at Aston Martin stood her in very good stead: ‘Looking after that team was very good preparation for looking after a family’.

Bib developed his considerable car dealership and aviation businesses, ultimately becoming president of Learjet in 1979. This necessitated a move to Tucson, Arizona, where Gillian loved the outdoor lifestyle, especially skiing, horse riding and playing tennis.

She was also delighted to be able to keep in contact with John and Tottie Wyer, who lived in the area.

Gillian and Bib’s idyllic lifestyle in the USA came to an end in 1985 when Bib suffered a severe heart attack and they decided to return to Australia.

Gillian kept in touch with other friends and former colleagues from the racing world and occasionally travelled to reunions. The picture of her with members of the old team in 1989 shows that, all those years later, her time at Aston Martin still meant a great deal both to her and the team:

‘To have been part of that was just unforgettable. It would be hard to find another group of people that got on so well and achieved so much over such a long period of time. They were great years.’

Gillian passed away in May 2020. She is greatly missed by the Stillwell family and her wide circle of friends and colleagues around the globe. Her positive attitude has been, and continues to be, an inspiration to many:

‘Be like Gillian and go live life to the fullest.’ (Marianne Stilwell, 2021)

Footnote: The authors believe that Gillian Harris was a trailblazer for women in motor sport and are working on a project to tell her story to a wider audience. They would like to thank the Stillwell family for their assistance and support.





ELECTRIC ROAD-CAR

Designed with production in mind — but not ready yet — the Littlest Leyland has caught the world's top manufacturers off-guard with its advanced road orientated specifications. Harold Dvoretzky is first with the full facts . . .

ABOVE: Plastic body is great shape, shows form of coming small cars. It is of course rust-proof, and is safer in crashes because of shock-absorbency.

ABOVE LEFT: Square-wheel, and a beautifully integrated dashboard layout is still completely simple. Only gauge is speedo with small dial to show amp-hours left in battery.

LEFT: Contoured seats provide ultimate comfort — though this beastie is strict two seater.

THIS IS the prototype for BLMC's pollution-free electric city car.

It could be on sale in three years! Its aluminium body was styled by the Italian Michelotti who has designed every Triumph since the Herald in the late fifties up to the Stag sports car of today.

It is a smart-looking two-seater based on Mini running gear — Mini subframes, Mini wheels and steering, and Mini suspension. It's even front-wheel drive — but there comes the snag.

Though its power units will either be twin electric motors driving the front-wheels or even electric motors in all four wheels, the power source is still a big question.

At the moment, heavy lead-acid batteries which have poor performance boost the weight of the Mini-sized vehicle from 12 cwt to 18 cwt. Apart from their short charge time — they can propel the Electricar a maximum 40 miles, at a top speed of 32 mph —

they are too hefty a payload to cart around.

The car's life is planned for 10 years. The batteries, in their present form would need replacement at least every three years at a cost of more than \$A300.

The cost of the car has not yet been evaluated. But it will have to be around, or below, present Mini standards to have a big appeal — even though government pollution and environmental regulations may demand its use.

But BLMC, whose Crompton-Leyland offshoot (which it shares 50-50 with Hawker Siddeley) is



BLMC's ELECTRIC CAR



LEFT: Pert and perky with plenty of styling yet practicality in big doors, wide wheel arches, good glass area.

BELOW: Quad lights and neat grille are distinctive frontal features. Note how tall headrest-buckets appear in screen. Big wipers give clear sweep.

BOTTOM: Rear end gets the "tailgate" treatment with jazzy tail-lamp wrap-arounds. Morrison is old name for Leyland-associated electric vehicle manufacturer.

the biggest producer of electric vehicles in the world, is pressing on with the car's development.

Crompton-Leyland was originally Morrison Electric Cars hence the name of vehicle.

Crompton Parkinson, one of the Hawker-Siddeley offshoots, is the third biggest battery maker in Britain in the car field and second biggest when it comes to making the heavy duty ones for driving electrically-powered vehicles. As 80 percent of Britain's milk floats and 70 percent of its fork lift trucks are electric and mainly Crompton-Parkinson, this is a really big business.

In all, there are about 50,000 electrically-driven vehicles on the road in Britain right now!

At the moment the Electricar's handling isn't all that could be desired. Six cwt of batteries mounted behind the two front seats under the "luggage" tray and up front are responsible. They're the new *lightweight* lead-acid batteries with special cases but they still weigh very heavy.

This has given BLMC engineers a tricky job sorting out handling problems. But they claim they have it beaten and by the time the power source is ready, the car should be handling as well as, if not better than, a Mini.

Meanwhile, work on the power source has reached an advanced stage.

Though other types are still being investigated, the feeling is that the zinc-air battery will win in the end. Three British firms (including Crompton-Parkinson) and three US corporations are working on zinc-air battery development as are two Japanese firms.



MODERN MOTOR — AUGUST 1971



BLMC'S ELECTRIC CAR

All eight companies are confident the problems are almost licked!

Crompton-Parkinson is already in production with small zinc-air primary dry cells of low voltage which are capable of five to eight times the performance of a normal dry cell.

In Britain, it's claimed it will be three years, possibly five, before the big zinc-air batteries with at least twice, (and possible three or four times the performance of the heavy lead-acid batteries) will be powering electric cars.

But when they do come they will give the cars better acceleration, far greater range and a top speed around 60 mph.

The prototype electric car needs little servicing.

Its batteries are topped up once a week and every three months the contactors, the motor commutators and brushes are checked.

There are only four grease points and the gearbox can be checked in the three-monthly schedule.

The body of the Electricar with its lushly fitted ergonomically-designed interior (which could be mixed in vacuum-formed plastic for the dashboard) is more than just a pretty design study. BLMC and Michelotti are well aware that by the time the Electricar gets into production, plastics for car bodies (and their entire interiors) could have replaced steel.

The prototype body is of aluminium. But production versions could be of the improved ABS sheet, Prestal (that's the metal-plastic invented by BLMC's Pressed Steel Division) or some other mouldable plastic. It could be vacuum formed or injection moulded or a little of both.

The design lends itself to either vac-forming or injection moulding, though for cheapness, the former seems to be the most probable.

Michelotti, like every stylist, has recently had to turn his mind away from thinking in steel and metal and get it orientated towards the new medium of plastic.

So far the turn-back of openings to present both a smooth outlook and a certain amount of torsional strength has baffled the engineers and styling boys trying to find a way of forming plastic sheetings.

But given the impetus (like dearer steel sheet and corrosion problems) the problems can be licked.

The Electricar will be rust-proof, but it can still crash and the possibility of acid spillage would have to be taken into account. The body will have to be proofed against acid.

Controls are simple — just a footbrake, accelerator and handbrake.

There is a key to connect up the power supply.

The driver then selects forward or reverse (which routes the current one way or another through the alternating current [AC] motors) by switching the black lever on the left of the simple dashboard arrangement.

To the left of the dashboard is also an instrument to measure the amount of power or charge left in the battery — virtually the fuel gauge.

Then comes the gear selection lever and the speedometer with indicator lights either side.

Two rows of switches — eight in all — control parking lights, headlights, dashboard rheostat and reverse light (top row) with the wiper switch, heater switch, blower and a spare on the bottom row.

The normal Mini stalk controls indicators, headlamp flasher and dip, and is mounted on the right of the Mini steering column.

To move off, the driver just depresses the accelerator pedal. To stop he lifts off, gets a certain amount of regenerative braking from the motors or uses the footbrake.

Present control gear uses "carbon stack", but more sophisticated use of electronic controls is forecast.

Running costs of the prototype, which as yet doesn't incorporate regenerative braking, work out about half an Australian cent a mile.

DIMENSIONS

Overall length	102 in.
Overall width	56 in.
Overall height	53 in.
Track, front	47½ in.
Track, rear	45 7/8 in.
Turning circle	19 ft 4 in.
Ground clearance	5 in.
Wheelbase	58 in.
Weight	18.5 cwt.
Weight over front axle	9.5 cwt (approx)
Weight over rear axle	9.5 cwt (approx)
Top speed	32/33 mph (approx)
Economical cruise speed	16 mph

BODY:

Steel tube frame with aluminium panels.

TRANSMISSION:

Triplex chain drive to gearbox and differential-to-front-wheel drive-shafts. Alternate drive sprockets to provide low, medium and high speed turning.

STEERING:

Rack and pinion.

SUSPENSION:

Rubber units as in Mini with telescopic dampers and trailing radius arms at the rear.

BRAKES:

Hydraulic drum-type on all four wheels.

WHEELS:

Alloy and tyres 145 x 10 in. radials.

POWER UNITS:

Two series-wound 3.5 hp electric motors one hour rated to BSF (British standards) 1727. Force amplified by two external blower-fans controlled by isolated key switch. Carbon stack controller to give smoother and geared acceleration with an economical half speed position. Top speed achieved by complete depression of accelerator. The motors are arranged in series/parallel controlled by electro magnetic contactors with blow-out coils. For safety, only half-speed is available in reverse gear. The 24-cell, 48-volt power source comes from eight monoblock type-3 FX-2 batteries which are guaranteed for 10,000 miles or 12-months.

A two-rate charger is built into the car. The batteries can be recharged in nine hours. A red lamp on the dashboard panel shows when the output current is flowing. Charger incorporates a voltage relay and 25 ft of cable and a 13 amp plug can be plugged into normal 240 volt supply.

State-of-charge indicator fitted to the dashboard.

REAR "luggage tray" behind seats is reached through open tail-gate, and covers the "battery store" below. Driver has cockpit gauge to advise when power is low.



AT PRESENT, heavy lead-acid batteries with low performance and short life are used, but Leyland's Electricar team says a breakthrough on a high-output zinc-air battery is imminent.



MODERN MOTOR — AUGUST 1971

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PART INSANE

When you do a ground up restoration and start with a body shell and boxes of unlabelled parts, you have to hope that the psychiatrist bulk bills.

The accompanying workshop manual never fully explains the eccentricities that inhabit the beast you are bringing back from the dead. It doesn't even go into any depth about the built in booby traps that the car designers have placed in your way to prevent you from 'doing it yourself'.

All the bolts required are of a specific length, thickness and thread that are not commonly available. '.

Unless you re-tap the welded in nuts, your search for parts has begun with just a nut on the end of a spanner that doesn't quite fit properly. Yes, you are that nut!

If there are four bolts to be taken out, you can guarantee that the first three will come off easily. That is just to build your confidence and inflate your optimism and ego. The fourth bolt will take the wind out of your sails quickly.

It will shear off leaving you having to drill it out and then re-tap. Or it will not budge at all and no amount of heat, WD40 or swearing will make it move. Of course, it will be in the least accessible place that allows only a sixteenth of a turn before having to reposition the spanner. You are left with the dilemma of either having to fix your bleeding knuckles or taking another Valium first.

Contacting parts suppliers and ordering over the phone or internet is challenging to say the least. The quality of parts has declined markedly and less scrupulous suppliers will offer you parts that struggle to survive until any warranty runs out.

Thus the destruction of your sanity is now moved closer on the planned obsolescence timeline.

Invariably the part you need is out of stock, wrongly labelled in the workshop manual, or, when it arrives, doesn't fit and just gets added to the pile of parts you hope to offload later. All the while your bank balance seems to be magically dropping.

Assume that all rubber components need replacing.

The rarer the car, the higher the price of the replacements. Then there is the wiring loom. It "consists of coloured wires wrapped in a cloth sheath.

The makers of these take great delight (and huge profits) in ensuring that the wires are never long enough to reach their intended target and certainly never match the colour coding in the manual.

If you try to stretch them to reach, they break and if you follow the colour coding, you are bound to see them fry and fuse together when first connected to the battery.

They sell more looms that way and their more profitable sideline, anger management courses you find are nearly always full.

Trying to modernise the car by adding electronic ignition sees it spitting out the parts because there is a subtle difference in every distributor, and when you find the parts the distributor won't accept returns, the nightmare continues.

The exploded diagrams in manuals are designed to confuse you. They look simple enough. The parts are all numbered, but that numbering has nothing to do with the sequence they go together.

The successful pattern is a code that



is almost uncrackable, leaving the enigma and da Vinci codes looking like child's play by comparison.

You call in mechanically minded friends and experts to assist. They look at the self-chosen disaster you have embarked upon and snigger at your ability to lose your marbles quicker than a rattling washer fallen inside a sealed part of a chassis.

The secret you have been told is to buy a second car to wreck for parts.

The neighbours start to complain that your yard soon fills up with more and more of them in your quest to find the holy grail, which is the counter clockwise threaded castle nut with a superfine thread that has never been cross-threaded, but is essential to finish your project.

Finally, frustration kicks in and, following health advice given to you by Lifeline, you decide to sell the car and all its separated components to another unsuspecting victim who has the same naive notion based on "How difficult can it be?"

Perhaps he will take your place when the doctors agree that you finally can be released from your padded cell.

Greg Tuck

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One of most recognisable and successful Mk1s in the Sprite Club. Completely hand built by Steve – has been successfully campaigned in numerous motorkhana and speed events over the years; winner of numerous awards for motorsport and concours. Still presents beautifully and ready to use in competition, or very useable as an entertaining and responsive road car.

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Autographed by John Sprinzel. An established, historic, turn-key car for a fraction of current restoration costs. \$35,000 (neg)

Expressions of interest to Ian Maud on 0414 580921.



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LOG BOOK CLUB PERMIT SCHEME

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO AHSDC MEMBERS REGARDING THE CLUB PERMIT SCHEME

Recent changes to the scheme mean that when signing new club permit applications, club safety officers/scrutineers are required to complete a Vehicle Eligibility and Standards Declaration form declaring that the vehicle is eligible, safe for use on the road, and that it meets the applicable requirements for the category of vehicle for which the club permit is sought.

This implies that when signing renewals of Permits we have the same responsibility to see that the vehicle for which the renewal is sought is in fact the same car in the same condition still meeting the Vehicle Eligibility & Standards.

We would expect that this is a mere formality however, to be seen to be administering in the spirit of the scheme and to protect our members privileges under the scheme as best we can we must see the vehicle concerned before we

sign a Club Permit Application or a Permit Renewal.

Your Committee has passed the following resolution:

From 1 May 2016, AHSDC members wishing to use the Club Permit Scheme must attend a minimum of ONE club meeting/club event/event at which the club has a group representation, each year – and have the relevant car sighted by one of the Club Permit Scheme Signatories before the club signs the Club Permit Renewal for that year. If you have genuine hardship meeting this requirement due to your country location please speak to the Club Signatories to make alternative sighting arrangements.

For some of you we do understand that this might require a little bit of planning and you might see it as onerous however, in reality it is part of our joint (club/member) responsibility under the scheme and it is really very little to ask of ourselves for the privilege of driving our cars on public roads for hundreds of dollars less than if it were on a full registration.

Club Permit Application Requirements

At the end of January 2015 the new club permit requirements came into play. For those people with an existing AHSDC club permit, nothing changes with regard to the renewal that you receive from VICROADS each year (this still has to be signed off by a club signatory when the permit is due for renewal).

However, remember that you need to be a financial member of the Austin Healey Sprite Drivers' Club Inc. This means rejoining each year by 1 January of the forthcoming year if you have an ongoing Club permit.

If your membership lapses your permit/s are considered to be invalid.

You also need to fill in the AHSDC acknowledgment form at the start of each year whereby you agree to abide by the rules and regulations of the scheme. This will either be sent out towards the end of each year, or can be obtained from Warren Reid. Remember when using your car on a Club Permit the log book must be filled in otherwise severe penalties will be imposed.

New Club Permit Application Requirements

If you have a new car to put on the club permit system or are transferring a car from another club or from another member then the following requirements apply:

1. You need to download or obtain from VICROADS and fill in the "Club Permit Application" and the "Vehicle Eligibility and Standards Declaration" forms. Both these forms then need to be signed by the club permit officer (Warren Reid). If Warren Reid is unavailable, then other signatories listed below can also sign.
2. Any signatory signing off the "Vehicle Eligibility and Standards Declaration" must sight the vehicle for which the Club Permit is being sought and assess the extent (if any) of modifications.
3. You must obtain a current Victorian Roadworthy Certificate for the vehicle and supply a copy to the club signatory.
4. You must supply six (6) time stamped photos covering front, back, driver side, open driver's door, chassis number, engine number – to Warren Reid. Preference is for electronic versions of photos.
5. Once items 1 to 5 have been addressed then you take the signed club signatory forms along with the RWC to a VICROADS office and pay for either a 45 or 90 day permit and receive the plates to place on the car.

Club Signatories:

Warren Reid (Club Permit Officer) 9 Giana Court, Ringwood North 3134. Mob: 0432604076
email: cpsadmin@ahsdc.org, club scrutineers for new applications and car inspections – Warren Reid, Owen Crombie and Mike Welsh. Renewals - Warren Reid, Garry Neeman, Owen Crombie and Mike Welsh.
More information on the requirements of the scheme and the relevant forms can be found on the VICROADS website www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/publications-and-forms?&searchtext=club%20permit

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