

July-August 2018



THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE  
OF THE THOROUGHbred  
SPORTS CAR CLUB



# Contents

## (Fairly) Regular Columns



About our Club Page 3



Office of the President Page 4



Two-finger Typing Page 6



Coming Events Page 8



You can't be serious Page 41



Old and News Page 42



Star in an Unreasonably Priced Car Page 43



The End Page 44

## Event Reports

Restaurant Night

Page 13

Scottish Arms, Bowral

Page 14

Mystery Weekend and a Half

Page 16

CMC/Shannon's Day

Page 24

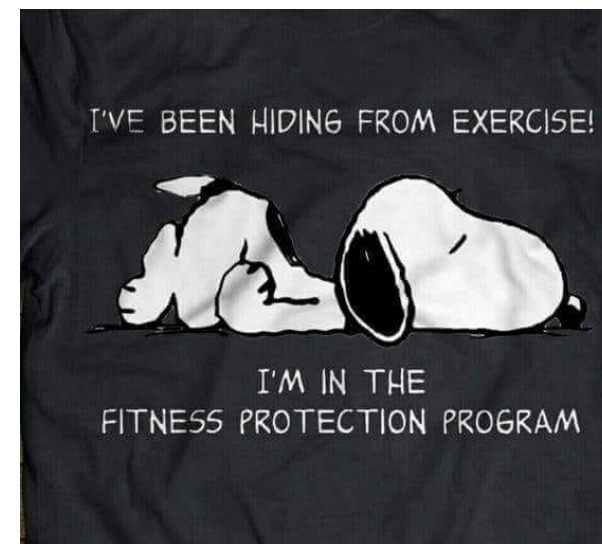
Overnight to Jenolan Caves Page 27

## ...and

My A-H 'Bugeye' Page 30

Key-rings for T'bred Cars Page 36

The deadline for copy for the  
September-October issue of Top  
Gear will be  
5<sup>th</sup>





# About our Club



## Calender

The [Official Calender](#) is published on our web site. Print a copy to keep in your historic log booked vehicle.

## Club Meetings

[Club meetings](#) are held on the 2nd Wednesday of every month except December and January at Carlingford Bowling Club.

## Club Objectives

- To foster a better acquaintance and social spirit between the various owners of Thoroughbred Sports Cars in Australia
- To help and advance Thoroughbred Sports Cars in Australia
- To establish and maintain, by example, a high Standard of Conduct and a Respect of the Laws of the Road

## Club Shoppe

Visit the [Club Shoppe](#) and make sure you are dressed appropriately for the next event.

## Correspondence

All correspondence to The Secretary, TSCC  
P.O. Box 3006, Dural, NSW 2158.  
Email: [secretary@thoroughbredssportscarclub.asn.au](mailto:secretary@thoroughbredssportscarclub.asn.au)

## Incorporation

TSCC is incorporated as an association;  
Registered No. Y15083-35

## Affiliation

TSCC is affiliated with CAMS Limited

## Committee

The contact details of the [Committee](#) are published on the Website.

## Other Information:

[Administration](#)  
[Annual Awards](#)  
[CAMS](#)  
[Club History](#)  
[Club Plates](#)  
[Membership Forms](#)  
[Pointscore](#)  
[Sporting](#)

## Disclaimer:

Any opinions published in the Newsletter should not be regarded as being the opinion of the Club, of the Committee, or of the Editor. No responsibility is accepted for the accuracy of any information in the Newsletter, which has been published in good faith as supplied to the Editor.

Articles are invited and should be mailed to the Editor for publication showing the name and address of the author

## Website

[www.thoroughbredssportscarclub.asn.au](http://www.thoroughbredssportscarclub.asn.au)  
Contributions to the Webmaster:  
[webmaster@thoroughbredssportscarclub.asn.au](mailto:webmaster@thoroughbredssportscarclub.asn.au)

## Top Gear

Top Gear Magazine was [first published](#) on 1st September 1981 by the Club. There is no connection or affiliation with the British based Top Gear magazine first published by Immediate Media Company on or around October 1993.

Current and previous editions may be downloaded [here](#).

All contributions to:

Stephen Knox

M: 0427 705500 Email:

[editor@thoroughbredssportscarclub.asn.au](mailto:editor@thoroughbredssportscarclub.asn.au)

## Guest Editors

Alfa Editor: [Barry Farr](#)

Aston Martin Editor: [Les Johnson](#)

Jaguar Editor: [Terry Daly](#)

Lotus Editor: [Roger Morgan](#)

## Other Information:

[Administration](#)  
[Annual Awards](#)  
[CAMS](#)  
[Club History](#)  
[Club Plates](#)  
[Membership Forms](#)  
[Pointscore](#)  
[Sporting](#)

**Top Gear** has been continuously published since September 1981.

# Office of the President

Barry Farr

The Mystery Weekend organised by Stephen Knox was once again the highlight of the year for many of the 56 who participated. It was also a packed room of 45 at the Kaiser Stub'n Restaurant for the Christmas in July dinner which Terry Daly organised and 46 members and spouses attended the July Wednesday lunch run to the Scottish Arms organised by Gary and Wendy Maher. The July and August club meetings were also well attended with 46 and 39 present respectively however numbers were less than expected at the Shannons Display Day at SMSP which Colin Allerdice organised and at which Lionel Walker and Lester Gough assisted all day. Colin reported 10 out of our 18 vehicles on display were the fast colour of red. The participation rate was also lower than expected for the two night stay at Jenolan Caves where 7 couples enjoyed the more intimate gathering. This was organised by Rob Clare who had to pull out a couple of days beforehand as Sue was unexpectedly admitted to hospital where she is undergoing treatment. I speak for all club members in wishing Sue the very best with her treatment.



In my first report for this year I indicated the future of classic car restorations in the UK looked to be in good shape due to the increasing availability of apprenticeships being provided by the Bicester College Historic Vehicle Restoration Apprenticeship Scheme. With the UK vehicle restoration industry

estimated to provide almost GBP5.5B economic activity each year, industry lobbyists have continued to be active which has resulted in securing Government funding for the renamed Heritage Skills Academy, the UK's only accredited institution teaching restoration skills. This has enabled the Academy to add Mechanical Engineering, Precision Engineering, Motor Trimming and Coach Building apprenticeships to its program and extend the participation criteria to not only 16-18 year olds but to older students and adults. The lobbying has also yielded more donor vehicles including four from Jaguar Land Rover. The Academy is based on the grounds of the former RAF Airbase at Bicester and apprenticeships last for 3-4 years.

Also in the UK the DVLA has revised its MoT exemptions to enable newly imported classic cars of at least 40 years old to be registered without any form of technical scrutiny. Documentation confirming the year of manufacture of the vehicle only, is required.

In my previous report I mentioned the change in the US tax code that now restricts tax free exchanges of collector cars where the sale proceeds were previously reinvested into the same asset class. One particular company in America, Classic Car Capital, has been quick to capitalise on the change by advertising under the heading of 'No More 1031 Exchanges' to 'maximise the return on your passion by refinancing your collection'.

Whilst Tesla still burns copious amounts of cash, loses money and misses financial and production targets, Elon Musk has become very impatient with journalists and short sellers of the stock. In an earnings call with





*Give him a break, Barry. He's been distracted by his new girlfriend, Grimes. Apparently she's a 'musical genius' and a sapiosexual.\* Ed.*

journalists he deemed questions boring and bone-headed and repeatedly shouted 'next' before granting 10 questions over 20 minutes to a U-Tube star. In the hours after the call Tesla's stock price fell 8% representing a USD2B drop in the company's value. Then early August Musk tweeted he was considering taking Tesla private and indicated he had secured the funding to do so, no doubt fed up with the journalists and short sellers and believing this would free the company from distracting scrutiny. However, funding was not secured and this is now being investigated by authorities as under US law, companies and corporate officers cannot give shareholders misleading information about company events. Further, when his advisors scrambled to seek the funding required, Musk did not like the strings attached to such funding and subsequently withdrew his idea to privatise the company. Meanwhile, the price of the Model 3 was increased from USD35K to USD49K.

With this year's F1 season two thirds complete and with Daniel Ricciardo having recently signed with the Renault Factory Team for the next 2 years, it's perhaps timely to review his performance in the Red Bull Team this year.

In qualifying, the Red Bulls have been well down in top speed compared with the Mercedes and Ferraris resulting in Daniel for the most part starting on row 3 of the grid usually alongside team mate Max 'Vercrashem' although Dan has out-qualified Max in 4 races only (Australia, TOP GEAR July-August 2018

Azerbaijan, Monaco and France). Not only has the Renault engine been down in power it has also been quite unreliable for Dan as he has suffered power/engine failure in 5 races (Bahrain, Austria, Germany, Belgium and Italy) and as a result of using up all his allotted engines, has had to start from the back of the grid in both Germany and Monza. Nevertheless, Dan has achieved two wins (China and Monaco) and one 2nd (France) and has had four 4th places and two 5th places thereby accumulating 118 points to date. Dan also achieved pole at Monaco which is regarded as the ultimate test of a driver's ability and he set the fastest lap time in 4 races (Australia, China, Spain and Hungary).

Despite these most commendable results, Red Bull saw fit to offer Dan remuneration for next year (believed to be \$18M), less than what Max was paid last year. It appears this, together with Dan being forced to also publicly apologise for the huge accident Max caused in Azerbaijan and the fact that Red Bull will move to Honda engines next year, led to Dan considering other offers, the result of which will see him move to lead driver for the Renault Factory Team next year on a 2 year contract reputedly worth \$70M.

Ciao for now, Barry



*\*Sapiosexuals are people who are first and foremost turned on by intellect, wit, maturity and emotional intelligence, a bit like TSCC members. Ed*

# Two-finger Typing

Stephen Knox

## Brush With Fame

In 1984 the HSRCA was having a dream run, able to attract substantial sponsorship from large corporations, including JRA, Pye Audio, Avon Tyres and AGL, although much of it was a case of 'not what you know but WHO you know. Paul Cross worked for Pye and smiled favourably on motor sport sponsorship. Paul Samuels dealt with AGL and had close ties to John Crawford at JRA. John was friendly with Stirling Moss and agreed to sponsor the historic meeting at Amaroo Park that year. Who better to have as drawcard/guest of honour, than one of the most famous racing car drivers in the world? It was generous support because Stirling's fee was \$10,000 plus air fares and accommodation for him and Susie, his wife. However, the man turned out to be very good value, acceding to all our requests for photographs, interviews and trophy presentations.

It fell to me to pick Mr and Mrs Moss up from the Boulevards Hotel in William Street and take them to Amaroo Park, after a brief press conference in the hotel foyer. Our guest answered questions he must have been asked a thousand times with patience and good humour – "Is it

true you were pulled over for speeding and the copper asked, 'Who do you think you are? Stirling Moss?' and, "How do you feel being such a highly regarded driver but the World Championship has alluded you?" At another point in his visit, I can recall the two of us running up Forbes Street for an interview at the ABC studios, with never a word of complaint.

TOP GEAR July-August 2018

and  
d an  
gey, I



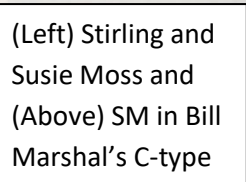
driver of the Jag but it was clear from Stirling's actions that the diver had seen him. I can't imagine the driver's reaction when, driving across the Bridge, enjoying an early morning, roof-down drive on a beautiful day, to have looked up to see Stirling Moss waving down at him.



(Sir) Stirling Moss and a  
(considerably) more hirsute  
editor with the lovely PRAD



“Oh, a Maser,” Stirling said. In that lovely old car’s lifetime, no one had ever given it such a compliment. To be mistaken, albeit temporarily, for a Maserati 300S by one of the world’s greatest motor sportsmen who has said that the 300S was one of his favourite cars, was quite a compliment.



## Stirling Moss 2.0

TOP GEAR July-August 2018

Stirling Moss	UK	1956	Maserati 300S
---------------	----	------	---------------

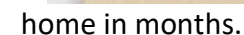
I always thought I could skate to my grandchildren that further down the list, in the same race as the great Stirling Moss, was my entry:

Stephen Knox	NSW
1963	Elfin Mallala

They couldn't care less.

## Sir Stirling Moss 3.0

In August I was at a motor sport function on the Gold Coast and ran into John Crawford (ex-JRA). We were talking about the wonderful 1984 Amaroo Park and he told me that Stirling, with whom John has stayed in touch, is quite unwell. He caught a chest infection in Singapore in late 2016 and retired from public life earlier this year. He hasn't left his



\*\*\*\*\*

After the investiture at Buckingham Palace, he got into the driving seat of his Mercedes - and a Buckingham Palace police officer joked: "Who do

you think you are, Stirling Moss?"

Pointing to his newly-received honour, he said: "Sir Stirling Moss, actually."

# Coming Events

## Calendar for 2018

(Events marked with an \* are non-point score events; names in italics are the event's organiser; shaded entries indicate a flyer following.)

### September

02/15 ~~Big Trip~~ ~~Barry Farr~~

12 Club Meeting

19 Wednesday run \* *Robyn Wards*

23 All British Day *Terry Daly*

### October

10 Club Meeting

14 POO Day *Terry Daly*

17 Wednesday run \* *Ian Norman*

21 Polo *Derek Scott*

28 Run to Wyong *Terry Daly*

### November

4 Lunch run to Hunter Valley *Ross Brackenbury*

14 Club Meeting / AGM

TOP GEAR July-August 2018

21 Wednesday run \* *Colin Allerdice*

### December

1 Christmas Party / Presentation dinner *D & J Slater*





## Tour of Joadja Historic Town and Distillery



Joadja was a kerosene shale mining town which operated from 1878 to 1911 under the management of The Australian Kerosene Oil and Mineral Co. After the collapse of the industry, the town was sold in 1911 and its people left the valley. Today, we can explore this bygone era and the natural beauty of this hauntingly magical place near Mittagong.

**Meet:** Pheasant's Nest Service Station, Hume Hwy 8.30am for a 9.00am departure

On arrival, Morning tea will be served, then we will be given a tour of the Heritage listed town, followed by lunch. After lunch we then tour the Distillery.

**COST:** \$45.00 per head

RSVP by 12<sup>th</sup> September to Peter Wards on 0408 219818 or email to [prwards@bigpond.net.au](mailto:prwards@bigpond.net.au)



# ALL BRITISH DAY

SUNDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018



SPECIAL 'FIRST OF'  
DISPLAY

Arrival from 07.30am  
You must stay between  
10a.m. and 3p.m. for  
OH&S reasons except in  
an emergency

Cost \$10/car  
BRITISH car only  
Limited to 15 tickets  
only!  
Members only  
First in Best Dressed

Kings School,  
Pennant Hills Rd,  
Parramatta .

Call Terry Daly  
0418 675 253  
to reserve your spot







# PRIDE OF OWNERSHIP DAY

14th October 2018



Every year Terry & Robyn Daly open their lovely home at 44 Cranstons Road in Middle Dural for the club's affectionately known 'POO Day' Its a chance to show off your pride and joy and to see the incredible diversity of machinery in this club. Arrive 9.30 a.m. Judging from 10.00 a.m. A carvery style buffet lunch will be served with champagne, beer & soft drinks .

Please RSVP to Terry Daly by 9th October on 0418 675 253 or [terry.daly@live.com.au](mailto:terry.daly@live.com.au) Pay \$45/head for members, \$60/head for invited guests into the Thoroughbred Sports Car Club Account BSB: 032-282 Account No: 135873 In the description field insert: POODAY YOURNAME e.g. POODAY SMITH if your surname is Smith





Lunch is at the Gwandalan Bowling Club, Gamban Road, Gwandalan on the southern shores of Lake Macquarie  
 Start at McDonalds, Pacific Highway Mount Colah at 10.00am for 10.30am departure.  
 Usual Club lunch available – refer copy of menu attached

**RSVP PLEASE BY 10/10/2018**

We'll need to know how many are coming and any dietary requirements  
 RSVP to: Ian Norman 0432 680 232  
 Email: [norman\\_ian@hotmail.com](mailto:norman_ian@hotmail.com)

Copies of the menu are available on the TSCC website



Location Shot  
 Taylors Bay Gwandalan



# Restaurant Night – Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July

Words by Terry Daly

This event was also loosely called the TSCC Christmas In July and was held at the long established Kaiser Stub'n Austrian Restaurant at Terrey Hills. Robert, the owner and chef, specialises in those traditional German/Austrian meat dishes complemented by delicious desserts. TSCC had the sole use of the enclosed outside area.

Initially forty six members booked for the three course dinner but Henry King and his wife were very late withdrawals due to a medical condition whilst Liz Kornhaber arrived with her nurse daughter in attendance due to a recent medical incident. Most arrived pretty well on time at 630pm when arrival drinks of beer or champagne were served. Seating arrangements were loose and it was great to see many new members intermingled with the old guard.

Originally we were told we had a choice of three entrees, three mains and three desserts but confusion reigned as the chef gave the members a fourth choice of mains. Personally I had the Mushroom soup, followed by the Vienna Schnitzel and the raspberry ice cream, a dessert also enjoyed immensely by Leonie Fuller. All I can say was the Schnitzel was the largest I ever attempted to consume, in fact, I failed to finish the dish and noticed several others who had the same dish also left plenty. On the dessert front, their signature dish, the Apple Strudel, was the choice of most of the members including that dessert champion, Barry Farr.

Four hours, three courses and two hundred thousand words later it was time to leave on what one can say was a very full stomach!

Great restaurant and a great night!



# Wednesday Run to the Scottish Arms, Bowral – 18<sup>th</sup> July

Words by Ron Powell, photos by Jeremy Braithwaite

What a fabulous winter's day greeted 32 members at Eastern Creek Maccas for the July 18 Wednesday run to Bowral's Scottish Arms.

Perhaps others, like me, were enticed by Gary's promise of 'some classic Maher roads, some you may not have been on, some you may never be able to use again'.

An interesting mix of 18 vehicles ranging from the Hood's immaculate Jowett Jupiter to the Johnson's Prado. We had classic Jags and Triumphs, Beamers, Mercs, a Honda 2000, a Datsun 260Z, Mustangs and MX5s and the fabulous Lotus Elise.



Two full pages of detailed route instructions caused a few wrinkled brows on the 5 solo pilots!

TOP GEAR July-August 2018

Colin Piper's red MX5 never left the exhaust pipe of Sue Harris' Fiat 500, which was having its first Wednesday run.

Mr Google suggested 104Km and 1 hour 9 minutes. Wendy and Gary stretched that to 131.65Km and nearly 2 hours using some great winding and twisting roads under and over the Freeway several times.

After a short stint on the Northern Road we were presented with the Oran Park countryside sadly infected with 'brick venereal' disease.



At the 2 right turning lanes traffic lights at Cobbity Road one of our solo pilots in a blue Mustang (who shall not be named) steamed off straight ahead in the direction of Camden.

A cheeky baby Fiat chirped its wheels causing our second blue Mustang to unleash its many hundreds of ponies to show that Fiat a thing or two!

Thanks Wendy for the interesting historical footnotes along the way



about your ancestor (William Chalker) and (for me) first time past the Mittagong airstrip.



All solo pilots arrived happily so that a very convivial lunch could be enjoyed at the Scottish Arms, no doubt enhanced by the generous \$20 meal and drink deal and the additional company of the Finneys who joined us at Bowral!



TOP GEAR July-August 2018





# Mystery Weekend and a Half – 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> July

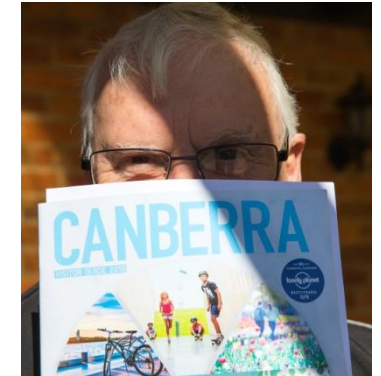
Words by most participants, photos by Jeremy Braithwaite

## Day 1 report by Robyn and Kevin Leggott

We arrived at Eling Forest Winery Cafe at 10am after an overnight stay with Rob and Kay Finney in Bowral. There were many TSCC members already enjoying the sunshine, coffee and cakes. Lots of conversations were taking place and it was great to catch up with friends although time was passing and our wonderful Mystery Weekend and a half organisers, Stephen and Jill Knox, hadn't arrived. We thought our mystery weekend was going to be even more mysterious!! Luckily they then arrived after battling Sydney traffic. Stephen handed out our information packages which included a brochure about Canberra. Could this be our destination? Yes we were off to the National Capital for our weekend away.



We set off via Goulburn and Wakefield Raceway, viewing the countryside with some pretty towns including Lake Bathurst and on to Bungendore for lunch at the George Restaurant in the Lake George Hotel. We once again



enjoyed chatting to the many people from the Club before we walked along to the Woodworks Gallery.

An amazing place, the Gallery was designed to create an ideal environment for exhibiting works in wood and other media. It was built in 1994 from Australian materials: Jarrah





posts, beams and staircase: Tasmania Oak floors, ebonised Victorian Ash windows and door frames, and



NSW Flooded Gum wall panelling. (Information taken from the Gallery brochure). There were magnificent works on display including art from

Bryan Dawe as Stephen had informed us. Some purchases were made by several people. Also opposite was a great Leather Shop to view.

We then set off again, the countryside looking very dry but interesting in its winter landscape. We are told Terry was breath-tested by the RBT Policeman on leaving Bungendore, Jim Catts just scooting past it.

We arrived at our accommodation, The Brassey Hotel, an early Canberra building from the late 1920s and recently refurbished. After settling in some people rested, others went on to view some of the many sites and scenes in Canberra.

Dinner was in the Burberry Terrace restaurant of the Burberry Hotel, on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor opposite our accommodation. We had an amazing view from there of the lights of the surrounding buildings with the mountains in the background. Pre-dinner drinks gave everyone more time to socialise with fellow members and decide what tomorrow might bring.

Our dinner consisted of alternate drop Salmon or Lamb and dessert of Apple and Berry Crumble or White Chocolate Cream Brulee. A great night!!

A wonderful first day, thank you Stephen and Jill.



*We then went to the National Museum of Australia? Soo peaceful and enjoyable. and the coffee was great! Plus cake. Then to the Glassworks..but our time is up!*



Jelly & Peter van Dyk

## Day 2 report by (almost) everyone

*Jill discovered the Handmade Market which only happens in the ACT every three months. We battled traffic that made Sydney look like a backwater and eventually found a spot in the vast car park, only to discover we were at the fruit and veg market! The Handmade one was good but crowded. The National Museum that afternoon was much better.*

Stephen & Jill

Saturday found us firstly at the National Museum which like everyone we found fascinating. The afternoon was spent at The War Memorial talking to a research officer regarding the location of my two grandfathers during WW1. The information gained will allow us to complete the research. A very timely location for a mystery weekend.

Rob & Sue

*We made a strategic decision to leave the Handmade Market until later in the day because of the traffic congestion; we therefore arrived at 3:47pm and experienced no traffic and Jane had 13 minutes to look round! Our other activities:*

*War Memorial – splendid tour, you always learn something new. Canberra Museum & Gallery – excellent exhibition to celebrate 30th anniversary of Australian Parliament. “Crafting the house on the hill”: stories behind the building’s major art & design commissions.*

Vic & Jane

Don't have much luck with BMWs on club runs ( think spoiler at Nundle Mill, low-life panel scratcher at Mildura), so Jeni's shopping trolley conveyed us Saturday to the War Memorial, where we overstayed the 4 hour parking limit by one hour, it was so good.

Bob & Jeni

*We also went to the markets and got stuck in traffic ...Spend 10 minutes inside and left the crowds behind. Peter gave a sigh of relief Jelly not spending??*



Everyone enjoyed the Handmade Market (Colin Piper photo)





TOP GEAR July-August 2018



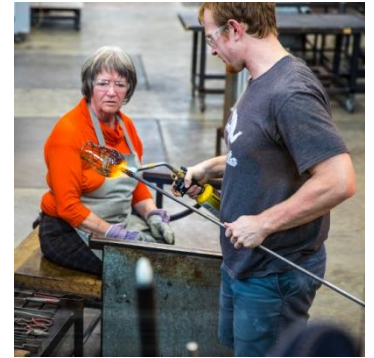
Together with the Kelly's Greg and I spent the morning at the National War Memorial, had a quick bite of lunch at one of the cafes there, then we all headed off to the National Gallery to check out Picasso's 100 etchings. We left the Kelly's at the National Portrait Gallery and spent a fascinating time at the Canberra Glass works watching the making of a vase. Altogether a great day.

Vic & Greg

*On Saturday, after a big breakfast, we walked to the glassworks with Jeremy and Julie. We spent an hour watching a lady having a lesson in glassblowing. The cost is around \$120, and she produced a very pretty vase. Jeremy took many photos, and afterword generously gave her his smug mug details so she could download a record*

*of her day.*

*After coffee we walked around the lake to the National Portrait Gallery and after lunch at the cafe spent the afternoon there. Of most interest was the stories of the people who had had their portraits done. The most compelling as works of art, to my mind was one of Quentin Bryce, the last governor general and one of the former chief scientist Penny Sackett, with telescope.*



*Rain caused us to catch an Uber home and a long lie down before dinner.*

*Laurie & Fran*



After an indulgent breakfast we visited the Glassworks to observe the creation of a vase – a fascinating process. Then a nightmare drive to the Handmade Market, competing with light rail construction and seemingly every Canberra resident. After 40 minutes in traffic, with rising tempers we diverted to Manuka for a 'few' purchasers, a quiet coffee and French pastries.

Rob & Kay

*We joined Laurie and Fran Bromley on a long walk which started at the Canberra Glassworks, carried on along the lake and ended up at the National Portrait Gallery where we had lunch.*

*Poor Fran has a hand in an amazing contraption after being bitten by a cat and we had everybody in the group photo on Sunday emulate the Fran wave.*

*The glassworks are in the original Canberra powerhouse ... back then they actually did the infrastructure development first! We didn't even know they existed and they've been open for 10 years. You pay around \$100 and they give you a lesson where you make something which you get to take away. The lady in the photographs was given it as a present by her son and was really chuffed when we talked to her afterwards.*

*Loved the Portrait Gallery. Behind every picture is a story* *Jeremy & Julie*

After a hearty breakfast at The Burbery we, along with other club members, went to the Handmade Markets then enjoyed a light lunch at a tavern on the Kingston foreshore while soaking up some rays. Around 5pm we joined a number of fellow members for drinks back at the hotel. An altogether relaxing and enjoyable day.

Barry & Dott

*We have been to Canberra a few times over the years, so we decided to go to the Zoo and Aquarium. A surprise packet. The animals were varied but familiar, the enclosures were open and airy, similar to Dubbo. The Aquarium was small and compact, lots of species and a Leopard Shark, which we had not seen before. The Coral was pretty and the Boa Constrictor was amazing. Well worth the "" Fortune" we paid to get in.*

*James & Janina Elphick*

Planning the day with our good friends Vicki & Greg, we all decided to firstly visit the War Memorial, which we've never visited before despite having family in

Canberra. After covering a large part of the Memorial, we decided to all visit the National Gallery of Australia to view the Picasso exhibition.

Following that, Wendy & I visited the nearby National Portrait Gallery, while Vicki & Greg went on to the Glass Factory. A great day for us with lots of walking.

Wendy & Vern

*We also went to the markets but left shortly after because of crowds. On to the War Museum to do 90min tour but was overloaded trying to fit everything in. Next time we will do a session at a time otherwise too much to learn see (or hear in my case :-). Great weekend and great company.*

*Greetings from your favourite blind person.*

*Monique & Harry*

Another brilliant "Mystery Weekend" which saw us all in Canberra this year. A huge bonus for Jan and me as we were able to visit friends who have had a few health issues recently. Thanks for that Stephen. Oh yes, the traffic to the markets, no doubt covered in more detail by others.

Colin & Jan

On the Saturday morning my instructions were very clear ... "take me to the Handmade Markets and also to the Canberra Glassworks, thereafter any further decisions may be discussed". So of course, the good burghers at the Handmade Markets made a killing that day (door stops/jewellery/curry pastes/endless inspections) and the gift shop at the Glassworks did not escape attention either. Then it was "feed me", so a close and personal inspection/discovery of the Kingston boardwalk cafes ensued. I had walked up to Parliament House in the early morning that day, walked around and around the Markets, had been carrying a mountain of shopping and simply because we must have been south of a border somewhere(?), a serious siesta time was called for.

And then, as quick as a flash, it was time for some serious socialising in the hotel lobby; it is just go,go,go on a TSCC mystery weekend!

Jeff & Judy Breen

*We decided we would visit the National Zoo and Aquarium ... Jamala.*



*We spent about three hours wandering around this amazing place which is very easy to negotiate and extremely well organised. The zoo is mostly open plan, giving the animals plenty of freedom to move. For those wanting an overnight adventure, there are luxury guest bungalows that allow you to sleep up close to a variety of animals.*

*Les and Roselee Johnson*

Our Saturday in Canberra consisted of battling the traffic on Northbourne Avenue to get to the Handmade Market. Next was the National Gallery of Australia, Robyn to view some of the exhibits while Kevin went to the café for coffee and cake. Lastly we went to the Glassworks after spending some time going around in circles obeying our GPS!!

Kevin & Robyn Leggott

*We had a great time on Saturday as I'm sure all did. Like many others we went to the market at Mitchell and were amazed at the quality and range of the offerings. We purchased some lovely hand crafted items that we really didn't need. We had an interesting Icelandic lunch then headed off to Parliament House. Interesting that Menzies remains the longest serving Prime Minister 17 years, and that the record 7 days in office of PM Forde who was deputy PM to Curtin who died in office, was rolled by Ben Chifley and remained PM for 5 years. Interesting to note that no PM since John Howard have there portrait in the House.*

*Here endeth today's lesson.*

*Jim and Jenny*

No surprise that the three monthly clothing market was top on Robyn's agenda! And on arrival who should we bump into but Anne O'Keefe the lady who first introduced me to Robyn many many moons ago! Three hours later and a few purchases we headed off to Manuka for another bout of shopping and a little lunch. So much for my intended visit to the War Memorial etc !

Terry & Robyn

## **Day 2 report by Les & Roselee Johnson**

TOP GEAR July-August 2018



After a leisurely morning and breakfast most of us set off for Lanyon Homestead. It was a half an hour's drive which was easy, but either side of the road was very dry, a stark reminder of the ongoing drought. When we arrived at the road that took us to Lanyon Homestead we had to negotiate two kilometres of dry, dusty road. Some may have been concerned that the road would damage their pride and joy, but other than a bit dusty, they all arrived uninjured. As we drove along the road we saw a beautiful rainbow ahead of us, so, Les stopped the car and tried to capture the rainbow on his iPad, but, unfortunately it disappeared quicker than anticipated.

We pulled up at the Homestead and donned our weatherproof jackets etc. because there was a bitter wind blowing across the paddocks. Most of us were a bit early, so had to brave the wind for about fifteen minutes.



**Group photograph taken and organised by Jeremy & Julie Braithwaite**



Then, we were divided into five groups and taken to different parts of the Homestead. We were first taken to the gardens and vegetable patch, which are the original gardens .

we



Then  
were

TOP GEAR July-August 2018

ushered into the shelter of the beautiful Homestead where we were shown around its different rooms.

It's hard to believe that fifty years ago the government was going to demolish it and use the land for housing. It is now heritage listed, so will remain standing for many years as a testament to our heritage.

Lanyon Homestead sits within a stunning landscape, with spectacular views of the Murrumbidgee River and Brindabella Ranges. It has been a working sheep and cattle property for over 180 years and today still retains its original surroundings and land use.







After touring the beautiful Homestead we were shown around the grounds which still contain the original kitchen, stables, blacksmith building and a horseless carriage. Les spotted in some old photos, a picture of an old 1914 Overland and then went on a mission to gather more information.

At around midday our tour was finished and we headed for the cafe for lunch. After a quick discussion we, and some of the others, decided to forgo lunch and hit the road for home, with the intention of stopping a bit later for lunch.

We thoroughly enjoyed our mini mystery weekend away and look forward to the next one.

Many thanks to Stephen and Jill for a well-executed, interesting and organised weekend.







## CMC/Shannon's Day at SMSP – 12<sup>th</sup> August - Article by Colin Allerdice

### THE BEAUTY OF RED

Red is arguably the most evocative and sensuous of colours. Throughout history the word “red” has shaped out thoughts, emotions and judgements whether they be of people, music, literature, clothing and, even, motor cars – as highlighted below.







**"I always liked red. It's a picker-upper" .... Nancy Reagan**

Yes, it was raining red cars at TSCC's display for the 2018 edition of the annual **CMC Shannon's Day** at Sydney Motorsport Park on Sunday 12 August. This red show was not a theme suggestion for the day – it just happened – a simple product of the cars that TSCC members own – just check out the brands! Of the 18 cars on display, 10 were RED ... can anyone match the cars with the owners?

Shannon's Day is the largest static display of classic cars in the Southern Hemisphere. It is CMC's big event for the year as it attempts to find car spaces for as many members of affiliated car clubs as is possible to squeeze in at SMP. This year CMC sold a tick under 2,000 display tickets for the day. Clear proof that the classic car movement is growing.

This year saw quite a few long standing TSCC members with friendships going back well over 20 years coming to display their special cars and to join in with our newer members -true "motorspirit". It was fantastic to see people such as Jim Peters, Adrian Walker, Syd Davenport, Lionel Walker, Vern Kelly and Lester Gough on the day.

TOP GEAR July-August 2018

And abandoning Noah's two-by-two approach, the marques on show were basically in three's or singles .. three Porsches, all bearing the responsibility of that celebrated marque's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, were matched by three Alfa Romeos, three Mercedes Benzes, three Jaguars and three Maseratis. A Ford Mustang, a Mazda MX5 and a BMW M3 rounded out the display.

There was a bit of a queue to get in around 9.00am and the weather was a tad chilly early, but it improved as the sun grew brighter and the wind died down. Food, coffee and car stories were plentiful.



**The Porsche's of Vic Clarke, Roger Korte and Robert Harrison**



**The Alfa's of Peter Dempsey and John Slater**

The full list of TSCC members displaying cars with the club is shown below but it is acknowledged that a quite a few members did display with other clubs.

Terry Daly	Ford Mustang
Robert Harrison	Porsche 911T
Peter Dempsey	Alfa Romeo GTV 1750
Jim Peters	Alfa Romeo
Syd Davenport	Maserati Khamsin
Dominic Truelove	Mercedes Benz SLK 350
Derek Scott	Mercedes Benz

Vic Clarke
Roger Korte
John Slater
James Elphick
Colin Allerdice
Colin Watts
David Slater

Porsche 911 Carrera
Porsche 944
Alfa Romeo GTV 1750
Maserati GranSport
Maserati Ghibli GT
Mercedes Benz CLK 280
BMW M3



Neil Mason  
Ian Norman

Jaguar Mark 2 3.4  
Jaguar Mark 2 2.4

Adrian Walker  
Colin Piper

Jaguar E-Type Series 1  
Mazda MX-5



Top from left: Jim Peters and Lester Gough; Syd Davenport's Maserati Khamsin; Derek Scott, Norm Johnson and Adrian Walker  
Bottom from left: Dominic Truelove's Mercedes Benz; The red of Porsche and Maserati; Terry Daly's Mustang; Neil Mason's Jaguar Mark 2

## Overnight Run to Jenolan Caves – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> August

Words & photos by Vic & Jane Clarke

Most people left home early to arrive at the start of the run at the Tin Shed café at Lithgow. There was a short undulating drive through very dry and brown countryside – there was water in Lake Lyell but we saw farmers taking hay and feed to some rather skinny animals in the paddocks. We stopped at the village pub in Tarana where we enjoyed some hearty winter food.



On the next leg of the run through Oberon and down to Jenolan Caves Jane and I discovered two features of our VW Touareg that we hadn't used before (despite owning the car for 5 years) firstly the switch for the heated seats (I had mine on a low simmer of "1" whereas Jane chose "5" for full heat) and secondly a warning ping and snow flake symbol advised us that the outside temperature had fallen to 4.5 degrees! Thanks to German engineering we were ready for snow and black ice but fortunately this did not eventuate.

28

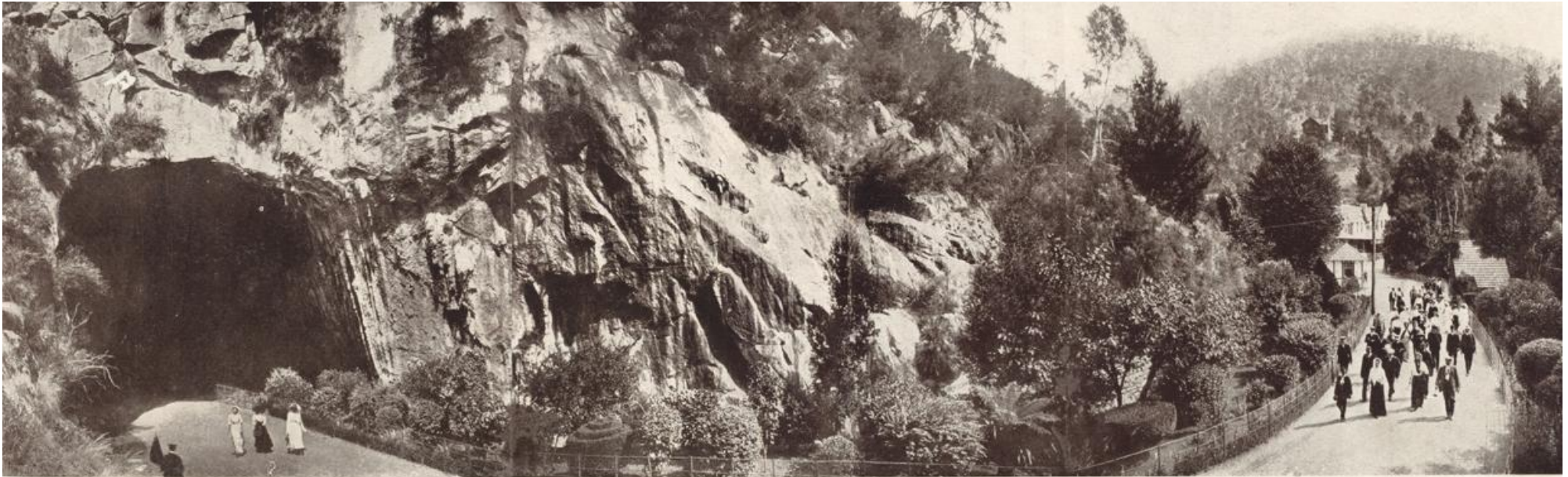
The Jenolan Caves are limestone caves located within the Jenolan Karst Conservation Reserve in the Central Tablelands region.

According to legend James McKeown was the first European in 1838 to set eyes on the caves. He was an ex-convict and possibly an outlaw reputed to have been using the caves as a hideout.



Over the succeeding years local pastoralists James Whalan and his brother Charles discovered several openings in 1848. Then in 1860 the Lucas cave the largest of the current show caves was discovered by Nicholas Irwin and George Whiting. It was not until 1866 that the caves were brought under direct government control. In the 1880s Jenolan began to emerge as a genuine tourist destination. The Aboriginal word 'Jenolan' (high mountain) was adopted in 1884.





PARTY LEAVING CAVES HOUSE FOR INSPECTION OF CAVES.

The brochure for Jenolan Caves describes the accommodation:

*"Our guestrooms in historic Caves House are old, and they take you back in time. They have no telephones or televisions to spoil the experience and are decorated in a style reminiscent of the late Victorian or early Edwardian eras. "*

Nothing has changed much at Caves House for many years, especially the paintwork. But that aside we enjoyed a traditional country menu in the rather grand dining room – plenty of mash potatoes but not a chip or French Fry in sight – and some very good local Pinot Noir wine from Oberon.

On Saturday morning some of the group braved the cool temperatures to stretch their legs and walk up to the Blue Lake on the eastern side of the Grand Arch. It is fed by the River Styx and the Jenolan River. The Blue Lake's intense colour comes from the refraction of light through limestone sediments. I don't believe anyone saw platypus there, but lyre birds and wallabies were seen in the bush.



This was a great run and a bit of wander down memory lane as most people



TOP GEAR July-August 2018



hadn't been to Jenolan Caves for many years.

Many thanks to Rob and Sue Clare for all their time and effort in organising this overnight trip to the historic hotel at Jenolan Caves. Unfortunately they were not able to join the group because Sue had been admitted to hospital a couple of days before. We were very shocked and upset to hear the news of her diagnosis – everyone sends their best wishes to Sue and also Rob, we are thinking of them both.



## My Austin-Healey Sprite 'Bug-eye'

T1 A Lovely Youthful Thing from 1958. An Article by Hugh King



Long ago and in a galaxy far away, I owned a second-hand and very original Austin-Healey Sprite Mark I. The remarkable little car designed by the great Donald Mitchell Healey, who answered “my darling little car” when asked, on my own Mosman verandah in 1977, to name his best and most lasting design. His answer was reasoned and careful; this was a car to be enjoyed by those enthusiasts with a love of motoring, a need for fast reflexes and safe driving, ‘cheap and cheerful’. Affordable, spirited, light, easy to maintain, cheap to ‘tune up’ and use in club competition work.

I bought the car from one John Watson, a fellow member of the Austin-Healey Owners Club, shortly after The Donald had departed from Sydney Airport following his first and only visit to Sydney. This little car was – maybe still is – a very solid example of the marque. Steel bonnet, 998 cc. motor and the miniscule twin SU carburettors, quarter-elliptic cart springs at the rear, all present and correct, a real little roller-skate. Over the

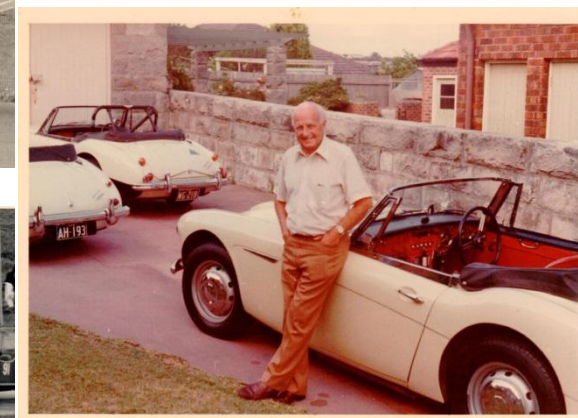
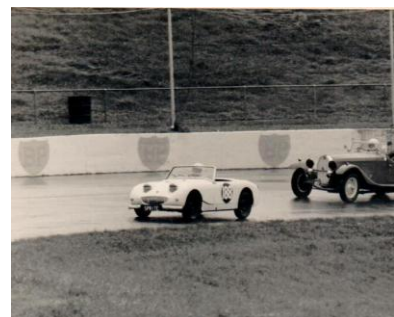


following 12 months I used it well – at Amaroo Park for example –

What were the chief ingredients of this little ‘Morris Minor Sports Car’? In 1958, shortly after it had been introduced, Bill Boddy the editor of *Motor Sport* (the esteemed and ancient English document of record) drove the car for a week or so and wrote his verdict, in terms that were typical of the man: firm but fair: although beneath the restrained commentary we detected a happy enthusiasm.

TOP GEAR July-August 2018

It is useful now to look at Bill Boddy’s commentary. It has stood the test of time and reflects not only my own impressions of the ‘darling car’ but also the very real issues confronted by manufacturers of the time (as I say, in a galaxy now far away, as I drive off in my new 2015 Mercedes-AMG A45).



So here is the ‘road test’ as printed in *Motor Sport* of September, 1958 at pages 617 and following, under the heading ‘Fun With a Sprite’. The quotations are complete, the comment is exemplary.

-----  
**EQUIVALENT TO THE 1,100-c.c. SPORTS CARS OF PRE-WAR DAYS, the Austin-Healey Sprite will just about reach 80 m.p.h. and will undoubtedly do 90 when the tuning-wizards breath on it. Road-holding**

***and steering suit the performance and the ride is very level. This newcomer represents sterling value at under £670.***

After neglecting the small sports car market for many years the Austin Motor Company introduced the Austin-Healey Sprite two-seater with 948-c.c. B-series B.M.C. engine last June. We have already described this interesting newcomer (Motor Sport, June, page 386) and expressed an opinion on it, but the proof is in the driving and consequently we welcomed a recent opportunity to drive a Sprite over an appreciable distance.

We can state right away that the Sprite belies its rather amusing appearance—it is pleasing to drive, handles well and, without possessing either particularly exciting speed or acceleration in its standard form, it can establish excellent average speeds over give-and-take roads.

So far as the Sprite's appearance goes, the high-set headlamps and upward curve of the radiator grille may not appeal to everyone. Moreover, although it is generally true that once inside a car the occupants are not aware of what the vehicle looks like, this isn't quite true in the case of the baby Austin-Healey, because always driver and passenger look out over a brief, falling bonnet from which the headlamps protrude like sore thumbs. However, appearance is not everything, and if the new Austin-Healey is referred to affectionately as the "Frog" or "Pram" as often as the "Sprite" this is more than offset by its many excellent qualities.

We recalled, when looking forward to our spell with the Sprite, that small British sports cars were once traditional and that motoring writers before us had enthused over long runs in vehicles such as the blown Ulster Austin and "Double Twelve" M.G. Midget.

In order to put the small Austin-Healey to at least as thorough a test we took it down to the West Country and back in a day, setting it to climb Porlock, Lynton and Beggars' Roost, and the next day made a rather less ambitious journey to Gloucestershire and back between a

late breakfast and tea, our starting point in both cases being within an hour's motoring of London's southern extremities.



In the course of these runs we formed a high opinion of the Austin-Healey Sprite as a "fun" car. If it is not particularly fast as sports cars go, it makes up for this with brisk acceleration, and quite outstandingly good road-holding and cornering.

The driving position is good, the bucket seats providing good support and being very reasonably comfortable even when occupied for hours at a stretch. Visibility is good, although if the sidescreens are erect they impede the sideways, view of a driver of average height and the central mirror blanks off his view of the near-side wing. Otherwise, the bonnet is so short as to offer an excellent view of the road, although in fog peering down into the beams of those prominent headlamps might not be so advantageous.

The small two-spoke steering wheel is well placed but as the engine box protrudes into the driving compartment the driver's legs are of necessity biased to the right, while the pedals and dimmer button are all close-spaced. The central remote gear lever is conveniently located but could with advantage be shorter, or set lower in the car. The pull-up handbrake is convenient to use, although prudish girl-friends may disapprove of its location on the left of the transmission tunnel!



In view of its modest price of under £669 the equipment, with a few exceptions, is well planned and beyond criticism, although it should be noted that heater, tachometer, front bumper and other rather essential items are extras, these alone inflating the price inclusive of purchase tax to over seven hundred pounds.



Neither tachometer nor speedometer, both small-dial Smiths, are very convincing, the former being calibrated in figures every 1,000 r.p.m., the speedometer merely every 20 m.p.h., the latter having, however, trip, with decimal, and total mileage recorders. The tachometer is shaded between 5,500 and 6,000 r.p.m.

The usual minor controls are found on the fascia, together with a combined oil-pressure gauge and water thermometer (normally reading, respectively, 40 lb./sq. in. and 175 deg. F., although a long hill-climb, such as Porlock, or crawling in traffic elevates the temperature to 190 deg.F.) and a rather unfortunately optimistic petrol gauge. An old-fashioned turn-switch looks after the lamps, with the removable ignition key within it, the

TOP GEAR July-August 2018

starter knob pulls out and the spring-loaded mixture control requires holding out. While the headlamps full-beam indicator is barely bright enough the direction-flashers indicator is sheer gross stupidity, because it flashes a blinding yellow light directly in the driver's eyes, virtually prohibiting its use at night. It is difficult to understand how such an experienced driver as Donald Healey, or indeed any test driver, can pass this out. The central flick-switch for the flashers is very conveniently placed but has to be cancelled manually.

There is a grab-handle on the fascia for the passenger and although no cubby hole is provided both trailing doors possess excellent, deep full-width pockets. Behind the folding squabs of the separate seats is stowage virtually unlimited; indeed, the boot is really too deep, in view of the fact that there is no lid to it and all objects, spare wheel included, have to be drawn forward and out over the seats. The screen is fixed and we disliked the sharp-edged flanges that take the side screens; anyone unlucky enough to let his Sprite tumble over might be badly hurt by these if the screen collapsed.

To gain access to the engine compartment the whole bonnet, inclusive of headlamps, hinges up and is automatically propped open, after a toggle lever has been turned and a safety catch released. The bonnet is very heavy, making this no light task. It could be fatal were the stay to collapse with the owner "under the lid," while shutting the bonnet provokes the response '\*###\*\*\*\*\*! as one's hand is trapped between bonnet and front number plate. After this one tended to drop the lid, but a sidelamp, secured only by its rubber flange, fell into the road. Engine accessibility is somewhat restricted but all essentials are at least in full view. These are trifling criticisms balanced against the fun of getting into the Sprite and motoring it about.

The two-carburettor B.M.C. engine goes rapidly to 6,000 r.p.m. in the two lower ratios and to 5,500 r.p.m. in third gear, if the tachometer doesn't lie, and it is quite customary to see 5,000 r.p.m. or 77 m.p.h., in top gear. The

maxima in the indirect gears, per speedometer, are, respectively, 25, 40 and 62 m.p.h., the speedometer not being more than averagely fast. Given a decent run 80 m.p.h. is just attainable in top gear.

These are mere figures, and from them it can be inferred, correctly, that first and second gears are rather too low. But in its manner of motoring the little Austin-Healey Sprite again overcomes such shortcomings. It motors, indeed, very briskly, very safely, pleasantly and withal exceedingly cheerfully.

The steering is unexpectedly high-g geared. The wheel requires only 2.25 turns, lock-to-lock, and the lock is distinctly good (turning circle 31 ft. 9 in.). Even those accustomed to vintage cars will drive the Sprite with a bit of a twitch at first and those who have acquired the art of motoring within recent years will probably wish for a rather lower-g geared action. But this is splendid steering for "dodging" and it has the very real merit of being light, practically devoid of kick-back and with only slight vibration coming back *via* the steering wheel. There is very mild castor return action.

Once the technique of steering the Sprite virtually by wrist movement alone has been mastered the little car becomes safe and very fast through corners. In this the driver is aided by the truly commendable design of the suspension (coil spring and wishbone i.f.s., quarter-elliptic back springs with anti-roll bar). The ride is very comfortable and outstandingly level for such a short, slight vehicle, but when cornering there is just sufficient lean to warn the ambitious driver that rear-end breakaway will soon occur. There is otherwise nothing supple about the springing, or, indeed, about the car as a whole. There is no scuttle shake, no flexibility about the chassis, and consequently the driver feels at one with the Sprite when driving fast. There is none of the vicious oversteer which characterised early small sports cars and the clever quarter-elliptic back suspension appears to have no vices, except when a sudden bump of camber change may affect slightly the cornering line. The axle judders

only slightly when storming rough hills, such as Beggar's Roost. Incidentally, the Sprite climbed this notorious trials hill strongly from a standing start, two up, and was unperturbed by the shale and deep gulleys; admittedly the gradient was dry at the time of our visit.



This excellent roadholding and cornering and the light, extremely quick steering make the Austin-Healey Sprite what it purports to be—a genuine little sports car. Third gear will be used frequently before corners and in traffic, as the 4.22 to 1 top gear rather stifles the 45-b.h.p. engine, although no doubt contributing to durability. It is rather a pity the gap between third and second gears is so wide, otherwise both these ratios would be in frequent use. Reverse is over beyond top-gear position, with safety spring, excellent on the road if less convenient for rally tests. The lever is not otherwise spring loaded. The gear change is as rapid as the lever can be moved, and beats the synchromesh during snap changes. The little remote gear lever is pleasant to operate but on the car we drove the action was rather stiff which, coupled with the high-set lever, made frequent use of the gearbox somewhat less of a joy than it could be. Even this labour is forgotten in the exhilaration of seeing the tachometer needle swing round towards 6,000 r.p.m. as the Sprite surges forward, accompanied by a, fine hard exhaust note and a not unpleasing tinkle on the over-run, which seemed to be a combination of mechanical vibration around 3,500 r.p.m. and a loose exhaust pipe. The surge forward is to the tune of 0-50 m.p.h. in 14 seconds, 0-60 m.p.h. in



21.1 seconds, the s.s. quarter-mile being devoured in 22 seconds. The Sprite cruises effortlessly at 60 m.p.h. (under 4,000 r.p.m.) and is no less happy at 70 m.p.h., when the engine is running well within itself, at fractionally over 4,500 r.p.m.

Il these facts add up to very respectable average speeds from this 948-c.c. two-seater with a commendable absence of fatigue. The support afforded by the bucket seats, the absence of squeal from the Dunlop Gold Seal tyres in normal fast motoring and the level ride contributing greatly to the low fatigue factor. In towns the exhaust note is completely unobtrusive unless high revs, are used. The mirror provides an adequate rear view and can be swivelled down to obviate dazzle and a little push-button on the fascia edge brings in panel lighting. The inbuilt lamps do not provide sufficient light when dimmed (a spotlight within the grille is a possible solution) and on the test car the not very penetrating full beam was handicapped by pointing skywards.

The 7-inch Lockheed brakes are adequate in normal circumstances and free from vice but the pedal has practically no range of travel, the action feeling spongy, and firm pressure is required to obtain much retardation. In making crash stops from 60 m.p.h. we were disappointed to discover that it is not possible to lock the wheels on a dry road, albeit this could be an asset when braking on slippery surfaces. The hand brake lever has rather a long travel but held the car securely.

The clutch pedal is somewhat awkwardly placed, but the action is light and smooth. The steering has stops to prevent the tyres fouling the chassis and no lost motion was evident in the steering gear after 2,600 miles. The horn could be more powerful with advantage.

There is a hood which fits snugly, the detachable frame being very close to the occupants' heads. The side screens are rigid and can be left in place with advantage to obviate side draughts. With the hood and side screens erect in summer the interior gets very stuffy, especially as the

gear lever extension become quite warm. The doors shut well; they have slightly inconvenient inside lever-type handles.

The Sprite is as economical as it is sprightly. Driving hard we accomplished a petrol consumption of 37 m.p.g. and rather more sedately, but with one fast spell, this decreased to 39.3 m.p.g. of Cleveland Discol. In a mileage of 700 about a pint of oil but no water was required, and the engine neither pinked nor ran-on. The fuel tank is alleged to hold six gallons but a check of the range gave a mere 180 miles from a brimful tank; it really is time the B.M.C. fitted larger reservoirs! The filler cap on the tail is not secured to the filler neck but it, and the rear lamps incidentally, are visible from the driving seat.

Altogether we were agreeably surprised at the very real merit displayed by this low-priced sports car. The Austin-Healey Sprite will prove extremely popular, we predict, amongst those greying old men (like the Editor?) who no longer drive fantastically fast but who fancy a sports car that handles well and is thus a good safe introduction to faster stuff and those who want a lightweight vehicle with a B.M.C engine they can tune to great speeds. And, of course, amongst those who merely want an inexpensive boy's racer.

The appearance of the Sprite is unfortunate, there are a few details that could be improved but at the price this latest product of Donald Healey and the Austin Motor Company is a vehicle of many merits and no vices.

#### *THE ENGINEERING FACTS - AUSTIN-HEALEY SPRITE*

*Engine : Four cylinders, 62.9 by 76.2 mm. (948 c.c.). Push-rod-operated overhead valves. 8.3 to 1 compression-ratio. 45 b.h.p. at 5,500 r.p.m.*

*Gear ratios : First, 15.31 to 1; second, 10.02 to 1; third, 5.96 to 1; top, 4.22 to 1.*

*Tyres : 5.20 by 13 Dunlop " Gold Seal " tubeless on bolt-on steel disc wheels.*

*Weight: 13 cwt. 0 qr. 7 lb. (without occupants but ready for the road, with approximately one gallon of petrol).*

*Steering ratio : 2.5 turns, lock to lock.*

*Fuel capacity : 6 gallons (but see text). (Range approximately 180 miles).*

*Wheelbase : 6 ft. 8 in.*

*Track : Front, 3 ft. 9in.; rear, 3 ft. 8 in.*

*Dimensions : 11 ft. 5 in. by 4 ft. 5 in. by 4 ft. 1 j in. (high).*

*Price : £445 (£668 17s. inclusive of purchase tax). With extras, as tested, £702 8s. 3d.*

*Makers : The Austin Motor Co. Ltd., Longbridge, Birmingham, England.*

-----

So here ends the *Motor Sport* road test of 1958, written more than half-a-century ago, and it provides a trip back in time for baby boomers. It is a substantial statement made by a senior gentleman journalist who has driven and enjoyed the little car in the English countryside, divining its true worth and its likely success in those more spacious and tolerant times. The 'little brother' to the famed 'Big Healey' was a success for Donald, his 'darling car'. Cheap and cheerful, indeed.





Interest is growing in aged key-rings for similarly aged cars; a trend reflected in steadily increasing prices on popular online sales platforms. Acquiring an aged key-ring for its historic and intrinsic qualities to add to a collection is not something new. Acquiring an aged key-ring to complete a restoration or preservation project may well be something new and appears to be gathering pace. Who would have thought! This trend may be the next, and perhaps even the last, unexplored area of interest associated with our cars.

A thirst for absolute originality and authenticity appears to be driving the trend. Desirable quality reproductions are available for some key-rings produced in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s but, in the eyes of a growing group of enthusiasts, there is nothing quite like an aged original bearing all the signs by which we define character; expressing through that character its individual history in company with fine cars and passionate owners. Put simply, an aged classic and a similarly aged key-ring work together! Like the cars for which they were designed, aged key-rings eloquently express their time and place in motoring history.

Key-rings were in the main extras left to the discretion of buyers and supplied by arms-length manufacturers who manufactured under licence to use corporate logos and images. Some were commissioned and issued by enterprising distributors and dealers. Some were optional extras listed in spare parts manuals issued by manufacturers as in the case of Jaguar in the 1960s and 1970s. Most are becoming collectible and some originals, due to scarcity and/or inherent quality of manufacture, are becoming much sought-after as interesting historical artefacts and period-correct

additions to complement restorations. Many still languish in the corners of drawers and old tobacco tins on garage shelves but likely not for much longer.

A number of countries manufactured key-rings as accessories but, without question, England was at the forefront of manufacture. America and France were also significant and examples can be found from Italy and Germany. Australia and New Zealand too had manufacturers of badges, fobs and pouches.

Dating key-rings is not an easy matter and in the main must be achieved using contemporary sales literature for the cars, published photographs taken at club events throughout the world and just a few recognized authorities on the subject.

The 1960s and 1970s were special for so many reasons! 'Blowing In The Wind', 'Red House', 'Cocaine' (Eric Clapton's!), hotpants, E-Types, Ford Cortina GTs, Mini Coopers to mention just a few! These were also the decades in which key-rings reached their zenith; the reason being that certain examples from this period were notably aesthetic and, in the view of some, established bench-marks for craftsmanship in keyring manufacture using vitreous enamel.

Key-rings from this period were produced by artisans and, in many cases, the key-rings alone survive to mark the existence of the enterprises and premises in which they were manufactured. Typically, they sold in-period for less than a pound or a few dollars and, unless produced by a few high-end jewellers, few required material outlays. As they were optional, many buyers didn't bother with them. Many were manufactured in small quantities and some in very small quantities. These circumstances

together with general deterioration through use over decades has meant relatively few originals survive today in unblemished condition.

English manufacturers representative of this period include Castles Unit Development Limited, Church Gate, Leicester, Leicestershire, (CUD), Manhattan-Windsor Limited, Birmingham, West Midlands, Gale Melville Ltd., Kingston-Upon-Thames, Surrey, and Melsom Products Ltd., Birmingham, West Midlands. Typically, these enterprises manufactured key-rings incorporating chrome plated, nickel plated or gilt finish metal badges and inlaid with coloured vitreous enamels. The badges were mounted on leather fobs with split-rings to hold keys. Many other firms were involved including high-end jewellers such as Toye, Kenning & Spencer and Fattorini and Sons (now Thomas Fattorini Ltd); both of which are still in existence and enjoy Royal patronage. In-period, Fattorini manufactured very attractive St Christopher keyrings for Henlys, the major UK agents for Jaguar in the 1950s and 1960s.

Not all keyrings were characterized by badges with hinged attachment to leather, faux leather or synthetic fobs. Some badges were let into fobs and glued or simply attached with a rivet. Snake chains or chains comprised of jump links and rings were not uncommon, especially with manufacturers in America and France.

Some leather fob shapes were associated with certain manufacturers, a primary example being CUD with its torpedo shaped fob, examples of which shape can be seen in the green Corvette Sting Ray key-ring in the group photograph and at key-ring number 5. Fob shape and material was influenced by practicality in use, changes in consumer taste and undoubtedly cost of manufacture.

Car manufacturers licensed their intellectual property in the form of logos and marks to selected suppliers that worked within strict guidelines on the use of registered IP (colour, dimensions, font, set-out etc.). As, typically, there were a number of licensees, similar badges can be found bearing one of several manufacturers' names. In some cases, badges bear no

attribution to a manufacturer at all; a circumstance I understand is likely explicable by key-ring manufacturers sub-letting badge manufacture to other companies or, in some cases perhaps, by unauthorized copying. Lack of attribution need not necessarily mean quality has been sacrificed but it does mean, for collectors at least, keyrings of marginally less desirability.



The process by which vitreous enamel is manufactured and applied to designs created on the surface of metal badges is an interesting one. It is however both beyond this article and my understanding. Broadly, thin layers of glass are fused to metal surfaces in furnaces using elevated temperatures. The process of enamelling is thought to originate in Cyprus



and is several thousand years old. Minerals including silica are dissolved at elevated temperature, colour is added through the introduction of metal oxides and, following cooling, the output is ground into a powder. Moistened powder is applied to the surface of metal (in this case the badge) within boundaries and shapes created in the metal surface. Badges may be exposed to the furnace or kiln more than once. On completion, the resulting vitreous enamel surface of the badge is smooth, scratch and chemical resistant and the colours are relatively stable.

Today, the process of vitreous enamelling for car key-ring badges has by and large been discontinued on industrial scale. The costs associated with vitreous enamelling and the introduction of cheaper hard acrylic coatings have resulted in enamelling being largely abandoned. A cheaper line of key-rings emerged after those using vitreous enamel for badges. They used a synthetic resin dome over a painted/ printed metal disc as shown with the Corvette key-ring in the group photograph.

The photograph on the preceding page of a selection of key-rings demonstrates something of the range available in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s for buyers of selected marques.

**Keyring number 1** (opposite) has no obvious attribution to manufacturer. The quality of the cream and brick red vitreous enamel, the gilt badge and the shape and material used in the elongated teardrop leather fob strongly suggests CUD. An interesting feature of this key-ring is the spring-loaded brass coin holder designed to hold 6 sixpences. The key-ring likely dates to the period between 1956 and 1966 although the colour scheme and design of the octagonal badge is similar to badges appearing on Magnette and Midget models in the 1930s. However, key-rings did not come into popular use until much later. Dating is assisted in this case by the coin holder.



Got a 'tanner' for the phone Mister? 'Button A and Button B' pre-pay public phone kiosks had been in use in the UK from whence this key-ring came since the mid-1920s. They were superseded in 1959 by 'Pay-On-Answer' kiosks. Both accepted 6d coins. Parking meters first began to appear in London from 10 June 1958 and I believe they also accepted 6d coins. The widespread use of toll roads remained decades away and indeed the UK still has few compared to Australia. Nationwide the greater need for sixpences would have been generated by the need to make use of public phone kiosks and doubtless this need would have inspired the designers of this key-ring. The 6d ('tanner' or 'sixpenny bit') was removed

from circulation in Britain in 1980. In Australia I note 'AB Multicoin' public phone boxes had been in use since the mid-1930s and, as the Australian and British 6d bits were of similar dimensions, the coin holder would have worked equally well for an Australian 'zack'. This key-ring is loaded-up with two 1955 'tanners'. A 1942 Australian 'zack' appears alongside in the photograph.

While not available in-period for use with MGs of the 1930s and 1940s, this key-ring would not look out of place against the dashboard of early cars such as the Midget, the Midget P-Type, TA, TB, TC, TD or TF. It would match beautifully with an MGA, a Midget (1961 onwards) or an early MGB.

**Key-ring number 2**, (preceding page) an early Jaguar key-ring, is interesting on several levels. The badge uses the 'wings' motif combined with an unusual Jaguar head that pre-dates the 'growler' found on badges in later decades. This combination, albeit looking less menacing, appears on bonnet emblems for 1950s Jaguar saloons. The zinc or chrome plated metal badge has black or dark blue vitreous enamel infill in the lozenge-shaped surround to the Jaguar name.

The badge is mounted on a leather shield that lifts to reveal a pocket with plastic window and a card for recording the owner's telephone number and car registration number. I note this example was once used with a Jaguar carrying NSW registration BOS-386; a vehicle once owned by someone having a registered address at Warkworth near Singleton NSW. The stitching is notably very fine. While dating of keyrings is fraught with risk, key-ring 2 is likely dated to the late 1940s or the 1950s. There is no attribution to manufacturer.

**Key-ring number 3** (preceding page) shares a feature with key-ring number 2 in having a pocket in its left side with plastic rear-facing window for car and/or owner details. The badge is chrome plated with white and blue vitreous enamel infill and, unfortunately, no attribution to manufacturer. The fob on which it is mounted has been dyed or coloured grey. This example likely dates to the early 1960s, although it's 'as new' condition

TOP GEAR July-August 2018

belies this dating. If correct, this dating would make this key-ring ideal for Triumph models such as Spitfire Marks 1-4, 1500 and similarly dated saloons.

**Key-ring number 4** (preceding page) is model-specific and was manufactured for the Austin-Healey 100, BN1, BN2, 100S and 100-6. For this reason, dating this key-ring is made easier, aided further in this case by an attached registration tag. Generally, key-ring manufacturers will have continued to produce for the second-hand car market for some time after car production ceased. The cars for which this key-ring was designed were built between 1953 and 1956. The metal registration tag bearing the (likely) UK six-character alpha-numeric car registration number ties this key-ring to a specific Austin-Healey 100 and likely on its first registration. The tag in this case dates first registration to the mid-1950s; entirely consistent with a key-ring issued with or bought at the same time as the car. It is quite special in having a link to a traceable chassis number!

This Austin-Healey key-ring is of elongated teardrop shape having a curiously narrow neck through which a link passes rather than a ring; a design appearing somewhat fragile. In this respect it is similar to key-ring number 2. While appearing fragile, it has survived for 60+ years and remains in reasonably sound condition. For practicality it surely must have had a split-ring attached to the link when new. This original Austin-Healey 100 key-ring is genuinely rare!

The badge is of chromed or nickel-plated brass. The red infill is vitreous enamel. The round head Wilmot Breeden (Union) ignition key is likely original.

**Key-ring number 5** (following page) is a CUD key-ring for a Jaguar and dates to the 1960s. CUD key-rings are in my view some of the best, if not the best, quality produced for use with Jaguar and many other marques and were included in Jaguar Spare Parts Catalogues as optional extras in the 1960s. The winner's flag/ chequerboard style of nickel plated badge used by CUD in this example has a raised Jaguar 'growler' motif at its



centre. The badge is mounted on a torpedo shaped leather fob. Although well known for torpedo shaped fobs, CUD did not employ the shape universally. Examples of original CUD Jaguar (cream/black 'growler') and MG key-rings on teardrop fobs can be seen in the group photograph.

This key-ring would suit any Jaguar of the 1960s including E-Types, Mark 2s, 240, 340, S-Type, 420 and Mark X. The winner's flag style is most often associated with the E-Type and I believe some examples of this style of badge incorporate reference to the E-Type. Early examples may have been

produced with all models in mind. This style of badge without the raised 'growler' appears on Jaguar key-rings produced by other manufacturers. It also appears on badges for after-market gear knobs of the 1960s. I note CUD produced matched sets of key-rings and gear knobs in the 1960s for a number of British marques and these, like the key-rings, are rare today.

Sourcing period correct key-rings is often not an easy task for owners. They do turn-up for sale on popular web-based websites

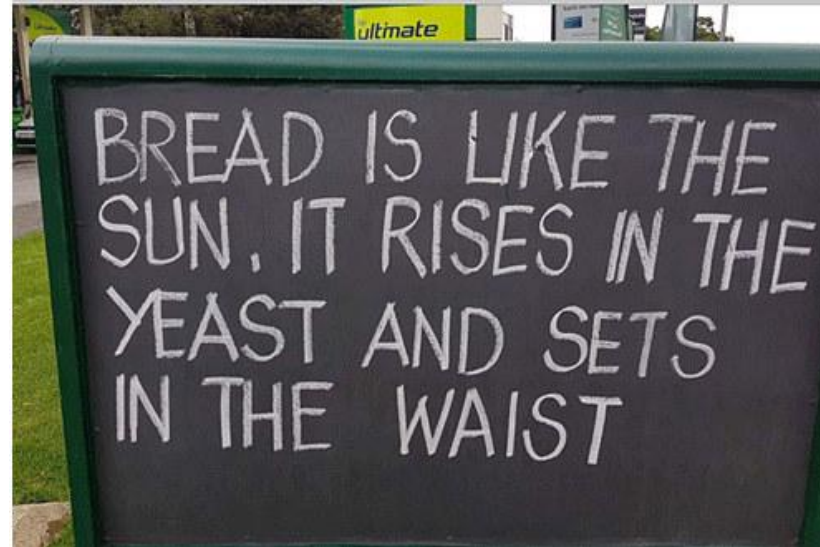
from time to time. There is also a very small number (internationally) of quality suppliers of early and reproduction key-rings. One example is Classic Leather Fobs in the United Kingdom. They will of course also turn-up if one is extremely lucky on parts sale tables at car shows but, in my experience, less and less frequently as years pass. A period-correct key-ring is a fabulous finishing touch to an honest and authentic thoroughbred car. If the key-ring is an original and bearing age-related patina, it is doubly special! Enjoy the hunt if you are currently searching!

TOP GEAR July-August 2018

To finish, here are a few decorative car key-rings - *Ed*



# You can't be serious!



If you can start the day without caffeine,  
If you can be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains,  
If you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles,  
If you can eat the same food every day and be grateful for it,  
If you can understand when loved ones are too busy to give you time,  
If you can overlook when people take things out on you when, through no fault of yours, something goes wrong,  
If you can take criticism and blame without resentment,  
If you can face the world without lies and deceit,  
If you can conquer tension without medical help,  
If you can relax without liquor,  
If you can sleep without the aid of drugs,  
Then you are probably a dog



# Old and News



Here's one they prepared earlier



*It's October 1958, and the newest alloy body of a 300 SL roadster is getting a tour of Mercedes-Benz's Sindelfingen plant via two men — Fred Flintstone and Barney Rubble style...*

Unlike the cars of the *Flintstones* cartoon, the 300 SL is no prehistoric vehicle made up of rocks and wood — it is a technological tour de force. Based on the Mercedes grand prix racer of the early 1950s, the 300 SL roadsters feature a space frame chassis, an updated six-cylinder engine with a competition camshaft, revised rear suspension, and direct fuel injection —making it the fastest convertible of its time. The aluminium body— the sole reason why these two men are able to carry it with such ease — weighs only 185kg, helping the car to produce a top speed of 140 mph. In due time, the body of this 300 SL roadster will soon be married with its chassis, engine, and tyres, and will have to rely on pedal power no more.

*Photo: Daimler AG©*

# Star in an Unreasonably Priced Car



Tyrone Power in front of his home with his '35 Duesenberg



# The End

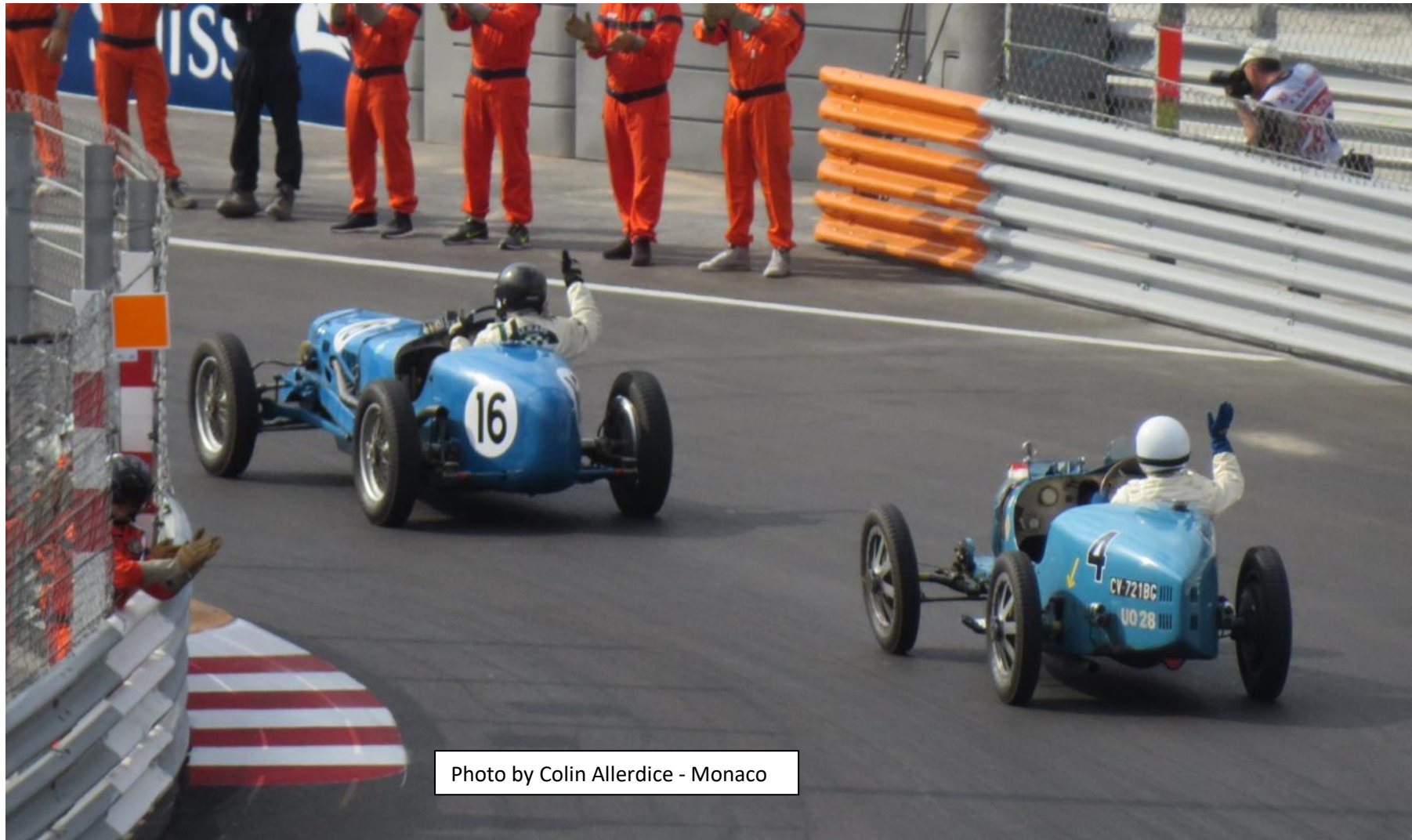


Photo by Colin Allerdice - Monaco