



VICTORIAN HISTORIC RACING REGISTER

ABN 97 521 303 894

Incorporated in Victoria

Association Number A 0007117 C

Foundation Patron: Sir Jack Brabham AO OBE World Champion 1959, 1960 & 1966
PO Box 3485 MELBOURNE VIC 3001 Website: www.vhrr.com Reg. No. 57/001
VHRR CLUB ROOMS 30-32 LEXTON RD BOX HILL

NEWSLETTER - December 2020

We meet Bi-Monthly - on the Fourth Tuesday of the Month 8pm
at the VHRR Club rooms 30-32 Lexton Rd Box Hill.

COMING EVENTS



Compliments of the Season and a Merry Xmas to all

December	12th	VHRR Annual Presentation & Awards Cancelled	0407 825 545
		VHRR Informal Christmas BBQ.....	0459 490 108

Please note* At present, many things are being cancelled/postponed so please check before you go.

Committee Meetings 2020

January 20th	April 20th	July 20th	October 19th
February 17th	May 18th	August 17th	November 16th
March 16th	June 15th	September 21st	December 14th

Wednesday Members Lunch - every Wednesday except Christmas Holidays.

CLUB LIBRARY HOURS Wednesdays 11.30 - 2.00 Club Nights 6.30 - 7.30

Club Permit Scheme

(Red Plate)

Chris Nelson0439 955 562

2/1 Rushdale Street, Knoxfield 3180 BH only please.

*CCE = Club Championship Event

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed within this newsletter are not necessarily those of the VHRR Inc. or its Committee and/or its Newsletter Editor. Whilst all care has been taken, neither the club or its officers accept responsibility for the accuracy of information printed and the quality of any items or services advertised or mentioned in this publication. Incorporated association Number A 0007117C. The Editor reserves the right to edit contributions submitted for publication.

The VHRR gratefully acknowledges the support of our major sponsors



IMPORTANT NOTICES

Report from the Secretary

Just a reminder that the AGM is likely to be held on Tuesday February 23 2021. Unfortunately we will not be holding our annual Christmas Celebration and Presentation Night this year.

In early October a reminder was forwarded to members who had not yet paid their membership for the current year. Many thanks to those of you who have since renewed. A special reminder to those who have cars on the CPS – it is imperative your membership remains current.

Hoping to see you at the club BBQ – see details provided by Conor Ryan in this newsletter. Numbers may be restricted so please, let Conor know if you are coming, asap.

Leanne Newson, Secretary

VHRR Informal Christmas BBQ

Currently we have 50 members on the list to attend the BBQ, anyone who is not on the list is asked to please not attend due to the current limitations. For those who will be attending, it is asked that you social distance, wear a mask where you cannot social distance, and stay in groups of 10 or less people at a time. We will stagger people coming up to get food and drinks in order to limit groups clumping up. Please contact Ross or Conor for any further questions.

Yarra Bend Park

Saturday November 12th @ 2pm

BYO: Chairs, Gazebos and any other usual items for a BBQ Picnic.

Contact:

Conor Ryan

0459490108

conor-ryan7@live.com.au

Ross McLaughlan

rossmclaughlan96@gmail.com

0467161257

Message from the RACV regarding their Motoring Interests Program

RACV has been, and will continue to be, a strong supporter of the historic vehicle movement for many years to come and we value the role that the movement plays in connecting Victorians, particularly in the regions.

One of our flagship events for 2021 is the commemoration of the centenary of the RACV Alpine Trials (1921) and this will travel through the regions in Victoria which have been impacted by COVID-19 and the summer bushfires. RACV will also support a number

of events across Victoria in 2021 to showcase historic vehicles.

The RACV Motoring Interests program will continue to support the movement and will now be managed by a broader community engagement team. Nicole Ballina, Community Engagement Manager, is your new contact at RACV. She can be contacted on Nicole_Ballina@racv.com.au or 0407 150 568.

RACV is committed to supporting the movement and looks forward to working with the clubs to deliver a long lasting and successful relationship.

Megan Ballantyne

Head of Partnerships & Education RACV

HARRY WHO? Part 2

The committee and constitution established during the December 9th 1903 meeting were ratified during two further meetings the new club held during January 1904. *Note* - Any Committee member who assisted Harry or competed alongside him will be recorded.

Harry obviously got his way and quite quickly the first outing was held on Saturday, February 20th 1904. With membership growing, thirty cars and a strong number of motor cycles were present at Princes Bridge at 2.15pm ready to travel to the Aspendale Race Course property of committee member of Mr.J.R.Crooke*. Whilst at Aspendale two attendees performed an impromptu speedy



dash around the track. Attendees were able to depart for their return journey after hearing acknowledgment of the events success due to

the arrangements made by Harry James (acting hon. sec.) and four committee members. - The Australian Cyclist Magazine later recorded praise including "many thousands witnessed the cars along the route, etc, and it only goes to show the extent to which the motor vehicle has been adopted by the citizens of Melbourne" Note - *Mr.J.R.Crooke's Grandson, Dr. Peter Crooke was the National Medical Advisor to CAMS for 15 years throughout the 1960's & 70's. Years later Peter's son and grandsons were competitors.

Quite quickly after the Aspendale run Harry had visited a number of privately owned properties to determine their suitability for motoring competitions, and included Sandown. The connection between the ACV and The Melbourne Commercial Traveller's Club came about when during an early ACV meeting members were informed of an invitation from the Travellers to attend their annual picnic on March 12th. If the invitation was accepted could the ACV arrange a programme of events such as motor cycle races, car trials of speed and dexterity in handling and starting tests. The invitation was accepted and during the first week of March several members of the ACV committee arrived at Sandown and tested the track's surfaces to confirm the proposed automotive events. Although the track was not specially prepared several fast times were recorded, including Harry James motor cycle dash that beat the best known race horse time over the proposed one and a half mile course by 8 seconds. Australia's First Official Motor Races followed within 10 days as part of the Commercial Travellers annual picnic. The original idea being to illustrate the suitability of motor cars replacing the horse drawn vehicles used by commercial travellers. The event was the largest ever held by the Travellers Club with 1400 in attendance. The ACV members had gathered in Alexander Avenue around 2.00pm ready for the one hour drive to Sandown and the race events scheduled for 5.00pm. The actual course had been pegged out days before by Harry James and other Committee members. The three events were completed on schedule with Mr J.B.Crooke winning the first with his Locomobile. The second event for motor cycles saw Harry James finish in second place six seconds behind the winner. The third event for heavy cars was won by Mr. H.Tarrant in his 10hp Argyle. The events were all handicaps and although vehicles had never raced before the

accepted handicap formula was horsepower based. NOTE - Press reports later claimed that Mr Crooke had wired down the Locomobile's pressure relief valve and achieved one million pounds pressure. They also claimed he had reached 35mph. After having so much fun at Sandown he quickly spent 1700 pounds on his Aspendale racecourse property and opened the motor speedway there in 1906. It apparently survived until about 1938. Other incorrect press reports claimed that Mr.H.Tarrant drove his own designed and built vehicle. He used the Argyle at that event and many others that followed. Years later serious claims followed that the 1904 Sandown event was the world's first held on an established race track. Races in Europe around the 1900's were held on public roads.

To be continued Lloyd Shaw

Historic Test and Tune

After a break of well over 6 months, a return to the track for the Historic Test and Tune last Friday was certainly welcomed! For many Historic Racing aficionados, the generous amount of track time that was on offer presented a perfect opportunity to dust off the cobwebs (for both car and driver!), and make sure everything was back in working order, ready to go racing in 2021. For me, I was so excited to get back behind the wheel of the mighty Daveric Formula Vee, but also expected to be a bit rusty, seeing as the last time I had a steer was at the Phillip Island Classic in March! I also came into the day with an aim to be relatively on the pace by the completion of proceedings, and I'm happy to say that the goal was reached, the expectation was correct too, but overall the progress made and confidence gained over the course of the day was very pleasing. The two meetings we entered earlier this year, pre global pandemic, saw me struggling to get my head around what it takes to be quick in a Formula Vee, as momentum and mid corner speed is so vital, and it's so often the case that using a slide to your advantage is the quicker way around a corner, but the time spent on track helped me to really start to believe in not only my ability, but believe that the car would stick to the road too! I've always been a big believer in the expression "with experience comes confidence", and every lap I set over the course of the day I felt that ever so important confidence coming on in leaps and bounds.

Friday also saw the 2020 Phillip Island Classic J,K and L Race 4 winner, Conor Ryan, behind the wheel of the Demmit Fueling Special, one

of the many unique cars in the Ryan stable, and Conor's performance was most impressive, as was the car's! It was quite the spectacle, and I'm sure everyone that attended would agree that the small block Chev would've comfortably broken the noise limit everywhere within about a twenty kilometre radius, and to see Conor having a solid crack added to the impressiveness too.

Overall, the Historic Test and Tune was a terrific day out, so a huge thank you must go to the team at Winton, not only for giving us all the opportunity to get back out on track, but also for providing everyone with much needed bottles of water on what was a very hot day, with temperatures ranging up to the high thirties! Also, a massive thank you as always to Conor Ryan for the incredible opportunity to have a steer, and to all that helped out during the day, it's much appreciated!

Looking forward to more laps soon.

Josh Lowing

Bathurst's Great Race of 2020 has been run and won, thus marking the end of the Holden vs Ford rivalry. Fittingly, Holden won this event, as it was the original catalyst for the fifty-seven years worth of motor racing history which we have since enjoyed.

The Holden Eh S4 – Australia's Original Factory-Built Supercar



Australians have been fascinated by the exploits and derring-do of motoring pioneers such as Wizard Smith and Francis Birtles, and, post war, the Redex trials stoked our imaginations. While open-wheeler race cars were the elite of circuit racing, tin-tops were filling the role of circus clowns. The sixties marked the start of a radical change, and Norm Beechey was leading the charge. His personality and flamboyant driving style earned him a massive fan base, and sedan racing throughout Australia moved up to centre stage. Sedans were now pulling in huge crowds, and this fact did not go unnoticed at GM-H.

The 1962 Armstrong 500 at Phillip Island was the turning point. That year, Ford had given GM-H

a black eye, with the new class-winning Falcons showing up the lone Holden EJ as a tired and out-dated town carriage.

In 1963, the introduction of the EH was the opportunity GM-H was looking for to get their revenge, but there was a problem – GM America had a world wide ban on supporting motor racing. However, USA underestimated the Aussie penchant for having a healthy disregard for front-office suits, and a plan to circumvent their ruling was being hatched. Enter the "Production Test Model".

The rules for the 500 were simple – probably one page sufficed! – the cars had to be showroom stock, no imports, and there had to be at least one hundred similar examples produced, sold and registered before 1st October. The cars were in four categories according to their retail price – Class A up to £900, Class B £901 to £1000, Class C £1001 to £1200, and Class D over £1200. Class wins were given equal status at £500 each, and there was no prize for outright except for bragging rights. The CEO of Armstrong was also adamant there were to be no factory specials – "The 500 would become valueless to both the Australian car buyer and the vehicle manufacturer if this sort of thing were allowed." Hmm...

The 1963 EH Holden came in only two broad specifications – the new 149 c.i. red motor in the Standard or Special sedan, but with the inadequate EJ three speed gearbox and a 3.36 diff ratio. The other option was the Premier sedan, heavier, with the desirable 179 red motor, but it was coupled to the power-sapping High Dramatic auto trans and a 3.55 diff. A compromise vehicle was needed, and so the manual 179 S4 was invented. The Special sedan was chosen because the price would be kept under the £1200 Class C limit, and, besides, it looked nicer than the plain Standard sedan.

By sheer coincidence (!), when GM-H decided to build their "production test models", a hundred and twenty in total, they just happened to have some handy features:

- 179 motor, blue printed, with a modified carburettor
- The Premier larger radiator, with the auto trans cooler deleted
- Heavier clutch
- Stronger gears in the gearbox, a wider bolt pattern between the bell housing and

gearbox, offset slave cylinder, and revised engine pipe and shift rods

- Larger tail shaft
- 3.55 diff ratio , with a nodular iron carrier
- 12 gallon fuel tank and re-calibrated sender
- Sintered iron brake shoes, with the anti-rattle springs and retainer spot-welded together, and a copper pin to help diffuse heat
- Nasco VH24 power brake unit
- Extended tool kit, as the rules for the 500 stipulated that any repairs required within the first twenty-six laps had to be done using only the tools in the kit.

All parts unique to the S4 were identified by special part numbers, stencils, or paint daubs.

All that, for a mere £50 more than a 149 Special sedan, making it £1160 retail.

Serious thought must have been given to fitting a four speed gearbox, as the engine blocks were cast with wider lugs on the back to accommodate a larger bell housing. Pity they didn't!

A rumour they had wider wheels proved to be false.

At that time, the rivalry was not Holden v Ford. It was the interstate rivalry between Melbourne and Sydney which was intense, arguing over and comparing everything from beer brands, bridges, beaches, and football codes. Heck, there was even a hit record called "Melborn and Sydeneye". The coat-hanger clan had pinched the Armstrong 500 and were taking it to Bathurst, and the Mexicans were seething.

S4 production was originally proposed to be divided between Sydney's Pagewood and Melbourne's Dandenong plants, but the decision was suddenly changed to all Sydney. More outrage! Melbourne wanted to show those northern upstarts how to prepare a serious contender by building just six cars, three of which were destined to go to what would be the first Holden Dealer Team. They had signed up Bill Patterson and Bib Stillwell (both Holden dealers), Doug Whiteford, Lex Davison, Bryan Thompson and John Youl – a formidable combination. The squeals from north of the border were deafening, but they weren't from Ford. (After all, it was Harry Firth who was preparing two GT Cortinas). Instead, the complaints came from owners of the Sydney-built cars, especially when they realised that the bodies of the Melbourne cars were to be built

by the Engineering Department, and the engines by the Experimental Department. It was easier to lavish extra TLC on six cars rather than on one hundred and twenty. Accusations of secretly hot-rodding flew thick and fast, more so as the ARDC had declared the S4 as "not within the spirit of the event".

The six Melbourne cars were duly delivered. The first went to Norm Beechey for racing under Appendix J rules, the next three were Dealer Team, the fifth to Ron Beith, an accomplished open-wheeler driver, and the last may have been donated to the police for evaluation purposes.

The grand unveiling was done at Sandown Raceway, but the haste with which the S4 program was instituted was beginning to show. GM-H had only days in which to produce parts lists and a revised workshop manual to prove that it was a genuine production vehicle. One hundred and twenty cars spread between six hundred dealerships only added to the angst.

The Sandown presentation became a PR letdown. Besides the aforementioned obstacles, there was paperwork in existence which showed the Melbourne cars were designated as "S5". There was one debatable discrepancy between the Sydney and Melbourne cars – the Melbourne ones were made from Premier body shells with the larger transmission hump to give the puny gearbox more cooling air. After a hurried conference, the drivers withdrew their entries, the official reason being given was that they were fed up with the controversies.

That was not entirely believable. GM-H would not have dropped such a major investment at the eleventh hour simply because of inter-state sniping. The S4 program had never enjoyed unanimous backing in the halls of power, and nervous execs with an eye on climbing the corporate ladder were loathe to offend their American bosses and their embargo on motorsport. They were not prepared to take the risk of post-race disqualification in case a zealous (NSW) scrutineer might decide that an S5 was not an S4. The humiliation would have been devastating for both GM-H and their high profile drivers. As the saying goes "the apple wasn't worth the guts-ache", and all reference to S5 was quietly erased. The S5 became just another myth.

(Heldon Motors rolled the dice and took one of the cars as their Spencer Martin / Brian Muir entry. As they didn't finish in a top six position, that eventuality never occurred.)

With these distractions removed, all interest swung back to NSW where the ARDC finally agreed to let the S4's race. There were six entered in Class C, along with four GT Cortinas, one Hillman, and a lone brave FB. Class D would provide the closest opposition with two Studebakers and three Valiants, plus Vauxhall, Zephyr, Humber and Peugeot. Classes A and B were dominated by eighteen Minis, and nineteen other reasonably priced four cylinder cars.

The S4 drivers were :

- # 14 Jim O'Shaunnessy /John Brindley
- # 15 Frank ("Fred") Morgan / Ralph Sach
- # 16 Kevin Bartlett /Bill Reynolds
- # 17 Brian Muir / Spencer Martin
- # 18 Harry Budd /Ron Smith
- # 23 Ian Grant /Trevor Marden

Sunday 6th October 1963 dawned fine, and fifty-seven cars lined up on the grid to contest the Great Race. There was no such thing as a top ten shootout – the cars were started in class order with the dearest to the front, and within the class the positions were determined by ballot. This made for a spectacular start with the S4's taking to the grass (yes, grass, on both sides of the start straight) to round up the heavier opposition before turn one. O'Shaunnessy grabbed fourth and Bartlett seventh.

The Muir/Martin car with Spencer at the wheel had been the fastest in practice with a 3 minute 29 second lap, and great things were expected of them. The Studebakers were fast initially, but as their brakes faded so did their chances, and the Cortinas of Harry Firth/Bob Jane and the Geoghegan brothers took over. The Muir/Martin car broke a shock absorber mount caused by the violent axle tramp the S4's were experiencing under brakes at Forrest's Elbow and Murray's Corner, but was able to rejoin quickly. Next to have problems was the Bartlett/ Reynolds S4 when they lost or broke a wheel at Hell Corner, but later broke another and three-wheeled it back to the pits at full tilt – KB driving down Conrod in the grass to lessen further damage.

Meanwhile, the axle tramp in the Muir/Martin entry was so severe that it broke a spring centre bolt causing the diff to move back, allowing the tailshaft to depart. After rolling and pushing the car back to the pits, they borrowed a tailshaft and rejoined the race a frustrating hour down. They still drove flat out, even reportedly managing to pass a Studebaker going up Mountain Straight, and nudging almost 115 mph

down Conrod. No guts, no glory. They were able to avoid the problem of cracking any wheels by being slightly more conservative at the Dipper.

At the halfway point, the two GT Cortinas were still in front, with the O'Shaunnessy/Brindley and Morgan/Sach S4's not far behind. This ended abruptly when O'Shaunnessy locked a brake coming down the Esses and flipped base over apex in a spectacular fashion. The other four S4's were too far back to mount a challenge, but were running reliably and checking the right



The Muir/Martin S4 chasing the O'Shaunnessy/Brindley entry through the Dipper

front wheel at each pit stop as a precaution.

With less than an hour to go, the Geoghegan Cortina retired, then the Morgan/Sach car had an altercation with a privateer Cortina, necessitating in a stop for some hasty repairs.

This put them a lap down, but they still finished with a creditable second place. The Budd/Smith S4 came fifth 6 laps down, followed by Grant/Marden, Bartlett/Reynolds and Muir/Martin.

For comparison, a Class D Valiant and a Zephyr finished 4 laps down, and four Minis and two Cortinas were less than 10 laps down in Class B. The FB was 15 laps down.

Aftermath

As the S4 didn't win, it was regarded as a failure. Could they have won? Undoubtedly, if it wasn't for the cracked wheels. The gearbox held up well, and the much maligned drum brakes would have allowed the S4's to brake as late as the Cortinas were it not for wheel tramp. If.....

Brian Muir modified his S4 for circuit racing in Appendix J, and he and Norm Beechey dominated during 1964 against the Cortinas and Jane's Jag.

There may now be less than twelve authentic S4's left in existence.

"Wheels" magazine came up with the poignant quote – "The raw power of the thing is sometimes quite staggering.....whether the average Australian driver can use this sort of performance is another question." Beautiful!

Holden's fifty-seven year racing legend was begun. It is fitting that Team Red owes its beginnings to that 179 cubic inch red motor.

Errata

The lack of factory records, plus conflicting accounts published in newspapers and motoring magazines, has made the tracing of S4 history very difficult. If readers could add any factual detail to this file it would be greatly appreciated. Dick O'Keefe

A who's who of Australian motorsport

gathered today to celebrate the 90th birthday of touring car legend John French at the new Gold Coast Motor Museum. More than 100 guests attended the morning tea which also included a tour of the new museum recently opened by brothers Grant and Carl Amor. Traditionally, the gathering is an annual reunion hosted by motor racing stalwart Ian Maudsley in August, but COVID-19 restrictions meant this year's event had to be cancelled.

John is a regular VIP guest at Phillip Island & Sandown. All the best John!

Thanks to www.speedcafe.com for this article



Mark Turnbull sent in this amusing video:
<https://vimeo.com/473597691> Thanks Mark
WELCOME, WELCOME, WELCOME, And Welcome Back! We have been away, but we are back! Post Covid-19 All Historic Race Meeting September 2021
Rob Rowe/John Lackey/John Medley are once

again involved in running a race meeting - for old cars and old motorcycles (including sidecars). We started at Amaroo Park in 1976, and revived with great success at Wakefield Park in 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 - special days indeed. Ours remains a unique and special event: we are amateur enthusiasts who love our motor sport, and want to share that with like-minded enthusiasts, friends old and new. We would like you to join us. By 31st December 2020, we need confirmation of your intention to compete from a minimum of 100 eligible cars and 100 eligible motorcycles, in the form of a \$50 deposit on your entry fee (to be refunded by 31st January 2021 if insufficient entries are received). Please send your name and \$50 deposit to Pheasant Wood Circuit
Phone Pheasant Wood 02 48411422 to make arrangements to pay by cheque or money transfer.

Bank Details BSB: 032102 Account: 108676
Use your name as the reference.

Total entry fees, including deposit, are \$160.00 Solos, \$ 160.00 sidecars, \$200.00 for cars. MA, MA single event, AASA and CAMS open and CAMS L2 (regularity) rider/driver licences will be accepted.

Classifieds

Reluctantly offered for sale -

Supercharged MG B GT Built for comfortable touring - never raced 'on a track' but exceptional performance on the highway - generally achieving 32 mpg. Due to my wife's difficulty in getting in and out of the MG we don't use the car as much as it deserves, however once inside it is most comfortable. In fact, in the twenty years



of ownership we've averaged under 900 miles per year. It is such a delight to drive that we feel it is time to move it on to a new custodian who can really appreciate it.
Not sure about price, basically seeking

expressions of interest as a package of car and trailer, although we will separate. Car alone has been valued at over \$40,000. Sensible offers will be considered. Trailer value is anybody's guess. Cannot even guess how much has been spent on this project as many receipts "lost" so wife isn't aware of how much it owes us.

As seen at Trade displays at Historic Sandown, Phillip Island, Winton etc.

A complete spec sheet is attached and an owner prepared complete spec. Owners Handbook is available.

Hans J. Pedersen

H.P. High Performance Products
Mitcham 3132, Victoria, Australia.

Ph. +61 (0)3 9874 1800

Website: www.hi-flow.com

Email: hans@hi-flow.com

Quick fuel E85 Race Carburettor as new, cost aprox \$1600.00 will sell for \$800.00.ph
0418 313 482



FOR SALE - STARTER KIT I've retired from racing and this gear could suit someone thinking of having a go, without having to outlay for new equipment.
RPM race suit-size M
Sparco boots size 41
RPM gloves size XL/11
Helmet, headsizes XL61-62
RPM gear bag.
Some balaclavas and underwear.



It's all used but in good condition.
Christmas Present for a young person ?
\$450.00
Tony Burrage
87904868 or
0409767117

Bullet Roadster spaceframe chassis, as used for the Gold Coast produced MX5 based

kit cars. Chassis in good order, never been used in a car. Strong space frame design that would be a good base for a variety of projects. Text Alan on 0414 470 460 if you'd like photos. \$1,500 ono. Have a complete Rover V8 3.5 to go with it for \$750 ono, or make an offer for both.

Wanted Girling Brake Calipers circa 1969 Front 18/4, Rear 16/4. Aluminium motorsport Caliper, 4 pot, Suit Lola T70 Mk3b, GT40. Lola T192, T142, T160, T190

Sorry I don't have a serial number for them. Any condition, even cracked or damaged. Re casting is an option I have. Roscoe Porter PH 0422 028 969 trackman.ltd@gmail.com

I am having a clear out and some race parts will go. Two Lucas fuel bombs, two Smiths Chronometric Rev counters (been reco'ed and not used since). I thought I would open the gate a fraction prices are open to negotiation. Not give away ones though. Kevin Bartlett kevinbartlett@protonmail.co



Morgan 4/4 Late 2015 Sports Ivory
Engine Sigma Duratec 1600
Gearbox Mazda 4 speed & overdrive
Wheels SS 15"
Interior Leather Honey
Hood Mohair & Side Curtains
Price \$95,000.00
Contact Bill Coombs 0407 432 426

