

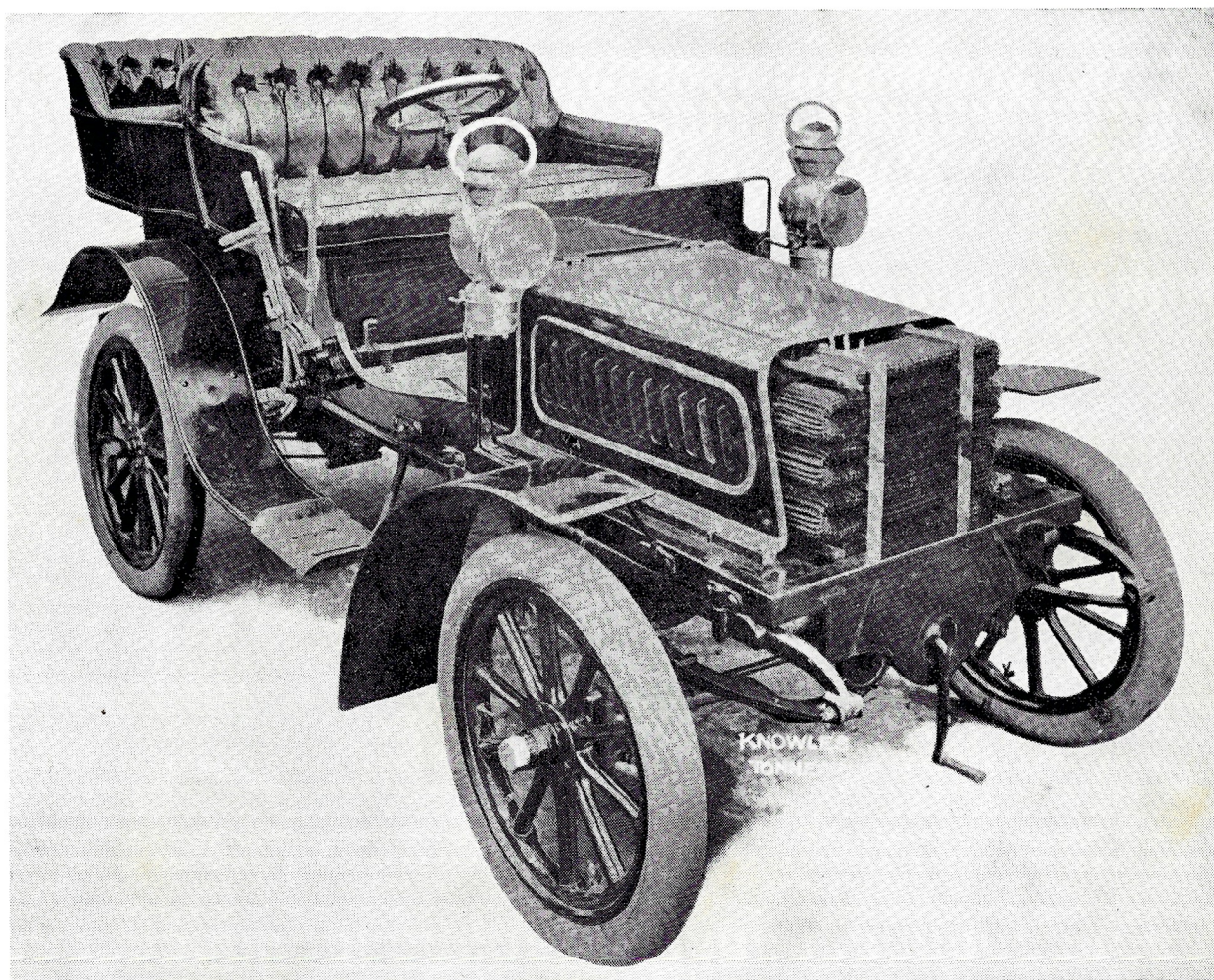
NEWSLETTER OF THE VETERAN CAR CLUB OF AUSTRALIA (N.S.W.)

SPIT AND POLISH

● MARCH, 1976, VOL. XVII, No. 9

Registered for posting
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SPIT & POLISH



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The Governor of NSW
Sir Roden Cutler,
VC, KCMG, KCVO, CBE.

NEWSLETTER OF THE VETERAN CAR CLUB OF AUSTRALIA. (N.S.W.)

Vol. XVII, No. 9

March 1976

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The next General Meeting of V.C.A. (N.S.W.) will be held at 8 p.m. on
THURSDAY, 25TH MARCH, 1976.

COPY REQUIRED BY FIRST THURSDAY OF MONTH.

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

SPIT AND POLISH, 134 QUEENS RD, FIVE DOCK. 2046.



KATOOMBA 1976

Credit-where-credit-is-due - so we must rightfully thank John Wards and his committee of workers who organised the 1976 Katoomba Rally. There appeared to be many helpers and to start naming them would be wrong for I may leave several out. Maybe I should make special mention of John and Peter Wards' sister for her effort in organising a beautiful morning tea at her home in Pitt Town and to the Wards and Garth families for the excellent barbecue lunch on Sunday.

The Rally was an outstanding success in all facets - the route was good - the accommodation was first class - the weather was fine for most of the time and the rally was well supported by about sixty starters including 6 or 7 veteran motor bikes.

I was hoping that some other member would have come up with an article about the rally, but since this was not to be, it would appear that I will have to volunteer.

Saturday, 28th February, 1976 dawned fine, warm and steamy, as we set out at 7.40 a.m. for the start at Millers Hotel, Prospect. Up to this point my 1913 Studebaker had only covered about 20 kilometres after a 10-year rebuild and it was with some anxiety that we set out to make our ascent of the "Blue Mountain". On the drive to the start we first met up with Col Bryson in Ford then at Lidcombe came across the Unhappy Sight of Jan and Rowley Coulcher with Eileen Sykes all looking with sad eyes at the offside rear axle and wheel some 4 inches out of the housing of the 1911 Star. This was a disappointment, for we had just completed a major rebuild of the engine to make it ready for Katoomba. Jan and Rowley were forced to withdraw at that point, only to find out a week later that with about 10 minutes' work, Star could have been back on the road.

We, George King - Talbot and Studebaker - pressed on to Prospect, arriving in ample time for the start. That enigma, George Sevenoaks, was our Starter, along with Mr. Ruddock who waved us away at 9.34 and then to Pitt Town and morning tea and via Windsor, Richmond - DARK CLOUDS - and up the mountain to Hawkesbury Lookout. In between some heavy rain we had a good view of the Valley below and time to recollect the good 2nd gear performance of Studebaker during the climb. After a rest we continued to lunch at Springwood in typical mountain weather of mist and showers. Lunch over we drove on through thick mist to successfully make the climb at a good rate in 2nd gear over notorious Boddington and on to the Everglades Motel at Leura.

"OPINION" CONTINUED

It was observed that many a member made good use of the heated swimming pool, Sauna, tennis courts, squash court and billiard room, followed by a trip to the Lounge for a drink before dinner. Making an unannounced welcoming committee at Everglades were a bus load of old car lovers from Parkes and Dubbo. If we had been made aware of their visit we could have given these keen people a run around Katoomba to round off their trip. NEXT YEAR !!!

The smorgasbord dinner was of a very high standard and, like the reasonable beer and spirits prices, was enjoyed by all the rally participants.

Of course Jim Simpson nearly made it again, but not quite. A telephone call at 9.15 p.m. from Lawson was the signal for Peter Wards and Barry Saward to rescue Jim and Beesa and trailer him to the motel for some welcome warmth and food. Next morning Max Chapman had Jim mobile in several minutes and he was ready for the return journey.

Did you hear of the grandson navigator of one of our well-known members who was heard to say as they crossed the finish line at Everglades: "I wonder who came second, Pa?"

Sunday was fine! No mist - no wind - just clear mountain air - for a Katoomba Rally that is rare!

After a few suspicious petrol problems with Studebaker, had to operate and by-pass the unauthentic vac. tank. This seemed to fix the problem, until after the finish at the Penrith Paceway. An excellent Bar-b-cue lunch laced with a very welcome cold can was a fine finale to a good weekend.

Woe betide me - for my troubles then began. Talbot and Studebaker left Penrith and headed for the Expressway with Delahaye not far behind and each time Studebaker moved into the vacuum behind Talbot to get a tow, then George would "add the lead", all the time thinking that I was wanting him to go faster. So this action was repeated several times until I had to admit that his Talbot has very very long legs.

We turned off the expressway and Studebaker stopped - petrol not getting into carby quickly enough - started, stopped and this act was repeated every kilometre or so until near Fairfield when it happened again. To add misery to misery, there was a massive explosion from Talbot's rear wheel as we were fixing Studebaker. Tyre replaced and on we went, only to stop in the middle of the Sunday traffic on Hume Highway on the hill leading to the Woodville Road traffic lights.

Our temperatures had reached boiling point and Studebaker would not start. There we were, hot, frustrated, dirty, tired and full of despair as the traffic cussed and roared all around us. I had arrived at the point of no return with foot raised ready to put a "number nine" through the radiator (George G. gave me that radiator) when an angel driving the most obtrusive bright red A Ford Hot Rod pulled up and casually said: "Trouble mate? Want a tow?" If ever a

"OPINION" CONTINUED

kind act was appreciated, it was then. Rope was quickly attached to this magnificent bright red, V-8-engined, chrome powered bundle of goodwill and Studebaker majestically motored over the hill and with a quick skid of the clutch we were under our own power again until King Georges Road. Then it all happened again as we bumped heavily over some rough road, with the added inconvenience of the muffler falling off. More blood, sweat and tears with a repeat dose two kilometres further on.

As I have always declared, Studebaker listens carefully to all that is said of her and just like the flowers, she should be spoken to carefully. Emerging from a further bout of fuel starvation, we were about to drive on as Arthur Garthon appeared in Range Rove and said: "I will shepherd you home." So Studebaker bit the bullet and motored the rest of the way (apart from discarding a muffler which Arthur picked up) with engine running smooth as silk.

POSTSCRIPT: The problem was found to be a cracked cork float near the brass tongue that operates the shut-off valve.

- R. BAXTER

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING OF THE VETERAN CAR CLUB OF AUSTRALIA (N.S.W.)
HELD ON THURSDAY, 26TH FEBRUARY, 1976, AT THE CLUBROOMS, 134 QUEENS ROAD,
FIVE DOCK.

PRESENT: Members 73, visitors 7.

MEETING OPENED BY VICE-PRESIDENT (A. FOY) at 8.20 p.m.

Minute's silence was observed in remembrance of member, the late Frank McGowen, deceased last Monday week.

Visitors were welcomed, with a special welcome back to members Reg. Jones and Stan Rumble.

APOLOGIES: L. Sheen, C. Burke, M. Pope, J. McGowen, K. Moss, F. Craze (letter read).

MINUTES: Minutes of meeting of 22/1/76 having been circularized were confirmed as a true record on motion J. Pickup, seconded R. Petersen. CARRIED.

ARISING: Registrations
Chairman reported Committee had agreed that the final date for the payment of registration renewals is 30th November and no further registrations will be renewed before 28th February, that inspection dates were considered early enough and all monies should go to the Treasurer.

Moved (J. Wilson/J. Dance) that the Management Committee's

suggestions be adopted. After discussion, this was carried.

Noted that, providing money is received by 30th November, inspection can be arranged UNDER EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES at a date other than those set.

Insurances

Chairman reported that the Committee had agreed that the building cover of \$10,000 was adequate, contents had been increased to \$5,000 and pictures are to be re-valued as separate exercise (now \$400) and dealt with accordingly.

RESOLVED (J. Heath/A. Blevins) that Committee's report be ratified.

TREASURER'S REPORT: W. McCarthy submitted Treasurer's Report (copy attached).

Chairman gave a special thanks to Toby Bent, Roy Farrell and John Wards for donations.

RESOLVED (W. East/J. Thorpe) that the Treasurer's Report be accepted.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Thank you letter to the Flood Group of Companies.
2. " " card from Reg Jones.
3. Circular re 1976 Q'ld. National Tour, Peregrine Beach, Sept. '76.
4. " " VCCA/Tas. National Rally 1977 (March 1-9 incl.)
5. VCCA/Ncle January minutes (noted October Tour on again this year.)
6. " " February A.G.M. (office-bearers were read).
7. Judy Rickard re wedding cars on 2nd October.
8. Millers Hotel to W. East for free dinner (noted that other members helping on 29/10/75 had received similar letters).

RESOLVED (J. Lewis/J. Burke) that correspondence as read be accepted.

INVESTIGATIONS:

G. Roberts reported that C. Stanbridge's car is a Belsize, circa 1914. Investigation on Ron Matheson's cars O.K.

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP:

Cyril J. STANBRIDGE
"The Lodge", Treetop Glen,
Thirroul. N.S.W. 2515

TRANSFER TO FULL MEMBERSHIP
1914 Belsize

Penelope STANBRIDGE
(Address as above)

WIFE MEMBERSHIP

Robert C.S. WINWOOD-SMITH
167 Rankin Street,
Forbes. N.S.W. 2871

FULL MEMBERSHIP
1913 Ford Tourer
1910 Renault Roadster

RESOLVED (W. McCarthy/D. Berthon) that applications be accepted. Chairman welcomed Cyril and Penny to the club and introduced them to the meeting. Robert Winwood-Smith was also welcomed.

EVENTS: J. Wards summarized final details of the Katoomba event. A letter from Rotary of Drummoyne was read - volunteers for procession W. McCarthy and V. Jacobs. Trophies from last year required as soon as possible. Members reminded raffle tickets on sale.

RESOLVED (M. Roberts/R. Baxter) that Mrs. Gwen Dunn be invited by the VCCA/NSW to attend the Katoomba Run, accommodation provided.

MAGAZINE: Eric Lang gave report, and requested more contributions from members for SPIT AND POLISH.

PUBLIC RELATIONS: A. Foy read Max Ruddock's letter (now Minister for Revenue). Press release issued to various medias and response on Katoomba event good.

SOCIAL: Glad King reported barbecue a success and \$200 profit made. Presentation is Saturday, 1st May, at Concord. Jenolan weekend July 3/4. Music Hall show changed if members interested.

REGISTRATIONS: M. Bendeich reported 22 cars registered, 13 not registered country.
85 " " 40 " " city.

CVVTMC: A. Foy reported on meeting, and the following points were noted:

1. Antique Tyre Supplies re-formed from Victorian Company who were disappointed in Dunlop not importing some sizes and keeping their end of the bargain. M. Ogle is Agent in N.S.W. for tyre orders.
2. Blank rims being organised (4 sizes).
3. Vintage Fed'n advised CAMS not infiltrating into V. & V. affairs as their interest clash completely.
4. Historic Rally of Parramatta and environs on 19th September. Sub-Committee appointed. More details later ex G. Roberts.
5. Radio 2CH offered to promote Warwick Farm event. Smith Family Charity proposal also received, and these being negotiated jointly.
6. Swap Meeting being organized by Chev. C.C. at Grace Bros., Chatswood, same arrangements as previously. Date thought to be 16th May.

REGISTRAR: M. Roberts advised that he is in the process of sending quotations to other States before proceeding with printing.

PHOTOGRAPHER: J. Thorpe tabled five photographs and more photos are to be sought during the Katoomba Run.

INSURANCE: V. Jacobs advised that he has requested a blanket letter regarding "total loss", asking for confirmation that the car remain the property of the insured. Members were reminded to check that their cars are adequately covered.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

1. Cairns Rally

G. Roberts advised that petrol from the border to Cairns will be supplied by compliment of G.M.H. (Q'ld.)

2. 136 Queens Road.

A. Foy read and summarized correspondence with Hall and Hall (Solicitors). Contracts to be exchanged, insurance to be arranged and cheque for disbursements to be sent. M.W.D.S. & B. require meter to be installed, and plumber is to be engaged. Rural Bank letter read approving overdraft application. Club is still down approximately \$1400 on the money promised in June/July. W. McCarthy advised that insurance arranged with Gibbs Bright and H. & H. advised.

3. Amaroo VSCC event

G. Roberts outlined the costs of running a race meeting. Noted that entry of \$3 per person was in line with these costs.

4. Water Pump Grease

Approximately 20 members indicated interest, and A. Foy assured that a sample will be available at next meeting.

5. "Thank You" Day

Motion V. Jacobs, seconded E. Lang, that we include a Thank You Day in our calendar.

V. Jacobs outlined examples of people to be invited on this run as, Hon. Auditor, employee who looked after our dealings at Hall & Hall, representatives from, say, G.I.O., D.M.T., Lions etc.

Motion was carried.

6. Fans

Frank Nissen given a vote of acclamation for ceiling fans, and the cool air being enjoyed by all on this hot evening.

7. Vintage Overland parts (Model 91)

W. McCarthy advised re chassis, 4 wooden wheels and some transmission parts available to person removing same.

8. Car/s of the Year Award

Chairman advised that arrangements are being made to display the "Car of the Year" in suitable frame in the clubrooms, going back five years.

Meeting closed at 9.50 p.m.

* * * * *

E V E N T SBLUE MOUNTAINS TOUR - 1976

The Blue Mountains Tour is now over and I take this opportunity to thank the Events Committee, their wives and officials for the valuable assistance given. A special thanks to club member Ron Selig for the use of his barbecue for the Sunday lunch.

I hope the members enjoyed the change in venue and weather. Some of the members should feel fitter after the swimming and sauna, especially those who took an early morning dip on Sunday.

Congratulations to Len Baxter and Mel Pope on winning the \$50.00 prizes.

JOHN WARDS,

Events Chairman.

P.S. An event will be held on Easter Sunday. Watch the Vintage Column of the "Sydney Morning Herald" one week before Easter for details.

* * * * *

DRIVING RECORD?

A recent "Letter to the Editor" of the "Sydney Morning Herald" read:

'Sir,

As a matter of interest I would like to know if anyone can better the following record.

At the age of 14 in 1903, I drove my grandfather's Star from Newbury to Brighton in three days, a distance of about 80 miles.

His car was a replica of the first one imported into New Zealand. The back had to be lifted up for one to pull a fly-wheel to start the single-cylinder horizontal engine. To engage the one-wheel chain drive, a handle was rotated on the top of a vertical column to push a leather belt from a free wheel to a fixed wheel, a normal gear change. When we came to hills I, being very tall, had to walk beside the car, lean in and steer it uphill. I remember one very steep hill we never would have made but for a group of cricketers who got out of their conveyance and pushed us up.

I am the holder of a current driver's licence and wonder if any other holder of the same can better my record of 73 years.

W.R. COX,
Leura.'



THAT OFFER - announced at the last meeting - made by 2CH and turned down by the C.V.V.T.M.C., should be snapped up by this club before it cools off. What we badly need now is a "wealthy" sponsor, specially in these days of escalating costs. With the burden of the "new" building purchase and the 1978 International looming on the horizon - the Management Committee should be examining any avenue of funding (not Arabic) projects and lifting this burden from the shoulders of the family man member.

#####

GUESS WHO has joined the ranks of the T Ford brigade? Give up? Jock McGowen. No, I'm not joking! Jock has seen the light. (Falmai wishes he hadn't). It may not be veteran, but at least it's Model T and fitted with a Ruckstell too!!

#####

BLUE MOUNTAINS RALLY: I am always being accused of knocking Club Committees (??) so this time I'll praise one - the Events Committee. The run up was excellent; a very good choice of route, together with Sally and Peter Kable (1972 Events Committee) we followed the field in MODERN TRANSPORT. There is no doubt that the Blue Mountains Run is a very difficult one to organise. Where to hold the start?? Always a problem. If it's too far out the "southern" boys leave home in the dark (maybe with Daylight Saving not such a problem). Morning tea and lunch, how to cut costs?? The Committee solved this one cleverly. Where to stay overnight? Here again an inspired choice. The point I wish to make is this - the Blue Mountains Rally should be organised and controlled by a SEPARATE Club Committee part of Events and to do this one Annual Event only. I feel sure that each and every previous Events Committee will say Ahem! to that.

Observations made on the 1st Day:

1. Bad luck for "Twinkle Star" snapping an axle on the way to the start. Quite a disappointment to those two stalwarts Reg Jones and Bob Baxter who have spent many weekends rebuilding the motor. Anyhow Eileen, Jan and Rolly arrived at Leura in "modern" transport.
2. Just what did Jimmy Simpson want with that plank of wood strapped under the "Besa"? Maybe taking his own "board" to the "lodgings".
3. Clever Ken Quarmby fitting a tinted lens to his rear view mirror.
Quote: "It's now impossible to see the smoke haze following behind."

STEERING COLUMN, CONTINUED:

4. Vic and Lucy Jacobs waiting at Springwood for hours for "Henrietta" piloted by Bob Hobson to arrive, not knowing that the olde girl hadn't left the garage (motor too tight after overhaul).
5. Bob showing off his 1913 "revamped" (as in 'vampire') Stude "town car" conservative in midnight blue and "turrett lathe" grey - by the way, please give that cap back to Norman Von Nida.
6. George Williams. Shame! Fancy driving in those old (white??) overalls. Dame Nellie would turn in her grave.
7. Ben Bronk in his F.I.A.T. on its 1st outing. Beautiful, Ben, beautiful.
8. A special welcome to John Smith from Dubbo, once again proving that Model T's can cross the mountains either way. (By the way, what happened to the K.R.I.T.? Couldn't the Cox's stand the altitude??) Also a Big Welcome to the Parkes Mob busing down and back in one day. That's dedication for you.
9. Good to see entry 41 "Clara" Martin purring along once again after her recent "Bungle".
10. Neil "Gooday Mate" Lewry and his entourage of Veteran Motor "Sickles" all clad in "Foreman White" overalls. They certainly created a lot of enjoyment for us all. Loved that deerstalker-cum-crash helmet. Bad luck for one chap stripped his gears and now they've nicknamed him "Shiftless"!!

And now the one sour note. A big rap over the knuckles for the driver of a modern "Cloud" Rolls whilst "acting" as "tender" vehicle for a veteran, drove about 2 inches from the rear of same, causing a queue of about 20 cars to form behind, with no chance to pass, this is the way to get us all branded as traffic hazards.

As I was unable to attend the run home (the famous fog gave us all bronchitis) I can only go on reports from others. By all accounts the Bar-B-Q was really great - a fitting climax to a memorable Blue Mountains Rally. Well done John Wards and your officials.

Happy motoring,

E.J.L.

* * * * *

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

From The Vintage Sports Car Club of Australia Ltd.

"Editor:

In reply to Mr. John Ward's great rip off, firstly the V.S.C.C. has no intention of ripping anything off anybody.

It would appear that John has no idea of the costs involved in promoting such an event.

Certain members of the V.S.C.C.A. put up a considerable sum of money, time and effort all at risk, to try and put on an event for all old car enthusiasts to participate in or spectate at.

I list some of the costs:

Hire of circuit including fire tender, two ambulances and two trucks	\$4370.00
Programmes one of which was handed out to every car passing through the gate, at no cost	\$1000.00
Posters	\$ 100.00
Advertising	\$1000.00
Secretary's office expenses, postage, telegrams, reception for V.I.P. including Government representative of sport and recreation. Lunches for officials	\$ 750.00
Making a total of	\$7718.00
The total gate takings and entry fees for competitors	\$9000.00 odd
This left a credit balance of	\$1282.00
The V.S.C.C.A., N.S.W., received \$500.00 which is being put to the club reserves.	

As the club has received many congratulations from interstate and New South Wales, it has been decided to repeat the event next year, the balance of the monies is being appropriated for the future event.

If the weather had not favoured us as it did, the V.S.C.C.A. could have suffered a very considerable loss.

The club's aim is to promote motor sport for all, and to support and help other clubs who put on events. Unfortunately, we were unable to obtain any sponsorship, so we had to recover our costs through the gate.

I think it was good value for money; hope we can get a sponsor for next year and reduce the entrance fee.

See you there next year John.

George W. Green,
Imm. Past President, VSCCA.

(Although it appeared in print that John was having a "shot" at the organisers, I understood that his main bone of contention was that some

VSCCA comment, continued:

car loads were entering for \$3.00 "all in" whilst he was asked \$3.00 per head!
Ed.)

* * * * *

CANBERRA EASTER RALLY - 16-19 APRIL, 1976

Entry forms available from our Secretary
or by writing to:

Rally Director,
V.C.C.A. (A.C.T.),
P.O. Box 394,
Manuka, A.C.T. 2603

* * * * *

S O C I A L

Congratulations to the Events Committee on an excellent tour to Katoomba. As navigator I appreciated the start at Prospect, the accommodation was very good, a very enjoyable weekend.

To Mrs. McGowen and family we send our sympathy at the sad loss of Frank.

Had a thank you card from Reg Jones, who is feeling much better now.

Future Outings:

Presentation Night, Saturday 1st May at St. Lukes Memorial Hall, 19 Burton Street, Concord, 7.30 p.m. Supper Dance, \$5.00 per person. Drinks - B.Y.O. Glasses provided, Punch provided. Numbers required by May meeting to confirm with caterers.

Music Hall, 156 Military Road, Neutral Bay. I have made a booking for Thursday, 17th June, to see "The Beast of Belgrave Square". \$7.50 per person, any time from 6 p.m. Show commences at 8.30. I think most of you have been to the Music Hall and know it is always a most enjoyable evening. May I have numbers and money by May meeting, thank you.

Jenolan Caves. A bus trip to Jenolan Caves, Saturday 3rd, return Sunday 4th July. "A" class rooms (with facilities) \$31.50 Adults, "B" class rooms (no facilities) \$24.50 Adults. Children under 12 years, "A" class \$17.50, "B" class \$14.00. Plus \$5.00 per person for bus. This includes Saturday lunch, dinner at night, Sunday breakfast and lunch before leaving on Sunday. A deposit of \$10.00 for Adults is required by travel

SOCIAL (CONTINUED)

centre by 11th June. Bus leaves Chester Coaches Pty. Ltd., 101-107 Orchard Road, Chester Hill at 8 a.m. Saturday. Cars may be parked in bus depot over week-end safely.

GLAD KING

* * * * *

NO OCCASION FOR HORSES: THE STEAM CARRIAGE BUILDERS

This articles concludes:

"Christian Dietz built another remorquer in 1839, which in effect was a road-going railway locomotive, with eight wheels, of which six steered and two drove. Put in service in 1841 at Bordeaux, it aroused the enmity of the local waggons, and on one occasion Christian Dietz had to beat off an attack with his poker.

Discouraged by their lack of commercial success, the Dietz family abandoned their road engines. But they had shown the way ahead to the traction engine.

The initiative in traction engine development passed to England, where stationary steam engines had for some time been mounted on wheels, to be drawn from place to place by horses to drive farm machinery.

In 1841, J.R. and A. Ransomes of Ipswich, Suffolk, introduced such a portable engine, equipped with a vertical boiler. This was designed by William Worby, whose grandson, William Worby Beaumont, was to write the 1900 Motoring classic 'Motor Vehicles and Motors'.

The following year, the logical step was taken of linking the engine to one of the rear wheels by a chain. This enabled the machine to drag itself along; while a horse remained between the shafts at the front, it was used only to steer the engine.

Ransomes' next self-propelled engine followed locomotive practice more closely, and proved reasonably successful in service. It was built by E.B. Wilson of Leeds to the design of Robert Willis.

Already, however, these early road locomotives were exhibiting one major fault: they were too heavy for the roads of the day. Although it was claimed that steam carriages caused less damage to the road surface than horse drawn transport, the problem of preventing self-moved vehicles sinking into the ground under their own weight had been a cause for concern for many years.

As early as 1771 Timothy Edgeworth had proposed a 'railway' which would automatically unroll beneath the wheels of a carriage and be taken up as it passed and several primitive forms of caterpillar tracks were designed in the early 1800's. One of the best was conceived by Sir George Cayley, 'The Father of Aviation'. This featured transverse castor wheels so that the track could roll sideways to help steering. Cayley was friendly with Goldsworthy Gurney, and is reported to have owned a Gurney drag which he crashed into a shop front in London's Bond Street in November 1840, killing his engineer.

NO OCCASION FOR HORSES: THE STEAM CARRIAGE BUILDERS (CONT'D.)

In 1808 the aptly-named John Dumbell patented substitution of 'Gothick or other kinds of arches, globes, semi-globes or segments' for ordinary carriage wheels to prevent them sinking on inferior roads or on bad ground.

While full-size versions of the early caterpillar tracks were not produced, the Boydell plate, invented in 1839, provided a temporary practical solution to the problem of spreading the load on soft going.

Boydell plates were flat 'feet' hinged at a tangent to a large diameter wheel: the first application of these to a self-propelled vehicle seems to have been the traction engine built by Richard Bach of Birmingham to Boydell's own design.

Then, in 1856, two East Anglian companies which were to become familiar names in the traction engine world built Boydell engines. They were Burrell of Thetford, Norfolk, and Richard Garrett and Sons of Saxmundham, Suffolk; in 1857 William Tuxford and Sons built a three-wheeled Boydell engine.

This was the peak year of Boydell's invention, when the Endless Railway Company - shades of Timothy Edgeworth! - was formed to market it. Certainly the British Army was interested, for a factory at Woolwich Arsenal was building Boydell 'porterrails', which were used on gun carriages in the Crimean War. But the platypode progress of a Boydell-equipped traction engine was unreliable and noisy, the hinged joints wore quickly, and the system was abandoned.

A rival design, by William Bray of Folkestone, Kent, featured retractable spuds forced through slots in the wheel rim by an eccentric gear - it was obviously only suitable for agricultural use.

A much simpler idea was the fitting of cross-strakes to the driving wheels to increase adhesion - this was the system adopted by Thomas Aveling of Rochester, Kent, when he began experiments in 1858, converting portable engines into chain-driven traction engines.

Before long Aveling evolved what was to be the classic form of the traction engine - loc-boilered, with a steam-jacket cylinder set on top of the boiler ('overmounted') behind the chimney, driving a crankshaft above the firebox. Early models had a fifth wheel in front: this was used to steer the vehicle. Aveling's traction engine proved a success, and by 1862 forty were in service (some of the earlier engines were built for Aveling by Clayton and Shuttleworth).

Export markets were soon established: M. Tresca, sub-director of the Conservatoire Imperial des Arts et Metiers made trials with the Aveling 'La Ville de Senlis' at Beaurain, while in 1868 another Aveling was towing an omnibus at Le Havre.

French manufacturers were not, however, entirely left behind by British developments. In Nantes the engineer Lotz had begun experiments with steam engines in 1856, and his first traction engine, 'L'Eclair', took to the road in 1860. Four years later, he built a chain-driven engine with a steersman sitting in front of the chimney, which could haul loads of 3,500-6,000 kilogrammes at 8-12 kph. His 1866 'La France' was a real road locomotive - its

NO OCCASION FOR HORSES: THE STEAM CARRIAGE BUILDERS (CONT'D.)

boiler was so long that water tended to collect at either end when the engine was negotiating hills! Subsequent Lotz engines had the old-fashioned vertical boiler.

Nevertheless, 'La France' was a powerful tractor, and on a 30.6 kilometre journey it pulled 29,353 kg (over 27 tons) at 7.3 kph.

Other leading French makes of the late 1850's were the Albaret from Liancourt, the Cail (built by a famous firm of locomotive engineers at Douai), the Gellerat, the Michaux and the curious Larmanjat, with an unusually short wheelbase.

Although the design of traction engines had become almost stereotyped by 1870, it seemed that there was always ample opportunity for flouting convention. Some makers followed the lead of Bray and Dubs in under-mounting their cylinders, railway cylinders. Others, like John Fowler in 1871, built engines with three wheels, of which the best-known was 'Progress' of the Cheadle Carrying Company. J. Taylor and Company of Birkenhead built the three-wheeled 'Steam Elephant' which had two cylinders, a stubby boiler, rubber-cushioned wheel spokes and scaled six tons.

In 1879 Amedee Bollee pere of Le Mans built two remarkable tractors, 'Marie-Anne' and 'Elizabeth', which had engine/gearbox units foreshadowing the layout of the BLMC Mini. The gears lay below the crankshaft, making for a remarkably compact unit. The rear axle was driven by a shaft, and a power take-off to drive the wheels of a trailer was incorporated. Bollee's patent provided for all the wheels of a road train to be driven in this manner.

However, the Societe Metallurgique de l'Ariege, for whom the tractors were built, failed to pay Bollee for them, and this most original line of development came to a dead end.

Ironical as it may seem, the anti-steam legislation that had begun in the 1830's actually favoured the development of the traction engine. The 1865 Locomotive Act laid down that: 'It shall not be lawful to drive any such Locomotive along any Turnpike Road or Public Highway, at a greater Speed than Four Miles an Hour, or through any City, Town or Village at a greater Speed than two miles an hour...at least three persons shall be employed to drive or conduct such Locomotive....one of such persons.....shall procede such Locomotive on foot by not less than Sixty Yards, and shall carry a Red Flag constantly displayed.'

Obviously, it became no more than sensible for steam vehicle manufacturers to concentrate on the slower traction engines rather than the more glamorous steam carriages.

Although the requirement for the man walking in front to carry a red flag was repealed in 1878, the flag was still carried until the 1896 Locomotives on Highways Act raised the speed limit to 12 mph and did away with the peripatetic harbinger altogether.

In America the traction engine had made its first appearance around 1865. Design tended to be far less stereotyped than in England. For one thing, American engines had to be designed to burn cheap, locally

NO OCCASION FOR HORSES: THE STEAM CARRIAGE BUILDERS (CONT'D.)

obtainable fuels such as wood, straw and, later, oil, rather than the steam coal that fired British engines. Also, while skilled labour was cheaply available in Britain, it was at a premium in America. Consequently American traction engines lacked the finish of their British counterparts, and were designed for ease of production. Spare parts were readily available, and easily fitted.

But whatever the differences between the products of the two countries, it was apparent that steam power was bringing new muscle to heavy haulage."

* * * * *

LET'S TALK POLITICALLY

In the past whenever a Politician began his policy speech or other public speaking assignments, whether or not on T.V. or in person, I for one can honestly state that in a matter of moments I found myself bored completely to such an extent that I either switched to something else or walked away. Nevertheless, the exception to this rule was the Hon. Mr. Max Ruddock, when he responded to our Acting President, Mr. Allan Foy, at our Dinner at the Blue Mountains Rally recently.

Mr. Ruddock's speech was totally ad lib. Besides referring to our veteran cars and club activities, he diversified by relaying information on Sydney's drastic weather, his own portfolio changeover, plus antics adopted to avoid strikes. I also liked his reference to "young" Mr. George Roberts, and his account of how he adopted chicanery to be present with us. There is no doubt that his speech, notably interspersed with witty anecdotes, was enjoyed by one and all.

J.W.

* * * * *

SIX INCHES

The title of my story is "SIX INCHES", the story of a Simple Cyclecar and a Narrow Gateway.

Great Britain was the home of the cyclecar and the period 1911-14 probably saw more types and makes of these ultra lightweight vehicles than at any other time in motoring history. The principle of their design was simplicity. My story is also simple. It relates to that era.

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My next-door neighbour has recently purchased a light car and as I wish to be in the swim in the affairs of Messington I have also decided to take up motoring. However a rather serious and unexpected difficulty presented itself.

(Continued on Page 17.....)

SIX INCHES (CONTINUED)

My front gate is just 3 feet wide and Priscilla - that's my wife - refuses to allow me to widen it as it would spoil the scheme of her herbaceous border in which the old oak gate plays such an important part.

She is not a bit keen on motoring and her obstinancy, I feel sure, is due to the fact that she does not want me to own a cyclecar. I, on the other hand, am determined to, and seeing that the Persuader machine is a tandem seater, I wrote to the company explaining my predicament and queried the overall width of the car. Their reply was disappointing. The cyclecar was just six inches too big.

By the next mail I enquired if I was to order one of their cyclecars - and in fact if I was to become a motorist at all - could they do or suggest something that would permit me to get the Persuader through the gateway.

I knew quite well that their's was the narrowest machine on the market and yet it was just six inches too big. It was impossible for me to store the car at any other place than in my own cycle shed, the nearest garage being one mile away, so that unless I could keep the machine at home, it would not be worth my having it.

The Persuader people replied with the idiotic suggestion that, as their vehicle was fitted with detachable wheels, I might just manage to get it through the narrow gateway by removing wheels one by one, pushing the vehicle a little way through and then replacing them. A more senseless suggestion I could not imagine. Think of the Joneses next door spying at me over the hedge as I arrived and began detaching the wheels before getting through the gate. To be placed in such a degrading position it would be preferable not to be a motorist at all.

I gave the Persuader Co. a piece of my mind for suggesting this and asked for other ideas.

Their next suggestion was that I should have a cyclecar without mudguards as they thought that the overhang of the mudguards was just sufficient to prevent the vehicle from going through the gate. This suggestion would of course make the vehicle look like a racer, and all Messington would think that I have become a professional driver. I had no wish to imitate those dirty-looking mechanic fellows one sees driving down to Brooklands on stripped chasses and then there was the mud and dust to contend with. What would Priscilla think of it?

I spent nights drawing up plans of the 3-foot gateway and the 3 ft. 6 inch cyclecar, making little paper models and trying to get them through the opening. But all to no good. The machine was too wide.

I had an inspiration. Why should I not take the car over the gateway as I could not get it through? The cyclecar journals were all quoting the lightness and handiness of the respective products, so perhaps Plato - "that's our boots boy" - and I could lift the front wheels over the gateway first, followed by the back half, and with a little manoeuvring, gain access to the garden.

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I sent a reply-paid telegram to the Explorer Co., asking them the weight of their car on the front and rear ends respectively. The answer came back in a couple of hours: "2½ cwt. on the front and 3½ cwt. over the back wheels."

To my knowledge I had never tried to lift 2½ cwt., before, but if I visited the coal merchant down at the station I could get some indication as to what the weight really meant. So Plato and I went down there and tried lifting sacks of coal. We found we could manage a couple of hundredweight or so quite easily and as this meant that we could lift the car over the gateway, I wired the Explorer Co. with a definite order. It was then that I remembered, I should require lamps, horn, electric lighting outfit, hood, windscreen, speedometer, tools, spare wheel etc., so a list of these accessories was made out and a request forwarded to have them fitted.

Meanwhile Priscilla was adamant. She refused any compromise in the matter of the gatepost, stating that of all things she detested, a tandem-seated cyclecar was the worst. I therefore deemed it wise not to again raise the subject with her about the car; but a few days later, having heard that the Explorer was ready for delivery, Plato and I crept up to London.

Perhaps Priscilla would relent when she saw us arriving in style, and no doubt when she saw the two of us straining and struggling in lifting the car over the gateway her heart would melt and she would reconsider the scheme of her herbaceous border and permit widening of the gateway.

When we arrived at the works there was the Explorer, shining in its newly-painted and varnished body and to my eyes a delight on wheels. The hood, lamps, screen etc. were all nicely fitted and the engine seemed to be running splendidly.

It was decided that one of the salesmen should drive it down for me, and then I thought, a mile or so from home I would take over the wheel, so that Priscilla could see how well I managed the car. Before starting, Plato and I decided to test the weight. Imagine our horror, on attempting to lift the front axle, to find we could only move it an inch or two.

Previously we had played with hundredweight coal sacks and yet the cyclecar was beyond our strength. I called the manager and asked if his previous assessment of the weight of the front axle was as stated, 2½ cwt. He explained that this was the case, but all the accessories I had requested had increased the front axle weight considerably. In fact, I believe he said, 2 cwt. had been added to the car. Here was a predicament. What could I do? The addition of the accessories, which I knew were so necessary, in many cases, were actually demanded by law, had rendered it impossible for me to get the car over the gateway.

It now occurred to me that the Explorer was probably no longer a cyclecar, and if this was the case, it was a bitter disappointment to me. Instead of owning a cyclecar as I had fondly imagined, I had purchased a nameless vehicle. It could not be called a light-car, with its tandem seats and double-belt drive and yet it did not conform to the cyclecar union's definition I had read so much about. The catastrophe was heart-breaking. Then there was the gate trouble. The only thing left for me to do, I supposed, was to go into a strict course of training, work up my strength and have Plato

(Continued on Page 19.....)

do the same until we could lift the car over the gate, for I would never endure the indignity of removing the accessories, day by day.

As a last resource I hoped Priscilla would relent when she saw me coming up in the car and would allow us to remove the post.

Eventually we set forth, myself seated in front, the salesman driving with Plato on the tail. At last we reached Messington and with only a mile or so to drive before reaching home, I decided to take over the wheel. I knew how proud Priscilla would be when she saw me sweeping up the road driving the little cyclecar as if I had been a motorist all my life. I was doing splendidly with the steering. There was only a quarter of a mile to go.

I knew that Priscilla would be waiting on the lawn for me and sure enough, there she was with a look of astonishment on her face. I increased the speed in order to make an impression. I saw Priscilla's terrified expression as the engine began to roar. Then the engine thundered and rather frightened me. I was approaching our gate - "that which had caused all the worry" - rather faster than I had intended, so I moved the throttle lever quickly. I suppose I must have lost my head, for the thing accelerated suddenly instead of stopping. Priscilla shrieked, I looked up and instead of closing the throttle, I had opened it still further, forgetting all about the road, steering, or gateway, as we darted forward.

There was a sickening crash as the cyclecar struck the right-hand gate post. A moment's suspense and the car bounded forward into the garden, carrying everything before it. Luckily, before it had time to do very much damage, the salesman managed to pull the Explorer up and we all got out feeling rather shaken. Priscilla was crying. She thought I would be killed and quite forgot about her precious herbaceous border, which had been ruined by the relentless onslaught of the cycle car. I seized my opportunity and asked her, now that the damage was done, if she would allow the gateway, when repaired, to be made six inches wider. She consented. I had thus gained my point but at the expense of considerable damage to the gate and cyclecar.

Every now and then when returning home from a day's run, I notice that Priscilla eyes me slyly as we drive through the new gateway into the shed. I sometimes wonder if she thinks I did it on purpose.

GEORGE A. ROBERTS

* * * * *

A D V E R T I S E M E N T S

WANTED

Veteran Model T Ford, requires light medium-sized trailer to carry it to interstate hub rallies. Pay reasonable price.

- "WOODY"

C/- Eric Lang,
61 Pacific Ave., Penshurst. 2222
579.5790 (evenings)

(Continued on Page 20.....)

WANTED

Ruckstell diff. housing only, with or without "innards".
Have 12 rivet diff. for swapping, also other veteran parts.
All replies answered.

- NEIL MARTIN,
45 Railway Street,
Guildford. N.S.W.
632.5047

WANTED

Dixie Magneto 4-cylinder, clock-wise direction looking at points.
Will purchase or exchange magneto or other parts.

- JOHN PICKUP,
19 Essex Street,
Epping. N.S.W.
86.3749

WANTED

Large number of parts for a side valve Dennis 250 Fire Engine
approx. 1924. (In service 1929).
Interested in purchasing another 250 side valve if fairly
complete, condition not important.
6.50 x 20 8-ply tyres in good order, or to suit re-cap.

For 1915 T Ford - coil box and switch.
Engine Fan complete.
Set mudguards.
Rear guard brackets.

FOR EXCHANGE

for some of above: one pair front hubs Veteran T.
Several Veteran T rims.

- ROBERT FORBES,
537 Chapel Road,
Bankstown. 2200
70.2098

WANTED

For 1911 A type Vauxhall advance and retard quadrant
and levers, oil pressure gauge 0-40P.S.I brass faced and
marked Vauxhall Motors Ltd.
One only 880 x 120 wire wheel, centre cock Rudge Whitworth
type with eight coarse splines or hub only, bonnet and bonnet
surround with parallel flutes or lend of same pattern.

Will buy or swap for goodies.

- JIM WEIR,
Peats Ave.,
Castle Hill. 2154
634.1388

VETERAN CAR CLUB OF AUSTRALIA (N.S.W.)

134 QUEENS ROAD, FIVE DOCK, 2046

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CLUB MEETING DATES 1975-76

1975			
NOVEMBER	Thursday 27th	APRIL	Thursday 22nd
1976		MAY	" 27th
JANUARY	Thursday 22nd	JUNE	" 24th
FEBRUARY	" 26th	JULY	" 22nd
MARCH	" 25th	AUGUST	" 26th

