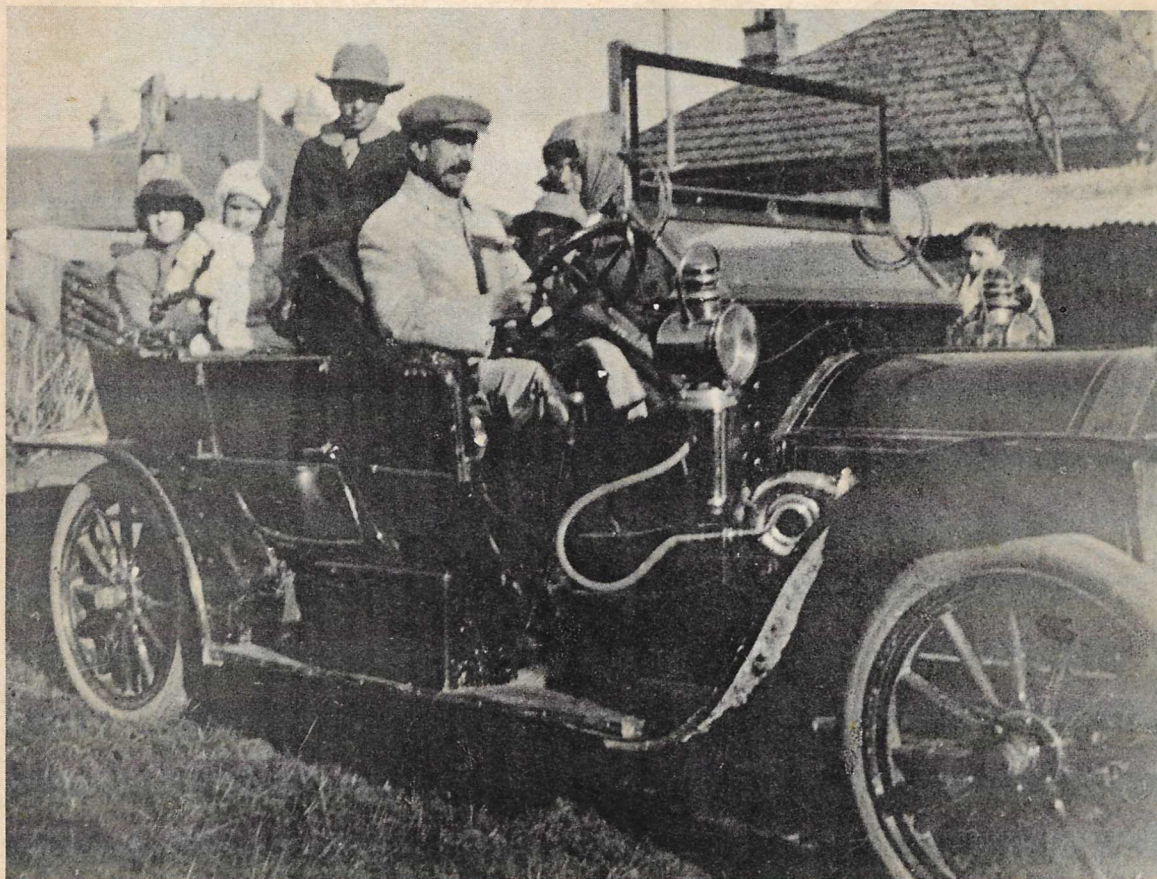


NEWSLETTER OF THE VETERAN CAR CLUB OF AUSTRALIA (N.S.W.)
Registered at the G.P.O., Sydney for transmission by post as a periodical—Category B.

SPIT AND POLISH

FIRST 4-CYL. CAR IN STRATHFIELD



THE DANCE'S 1910 DARRACQ



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

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Patron:

His Excellency the Governor of New South Wales,
SIR RODEN CUTLER, V.C., K.C.M.G., C.B.E.

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E D I T O R I A L

The Fork in the Road

A long time ago two men, separately, achieved what had till then seemed impossible, namely, a method of keeping an engine in continuous motion, without the cumbersome adjuncts attaching to the steam engine.

That, in itself, seems inoffensive enough, till it was decided that the then existing motors were not fast enough, and in order to obtain more speed they needed more power. This meant bigger motors. General demand increased, and the handful of manufacturers were joined by many more, including triers, inventors, businessmen, go-getters and others.

By now, Henry Ford, with his 'sluice gate' type of mass production, was embroiling millions - and we mean millions - of time payment devotees. Other manufacturers were on the band waggon of 'drive today, pay later'. And considering the number of vehicles produced, there was too much being paid in cash by the users, or being rung up against their credit.

It was found fairly early that for some reason everybody had to be in transit from here to there at 'break-neck' speed. And what a coldly appropriate term that one is! In order to improve the capacity for fast travel, the aeroplane was fiddled with, toyed with, experimented with, improved in many ways, but the cost of producing such a unit kept it well out of the hands of the average commuter. By now the costs of producing, maintaining and running the airborne commuter carrier have become exorbitant, but man still makes every endeavour to improve on the previous year's improvements. We have aeroplanes which cost tens of thousands of dollars, we have

(Continued on Page 2.....)

The next General Meeting of the Club will be held on THURSDAY, 25TH MARCH, 1971 at the Five Dock Community Hall, Great North Road, Five Dock, at 8 p.m.

others at hundreds of thousands of dollars, and even at the now generally accepted standard of cost - millions of dollars. Just try to comprehend the cost to put a Concorde into the air. The national hand has been pushed right to the bottom of the national pocket, and, grief of all griefs, in the process of endeavouring to lift off the ground a nightmarish heavier-than-air machine, one of the earliest and certainly the best known and respected car manufacturing companies has been pushed to the wall! Having become disgusted with a Decauville that he had acquired, due to its failures and shortcomings, Henry Royce exclaimed apparently, in a voice full of resentment, that he could build a better motor car himself - and of course he did just that!

And now the snowballing bigness of things commercial has dragged down this fine, well established firm to an ashamedly low level. After all this allegedly great thinking, it is now being queried up top whether this dream ship, this technical and technological leviathan will ever take the air, as it is being sensed now, at last, that it will probably prove to be a fizzer in the matter of profit earning. At \$26 million per unit it is, to say the least, an expensive form of travel.

However, a consoling thought for many people is the fact that it will reduce the travelling time from London to Sydney from 25 to 14½ hours. Now is that not wonderful? Technically, yet, but from the practical viewpoint - why? One would enter the 'plane in Sydney in December wearing shorts and short-sleeved shirt - due to the heat - but would be forced to change to semi-lunar garb within 12 hours, before setting foot in London's bleak, sleet-filled Christmas weather, with snow and robin red breasts and bare, gaunt, leafless trees everywhere, and of course no sunshine. And you'd probably need to cadge a bit of Vic's. expense account to help you buy the ticket, anyway.

So now, having reached so far, a decision must be made whether to go ahead with the programme and do a bit of a 'minsec', or switch to the other track and let's stick to something reasonable, sensible, and manageable for Mr. Man-in-the-street.

* * * * *

FEBRUARY MEETING

The President was in the Chair, and opened the proceedings by welcoming two visitors - Sid Carey and Mal Bradney.

The Treasurer announced a trading profit of \$2979 and a credit balance at the bank of \$3060.

John Corby, for the Events Committee, made the prospective Blue Mountains Rally his main topic.

Dating Officer George Roberts announced a 1914 Studebaker with a spare 1915 motor, to be examined for Philip Campbell.

Starters for the Presentation Night were being accepted, reported the Social Secretary (Jan Sykes), as also were those for the Theatre Party, being for "The Man from Romancia".

The Trumbull of Doug. Pearce is nearing completion, so reported the Registration Officer, David Berthon.

The P.R.O., in the person of Warren Irish, said that leaflets are not to be distributed as in early years (too much litter for modern day thinking, Ed.). However, publicity was being arranged so that most of the interested observers would be made aware of the best vantage points along the route, including starting and finishing points. He gave details of an interesting book by Lord Montague - "Steam 1770-1970". This is to be available about May. The distributors have offered to supply the Club with the book at a 25% discount off the retail price, for a guaranteed number. Another book was also mentioned, each being approximately \$7. A show of hands was called for to determine how many of those present would be willing to purchase books. The result was not overwhelming. Warren suggested that the books could be available at Christmas.

Arthur Garthon reported that a meeting of C.V.V.T.M.C. was held at Drummoyne R.U. Club. The club had expressed surprise at the Veteran Club's querying the back of the "Permit to Drive" (our Registration Certificates.) No time has been available yet for them to take any action in the matter of a Combined Club building. Bruce Cooper was present (Five Dock 25 Feb.) and told the meeting C.V.V.T.M.C. had been requested by the Transport Department to cut costs in the matter of plates. It appears that the Veteran Club is the only one of the combined clubs which deals direct with the Department. The President answered that it had always been that way and he, personally, considered that not only was it a practicable approach, but he considered it desirable. Jock McGowen, at this stage, stated that the Club should, in fact, do as Bruce Cooper suggested, and work with the Department through C.V.V.T.M.C.

'Situation Normal' on the Library front, Len Sheen stating that one member had availed himself of the use of the Library.

The Coffs Harbour Rally was brought into the picture by Len Sheen, who announced that as application forms have been forwarded to all relevant clubs round the states, it is eminently advisable that intending participants lodge their applications as soon as possible. It must be obvious that accommodation will not be inexhaustible.

In the matter of premises, the President said that not much of a concrete nature had been achieved.

The Blue Mountains Rally came up for discussion by Bill Hardman sounding out the possibility of a film being made this year. He would be in the position to shoot such a film if it were made available. A remark came from one corner that film could be acquired at a reduced rate. Moved by Terry Cook, and seconded, that \$25 be allocated to the Club Photographer for the making of a film of the Blue Mountains Rally. Discussion took place regarding the type and size of film to be used. Discussion was halted by Ross Marshall volunteering to donate films to the Club for the B.M.R. coverage.

Terry Cook spoke up again, this time to announce that he is in a position to acquire the loan of "Henry Royce, Mechanic", a film with a fairly obvious flavour.

Len Sheen told the meeting that unfortunately the pictures of veteran cars taken in respect of the writing pad covers were at an undesirable attitude for that particular job, and, in consequence, are to be retaken. Arthur Garthon is at the back of this bit of activity, and we understand that the three vehicles concerned in this are Arthur Garthon's Delahaye (surely not!), Reg Jones' Clement Bayard, and Ross Marshall's Talbot.

* * * * *

"SPIT AND POLISH - Vol. 1 No. 9 - March 1960 - Editorial Notes.

Another very important matter, viz. the inclusion of Associate Members was brought up and discussed, but owing to it's importance it was moved by one of our Foundation Members, Frank Klein, that the President be asked to address the meeting giving a brief outline of the proposal, so that members could carefully construe the pros. and cons., then at a later meeting fully discuss all angles of Associate Membership, which of course if agreed upon would have to be ratified or otherwise at a special meeting."

* * * * *

BLUE MOUNTAINS RALLY

All Blue Mountains are not the same B.M.R. To the extent that we make our way from Point A to Point N (by calls to the nth degree via various other points), it was the B.M.R. again. We see mainly the same vehicles and the same families, but then, any cup is dependent upon 'the hard core'. And it is beaut. to see them, too!

We have plenty four wheelers, quite a number of two wheelers, but this is the first year that we have seen a three wheeler. And what a novelty it is! Chris. assured us that until one handles a tiller steered vehicle one has no comprehension of control ease. A piece of cake! Just sit there comfortably with a rod to handle. But Chris.! Just one question - can you give us an approximate idea of the maximum height of the trajectory to be described by driver and passenger, should you inadvertently hit a plumber's ditch at, say, 60 m.p.h.? Almost the same effect as an ejector seat, we'd imagine.

One of the first sights we saw on the starting area - and we emphasise 'sights' - was the old Len Masser himself. And did he have the De Dion? No! Did he borrow a Novacastrian vehicle? Again, no! What do you think the old galoot came to Sydney for? Not a Car Rally, but a Nuptial Rally! No! Not his own. We understand that is old hat now.

It seems there is among the male citizens of this place, at least one fellow who is not a rolling stone, for he gathered a Moss, and between them "a wedding has been arranged". The wedding must have been some affair, as it transpired later as the day wore on, that an answer to the oft asked question: "Where is So and So?" was answered in the words: "Oh! He's at the Moss wedding." And for those not in the know, let us say that it would appear that there has been some bad organising in the Moss family circle somewhere. How could a family possibly organise a wedding in such a way that Pop missed out for the first time on the Blue Mountains Rally?

For ourselves, though, we have an overriding thought, for this is the first year in which we have reported specifically as a passenger. Yes! Go on, we know! Sometimes (very few of them) we have arrived as a grateful but unwilling passenger in the vehicle of a good samaritan member. Yes! We know! A short while ago we rode in style (?) in the dark, behind an Elite! But we drove out all right next day! (Up the Besas!)

And talking of Besas - its marvellous how quickly some qualities can rub off. It would seem that the atmosphere of the Oldies' Villages had a bad

effect on the old sleeve valve job, for Ron had difficulty in persuading her to negotiate an admittedly stiff right hand turn at the top of a rise. This made it hard for Bill McCarthy, as he was then forced to come to a stop at a spot on which no normal driver would voluntarily do so except under dire circumstances. Now in order to lighten the load, both the front seat passenger, and the only able-bodied rear seat passenger alighted, and of course, as is usual in these circumstances, put a shoulder to the wheel, as it were, and put in those few extra pounds which, in our estimation, are more of a moral help than a mechanical necessity, for the Martini would still have made it.

This was the cause of a pathetic but very enlightening episode. The action here reminded Bill of Genevieve, when the Spyker was crossing a stream and was helped out ably by a passing woman, pressed into the job by Kenneth Moore demanding that she give a push behind. Bill spoke rather loudly (to outdo the Martini, of course!) as a nostalgic spurt brought to his lips the words: "Push, Madame, push!", then "Harder, Madame!" An old dear was walking past us, on our near side, and Bill had turned his head to the near side to make himself clear. His nostalgic words hit the old lady as a challenge to her good samaritan spirit, and, with a sheepish smile, she started towards the rear of the car! Poor old Bill, small as he is, felt momentarily smaller still, but by now we had passed her. The episode brought all of us down a few pegs, as it was evident that she had mistakenly felt that the words were flung at her.

Whoever thought up the diversion through the Nuffield and Mowll villages hit on a bright idea. It was obvious that the old people enjoyed the sight of the ancient machinery passing through. We set to wondering as we drove through, how many would have had the thought: "That looks just like the car that Dad had when we were at Blankville. Wonder if it is?" It brought to our mind the pleasure given to the inmates of Lady Davidson Home during the Bobbin Head run.

"Up Periscope!" An order not given usually at a motor car rally, but we understand that Capt. Frank Nissen gave that order en route to Linden on Sunday. We imagine that the little Humber spent some time with her bilge pump working. Poor Jo. copped it "good and proper" while they ploughed into a wet head wind. It is known to most and must be recalled to some that that model was not fitted with a windscreen. Jo. got quite a dousing. Really, this couple had an unfortunate few hours during the week-end. Their arrival at the top of the mountains was celebrated by liberating some polluted city air from a tyre, into the clear mountain air. Very bad luck, Frank, but it can happen to any one of us. We also heard of trouble with the horn. And poor Jo - would you believe it? - she lost her bonnet! If a bonnet had to be lost, then it is better that Jo should have lost one than that the Humber should do so - with all respect o Jo! Do we sense a replay of "Genevieve"? We seem to recall a delightfully ridiculous bit of millinery nonsense going overboard at one stage of the competitive run between Genevieve and the Spyker.

Our tapping of the grapevine prior to the weekend gave us hope that Mossie would appear on Sunday at some stage. But to our knowledge there was no sighting of the said member. And that reminds us - where was Spraggo? Could we be anywhere near the truth by suggesting that he and Mossie spent some time in the bike shed counting - and of course recounting, the empties as they went past, or were they separating the fortunate live ones from the dead marines, and lining them up. Or did they fear an official balloon blowing test on the way up the mountains?

We saw that the Sheen family was represented by Hilda, who, while she looked to us to be her usual bright self, said that she could only just see! And by Len, who was filling in his time by collecting the identity numbers from the vehicles.

At times we felt a little worried that the Registration Officer might have had another branch of registration to attend to. However, Diana behaved herself admirably. The foresight displayed by David took our mind back to a radio session of some few years ago, namely, 'Gently, Bentley.'

John Pickup managed to bump into a few stray gremlins with the Overland. We have not the authentic details of his misfortune, so we leave him to supply the story.

It's good to reach agreement on some things. Jock is quite aware that we see new faces every day, in addition to the old "faces", of course! The Armstrong-Whitworth was in its usual super tidy condition, but we were struck by a fairly glaring anachronism. We refer to the stone guard for the protection of the radiator. A very desirable thing, Jock, when going to Melbourne and back. But we feel that the Concourse fellows would look blackly at it. Maybe it would pass if it were made of 1/2" chicken mesh, on a sapling frame, and fixed with some pieces of No. 8 fencing wire! More in keeping with the A-W's era.

Remarks that set you thinking. We're sure that the similing-faced George Sevenoaks, standing under a dripping umbrella, pushed us off from Blackheath with the thought-provoking words: "I'll be suein' you!" Bright fellows we have in this Club. Felt like getting the old Sep. H. lined up ready.

Tilly Talbot apparently struck trouble in the nuclear department. Talking it over with Jack, it would appear to have been partly attributable to dampness. That overnight mist would creep even into an egg and dilute it. Towing was the order of the day, but adjustment of gaps finally produced mobility. Remember that Mountain Rally 3 years ago, when half a dozen cars were badly affected by damp magnetos due to extremely humid conditions which culminated in a heavy storm? For ourselves, we are still ruefully thinking about it, but at least it did bring to light a trouble of which we had no earlier knowledge. The lower edge of the distributor cap was weathered and quite porous, this being a good sponge for damp air drawn through the radiator. We got as far as Pennant Hills, when the dampness became an additional unwanted electrical circuit, and called a halt to our intended participation in the Rally.

Following the run of a couple of years ago, which included lunch at the Penrith Paceway, we find ourselves with praise, again, for those who attended us at the table.

From varied quarters we pick up various pieces of helpful information. We have just about decided that when our spate of veteranitis has worn thin; when we get to exchanging the active participation in driving and in starting handle turning, for the slowness and comfort of 'a seat in the sun', we hope to be able to avail ourselves of a travel offer of a trip to Denmark. It would appear that social services (particularly for oldies) in that country are far and away ahead of those available here. And that comes from one quite ablet to discuss Denmark - though she is now Irish!

The vehicles of most members represent a cross section of types and sizes in a broad range of makes. Jim Cooper and Reg. Jones show just such a cross section in one make. The little Clemmie sports only two pots of a small size, as opposed to the big Clemmie's much bigger engine and body. It may not be appreciated by many that the pistons of the little Clemmie move together, but fire alternately. Wonderful the peculiarities of various engines. All of them, in a sense, like religion, all aiming at the same goal, but achieving it each in their own way, and each with very good reason for so doing. And while thinking of Reg Jones, it still seems unusual to see anyone but him at the wheel of the Oakland. Different to us fellows who produce a daughter. But then, in those early (!) days of families, it mattered little, as the veteran movement had not been thought of. The big Clemmie gave us a very good representation of the war time gas bag on the roof, as she sped ahead of us en route home, apparently almost airborne by the hood.

Stan Rumble was responsible for a nostalgic turn on leaving the Paceway after lunch. One of those unspoken questions of the early days: "Will some of you fellars give us a push?" was answered by a few of us, but the Maxwell did not respond readily to artificial resuscitation till a partly choked jet had been cleared.

The two Delaunay Bellevilles were present, but we personally saw very little of either driver, except to learn that the Max Welch one has had an extensive check over since the International Rally, and this proved quite a profitable act.

As far as we were able to make out, it seems that the youngest participant in the Rally was Andrew Petersen, of Lidsdale, who arrived on the world scene just four weeks before the Rally. This must surely stand as a local record.

With many others we enjoyed a very impromptu cup of refreshment - tea or coffee, and bicks - at Linden Bull Camp. As it was not mentioned in the screed, we were rather puzzled, and enquiries revealed the information that George Stelling and family were responsible. When one has such bright daughters this sort of side issue is fairly easily put under way. Apparently it started as a personal help to a small coterie, but in no time, all vehicles arriving there stopped to participate. A very much appreciated unscheduled stop - the Stellings can be very assured of that.

At Parramatta Park, among the interested spectators was a fellow of not so many years, looking at Max Chapman's Wolseley. Nothing to that, except that he was confined to a wheeled chair. These sights help us to bear cheerfully whatever troubles we may have. No matter how badly he may be bitten by the big of veteranitis, it could be said that he would stand very little chance of ever driving a veteran, except with difficult adaptations to the foot controls to make them operable by hand. The unfortunate fellow was sitting so low that he was unable even to see into the cockpit. When he "drove" round to the near side we managed to display sufficient intelligence to open the near side door to let him see in. In comparison with many others, of course, the Wolseley bulkhead presents more or less the impression of a Mini 707, so the fellow had something to really look at. When he reached the Martini, Bill lifted each side of the bonnet, and this provided additional pleasure for him. No! We should never grumble!

It would appear that Sam - you all know Sam! - was not given the pleasure of sampling the enticing extra canine aroma of the Mountains posts.

Anyway, big as a Delahaye seems, accommodation therein must have been pretty well taken up after necessary luggage was installed therein, without including Sam.

Had a short talk with Adrian Hunt, ex-The 'Gong. It still seems incredible, after all these years, that we really see so few of our mates on the road. Can't say that we really saw the Fiat. But we conversed with the driver, and that is more important.

Speaking of vehicles which we don't see - there was no Sykes' Star this year, it being in Tasmania with Mum and Dad, but saw our Minute Secretary doing a stint on controls, so there was still a Sykes amongst us on the Rally, as is usual.

The almost ornate looking bodywork of Trevor Foulcher's Fiat always makes it stand out, when compared with most of the closed bodies, and particularly with most of the tourers.

The Albion, to our way of thinking, seems to be overbodied (no! not an excess of calories) for the engine she possesses. At 16 h.p. it outclasses the Prefect, obviously, which is rated at 10 h.p., expected to be producing a maximum of $6\frac{1}{2}$ to 7 h.p. How interesting to see the old chain drive in action! Just imagine all the dust and grit it must have gathered on the chains years ago. And no attempt made to cover them.

In a run over the Mountains we drive west of course, and in so doing see Reta and Bill East. Which reminds us - where was don South and the Mitchell? And has the Dodge a North East electrical system?

The Presential mount was far more in keeping with his Club status, than would be the Reo, lovely as she is. More space in the Prince Henry, anyway.

Another executive mount was seen in the shape of George Adams' Studebaker - a good mount for an Hon. Secy. (even if it does get some cog trouble!)

The T Models in the larger size become the only size for families such as the Max Roberts and the Herr Johann Gottliebs (Mr. Jack Godfrey to you.)

Looking back over the weekend we cannot but compare its prim quietness and subdued behaviour with an earlier effort of many years back. The older members will recall the noisy evening (or was it night?) at a certain hotel, with members of a certain Oil Coy. We remember seeing the brother of a certain member, doubled in two like a diminutive hunchback running round the room and taking in his stride a run up over the piano - (Curtains!).

'Smarvellous where you meet people! One member who drives a Pommie Single Seater was quite sure that he knew the direction we would follow on Saturday, and when he had reached Rogan's Hill (after the drive through the Nuffield and Mowll Villages) he turned left to Castle Hill instead of right to Round Corner. His error was quickly noticed, and he consulted his Gregory's to see what best to do to return to the correct course. When driving through one section he was surprised to see Jim Weir in the Buick. "Thank goodness," he thought, and asked him: "Are you lost, too?" "No!" says Jim, "I live here." "Oh!" said his enquirer (now a little crestfallen, we sense) and proceeded to follow him out. It transpired that Jim had taken his daily work horse to the start to get things going, and had returned home for the Buick.

Having spent a couple of hours looking out the bedroom window and killing time in the street below on Sunday morning, we are not surprised at the suggested new name for one town - BLEAKHEATH! (Nothing to do with Joe Heath, of course, who is anything but bleak.)

So that put the Blue Mountains behind us for another year. Wonder how accommodation will be in twelve months' time. May have to borrow the Moscow Circus Tent.

* * * * *

THE FIRST 4-CYLINDER CAR IN STRATHFIELD

Our cover this month shows the Dance family proudly posed in the Darracq which Jack's father bought new in early 1910. And where is Jack? That's him in the middle of the front seat where his Mum and Dad could keep an eye on him, no doubt! I'm sure Jack wishes that the car was still in the family today.

You may recall that in the October 1970 edition of SPIT AND POLISH, (pp 8 and 9) Jack gave us some of his recollections of this car, including the fact that it was then the only 4-cylinder car in Strathfield. It is especially interesting to read once again Jack's account of their first trip to Bathurst in 1910 in this car, particularly bearing in mind the relative ease with which many of us tackled the Blue Mountains earlier this month, due to the vast improvement in the roads since 1910. I don't recall any members having to walk up the steep hills in the Blue Mountains Rally, as Jack had to in those days!

Thanks for the photo, Jack.

- WARREN IRISH

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ERROR:

Theatre Party mentioned on Page 2 should read: "Man of La Mancha". Ed.

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ADVERTISEMENT:

WANTED - ALL STATES - For 1910 F.N. Type 1400/1500

Exhaust manifold; Water pipes; Carburettor (F.N.);
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TAZIO NUVOLARI - FURTHER EXAMPLES OF HIS PROWESS

Nuvolari's uncanny ability with racing cars was more of an inborn instinct than of virtuosity attained by hard trying. Not that he did not work hard and long at his profession of driving. But he did not suffer from the difficulties which beset lots of us when studying for examinations.

For one thing he was not permissive in the matter of driving technique. He broke most rules (or did not accept them, if you like), but his uncanny ability gave him the special dispensation to come out on top.

Corners, for instance. He did not feel that there was only one correct method of attacking them. On some occasions he would enter a corner straight and come out sliding, or might even slide the whole way. On other occasions he would enter a curve pointing the wrong way for entering, but the right way for exit, and be able to hold the car this way right through the curve. He would enter a curve holding the front wheels 6" from the fence at the beginning, and still be 6" away as he came out of the curve. In following this procedure he could be travelling at 150 m.p.h.!

He possessed really fantastic judgment of a car's balance. When braking, turning and accelerating he was always aware of the weight held by each wheel as the car swayed, and hence, changed the weight distribution, and, hand in hand with this awareness, he always realised the speed of the car in each sideways direction.

The famous (or infamous) White House Corner smash with the Bentleys was a nearly impossible series of collisions. Various drivers, all of them very experienced men, were unable to avoid a series of pile-ups. The 1935 Grand Prix of Monte Carlo was run in heavy rain. One car was unlucky enough to break an oil line on a double bend, leaving an enormous quantity of oil on the track, which, as has been stated, was covered with heavy rain. So the oil floated on the surface of the aforesaid rain. The first car to hit this oil crashed. The second car crashed. The third one crashed. The fourth one piled into the second one and the third one, and the fifth one did the same thing. Nuvolari was sixth, and he arrived at the corner with a fairly wide open throttle. For most drivers this would have been it, but not so Nuvolari. It has been reported that "he not only steered through the oil, slamming the wheels from side to side faster than the eye could follow, but did not touch one of the five cars stacked up all over the place. If it was not the greatest display of sheer virtuosity seen on the road, it will have to do till something better comes along."

Car racing is a serious business, requiring a cool head and solid application to the job in hand. But he had no fixed rule on that score, either. His actions - they were not demonstrations - were really entertaining. He yelled, shook his fist, bounced up and down in the car like a jack-in-the-box. He drove with one hand, and beat the side of the car with the other. No matter what the speed, he was perfectly at home in a racing car.

He exhibited excitement rather than fear. On 10 April 1950 he won his last race - the Monte Pellegrino. He was then 58 years of age! At one point he got a bit "off centre", as he had one wheel spinning over a precipice, but he

managed to get the car back onto the road. In many parts of Italy, if a wheel is over a precipice there's generally a heck of a lot of uninterrupted air between the wheel and ultimate terra firma. He was quite unaffected by this mishap, as he was always able to make a racing car do anything but talk. One happening which he considered was more worthy of comment was when a car caught fire at high speed. He managed to reduce speed to 100 m.p.h. - yes! 100! - which was the minimum he could get it back to with the time left to him in which to "abandon ship". He jumped! The slippings, slidings, bumpings and gyrations that he executed thumped him a bit, but he was at the wheel again in two weeks.

In winning his second Mille Miglia, it was necessary that he pass Varzi's car in about the final 100 miles. Varzi was well ahead of Nuvolari, and to keep Varzi off his guard, Nuvolari drove 60 miles through pitch black country roads with all lights turned off. His riding mechanic was apparently considered a brave man, who was not at all perturbed by ordinary hazards, but he was horrified at this procedure. As he caught up to Varzi, Nuvolari switched on his lights, and beat Varzi by a mere 500 yards in 1,000 miles.

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SOME THOUGHTS BY ETTORE BUGATTI

The old Ettore insisted that absolute cleanliness be observed in his widespread factory, irrespective of what work was being carried out. Everything had to be kept next to surgically sterile. It must be conceded that such a maxim was not entirely eccentric, really, as many jointings in his vehicles were metal to metal, and this must surely have rendered absolute cleanliness a mechanical essential. Such a crank was he on this point that when it was reported to him that the cost of cleaning materials was outrageous and it had appeared that some of it was, in fact, being stolen by employees, he was not perturbed, and would merely insist that "Things must be kept clean - very clean."

He built the majority of his cars to a small size, and was appalled at the enormity of the Bentley, though he did acknowledge W.O.'s ability. He is reported to have said: "I have the greatest respect for M. Bentley. He builds the strongest and fastest lorries in the world."

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GYMPIE SWAP MEET

- Colin Parker

A memorable occasion and a must in my notebook for next year. As Colleen and I were apparently the only Sydney-siders there, here is a report.

Somehow managed to get the Fiat 124 Sports as far as Warwick through the floods and drenching rain without a hitch but facing a muddy quagmire midway between Warwick and Ipswich I had my doubts whether we would make it to Gympie. The line of cars and trucks was over a quarter mile long on both sides of the blockage and a truck driver tried to wade across only to find

that it was deeper than he was. However, a chat with some locals and a by-pass was found, some forty miles out of our way, but worth it. Uphill and down dale, along country lanes and across rickety bridges to within one mile of Ipswich and the flood-free roads north, but to our horror the road was blocked by the all familiar murky floodwater. There were fifteen or so cars lined up prepared to sit it out until the water dropped. A Valiant decided to have a go and made it to the dry road on the other side. The thought of all those brass lamps and radiators at Gympie drove us on. So into the murky water we went - sounding like a sick speedboat we coughed our way through, and made it! Not bad considering the water was just over two feet deep.

The Swap got under way before 8 a.m.! I know, as we were staying in a motel a short way away and had to bolt my breakfast in case I missed something. A very enthusiastic roll-up and a credit to the organisers of the Gympie Club. A tuck-shop provided sandwiches, drinks and COLD BEER !!! The sun was burning hot and even the local boys were complaining about the heat in between mouthfuls of four X. One stand alone had some sixty or so brass lamps (side lamps, headlamps, motor-bike lamps, tail lamps and generators) for swapping as well as magnetos, about twenty radiators (mostly vintage) etc. etc. And what's more, they are prepared to swap purely for the sake of helping one another. Unlike Cooma, all items were on display, not locked up in car boots for private receiving, as so many were.

Would say there were about thirty-five displays, ranging from a complete Dodge Bros. car, veteran and vintage motor bikes, the usual array of Ford T bits, a great assortment of radiators, lamps, horns, kero side lamps, wheels etc.

Noticed at least two 1912 type T Ford diffs., a brass KRIT radiator and a self-generating gas headlamp made of cast aluminium. By about late lunch, when the Swap was really in full swing, fellows rushing this way and that, can of four X in one hand, radiator, diff. or something in the other, a massive tropical storm came from out of nowhere and drenched the lot. It killed about four deals I had going stone dead and caused a row when I tried to get in the car with water everywhere, Colleen saying I smelt like a wet sheep. And as I said at the start - well worth the effort when its on again next year.

Oh yes! A P.S. The Queensland boys report that there are five or six Yanks out in Western Queensland gathering up Veteran and Vintage cars and parts and have already dispatched about thirty tons back to the States. One chap who saw the load said there was a lot of Veteran bits amongst it but nothing very complete. However, it has stirred the Gympie members into action, buying what they know of to stop it going out of the country.

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RALLY FILM TO BE SHOWN AT NEXT MEETING

At the next General Meeting on Thursday, 25th March, a 30-minute colour film will be shown of the "Vehicle and General 1,000 Miles Trial" which was held in England in May, 1970. Sponsored by the Vehicle and General Insurance Group, supported by the Mobil Oil Company, this event was organized by the Veteran Car Club of Great Britain to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the original trial.

This film is a straightforward record of the 1970 trial which, as far as modern conditions allowed, followed as closely as possible the route taken by the pioneer motorists in 1900.

Some members may recall that following his participation in the International Rally here last year, Lord Montagu had to hurry back to England to take part in the Trial in which he drove the 1899 Daimler with which his father had competed in the 1900 Trial.

There were in fact three competitors in the 1970 Trial who had taken part in the 1900 Trial - Messrs. St. John Nixon, George Lanchester and W.R. Randolph.

This film should be well worth seeing, so don't miss the next meeting.

We are grateful to Mrs. C. Veney, Films Officer at the British High Commission in Sydney, for making us aware of the existence of this film and for making it available to us.

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POPULARITY POLL

The following is a list of the ten most popular cars in New South Wales in 1915:

BUICK, CADILLAC, FIAT, FORD, HUMMOBILE, OVERLAND, RENAULT, STAR, STUDEBAKER, TALBOT.

As you can see the list is in alphabetical order - can you re-arrange the names in order of popularity (in 1915) from one to ten? There are no prizes for this but the answer will appear in next month's SPIT AND POLISH.

The list is taken from a long list, supplied by George Roberts from official records, of all the cars registered in N.S.W. in 1915 showing the number for each make. This list will be printed in full next month and I think you will find it most interesting.

Here's another question for you - what was the total number of cars registered in N.S.W. in 1915 (including all pre-1915 models registered for use in that year)? One of the following numbers is correct:

3,468

7,951

10,734

14,276

Answer next month!

- WARREN IRISH

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COONAMBLE SHOW CARS IDENTIFIED

"Eagle-Eye" George Roberts has identified most of the cars on the cover of the February issue - get out your copy and see if you agree with him.

First Row: (left hand side of photo - cars lined up facing circuit):

1. Buick
2. Ford
3. Overland
4. (Uncertain)
5. Ford
6. Ford
7. Ford
8. Buick
9.) Not discernible
10. etc.) " "

Second Row: (not in line):

1. Ford
2. Ford
3. Buick Roadster
4. Buick Tourer (hood down)
5. Buick Tourer (hood up)
6. Not discernible
7. Buick Tourer (hood down)
8. Buick Tourer (hood down)
9. Buick Tourer (hood down)
10. Daimler
11. Overland
12. (Car facing camera) Not discernible

Third Row: (not in line):

1. Ford
2. Ford
3. B.S.A. Motor cycle
4. Ford
5. Argyll
6. (uncertain)
7. Buick Tourer (hood up)
8. Dodge (in distance - rear to camera)

Well, do you agree with George's powers of observation? If not, let us know. Perhaps John Smith in Dubbo can pick out some of George's 'not discernibles' in that enlargement of the photo in their Clubrooms?

- WARREN IRISH

HERE AND THERE

Noticed Hilda Sheen has been a bit gummy lately.

Ever heard of a crash diet which really works? If you have, Pam Roberts of Dover Heights would like to try one. It seems that 600 calories a day are too many.

Heard that Jim and Esne Lewis were 76 lb overweight on their recent return from Hong Kong - luggage or otherwise.

Seen Warren Irish trying to keep dry in our recent light (?) showers? Seems the trouble was leaves blocking the drainpipes.

Heard that Dorothy Kay (here from the U.S.A. with other half, Clarence, for the International Rally) now has a broken leg. My information was that she didn't like the lay of the carpet, so moved it the hard way.

Heard that you can't drive through Victoria on N.S.W. Veteran plates unless the rally you wish to attend is run by V.C.C.A. (Vic.)

Notice the recent absence of George Campbell from our outings? I hear the trouble was a bout of shingles. Hope they are cleared up very soon.

Seen Jack Butcher and wife displaying a new daughter. "That's the last" is Jack's loud proclamation.

Noticed the honourable editor was missing his B.S.A. in the Mountains Run. Just caught sight of him sitting in the back of a Martini. I wonder if he found it any easier to control than Bill did.

Wonder what happened to all our associate members on the Mountains Run. If any more had turned up, John Corby and Co. would not have had to work his officials quite so hard.

Bad organisation on part of Ken Moss's daughter, Jill, who was married on 6th March. It kept a lot of old faces away. Anyhow, Jill, congratulations and best wishes for the future.

The question being asked a lot in recent months - "Honey, is you in fashion, or is we in trouble?"

How would you like to surprise your wife and take her for a night on the town to see "Man of La Mancha" at the Theatre Royal. I have organised a party booking for 28th April. Tickots, normally \$4.50 (stalls) are \$3.50. Bookings are hard to get, so let me know as soon as you can, if not before.

Last but not least, don't forget our Presentation Night, 1st May. This is a must, as winners of the Mountains Rally are to be announced. The venue is Denistone East Bowling Club at 8 p.m.

- JAN

May we extend our sympathy to Enid Diemel on the recent loss of her father and to George Campbell on the loss of his mother.

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THE MASS CAR (OR MASSER'S MASS'S)

In answer to our article in January SPIT AND POLISH we have a letter from Len Masser, in which he refutes some statements, and gives us some little known facts.

We have caught him by his Achilles Heel, for after a couple of exclamatory words, he admits that his secret is out at last! He said, amongst other things..... But wait a bit, let him explain it all in his own words. (You see what we mean about his 'exclamatory words'). And we quote:

Odds Bodikins! Gadzooks! So my dastardly secret has at last been uncovered by B.S.A. (see last issue). What am I to do? Hide behind the wicker whatnot or stand exposed as my own shy little self?

First I must rectify some libellous statements that have occurred on the subject of that collection of tea money in the "Gib it Tin" as the Hon. Ed. so aptly called it. The only thing I ever got out of that bleddy tin, and I cross my heart, Scout's honour, was a measly little seven months' trip to England and Europe and surely nobody would begrudge me that. When I think, (and I use Vic. Jacobs' superlatives) of how "under gruelling circumstances" and with "tremendous stamina" I battled my way up and down the aisle, holding my pitiful little begging bowl, while the scorn of the puerile peasants and the bloated bourgeoisie eddied and swirled around me, I scarcely think it was worth the effort of blood, sweat and tears. Nevertheless, this is the spirit of Empire, and no colonial cads are going to upset me. So there!

The second point is that when, at the beginning of the collection I moved my right arm in what the Hon. Ed. interpreted as a papal blessing, it was merely to brush the sweat from my tortured brow, and also to show that I had nothing up my sleeve.

Now that we have got that we have got that section of my answer of "details dastardly", let's proceed a step further and get our communal teeth (manufactured, of course, by none other than yours truly - "very good, very clean tuan, ten cents a throw") into the very heart of this scurrilous article, and this, of course, is the Mass car! The gentleman who manufactured this vehicle, Mr. Masser hyphen something or other (it's not relevant, suffice to say his name was Masser) was apparently of noble lineage. One of my ancestors was a baron, although I think that it should have been spelt "barren", as he left nought, as the Poms say. Enny'ow! Here we have a bloke with the same monica as mine, who builds motor cars in the early days of motoring and he had his office and factory at 99 Ludbroke Rd., Notting Hill, London, W., Tel.2401 Paddington. Telegrams "Lancassant, London", so if any of youse want to get in touch with him you've now got the full gen. Time goes by and some egghead in the V.C.C.A. finds out that Masser is really famous, although I have reiterated this fact 'ad nauseum' for years.

At this stage of my answer I really get turned on, for now comes the 'piece de resistance'. On the same day that the article appeared, my very good friend Ray Thomas gave me a 4-cylinder engine, gearbox and lubricator. Yep! You've guessed it, and 1910 Mass engine No. 433 Model B. How does that grab you? Now I would be a very happy shy little bloke if somebody told me where the rest of the bits are, so that the efforts of that scion of geniusses (or should it be 'genii'?) can be perpetuated. ... This is my answer to your article, James, and if you write any more like that one, I'll have your 'corpus delecti' for a neck tie.

Vive la Mass!