



FLAT CHAT NEWSLETTER
AUSTIN-HEALEY OWNERS CLUB (NSW) INC
ABN: 87 630 303 136

COMING EVENTS

APRIL

- 4th Monthly Meeting
- 6th Cent Coast Gathering
- 10th Committee Meeting
- 20th Mid-Nth Coast Gather
- 21st Expansive Car Collect

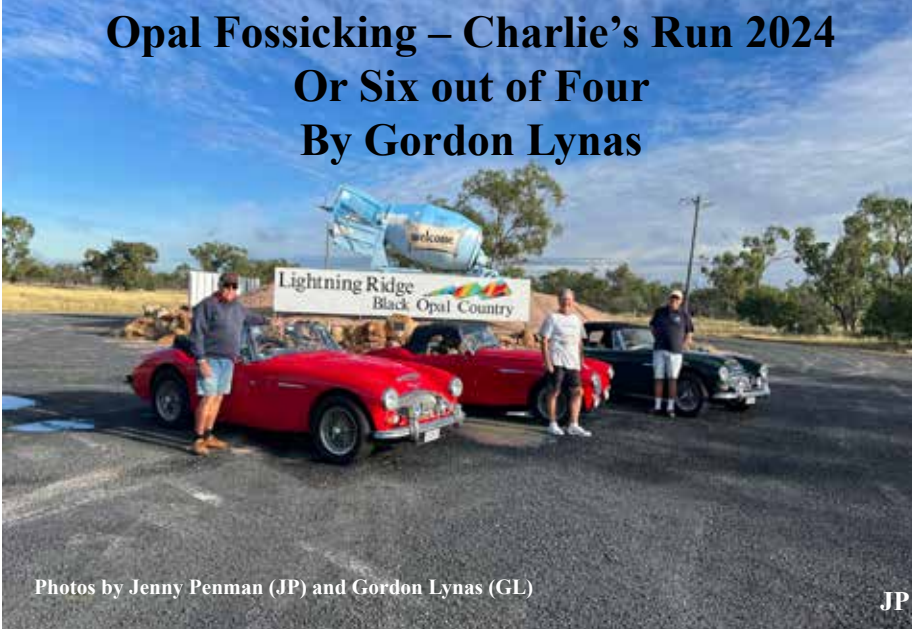
MAY

- 2nd Monthly Meeting
- 4th Cent Coast Gathering
- 9th Committee Meeting
- 15th Book Barn
- 18th Mid-Nth Coast Gather

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Opal Fossicking – Charlie's Run 2024
Or Six out of Four
By Gordon Lynas



Photos by Jenny Penman (JP) and Gordon Lynas (GL)

JP

We started well, five Austin-Healeys set out for Orange, our first rendezvous for all of the 'Runners'. Henrietta, our 100 seemed to be performing beautifully along the M2 and M7. Stopping at traffic lights at Richmond, I noticed a distinct smell of hot oil, so thought I had better check her over when we stopped for fuel at the North Richmond BP. The engine oil level was fine and no sign of it leaking from the usual places, so I looked underneath. There beneath the gearbox was a glistening pool of the precious fluid.

'Not good!', I thought. However, the chap at Abel's just over the road was very helpful and after a coffee we managed to put Henri-

etta on a hoist to have a look for where the oil might be emerging. Sadly, oil was dripping from every part of the gearbox and overdrive. There was nothing obviously loose, so no obvious remedy. I thought about the distance to Lightning Ridge and back. As far as I knew the closest garage to there, that might know something about Austin-Healeys was on the Gold Coast. A long trek in an ailing car. Apart from which, did I really want to have to top up the gearbox every evening, leaving a messy puddle of oil on each and every motel's perhaps otherwise pristine forecourt? Well, no I didn't. So, we regretfully turned around and headed for home and a car change.



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North Parramatta NSW 1750

EMAIL: enquiries@austinhealeynsw.com.au
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FB: www.facebook.com/groups/681723625314952/

Our monthly meetings are held at Strathfield Golf Club, 52 Weeroona Rd, Strathfield NSW 2135 on the 1st Thursday of each month commencing at 7.30pm.

Members and guests are welcome to join us for dinner in the bistro from 5.30pm.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I've just returned from Charlie's run to Lightning Ridge and must confess that I found it really enjoyable and you will find a report and pictures in this edition. For me it was an opportunity to renew friendships with those who do not attend meetings, and as a single attendee appreciate the fact that I'm included in other people's plans for each day. The Austin-Healey community is fantastic to be part of.

Unfortunately, my 100/6 is not going with a self-diagnosed blown head gasket, to be confirmed by those who are more qualified to provide a more accurate diagnosis, but thanks to Geoff Smith I was able to hitch a ride with him. This gave us an opportunity to solve all the issues of the club and concluded that the president and vice president both needed to be replaced.

I'm hoping that members will read past the first two paragraphs, as



I've now inserted this third with a request, that you read further and if you're a regular attendee at monthly meetings that you let me know how they can be improved or if you don't attend, what would encourage you to.

Our discussion started with me expressing my disappointment at the number of members attending our meetings. Specifically, the March meeting, when only 20 members turned up, with no one on Zoom, to hear Chris Jenkins' provide an interesting presentation on the development and history of the Bushmaster. It was well advertised and members indicated

that having a speaker was a good addition to our meetings.

A recent discussion with one of our members challenged me about the future of our club and what it would look like, and this was also at the back of my mind.

To state the facts, the club was formed 55 years ago and to be still in existence for a marque that has not been produced for over 50 years, and still with original members, is a remarkable achievement.

The demographics of members has gone from those who formed a club around Ross Bond's racing
Cont' page 6

COMMITTEE LIST - 2024

Club Patron—Ross Bond

President - Jim Phillips
8 Belina Ave.,
Wyoming NSW 2250
0413 589 306
jjjimbeau@gmail.com

Vice-President - Geoff Smith
0458 777 339
m.gpsmith@bigpond.com

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0421 598 755
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Treasurer - Jenny Penman
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0419 233 099
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Membership Secretary - Christine Lyttle
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membership@austinhealeynsw.com.au

Regalia - Colin Rule
0467 563 523
coolibahconvertible@bigpond.com

Technical Officer - Greg Strange
02 9319 2299
gregorymstrange@gmail.com

Club Registrar - Patrick Quinn
(Inc Conditional Registration)
Please send all Conditional Registration documents to Patrick's postal address at left

Public Relations - Ross Penman
0408 465 547
penmans@bigpond.com

Webmaster - Jim Phillips
0413 589 306
jjjimbeau@gmail.com

Public Officer - Alan Mitchell
PO Box 123
Marulan 2579
0412 898 656
mitchellaj@ozemail.com.au

Non-Committee Positions
Chapter Coordinators
Central Coast Colin Rule 0467 563 523
Illawarra/Sth H'lands John Thornton 0419 266 284
Mid Nth Coast Phil Loking 0412 392 362
Western Greg Poole (02) 5355 0079

CSCA Delegate - Colin Goldsmith

Librarian - Ronnie Strange

CMC Delegates - Ray Roberts
Greg Strange

Welfare Officer - Pamela Ross 0408 201 226

Display Day Coordinators - Ross & Jenny Penman

Conditional Registration Inspectors -
Neville Stirton - 0414 472 877 - Geoff Smith - 0458 777
339 - Phil Loking - 0412 392 362

Assn of British Car Clubs Rep - Christine Lyttle

National Assn Delegates - Gordon Lynas & Jim Phillips

AHOC Life Members - Don Read (D), Alan Jones (D),
Warwick Sell (D), Joe Armour, Christine Lyttle, Patrick
Quinn, Terry Bancroft (D), Ray Roberts and David Mould.

If you want to send something by post, the Club's
address is:- AHOC (NSW) Inc
PO Box 2754
North Parramatta NSW 1750

It would be appreciated if there were no phone calls to committee members after 9:00 PM.

EXHAUST LEAKS



By Patrick Quinn
(02) 4567 7380
0417 673 065
p.quinn@outlook.com

Greetings and welcome to the April 2024 issue of the *Flat Chat Newsletter*.

Woo Hoo! What a lucky editor I am this month, as I have been the happy recipient of a number of interesting articles. Lucky for you too as you don't have to put up with the drivel that I would have to write if the words had not arrived in my inbox.

Thank you muchly to Secretary Julie for not only sending in the 'must-read' minutes, but also two articles on attending the Tea Gardens Hawks Nest gathering, as well as letting us know how she and Garry had recently had their garage and work shed floors epoxy coated. Looking at the finished product it looks brilliant. Many years back when young and I didn't think things through I had carpet on the garage floor. Great idea? Not really as I didn't know that the garage did occasionally flood and it didn't take long before it all started to smell.

Thanks again to Ronnie Strange for another article, this time on installing

a wind deflector to his Mk2 Roadster. I'm pleased to say that's it written in his unique style. Thanks also to Lew McAllan for the article on his Sprite that started when he lived in the US.

If you have got this far, you would have read about this year's Charlie's Run to Lightning Ridge. Pleased to say that everyone had a great time. Thanks as well to Greg Poole, Bryan Levy and Ray Roberts for sending in photos and especially to Ray for his story about some bloke he met in Orange 30 years back.

Frankly I'm surprised by the number of members who mention the Quinn Austin-Healey to me and where it's up to. If anything, it tells me that more than a couple of people actually read the *Flat Chat Newsletter*. So this month I thought starting with a riddle, asking what is the connection between preparing the carpets for fitting and having a new puppy in the house. Probably very little on

the face of it, but we all know what a new puppy is like before it learns what outside the house is for.

Feeling protective about the condition of the household carpet, very early in our more recent bout of dog ownership, we bought a machine called a Pet Stain Eraser by Bissell and it does exactly what its name implies. It's a carpet cleaner that squirts cleaning fluid, has a built-in scrubbing brush and sucks up liquid into a holding container. Running on rechargeable batteries, it does its job brilliantly and guess what else it does? It cleans car carpets perfectly!

By the way, the indicator/horn wires are connected, and everything is working, however it intrigues me how a total of nine wires can be connected at least 127 different ways.

I trust you enjoy this issue of the *Flat Chat Newsletter*.



Monthly Meetings - Zoom ID 980 9019 7648 Passcode 336164

**We meet on the first Thursday of the month at Strathfield Golf Club
Weeroona Rd, Strathfield. Starting at 7.30pm or enjoy dinner from 5.30pm**

Minutes of the General Meeting

Thursday, 7 March 2024

Meeting commenced at 7:40pm.

Venue - Strahfield Golf Club and Zoom

ATTENDEES

Patricia Bancroft, Harley Boggis, Natalie & Vince Cessario, Greg Denning, Colin Goldsmith, George & Liz Goodare, Chris Jenkins, Denis Kasza, Alan Mitchell, Jenny & Ross Penman, Jim Phillips, Patrick Quinn, Rod Richards, Muriel & Ray Roberts, Colin Rule, Neville Stirton, Ronnie Strange, John Thornton, John Wakeling.

VISITORS, NEW MEMBERS

Jim welcomed Greg Denning back to the Club.

APOLOGIES

Mark & Gabby Bancroft, Janice & Jeff Burton, Mal French, Amer Khoury, Dianne Lawlor, Julie & Garry Lee, Kathleen & Kris Long, Caroline Quinn, John & Judy Sherman, Geoff Smith, Greg Strange.

MINUTES

Resolved that the minutes of the General Meeting held 1 February 2024, as published in the March 2024 issue of *Flat Chat*, be verified as a correct record of that meeting.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Jim wished the Club a very happy 55th birthday!



VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT

No Report

SECRETARY'S REPORT

On behalf of Julie, Jim went through the non-spam emails received in the month prior:

- Mike from the Efficient Freight Company was offering shipment of engines, parts etc. from the UK.
- Former member, Harold Johnston, was looking for a recommendation for a mechanic to do some work on a BN1.

- Ticketed experiences for Cooly Rocks On (5-9 June) were now on sale.
- An enquiry had been received from Mike Harrison wanting to contact Club Member Don Brown.
- Targa Classica was coming up shortly (18-21 March, in Victoria).
- Two separate offers of Sprite parts had been received – both queries were referred to the Sprite Club.
- Healey Torque magazine (Qld Club).



TREASURER'S REPORT

Jenny gave an update on the status of the Club's piggy bank.

Main Account	\$7,714.59
Debit Card	\$164.82
Term Deposit	\$70,000.00
Cash Reserve	\$42,372.17
Charlie's Run Ac	\$17,038.39
Total Members' Funds	\$120,251.58
(Not including Charlie's Run)	

Income

Membership	\$415.00
Interest	\$47.80
Raffle Proceeds	\$103.00

Expenses

Flat Chat book binding	\$82.50
Adobe software (Secretary)	\$581.90
Excel annual subs (Treasurer)	\$109.00
CSCA annual affiliation fee	\$150.00
Presentation lunch	\$135.85
Trophies	\$907.50

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

Jim advised that membership applications had been received from Glen & Barbara Roberson of North Haven, and Allan Bryson of Rainbow Flat. Also, former member Greg Denning (South Tacoma) was rejoining the Club. All the applications would be going to the next Committee meeting for approval.

SOCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

Denis gave an update on all things social, including the success of the Amaroo Park reunion. He reminded members again that Greg Strange needed numbers for the Shannons Day ASAP, so any members planning on attending needed to let Greg know.

John gave a report on the Loftus Tramway event and also reminded everyone of the next couple of Illawarra & Southern Highlands Chapters' events.

Jim took the opportunity to congratulate John on him winning the Alan Jones Trophy for 2023.

WEBMASTER'S REPORT

Jim reminded everyone that there was a link on the Club's website to the 2024 National Rally in Geraldton. He also thanked Julie Lee, Jenny Penman and John Thornton for adding photos to the website and encouraged members to have a look

WELFARE OFFICER'S REPORT

Pamela had sent "get well" cards to Lenore Armour, Larry Johns and Larry Varley to wish each of them well after recent illness.

Jim referred to Pamela's recent enquiry about whether she should continue sending her hand-made cards to Club members. Feedback from the meeting was a resounding "yes" that Pamela continues to do so.



EDITOR'S REPORT

Patrick advised that the March issue of Flat Chat, had gone out the previous evening. He thanked members for their contributions to the magazine.

REGISTRAR'S REPORT

Patrick provided a case study on the significant savings he was about to enjoy with putting his 30-year old Toyota Hilux on Conditional Registration.

HISTORIAN

No report.

LIBRARIAN

Nothing to report from a library perspective, but Ronnie had bought along some of his paintings for everyone to have a look at.

TECHNICAL OFFICER

No Report.

PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT

Nothing to report.

CMC REPORT

No Report.

ASSN. OF BRITISH CAR CLUBS

Ray advised that the All British Day was not going to be held at the Kings School this year and an alternative location was being sought.

CSCA REPORT

Colin reported on the goings on in CSCA-land, including Patrick Townshend's run at one of the Bathurst 12 Hour support events. Patrick Quinn had promised an article for the next Australian Austin-Healey.

REGALIA

Colin Rule didn't want to steal any airtime from Chris Jenkins, so he invited members to come and speak to him after the meeting to see if he could part them from their cash.

SHOW & TELL



After delivering a presentation on the Bushmaster Protected Mobility Vehicle at a very well-attended Central Coast Chapter gathering, Club Member Chris Jenkins reprised his presentation for the benefit of more members. Chris is a very-well credentialed defence industry leader who had held senior roles with Thales (which produces the Bushmaster), both locally and internationally for over 35 years. It's fair to say he knew a thing or two about the Bushmaster!

FOR SALE OR WANTED

Nothing was raised.

GENERAL BUSINESS

No general business was raised.

Meeting concluded at 9:00pm.

President's Report cont'

achievements, through a whole spectrum of reasons for acquiring an Austin-Healey from family connections, to them being a great looking car to acquire.

A large proportion of the club's membership have retired, with many having moved out of the suburbs to other areas and for various reasons can no longer attend the monthly meetings. Of the remaining members still employed, some are in positions that provide little time for attending meetings as they seek to obtain a satisfactory work/life balance. Some of these are the next generation of club mem-

bership and, I think, have the skills and knowledge to rejuvenate the AHOC based on work experience to ensure that the club is more than just a vehicle for obtaining Conditional Registration and a repository for marque information. How do we get you involved?

The run to Lightning Ridge reminds me of the support that is provided to club members, and I thank you

Jim Phillips
President

Membership Report -

Christine Lyttle

membership@austinhealeynsw.com.au

Hope you all enjoyed your Easter break, and the Easter Bunny left you lots of chocolate eggs to enjoy!

We have no new members this month.

It was sad to read a note from Terry Wade of the AHOC Vic on Facebook on Easter Sunday, that long time member Morris Ruston had passed away. I remember going to Morris' place back in the '70s to pick up some car parts with Kevin Gardner. Morris attended their March meeting only weeks before his passing. My condolences to his family, Sandy and their children. RIP Morris.

Please ensure you check your details on the website to ensure they are correct as we will be sending out membership reminders in May and want to ensure that you receive the email. Please also let me know at the above email should you have any changes.

Looking forward to seeing you at the General Meeting.

(Editor's Note: Yes there was a time before The Healey Factory and Kilmartin Sheet Metal. If you needed a new set of sills or cockpit floors for your Austin-Healey they were available from Morris Ruston. Like Christine, I met Morris in the 1970s and all replacement metal that's on the Quinn Austin-Healey came from him complete with the correct pressing indentations etc. I was saddened to hear of his passing.)



**Past member Wally Gates
in his 100 at Oran Park. Not
sure of the date, but late
1960s - early '70s**

Social Report

Dianne Lawlor 0413 873 191

gregorymstrange@gmail.com

Denis Kasza 0407 492 008

deniskasza@gmail.com

A reminder that all the social events mentioned in the Flat Chat Newsletter can be attended by any member. If you wish to drive down south to join with the Illawarra - Southern Highlands Chapters, north to join the workshops on the Central Coast or the Mid-North Coast please do so. Just let the organisers of each event know you are coming. You do not need to live in this area to join in.

On a personal note, Greg and I drove our little Austin-Healey (Sprite Mk3) to the Albury-Wodonga area last week to join other Spridgets in navigating our way around country roads, including an observation run, where we missed the very first sign to be found. We didn't get lost though.

March was filled with Charlie's Run. Hopefully all participants had a great trip.

We are hoping to have speakers at our monthly meetings. If you have recently heard a great speaker that our group might be interested in hearing, please let Jim Phillips know.

Dianne Lawlor – Social Secretary

Below are details of coming AHOC events. For further information contact the provided number or the above.

Expansive Car Collection, Private Open House, South Coast

Venue: Organised by the AHOC Southern Highlands and Illawarra Chapters

Date: Sunday 21st April 2024

Picnic in the grounds, BYO food and drink, picnic tables.

Tea, coffee, BBQ facilities on site

Further details to follow

Contact: John Thornton 0419 266 284

Fitzroy Drive, Southern Highlands and Illawarra

Date: May 2024, please refer to club website for more details

Contact: as above

Berkelouw Book Barn

Southern Highlands and Illawarra Chapters

The Berkelouw Book Barn, Bendooley Estate

Date: Wednesday 15th May 2024

Contact: John Thornton

Wharf Cafe, Quarantine Station, Manly

Date: June 2024, please refer to club website for more details

Contact: as above

Old Hume Highway

Southern Highlands and Illawarra Chapters

Explore remaining sections of the old Hume Highway

Dates: Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 19th, 20th, 21st June 2024. Three Day Getaway

Contact: John Thornton

Donald Healey Birthday Display Day

Venue: Parramatta Park

Date: 7th July, 2024

Contact: as above

Hawkesbury Drive

Date: August 2024, please refer to the club website for more details

Contact: as above

Central Coast Workshops

Dates: First Saturday of each month

Venue: 109 Humphreys Rd, South Kincumber

Contact: Colin Rule 0467 563 523

Please bring a contribution to morning tea

Mid-North Coast Workshop

Dates: Third Saturday of each month, beginning February

Venue: 79 Barton St, Croki

Time: 9.00 AM-12.00PM (Please register in advance)

Contact: Phil Lorking 0412 392 362

thelorkings@outlook.com

Please bring a contribution to morning tea





Historic Vehicle Registration News

If you have a car on Historic Vehicle Registration you should read this.

Greetings! We have a total of 229 vehicles that are conditionally registered through the AHOC and of these, 123 are marque vehicles or Healeys, Austin-Healeys or Jensen-Healeys. One of these is a Healey trailer made specifically to carry a Healey boat. Of course, the boat itself is not, but the trailer is.

Due to the ongoing success of the out-of-Sydney chapters, the club is attracting additional marque cars to its membership and these folks see the financial logic in placing their cars on Conditional Registration. This is of course a good thing, as the annual inspection is undertaken by someone who is well versed in the marque and can provide assistance if needed. Remember we

have three members who are happy to inspect your car free of charge.


It continues to disturb me that not all members read the monthly *Flat Chat Newsletter*, for if they did, their registration renewal would be simple. It's the only reason I can think why I continue to receive renewals by registered post. Please read below, but I wonder if it's worth saying that, as clearly they don't read it in the first place. Normal mail is fine, as is Express Post, but remember I am not an employee of Australia Post so most items are dropped into the local letterbox and your paperwork finds its way to you from there.

Once again here are the instructions on renewing the Conditional Registration of your car.

- Once you have received the renewal papers from Transport for NSW, arrange for your vehicle to be inspected for roadworthiness by either an Authorised Inspection Station or one of the volunteer AHOC inspection officers. See page 2 of this *Flat Chat* for their contact details. Remember all vehicles, including Historic vehicles need to be inspected and passed as roadworthy.
- Complete the left-hand side of the "Historic Vehicle Declaration" and post it to me at my home address (See page 2 of this *Flat Chat* for my address) along with an indication that your car is roadworthy or a copy of the pink slip. Please include a stamped self-addressed envelope. There is no need to send me the registration certificate. Do not post the documents by Registered Post as that just slows down the process as I have to go to the post office to accept a registered postal item.
- Once returned, either go to your local Services NSW office to do the renewal or post to Transport for NSW in Parkes. That address can be found on the registration papers.

PLEASE DON'T FORGET THE STAMPED SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE.

Gregory Strange
Motor Mechanic



Between Abercrombie Street & City Road

117 Cleveland Street,
Chippendale NSW 2008
Tel: 9319 2299
Mobile: 0412 811 958
MVRL 35580

Run cont'

Now there were four, Darry Dobe's Riley engined '100', and the 3000s of Ross and Jenny Penman, Allan Whitehouse, and Greg Denning. Historically speaking, this was not a lot of Austin-Healeys for a Charlie's Run, but Lightning Ridge is a fair way from home and sits at the end of the known world ,i.e. the roads thereabouts and onwards are mostly unsealed! So, it's not too surprising that a few owners thought it better to travel in their tintops with better ground clearance.

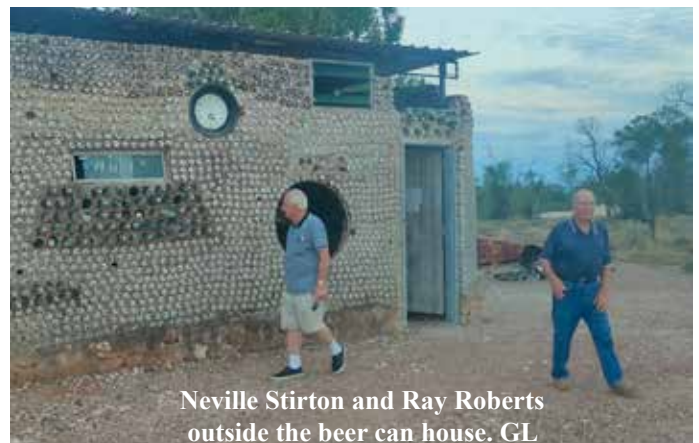
Our first night was at Orange which provided both an excellent dinner and a spectacular sunset, despite being rather on the chilly side. We of course were all set for the possibility of 30+ degrees on this Run, not the low teens of Orange. Thursday morning saw us set off, gently shivering, but in sunshine, to cruise via Burrendong Way to Wellington, diverting for a glance at Lake Burrendong along the way. After that it was an easy drive to Gilgandra for our second night's rest. For a small town it has a lot to offer, especially the Coo-ee Heritage Centre which can be reached by the 'Windmill Walk', a two-kilometre stroll from the town along the banks of the Castlereagh River decorated with farm windmills of course. The Centre gives a taste of local and aboriginal history, as well as hosting an excellent exhibition of the Coo-ee March of 1915 when 25 men set off to march to Sydney. Their aim was to gather recruits to the army along the way and was wildly successful. In Sydney, over 300 marchers were received by enthusiastically cheering crowds. Thousands packed Martin Place for the final steps of the march.

We discovered that Gilgandra is fortunate in having its own council, meaning that it can spend all of its funds on Gilgandra, and that can be seen in the lovely 'Hunter Park' and playgrounds to the south of the town as well as the 'Gil Library Hub' in the centre of town. The Gilgandra Services Club was very hospitable, sending out the courtesy bus to collect and return us to our motel as well as providing tasty meals.

Next was our goal for this Run, Lightning Ridge, home of the black opal. It is one of only a very few places in the world where this gemstone can be found. It is an amazing place, while the town centre has sealed roads it seemed that other than the main road out, every other road was dirt and had just

evolved from earlier miners' tracks. Following any of those dirt tracks immediately led you into another world of mullock heaps, many next to some form of apparatus for raising and tipping the 'ore' won from tunnels underground, an indication that that claim was still being worked. The signs of tough living and hard toil are very evident, but if a miner strikes it lucky the rewards can be immense. A single large nodule of opal could be worth a quarter of a million dollars! By weight, the best black opal is said to be four times more valuable than gold. The difficulty of course is that first you have to find the opal and that seems to be a very rare occurrence. The few opal miners we spoke to seemed to almost eke a living out of their mining, but they wouldn't ever give up the chase!

The car door tours are I think unique to Lightning Ridge. How do you mark out a tourist self-drive route on tracks without names that criss-cross and diverge exponentially? You hang an old car door from a post or a tree paint, it the colour for that tour and add an arrow to show which way to go. It works wonderfully well, provided you travel in the right direction. Retracing one's tyre tracks is difficult as the backs of the doors aren't painted, often hidden, and only indicate the direction to go, not where you have come from. It would be easy to get lost.



Neville Stirton and Ray Roberts outside the beer can house. GL

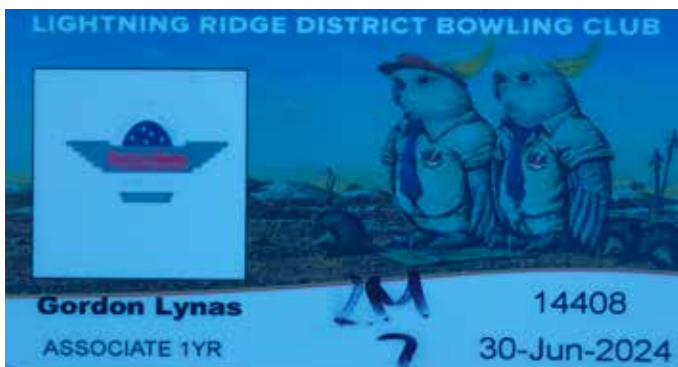


Waiting for sunset. GL.

Run cont'

There are four car door tours around Lightning Ridge and a fifth centred on the Grawin opal fields. On our first night most of us took the green tour to a lookout to see the sunset. The weather, being capricious, decided to role in a cloud bank just as the sun was about to set. However, the view was still good and there were the added bonuses of the Stone Labyrinth (or maze), and the beer can house.

We stayed at the Wallangulla Motel, and I have to compliment the staff on their organisation. The Motel is owned by the Bowling Club which is just across the road and serves cold beer, reasonable wine, and tasty meals as well as providing big screen TVs for watching the Australian Grand Prix. What more could we want? Before we set off, the motel had called me to suggest they make each of us members of the Club, which would not only save us from signing in at every visit, but also gave us a discount on meals and drinks. They organised membership cards complete with our club logo.



They do this for every tour group. It's a great way to welcome visitors.

A visit to Lightning Ridge could not go without a visit to at least a few opal attractions. The Australian Opal Centre is a community run museum with more to interest visitors than could be guessed from its small size. Like every other shop in Lightning Ridge, it will also sell you an opal or three. The John Murray Art Gallery is amazing. He has a cartoonist's eye for the absurd, enhancing many a blank wall in town with humorous artwork. In the gallery one can also see his thoughtful and atmospheric renderings of the local scene. Also displayed are works by Vikki Murray, a very talented photo-artist. Vikki and John's works complement each other in offering a fascinating vision of the outback (see www.johnmurrayart.com.au).



For those with a yen to see what an opal mine looks like, there are two options, the 'Walk-in Mine' and the 'Chambers of the Black Hand Mine'. Both of these were opal mines but have been made into tourist attractions. Both are well worth a visit. The former takes you through a number of tunnels and has much to explain the process of opal mining. In the early days miners used a pick and shovel. A chisel edged pick avoided shattering the opal when digging. As it's as fragile as glass, a carelessly wielded pointy pick can turn a single \$100,000 opal into \$5 fragments. They mined by candlelight, except that candles cost money, so they dug in the dark. If a pick hits opal, it 'rings'. A candle would then be lit to see what had been found. As the tunnels were only just big enough for a miner to worm through on his stomach, he certainly couldn't have suffered from claustrophobia! Today, electric jack hammers have mostly replaced the picks, but there is still a deal of shovelling to be done. It's still back breaking work and certainly not for the faint hearted.

The Black Hand was a painted signpost indicating the road to Walgett. This mine was dug nearby so became known as the Black Hand Mine. Some decades ago, Ron Canlin was a miner working this 'claim'. He filled in some of his time by carving the

Run cont'

soft sandstone that bears the opals. After many years work with a butter knife, a fork and a pan scourer the mine's upper galleries hold a treasure trove of sculptures. Subjects range from Greek classics to film heroes, rock bands, children's fables, Egyptian frescoes, and Da Vinci's 'last supper'. Truly an amazing place, and if you wanted to go deeper, you could also tour the lower mine workings to see how the opal was won.



Larry Helen and sarcophagus. GL.

(See <https://chambersoftheblackhand.com.au> for more artwork)

I mentioned that cloud covered the sunset on our first evening, well that was followed by rain on both days of our visit. The benefits of this were that the roads weren't dusty, and the temperature was pleasantly in the low 20s. The downside was that the dirt roads turned to mud. Most were easily passable, but one or two became quagmires as John and Fran Thornton discovered when attempting to see what the Lightning Ridge Golf Course was like.



GL

After an hour or so of struggling, they had managed to get the car almost, but not quite, back onto terra firma. Fortuitously a local young man with a ute and a tow rope happened by and rescued them. They had a fine tale to tell that evening over drinks and dinner. The reward was a presentation later.

There is much to see and explore in and around Lightning Ridge, but only so much that can be done in three days, and so on Monday we went to Gunnedah, our first stop on the way home. To complete our set of car door tours, Louise and I decided to do the 'Orange Tour' on our way from Lightning Ridge. It starts some 50kms west of Lightning Ridge and tours the Grawin Opal field. Features include: the 'Glengarry Hilton'; Marg's Carvings; a movingly evocative war memorial beside a small lake; and the Sheepyard Inn, amongst many others.

The War Memorial is particularly significant here, as many miners are veterans of Vietnam, Afghanistan and other recent wars. We stopped at the Sheepyard for coffee. After 10 minutes we were told very apologetically that they had just gone onto solar power and because of the cloudy skies they didn't have sufficient power to boil the kettle! Marg on the other hand has a very well-lit shop and workspace where she carves opals. She and her husband have a mine nearby which supplies them with material and works with a jeweller to create beautiful opal rings, pendants, earrings and the like. Marg also likes to chat and told us tales of opal mining and of how she and her husband ended up at Grawin. For us, it was the best of the car door tours, but we were grateful for the dry sunny conditions for our visit. Others had tried the day before and been deterred by the mud and the puddles. We had just one stretch of road that was distinctly slippery and slidey. I was grateful that we were in the Land Rover as we would never have ventured on this tour in Henrietta.



GL

It was an uneventful drive to Gunnedah enlivened by a flock of emus bedside the road near Walgett. The rain had stopped, and we travelled in sunshine all the way.

Four Austin-Healeys arrived from Lightning Ridge.

Run Cont'

Two more joined us for the last two days, so now our four Austin-Healeys had become six, thanks to John and Judy Sherman and Mal French.



Austin0Healeys at Werris Creek. JP

Next morning we visited the Railway Journeys Museum at Werris Creek. This small village hosts a railway station fit for a city. It is still a significant junction on the routes to Moree and Armidale, but many routes have been closed since its heyday in the 1920s and '30s. Nevertheless, it hosts a fascinating museum and still has many trains every day, although most of these now carry coal, not passengers.

Our next stop was Quirindi for a visit to Bob's Shed which houses an eclectic mix of everyday items that might have stocked a general store in the 1950s, a collection of replicas of various racing Holdens, a few motor bikes, toy trains and cars, but not a single Austin-Healey.

Our last night was at the Grapevine Motel in Denman. We had arranged an 'alternate drop' two-course

dinner and we were not disappointed! Freshly baked loaves of bread were followed by: Slow cooked Beef cheek, shiraz jus, roasted garlic



JP

mash, greens; or, Barramundi, roasted potatoes, salad, aioli, lemon; or, chicken breast prosciutto, roasted sweet potato, greens, in a garlic cream sauce. That was rounded off by: Tiramisu; white chocolate and lime brûlée; or sticky date pudding, vanilla butterscotch and vanilla ice-cream.

What was not to like???

It was a great end to a very interesting and enjoyable Charlie's Run.

Five Austin-Healeys set out, four completed the 'Run' and two joined later, and so five became four became six! Is this the first to have more Austin-Healeys complete the Run than had set out on the first day?

See you on the next Charlie's Run!



JP

Chapter News

Central Coast Chapter Workshop - March 2nd 2024



The morning of Saturday 2nd March saw another well attended Central Coast Workshop, with 16 enthusiasts attending and 11 Austin-Healeys on show.

The theme for the morning was, 'How to fit scuttle seals to a six-cylinder roadster.' Chris Jenkins's 3000 Mk2 roadster was used for the demo. The project took 2 1/2 hours to remove and replace front windscreen, rear-vision mirror, tenax studs, screws and dash top, then cut, drill and fit scuttle seals.

We welcomed Reg Wade from Avoca Beach a new recruit with a very nice Red BN1-100. He is now joining the AHOC.

The morning concluded with the traditional coffee, cookies and cake which incidentally went down very nicely, and I had two cups of coffee. (A bit dry after my demo).

The fearless attendees for the morning were Helen Vance and Adam Lethlean – Mk1 BN7, Julie and Garry Lee - BJ8, Greg Denning - BJ8, Reg Wade – BN1, Doug Ross, Roger Ramsey, Ken Offord - BJ7, Richard Cardew - Sunbeam Alpine, Chris Jenkins – BT7 Mk2, Richard Horwood, Jim Phillips - BN4, Geoff Smith BT7 MK1 and Kerrie with yours truly BN1, BN2 and Bond 3000.



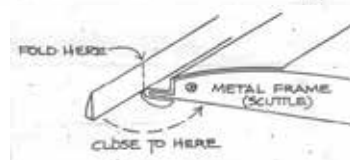
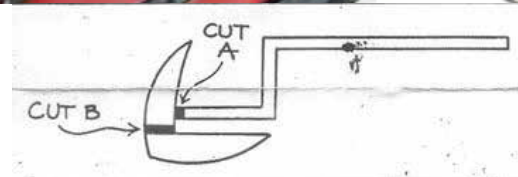
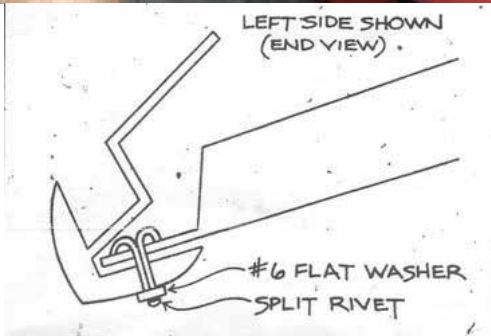
The next Central Coast Austin-Healey Workshop will be held on the 6 April, same location, 109 Humphreys Road Kincumber South. Topic for the day will be replacing the windscreen on a 100/6.

May 4th workshop will hopefully see all the chapters getting together for the first time. The Mid-North Coast, Illawarra and Southern Highlands and Central Coast chapters along with Sydney members will meet here starting at 10am. Guest speaker for

the morning will be Chris Hatch from our Mid-North Coast chapter who will be speaking about and demonstrating the multimeter.

The usual coffee, cookies and cake will be on tap and a special barbecue lunch provided courtesy of our Austin-Healey Owners Club of New South Wales.

All very welcome, so take care and happy Healey-ing. Kerrie and Col Rule.



AHOC Illawarra & Southern Highlands Chapters Bradman Museum Bowral - Lunch at Burrawang Village Pub

David McIntyre from the Southern Highlands organised our very successful event in Bowral for Friday 15th March, when we met at the Bradman Museum to start the day.

The first to arrive at the venue was local member Greg Barnsley in his red over white BN6 followed by David and Michelle McIntyre in their immaculate metallic green BJ8.

Illawarra members Rob and Annie Sassall arrived in their recently purchased Mercedes AMG GT. Rob mentioned his BT7 Mk1 was in the workshop having some maintenance carried out. (I think it was a good excuse to bring out the new toy and give it a run up Macquarie Pass.) He spent a great amount of time telling us how great it handled the Pass! Fran and I were the other members from the Illawarra. Sydney members included Colin Goldsmith, in the Lexus LC 500 and Richard Horwood.



The tour through the Bradman Museum was a wonderful experience for cricket enthusiasts. It provides a detailed history from its earliest beginnings through to the life of Sir Donald Bradman. It also tells the story of the World Series Cricket introduced



by Kerry Packer and finishes with current day international cricket.

With our cricketing interests satisfied, we moved on to the Burrawang Pub at Burrawang Village to be greeted by Mark and Gabby Bancroft in the family BT7 Mk2 which is currently for sale.

For most of us, this was our first-time meeting with the Bancrofts' son Mark and daughter-in-law Gabby.

I was talking with Pat Bancroft at the March monthly meeting three days before our event. She was saying how keen Mark and Gabby were to find some time where they could join the Southern Highlands activities. So, when Mark let me know they were going to catch up with the group for our lunch, I was pleased to meet and welcome them.

The place was just a buzz with all the talking and discussions going on around the table. Not enough time to get everything said.

The Burrawang Pub turned out to be an exceptional venue as a meeting place for our Austin-Healey members. Meals were superb, the venue can cater for larger groups and the location is spectacular with views way up the valley. Imagine all of this and it is an easy day's drive for anyone living in Sydney and the Illawarra.

More photos can be found on the Club's website.



Mid-North Coast Chapter 16th March 2024 by Phil Lorking

Present were Tony Ash, Al and Di Bryson, Glenn Roberson, Chris and Lyndell Hatch, Glenn Nisbet and hosts Phil and Anthea Lorking.

The activity revolved around safety and roadworthy checks on two Austin-Healeys. Unfortunately, as I was busy with this I did not get many photos of the action, and of course forgot to delegate.

Glenn Nesbit (Sprite MKI) requested membership

forms. Allan Bryson has forwarded his application forms to Chrisine Lyttle earlier this month.

We all adjourned for tea/coffee and cake while catching-up on the last month's events.

The gathering closed around 12 noon before the rain set in once again. Next Meeting will be 20th April 2024, at 79 Barton St. Croki.





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Contact: Vince Cessario AHOC Member

info@platinumsash.com.au
13 Wilham Street - Artarmon NSW 2054

Tea Gardens Hawks Nest Motorfest – 9 March 2024

By Julie Lee



I have it on good authority (Garry) that's it a sod of a job to replace the rear welch plug on a BJ8 because there's no room to bang it in. And because said set of welch plugs needing replacing on my car, and said rear plug was being recalcitrant, it wasn't until late Friday afternoon that the car was back in good running order. Just in time to venture off to the Tea Gardens Hawks Nest Motorfest, north of Newcastle the next day!

It was a really nice run up the motorway from the Central Coast, and the Motorfest was easy to find. Judging classes were quite broad, including Best British Classic, Best American Classic, Best European, Best Japanese, Best Vintage/Antique etc. We hadn't prepped the car, so we had no plans being part of the display, but with parking at a premium, were quite happy to pay the \$10 to enter and parked at the end of a line of various British marques.

It was definitely an interesting mix of cars on display from a seemingly huge number of different car clubs. Garry and I were the only ones representing the AHOC, but we spotted several other Austin-Healeys as we wandered around, including the BJ8 of recently rejoined member Greg Denning.



One of my favourites on the day was a 1959 Ford Fairlane with matching vintage caravan.

There was also a very cute 1954 Propert folding caravan, named 'Tammy'. The Propert caravan was

manufactured in Vacluse between 1952 and 1970, with around 350-400 of them being made. Proport apparently also made kitchen appliances.

Garry was intrigued by a Ford Thunderbird with a wooden roof and surfboard. The car would originally have been a convertible so we've no idea where the inspiration came from to add a timber roof!



Other vehicles that caught eye included a beautiful-ly restored timber delivery truck and an orange and white 1955 Chevrolet Bel Air, also in mint condition.

There was a small number of lunch options available on the day – I'm pleased to say that our choice of the slow-cooked lamb rolls was a definite winner. We were also lucky to get our hands on one of the last bottles of water in captivity, as with it being a bit warm, the cold drinks for sale ran out a lot earlier than the organisers expected!

The range of makes and types of vehicles there on the day varied hugely, but it was really pleasant just wandering around chatting to people about their particular pride and joy, and given that it's a fund-raising event, the organisers were rapt at the 420 entrants who turned up.



1960 Liege-Rome-Liege with John Gott behind the wheel and Rupert Jones co-driving.



AUSTIN HEALEY NATIONAL RALLY GERALDTON 2024

22 TO 26 AUGUST

Wildflower Country Provisional Program

Thursday 22nd August

- * 2 to 5pm – Registration at the Ocean Centre Hotel (OCH).
- * From 5.30pm—Sunset Evening at the Geraldton Yacht Club (GYC), Meet & greet while the Sun sinks into the ocean at 6.03pm. Casual/ Come as you are for drinks and share food. (350m walk from OCH)

Friday 23rd August

- * 6am to 8.30am – Breakfast at your Hotel.
- * Mid to late morning – Display at the City's Foreshore, cafés and shops close by.
- * Afternoon – Visit the HMAS Sydney Memorial and Batavia Museum
- * 7.30pm till late Farmers & Fishers (Dress Up) themed Dinner at Gybes (GYC) – Bring your dancing shoes! (350m walk from OCH)

Saturday 24th August

- * 6am to 8.00am – Breakfast at your Hotel.
- * 8.45am – Depart for Mullewa (99km) for the Agricultural Show where our cars will be on display.
- * 10am to 1PM – Have fun at the show. Explore Lover's Lane Wildflower Walk that circles the Showgrounds. Take a 30min bus trip the Pindar Wreath Flowers
- * 1.30pm – Head back to Geraldton via scenic wildflower route.
- * 7.30pm - Casual Dinner at the Batavia Convention Centre (BCC). (140m walk from OCH)

Sunday 25th August

- * 6am to 8.30am – Breakfast at your Hotel.

Option 1—Moderate Drive

- * 10.00am to Middy – Depart for a scenic run through the Chapman Valley to the Nabawa Valley Tavern for lunch
- * 2pm – Depart Nabawa for a leisurely drive back to Geraldton via the historic town of Northampton.

Option 2—Long Drive

- * 9am—Depart for Kalbarri National Park & Skywalk via Port Gregory coast road and Kalbarri Townsite (193km)
- * 11am to 1pm—Take in the stunning views or enjoy a brew with view at the Skywalk Café.
- * 1pm Depart for Geraldton, via (Northwest Coastal Hwy)180km)
- * 8pm till Late – Gala Dinner (BCC)– Dance Band—Semi Formal. (140m)

Monday 26th August

- * 6am to 9.00am – Checkout .
- * 9am to 11am– Farewell Brunch at Geraldton Surf Lifesaving Club (short drive 3.4km)

National Rally Ticket Price—\$595.00 per person

Registrations will be open from January 31st 2024.

Access to discounted Hotel Rates open from January 31st 2024

HQ Ocean Centre Hotel



HMAS Sydney Memorial



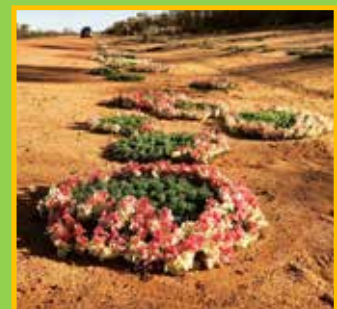
Midwest Wildflowers



90th Annual Mullewa Show



Wreath Flowers of Pindar



Kalbarri Skywalk



For more information please see the AHOC website at:

<https://www.austinhealeynsw.com.au/national-rally-2024/>




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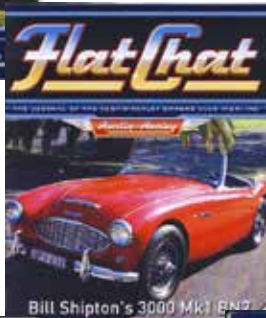
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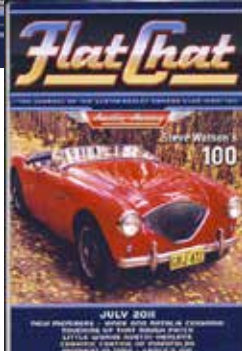
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Free and gratis to members. All you have to do is to send a 1-3GB USB (thumb) drive to me at the below address along with a stamped self-address envelope.



Patrick Quinn
"Wongaburra"
116 Warks Hill Road
Kurrajong Heights
NSW 2758

You can give me the drive (& stamp) at a meeting.



Cost of Living Help (Issue No. 47)

By Ronnie Strange

“What are you doing in the garage?” Toni asked.

“It’s secret men’s business.” I said.

She asked again the next day. I replied “I’m making a, I don’t know what it’s called.” So I asked her because she is far more intelligent than me. “What’s the opposite to Wind Deflector?” I can’t say here what her answer was, as it may offend someone or they may know someone who may be offended. Although as FLAT CHAT is only read by me, Pat Quinn and three others, I doubt I’ll be cancelled if I disclosed her answer.

Using my knowledge of aeronautical aerodynamical engineeringness, gained as a flight attendant with Gambian Airways, this device in theory should direct outside air towards the driver when travelling say, on a motorway in very hot conditions.

Let’s call it a WIND INFLECTOR, a WIND ON-FLECTOR, a WIND INSPLITTER, a WIND DIRECTOR or even a WIND RICOCHETEOR.

Whatever it’s called, I’m sure you can do it on your limited budget during these tough times.

Coloured clipboards from Officeworks are \$2.25 and I lashed out and bought two! Extravagant I know, but best to be on the safe side. Fashioning the shape is important as it has to look as though it belongs there. Bolting the device to an adapted four-inch-long bolt using the sidescreen hole in the door completes the job except, while erasing the permanent black markings from the plastic I decided to clean it with mineral turpentine. DON’T EVER DO THAT as it will cause coloured plastic to turn milky and useless therefore doubling your capital outlay on material. However, it provided a useful template for the stand-by sheet.

The light-coloured piece near the base of the device which looks like part of the bracket is in fact a small (very small) iceberg which is permanently frozen due to reverse beams from the sun. The air travelling across that iceberg further chilling the air to the driver.

As you can see, this didn’t impact the family budget

too much and we’ll do without a loaf of bread for a few days as a consequence.

My theory naturally turned out to be correct as the WIND THING actually worked.

I’m here to help.





Austin-Healey Owners Club Illawarra & Southern Highlands Chapters

A Great Day Out Private Car Collection-NOWRA Region 11:00am Sunday 21st April 2024 PICNIC DAY

An invitation to members and friends to enjoy a collection of interesting cars and memorabilia belonging to our host. His collection has been put together over many years. Each of his cars has some special connection to his life.

The day will be a “picnic day” on his property.
Please BYO, food, drinks, picnic chairs and tables.

There will be available:

1. An operational BBQ for your use.
2. Cooked onions.
3. Sauces and condiments.
4. Coffee, tea, hot water urn.
5. Toilet facilities in one of the car display sheds.
6. Parking for all guests' cars is 'off street' and within the property.
7. Please park where directed.

Address and further information will be provided to those attending.

All Enthusiastic Responses To:
john.thornton2011@outlook.com

Mobile: 0419 266 284



You Could Eat Your Dinner Off It.

By Julie Lee

Given the ever-present possibility of old motor vehicles dispersing their liquid contents onto places you'd rather they didn't, the good news is that you can protect your garage and/or shed floor from the resulting mess.

When we moved into our new residence almost two years ago, the existing garage floor wasn't too bad, but the shed floor was in dire need of some TLC.

We'd done a DIY garage floor resurface job at our previous house, and despite following the instructions to the letter, the results were very disappointing, even with my beautifully artistic casting of confetti onto the paint! Tyre marks from the cars and bikes refused to budge, but unfortunately, complaints to the paint manufacturer were not productive.



So this time around it was definitely a case of getting a professional to do the job. So Garry did some investigating and landed on Coastal Epoxy Services, a business based in Tuggerah.

Their first step in the process was to prep the floors by diamond grinding to open them up (a bit like sanding walls before you paint them). Next was filling in the various cracks and gaps to ensure that the floor was a nice even surface.

Step three was to lightly grind again, then apply the first coat of two-part epoxy paint (Dulux Durebild semi-gloss). This coat, which soaks into the concrete, was left overnight to cure. A xylene wash was also used to remove any chance of amine bloom (a known issue with epoxy coating systems which can occur when applying in cooler temperatures).

The next day, after a light sand, the second coat was applied. We had to wait 72 hours before walking on

the new surface, and seven days before driving on it. As you can see from the photo, the difference was quite dramatic!

Of course, with usage, the floor still gets grubby, but the difference with the epoxy coating is that it cleans up really easily. Garry's found that washing down with a mop or squeegee, then squirting some Domestos onto the surface, followed by washing or hosing down does the trick.

Given the stark contrast in how the floors looked before and after (you really could eat your dinner off it!), we thought the cost was pretty reasonable, being a total of \$5,000 to do a large three-bay shed and three-car garage. We were really happy with Coastal Epoxy Services and would recommend them if you're thinking of doing something similar. Although based on the Central Coast, they also do work in the Sydney area. Their Facebook page is <https://www.facebook.com/coastalepoxyervices> (the photos below of the finished garage are from a post-dated 9 June 2022) and the phone number is 0400 580 273.



Lew McAllan's Sebring "Barchetta" Sprite

Back in 2012, I had another Bugeye project underway, but was sidetracked when I happened upon Martin Ingall's Sebring Sprite website. I loved the look of the cars and decided that I needed one, but didn't want to modify my Bugeye.

My Sebring Sprite started life as a late '68 Mk IV Sprite which I purchased in late 2012, for just \$1,000. The car was just 10 mins from where I was living at the time, in Champaign, Illinois. It was drivable condition (with recent engine rebuild) and although it had leopard print seat covers, a brownish burgundy colour paint and cream wire wheels, I just couldn't resist a bargain !



I immediately decided this was to be my Sebring fastback and went ahead and ordered two Sebring fronts and the fastback from Archer's Garage in the UK. Took a while to get them, but they arrived in April 2013, which gave me plenty of time to strip off the square panels and sell off all Mk IV parts that were not to be used on the project. I decided to do the full change over to earlier Bugeye A posts, B panel and scuttle, with Bugeye doors and wheel arches fitted.

Fortunately, after sand blasting, the remainder of the body was in excellent "original" condition with no extra holes and virtually no rust in the floors and

sills. I decided to change the steering column to Bugeye style, so the fascia panel on the left side also had to be changed to a UK spec Mk IV panel to accept the later dual line brake master and clutch master from the later cars and the mounting points for the steering column.



It was around this time that I met another Sebring Sprite builder and 3000 BT7 owner, Neil Anderson, through our contact at Archer's Garage. Conveniently, Neil was located in Illinois and was looking to ship a Sebring front to the US. Neil shipped the front for his Sebring project in the same shipment from Archer's and was able to pick up the entire crated shipment in Chicago, which was a huge help to me. We have since become good friends and shared progress on various Austin-Healey projects, both big and small.



Lew's Sprite cont'

After trial fitting of the fastback body and Sebring front, the car was taking shape. At this stage (around mid-2015) I stripped the running gear off the car and flipped it over to paint the underside, followed by the engine bay and rear trunk area. This allowed me to build the car before bonding the fastback, which in hindsight, was very fortunate for me, as you will see below.



The build proceeded with rear end installation, engine bay peripherals including new wiring harness, dashboard, then engine and gearbox, followed by front suspension and exhaust.

After many trial fittings of the fastback body – which was not an easy fit - I decided it was too difficult to get in and out of the car, so I made a complete change in direction. I had seen on the Sebring Sprite site Andy Hide's unique Green Frogeye with removable coupe hardtop and thought it looked rather cool with just the Brooklands aeroscreen. This was the way to go.

I sold the Sebring fiberglass fastback and obtained a Bugeye fiberglass rear end locally in the US from Dave Craddock at Preform Resources in Michigan. It actually fitted quite well once I had made the Mk 2 cutout to clear the roll bar. Finally satisfied with the fit, I used Sikaflex to bond the body to the chassis. So, now my Sebring had a Bugeye rear with a Mk 2 rear deck, and was a roadster once again.



Onto the final body work, as some scuttle and B pillar mods were needed for optimum door alignment, and I decided to de-seam the fiberglass Bugeye rear to match the Sebring front. I used some of the cut-out rear deck and additional fiberglass to build up the rear cockpit surround to match the Mk 2 rear aluminium trim pieces.

I was fortunate to have my brother Mark here from Australia and he was a great help to finish the bodywork. With necessity being the mother of invention, and no paint booth available, we decided to paint the car in a portable carport/paint booth. He is a better painter than me, so I deferred to him!



Mark is also a Bugeye fan having raced a few Cooper S Minis years ago and built three or four Bugeyes over the years, including a current project. He works fast, so we completed the final assembly in just three days! I do think the paint was dry, maybe not so rock hard we were trying to complete

Lew's Sprite Cont'

the car for the Sprite 60th Celebrations at Lake Elkhart in Wisconsin, but missed by one day due to a clutch issue, that required an engine pull to resolve. Rather frustrating.

My wife Anne said we looked like Laurel and Hardy! Not sure what she was hinting at



The final pics are the finished car circa September 2018 - notice the LHD setup, ½ elliptic rear springs for the keen eye, sporting the larger Mk IV boot badge for the Sebring front to indicate its heritage and later style black on black Mk IV seats, with stock looking Mk2 style dash with Mk3 gauges. So, it actually has a bit of every Sprite Mk incorporated into the finished Sebring.

The car has a 1275 with street cam and a 45 mm DCOE Weber with Pacesetter exhaust manifold and Monza exhaust. It gets along nicely, albeit a little fresh in the face with cool Chicago weather in October. Fortunately, with Illinois Extended Antique rego plates, we could only drive from April through October, so "Bluey" had to hibernate during Winter !

The Sebring "Barchetta" Sprite was imported into Australia when we returned home at the end of 2019, converted to RHD, now with a windscreen and resides at Lake Macquarie, alongside big brother. Now considering a front change to a custom Monza front and Speedwell Fastback hardtop. Perhaps more of this story to follow.



Who's the Bloke Talking with Ray?

by Patrick Quinn

Just back from Charlie's Run to Lightning Ridge, Ray Roberts couldn't wait to get on the phone to relay a memory.

No, Ray hadn't found a large chunk of black opal stuck to his shoes, but a memory from around 30 years ago brought on by their choice of the dinner venue in Orange.

It brought back memories, because it was the pub they had met Jack Brabham in the early 1990s over the weekend of the return to the Gnoo Blas circuit at Orange. There were quite a number of Austin-Healey people who had surrounded Jack and sort of filled a corner of the pub.

Ray recalls being indignant at the locals, as they kept pushing past the group and knocking into Sir Jack. Included amongst the Austin-Healey people back then were Stan Goodwin, Barry Campbell, Don Read, Ben Sellers, Charlie Britten, Bob Cutler, Seve Watson and of course Ray. With the exception of Bob Cutler and Ray, the names are of those who are either sadly no longer with us or who have moved onto other things.

Back then, the event extended over two days and on the Sunday, Ben Sellers was driving Ray's 100S, and while they were standing around the pits, a fellow came up to Ben and asked if he would sign his programme. Ben declined, but the bloke was persistent, so he signed. The bloke then swore saying that Ben had spoilt his programme, as he wasn't Jack Brabham. Having known Ben and Sir Jack I can't see any similarity between the two.

Prior to 1995 the Gnoo Blas circuit was open to anyone who wanted to see if they could better the times set during the 1950s, but there was a serious accident and tragically an enthusiast lost his life. When it started again, those who wanted to try the circuit were escorted around.

Fast forward 30 years, Ray had a look at the spot where he was talking to Sir Jack, and realised that the group had been standing in front of the entrance to the ladies and gents. No doubt he thought no one had any time to think who was standing there, as they were in a rush for the loo.



Sir Jack Brabham sitting in the 1959 Mildren Cooper Climax of Dick Willis at Gnoo Blas in 1993. In the background are the 100/6 of Don Read and Charlie Britten's BN2. Thanks to Dick Willis for allowing us to use his photo.

Letters and Photos to the Editor



Thank you to Bryan Levy for this ethereal photo of his 100 taken at Centennial Park at 7.15 last Sunday morning.

There was a time when there was an abundance of Austin-Healey 100Ss in Australia.

Thank you to Ray Roberts for this photo taken in Melbourne.

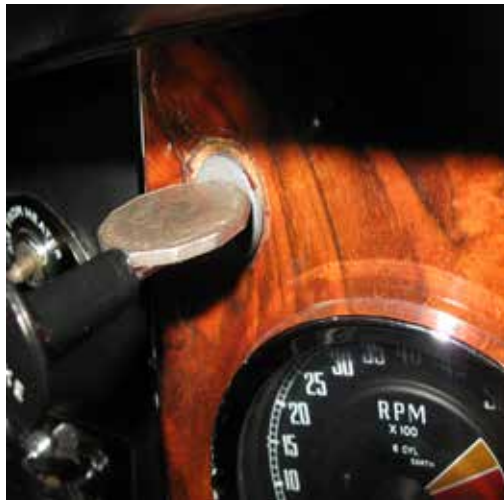


Greetings Patrick

I was interested to read in the last Flat Chat at p22 that at least one other member has, like me, an ununlockable choke cable. Mine has been that way for years.

However, being unable to afford the remedy President Jim Phillips has devised, some years ago I engineered an alternative method which is highly affordable, engages the choke fully, fits perfectly and securely between the underside of the knob and the dash and will surely last for many years.

I attach a pic thereof. I may apply for patent protection.



Cheers for now
Greg Poole



Shannons Day (CMC Display Day)
25 August 2024 at Sydney Motorsport Park
We need to confirm the tickets this week and they will only be purchased for those who confirm this week.
If any questions please contact Greg Strange 0412 811 958

Tickets cost \$25.
If interested in attending, please deposit into the AHOC account
BSB:032669 AC 252564 and note it as Shannons Day with your surname.

Your Last Page



Surely it just needs an afternoon's work.



BMC has the inside track on outdoor fun!

Sun and fun... fresh air and the fresh, clean lines of a BMC thoroughbred sports car. Drink in the lean looks of an eager-to-go Austin Healey, MGA, Sprite or an all-new MG Midget. They're kicks to drive, too... whether you're in a pavement-blistering mood or just tooling around the block. Either way you'll appreciate that low pitched purr of power. Can't believe pleasure driving is possible? Then take a trial fun-run in a BMC sports car and discover why they've outsold, and out-pleasured, all the others put together. Your BMC dealer has a fun-run key waiting for you.



Spot the Austin-Healey. After last month's hard one, this is easy.



My Heavens



You Sure?

Monthly Meetings - Zoom ID 980 9019 7648 Passcode 336164

We meet on the first Thursday of the month at Strathfield Golf Club Weeroona Rd, Strathfield. Starting at 7.30pm or enjoy dinner from 5.30pm