

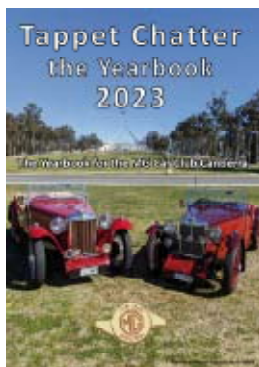
Tappet Chatter the Yearbook 2023

The Yearbook for the MG Car Club Canberra



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COVER PHOTO

Our cover photo shows Kent Brown's TC and Brian Oxley's J2 with the iconic Australian Parliament House flag mast in the background. The photo was taken to promote the Canberra Centenary MG Rally held in Canberra over the weekend of 29 September to 2 October 2023.

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WELCOME!

Welcome to our new *Tappet Chatter*. Members with long memories will remember that our Club magazine, *Tappet Chatter*, came into being in 1981 following a competition to give what was then just a few pages of newsletter a proper name. The Victorians had “Wheelspin”, NSW had “Opposite Lock”, surely Canberra could come up with a name to rival these icons of the Australian MG community? The legendary Don Brown won the competition with his suggestion, and so it was, our regular newsletter became *Tappet Chatter* and over time grew into a well-received monthly magazine, at first printed and posted, but more latterly sent out on the email.

Last year, after 475 editions, the monthly *Tappet Chatter* ceased with the August 2022 edition. Editor Mark Horsfield who had been in the editorial chair since 2012, advised the Committee that he was stepping back from the monthly treadmill and, as is the case with so many voluntary roles in our community today, the Club was unable to find a replacement editor. As Mark said in his very first editorial in June 2012, “change is inevitable, except from a vending machine”. A new approach was needed to keep members in touch with Club activities.

The new approach is the “Club Communiqué”, a bi-monthly formatted email compiled by a small group of scribes on rotation (to avoid burn out) and sent out bright and early on a Monday morning. The *Communiqué* is great for keeping members up-to-date with what’s coming up and similar right up-to-the-minute news and views, but it doesn’t as readily capture the soul and the spirit of the Club in the same way as the monthly magazine did. Future historians might also find it hard to work out what went on during any given Club year, and so the idea of a Yearbook, quite popular in other corners of the MG world, was born.

Covering the activities of the Club in a structured way over the Club year (this first one covers 2022-2023 from AGM to AGM), *Tappet Chatter - the Yearbook* gives readers a snapshot of the broad range of events, runs, displays and the myriad of activities that make up the MG Car Club Canberra and the contributions of the many people who comprise our active community. It is available in hard copy for those who like the tangible look and feel of a magazine, but also electronically for those with an eye to environmental issues or who prefer less clutter in their lives.

We hope you enjoy it. Please let us know what you think...

The Committee
MGCC Canberra
November 2023

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Debbie Whitfield opens our Yearbook for 2023

I am grateful for the honour of having served as President of the MG Car Club Canberra for the past 12 months. We had a bit of a shaky start to the year with the resignations of a couple of members of the Committee, and I would like to especially thank Ewan who took on the role of Secretary.

A significant change this year has been the introduction of a bi-monthly email *Communiqué* in place of the previous monthly *Tappet Chatter* magazine. This communication medium has been widely welcomed in keeping members informed of the Club's activities in a timely manner and in an easy "speed read" format.

Importantly, the name *Tappet Chatter* lives on in this our first annual Review of the Club's activities. *Tappet Chatter - The Yearbook* complements the nitty-gritty of our daily and weekly activities as promoted in the bi-monthly *Communiqué* by providing a more lasting and entertaining read about the Club's major activities over the past year.

It is only when you see our activities summarised in this way that you realise what a lot of work goes on behind the scenes to bring them to you and over such a wide range of MG-related interests - tours, displays, concours, workshop, social events and motor sport to name a few. Thank you to everyone who willingly gives their time to initiate and run these activities and events. Some highlights follow...



Club Community Support for 2022-23

The Committee had selected Daydream Machine, an organisation for neurodiverse children which is run by Luke Ferguson, as our Community Support recipient for this year. I am proud to report that we have sent our Club contribution of \$1500 to Daydream Machine, plus a further \$1000 raised from the raffle held at the Centenary Rally. Members will recall Luke came to give our Club a talk about how the Daydream Machine works with the young people that attend.

Displays

Displays are an important part of our Club's community involvement as they keep the MG name in front of car enthusiasts and the community alike. Laurie Gardiner, our displays co-ordinator has more to report on the displays we participated in over the past year, but I particularly want to thank Laurie on your behalf for all he does behind the scenes to bring our cars to life. Over the past year, MGs have been well represented by our club members both displaying their cars and helping out in particular at Terribly British Day, Shannons Wheels, and the mighty Battle of Waterloo.

Social

This year we have been able to mostly continue with our monthly and midweek meander runs when the weather has been kind to us. The Tuesday morning coffees at Weston are always well attended as are the Sunday morning breakfasts.

We started 2023 in style with breakfast at Café Injoy in January this year followed soon after by our first major trip/run this year, the ten day Great Ocean Road Tour in February. Even though the weather was a bit challenging being so very hot everyone enjoyed it, thank you to Mark and Naomi Horsfield for organising this very interesting tour. Mark has written the tour up elsewhere in this *Yearbook*.

Our Autumn weekend away was to the Batlow Cider Fest. Not even the rain could stop the attendees enjoying themselves. We stayed



in Tumut, and Peter Dalton organised a stop to the Snowy Mountains Hydro Discovery Centre on the way where we were given lunch and a tour. This was one of the highlights on this weekend.

Motorsports

Another four successful motorkhanas were conducted during the year with many Club members taking part at various times. And 19 Club members were involved at sometime during the year in running of the events; a positive result. On average, there were around 30 competitors at each event aged anywhere from 12 years to those of "mature years".

Glenn Kirk also attended Natmeet 2023 in South Australia and won his class in the motorkhana, Class ZB (MGF) and gained 3rd place in the speed event.

Plans were well under way to hand over the running of motorkhanas to a new "young" team but late in the year the CEO of the Sutton Road Training Centre (SRTC), a facility we have used for around 20 years, advised that he would no longer allow the hire of the Vehicle Manoeuvring Area to be used for "motorsport".

The new team is now exploring other venues that may be suitable. Notwithstanding this outcome, I cannot fail to give my sincere thanks to Chris Hillman and Kent Brown for their dedication over many, many years in organising the motorkhanas for the club and wider motorsport community in the region. These events will be sadly missed as indeed the provision of an onsite bbq to feed the masses which was managed by Virginia Brown and her Guides. It is unfortunate that the loss of the motorkhana has also had a significant impact upon the fundraising opportunities for this group of young Canberran women.

A total of eleven club members were also regularly involved with various other motorsport activities throughout the year including circuit racing, regularity events, hill-climbs and a sprint event. Venues included Winton Motor Raceway, Phillip Island, Sydney Motorsport Park, Pheasant Wood (Marulan), Tailem Bend and the SDMA facility at Fairbairn Park. Congratulations to all!

Canberra 2023 Centenary Rally

In a partnership with the Pre-War MG Register of Australia, we hosted the Canberra 2023 MG Rally, the first official Centenary of MG event held in Australia. The Rally had 160 registrants with guests from QLD, NSW, VIC, TAS, SA, UK and NZ; and we had 100 Pre-1956 MGs displayed in glorious sunshine at the National Museum on the Saturday most of whom participated in the 100 km Centenary Social Run on the Sunday, followed by lunch in the picturesque Queanbeyan City Gardens.

This was a major undertaking for the Club, possibly the largest since we hosted the MG National Meeting in 2001. Feedback from our visitors was extremely positive with the Club being warmly congratulated for a very friendly and professionally organised event. Indeed, over 60 Club members participated either as registrants or formally helping with the arrangements that even included a very popular MG market stall at the National Museum. Thank you, Mike Stearn and Kerry McDonald, for running the market stall.

And again a very big and sincere thank you to the Rally organisers Malcolm Robertson, Kent Brown, Ewan Ward, and Brian Calder. I also want to single out just four other Club members who went above and beyond to make the Rally such a success: Virginia Brown, Gaye Weller, Christine Calder and Mo Dechaineux.

Members Feedback Survey

A members' survey was conducted through the year as part of the annual membership renewal process. The Committee noted that the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. In due course there will be some changes made to aspects of club events and such to accord with members' wishes. A significant number of responses indicated a willingness to help out with its activities.....so I'm sure we'll see lots of interest in nominations for our new Committee!!

Executive Committee and Non-Committee Position

We have many members that help run the club in non-Committee positions. Ewan Ward Library, Bob Tazzyman Regalia, Kerry McDonald and Greg Whitfield Concessional rego, Kerry McDonald and Brian Calder CACTMC reps, Malcom Roberston, Kent Brown, Ewan Ward & Brian Calder Communique Editors, Naomi Horsfield Ladies lunch runs, Laurie Gardiner display co-ordinator, Glenn Kirk National Natmeet rep, Peter Dalton Social co-ordinator, Greg Whitfield Membership Secretary and Club History Recorder and lastly, but most needed, Jan Kirk, Christine Calder, and their band of helpers ensuring we have a lovely supper after every meeting.

My thanks go to the Executive for working to keep the wheels of the Club turning. As an ordinary committee member now, I look forward to working with newly-elected President Kent Brown, Vice President Malcolm Robertson, Secretary Ewan Ward, Treasurer Brian Calder, and fellow committee members Peter Dalton and Tim Brown. If 2024 is as good as 2023, the Club is in very safe hands.

Debbie
President 2022-23

THE YEAR AT A GLANCE

Club Secretary Ewan Ward summarises the Club's activities over the past year...

Looking back at the previous year, there has been a continuation of many well-established activities as well as some new initiatives, some successful, some less so. In all respects though, the Club has maintained a variety of activities each month to seek to cater to the varied interests of Club Members.

Our Club has been well-served by the excellent monthly *Tappet Chatter* magazine, but this takes considerable time and effort on behalf of the Editor to herd the cats for input and push out a fresh and informative magazine each month. All good things must come to an end, so our Club Year commenced with a change of approach as Mark Horsfield stepped down as Editor after many years of dedicated service. The Club's new Committee has implemented a new method of communication with members through the bi-monthly Communiqué, delivered to your inbox twice each month on a Monday morning. The editorial load is now shared by a few Committee Members to edit two editions on a rotational basis. This has now settled down to a manageable and very effective means of reporting on club activities and advising of future events.

The other initiative has been to transition the Club website to the MYCCO website platform. Again, the load is shared between several Committee members and this too has settled down to a manageable and very effective primary web presence for our Club.



Tuesday coffee mornings at the Yarralumla Play Station Cafe have proved very popular

There is more to offer with the MYCCO platform, but first we need to learn to walk confidently before we

tackle the more advanced features!

So, what has stayed the same, and what has changed?

We have maintained our Monthly General Meetings at St Peter's Church Hall in Weston with a range of interesting speakers followed by a short General Meeting and then the traditional supper. We have heard from Club Members John Harriott on his Formula Vee exploits, from Kent Brown on the Abingdon Railway Station and The British Motor Museum, from Ewan Ward on the new Club Website and from Malcolm Robertson on the New Zealand Pre-'56 Rally. External speakers have included Paul Ireland in the UK via Zoom with a technical presentation on "How Engines Work", Luke Ferguson from Daydream Machine and Stephanie Shaw from Shannons.

We have maintained an interesting and varied range of destinations for the Monthly Social Runs organised by our long-suffering Social Coordinator Peter Dalton. There will be more about these runs in a later section. Suffice to say that runs have been organised in all directions from Canberra through interesting scenery over our sometimes challenging local roads. Destinations have included Bowral, Cooma, Wee Jasper, Captain's Flat and Gundaroo.

The Mid-Week Meander (MWM) has been a long-standing feature of the Club calendar, but attendance has been somewhat variable! A new initiative was implemented to move the MWM to the first Tuesday of the month, to depart from the Tuesday coffee morning location at Weston Park. This was intended to provide a consistent meeting point for a coffee before heading off to the chosen destination. This met with varied success, commencing with a visit to Old St. Lukes Studio and the Baker at Sutton. MWM's will reappear in the Calendar as the weather becomes more conducive to MG motoring.

Club Workshops at the Club Service Centre in Fyshwick have provided a varied and interesting range of topics to those wanting to learn more, or share their knowledge, on maintaining their MGs. Kent Brown and Mike Stearn



have continued to impart their considerable wisdom on MG mechanicals with topics including clutches, ignition systems and classic electrical systems. Attendees are treated to a delicious sausage sandwich cooked to perfection by Glenn Hogan. The Club Workshop caters to all levels of skill and experience and we are always open to suggestions of interest to members.

The Club has participated in a number of displays throughout the year, more of which is covered in later sections. We have maintained our traditional presence at Terribly British Day, held at Queanbeyan Park; Shannons Wheels, held at Queanbeyan Showground; and the Battle of Waterloo, held at the Spanish-Australia Club, Narrabundah. Some of our Club Members also ventured out to the wilds of Wamboin



for the annual Wheels of Wamboin display, and Ewan Ward represented the club at the Cooma Motorfest and at the Sydney All British Day.

Kent Brown and Chris Hillman (left) continued to put on Motorkhana Events for MG and other local Car Club members. These events have been

very well received but only happen with a lot of effort from the principal event organisers and volunteers on the day. After many years, organisation of these events was in the process of being transferred to the Heritage Nissan Club – ACT until the unexpected announcement of cessation of these events at the



Motoring in New Zealand - Malcolm Robertson and Gaye Weller in their borrowed 1939 WA tackle a river crossing on the pre-56 rally.

Sutton Road Training Centre.

Not content with Mid-Week Meanders and Monthly Runs, longer tours were organised through the year including attendance at the Gathering of the Faithful, organised by Mark Horsfield; the Great Ocean Road Tour, organised by Mark and Naomi Horsfield; and the Autumn Weekend Away to Tumut for the Batlow Cider Festival organised by Peter Dalton. These events provide an opportunity for longer-distance motoring, sometimes testing the water resistance of ageing MGs and the navigational skills of their drivers, as well as varied social activities with Club and other motoring enthusiasts. In activities with other Clubs, Malcolm Robertson and Gaye Weller participated in the New Zealand Pre-'56 Rally, in a borrowed 1939 MG WA as well as a tour in Gippsland in their SA coupe organised by the Pre-War MG Register, and Ewan Ward participated in a tour of the Snowy Mountains with the Sydney-based MG Restorers Association in his YT.

And lastly, but by no means least, the Club hosted the Canberra MG Rally 2023 for Pre-War, T-Type and Y-Type MGs over the recent October long-weekend.

Again, this will be covered in more detail in a subsequent piece, but this Rally was a fitting finale to the Club year with 100 magnificent MGs of all types and sizes from 1925 to 1955 in magnificent weather and participating in a range of magnificent display, driving and social events. A fitting tribute to celebrate the Centenary of MG.



Ewan Ward's YT enjoying a snowy stop at Dead Horse Gap on the MG Restorers' run in the Snowy Mountains in early November 2022

Ewan

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Life membership is our Club's most prestigious award. This year we applaud Greg Whitfield's many contributions...

At our Annual General Meeting in October, Greg Whitfield was made a Life Member of our Club.

Greg has served on the Club Committee as Secretary for two years (2012-13 to 2013-14), and as President for four years (2014-15 to 2017-18). Greg has also served as a Concessional Registration Scheme delegate to the Council of ACT Motor Clubs for one year (2018-19), and for over 10 years he has been a Club Registrar for Concessionally Registered Vehicles (2012-13 to 2023-24). He has been directly involved in the organisation of at least three 'Weekends Away' – the Club's principal social event each year;

he has been the Club Historian for over five years, he is our current Membership Secretary, he has arranged 'suppers' for Club monthly meetings, and he even stood-in at short notice to be MC of the Club's Presentation Dinner in 2022. The sum of these is a very significant personal contribution to our Club.

Greg and his partner Debbie joined the Club in about the year 2000 when he purchased his 1970 MG Midget from another Club member. MG 127



became his 'daily drive' to work and it has travelled extensively on Club outings and tours, including to Tasmania twice, and on other extended tours. The Midget was later joined by an MG TF 160 which has won numerous Club concours awards. Greg has been awarded the Murray McFarlane MG Midget Trophy on six occasions, he was a regular official at Club motorkhanas, and has always been a friendly Club member who has welcomed and encouraged others across the full range of Club activities.

We congratulate Greg on the Award of Life Membership of our Club.



Kent Brown
President 2023-2024

COMMUNITY

The MG Car Club Canberra maintains a community support program and a carbon neutral policy. Here's what we did in 2022-23...

Community Support

Our Club has been part of the ACT community for nearly 50 years now. Being a responsible part of our community means that as a Club we are aware of the current social, economic, and environmental situation, and we have a willingness to contribute appropriately. As classic motoring enthusiasts, we enjoy many benefits such as a Concessional Registration Scheme, and we are recognised as an organisation when we seek the involvement of other parties. In the past we have had direct meetings with Government ministers on matters affecting us, and a good example this year was the willingness of the National Museum to promote and partner our Club in our Centenary of MG Rally.

Two of the ways in which we currently give back to our community are through our Community Support Program and through our Environmental Program.

This year we chose 'Daydream Machine' as the recipient of our Community Support Program.



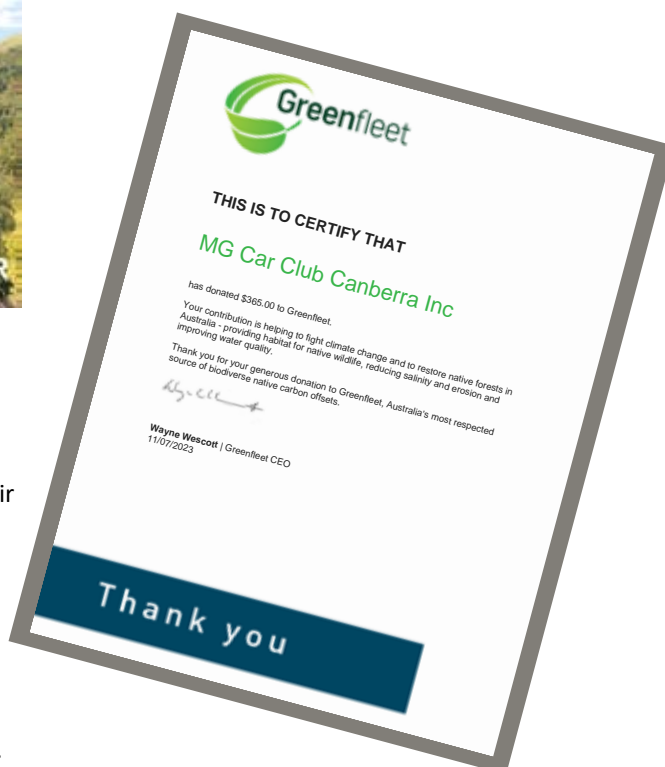
Luke Ferguson and the Daydream Machine

Daydream Machine is an organisation that runs programs for neuro-diverse children in the ACT region. Their founder, Luke Ferguson, gave a moving presentation to a Club meeting and this year we raised and contributed over \$2000 to Daydream Machine. The raffle that we ran at the Centenary Rally was a major contributor to the amount raised.

Environment - Carbon Neutral



Our other direct contribution to our community, and something that we take great pride in, is our awareness of the impact of our Club motoring on the environment. Part of our Club's published environmental policy includes a provision for members to contribute a voluntary amount with their membership towards carbon-offset. A significant number of our members now make this voluntary contribution, and over this last year we raised \$365 from members and an additional \$223 from the participants in the Centenary Rally. Our carbon offset partner is Greenfleet (www.greenfleet.com.au) for those who wish to read more about its carbon sequestration and Australian revegetation programs.



CELEBRATING THE CENTENARY

Brian Calder reports on the Canberra MG Rally 2023...

Over the October 2023 long weekend we partnered with the Pre-War MG Register of Australia to organise and deliver the Canberra MG Rally 2023. It was promoted as a celebration of the Centenary of MG and the first major post-COVID event

Register and the MG TYme's that have been hosted by our Club since 2010.

The Rally was a very large

undertaking by the principal event organisers Malcolm Robertson, Kent Brown, Ewan Ward and Brian Calder. So what did we deliver?

- Our Rally (and our Club) featured in articles in the Canberra Times twice, and in a wide range of other media – including two live radio interviews. Our theme was 100 MGs to celebrate 100 Years.
- We had participation by over 160 guests from QLD, NSW, VIC, TAS, SA, UK and NZ, and over 60 Club members participated or assisted in the conduct of the Rally.

- We had 100 pre-1956 MGs. Probably the largest and most diverse assembly of these 'older MG cars' in Australia ever. The cars ranged from the 1925 replica of Old No 1 right through to the 1955 MG TF. The MG models participating included: Vintage, M, F, J, K, L, N, P, Q, SA, TA, TB, TC, TD, TF, VA, WA, Y, YT, and some specials based on these models.
- We had a spectacular display in the grounds of the National Museum attended by many hundreds of visitors. And our own Club member Laurie Gardiner won the T Type 'People's Choice Award' that included votes from the public.
- Our Display Day included a popular market stall for MG parts run by Mike Stearn and Kerry McDonald.
- To cater for the number and capabilities of the cars, we had two different runs to Queanbeyan Park on the Sunday where we had a picnic lunch.
- And to conclude the Rally, we had a very successful Rally dinner at which our Club presented two new national awards for contribution to the MG movement: The Peter Kerr Award for T Series MGs, and the Steve Brompton Award for Y Series cars.

Our Rally was the first time Australia has convened a Pre-1956 MG Rally in the style that is held in NZ and the UK. We will have to wait to see whether it will continue in this format. As a Club, we believe it can

provide the basis for a fantastic biennial social and non-competitive event specifically for older MGs.

The Pre-War MG Register of Australia has been holding a biennial rally for pre-war MGs since 2005. Their first rally, held in Beechworth, Victoria, was initiated in response to a declining interest in the annual MG National Meetings by owners of the pre-war cars. Pre-war owners were finding the meetings too competitive, too large and often too far from home to drive their older cars to. They were seeking something with a more community feel centred around the earlier cars and held less frequently.



TA, TB and TC MGs along the terrace at the National Museum
Photo by Scott Watson

Our Canberra 2023 Rally was also the Pre-War Register's biennial rally and we were pleased that so many of Australia's early MGs attended from as far afield as South Australia and Queensland. More than half the 100 MGs attending were pre-war MGs and many of the post-war T-types on the Rally were owned by pre-war MG owners.

Our thanks go to these owners for bringing such special MGs to Canberra and to the Pre-War MG Register for its assistance in bringing the Rally together.

Brian



*Above: Terry and Julie Prodger's 1925 MG 14-28, one of the earliest surviving MGs in the world
Photo by Scott Watson*



*Above left: Brian Oxley's J2 heads a line of Triple-M MGs
Above: Ian & Loris Mawson in their Le Mans replica M-type
Left: Competition MG J3s
Below: Stunning supercharged engine from K3004
Photos by Ty Starrs*



*Participants and public alike enjoy a day among some very fine MGs at the National Museum of Australia
Photo by Scott Watson*

AUSTRALIA'S FIRST PRE-56 MG RALLY

Was the Canberra 2023 Centenary Rally more than the sum of its parts? asks Malcolm Robertson...

Photos from Ty Starrs, Scott Watson and Malcolm Robertson

Australia is a big country geographically, spread out over thousands of miles between population centres, and the Australian MG scene is equally spread out and fragmented. Despite this difficulty, for over 50 years, MG owners have come together annually over the four-day Easter weekend for an extravaganza-style and competitive MG National Meeting hosted by the various State-based MG Car Clubs in turn. In more recent years, a biennial rally for pre-war MGs emerged in 2005 more as a social get together than anything seriously competitive, and in 2010, a similar biennial event for T and Y-series MGs was initiated by our Club, the MG Car Club Canberra.

For 2023, the Centenary year, the MG Car Club Canberra agreed to host the biennial pre-war rally and to combine it with its own T and Y-series rally, creating for the first time a Pre-56 Rally in Australia.

Promoted as an event to celebrate the Centenary of MG, the number 100 featured strongly in the organisation of the event which was programmed to run over a three day weekend in the Australian National Capital from 29 September to 1 October. One hundred pre-56 MGs attended, the earliest being Terry Prodger's MG 14-28 (chassis number 115687) and the latest Laurie Gardiner's TF1500 (TF 10051). In between were some seriously interesting MGs, but more on them in a moment.

After a welcome pizza evening the previous night, on the Saturday of the weekend the 100 cars were displayed in the grounds of the National Museum of

Australia, and on the Sunday most of them undertook a 100 kilometer drive in the surrounding Australian countryside, culminating with a picnic lunch in the city park of the neighbouring NSW town Queanbeyan, just over the border from the Australian Capital Territory.

The rally concluded on the Sunday evening with a gala dinner for the 160 participants where both traditional and some new awards were announced and trophies handed over. The Pre-War MG Register

of Australia has a long and deep history in the Australian MG community and its awards reflect this. Its premier award, the Kimber Trophy, for services to the Register, went to Allan Herring in Western Australia for his role as a correspondent to the Register Newsletter over many years, as

well as his ownership of his TB since the 1960s and his restoration and spirited use of his two other pre-war cars, a J2 and an NE replica.

The Canberra MG Car Club, as hosts of the combined event, had donated two similar awards which it hopes will continue to be awarded biennially in Australia. The first, introduced as the Peter Kerr Award, commemorates the work of the late Peter Kerr as convenor of the Australian T-type Association over many years and was awarded to Mike Sherrell for services to the T-series MGs. Mike will need no introduction to many Club members who will be aware

of his seminal books on the TC, but his role as one of the foundation members of the TC Owners Club in Western Australia may be less well-known. He is a great ambassador for MGs and a worthy recipient of the first Peter Kerr Trophy.

Similarly, our Club also donated the Steve Brompton Award for services to the Y-Series MGs, named to commemorate the late Steve Brompton. Steve was a long-term and passionate Y-Type owner, purchasing his first YT in 1975. He was an early member of the Sydney-based MG Restorers Association and served on the Committee for many years as the Runs Coordinator. Steve also ran the Australian Y-Type register with Tony Slattery for many years. Steve and his



One of the earliest cars on display was the Bruce family's fabulous Old Number One Replica displayed by Malcolm Noad



David Morgan driving the Class H record breaking J3 owned by his mother Marguerite (J3756)

wife Lynne organised the MG Y-Type 50th Anniversary Event at Mt Victoria in 1997; the 60th Anniversary Event at Maitland in 2007 and again for the 65th Anniversary at Mt Victoria in 2012 before handing over to Tony and Debbie Slattery for the 70th and 75th Anniversary Events. Steve's last YT, originally owned from new by Bob Lawrence, continues to be used by Lynne and her children. Unsurprisingly, the inaugural Award was made to Tony Slattery.



Sarah Taylor completed the 100 km social run in her 1930 M-type, once a Canberra car

Coming back to the participating cars, the 100 MGs that converged on Canberra comprised some 50 pre-war cars, over 20 TCs, 15 TDs, 9 TFs and 9 Y-types. While all MGs are significant with their own life stories and charm, some turn out to be more significant than others for various reasons. Chief among these reasons is success at MG's greatest marketing platform, competition and record-breaking, the activities that put MG on the front pages of the motoring press in the 1930s and similarly post-war. Ever since Old Number One earned Cecil Kimber his gold medal in the 1925 Land's End Trial, MGs with competition history have earned a special place in the hearts of motoring enthusiasts worldwide.

And so it was that in Canberra for a few glorious days, among the one hundred cars present we had a mouth-watering

sprinkle of those very special cars. First up, we had our very own Old Number One replica, crafted in the 1980s by local Canberra enthusiast the late Jim Bruce and still owned and campaigned by his family. Among the pre-war competition MGs we had two K3s (Adam Berryman's K3002 and Ross Kelly's K3004), both with impeccable history dating back to the Mille Miglia and the full gambit of motor racing events held in the 1930s before these cars came to Australia.

We had a pair of J3s including perhaps one of MGs most famous cars, Marguerite Morgan's J3756 which held numerous class speed records for MG during 1933 and 1934 at the hands of some very



John Lackey's Q-type (QA0257) was one of the stars of the Centenary display

famous racing drivers, and finally a Q-type (QA0257). Australia has two Q-types and this one, owned by John Lackey, is known affectionately as the Hope Bartlett car (as opposed to the Murphy car, QA0256) as it was Hope Bartlett who raced it so successfully in Australia in those heady pre-war years.

We also had some lovely post-war TC Specials. Aussies love the TC Specials as so many of our motor racing heroes cut their teeth on TCs and genuine original ones with these drivers' fingerprints still on the steering wheels and gear sticks attract great interest but are becoming so hard to find.



Club member Tim Brown's fabulous "one owner" TC Special not only has fingerprints on the steering wheel but has history back to 1949



The SVW and Y-series cars were a picture on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin with the Museum's Murray River paddle steamer Enterprise in the background

And while all that enthusiasm above would have you believe it was only sportscars present, we also had eight Y-types and six SVW cars, three SAs, one VA and two WAs, each of which deserve a paragraph of their own but perhaps these can wait for another day.



So, will Australia host another Pre-56 MG Rally any time soon? The answer is probably "no" as the Pre-War MG Register of Australia

has already announced that its next biennial rally will be for pre-war MGs only, and will be held in the goldfields region of Victoria in 2025. And if the



Elmar and Jenny Gailitis from New Zealand drove Queenslander Ellen Wilson's SA saloon in the 100 km Sunday social run

Canberra MG Car Club reverts to offering its MG T and Y event in the off-years to the pre-war rallies, the next of those will most likely be held in 2026 when the Club has recovered from Canberra 2023.

While to many participants, Canberra Club members and the general public who attended the display, the Rally may have been more than the sum of its two biennial parts, there seems little prospect that those two rallies will come together again any time soon.

But you never know. The memories created by the camaraderie and ambience of the Canberra Centenary MG Rally 2023 are strong and will go down in the annals of Australian MG history as one of the most successful and interesting events held.

Perhaps the idea of a pre-56 event may well live on.

Malcolm



The last of square-riggers – a quality display of the TFs



Elmar and Jenny Gailitis from New Zealand drove Queenslander Ellen Wilson's SA saloon in the 100 km Sunday social run

THE GREAT OCEAN ROAD TOUR

Mark Horsfield reports on the Club's most recent interstate touring event...
Photos from Naomi Horsfield

In February 2023 a group of MG Car Club Canberra members embarked on a circular tour to drive the Great Ocean Road in Victoria. The tour had been a long time coming as this was the third attempt to make it happen.

Kerry Atkins had driven a lot of miles and completed a lot of research and planning for the tour to occur in 2020, but as we all well remember, COVID happened. Then in 2021, Trevor and Keren Clement intended that Kerry's planning was not for naught and so the Great Ocean Road tour was included as phase 3 of the Tasmanian Tour they had planned and executed magnificently.

However, almost as we were boarding the Ferry to return to the mainland from Tassie, the Victorian Government instituted one of its Victorian lockdowns which required us to cancel the Great Ocean Road tour and make a B-line direct for NSW once disembarked from the trans-Tasman ferry.

Third time lucky they say, and so planning began in mid-2021 for another attempt in 2023.

Mark and Naomi Horsfield took the reins for this one and the submission to the committee was approved in mid-2021. In total there were nine cars and 17 people who took part. They were:

Mark and Naomi Horsfield (driving Trevor & Keren's MGA roadster (more on that later))
Trevor and Keren Clement (driving an MGA coupe)
Dave and Debbie Bailey (driving an MG TF Spark)
Terry and Kathy Griffiths (driving an MGB GT)



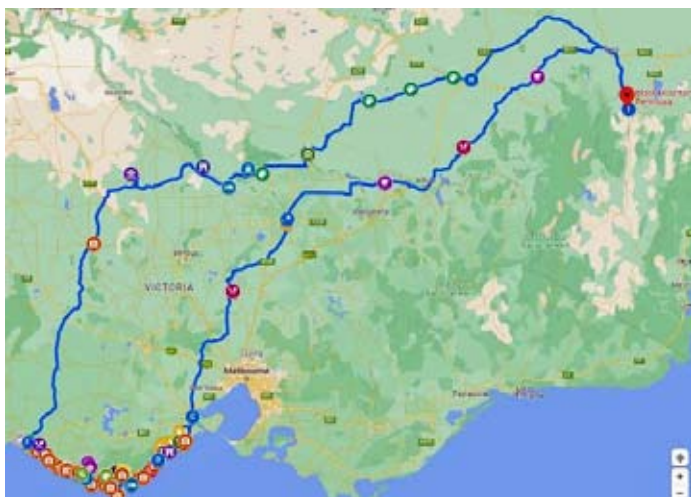
Greg and Debbie Whitfield (driving an MG Midget)
Bob Tazzyman (driving a Rover 75)
Geoff and Heather Piddington (modern)
Wayne and Sandra Smith (modern)
Chris and Joanne Wells (driving a modern – their MGB is still being built)

Friday 17 February was the day of departure and as the afternoon progressed the temp soared to being 40°C with other days in the high 30s which is testament to the reliability of British classics which were probably never designed for sustained operation under such conditions and our first leg took us to Tuckerbox Antiques for a wander around and morning tea. Lunch was at the Submarine Café in Holbrook and afternoon tea was at a great little place in Rutherglen called "Caffeine and Machine".

This café was on the main road and was ordinary from the outside, but on the inside you ordered coffee and then walked through some double doors into a very interesting and unexpected motorbike display. Lots of bikes in various states of repair, full size dioramas and workshop equipment from days gone by.

It was a hot day, and in classic cars body temps began to increase as the day went on, but fortunately there were no vehicular issues with overheating which was a great start to the tour. Good coffee too!

Our stop for the evening was in Shepparton and the next morning was to see us venture into the Museum Of Vehicle Evolution or MOVE on the outskirts of Shepparton. One of the highlights of our visit to the MOVE was that the owner of a couple of displayed MGs was there and he was able to explain much about his unique cars. He even pushed his MG *Vulgarilla* out from its display area





Vulgarilla on display at MOVE in Shepparton

so we could have a closer look. He opened bits and removed panels so we were able to see parts that not many folks get to observe.

After this we headed south again to overnight in Geelong.

From Shepparton to Geelong we lunched at Tooborac Brewery and coffeed at Mount Macedon Cross cafe. While at Mount Macedon we visited the cemetery there as Trevor Clement had regaled a story of the grave of Laurence "Laurie" Matheson, who died in 1987 aged 57. Atop the grave, carved from marble, is a naked female sculpture entitled "Asleep". Matheson's widow, Christina Matheson, commissioned Peter Schipperheyn to design this life-size memorial in a loving tribute to an eternal and undying love.

Sunday 19 February was probably the most anticipated day of the entire tour because this was the

day we were going to see the Abikhair MG collection, hosted by Ray and John Abikhair and the Geelong MG Club. The President of the Geelong Club met us at the motel and took us on a scenic journey to the Abikhair collection, where Ray, John and other members of the Geelong club were waiting to greet us.

The collection is privately owned and has some outstanding examples of rare MG cars from throughout the historic period of MG. Cars such as both the first and last Airline Coupe, MGA twin cam and MGA Deluxe, not to mention the pre-war models. Some of which can be seen in the pic to the right. Ray, John and the Geelong Club put on an excellent morning and provided tea, coffee and smally eats as well as opening the shed next door which had even more hard to find MGs in it, but not as pristine.

After this tremendous experience it was time to begin the drive of the Great Ocean Road. Members of the Geelong club escorted us from the Abikhair's to the beginning of the Great Ocean Road.

At this point we were all fresh and keen to get on with the drive.

It took us five days to do the drive from Geelong to Warrnambool with many stops along the way and some magnificent scenery. I'd heard stories about tour buses and tourists creating havoc on the road but fortunately for us there was very little of this to be seen. There were some roadworks going on, but then again there was major roadworks going on all over the eastern states after the heavy rains.

We didn't just do the Great Ocean Road, we also explored some of the hinterland as well. Such as the



The Great Ocean Road Tour crews at the Abikhair MG Collection in Geelong



The grave of Laurence "Laurie" Matheson, who died in 1987 aged 57, with the sculpture entitled "Asleep".

foody road near the 12 Apostles and a lovely drive into the Otway Forrest where we were able to do the Tree Top Walk. This area was a hidden gem. One of the roads we took was perfect for sports cars and tremendously picturesque.

I won't prattle on too much about what we did between Geelong and Warrnambool because it can all be found online. Needless to say, Nome and I will probably do it again some time and pick up on the things we missed.

After Warrnambool, we headed back to Canberra via a few identified stops that were interesting interludes. Once such venue was the 'Spanner Man' at Boort (suggested by Graeme Corbett). This place was

the residence of John Piccoli, who over a number of years, created some outstanding artwork out of spanners. Sadly he has passed away, but his family still opens up the property by appointment only to allow visitors to wander through the open air gallery and the sheds full of spanners.

In Echuca we caught up with former club members Graeme and Jo Corbett who were visiting their son and were able to drive to Echuca and join us on the Murray River Paddle steamer cruise. It was lovely to catch up with them again and we very much appreciated them taking the time to get together.

One of the last visits we did was to the Tocumwal Historic Aviation Museum. It is historic because it was the largest aerodrome in the southern hemisphere in 1942 and the largest base ever operated by the RAAF. From here it was an overnight in Wagga and then a short dash home.

Fortunately there were few car issues on the trip, however, in the week before departure Nome's TF, which we were planning to take on the trip, blew a head gasket, so we decided that my MGB would be the one taking us on the journey. Then two days before we were to leave the B's clutch packed it in



Spanner sculptures crafted by John Piccoli in Boort

so we were then going to take the modern MGZS.

Trevor and Keren very kindly offered us the use of their recently rebuilt MGA which performed admirably. We cannot thank them enough, and the trip proved how well it was put together.

Another issue was the head gasket blew on Bob Tazzymans' MGB (a B that has done two trips to Tassie) just before departure too, so he was forced to take the Rover. Additionally on the trip the MGA which TC and Keren had lent us lost a couple of bolts that held the alternator in place, but it only made a noise when we went around a corner! Fortunately folks in the troupe had





some spare bolts so it wasn't long before we were on our way again.

Then just as we were finishing the trip Terry and Kathy's MGBGT began to have gearbox issues. Around Gold Creek, Terry had trouble selecting first gear when stopped at the lights, but got away ok.

- 2km from home, just about to turn off Monaro Hwy into Lanyon Drive, lost 5th;
- Half way up the hill from Hume to Jerra, lost 4th;
- Through a not-quite-red-yet filter into Jerra, lost 3rd;
- Crawled home in 2nd, stopped at the top of their driveway with the intention of reversing into the garage, nothing – no reverse, no forward gears. A passing jogger helped push it into the garage.

So I guess there were a few car issues related to the trip after all. Terry has got word back that his gearbox had not been properly assembled in the first place (not done by Terry) by whomever did the assembly, and is in the final stages of repair.

Bob's MGB is back on the road and running the best it has done in years. Chris's MGB is 'still' being built

and will hopefully be ready by the October Rally. Nome's TF 1500 has had the engine and gearbox out four times trying to identify a rear end leak after the head and block work, and has to come out again



Mark's MGB has had to have a cylinder sleeved and the block decked, the head shaved and reconditioned and is now being rebuilt and Mike Stearn serviced and rebuilt the gearbox.

Honestly, if you haven't driven the Great Ocean Road, I highly recommend you do, and if you can do it in a classic car it will be even better.

Mark



Paddle steamers at Echuca

SOCIAL

Peter Dalton summarises the Club's all-important social activities...

It would be remiss of me not to introduce a summary of our Club's social activities without mentioning some very important people who have contributed so solidly in past years. I'm talking about Gail Argyle (and her late husband Tony) who crafted our annual Presentation Dinners so capably for many years, and also Michelle and Stanley Van Wijk who took over from Gail last year and were showing great promise as dinner organisers before they decided to relocate to the UK for the foreseeable future.



Gail Argyle in evening attire

Our Presentation Dinner is the showpiece of our calendar year. Not only does it give us a welcome excuse to dress up a bit (not too much) and enjoy a lovely evening of fine dining and a bit of fun, it is the occasion when we acknowledge the contribution

of many Club members to our small community and applaud the winners of our competitive events. Gail and Tony were masters at selecting venues, choosing menus, decorating the tables and organising little fun competitions to make us all feel special for that one night of the year. Michelle and Stanley had the same approach and we were saddened when they advised that they were not going to stay longer.

We were also saddened this year not to be able to host the Dinner. RSVP numbers were insufficient for the event to go ahead, and presentations were ultimately made at a regular Thursday evening Club meeting.

But all is not lost. Our newest Committee member, Tim Brown, has agreed to be the Presentation Dinner organiser for 2024 and I hope as many of our members as possible will support the Dinner next year. With a long and distinguished navy career behind him, I have no doubt that Tim will do us proud with an event to rival the best of naval traditions. Gold braid and ceremonial swords may be required.

Social activities form a significant part of our Club's year. While the Presentation Dinner may be our

premier event, the Club provides a range of social activities which we hope fits most members interests and budgets. We offer everything from weekly coffee mornings and breakfasts to monthly Sunday runs and annual weekends away or even longer tours.

Coffee Mornings and Breakfasts

Our coffee mornings introduced a couple of years ago have proved very popular with regular attendances in excess of 25 members not uncommon. The location at the



Yarralumla Play Station in Weston Park is ideal. Not only is the coffee excellent, but you can enjoy the ambience of the Park while looking out over a fine line-up of classic MGs. Not an SUV to be seen.

Monthly Runs and the Weekend Away

The social activities arranged in the past year included the local and regional monthly runs to various locations such as the very charismatic Captains Flat Hotel. Other pub destinations were to the rollicking Sunday atmosphere at the famous Gundaroo Pub and The Bredbo Inn. We also enjoyed a journey along less travelled backroads to find a remote pottery en route to the always popular Sutton Pie Shop. Another run was a midwinter tour of the Tidbinbilla Valley Loop followed by a hearty roast lunch near Tharwa.



Stanley and Michelle Van Wijk among their British cars





Monthly run - the ladies participating in the Gundaroo Run in August

Once the weather cleared, we enjoyed a picnic run returning down the scenic meandering Murrumbidgee Valley route to the very lush Wee Jasper Riverside Camping Ground. Another was a shorter drive downhill past Mt Stromlo and across the



MGs were on display at the Duntroon Dairy open day in April 2023 organised by the National Trust

bridge to gather at the Cotter Reserve. Particularly rainy weather persisted during last summer. This caused several events to be cancelled. Some of our other runs required rescheduling due to many severely dangerous unsafe potholed road surfaces.

Our intention is always to keep the distance of the Monthly Runs to not much more than an easily accomplished one hours drive. The number of cars joining us on these runs averaged about 10. The Club trailer remained quietly at rest and unused to retrieve any troubled travellers. I cannot recall any MG requiring assistance to get home safely. Members are clearly maintaining their MGs in good running order.

Our 2022 Christmas Party was held way down river at the Murrumbidgee Golf Club on the south side of Canberra. Some northern MG folk consulted their Google Maps and checked their passports to

ensure they could legally gain road access to this function held in the Deep South of Canberra. They all got through the border controls without incident. I resolved that it would be fair to all Club members to select a true northerly venue for Christmas in 2023.

Touring

The two principal tours offered to our club members this year were the longer Great Ocean Road Tour and the Annual Weekend Away. Weekend tours normally depart on Friday mornings and return by Sunday evening. Past destinations have included Forbes, Cowra, Kangaroo Valley, Orange, Wagga, Hill End, Southern Highlands, Jindabyne and several popular South Coast towns.

This year the destination for the Weekend Away was the Annual Batlow Cider Fest. The two day street party is held each May just down below the Snowy Mountain Ranges. People from far and near gather to sample the wide range of local cider and to try the hearty country finger food from food vans lining the main street. Lively entertainment is provided by charismatic local mountain bands playing from several stages along the main street of this hillside town.

Our group of 32 club members on the tour were accommodated in nearby Tumut due to the shortage of options in Batlow itself. The first leg of our route was south to Cooma to our lunch at the redeveloped Snowy Hydro display. After lunch, we were updated on the difficult issues faced by the engineers working on Snowy Hydro 2.0. Travelling via Kiandra, our MGs revelled in the open roads across the High Country and through the National Park. Passing by Talbingo the group were impressed by the late afternoon views across the Blowering Dam.

Tumut offers many choices of good pub food. We know where to eat. We've been there before to form part of the Festival of the Falling Leaf. Day One was a success. No problems with cars and smiling faces



Club cars gather in Weston park for the February monthly run

all around the table. The grim weather forecast for Saturday was the topic of discussion. Everyone had packed all their full winter gear and would need it all! Beanies, gloves, parkas and boots.



Arriving in Batlow after a climb up the range we found some car parking close to an entrance. It felt ready to snow. Glühwein was a great option. A crowd of very happy people were here already. Dancing started to be a good way to warm

up. Our Club President found herself a cute new Apple Shaped Beanie just like the locals were wearing. Things became challenging when the misty rain started but we found cover together to revel in the occasion. A wide choice of food was available and was most necessary. We all enjoyed ourselves.

Sunday was our final day. A short trip to the once prolific Adelong Goldfields Museum was a truly interesting stopover. Inspiring history was to be found in this remote building. We then sheltered in the historic Adelong Hotel for more hearty pub food.

Later our final stop together was to view the actual gold races where substantial volumes of alluvial gold was won. As we peered down into the gorge below to



see this living history we in turn were watched from high above by three circling eagles. Chilling!

I later led the remnants of the 2023 tour party along roads less travelled and northwards into the remote foothills of the northern section of the Snowy Mountain Range. Signposts were no longer to be seen so I worked a way home by guesstimate and choosing to avoid GPS. We later successfully rediscovered the Hume Highway well north of Gundagai.

A memorable Annual Weekend Away for us all.



Photos:

Above: An apple beanie, cider and surprises...

Below: The Batlow Cider Fest Touring Group showing typical MG exhuberance



Ladies Lunch Runs

Traditionally a car club is a club for the boys and their toys, but thanks to our active group of ladies (many of whom own their own classic cars) ably organised by Naomi Horsfield and Jo Blackburn, regular Ladies Lunches have been on our Club calendar for quite a while.

Held quarterly in the best seasons, the Ladies Lunches over the past year visited *The Carrington* in Bungendore (last summer), *Tallangandra Winery* in Gundaroo (in the autumn) and the *Yazzbar Winery* in Yass (spring 2023).

2024 is guaranteed to be just as good.



The Ladies lunch runs are always popular and a fun way to experience some of the best of the Canberra Region's wineries and eateries



Super Suppers, thank you Christine and Jan

Our Club monthly meetings always end with a delicious supper provided by the Club. It's a great opportunity to catch up with other Club members, ask additional questions of our guest speaker, and even have that sausage roll that is forbidden by the diet at home.

This year our suppers were provided by Christine Calder and Jan Kirk as a team effort. Always



provided, and always a great selection of food and drinks. Other supper helpers regularly seen during the year were Gail Argyle, Mo Dechaineux, Virginia Brown, Deb Whitfield, and Val Long.

Workshop Saturdays

While not strictly a social activity, the occasional Saturday mornings at our Club workshop and garage in Yallourn Street, Fyshwick, are an opportunity for members to come together to hear about something technical and to enjoy tea, coffee and a sticky bun plus a traditional sausage sandwich lovingly prepared on the Club barbecue by Glenn Hogan.

Over the past year, members attending the workshop mornings, some bitterly cold but with the edge taken off the cold by Glenn's sausages, learned the inner workings of various mechanical and electrical components as used on our cars: clutches, generators, distributors and more. Ably presented by Club experts such as Mike Stearn, Ewan Ward and Kent Brown, members were able to enjoy some social interaction and fill their empty stomachs all the while learning something useful that can be applied back home.

Peter



Glenn Hogan mans the barbecue at the Club Workshop

AWARDS

We celebrate contributions and achievements of our members...

This year we presented our Trophies and Awards for 2022-23 at our AGM in October. The award of trophies recognises involvement in Club activities and success in competitive events. Our Club has a long history of these trophies and presents a number of perpetual trophies and other awards each year.

2022-23 Trophy and Award winners are detailed below:

Awards for Contribution and Participation



The Garry Quayle Trophy - awarded to the Club member who has made the most significant contribution to the Club during the past year	John Cooper (above)
The Brian Darke Trophy - awarded to the Club member who uses their MG Pre-War, T Type or Y Type car in competition, display and/or social events to the greatest extent possible.	Ewan Ward MG YT
The Murray McFarlane Trophy - awarded to the Club member who uses their AH Sprite, MG Midget, MG Magnette (post 1956), MGA, or MGB, in competition, display and/or social events to the greatest extent possible	Trevor Finklair MGB GT
The Peter Daley Award - awarded to the Club member who uses their MG RV8, MG F/TF (post 1995), MG Z Series and subsequent models in competition, display and/or social events to the greatest extent possible	Malcolm Robertson MG ZT260
The Ken Lockwood Trophy - awarded to encourage members to participate in Club motor sport events	Glenn Kirk
The Boot Badge Trophy - awarded to the member with the most worthy hard luck story of the year	Brian Weston MG Midget
The Matthew Flinders Trophy - awarded to honour the year's most outstanding feat of (mis)navigation	Peter Dalton
The Safety Fast Trophy - awarded to the Club member who has made the most significant contribution to the Club's magazine 'Tappet Chatter'	Not awarded this year.

Awards for Motor Sport

The Nifty Octagon Award - awarded to the member accumulating the most points in motor sport competition events during the year	Kent Brown
The Steering Wheel Trophy - awarded to the member accumulating the most points in Motorkhana events during the year	Kent Brown
The Humbug Trophy - awarded to a junior member of the Club as a way of fostering the MG spirit and assuring the future of the MG marque and our Club	Not awarded this year

Awards for Restoration and Display

The Founders Trophy - awarded for the best completed MG or other eligible car restoration by a Club member.	Trevor Clement MGA
The Don Brown Trophy (Concours) - awarded to the outright winner of the Club's annual Concours d'Elegance	Rohan Moffitt MG TC
Pride of Ownership Award - awarded to the owner of the MG achieving the highest overall score in the Pride of Ownership Category at the Club's annual Concours d'Elegance	Laurie Gardiner MG TF1500
The Magic Midget Trophy - awarded to the owner of the vehicle judged by entrants and members of the public to be the most appealing MG at the Club's annual Concours d'Elegance event	Laurie Gardiner MG TF1500

The Founders' Award for Excellence in Restoration

Trevor Clement explains how it is done...



and labelling every part and storing everything where it can be found when needed. You have to remember that a car project requires three car spaces to do effectively as the chassis takes up one spot, the parts you have removed particularly the body panels take up another car spot and you still need room to work."

"And I couldn't have done it without Keren," says Trevor. "You really need to have a supportive and understanding spouse willing to be that extra pair of hands often needed, along with the

In an unexpected first for our Club, Trevor Clement won the Founders' Award for Excellence in Restoration for the second year in a row. This Award is not made every year as restorations are notoriously slow endeavours, but never-the-less, our Club is fortunate to have a strong restoration ethic and several members have won the award over the years for some stunning restorations: Mike Stearn for his Y saloon, Brian Oxley for his 1932 J2 and again a few years later for his 1931 F1 Magna; Dave Burns for his beautiful MGB and Malcolm Robertson for his K3 look-alike MG Special based on a TB/TC chassis.

Trevor won the Award many years ago for his classic MG TF and then in 2022 he won for his TC Special, a project that had kept him in the garage for several years. But here's the amazing thing. Barely one year later, in 2023, he has won the trophy again, this time for his Bardiman Grey MGA 1600.

Suitably impressed, we asked Trevor "how on earth do you restore an MGA from the ground up in twelve months?" Here's his reply:

"Having restored several cars and motor bikes over the years, I have developed a well refined process. All restorations start with a detailed photo shoot of every aspect of the project. Next comes the strip down which also involves more photos (thank goodness for digital cameras), bagging

words of encouragement with the regular cuppa and biscuit!"

"My biggest frustration is that being a perfectionist I am generally unable to achieve the standard of workmanship that I desire. I remain in awe of the old school panel beaters who can form and shape a flat sheet of steel into a body panel of compound curves. I must admit to being a great fan of YouTube and watching the experts doing what I am trying to do. I must also admit to turning a lot of steel sheeting into scrap in the process."

In answer to our first question, Trevor says that being retired and being restricted to the garage during COVID were really the keys to building the supercharged TC Special and restoring the MGA 1600 Roadster in consecutive years.

"And who knew you could get home delivery from the Auto Paint Suppliers!" he quips, with his trademark smile.



SPORTING

Kent Brown reports on the Club's motor sport activities...

The moniker of *Safety Fast!* has its origins one rainy day in 1929 when Ted Colegrove was driving behind one of the new Oxford buses. To warn those behind that it was fitted with brakes all round, and not just at the front so it could stop much quicker, painted on the back was a large Dewandre Triangle with 'Safety First!' emblazoned on it. Ted thought if it was altered to read 'Safety Fast!' it would be a wonderful slogan. When he went back to Kimber with his idea, he (Kimber) agreed.

During an interview in 1979, MG General Manager John Thornley gave his interpretation of 'Safety Fast!' "I have always done my best to persuade people that if they want a motor car to go faster, the first thing they look at is its stability, the second is the ability to stop it and the third to increase its power. In that order. I believe most race car designers would agree with that statement."

And so we have that ethos continuing in the sporting fraternity of MG Car Club Canberra today. The motorkhanas we run certainly look to John Thornley's first two points and the third never goes astray. The same applies in the various motorsport events contested by 11 club members during the year, although "more power" probably rates a little higher when circuit racing, driving in a supersprint, hillclimbing etc. than it does for motorkhanas.

Under the motorsport umbrella there are three Club trophies available to be won:

- The Steering Wheel Trophy
- The Nifty Octagon Trophy
- The Ken Lockwood Trophy



The Steering Wheel Trophy, won by Kent Brown this year, is awarded to the member accumulating the most points in Motorkhana events during the course of the year. The trophy was presented to the Club by club member Tony Argyle and was first awarded for the 1993/94 competition year. Trophy points are awarded to competitors on the basis of participation and performance (as reflected by overall placing) in each event.

The trophy was contested over the year when we conducted four very successful club (multi-club) motorkhanas, averaging around 35 competitors each event, on the Vehicle Manoeuvring Area at the Sutton Road Training Centre. Competition in the motorkhana event at the 2023 National Meeting in Adelaide also

accrued points. Glenn Kirk was successful winning Class ZB, MGF, at the Natmeet. Participation by club members was disappointing however with only six taking part. A good range of club volunteers assisted though, 19 in all.



The Nifty Octagon Trophy, won by Kent Brown this year, is awarded to the member accumulating the most points in competition events during the course of the year. The trophy was first awarded in 1985 and was named after 'Nifty' Neville Piper, the then Sporting Secretary. As for the Steering Wheel Trophy, points are awarded to competitors on the basis of participation and performance (as reflected by overall placing) in each event. But overall results for the Steering Wheel Trophy are also included in the total score.



Steering Wheel Trophy winner, Kent Brown, at a motorkhana in his MGBGT V8

The events, other than motorkhanas, in which club members participated were:

- Australian Racing Drivers Club (ARDC) 70th anniversary race meeting at Sydney Motor Sport Park (SMP)
- Historic Sports and Racing Car Association (HSRCA) Summer Festival and then Sydney Classic at SMP
- Golden Era of Auto Racing (GEAR) meetings at Pheasant Wood (Marulan) and SMP (Druitt Circuit)
- Victorian Racing Register (VHRR) Phillip Island Classic
- Winton Festival of Speed and then Historic Winton at Winton Motor Raceway (Benalla)
- Southern Districts Motorsport Association (SDMA) 1-lap hillclimbs at Fairbairn Park



Andrew Hutt in his very fast MGB V8 competes in a motorkhana



The Ken Lockwood Trophy, awarded to Glenn Kirk this year, commemorates the contribution made by Club member Ken Lockwood to the early development of the Club's motor sport activities. Ken was the Club's first competition (Sporting) Secretary and instigator of the

Club's first competitive events held in the Goose Paddock at the historic Lanyon Homestead. The purpose of this Trophy is to encourage Members to participate in Club sporting events. It is awarded by the Committee as an encouragement award to the Member who demonstrated the most enthusiasm for, and participation in, sporting events.

The range of MGs used by Club members this year in motorsport events included MGB, MGB GT, MGBGT V8, MGB V8 Roadster, MG Midget/AH Sprite, MG3, MGF, MG ZR 160 and MG T-Special. Drivers involved were Andrew Hutt, Robin McIver, Ian Reid, John Harriott, Amelia Starkey, Malcolm Robertson, Brian Weston, Kent Brown, Glenn Kirk and Audrey and Joe McGrail-Bateup. Clive Carling recently bought Peter Gentry's nicely set-up MGB GT and may be seen on the track next year.

Motorkhana – End of an Era. During the year a strategy was developed and implemented to hand over the running of future motorkhanas to a band of willing "young'uns". This was proceeding well and indeed all the club equipment had been handed over to the new team. However a few days after the August motorkhana, a meeting was called with Peter Hill, the CEO of Sutton Road Training Centre (SRTC).

Mr. Hill advised that motorsport events would not be conducted/permitted at the facility he "owns". Mr. Hill apparently did not understand, until recently, what a motorkhana actually was, and said that his organisation was ONLY for driver training, and is not a motorsport precinct in any way, shape or form. Over many years the MGCCC has regularly conducted motorkhanas at the facility and a quick check of records, revealed that around 40,000 individual pattern runs have been successfully timed with no injury to either a competitor or official.

During a lengthy meeting with Mr. Hill it was explained that a motorkhana is actually a non-speed event, as recognised by Motorsport Australia, and it was a fantastic opportunity for juniors, in particular, to learn car control.

Indeed, it was suggested to Mr. Hill that he may like to speak to seek the thoughts of Neal Bates who taught his children Harry and Lewis, now Australian Rally Champions, their basic car control skills at a number of our motorkhanas. Or Mr. Hill could talk to Rick Bates similarly. 5th Gear hire the Sutton Road facility from time-to-time for driver training. Mr. Hill declined.



Ian Reid at Wakefield Park in the Sprite he jointly campaigns with John Harriott

Mr. Hill had no issue with the MGCCC, how it ran the events or conducted itself as a hirer. He advised the Club would be welcome back at any time provided it had nothing to do with running a motorsport activity. Mr. Hill reaffirmed in conclusion that the SRTC was a driver training facility only and will not be used for any motorsport activity i.e. an event that is competitive in nature (even just against yourself) or involved timing.

And so ends the running of motorkhanas as a community grass roots motorsport activity in the Canberra region, unless of course another facility can be identified and hired.



Malcolm Robertson gets wet in his T-Special at Winton in May 2023
Photo from Geoff Colson



Robin McIver at Pheasant Wood Circuit in his new Group S MGB

Another race MGB had joined the club! It is a log-booked Group S (Motorsport Australia - Production Sports Cars) car. Robin McIver has purchased a very neat, purpose built, historic racing car. The powder blue MGB was built at Peninsula Sports Cars in Brookvale, Sydney by Richard Caller who worked as a mechanic for the business owner, Geoff Morse. Richard used the car several times but when "Morsey" sold his business to Darren Freeman the MGB was part of the deal. Darren has only used the "B" sparingly in historic events primarily at Sydney Motorsport Park.

The 1963 MGB Group Sb race car has a Motorsport Australia Historic Log Book and boasts a 45DCOE Weber, balanced, lightened billet crank, forged rods and pistons, competition bearings, race cam, roller rockers, ported and polished head, ceramic coated extractors, Oil cooler and large oil warning light, oil and coolant catch tanks, Tilton clutch, new alternator, fibreglass hardtop, full roll cage, window net, variable rev limiter, almost new R specs, current Sparco seat and harness, VTO Minilite wheels, new front calipers, yellow stuff race pads, rain light, reverse lock out, etc.

Robin has actively campaigned the car at GEAR meetings and also in a Regularity event at Winton Motor Raceway.



HSRCA Sydney Classic 10 June 2023 - Group S Grid

Wakefield Park, our nearest licensed race track, closed its gates in September 2022 as a result of noise complaints and a decision in the NSW Environment Court that placed massive restrictions on the venue such that it was no longer viable to operate. Subsequently the owners, Benalla Auto Club who also own and operate Winton Motoraceway, sold the business to Steve Shelley who owns the Pheasant Wood circuit at Marulan.

Steve Shelly and his family have done a massive amount of work to get the circuit operating again. Wakefield Park is now to be renamed as One Raceway. It is a

name that encapsulates the owner's passion to bring everyone together with a genuine sense of unity, community and respect. And the owners are aiming to launch One Raceway the first half of 2024.

In a move that redefines motorsport, they are introducing an Australian first: a dual-direction circuit. Each track will bear its own identity—unique names, individual records, and a distinct feel. This game-changing feature is set to challenge even the most seasoned racers while offering spectators a viewing experience like never before.



Amelia Starkey in her T-Special at Pheasant Wood

The southern noise wall is almost across the finish line, and the northern counterpart is well underway. These aren't just barriers; they're vantage points for fans. And rest assured, the owner's say, "we're keeping noise levels capped at 95dB."

After consulting with Motorsport Australia and Motorcycling Australia, the Shelley's are implementing safety features that aren't just essential—they're innovative and include revamped pit exits, improved

track corners, international-grade light panels, and advanced timing systems. There will be a complete circuit resurfacing and advanced drainage systems to keep the track race-ready, come rain or shine.

It will not just be sprucing up the asphalt but amplifying the overall experience, starting with a freshly resurfaced paddock as well.

We are very short of motor racing circuits and to have One Raceway operating cannot come soon enough.

Kent

DISPLAYS

Laurie Gardiner covers the Club's displays...

Terribly British Day 2022

Our annual Club display season kicks off with the Terribly British Day in early December each year. For 2022, our theme was to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the introduction of the MGB and the call went out for as many MGBs to join the display as possible. The troops rallied to the cause and we had an excellent line-up of cars with Robert Leticq's beautiful red MGB winning the coveted "Best MGB" accolade.

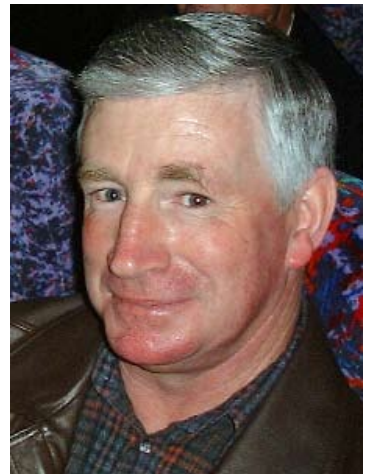
As always at Terribly British, we had a wide display of MGs for the lovers of English-built cars to marvel over. These ranged from David Thomson's black MGTC which was hiding among the Triumphs (David's second love) to Malcolm Robertson's rare V8 MG ZT-T 260, the last of the MGs built in England before the factory went into liquidation in 2005.

Also on display were several more T-series cars including Brian Calder's recently purchased MG TD, two MGAs including Trevor Clement's freshly restored

MGA 1600, Mick O'Brien's MGC, Simon Braun's RV8 and a good collection of the later MGF and TF models. Overall, an excellent showing from our Club.

Shannon's Wheels 2023 Display

The Club launched our 100 years of MGs theme at the 2023 Shannons Wheels Display held at Queanbeyan Showgrounds on 19th February 2023. Our approach to this display was to showcase MGs through the decades, starting with the 1920s and progressing through to the 2000s. Thanks to a great participation by Club members, we were able to present a very extensive and eye-catching display on the day, which resulted in the MG Car Club Canberra being awarded the Shannons Best Car Club Display Trophy.



Robert Leticq's MGB won the Best MGB accolade at our Terribly British Day 60th Anniversary of the MGB display

Standout displays were the "War Years Decade" complete with a Spitfire Fighter Pilot (courtesy of Rowan Moffitt) and some beautiful T Types to complement the soldiers, sailors, and airmen on display with their trusty rides. Not to be outdone, we also had some very smart turnouts from the "Baby Boomers Decade" complete with period prams and bubs (courtesy of Ewan) and the extensive range of "MG Race Specials" on show. This display also allowed the Club to conduct its own annual Concours and Pride of Ownership judging on the day. Overall, a very rewarding display which showcased MGs through the decades.



Triumph owners wonder how David Thomson's MG TC somehow came to be in their midst



The "War Years" decade display at Wheels 2023 attracted a lot of interest from visitors to the show



Above: Richard Simpson's MG Y Tourer at Wheels 2023

Battle of Waterloo

The Club was again well represented at the BoW Display event conducted on 18th June 2023. The display allowed the British and French Car Clubs to do battle on the day for the most cars on parade. Our Club contributed significantly to the parade ground, and we were able to send the "Frogs" packing again in 2023 with lots of oil drips mixed with their croissants as they were frog-marched away from the Battle. Overall, a great day and enjoyed by all who attended.

Below: Rohan Moffitt's concours-winning MG TC complements the fully-kitted out WWII aviator at Wheels 2023



Above: MGAs at Wheels 2023



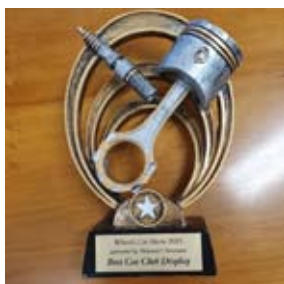
Above: Detail is all-important for concours presentation - Kent Brown's MGBGT V8

Canberra Rally Display Day

This event was staged to celebrate the 100 Years of MGs and catered in particular for the Pre-War Cars and the T & Y Types. The display event held at the National Museum of Australia on 30th September 2023 attracted over 100 vehicles and with the blessing of a beautiful Canberra Spring Day, the participation by participants and the public was outstanding. Thanks to the successful planning of Malcolm Robertson, Brian Calder, Kent Brown, and Ewan Ward this event was an outstanding success.

Although a National event combining the biennial rallies of the Australian Pre-War MG Register and the MG Car Club Canberra's MG TYme, cars from our Club were well-represented at the Display.

Photos from the Rally are elsewhere in this edition of Tappet Chatter, but among many Club cars, it was good to see Alex O'Grady's cream TD, David Bailey's grey TD, and Geoff Piddington's TC Special in the line-up, along with Yvonne Earle's black TD owned and used by her late husband Terry for so many years.



Left: The Shannons Best Club Display Award was won by the MG Car Club Canberra



Competition MGs line up at Wheels 2023: Kent Brown's MGB (obscured); Malcolm Robertson's Blue Streak Special (car 12), John Harriott's Sprite, Ian Reid's Sprite and the Bruce family's Old Number One replica, the Kimber



Above: Yvonne Earle's TD and Geoff Piddington's TC Special, and Right: Alex O'Gradys TD, at the National Museum display, September 2023

Display Events and our Pride in Presentation.

Display events as organised and conducted by the Club over the past 12 months always bring joy to those attending. Be it those just getting into their first real MG or families of previous MG owners that see first-hand what the MG Marque is about. And there are always many funny stories associated with owning an MG.

Of course, for those perhaps attending their first display day in the new "pride and joy" it allows for that important networking and "esprit de corps" to be shown to fellow Club members and the public with respect to the MG Marque.

The pride taken by our members in displaying their vehicles at display days is not lost on those attending with the positive engagement by fellow members and the public.

Laurie



NUTS & BOLTS

Greg Whitfield outlines the work that goes on behind the scenes to keep the Club running ...

The nuts and bolts of the Club are the things that you the members benefit from but often don't see the underlying work. For our first Yearbook, I thought I would cover several of these in some detail to give you a taste of what goes on behind the scenes to give the Club its soul.

Membership

So, what about our membership? A quick check of our membership records reveals that our numbers have pretty well remained constant for at least the past decade; perhaps even longer than that. On average we have around 300 members which includes spouses/partners and a very small number of under 18s as part of a family membership. With numbers like that we continue to be the largest single marque club in the ACT. We get an approximate 10-15% churn over a membership year. The churn comes from members leaving the ACT or selling their vehicles; the latter often because of age-related mobility constraints. That said, while numbers usually drop at the time of membership renewal, those losses are generally replaced by new members over the new membership year.

Nearly 80% of our members are over the age of 60, so hip and knee (suspension) replacements, and general ageing, generally contribute to decisions to part with an MG, most often with a great regret.

Our membership is not restricted to the ACT; we have members from Goulburn to the north, Yass to the west, Cooma to the south and a sprinkling of members from Wollongong and southwards along the NSW coast.

We generally see a distribution of interests in club activities. Approximately 80 or so of our 300 members would be what might be described as active members, the vast majority of these participating in our social events. Others would include a small group of motorsport competitors and enthusiasts and then those more inclined to be involved in display events. Our status as an authorised club for concessional registration purposes in both the ACT and NSW means we also have a number of members who join primarily to access the respective schemes.

Quite a significant change was introduced this year with respect to membership renewals with the implementation of an online process using Jotform. This process combined an annual membership renewal reminder together with a feature to update personal details to keep such things such as addresses and contact numbers up to date. The automation of renewals provided a welcome reduction in the workload of the membership secretary as well as

a decrease in the amount of paper forms used each year. Grateful thanks to Ewan Ward for developing this process



Concessional Registration Scheme (CRS)

April 2023 saw the long-awaited introduction of a new Concessional Registration Scheme (CRS) for Vintage, Veteran and Historic vehicles in the ACT. The Council of ACT Motor Clubs (CACTMC) had lobbied the ACT Government for a number of years to review the previous scheme, largely the desire to mirror similar State schemes which included modified vehicles as well as providing more generous "unrestricted" use conditions.



There were two major changes to the new scheme. The first provided 60-days of unrestricted use of the vehicle (in addition to any authorised club organised events) and secondly, the inclusion of a modified historic vehicle category. Modified historic vehicles were previously excluded from the scheme.

The ACT and NSW differ in the latter category with NSW having a large list of defined modifications permitted under the NSW scheme whereas the ACT scheme is less defined; essentially if the vehicle is not in original condition, it is classified as modified. Modified vehicles however have to be inspected at the ACT's Hume Inspection Station and have those modifications approved before they can be accepted into the scheme.

We have 133 vehicles on our books with a number of our members having more than one historic vehicle (and some motor cycles) on the concessional rego scheme. Some of the more unusual vehicles include an MG J2, a rare 1935 Wolseley Hornet Special, a highly modified V8 MGB roadster and a pink 1973 Leyland Mini Moke.

An almost immediate (and foreseen) result of the introduction of the scheme was a sudden increase in membership applications to many of the CACTMC clubs, primarily to obtain CRS privileges for modified vehicles such as hot-rods and street machines. Our

club was not immune from applications, but with a constitutional limit on the number of MG owners vs non-marque owners in the club, a number of non-marque applicants were rejected and directed to more appropriate clubs. This limit was imposed to retain the spirit and objective of a single marque club.

The new scheme still requires vehicles to be visually verified annually by a club registrar in order to obtain the necessary form for concessional registration purposes. Interestingly, while the ACT allows the completed form to be submitted by email with the rego renewal processed online, the NSW scheme still requires an original hard-copy form together with an annual safety inspection report, both of which have to be physically presented to a Service NSW centre or mailed by post.

The new scheme now affords vehicle owners with more opportunity to drive their prized autos but also allows the general public to see these special vehicles on many more occasions aside from the usual competition and show and shine events.

Library

The Club library continues to operate quietly in the background. There have been no purchases during the year but there have been several donations to the library. A list of books held by the library is now up on the Club Website so have a look at what we hold and contact the Club librarian or come along to the Club Monthly General Meeting to borrow the book you have been longing to read.

Regalia

The MGCC carries a wide range of apparel and hardware that can be purchased at club meetings or by arrangement with the regalia manager. With the commissioning of the new website, a full stocktake was carried out which provided a great opportunity to photograph all of the stock items so they could be displayed online. A one-off purchase of "letterman" style MG emblazoned jackets in red and blue with

white piping was a huge success with all jackets selling the moment they became available. Club regalia is a proud emblem of our shared passion for these classic British cars. The logo adorned on everything from hats to jackets unites us in a sense of belonging. Our regalia represents more than just attire, it's a symbol of enduring love for MGs and displays our affiliation with the club. Each piece of regalia is a statement of our dedication to preserving the legacy of MGs cars.

Website

The previous Committee had reviewed options for the Club's website and had recommended the adoption of the MYCCO system. Standing for My Car Club Online, the MYCCO website template was developed by Andrew McCurdie, the developer and operator of the British Car Buy, Sell, Swap website and a dedicated car club person. The MYCCO template is designed specifically for car clubs and is intended to be easy to use for non-IT literate people such as the majority of your Committee members.

The Committee agreed to subscribe to MYCCO and in September and October last year content from our old website was migrated across and new material added before the new site went live in December.

Several committee members now have access to the back end of the new site and are able to up-date sections of the site under the overall guidance of the webmaster (currently Malcolm Robertson). The webmaster also holds the keys to the Club's Gmail address, the Mail Chimp account for sending out our formatted Communiqués and other notices, and the Club's Dropbox, but committee members also have access to these, with several now involved as Club scribes in compiling and editing the Communiqués, thus sharing the technical roles and editorial load.

Greg



Laurie Gardiner's exquisite TF1500 "Tiffany" won the People's Choice for T-types at the Centenary Rally this year

FIRST WORD LAST

Malcolm Robertson rounds out our first "Tappet Chatter - the Yearbook" with some editorial comment ...

In 1975, when Brian Oxley and I, were both driving TFs (that's mine below, TF9795) as our daily cars, we resurrected the MG Car Club Canberra with help from the legendary Geoff Venn and a couple of other T-type owners. Our guiding philosophy was written into our first Newsletter (right) which came out in February 1976. Simply: "The old club faded away through lack of support; this club does not expect support but if you are prepared to give it, then all the better for the club."

That was nearly 50 years ago, and with that guiding principle and a lot of hard work by many dedicated MG owners, we now have a strong and thriving MG Car Club. Occasionally a committee might grizzle about lack of support, but overall the broad range of activities your Club offers today is down to members putting their hands up and taking on roles and jobs.

A quick skim through this first *Yearbook* makes you realise what a fabulous Club the MG Car Club Canberra is today. Thank you to everyone who has chipped in over the years to bring us to this milestone point: past presidents, members of the committee, people who have taken on non-committee roles and you, the members, who join in, front up, and generally participate in Club activities. As Brian and I recognised back in 1975, everyone has another life outside the Club and the extent to which each and every one of us can participate depends on what's going on in that other life.

This first *Yearbook* is a milestone in the Club's evolution. We started out with a one page (two sided) Roneoed newsletter which I wrote and Liz typed up. It grew in size and stature, took on a name

(*Tappet Chatter*, thanks to Don and Margaret Brown), became a monthly printed magazine, and finally morphed into the electronic era under Mark Horsfield's guidance. Sadly, it became a job too big for any one person and after Mark stepped back, no one was willing to take it on.

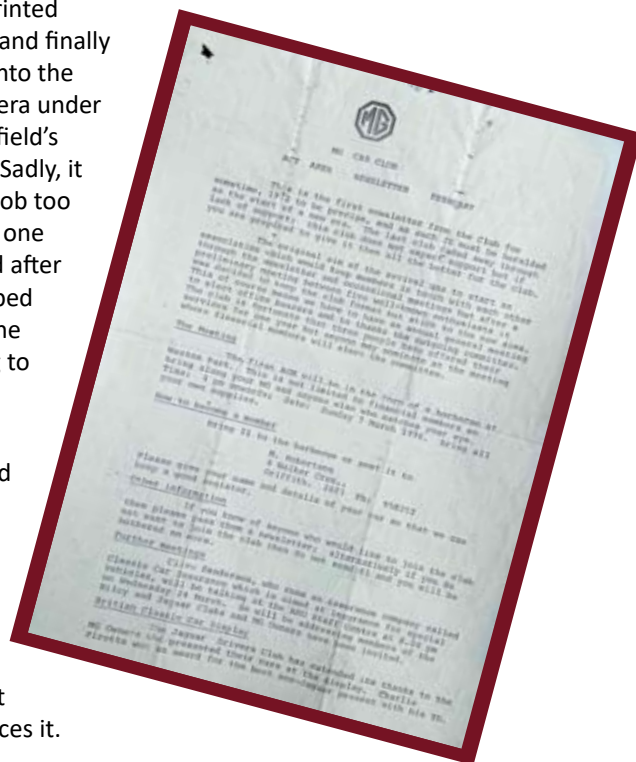
And so the Club moved to the bi-monthly electronic Commu-niqué and the team effort that produces it.

I personally believe there is still a place for a printed magazine. This first edition of the *Yearbook* keeps the *Tappet Chatter* name alive, gives you something to browse though and read at your leisure, as well as tests the waters for something that captures the heart and soul of the MG Car Club Canberra and its members, while being less arduous to edit.

Just as I was happy to be your first newsletter editor in 1976, I'm delighted now to be the first editor of the new *Yearbook*. I hope you like it, and that it will continue into the future, at least until some new technology renders it obsolete. Please let the Committee know what you think: committee@mgcccanberra.org.au

Finally, thank you to everyone who has written something for this publication or taken the photos. Without your contributions, the magazine would not be possible.

Malcolm



FROM THE ARCHIVES



*MG Car Club Motorkhana, Canberra Showgrounds, 8 March 1970. Geoff Venn MG TC
Canberra Times photo*



*Motorkhana practice - Narrabundah Oval 1970 - Paul Atkin MGA Coupe, Bruce Shirmer TF, Geoff Venn TC
Photographer unknown*



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