



An incorporated club

A0035462V

A friendly family social motoring club

Edition 128

May 2009

REFINED PERFORMANCE IN RED!



A proud Brent Gazzaniga shows off his pride and joy, a fine red E-Type Jaguar which looks super-purposeful and is a well-known car for giving extremely refined and satisfying performance. See story about how this car was rescued last February on Page 8.

Please send in photographs of your British Classic so that it can be featured here – otherwise, definitely more Jowett pictures!

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

The annual membership subscription for the ABCCC Inc. is \$35.00. There is a once only joining fee of \$30.00. Please send membership subscriptions to:

Pat Douglas

PO Box 201

Chirside Park VIC 3116

Please Note: Membership subscriptions should be paid prior to the end of December.

Your ABCCC News

THE ALL BRITISH CLASSICS CAR CLUB (VICTORIA) INC., FOUNDED SEPTEMBER 23rd 1997
THE ABCCC IS AN ACTIVE MEMBER CLUB OF THE ASSOCIATION OF MOTORING CLUBS INC.
Club Founder – The Late Frank E Douglas

"Owning And/Or Appreciating The Spirit Of Fine British Classics"

THE ALL BRITISH CLASSICS CAR CLUB – YOUR COMMITTEE

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<http://www.abccc.com.au>

IMPORTANT CLUB INFORMATION

The All British Classics Car Club (Victoria) Inc, (ABCCC) is a fully incorporated club in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Act. Accordingly, any publication or document officially issued by the ABCCC must carry the ABCCC's Association Incorporation Registered Number: A00035462V.

The Official Club Magazine – *Your ABCCC News*

The publication, *Your ABCCC News*, is the official magazine of the ABCCC Inc. It is published once a month, with the exception of December each year. The magazine's issue date is during the week of the 25th of each month. To make the Editor's task a little easier, it is requested that articles, event information and photographs are with the Editor prior to the 14th of each month. Articles published in *Your ABCCC News* may be used without permission, however, the ABCCC does ask that appropriate acknowledgement be given.

For those members who receive their issue of *Your ABCCC News* via E-mail, the magazine will be available to download from the ABCCC Website at the same time that the printed copy of the magazine is mailed to those who do not have access to the Internet.

Disclaimer

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All correspondence should be addressed to the Editor *Your ABCCC News*, 59 Rowson Street, Boronia, Victoria, 3155. Other Editorial contact information is listed above.

It is club policy to have the right to refuse placement of advertising material in *Your ABCCC News*, from those who are not members of the ABCCC Inc.

The Victorian Club Permit Scheme

The ABCCC Inc. is a club that is authorised by VicRoads to operate vehicles under the Victorian Club Permit Scheme (VCPS). On the Committee there are two VCPS Officers and their contact details are listed above.

Club members will be kept up to date with respect to changes and improvements to the VCPS. However, it cannot be stressed enough, that a vehicle operated on the VCPS, must carry the VicRoads Permit (current), the AOMC VCPS Handbook and a copy of *Your ABCCC News* that contains details of the event the permitted vehicle is participating in. All enquiries should be addressed to the VCPS Officers.

ABCCC EVENTS DIRECTORY 2009

Note: All events listed in this directory are placed in good faith. Events for inclusion must be with the magazine editor prior to the 14th of each month. Events organised by other clubs or associations have a contact telephone number, that should be contacted prior to the event, if giving consideration to take part in it, to confirm date and venue.

May 2009

- 3 Cream Sponge Tea and Classic Run – An ABCCC Event Geoff & Judy Birkett (03) 9755 1772
Venue – Meet at Sassafras CFA Station (Melways Map 75, Ref. D1), Ferny Creek, Victoria.
- 10 Run For Bollygum Park – An ABCCC Attend Event George Chrystie 0429 382 409
Charity run from Whittlesea to Kinglake.
Start Venue – Whittlesea Secondary College, Laurel St, Whittlesea, Victoria (Melways Map 246, G9/10).
- 17 RACV Classic Showcase – An ABCCC Supported Event Mike Allfrey (03) 9729 1480
Venue – Members' Car Park Lawns, Flemington Racecourse, enter from Epsom Road.
- 17 AHMF Motoring Heritage Day – The Australian Historic Motoring Federation
This is a get out and about in your classic motor car for a day.

June 2009

- 12 – 14 Weekend Retreat to Bright – An ABCCC Event Frank Sawyer 0408 633 778
Venue – Riverbank Park Motel, Bright, Victoria.

July 2009

- 5 Wool Museum and Ford Centre Visit – An ABCCC Event Anne Tootell 0412 549 906
Venue – Geelong, Victoria.
- 18 The Great ABCCC Trivia Challenge – An ABCCC Saturday Event Geoff Birkett (03) 9755 1772
Venue – Lilydale International Club, Nelson Road, Lilydale, Victoria.
- 26 Christmas In July Luncheon – An ABCCC Event Colin Brown (03) 5964 9291
This is our club's Annual 'Dinner', an event not to be missed. Mobile 0408 343 176
Venue – Marybrooke, 10 Sherbrooke Rd, Sherbrooke.

August 2009

- 2 Di & Nello's Big Day Out – An ABCCC Event Diane Mafodda (03) 9719 7949
Venue – TBA.
- 14 – 21 ABCCC Holiday – An ABCCC Overseas Event Marjorie Pepper (03) 9439 7875
Destination – Burnt Pine Township, Norfolk Island, Pacific Ocean.

September 2009

- 2 Maxine's Picnic Day – An ABCCC Mid-week Event Maxine Pettigrew (03) 9739 1146
Note: An event not to be missed.
Venue – TBA.
- 13 A Special Club Run – An ABCCC Event Pat Douglas (03) 9739 4829
Venue – Tynong North, Victoria.
- 27 Diesel-hauled Out Of Nyora – An ABCCC Event Heather Cannon (03) 5659 0624
South Gippsland Tourist Railway and Lunch Trip.
Venue – Meet at 13 Hatch's Road, Nyora, Victoria.

October 2009

- 2 – 4 **Indulgence '09** – An ABCCC Event Peter McKiernan (03) 9787 6003
Venue Destination is Secret, but it will be exceptional.
- 17 – 18 Como Gardens Open Day – An ABCCC Assist Event George Hetrel (03) 9761 1341
Venue – Como Gardens, 79 The Basin – Olinda Road, The Basin, Victoria.
- 25 RACV City To Cape Run – AOMC Inc. Iain Ross (03) 9890 0524
Start – Melbourne. Finish – RACV Cape Schanck Resort, Victoria.

November 2009

- 2 Yarra Glen Races – An ABCCC Cup Day Display Event Colin Brown (03) 5964 9291
Venue – Yarra Glen Racecourse, Yarra Glen, Victoria. Mobile 0408 343 176
- 14 – 15 Bendigo National Swap Meet – FVV & CVC Inc, Booking Officer 0427 446 660
Venue – Prince of Wales Showgrounds, Bendigo, Victoria.
- 15 ABCCC Members' Grandchildren's Picnic – An ABCCC Event Marjorie Pepper (03) 9439 0264
Venue – Werribee Open Range Zoo, Werribee, Victoria.
- 20 Visit To Heronswood Diggers Café – An ABCCC Event Heather & Tom Cannon (03) 5659 0264
Venue – Heronswood, 105 Latrobe Parade, Dromana, Victoria.

December 2009

13 Christmas Luncheon – An ABCCC Event
Venue – Mornington Golf Club, Mornington, Victoria.

Tony Pettigrew (03) 9739 1146

June 2010

6 – 8 A Special Weekend Away – An ABCCC Event
Venue – Tocumwal, New South Wales.

Frank Sawyer 0408 633 778

?????? 2010

? - ? Two Clubs Reunion – An ABCCC Event
Meet with the ABCCC Queensland Group.
Venue – Historic Richmond, New South Wales.

Frank Sawyer 0408 633 778

THE VICTORIAN CLUB PERMIT SCHEME AND THIS DIRECTORY

IMPORTANT, BE AWARE OF: All ABCCC 'noted events' in the Events Directory above are VCPS authorised. To qualify for the VCPS, under the auspices of the All British Classics Car Club Inc., your VCPS permitted motor car must attend a minimum of three (3) club-run events per year, from the date of the motor car's permit issue.

VICTORIAN CLUB PERMIT SCHEME RENEWALS

For your Victorian Club Permit Scheme (VCPS) renewal, please forward your completed renewal form to Colin Brown, PO Box 40, Coldstream, Victoria, 3770. Please enclose a stamped envelope addressed to VicRoads, along with a cheque/money order for your VCPS fee, and I will sign on behalf of the club and forward it on to VicRoads for you.

NEW VCPS APPLICATIONS

For members wanting to place a motor car on the VCPS under the auspices of our club. Please contact Nello Mafodda on (03) 9719 7949, who is the ABCCC VCPS Officer In Charge. Nello will be able to provide all the information required to place a motor car on the VCPS.

Nello's position is entirely voluntary, so due consideration should be given when contacting him.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Times have been mighty hectic of late and, hopefully, we will be back to normality soon. Our Chauffeur for the RACV Fly The Flag Tour, Ted Cockrell and his partner, Sheila Hinchcliffe, enjoyed the Tour very much. They think that there is no such event in Britain, particularly not having four-hundred plus people sitting down to a good evening meal each evening of the Tour and being so well entertained too. They were amazed at the friendly welcome given to them by so many Tour participants, and they have asked for their thanks to be passed on.

As usual, the Editorial Rover performed well on the Tour and treated the hill country with utter disdain. Ted was mighty disturbed at having to drive down the dirt road near Stanley on our way to Myrtleford. He had never driven on such a road before, and particularly on such a steep downhill grade – it was mastered with great caution.

We have some very good firming up of our events calendar. Be sure not to miss Frank's weekend retreat to Bright for our June weekend away. There is also our annual luncheon, this time taking place in the Dandenong Hills' beautiful Sherbrooke Forest area. There is a cut-off type booking form on Page 14 of this issue. Be sure to book early on this one!

Of greater urgency, is letting Geoff and Judy Birkett know that you are coming on the Cream Sponge Run, which is being held on 3rd May.

Mike Allfrey.

A WARM WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

A hearty welcome to the well-oiled machine that is the All British Classics Car Club. Our club is one of the fastest growing motoring interest clubs in this country. We hope to be able to welcome you and, in actual fact, your British classic motor car, at one of our events soon. Our club aims to have two motoring events each month, so there are plenty of fabulous events for you to select from. Welcome, each of you!

Name	Make Of Car	Model	Year
Clive & Helen Benoy	Austin	10 (Litchfield)	1936
	Austin	10 (Cambridge)	1937
	Morris	Minor 1000	1961
	Austin-Healey	Sprite (2A)	1962

Pat Douglas – Membership Secretary.



THE 8th RACV FLY THE FLAG TOUR



Early on Saturday 21st March, two-hundred and five heritage vehicles from Victoria and interstate, gathered at Government House (Melbourne) for the keenly anticipated flag-off for the RACV Fly The Flag Tour, that is organised by the All British Classics Car Club (Victoria) each year. This, the eighth Tour, it was the north east of Victoria that would be explored by the cavalcade of varied and gleaming motor vehicles. A hearty cooked breakfast was provided on the lawns in front of the imposing façade of Government House.

Soon it was time for RACV President and Chairman of the Board, John Isaac, to officially welcome the participants, congratulate them on the splendid condition of their motor vehicles and then to formally flag them off on their North-eastern Tour. Soon, there was a colourful cavalcade of flag bearing motor vehicles with such names as Alvis and Austin through Morris, Mercury and Mercedes-Benz to a well presented (Ford) Zephyr utility to round off the alphabet of marques.

The route this year took the Tour to overnight stops at Kerang, Yarrawonga, Shepparton, Beechworth and Mansfield. The Tour stayed in Beechworth for two nights, with a loop run to Mount Beauty in between. The finish was at Lilydale in Melbourne's east. In all, a total of 1,386 kilometres were covered by the route, and there was a good variety of terrain to suit touring needs. There were long straight roads as well as the twisting challenges of the Great Dividing Range. The RACV Fly The Flag Tour also passed through burnt out areas devastated by the recent bush fires. People in towns close to those areas were pleased to see the Tour go through their areas.

One of the principal objectives of the Tour is to have local people involved by coming to the roadside along the way and waving flags at the passing cavalcade of motoring history. The Tour also involves local primary school children who, waving flags and cheering, watch the cars pass by just after morning flag-off ceremonies. At the Tour's single-sitting evening meals, the local Mayors are invited to officially welcome the Tour into their shires. They were also presented with a commemorative Tour Plaque as a memento of the occasion.

This year there was a full entry and amongst them were some splendid examples of the heritage motoring scene. Geoff and Judy Birkett's MGA, on its first lengthy run after an immaculate restoration, was a very reliable performer. Other cars of note were the fine Triumph Stag entered by Colin and Jenny Thomas from Bendigo, the very imposing Jensen 541-R entered by Robin and Anne Jervis-Read, the superb MG Magnette entered by Ken and Caroline Armstrong keeping good company with no less than five TF model MGs. There were also the three Morgan 4/4s that added a splash of colour wherever they were driven – always in close company. Another car of note was the expansive Ford Galaxie entered by Bill and Terri Allen.

A highlight of this year's Tour was a visit to the homestead called Byrramine, just a short distance east of Yarrawonga, on the Murray Valley Highway. This is a very interesting house which has a sensible arrangement of rooms surrounding a central entrance hall. From above the dividing walls would resemble the spokes of a wheel. Morning tea served under the spreading elms, planted in 1842, was a special occasion. Another highlight of the day was the lunchtime visit to Kyabram's famous Fauna Park.

It was very pleasing to walk around Beechworth on the Tuesday afternoon, and see so many fine vehicles resting while their passengers enjoyed the freedom of the Tour-provided Beechworth Precinct Passes. The town certainly knew we were there!

Staying in Beechworth meant that the RACV Fly The Flag Tour could make a leisurely scenic tour to Mount Beauty and Yackandandah. It did rain a little, but no one was heard to complain. The Tour passed through the small township of Stanley and soon after, there was a well preserved gravel road down the hill through extensively burnt forest. Then, virtually the entire Tour contingent stopped for morning tea at the well known Myrtleford Lodge Aged Care Home, where the staff put on a refreshing cuppa. The people staying at the home, spent quite a time reminiscing about cars they had owned. This was a very special break in the day's touring and thanks are due to Mary and her staff for making the Tour so welcome.

While in Beechworth there was a lively auction, ably conducted by Bill Wellwood, to raise funds for the RACV Community Foundation. The amount raised by the auction was in excess of \$18,000 and there were forty lots of



donated items. There was spirited bidding for such as Tour Number 001 for the 2010 RACV Fly The Flag Tour, as there was for a flag featuring the Tour badge, signed by everyone on the Tour. Bill kept the bidders well entertained during bidding and in between lots. Thanks are due to those who so generously donated items for the auction. The RACV should also be thanked for producing the informative auction catalogue.

Left: The Businessman's Express sets off for Lilydale.

There was quite an interest in the Beechworth Police Paddock morning display before the flag-off ceremony

that sent the cavalcade on its way to Mansfield. At the following morning's flag-off, the Tour cavalcade was given a rousing send off by excited children from the Primary Schools waving their flags and shouting encouragement! On the run down to the International Club at Lilydale, Alexandra was filled with heritage vehicles while their owners sought morning refreshments.

There were nine classes of awards presented during the end of Tour luncheon. The awards and recipients were:

1. Best Vintage Car

1930 Ford 'A' Model – Evan & Rachelle Paton

2. Best Early Classic Car

1934 Chevrolet Master – Geoff & Lisa Odgers

3. Best Classic Car

1961 Chrysler Valiant – Peter & Michelle Flavelle

4. Best Modern Classic Car

1981 Porsche 911 – David & Jill Hosking

5. Best Open Sports Car

1961 MG 'A' 1,600 Roadster. – Geoff & Judy Birkett

6. Best Family Car

1965 Holden HD – Ian McKenzie & Tracy Robertson

7. Best Car Overall

1935 Ford Coupe – John Provis & Lynn Irwin

8. President's Choice Car

1963 Jaguar Mk II – Arthur & Clare Williams

9. The Frank E Douglas Perpetual Award

1950 Fiat Topolino – Ray & Wendy Hudson

There are a number of organisations and people to thank for making the RACV Fly The Flag Tour the success that it most certainly was. Thanks are due to the Marong Football Club, the Kerang Lions Club, the Mount Beauty Lions Club, who kept the Tour replete, the All British Classics Car Club who provided the marshals who made the Tour guidance and parking so easy, the RACV for sponsorship and touring facilities and, last but not at all least, the Tour Organiser, Tony Pettigrew, for keeping the entire Tour on track and on time. Special thanks must also go to the several Shires that made the RACV Fly The Flag Tour so welcome in their localities. Further thanks are due to the participants who so enthusiastically took part in all of the activities along the way.

Tried for the first time were special flag-offs with five TF MGs leading the field on one day, the Mercedes-Benz entrants and the three Morgans on other mornings. This idea was appreciated and worked well.

It was indeed a splendid Tour!



Keith Anderson's fine Rover at the start.

Robin & Anne Jervis-Read are flagged off.(Below)



Mike Allfrey – A Tour Participant.

A TOUR WITH TWO REASONS

The annual RACV "Fly the Flag" Tour took place in March, 2009 with the normal popularity. Over 200 cars took part, the oldest being a 1924 Vauxhall 30/98. Three Morgans also took part in this 850 mile event. Leaving Melbourne on a cool overcast Saturday morning, we travelled north via the gold town of Bendigo. Our first overnight stop was at Kerang. This run proved to be just over 200miles. I must admit that I was so looking forward to my arrival. Driving in full sun and 34 degrees of heat is not conducive to driving and enjoying Morganeering. Over 400 participants enjoyed our first dinner and entertainment.

Our second day again broke with blue skies and sunshine, although a little cooler. We travelled along the mighty "Murray River" valley. The river though is far from being majestic due to the prolonged drought, (now running at 8 years). Passing through the picturesque river port town of Echuca, we made our way onto our second overnight stop at Mulwala. This beautiful little town is on the NSW side of the Murray River. Dinner was held at the local Golf Club with its marvellous amenities.

Day three commenced with a short drive to visit a Homestead built in the 1800s (you have got to remember that our history is much younger than most). The home was that of Elizabeth Hume. This lady was an immigrant from England and she was instrumental in the opening up of Eastern Areas of Australia. We then travelled on to Kyabram where we had lunch and a short break. From that we journeyed onto Shepparton. The City of Shepparton

is renowned for its wine and fruit growing because of its temperate climate. Once again, our dinner was superb and the entertainment was just right.

The following day we drove to Beechworth. This small town located in the northern border hills of Victoria was affected by the recent bush fires. To have 400 people arrive and stay for two nights sure gave a boost to the local economy. Staying for two nights allowed us to explore the local area which includes Mount Beauty and Myrtleford. The last night in Beechworth, the Tour Organisers had this to say..... "For those of you are not aware, 2009 is the Centenary of the Morgan Motor Company. To celebrate this occasion, the committee would like to call on the three participating Morgans to lead off in the morning's flag off.

That honour of lead Morgan was given to me, where I was to drive through the streets of Beechworth with 200 classic and vintage cars behind me. Leaving Beechworth we headed for our next destination. A distance of 120miles brought us to the Victorian town of Mansfield. Again, the evening was enjoyed by all, this time with a wonderful Fancy Dress Party.



A part of the centenary celebration, the three Morgans are flagged-off from Beechworth.

It was at the town of Mansfield that we started to travel through the bushfire affected areas. To say the least, it was horrific. It was like a war zone. I am not sure that to show my car against such destruction is a good thing.



Morgans alongside Black Saturday's devastation, near Buxton and Narbethong.

Now, you may wonder why I titled this report "A Tour with Two Reasons".

The first reason was to enjoy the marvellous motoring event in some of Victoria's most beautiful countryside. The second reason was to visit the devastated areas and call on the communities destroyed by the February fires and try to inject some support, both financial and emotional. Since the fires tourism to these areas has slowed completely and several areas are suffering. They have requested all to come again and visit and support them.

Phil Cook.

AN E-TYPE JAGUAR IS RESCUED!

My name is Brent Gazzaniga, a recent member of the ABCCC. I am also an active volunteer CFA Fire-fighter and have been involved in many of the recent fires around the state. During this time I have witnessed many scenes of tragedy and devastation. The last two weeks have brought the fires to my own doorstep and in view of the fact that I would probably be away from Gembrook when the fires impacted on our town I was extremely worried about the fate of my treasured E-Type Jaguar. Not knowing what to do at the time, I rang Tony Pettigrew and asked if he could arrange for someone to take my car into safe keeping until the fire threat had passed. Tony acted immediately on my behalf and arranged for Geoff Birkett to be on stand-by to come and get the car should the stuff hit the fan. As the threat increased last week I called Geoff and asked if he could come and pick up the car. Geoff dropped everything and he and his wife Judy drove up to Gembrook and took the car away to safety where it still resides at Tony's place as I write. I would like to sincerely thank Tony, Geoff and Judy for doing this, allowing me to concentrate on the task and carry on with the fire fight knowing that even if I lost everything I would still have the car. I think that this is what clubs such as ours are all about, strangers linked by a common bond uniting to help each other. Thanks again from the bottom of my heart.

I note from recent editions of the magazine that unless we act, we will get another picture of a Jowett on the front page, so I have included a picture of the rescued E-Type for such evasion.

Brent Gazzaniga.

Editorial Note: This brings to notice a valuable service that our club can provide – a register of club members who have the space and security to temporarily store a vehicle owned by another club member, that may be threatened in a similar way to the Jaguar described above. The Editorial garage has space for short term storage in emergencies, so that means there could be a start to such a register,

Any volunteers?

Mike Allfrey – Editor.

SPORTS CARS

A North American View (Note: All \$ are US)

A sports car is not a sports car because it looks like a sports car, any more than a man who looks like a doctor is a doctor. Performance tells. Basically a sports car is a dual-purpose machine. On the one hand, it can be used for everyday transportation with a minimum of inconvenience. On the other, it can be made race-worthy with a minimum of modification. Most *bona-fide* sports cars have inherited certain features from racing. Most of them are two-seaters because racing sports cars just cannot afford to carry around the extra bulk and weight required for four passengers. Many of them are convertibles because the early racing sports cars were open models. All of them offer exceptional speed and acceleration for their size and the size of the engine. But where they really shine is in the braking, steering and handling departments. These combine to give a sports car a taut, eager manner that makes the driver feel he can master just about any road situation. In the final analysis, a sports car is what a sports car does.

And that was true, to a certain extent, even in the days when automobiles were still a novelty. Cars were cars, but as soon as one of them could outrace a horse, it became a sporting proposition. Then, too, early car owners who had plenty of money and leisure, turned to their machine more for fun and games than for practical everyday transportation.

Both America and Europe produced many fine sports cars before World War I. Some of their names have faded, but on today's antique car market an old sports car of good standing still brings a higher price than a sedan or touring car of similar vintage. Perhaps the two greatest names among pre-World War I American sports cars are Stutz and Mercer. Both were fire-snorting, four-cylinder monsters that could easily top 60 mph. Their drivers and passengers sat in the open, exposed to the elements, with maybe a monocle windshield protecting the driver. Both makes set track records and cross-country records. Even today a reputable modern sports car would have to hustle to beat some of the old back-road records. In 1912, for example, a Mercer averaged 69.54 mph for a 150½ mile road-course run. The year before that a stock Stutz did very well in the 1911 Indianapolis race.

The *raceabout* became an American type that was produced by a number of firms besides Mercer, Moon made one, as did Crane-Simplex (based on a contemporary Mercedes design). These *raceabouts* had a number of similar style features: separate, hood (bonnet) over the engine; a completely open cockpit; no doors or side panels; no top; an occasional windshield of sorts (usually a monocle clamped to the steering post); two deep bucket seats; a round gas tank for thirty gallons or so; maybe a tool box, and at least two spare tires at the rear. Details naturally varied, but over-all the designs had much in common.

Personal transportation in those days was as glamorous and exciting as owning a private airplane is today. In Europe this excitement was reflected in the sporting vehicles. Germany produced the Mercedes; France the Amilcar and Bugatti, among others; England the Vauxhall; Italy the Alfa Romeo; and Spain the Hispano-Suiza. These cars came in various sizes, both before and after World War I. Most had high price tags, superior performance and racing potential, and a fun to drive quality that old timers still talk about. Between world wars, European

sports cars continued to flourish, but the American versions withered on the vine as bigger and more comfortable cars appeared.

The late twenties and early thirties saw the rise of the inexpensive, small-sized, lightweight sports car in England. It came in many makes, but the archetype was the MG, a brainchild of Cecil Kimber, who managed the Morris Garages (hence MG). Drawing from a collection of Morris economy sedan parts, Kimber built a back yard special that attracted so much attention that he was able to persuade Morris himself to back its production. By the mid-thirties the car had assumed what would become the established pattern of a sports car – two-seated body work; extended nose; cut down doors; slab-sided, vertical gas tank; and rear-mounted spare tire. This was the MG Midget. Starting with the P series in this form, it developed through the T's, which carried on after World War II. The best known in America were the TC, TD, and TF that ran through 1955. These and the MGs that followed – the A and more recent B models – became eminent examples of low-priced sports cars offering a fun-run for the money that few other cars, sports or conventional, could match.

Right: Watched by knowledgeable on-lookers a nice TC model MG sets off on the 2008 RACV Fly The Flag Tour.

To some, an automobile is simply a utilitarian device – like an electric iron or a plough – a convenient, reliable, uninspiring piece of equipment that serves a practical purpose. Such a view is, in the eyes of the sports car faithful, pure blasphemy. As they say, “You either got it, or you ain't got it.” You need never even have driven a sports car to know where you stand. For if you can savour the pleasure of driving through the night on a twisting black-top road; if you can sense that your car is more than an assemblage of metal parts; if you honestly like to drive – why, then, you have “got it.” The fact that so many drivers have discovered that they, too, have “got it” accounts in large measure for the surge in sports car sales in recent years. The questions frequently asked are: How is one sports car different from the next, and what does one get for his money? Let's take a healthy sampling of the contemporary crop and find out, starting at the bottom of the price ladder and working our way up. Prices range from just under \$2,000 to just about anything you care to imagine; a \$25,000 price tag is not unheard of. But let's not overdo it.



Below \$2,000 there is just one economy sports car, the Austin-Healey Sprite. This little pumpkin-seed of an automobile fills all the requirements of a *bona-fide* sports car. It can be driven to the supermarket during the week, and it can be readily set up for week-end competition. It also has excellent brakes, a high degree of road holding, and the light, tight feel that makes a sports car fun to drive, especially on the twisty back roads where a Cadillac can be hard work. Wind-up windows and somewhat better rear springing make this car a bit easier on the rear end than it used to be in the earlier versions, but comfort is not the strong selling point of this car, or of most other sports cars, for that matter. Sprites sell like hot cakes because they are truly fun to drive – to the post office, on short trips, and, for the hardy, even on long trips.

The \$2,000 to \$2,500 price bracket offers two more small-sized, true economy sports cars. These are the MG Midget, the Sprite's alter ego, and the Triumph Spitfire. The MG Midget is identical to the Sprite in every department except that it has wire wheels and some fancier chrome work. The Spitfire, based on Triumph 1200 economy sedan parts (just as the Sprite is based on major components from the Morris Minor and Austin series sedans), is slightly larger than the Sprite or Midget. It rides a little easier and has more room for tall people. Rack-and-pinion steering gear gives instant response when you so much as nudge the steering wheel. Disc brakes on the front wheels, plus drums on the rear provide fade-free braking that many a full-sized or luxury sedan can envy but not approach. The small, but lightly loaded engine gives the car an eagerness that makes driving more exciting than it has been in most ordinary passenger cars of the past generation.

Up another price notch, from \$2,500 to \$3,000, are the somewhat larger, more comfortable sports cars most of which can just break 100 mph in stock form, if this means anything to the casual sports car driver. Besides being a good talking point on Saturday night, this extra speed that normally isn't needed does make for easier turnpike cruising than the buzzing Sprite, Midget, or Spitfire. Well represented in this group are such British marques as the MGB, Triumph TR-4, and Sunbeam Alpine. These cars have more room, comfort, and usable performance than those in the Sprite class. In the Italian line, the Fiat 1500 convertible is conspicuous for its comparatively low price range. Designed by Pinin Farina, the eminent stylist, this roomy and well-mannered two-seater costs slightly under \$3,000. Another car that may well make a dent in this group is the Datsun SPL-310, a Japanese sports car of considerable attractiveness.

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Right on the edge of true sports cars in this group is the Volkswagen Karmann Ghia, which has much of the sporting feel, but makes no pretenses of racing potential. As a pleasant, high-economy, grand-touring type of sedan or convertible, though, it certainly deserves mention.

In the \$3,000 to \$3,500 bracket, you'll find the Austin-Healey 3000, the Morgan, and several uncommon sports-racing cars like the Lotus Super 7. In luxury and performance these cars begin to depart from an economy car ancestry, and they show it. Gas mileage, for example, is a good peg lower than the thrifty 25 to 35 mpg of the

economy sports cars. There's no lack in diversity of design, however. For instance, the Morgan is the last of the classic English sports cars with a rock-hard ride, flapping side curtains, and a hardwood frame in the coach-built body. It's light, though, and a creditable performer. Completely different is the Austin Healey 3000, a very solid sports car with lots of power in a sizable six-cylinder engine (all the other cars up to this point have been fours). It definitely moves, handles the way a sports car should, and the finish certainly justifies the higher price. The Lotus Super 7 is an out-and-out racing sports car that even comes in kit form for those eager beavers who want to save money, or who just like to build their own cars. (Also, in England where Super 7's are raced on many courses, a kit car owner can avoid the stiff purchase tax applied to all new vehicles.) This little snorter is a car so stark that only an incurably dedicated buff would drive it on the street for everyday transportation. A serious racing enthusiast would probably carry it around on a trailer and use it only for competition, while a non-racing owner might find it just the ticket for summer fun.

Also included in this group is the Sunbeam Tiger, one of the growing breed of factory hybrids that is being equipped with large American V-8 engines. Thanks to modern thin-wall casting techniques, the Tiger's V-8 is only slightly heavier than the four-cylinder engine it replaces. Consequently, the car loses little of its balance and sports car feel, and gains much in the power department. A good deal more power can be had simply by bolting on performance options. available from Ford dealers.

Above the \$3,500 price range the accent on performance is pronounced. Notable are the Alfa Romeo, Porsche (about \$4,200 and up), American Corvette (starting at about \$3,800, with optional equipment rounding it off to \$5,000 more or less), the A.C. Cobra (ranging upward from about \$5,500) and the Jaguar XK-E (up around \$5,500). At these prices one gets what he pays for in performance, looks, and handling. The Alfa Romeo has long offered a jewel-like, overhead camshaft, four-cylinder engine backed up by a handsome Italian body. Both on the street and the race track this marque has made its mark and found a home in America. Porsche is practically unbeatable in its class on tracks both here and abroad. It is also quite a civilized grand touring car, exemplifying how much luxury can come in a small package.

So far, Corvette – in some of its versions – has been the only modern, American-made production car available (although the folks at Ford insist this is no longer the case). Given an engine with 300 or more horses, plus special performance options in transmission, braking and steering, to cite a few, Corvette can be a formidable campaigner. But what about the Mustang? Is it or isn't it a sports car? According to Lee Iacocca, Ford's general manager, it is a triple-purpose car that can qualify in the luxury, street, and competition classes. With such options as three V-8 engines (up to 271 horsepower), four-speed transmission, quick-ratio steering, and a special handling suspension, the Mustang is certain to earn a seat in the council of sports cars. The price starts at about \$2,400, but it will take another \$650 or so to make it sports-worthy.

A highly regarded marque with a decided bent for competition is the A.C. Cobra, conspicuous for its fine lines, great racing chassis and independent suspension system. In its natural state the car is powered by a high-revving, low-displacement, six-cylinder engine. A \$6,000 version of the Cobra, prepared by racer-builder Carroll Shelby, comes equipped with a 289-hp, high-performance Ford V-8.



Left: The desirable Jaguar XK-E Roadster, just begging for the hood to be stowed and the open road ahead.

As for the Jaguar XK-E, it's all sports car. It can do better than 150 mph and has by far the best brakes you'll find on any automobile. In appearance, it lives up to its price and reputation. It may not be as convenient to get in and out of as the Corvette, and it's probably more difficult to maintain. Still, the Jag is certainly the link between the just-around-the-corner type of sports car and the faraway dream that one could almost call super-sports or super-grand-touring.

These super jobs – in luxury as well as performance – start at a cloud-level \$7,500 and end up somewhere in the financial ionosphere. Well up there is the hybrid ISO (about \$10,000), which offers a fine Italian body on a special chassis powered by an American Chevy Corvette engine. The result is a mechanized gazelle with the braking, handling, and feel to justify its 140-mph potential. What makes the car well worth the money to those who can afford it, is the accompanying luxury, comfort, and style. To put the cherry on the cake, the engine and most of the major mechanical parts are easily maintained via local Chevrolet channels. Aston Martin's DB-5 model (about \$11,000) is a direct mechanical descendent of a car that entered and placed well in the Le Mans 24-hour race and then drove home without any special attention or modification – a classic example of a bona fide sports car. In the same class is the Mercedes 230 SL, which has supplanted the 300 SL and its well-remembered sibling with the gull-wing doors. These are in the \$10,000 class. A notch or two up the price ladder sits the fabulous Ferrari, the sports car of sports cars. With watch-like precision, its V-12 engine gives the racing model a speed potential just short of 200 mph. The luxury sports model which costs about \$13,000 is capable of doing about 150 mph. The finish, the leather, the styling, the feel, the braking—everything about these cars is as flawless as spare-no-expense craftsmanship and design can make them.

The sports cars discussed here are typical of the contemporary “available.” There are others, of course – including many “one-of-a-kind” machines. There are also quite a few “let’s pretend” sporty cars that look jazzy but don’t play the same tune. But all it takes is one short road test to cull them out. Either they “got it” or they “ain’t got it.”

*Supplied by Bruce Moran.
From Automobile 1 (1964) – With Thanks.*

PAST AND FUTURE EVENTS

A section devoted to reporting on what has happened, or is about to happen within our club. All club members, not just those who have organised events, are encouraged to submit reports for inclusion here in Your ABCCC News. Event reports will be accepted in hand-written form, typed or via the E-mail system.

OUR PENINSULA MEANDER – Wednesday 1st April, 2009

A Pleasant April Fools’ Day Out

Despite the RACV Fly the Flag Tour ending the weekend prior to the April Fool’s Day Peninsula Meander we had 29 participants, nearly half of whom had not been on the Tour. Beautiful autumn conditions prevailed for the drive from the Coolstores at Moorooduc to Merrick’s General Store where members enjoyed freshly baked muffins, pancakes with tea and coffee, for our morning tea amongst friends on the deck with sea views to Western Port Bay. The muffins were such a hit they were a sell out, much to some people’s disappointment.

Right: Straight out of Gamages’ shop window!



From there it was a short drive to Montalto/Tuck’s Ridge where we were able to sample fine wines, stroll the sculpture walk at leisure and take photos of the very photogenic Tuck’s Ridge winery next door. Having made the most of the fine conditions people spent the rest of the time socialising in the piazza.

From there we had a scenic run via Red Hill South to Red Hill and on to Mornington where a leisurely lunch was held at Kirk’s Hotel whilst enjoying lovely bay views on The Esplanade at Mornington. Many thanks to all who participated. The Meccano picture credit goes to Bryan Tootell – Thanks Bryan.

Karen and Ken McDonald.

THE CREAM SPONGE RUN – Sunday 3rd May, 2009

The Most Sumptuous Cream Sponges In The World!

We will be meeting again at the Sassafras/Ferny Creek CFA, Melways Map 75, Reference D1 at 10:00 am for a Cream Sponge morning tea. Your donation for morning tea will be, as usual, gratefully received by the brigade. We will then take a scenic route to the Paradise Hotel in Clematis for lunch. Melways Map 127, Reference A3.

There will be the usual running sheet with questions to answer on the way, and a prize for the winners. We have booked the balcony room at the hotel, and have been advised that your car can be seen in the park, so you may wish to take your “special” motor for pleasant day out. We don’t think snow will be a problem in May!

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible. Please phone and let us know to assist with catering
GEOFFREY and JUDY BIRKETT (03) 9755 1772.

Geoff & Judy Birkett.

BOLLYGUM PARK FUNDRAISER RUN

In the heart of the devastated township of Kinglake one block of land remains almost untouched. For the family and friends of Suzanne Hyde, that is a blessing. Mrs Hyde spent more than a decade campaigning and fundraising for the 1 hectare patch, called Bollygum Park.

Having helped raise more than \$800,000 for her cause, her dream was for a themed reserve where children could play and Kinglake locals meet.

Black Saturday changed that.

Mrs Hyde and her husband Geoff were among the Kinglake residents who lost their lives in the bushfires. They were killed trying to protect their home.

And now locals are vowing to realise Mrs Hyde’s dream. Resident, Tim Huggins, said Kinglake needed the park more than ever.

Mrs Hyde’s sister Julie Cramer, said the completed park would be a legacy for Sue.

"Sue and Geoff loved this area", said Mrs Cramer, "their home was always open to their neighbours and nieces and nephews."

"Bollygum was her passion She wanted it to be a safe place where kids could play."

Evonne Barr in Kinglake.

From a Newspaper Clipping – with thanks.

THE RUN FOR BOLLYWOOD PARK – Sunday 10th May, 2009

The piece above is a worthy introduction to the Run For Bollygum Park. As most of us well know, club members George and Joan Chrystie were Kinglake, until they retired recently to Tocumwal. For this reason, George has a passion for projects in Kinglake and wants, not only for us to remember those who perished, but also to support those who survived those bushfires of that awful Saturday.

A number of car clubs have committed to this run and it would be very appropriate if our club could continue to support this George's cause. When we say continue, this means that approximately \$950.00 was donated by club members during the recent RACV Fly The Flag Tour. For this, George is extremely grateful and gives us his thanks for our generosity. The funds raised by our club will be handed over separately during a ceremony at the Bollygum Park site on the completion of the run and the day's activities.

Thus we are calling for a splendid turn out of ABCCC Classics on the day! Yes, it is on Mothers' Day, but as Lyn Higginson so aptly put it, "We have the rest of the year to express our love for our Mums, and, this time it is very appropriate for us all to join in on this event."

Well said!

The run will commence in Whittlesea, at the Secondary College in Laurel Street where a market is held on the third Sunday of each month. There is plenty of space on the road to the sports oval in Walker Recreation Reserve (Melways Map 246, Reference G9/10). This is going to be a great event, commencing at 11:30 am, so, bring along a full tank, a picnic and be ready for a great day. George will be there early with a warm welcome, and it has to be believed that he will be thoroughly thrilled if we have a significant number of gleaming classic cars on the run. Good weather has been ordered.

What a wonderful way to spend Mothers' Day, and if there is any family commitment, bring Mum along too!

This event has been gazetted as a club event and, therefore, is open to those vehicles operated on the Victorian Club Permit Scheme.

For details please contact George or Joan on telephone number (mobile) 0429 382 409.

Mike Allfrey for George Chrystie.

RACV CLASSIC SHOWCASE – Sunday 17th May, 2009

A Major ABCCC Attend Event & AHMF National Motoring Heritage Day

Please note that this eminent event has been re-scheduled to this 17th May date. It has also been re-located back to the Members' Car Park lawns at Flemington Racecourse. It is our intention to make this a big showing of our fine motor cars, so we are looking forward to a significant display of British classics at this event.

Arrangements are already in hand to secure a large reserved area for our display.

We have the capability to be able to mount a large display, therefore, please let me know if you intend to join in on the ABCCC Show site. We will be pre-booking for you, details will be supplied individually. Please contact me for your indication to join our display on (03) 9729 1480 or, you can E-mail to: michael.allfrey@bigpond.com

Because this day is also the *AHMF National Motoring Heritage Day*, a day when the general public should see a sizeable number of heritage vehicles on our roads, maybe it would be an idea to take a different and longer route home to gain maximum exposure for our movement. It is vitally important that the *AHMF National Motoring Heritage Day* and the RACV Classic Showcase be well supported by our club, In addition to that, we desperately need to outnumber the *American Motoring Show* participants.

Mike Allfrey.

WEEKEND RETREAT TO BRIGHT – 12th -13th June 2009

This trip is to replace the inter-club tour to Richmond NSW, which was deferred until a later date, at the request of our sister club in Queensland.

We will leave from a point to be decided on Friday 12th June and take a leisurely drive to Bright. Where we will spend the next two nights, before travelling home to suit ourselves. We have negotiated a package deal which includes two nights accommodation, cooked breakfasts and two evening meals, outside with fire drums weather permitting or inside in the dining room if not, those of you that came to this venue before will remember what a great atmosphere there was on the river bank.

All this for only \$200 per person, including a complimentary drink each night. So all you have to do is bring what you want to drink and your smile. Due to the short lead up time if you could let me know if you are coming then I can book you in. Feel free to call me on 0408 633 778, if you require any more information or to book your spot.

Frank Sawyer.

THE GREAT ABCCC TRIVIA CHALLENGE – Saturday 18th July, 2009

Make Up A Team And Join The Challenge!

Please note the new date for this event

We will be having a buffet dinner with two courses featuring an Italian theme, at a very reasonable \$20.00 per person. Questions to make you smile and test your knowledge. What could be nicer than a glass of red and lasagne with friends on a winter's night. Please arrive sharply at 6:30 pm for a 7:00 pm start.

The Great ABCCC Trivia Challenge will be held at the Lilydale International Club, Nelson Road, Lilydale, Melways Map 38, Reference H3.

Phone please to assist with numbers for catering **GEOFFREY AND JUDY BIRKETT 9755 1772.**

Geoff & Judy Birkett.

CHRISTMAS IN JULY – Sunday 26th July, 2009

So, you thought that Christmas was all over? Wrong! It is time to start thinking about our Christmas In July!

This year, we have a new venue and, I guess a number of you will remember *The Baron Of Beef?* Well. It is now called *Marybrooke*, and a lovely Tudor style mansion it is, nestled on the edge of Sherbrooke Forest and listed by the National Trust.

Marybrooke is located at 10 Sherbrooke Road, Sherbrooke (Melways Map 75 Ref: H2). Timing is Sunday 26th July, 2009 at 12:30 pm for a 1:00 pm lunch. It should be noted that this, our annual club luncheon, is a club member only event. Drinks will be provided by the club.

There will be cream of butternut pumpkin soup, roast turkey and pork (with crackling and cranberry sauce), served with an assortment of roasted vegetables, pan gravy and condiments. All of this will be followed by individual plum puddings with warm custard. There will also be tea or coffee afterwards.

Cost of all this is just \$30.00 per person and bookings should be made quickly to avoid disappointment. Bookings and payment are required before 17th July. To book, please use the booking form on the back page of the next two magazines.

By popular demand, there will be a Kris Kringle with a \$5.00 limit.

Colin and Joy Brown.

INDULGENCE '09 – Friday 2nd to Sunday 4th October, 2009

The Renowned ABCCC Indulgence Weekend

If you enjoyed Nagambie, Bright or Metung you will certainly not be disappointed with this year's venue. A full tour of pure indulgence is set, and, it is proposed that we will leave Yarra Glen on Friday 2nd October at 8:30 am. This time, we will proceed in a northerly direction. After approximately 1½ hours drive we will stop for morning tea, which is included and comprises a cup of tea or coffee and a cookie.

After morning tea we will proceed to our luncheon venue, an internationally renowned country brewery and pub where we will have a BBQ lunch and a sample of their manufactured product. We will then proceed to our destination venue (secret location). After we unpack we hope to enjoy pre-dinner drinks and nibbles. Dinner on Friday evening is in an old bluestone winery (walking or staggering distance from our 4-star motel) where we will enjoy a three course a la carte dinner with a bottle of wine per couple.

Saturday morning, following a cooked or continental breakfast in our rooms, we will assemble at 10:00 am and board a coach, for a tour of local wineries including lunch at a boutique delicatessen operated by "The Pickled Sisters", where we will sample local foods and again, a bottle of wine per couple. After our tour we will return to our accommodation at approximately 4:30 pm. Pre-dinner drinks will be held by the pool (bring your bikinis or togs), dinner on Saturday evening will be a BBQ with salads and fruit salad and ice-cream and again, by the pool.

On Sunday after a sleep-in, we will walk to our brunch venue where we will enjoy a cooked or continental meal after which we will make our way back home for the recommencement of our diets! Our venue is such that you will not need to drive your car from the time of arrival until you wish to return home.

The cost for all this 2½ days of indulgence is \$600 per couple.

We are restricted to a limited number so early bookings are necessary. Full payment will be required by early September. To make your booking for this fabulous weekend of *Indulgence*, contact Peter or Rosalie McKiernan on 0407 876 023 or (03) 9787 6003.

Peter and Rosalie McKiernan.

SUPPORT YOUR PRESIDENT!

(HE IS LOOKING FORWARD TO A LARGE DISPLAY)

GET YOUR BOOKINGS IN FOR THE RACV CLASSIC SHOWCASE. CONTACT MIKE ALLFREY ON:
TELEPHONE (03) 9729 1480 E-MAIL michael.allfrey@bigpond.com



CHRISTMAS IN JULY

You thought Christmas was over? WRONG it's time to think about Christmas In July.

This year a new venue, and I guess a lot of you will remember The Barron Of Beef. Well, it is now called *Marybrooke*, and a lovely Tudor style mansion it is, nestled on the edge of Sherbrooke Forest and listed by the National Trust.



LUNCHEON INFORMATION

- DATE:** Sunday 26th July, 2009
- TIME:** 12:30 pm for a 1:00 pm Luncheon
- LOCATION:** Marybrooke, 10 Sherbrooke Road, Sherbrooke, Victoria.
Melways Map 75 Reference: H2
- MENU:** Cream of Butternut Pumpkin Soup
Roasts: Turkey and Pork (With Cranberry Sauce and Crackling)
Served with an Assortment of Roasted Vegetables, Pan Gravy and Condiments.
Individual Plum Pudding with Warm Custard
Coffee and Tea
- COST:** \$30.00 per person (Drinks Provided by the Club)
By popular Demand, we will have a Kris Kringle (\$5.00 Limit)
This is the Annual Club luncheon, and is a Member-only Event.
Pre-booking and Payment is Required before the 17th July.

Colin and Joy Brown.



CHRISTMAS IN JULY BOOKING

Please Reserve Seats For: Name

Enclosed is my Cheque/Postal Note/Money Order for \$

Payable to: All British Classics Car Club Inc,
Send To: Pat Douglas
PO Box 201
Chirnside Park
VICTORIA 3116