

The Official Magazine of the MG Car Club of Queensland Inc.,  
affiliated with the Confederation of Australian Motor Sport.

Published 8 times a year

Next edition due out in late June. Copy to the Editor by the  
middle of the third week of June. Members personal advertisements  
are free.

THE OPINION of correspondents and advertisers expressed in this  
magazine are not necessarily those of the Management Committee nor  
the MG Car Club of Queensland Inc and as such the Club accepts no  
responsibility.

ALL ENQUIRIES TO THE EDITORS C/- Box 1847, G.P.O., Brisbane.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

		Home	Work
President:	Terry Corbett	892 1151	
Vice President:	Steve Austin	286 2979	
Secretary:	Position Vacant		
Treasurer:	Position Vacant		
Committee:	John Davies	341 6798	253 2154
	Ray Edwards	343 7369	349 6022
	John Kingcott	354 6541	
	Paul Strange	349 1400	834 7122
	Ann Thomson	378 1368	
	Peter Tighe	391 2093	
	Reg Tomkinson		279 1533

--- oOo ---

Membership Secretary:	Phil Hutchison	355 2188
Events Secretary:	Joan Appleby	857 1561
Club Captain:	Peter Rayment	300 3148
CAMS Delegate:	Ann Thomson	378 1368

--- oOo ---

POSTAL ADDRESS	CLUB ROOMS
G.P.O. Box 1847,	18 Nash St.,
Brisbane, 4001	Rosalie

(the committee meets every second Monday night)  
(Clubrooms open most Friday nights)

EDITORS OF THE OCTAGON John and Helen Kingcott. Articles to be  
posted to G.P.O. Box 1847, Brisbane 4001.

CONSTITUTION A copy of the Club's Constitution is available for  
Club members perusal at the Clubrooms. Copies are available from  
the Secretary for a nominal fee.

--- oOo ---

WANTED: Your help on Sunday 26th May at Mount Cotton.  
We will be having the final AHC Working Bee. Let's  
make the place look great. See you there around 8.30 am.

--- oOo ---

WANTED: Officials for the days of the practice and Running  
of the Australian Hill Climb Championships. Please  
ring Joan Appleby or one of the committee if you can help  
if only for an hour of the time. Thanks in anticipation.

--- oOo ---

1991 Club and Racing Calendar

MAY	
28th	Working Bee - Mt. Cotton 8.30 a.m.
31st	Australian Hillclimb Championship Practice 12.00 pm Mt. Cotton
JUNE	
1st	Day 2 - Practice 12.00 noon Mt. Cotton
2nd	Day 3 - Timed Runs for Championship - 9.30 am Mt. Cotton.
9th	Grafton Hillclimb (Round of NSW Championship) Queensland Motorkhana Championship - Round 3.
14th	Tassie National Meeting Get together - Club Rooms
22nd	Queensland Rally Championship Round 3 ITMAC
JULY	
12th	Touring Assembly - Leaving Clubrooms
13/14th	Lakeside - Australian Touring Car Championship
14th	Queensland Motorkhana Championship - Round 4
21st	Hillclimb - Mt. Cotton
26/27/28th	Australian Rally Championship (Brisbane)
AUGUST	
4th	Proposed Lakeside Race Meeting QRDA Queensland Motorkhana Championship (Round 5)
25th	British Car Club Day - Woolshed
30th	Iron Man Weekend - Touring Assembly
31st	Iron Man Weekend - Sprints & Motorkhana (Lakeside)
SEPTEMBER	
1st	Iron Man Weekend - Hill Climb (Mt. Cotton)
8th	Queensland Motorkhana Championship - Round 6
14/15th	Australian Sports Sedan Championship and Australian Drivers Championship - Lakeside
OCTOBER	
11th	Touring Assembly
13th	Queensland Motorkhana Championship (Round 7)
20th	Race Meeting, Lakeside (QGRA)
27th	Hillclimb - Mt. Cotton
NOVEMBER	
10th	Queensland Motorkhana Championship Round 8
24th	Lakeside Race Meeting - MGCCQ
DECEMBER	
1st	Hillclimb - Mt. Cotton
6th	Touring Assembly - Club Rooms.

--- oOo ---

SPECIAL NOTE A number of members have raised the question about work being carried out in the tongue area leading down to the hairpin at Mt. Cotton. After a recent CAMS track safety inspection CAMS required suitable protection for the Flag Marshalls point at the hairpin.

The alternative to these modifications would be to remove the flag point from the hairpin and this would result in decreasing driver safety.

--- oOo ---

FOR SALE

MGB Mark 1, 1963, Red, Good condition, unregistered  
\$7500 Or near Offer.

Contact Pauline Coley 849 7729 (H) 399 1018 (W)

--- oOo ---

MGB Mk 1, 1963 White, all original, Wire Wheels, very neat  
and tidy Reg 10.91 \$9500.

Contact Paul Whitehead or Kym Drabble Phone 355 7745

---- oOo ----

EDITORS' MUMBLINGS

Well, its nearly June and that means Mt. Cotton and the Australian Hillclimb Championship. Working bees are being held on a weekly basis at the moment. The next one as you read this is Next Sunday 26th May. See you there at 8.30 a.m.

I know I asked last month, but if anyone can lend us a caravan for the AHC Weekend please contact Terry Corbett.

Received an interesting letter from Barry Green announcing that the Weewondilla II hillclimb is being resurrected. A meeting of interested parties was held on 28th April and hope these people will keep us informed on their progress. Weewondilla is an up-hill down dale,  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile dirt circuit situated on private land on the northern outskirts of Warwick. Events were held between 1967 -1970 on the run-wot-ya-brung basis. Looks interesting.

Anyway enough from me

Wee you at the AHC

John Kingcott.

--- oOo ---

Spotted in a 1961 motoring magazine -

"Queensland New Circuit - Queensland's Touring Car Championships on March 19, will be decided on the brand new  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile circuit at Petrie, only 19 miles from Brisbane.

The 24ft wide, fully sealed circuit is on the property of QMSC President Sid Sakzewski, who was the driving force behind its construction. The financing was done by the Club and by many enthusiasts from Queensland and N.S.W. as well as Sid himself.

The QMSC held a closed sprint meeting at Lakeside in February to test the circuit, and everything went off without a hitch.

Racing on the twisty track with its one short straight was dominated by Ivan Tighe's hillclimb Special - the Tighe Vincent- which also set the first lap record of 1 min 19.6 sec. But Basile's Porsche Carrera was only 2/10th sec slower.

Queenslanders can look forward to a very active season, with four meetings at Lakeside, three at Lowood (including a Gold Star event and the Australian Touring Car Championship), one on the Middle Ridge open road circuit, the Australina Hillclimb Championship on Prince Henry's Drive (Toowoomba) and the State Title on the Gold Coast.

In addition to all this, another new circuit should be operating by August in the Surfers' Paradise area; its promoters hope to get in the big time tying in with the organisers of the New Zealand GP and Warwick Farm."

--- oOo ---

Remember the WA MG guys with the ZA Magnette that is the one that went across the desert etc. Well, he had written a book about the whole deal. It is available on mail order to Ken McKimmie via MG Car Club of WA, P.O. box U1924, Perth 6001. Cost until 31.5.91 is \$14.95. Be sure to mention MG Car Club of Queensland Inc. in your order.

--- oOo ---

Heard the other day about a bloke who was speeding home to the loo. So great was his need that he ignored a police radar trap and the resulting fine. (\$200.00 to be exact plus costs) Should have found a handy tree.

--- oOo ---

CAMS NEWS

A separate company "CAMS Commercial" will be formed, run by a Board of Directors. The company's shareholders will be the National Council of CAMS and the Board will be appointed annually by the NCC. The day to day operation of CAMS commercial will be the responsibility of the Managing Director (Mr. Barry Oosthuizen) who will report directly to the Board.

CAMS Commercial will be responsible for all the commercial dealings of the Confederation, i.e. Television, Shell Touring Car Championship BP Rally Championship, Series Registrations, Calendar etc. The profit generated by this company will be returned as dividends to CAMS.

As part of the overall restructure the present CAMS administrative organisation has undergone some changes. The Finance Manager has become more autonomous in that he reports the financial position of CAMS to the NCC and CAMS commercial to the Commercial Board. He has also taken on the responsibility for the data processing functions.

The administration of the sport to be organised on product lines and the duties of the staff have been rearranged

In keeping with the restructure, a program of forming CAMS into an incorporated company is being pursued. The company will be structured in such a way as to preserve the present voting boundaries and the present democratic system of elections.

It will be some time before the impact of these changes becomes apparent, but the intention is to allow the sporting administration to concentrate on the sporting aspects and the commercial matters to be handled by people with expertise in commercial matters.

--- oOo ---

HILLClimbing THE CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Championship officially began when CAMS took over control of the sport in 1954. It is second only to the Australian Grand Prix for the number of times the event has been held. Records show the first Championship was held in Victoria at Rob Roy in 1947 and was won by Arthur Wylie in an A Model Ford Special. It has been contested every year since except for 1972 - 1975 when it was a series title.

The winner is determined by the fastest single run by a competitor. All but three Championships have been won by a single seated racing car. These were won by a Porsche Spyder (1966), Porsche 906 (1971) and a Bingham Cobra (1972).

Previous winners are as follows:-

1976	Bathurst	Peter Holinger	Holinger Repco Holden
1977	Morwell	Ian Judd	Cheetah Holds
1978	Collingrove	Peter Hollinger	
1979	Mt. Cotton	Peter Hollinger	
1980	Silverdale	Kym Rohrlach	VW Special
1981	Ararat	Alan Hamilton	Porsche Special
1982	Collingrove	Kym Rohrlach	S/C VW Special
1983	Mt. Cotton	Roger Harrison	Elfin 600C
1984	Huntley Hill	Warren Brown	Sceptre V8
1985	Mt. Leura	Ivan Tighe	Chevron B38
1986	Collingrove	Kym Rohrlach	Elfin
1987	Mt. Cotton	Kym Rohrlach	
1988	Fiarbairn Pk	Peter Holinger	Holinger Repco
1989	Cippsland Park	Alan Hamilton	Lola T8750
1990	Collingrove	Garry McFadyen	Bowin Hay

See over

Previous to 1976 winners were -

1947	Rob Roy	Arthur Wylie	Ford A Spec
1948	Rob Roy	Frank Kleinig	Hudson Spec
1949	Rob Roy	John Barrablough	S/CMG K3 Magnette
1950	" "	Keith Martin	Cooper 1000
1951	" "	Jack Brabham	Vee Twin Speedcar
1952	" "	John Crouch	Cooper 1100
1953	" "	Reg Hunt	Vincent 1000 Spec
1954	Collingrove	Bill Patterson	Cooper Jap
1955	Toowoomba	Lex Davidson	Cooper Vincent
1956	Bathurst	Lex Davidson	"
1957	Albany	Lex Davidson	Cooper Irving
1958	Rob Roy	Bruce Walton	Walton Cooper
1959	Hobart Domain	Bruce Walton	"
1960	Collingrove	Bruce Walton	"
1961	Toowoomba	Bruce Walton	"
1962	Silverdale	Bruce Walton	"
1963	Silverdale	Bruce Walton	"
1964	Silverdale	Ivan Tighe	Tighe Vincent
1965	Lakeland	Tim Schenken	White 500
1966	Collingrove	Alan Hamilton	Porsche Spyder
1967	Bathurst	Greg Cusack	Repco Brabham V8
1968	Templestowe	Dick White	White 1500
1969	Silverdale	Dick White	White 2000 S/C
1970	Mt. Cotton	Paul England	Ausca VW
1971	Collingrove	Alan Hamilton	Porsche 906
1972	Australian Series	Murray Bingham	Bingham Cobra
1973	"	Paul England	Ausca VW
1974	"	Paul England	Ausca VW
1975	"	Stan Keen	Elfin Mk 5

Next month will see competition in the 1991 Championship and we will look at the 1991 results and compare them with those of years gone by.

--- oOo ---

MT. COTTON GO KART SPECIAL- Under 500 cc record holder at 45.3 secs. Yamaka RD 400 cc with all the good gear. Needs some tender loving care to return to race trim.

Bargain at \$900.00.

Contact Nigel Johnston 075 913 894 (H) 075 313 353 (w)

--- oOo ---

WANTED the loan of a caravan for the Australian Hillclimb Championship weekend. Will be well looked after. Please try to help.

--- oOo ---

Also wanted assistance with officials and catering for the weekend. If you can only help for an hour or two, it will relieve someone else from doing the job all day. Come and show your Club colours on the day.

--- oOo ---

DORK OF THE MONTH

Would have to be the would be bank robber who wrote and passed his ransom note to the bank teller on the back of one of his parking fines. What a dork!

--- oOo ---

BASS STRAIT TRAVEL

Recently I made a pilgrimage home to Tasmania using both the Abel Tasman and the new Seacat Tasmania. I thought a brief critique of both vessels may be of interest to members considering attending the 1992 NatMeet in Launceston, or indeed, anyone travelling at other times.

**THE SHIPS:** Many will have heard stories of, or maybe actually travelled to Tasmania by conventional ship (ie the Abel Tasman, or one of her predecessors), so I won't dwell on this mode of travel. There aren't any surprises here; the Abel Tasman is a comfortable roll on - roll off ferry of 19212 tonnes, 149m long, carrying 260 cars and 920 passengers at 18 knots. The trip is overnight and takes 14½ hours, leaving at 6.00 pm from Station Pier in Port Melbourne (NOT the old terminal at Webb Deck) and arrives in Devonport at 8.30 am. She leaves Devonport the same night at 6.00 pm resulting in a round trip of 2 days and a schedule that repeats every 2 weeks. **NOTE:** The old schedule used to include a lay day each Saturday, allowing a weekly schedule.

The new Seacat is a bird (pussy cat?) of an entirely different feather. The route is approximately two-thirds the distance for the Abel Tasman and takes just 4½ hours at around 40 knots, allowing a return trip each day in peak periods. Once underway, you could waterski behind the Seacat, but you would have to be wary of the magnificent 'rooster tail' kicked up by the four 5000 horsepower jet propulsion units - and don't expect to be picked up if you fell off. The Seacat's day starts at 8.30 a.m. leaving George Town in Tasmania, arriving at 1.00 pm at Port Welshpool (110 km south-west of Sale - 195 km southeast of Melbourne) in Victoria. She then leaves Port Welshpool at 2.00 pm arriving back in George Town at 6.30 pm. At first sight, this all-aluminium vessel appears to be nearly as wide as she is long, but is in fact 73.6m long and 26m wide, displacing 700 tonnes. She carries 350 passengers in comfy aircraft style seats (mostly in rows of 3) and 84 cars. Like the Abel Tasman, the Seacat has both rear and bow doors, allowing cars to drive straight through, no, Leroy, in port, not at sea!

Note well - Port Welshpool is a tiny fishing port, so don't expect a range of eating places when you get there. On the other hand, the milk bar near the Sea Cat terminal is well set up for take-aways and the staff try hard. This town is ripe for the development of extra facilities to cater for travellers - does this suggest any business opportunity to any members?

**RIDE ETC:** First, let me squash some misconceptions about Bass Strait. It is true that this stretch of water can be extremely rough, since it is quite shallow (about 6 fathoms/30 feet, you could nearly walk home if you were unlucky enough to sink) and it is right in the path of the Roaring Forties. That being said, the facts are that Bass Strait cuts up rough only on about 5 to 10 days out of 365 in a year. On any one such sailing, you get 900 very ill passengers going home spreading nasty stories about their trip. To be fair the other 360 days trips in a year are plain sailing.

What can I say about the Abel Tasman? It is a large seagoing ship that rides very well. There is oodles of room to move around and explore which is just as well given the time spent on board. There is plenty of outside deck and some excellent vantage points for viewing the arrival and departure procedures.

It must be said that the Seacat rides very well - on a flat sea. You could do all the normal stability tests like balancing a cigarette on its end, and so on, until you hit a bit of a swell. Every now and then, we experienced a slight rolling motion for a minute or two. This is the sort of motion that can make poor travellers feel uneasy quite quickly, but the cure is close at hand. The only 'outside'

over

part of the Seacat is an observation deck that extends across the stern, immediately behind the passenger lounge. Here you can get a lung full of fresh sea air to cure any uneasiness. This deck is quite safe as the whole area is enclosed in heavy fishnet to prevent losing anyone overboard. If you wish, you can spend the whole trip there, as some people did. Getting back to the rolling motion mentioned earlier, I attempted to investigate the cause by watching from the observation deck, but could not see any swell. I can only assume that there was a gentle swell there that couldn't be easily seen. The sheer speed of the Seacat compresses the peaks and troughs of the swell so that it is felt as the rolling motion. Being a daytime trip, all that broke the boredom was the 'in-flight' movies playing on the many screens around the passenger area and the sight of a few rocky islands in the distance.

FOOD: On the Seacat, there is a tiny food bar that sells reasonable sandwiches, potato chips, soft drinks and lollies. That's it! On the other hand, that is probably all you need in 4½ hours.

The Abel Tasman has three restaurants and a 'coffee shop' (read milk bar). The cheapest restaurant is grossly overpriced for what you get but they have a captive market, so that are not that worried. I must admit ot not having tried the other two restaurants, as I am not that rich! The coffee shop is OK, I suppose (not the lack of enthusiasm) and is open for reasonable hours.

FARES: Fares are a difficult thing to compare, since these vary according to the type of accomodation you have, the time of year and the length of your car. Suffice to say, that generally, fares are in the same ball-park for most requirements. If you don't wich to take a car (Heaven forbid), it is even difficult to compare air fares with ship fares as these are changing rapidly with deregulation and are subject to a range of discounting, depending on travel conditions and when you buy your ticket. I suggest that you make your own enquiries and compare according to your own unique circumstances. Bear in mind that for the 1992 NatMet concession fares have been obtained and it would be a shame to miss the opportunity to visit and explore the best state in Australia.

Dennis Hensby (With compliments of the MGCC Canberra's magazine "Tappet Chatter")

--- oOo ---

#### NEW MEMBERS

The committee and members of the Club would like to welcome all those who have recently joined the Club. I hope that we see a lot of you at events, and that you get as much satisfaction out of being in the Club as Vince and I have done over the years. You have joined a great bunch of people so let's see you around the traps.

Joan Appleby

--- oOo ---

MG NATIONAL MEETING  
NOWRA 1991

Well the Bathurst, Richmond, Nowra MG National Meeting finally got under way after many heart stopping moments for the organizers ( like the Iraq War ). 425 enthusiasts converged this year on the NSW south coast town of Nowra this Easter. Our members who attended used many different routes to get there. Some down the coast, some down the New England and some via Canberra. All arrived safely in Nowra.

Registration (Good Friday) took place at the Leprechaun/Archer Resort - poolside, then off and we collected some regalia. That night, we turned back up for a tremendous Seafood Smorgasborg by the pool ( the Shoalhaven area is noted for its game fishing [ask the Wests and the Whites ] and seafood ). Many old acquaintances were rekindled and new ones established. And no one ended up in the pool.

Saturday dawned - WET - not good for the Concours. (192) The original Concour site ( locally known as the Duck Ponds ) had to be abandoned due to overcrowding of ducks in the park and puddles, so back to the Archer's Carpark. The day was marred by the fairly frequent showers, this making judging difficult ( nothing like having water slowly working its way through your clothes ). The outright Concours has now been broken into two sections - Pre MGA ( old ) was won by Bruce Croft (Gold Coast) with his TF and post TF ( modern ) was won by Frank Ardron's (Sydney) B Mk.II roadster which took the overall Concours Trophy up here in Brisbane last year.

That night saw us back to the Archer for the 50's night. Out came the Brylcream, the kisscurl on the forehead, and the bright Bobby socks. People certainly went to a lot of effort to make the night a success. The food, you guessed it - Chicko Rolls, Hamburgers and Hot-dogs. Boy what junk food.

Sunday dawned a superb day and all making tracks to HMAS Albatross for the Motokhana. (260) 4 events 2 runs at each were run ; 1. Forward Salom, 2. Lazy Eight, 3. Multiple Loop, 4. Plumb Crazy. The direction of events 1 and 4 was reversed to help the flow of traffic from one event to the next. John Crane took 2nd in class B Mk.I (pull out door handles). Col West also B Mk.I was getting into the swing of it but he was sure that they kept shifting the poles. Ian Connell B Mk.II suffered the same problem as Col. Alwyn White A had a good run. David Lake took 3rd in the Midget class in Samantha's car pushing her back into 4th place. Lyndal Parr had been having trouble with her diff but still put in some good runs. Dean Tighe should certainly know what a Midget's diff looks like now. Peter Rayment TC worked hard and was rewarded with a class win. Delia was also getting the TC working nearly knocking Peter off in two events. We had trouble holding back Barbara White TF after her runs, she wanted to keep going, she was having a ball. Martin Reeves (Newcastle) B Roadster V8 Special took outright in the Motorkhana. All agreed that we need more motorkhana practice.

Sunday night and guess where, back at the Archer for the Irish Night. Some decided not to come to this night, the pressure of the weekend was catching up, but what a night. Little Leprechauns, Irish lasses, Nuns, Priests, Monks and Village Idiots were to be seen everywhere. The Irish stew and potatoes

certainly went down well. In true Irish fashion, Ian Connell got lost in the tent whilst trying to compete in the GREEN Beer drinking contest. Delia Rayment was made a honorary member of the Canberra club and was presented with a bright green Sherwood Forest cap. This night a fair few ended up in the pool. Some were the judges of some of the competitions, some by their own free will - most of these were in a swimming competition, Peter Rayment waving the flag for QLD. The winner was from NSW. He had swum to the wrong end of the pool colliding with Peter whilst he was trying to retrieve his togs. (Must have tied an Irish knot) All who attended had a great time.

Monday saw most back at HMAS Albatross an a Quarter Mile Sprint into a fierce headwind. (260) Once underway and with two cars at a time the event went through quickly. Ian Connell B Mk.II our first cab off the rank went well taking a 2nd in class. Some work the previous night on the car's tuning must have helped. Samantha was having a ball against Anthony Norden's (Victoria) Midget but was not quite fast enough. David Lake was up against a Rubber-bumpered 1500 Midget (skirt driving) but the 1098 was not enough. Lyndall Parr Midget had a good run but went hungry as well. Delia Rayment TC was just pipped by the class winning Greg King (NSW) TF. John Crane B Mk.I was likewise beaten by Nick Philips (SA) "How does it keep going" B Mk.I. Peter Rayment TC had his annual grudge match with Peter Gostelow TC (Victoria), but Peter R was blown to the weeds by Peter G (Class Winner) and Peter R ended up with a 3rd in class. Bob Appleby's TC? (Victoria) talking 2nd in class. Peter Harper (WA) took Fastest Time of Day in his beautiful red B roadster V8 Special.

For those not competing in the sprint a day run (36) was organised which travelled around some of the scenic attractions of the Shoalhaven District. Barbara & Delma West TF & Alwyn & Col A had a great time on the run which ended back at Albatross in time to see the Top Ten Shoot-out from the motorkhana. The ten consisting of 2 WA, 6 Newcastle, 2 Vic, 1 SA proceeded to do battle with Graeme Adams (Vic) B Mk.II coming up winner, but all drove smoothly and fast. After this was the Teenage motorkhana. 16 participated come hell or high water (The skies opened up during this event) but all drove well and this form of competition must help produce safer drivers for the road.

That night after a scrub up saw us all at Police Youth Centre for the Presentation Dinner. Amid much noise, good food, music - the presentation dinner progressed. A welcome to the latest MG Car Club Wagga Wagga and to the three overseas guests. During the evening the winning raffle ticket for a red MGB was drawn from a babies cot (there were heaps of tickets) by Miss MG (Newcastle). We failed to win but the Diabetes' Association did with a \$40,000 donation from the sale of 20,000 \$5 tickets. Congratulations to the NSW club on a most successful raffle. The overall winning club for the Wratten Trophy was Victoria.

Tuesday morning dawned fine and clear and so off to the farewell breakfast around the pool at the Archer. This consisted of Chicken Breasts, fresh fruit and champagne. So with goodbyes till next year another National Meeting drew to a close. Numbers were down, the recession certainly having its affect.

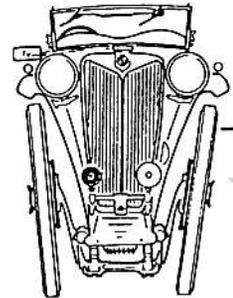
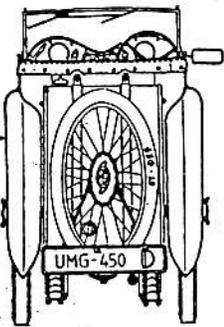
One can say on behalf of the Qld contingent congratulations to the NSW Club for a terrific weekend.

Peter & Delia Rayment

If you are interested in or aspire to own or rebuild a MG TC, then this is a book that you must have. Described as "an appreciation and reference" by Mike, I certainly can recommend it. The book covers Lineage, Originality (also a special section on this in detail), and Restoration (general, chassis, engine, body). Many good photos and drawings are included which are a great help to further describe what may be difficult in words. Certainly, I can recommend the book as a reference and a help to rebuilding, having already having "been there done that". After reading the book I have found myself looking at the fine attention to detail that was in the cars when produced. Would you believe that the sidescreeen holding socket in the door has the 3/8" hole eccentric. Variations in the shapes of the front mudguards are covered along with the procedure on the correct method on the steps that are required to fix them. A large section is on the bodytub as this is important to be correct. It would have been good to have had this book 15 years ago when I did mine. You however are lucky, the book has been written and well presented. The hard covered A4 size book is a numbered limited edition so you had better move fast (just like a TC) or they may be sold out. A lot have already gone overseas. I have one here if you would like to see one as they will not be in the shops but are being sold direct from the author.

Peter Rayment

# MISTRESS in the GARAGE



□ Fanaticism is the word that comes to mind listening to MG-TC owners discuss their vehicles.

□ So says DENNIS LINGANE, who was at the launch of Michael Sherrell's book *TCs Forever*.

**M**IKE SHERRELL has spent 32 years of his life breathing life into a 1949 MG-TC that to many can only be considered a fragile four-wheel relic by modern standards.

Then he spent another 12 years writing a book about the car that his wife publicly admits she has often wanted to take an axe to.

"I felt he had a mistress in the garage," she told the gathering in Alexander Library for the launch of *TCs Forever* last Thursday.

His complete dedication is illustrated by the fact he took voluntary redundancy from a secure job to get the \$25,000 he needed to get the book printed.

Mike admits he is a fanatic but he is by no means unique among TC enthusiasts.

Fellow TC owner and MC at the launch, Noel Semmens (chairman of WA Industry Travel Association and former head of the WA Department of Tourism), declared: "God drives a TC".

"Jaguar owners, even TD owners, may argue that God drives their cars. But we know better," he announced to a crowd that did not disagree.

Outside the Alexander Library 17 MG-TCs lined up in the culture centre plaza, their bulbous headlights and antique radiators all pointed at the worshippers inside the glass walls of the library.

Peter Briggs, car fancier extraordinaire, reminisced about how, as a young lad, he was busting to swap his Morris Minor for a TC for sale in a local garage.

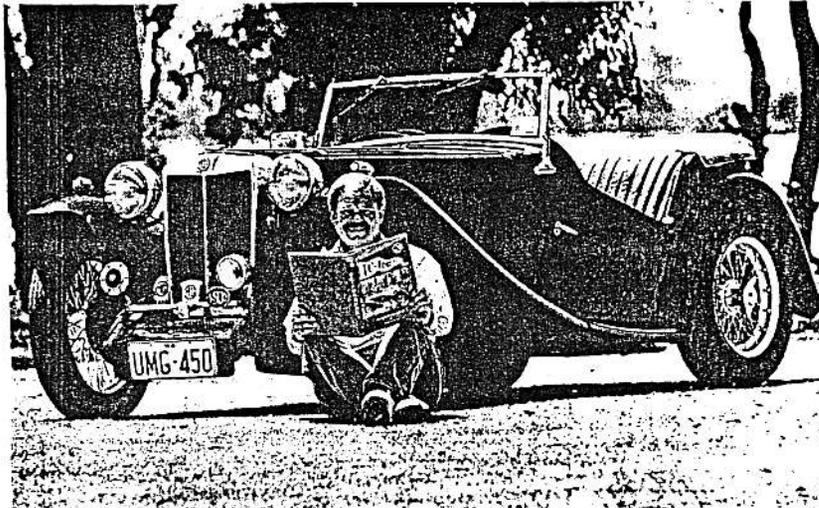
"It was the same price but my dad would have gone mad if I had swapped. So I just used to go and sit in it and dream," he said.

He now owns several.

Former president of the MG-TC Owners Club, Barry Palmer, admitted that in the 50s and 60s TC owners were no better than yahoos, "four-wheel bikies" raising hell around Perth's peaceful streets.

Local identity and Ford dealer Denis McInerney was there checking that the TC he formerly owned was in good condition. He sold it on condition it was kept in *concourse* condition or he would repossess.

Another owner described how he took his TC apart and stored it in boxes so it would not become part of the assets to be split up when his wife divorced him for spending too much time with his passion.



Mike Sherrell pictured with his beloved MG-TC and the book he has written on the subject.

It is hard for those outside this inner circle to understand the hold these whimsical two-seaters have over their owners.

But the crowds that gathered round the clutch of TCs was proof there are plenty of newcomers ready to fill the shoes of TC enthusiasts when they move on to the great workshop in the sky — where they will doubtless find out whether God actually does drive a TC.

But will these potential new owners have the the staying power of people like Mike Sherrell, who has covered 800,000 kilometres in his TC, a car he has used as daily transport since he bought it.

In nobody is the TC passion more obvious than in Mike, who bought his car in 1959 when it was a 10-year-old wreck and he a smitten 19-year-old youth.

Since then the car and he have been inseparable — except when he was thrown out of it after he rolled it in a race at Caversham racetrack in 1962.

In the 32 years he has owned TC/9491 he has restored it three

times and rebuilt the engine eight times (six rebores and two cylinder restees).

It has been his everyday transport as well as his fun car.

He and the TC have shared joy and pain, disaster and triumph in a colourful history.

To his wife's chagrin, he says he has always considered it his most valuable asset — from the day he bought it for "350 quid" (\$700), through the times the model could be picked up for around \$100 in the mid 60s, to the present day, when you may pay up to \$35,000 for one.

There were times, he admits, his passion put a big strain on his marriage — especially when his wife Loretta took issue with the amount of money spent on the car when the family did not even have an inside dunny in their small house.

But now she would not let him part with the draughty, spartan TC, the family car until the birth of their third child.

"It is only in the past few years that I have realised how important it has been for him to have the car," she said.

He now has five children and they all treat the TC as part of the family. He concedes he was probably selfish to have held on to it through the tough economic times when he was trying to feed, house and educate his brood.

His book *TCs Forever* is, however, more than a story about the love affair he has with the car.

It is an extremely detailed guide to all aspects of the car, with many hints on restoration. It also is an overview of the car and its lineage, of the world-wide clubmanship that keeps the cars rolling many years after equivalent marques and models have disappeared.

And it fills a gap left by other books on the TC. As Noel Semmens said: "There are those who restore cars and there are those who write books. Rarely do you find someone who has such intimate knowledge of the beast who can also write."

While the Sherrell/TC story is fascinating, the story of the writing and publication of the book is an epic of dedication in its own right.

He worked at it over 12 years, the first eight writing and rewriting, the remaining four trying to find a publisher. He was unsuccessful. So he bought a Macintosh computer and set about retyping the 250 pages of text into the computer, using a desktop publishing program to lay out the pages.

He did all the detailed drawings of the carpentry and body panels himself. He then had an architect friend go over them to ensure they were professional enough for publication.

He was still unable to get to first base with a publisher. It was about then that his employer Telecom called for voluntary redundancies. He took the money and ran all the way to Singapore.

He used a laser printer to produce the pages and drawings. It took him nine months working full time to get the book to "camera ready" stage.

He took the finished product to Singapore and paid \$25,000 to have 1500 numbered copies printed.

He now plans to market the \$60 books himself.

The numbers start from the first TC chassis number, 0251. So at the launch, it was not surprising to see a rush of TC owners eager to get a copy of the signed book bearing their chassis number.

The A4-size book comes cloth bound with hard covers. It has hundreds of illustrations, including colour and black and white photographs, and detailed drawings to help a restorer build a new body from scratch.

As somebody who restored the one car three times over 32 years, and now restores other people's TCs for a living, there is probably no one better qualified to write on the subject.

He has traced the history of the marque from the time it was first fitted with the unique radiator grill that became its trade mark in 1929 (M type) to its demise in the 11 in the late 1950s.

"The TC Club in WA is a group of 'Boys Own' characters who drive their cars hard. Michael says he believes cars should be used regularly.

"For a while there was a tendency for people to restore TCs and put them in a glass case," he says.

"But that is now changing in WA, thanks to our round-the-house historic racing events like the York Flying 50 and the long runs the club organises."

