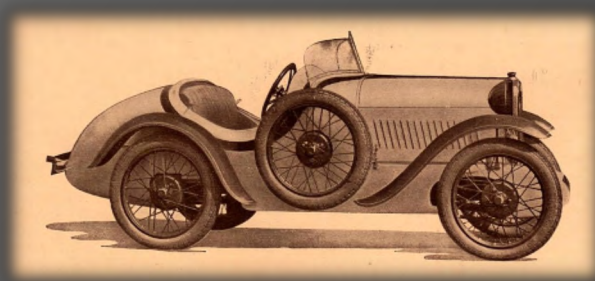


Country Motor

Australia



Issue 7



**Magazine produced
for Pre-1960
motor enthusiasts**

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Brian Long's 1955 Lancia Aurelia B12

Back copies of Country Motor
are available upon request

Country Motor is a E-magazine
created for and by country motor
enthusiasts who have passion for
ancient motor vehicles,
engines, in fact any motor that is
curious and old

Please forward all editorial
enquiries and contributions to
David Vaughan

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Country Motor Australia

Issue 7

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Editor's Entries

Welcome to the seventh edition of Country Motor

Seventh Issue

Thanks for several stories. It would be good to hear from more readers about their old motor experiences. I am sure there are lots of great stories to be told about events and restorations.

I had lunch with a dozen Lancia owners in Boort in October. I have had only one motoring experience in a Lancia. In 1994 Peter Fleming & I attended the VSCC 60th Anniversary in the UK. We took the opportunity to join Matthew Larkin and mate Robin in his Lancia Lambda on a glorious day for a ride through Cotswolds on a navigation trial; then later an impressive untimed sprint up the Prescott Hill Climb.



Instead of the usual old photo gallery I have included a story of my first old car as further old rally photos were taken on occasions when I participated in my own vintage car.

There seems to be a bit of theme in recent issues on Australian body builders. This issue Wayne Styles has done some research on the Latrobe Austin 7. I've added to it with more information on Australian bodied Austin Sevens.

An event I try not to miss is the Bendigo Swap which is administered by a large committee and helped by numerous volunteers. Each year the Swap runs seamlessly due to behind the scenes work as well an excellent souvenir guide is produced. We tend to take it for granted, however when we have the opportunity we should thank these people as it is a major undertaking.

I wish everyone a safe and happy festive period and will catch up with you early in the new year. *David*

LANCIAS VISIT BOORT



Michael Southgate from Bendigo, who has a Lagonda and a collection of Lancias invited me to meet a group of Lancias passing through Boort on their Clive Beattie Tour. I accepted the invitation and motored out to Boort (45k) in the Alvis.

The roads are quite narrow, sealed but bumpy to the rural town. From Wedderburn I passed through Korong Vale, Borung that is a cluster of old homes and Mysia another one-horse settlement. Korong Vale is just a shadow of what it was many years ago. It was the hub of a railway junction with all the railway paraphernalia. Station, numerous sidings and branch spurs, turntable and sheds. It is hard to believe as nothing has been left to indicate its former life. One branch line actually came to Wedderburn and was closed in the 1970s. The old track site is across the road from our house. Only a platform remains at the station stop and wheat silos are along side.

At Boort I met Ferg & Louise



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Anderson at the service station, they drove down from Murtoa in their 1954 Lancia B20 Aurelia GT. As it was early we had a walk around the town examining lots of old interesting photos attached to plinths in the main street. In time Lancias arrived from



other country areas as well as those who travelled a long drive from Melbourne.

Lunch was at the Railway Hotel. The meals were good and inexpensive in a pleasant lounge environment.

Considering I was a total stranger and only knew Michael and Russell Meehan I was made very welcome and I enjoyed many conversations with the Lancia owners.

The meal was very prompt and leaving the pub was delayed as a rescue team had to drive out to nearby Durham Ox with a

can of fuel for a stranded vintage Lancia.

Once everyone was ready to move on the group went out to see the Spanner Man. John Piccoli has produced numerous sculptures made of spanners. John was struck down with polio when a lad and has since

been wheel chair bound. However like so many courageous people with disabilities he has not allowed his life to be anything but fulfilling. His incredible sculptures are a testament to his tenacity. He gave a talk on his sculpturing career and breeding exotic birds of which he has many in his bird aviaries.

David





Previous page a 3rd Series Appia Berlina from 1961, owned by Peter & Diana Renou, following is Paul Vellacott's 2nd series Appia Berlina. Above: Paul & Jo Doumany's 1926 Lambda. series 7. Brian & Tsjitske Long's 1955 Lancia Aurelia B12 Berlina. Alan & Shellagh Hornsby's 1964 Flaminia Pininfarina coupe 2.8 3B. Paul Vellacott's Appia Berlina, made '56 & '59. Bill & Liz Jamieson's 1974 2nd series Fulvia Coupe. Fulvia coupe 1.3S, 1969 is Leigh & Sue Coutts. Michael Southgate's 1968 series 2 Flavia Berlina "Milleotto" 1st series. Russell & Iris Meehan's 1969 Fulvia Rallye coupe, first series. B20 Aurelia GT owned by Ferg & Louise Anderson. My Alvis. Chris Long's Lambda, an earlier series of 1927, long chassis. (Thanks to Michael Southgate for identifying the Lancias in the photos)

Peter Renou Reflects on a Few Cars he has Owned



Thank you for the back issues of *Country Motor Australia*. At 79 your material comes from my time as a young motor and car enthusiast. The first car I built was a special with a Crossley chassis and Alfa Romeo RL engine and gearbox. I started at 16 and its first outing was to Berwick in 1961. I was 22 and you can see I was as pleased as Punch. These photos were taken by Ash Tracey who sent them to me recently. I was very happy to get them as I had very few. Then Kalorama 1962 when Ted Heider-Smith rolled his Fraser-Nash and his poor passenger suffered a fractured pelvis.

I have never been able to identify the model of my Crossley chassis with certainty. The story I was told, I can't remember by whom, is that the car was brought out for the tour by the Prince of Wales somewhere about 1927 but that doesn't equate with Royal visits on Wikipedia. Maybe it was Albert's tour in 1926 but one of the cars listed for this tour was 18/50HP. Looking at all the Crossley photos on the internet my best guess is it was 20.9HP. These cars had Perrot brakes with large finned aluminium brake drums. In the photos they look smaller than on my car, but my car had 19" rims giving the impression of large brake drums. My car had wire wheels with 80

short splines.

At age 16 naïve Peter bought a partly complete Alfa Romeo. It was a chassis with a 3 litre Alfa Romeo RL engine and gearbox fitted. At that stage I didn't recognize the Crossley radiator until I found the name 'Crossley' filed off the aluminium diff cover.

The only trouble I had with the engine was camshaft and follower wear. There was a man, Thomas I think his name was, in a small shop near the intersection of Burke and Dandenong Roads who ground them, but the followers quickly wore. Second go he Stellited the followers and I had no further trouble. I had problems sorting out carburetion. I cast up two stub manifolds to fit SUs but couldn't get them right. Eventually I fitted an updraft Zenith on the original manifold and was able to sort it out. It went well.

The brakes took some organising matching the Alfa pedals and levers to the chassis. With a cross shaft and cables, I had the pedal operating all four wheels and ignored the transmission brake. Although uncompensated the brakes worked well.

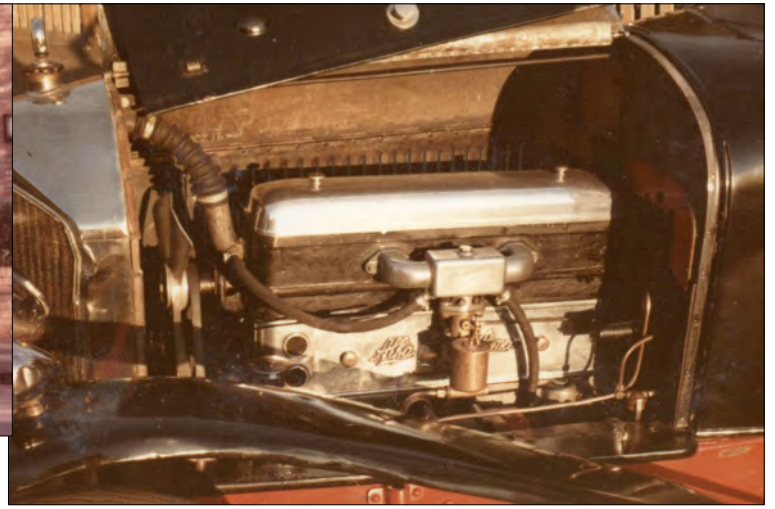
The body came from a vintage

Singer I found at a wreckers. My cousin and I towed it home behind a ute. It was on its chassis with the back axle still attached so we draped the dumb irons on the back gate of the ute. Half way up Punt Hill a man behind us became frustrated with our slow progress and roared past us flat out in first in his Ford V8. There was a loud bang and the Ford emptied its sump contents onto the road.

A dear old body builder worked at the back of a commercial garage in Toorak Road, South Yarra. He was fitting the first fiberglass bodies to English trucks such as Albions and Leylands. He narrowed the body and windscreen frame to suit the chassis, made the scuttle and charged me \$15 – bless him.

The car looked good and drove very well. My cousin and I had a lot of fun in it. Eventually it broke a tooth off the diff pinion, so I set about grafting in a Vauxhall 23/60 back axle. I had it largely completed when I had to sell it because of work commitments and my parents wanting





their 4-car garage back. I sold it to a man who wanted a project to run with his son. In the event he left it in a field for 20 odd years until the new body rotted off and the parts were disseminated to where I know not. A Crossley fan rang me many times over the years trying to chase up the parts. A trailer load of spares went with the car including an Alfa Romeo RL engine. This engine came from the Alfa

destroyed in the Flood fire which was out of the car at the time. It spent many years at RMIT so students could practice working on it. I heard it ended up at Dad's Garage in Sydney Road, Coburg so I went out there and there it was under a bench!

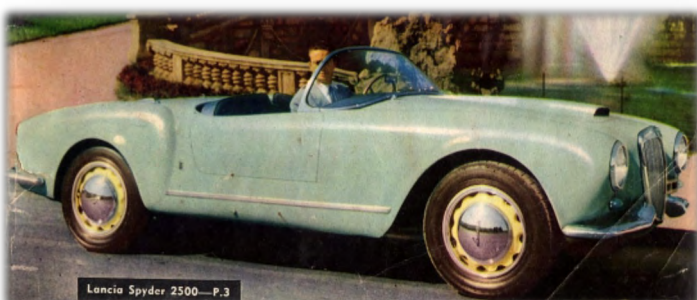
I have restored two other cars over the years, both from total wrecks. The first was a very rare Lancia Aprilia Ghia Grand Sport built in 1947 by a man called Basso in Turin with the blessing of the Lancia Factory. I was lucky to rescue it from California before it went to the tip. Two exist, mine with chassis number 101 and one in England with number 103. Mine is now with the man in Mittagong who rebuilt the body for me. We don't know what happened to 102 but I suspect it was a pretty little coupe also by Basso. A replica spider

was built in Italy about 10 years ago. I haven't seen it yet but hope to one day to see how accurate it is.

The other is a 1938 Lancia Astura Cabriolet by Pinin Farina. (More about this rare Lancia in issue 8) That took me 35 years and thousands of hours. it came up nicely. I sold it after 12,000 miles because I just don't like big cars. I love my little Appia and 1935 Augusta. It is now in that museum in Gosford.

Our club (Australian Lancia Register) has members all over the world including the USA, UK, New Zealand, Switzerland, Norway, Italy, and Hong Kong. When we run our Castlemaine Rallies, we usually have about twenty overseas participants.

Peter

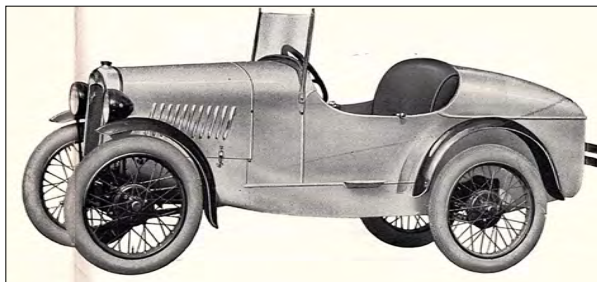


On the cover of 'Cars' magazine October 1955 was this illustration of the new Lancia Spyder Gran Turismo 2500, regarded in Europe as one of the best looking road vehicles produced that year. The body was built by Pinin Farina in very restricted numbers, so that the car, in truth, is a real 'limited edition'. The Lancia Spyder is very fast (top speed is well in excess of 100mph) and has outstanding road holding. The colour photograph was taken for 'Cars' at Turin, in Italy.

Latrobe Austin Seven

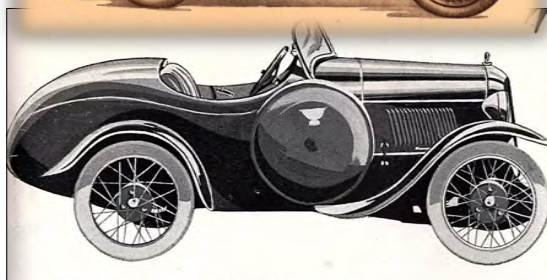
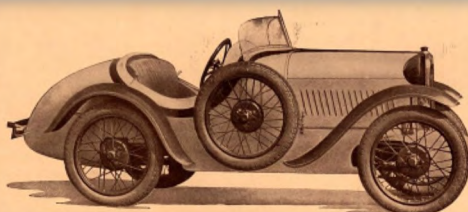
By Wayne Styles with assistance from Austin Seven expert Bill Sheehan

It is well documented that Herbert Austin had the desire to have an interest in the distribution of his 'Seven' model thus his involvement in the American Austin company by 1929. Until 1928 imported Austin sports models were sold in Melbourne by 'Light Cars, Australia' in Queen Street and Chummys sold by 'Morrison Motors' of Bourke street. During 1927 the director of the Morris importer [SA Cheney] visited Herbert Austin with the intention of attaining the sole distributorship. You can only imagine that Herbert having spent 8 years of his youth in Melbourne and the desire to retain a level of control of his product in the colony showed a keen interest particularly as Longbridge would retain some control as his son in law and South Australian born Arthur Waite was to be sent to set the operation up and be Managing Director of 'Austin distributors' of Bourke Street, Melbourne.



AUSTIN 7 "STANDARD SPORTS"

Finished in polished aluminium or colour as selected. Note the sporty appearance of this fast little two seater. Fully equipped with Hood. Screen. Spare Wheel carried in boot, and racing type guards.



The Special AUSTIN 7 "ACE" Sports Model

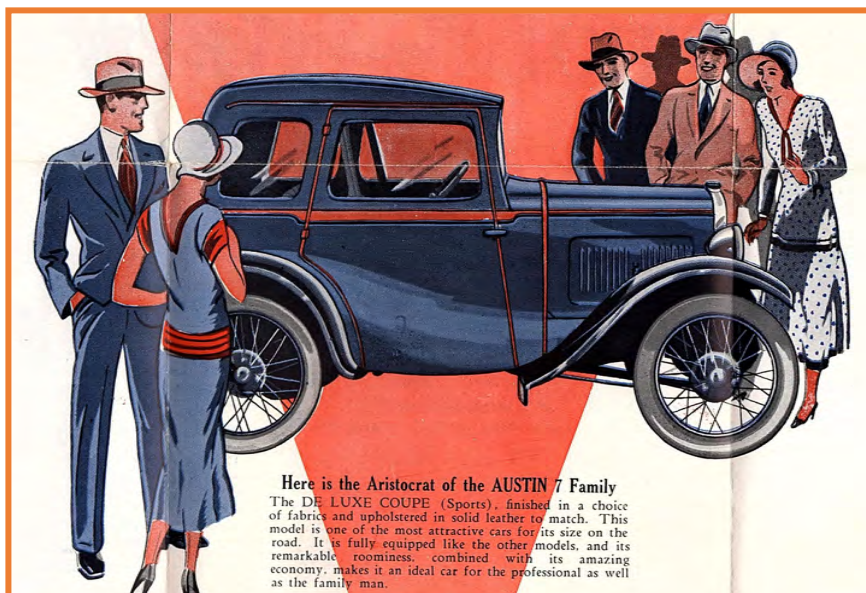
Is truly a beautiful piece of workmanship. Smart and "Snappy" — the ideal car for youth and those who desire speed with economy. The long streamline body with streamlined cowl over Radiator, the low "V" Type windscreen, and other attractive fittings give this special AUSTIN 7 model an air of distinction possessed by no other light car. The special Air Cushions which are fitted to the "Ace" give wonderful riding comfort.

then chose to have their bodies built by J.W George in neighbouring Richmond. They were released in time for the Christmas period in 1928. Melbourne Body Works churned out Chummy bodies that were more mass produced and suitable to our conditions. The George body on the other hand had been made in small numbers and on heavy timber bearers following the chassis rails which was the method applied to the sports cars. A Holden body of the period is identified by a single swage line from door to door whereas the George body had two.

Latrobe motors is not believed to have had a long existence but not before leaving it's mark on the Austin Seven Sports as we know of them today. They too sold the 'Standard Sports' model and placed in the same script as Austin used, the word 'Latrobe' on the radiator of each car sold, hence how this particular sports car obtained it's nickname in Victoria, they are all referred to as 'Latrobes'.

Finally, the 'Latrobe' is the most common sports model in Victoria followed by Meteors then Wasp models but in much smaller numbers. In addition to the genuine Latrobes still surviving they are helped along by the manufacture of new bodies being readily

distributor. It is assumed that they acquired rolling chassis from Austin distributors and available in Melbourne to acquire and build a replica, but that is another story. *Wayne*



Here is the Aristocrat of the AUSTIN 7 Family
The DE LUXE COUPE (Sports), finished in a choice of fabrics and upholstered in solid leather to match. This model is one of the most attractive cars for its size on the road. It is fully equipped like the other models, and its remarkable roominess, combined with its amazing economy, makes it an ideal car for the professional as well as the family man.

AUSTIN DISTRIBUTORS PTY. LTD.
DIVISION OF S.A. CHENEY MOTORS PTY. LTD.
460 Bourke Street • Melbourne

By 1928 the organisation was up and running, they were distributing Sevens to small country dealers and their newly appointed salesman Cyril Dickason [who went on to become Managing Director and finally the Director] became famous with his Australian racing exploits.

A C Waite (Austin 7) won the first Australian Grand Prix at Phillip Island and Class A win in 1928 under handicap. In 1930 and 1931 C R Dickson won Class A in an Austin 7 and third out right in 1932.

Waite was aware of the impending 'super sports' model that Longbridge were working on and as he too was a keen participant in the racing scene he placed an order with James Flood of neighbouring Footscray to build a sports body that could be fitted onto a standard rolling chassis. The first of these 1928 all aluminium bodied sports were fitted with a 'V' windscreen and 5 inch headlights and was campaigned by their employee Clarry May at Phillip Island.

From the first version the model was improved slightly for the 1929 season and by late 1930 had altered to a single flat windscreen but otherwise the same, all to be produced as a standard model to be retailed in volume and called 'standard sports'. The early ones were all polished aluminium with red guards and wheels, later, painted red over black.

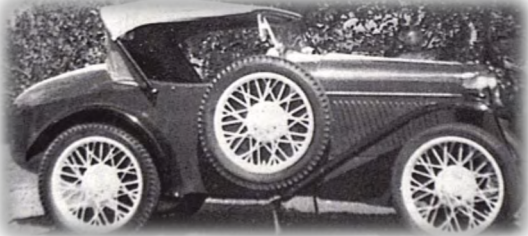
During 1928 two blocks away in Latrobe Street, Melbourne 'Latrobe Motors' had been watching what was transpiring from Cheneys Longbridge operation and for reasons only known to themselves as subagents decided to access their own Chummies and not purchase from the new

Further Notes on Austin Sevens

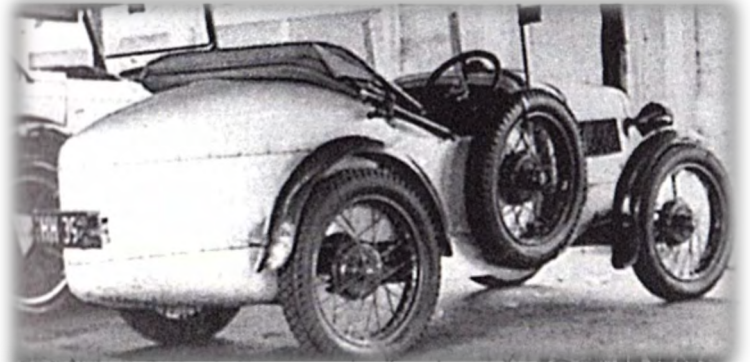
It is astonishing on how many body variations that can be found on Austin Sevens. Some are peculiar to Australia such as the Meteor, Latrobe and Wasp (*below*) In the UK numerous body constructors used Austin Seven chassis to make sports models, better quality saloons or commercial adaptations.

Referring to Norm Darwin's excellent book 'Early Australian Automotive Design' it is noted that Melbourne Motor Bodies was a subsidiary of Allied Motors, it became Melbourne Motor Body and Assembling Company (West Melbourne) it was renamed Ruskin Motor Bodies Pty Ltd in 1930. The firm was eventually sold to Austin Motors in 1948 and early Austin A40s were assembled by Ruskin. The company also made bodies for All British Motor Co Pty Ltd including Rolls Royce, Sunbeam and Armstrong Siddeley.

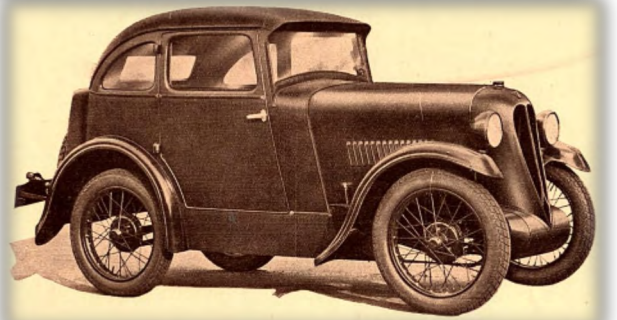
The very comprehensive 'The Austin Seven Source Book' by Brian Purves of the UK illustrates both a Chummy and Sports Seven that were sold through the Latrobe Body Works, Latrobe Street, Melbourne retail outlet. They claimed their Chummies had 23 improvements over the British model. The construction utilised the production Austin radiator cowl, steel bonnet and aluminium scuttle and Latrobe then produced their own body with an overlap joint directly below the doors. The door was originally a square design but passengers found difficulty climbing into the back seat so the door was redesigned with a sloping rearward edge. A tilting front windscreen pivoted approximately a



quarter the distance down the front upper edge. As with most coachbuilders producing Chummies in Australia from around 1927, they nearly all featured a beading running around the body just below the waist rail. The sports style Seven was designed and constructed on an ash frame and panelled with aluminium also the louvered bonnet. The pointed tail was constructed from five pieces with the number plate hung in the extreme end. Folding the back of the bench seat forward accessed the storage in the tail. The spare wheel was carried on drivers side held by two cradles and strapped at the top. The front mudguards were designed by Latrobe and the front guards turned with



the wheels being attached to the brake drums. A vee windscreen was optional along with a hood, side screens were not provided. Colours were selected by the customer to go with black mudguards and headlamps.



The sportsman coupe is believed to have been built by Flood but was not popular, a restored one was displayed at the annual Austin 7 rally in 2018.

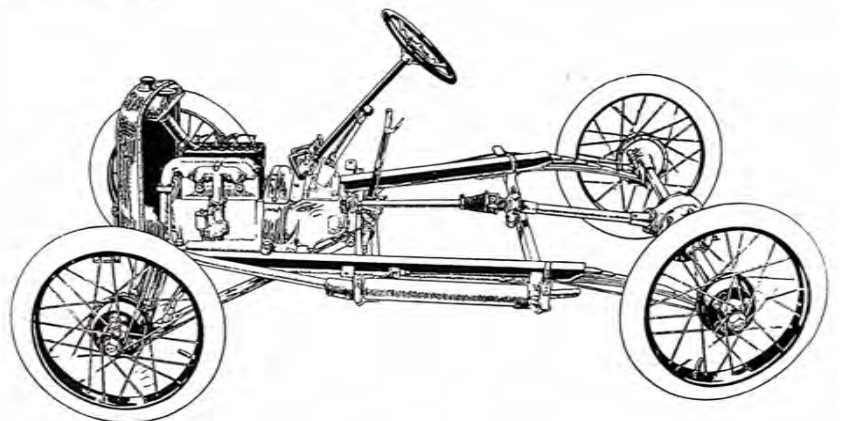
David

Austin Seven Production 1922-39

1922	178	1932	21,285
1923	2,409	1933	20,383
1924	4,800	1934	22,685
1925	8,024	1935	27,225
1926	13,174	1936	24,523
1927	21,671	1937	20,671
1928	24,247	1938	8,089
1929	26,540	1939	656
1930	23,739	Grand Total :	290,944
1931	20,645		

Austin Seven Chassis

The Seven 'A' frame chassis had a 6 foot 3 inches (1905mm) wheelbase from 1922 to 1931. Actually went on sale in early 1923. Four wheel brakes (rare in 1922), torque tube transmission and quarter elliptic rear springs. Transverse front spring and triangulated radius arms in the Model T manner. Inefficient brake system was cable operated and uncoupled, foot on rear and handbrake on front. Narrow beaded edge wheels were replaced by well-based in 1925. Engine 747cc 4 cyl sv 3 speed gearbox.





AUSTIN COLLECTOR

Lee Watkins has a few 1950's Austins



Lee Watkins has a few Austins, but only the A95 Westminster and the A40 Devon are on the road.

The A95 is a maintained vehicle. It has never been off the road for restoration but has been patched and had few rust and paint repairs done over the years.

The A40 is a late 70's early 80's restoration done at a high standard. When he purchased it earlier this year it had only travelled approximately 5,000 miles since it had been restored. Since Lee has owned it he has done at least a further 4,000 miles in it.

The A95 Westminster (Hattie, as her original number plates were HAT) is part of the family being their wedding car, it brought home their first born (unfortunately a leaking welsh plug prevented her from making it to collect their second born child) and has taken them around Tasmania all the way up to Rainbow beach and back.

He has just purchased a rare A95 Countryman (station wagon) which he will restore over the years.

Lee's other car is an A40 ute in storage awaiting restoration.

The photo below is a line up of Westminster's from last year's Westminster Run held in Echuca. An early November weekend this year the event was held at Wagga Wagga.

The Austin Westminster series were

large saloons and estate cars (by UK standards) replacing the Austin A70 Hereford. The Westminster line was produced as the A90, A95, A99, A105 and A110 until 1968 when the new Austin 3 litre took its place. Badge engineered versions of the Farina Westminsterers were also produced sharing features from the premium Wolseley and Vanden Plas marques. 101,634 Westminsterers were built.

The A90 Six Westminster was introduced at the 1954 London Motor Show at the same time as the A40/A50 Cambridge saloon. The BMC series 6 cylinder 2.6 litre engine produced 85hp. with single Zenith carburettor.



2018 BENDIGO SWAP

Bendigo Swap was the same old thing. Hundreds of swap sites, tent city, hot weather, dust, thousands of people shoving and yelling, bargaining and dismissing unreasonable prices, trade stalls, junk upon junk, smell of BBQs, tired irritable punters overwhelmed by so many useful things that they love to have but know they will never use. Eyes glaze over by the fatigue of shuffling from one stall to another. If you don't know what you are looking for you are never going to find it. Then the stomach rumbles from a greasy hamburger you just ate to relieve your frustration and it left a fatty taste in your mouth. It's a repeat of every year.

It is strange though, despite the any physical discomfort no one cares. The phenomenal Bendigo Swap has an amazing magnetism that attracts the optimism of coming home happy having acquired some things that are of value and might even contribute to the completion of a project or decorate the garage. The problem is once you leave the safety of the premises what will you say when your spouse asks how much you spent?

I attended the 2018 event and came home totally exhausted having walked a far greater distance than when we go shopping at Coles trying to track down a four-pack slab of bake beans or Lyne's favourite banana and mango juice.

I actually look forward to the event months before the Swap and count the days off over the preceding few weeks. It's a day of immersion into the depths of collecting possibilities and maybe buying a hidden treasure or two, which usually escapes me.

Even if I bought nothing, (not an option) I enjoy meeting many associates in the movement, often the only time of the year I see them, especially if they are from interstate. **Radiator needs to be identified**



Just inside the entry gate was Graeme Jarrett who had an interesting stall consisting of veteran and vintage parts. Graeme has several veterans which include cyclecars. Last year I sold him a veteran Jackson gear-box I rescued

from our Wedderburn swap to help complete a Jackson car he is building. He had a lovely veteran radiator very similar to ones fitted to veteran Sunbeams, however he has been unable to identify it.



Classic Teardrops can build you a quaint classic caravan style of the 1950s, ideal to tow behind a Morris Minor. Prices start from \$3,500 for a

basic shell and chassis.



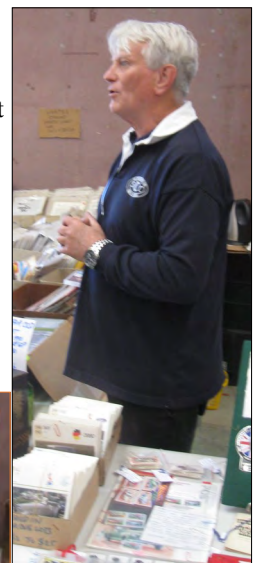
Reproduction Model T bodies

If you are restoring a 1911 or 1913 Model T Ford chassis Arthur Byrne of Adelaide can provide a metal kit body to complete your restoration. He is not keen on 'mother-in-law' seats sometimes requested as they end up holding luggage, so why not have a trunk instead? \$3,000 for a kit.



Lots of rusty motorcycle frames were available as well as this Harley Davidson twin engine for \$3,700

On the Badge's site Peter Fleming was assisting to sell a variety of must haves in automobilia and also picnic sets suitable for 1950-60's cars. Peter is currently working on a veteran Morris and refurbishing the engine on his M Type MG.



Collecting pedal cars can be just as much fun

as the real thing. Fred Hay of Pedal Car Panels from Wagga Wagga can assist with many parts such as wheels for restorations. He had several pedal cars available to restore in various styles.



At 12pm Austin owners always meet outside the front building near the main gate to catch up with Austin news. As I am past Austin owner I join in for a chat. Tony



Groom from NSW is progressing with his rare 1934 Austin Kempton 6 cylinder saloon, the body is currently in the paint shop. Ian Wells is the custodian of his family's 1925 Austin 20/4 tourer, Ian Mann from NSW has an Austin 12/4 tourer, Wally Nye has several Austins that include a veteran, 1928 16/6 saloon and Austin 20/4 special. Peter has a 1947 Austin 16hp saloon and A40.



Several cars were for sale at the swap. A smart Dodge Victory Six sedan was priced at \$29,500. American sedans have crept up from \$20,000 a few years ago to \$30,000 plus these days, no doubt reflecting the costs of restoration.

I always stop to talk to Alan McKinnon of Antique Tyre Supplies. He is amazingly quick at changing tyres on vintage wheels. Alan has restored four Alvis 12/50s, he rallies three of them when he has time.



It is very fashionable to own a classic motor scooter. Vespas and Lambrettas come to mind. Many motorcycle manufacturers turned their hand at making scooters. I am sure bikies would not want to know that even Harley Davidson made a scooter in the early 1960s that was named 'Topper'! Also Honda, Raleigh and Triumph provided cheap means of transport for the Mods of the day, usually derided by the biker Rockers. An unusual brand seen was a complete NSU Prima for sale at \$1,750. These were Lambrettas built under licence that expired in 1955.



Single cylinder 1928 AJS motorcycle with was quickly sold, note the gate change gearbox on the side of the petrol tank. I'm sure promoters of motorcycle safety these days would not approve of the number plate mounted like a blade on the front mudguard.

Starting out with Chevrolets Peter Miller developed an interest in old cars. He still has his first restored vintage tourer but has moved onto an Alvis Speed 25 and 12/50 and a Delage which he is finishing off.

Delage was the marque featured at the Swap. The Delage Club of Australia displayed four examples of the make. Damien O'Doherty, a Delage owner, was there to talk about the various models.



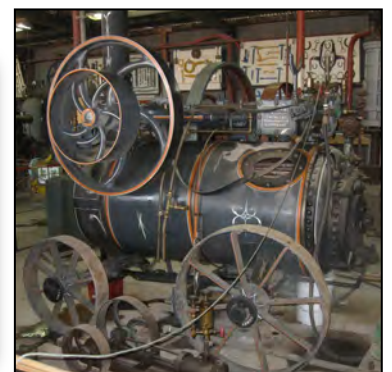
The above is a 1928 DR70 with its original Doctor's Coupe Martin & King body. 2,516cc 6 cyl. s.v., Ricardo head, 4 speed gearbox and servo assisted brakes. One of 66 that have survived from 5,296 produced. The model below is a 1929 DMN 3,181cc 6 cyl. It has just been completed having brought together the original chassis,

engine and gearbox from different locations after the car was broken up 40 years ago. The body is an original Drop Head Coupe by Martin & King.

A display of barn finds were in another building. These included a Model A Ford, Ford 10hp, 1926 Overland Whippet and a Tatra.



Bendigo Steam & Oil Engine Preservation Group has their engine shed on the premises that display a large variety of engines. Portable below built by S Williams & Co Engineers, Rockhampton & Brisbane





Images from Bendigo Swap: 1952 Tatra rear engine forerunner of the VW Beetle & Porsche, owned and stored 40 years by Rini Zysvelt. Vintage Chev.1927 Delage DIC, one of 20 survivors of 424 produced. 1936 Chevrolet 66,000 miles never been restored \$19,500. 1917 James M/C 2 stroke 225cc, runs \$14,500. Reproduction brass bulb horns. Pair of veteran headlamps at \$2,800. Sirram Brexton 4 person picnic case circa 1960-70, all matching china \$400.00. 1930 Hudson roadster owned by Bill Bateman. 1928 AJS M/C was sold. Split windscreen Volkswagen Combi van restored and ready to sell. Just needs an oil change and this 1929 DA Dodge sedan would be ready to rally! Cheap at \$5,000? 1936 Delage D6-70S re-bodied in the 1980's as a replica of the 1937 Le Mans racing body in the UK, imported to Australia in 1985, 3.5 litre, 160hp @ 3,000rpm, max speed 187kph. 1951 Oldsmobile sedan won a trophy in the Show & Shine.

BITS & PIECES

Late last year a traction engine enthusiast, Bob Meyer of Wedderburn, died under the wheels of his moving engine, they believe



he had a heart attack and fell from the cabin. He was a true gentleman and would help anyone out especially if it was an engineering job.

The local engine club miss him and his traction engine at engine rallies. A few weeks back his traction engine, tractors and shed of equipment were the subject of a clearing sale. His Foden traction engine, that was in good running order, was sold to a Geelong enthusiast for \$91,000. He also had a Fiat 451C Montagna bulldozer in excellent condition (sold for \$14,000) and a David Brown tractor with a FEL (\$3,500). Proceeds of the sale will benefit his widow in her future years.



Old trucks are frequently found on farms. There must be hundreds either discarded or still in use undertaking farming duties. At the Spannerman's property this complete rusty Dodge was no

doubt part of a farm fleet of agricultural vehicles before being pensioned off in a paddock.



John Blythe's Austin 12/4 van on 'Miss Fisher Mysteries' movie set

Since I was seven years old I have been collecting model cars. I have over 1,000, mostly 1/43 scale models displayed on shelves in my study. At Bendigo Swap I am always on the look out for a few more models to add to my collection. My collection started with Dinky Toys which I played with and many I have had to repaint.

I am not a big spender on models like some collectors who have 10,000 models. The collection is added too a few at a time.

Although Dinky Toys consist of only a tenth of the collection I think they are very well detailed and admirably represent the makes modelled. Dinky Toys appeal to the older generation and as they are passing away what had been an expensive hobby locating various models is now a lot cheaper.

A case in point is this Lagonda introduced in 1940 and discontinued in 1954/5. Three years ago I saw one in similar condition at \$90. a lot more than I was prepared to pay. This year I acquired this one for \$35. I am not fussed about boxed models as I put them on display without boxes and they take up too much room to store. Boxed 'Models of Yesterday' have plummeted in value, many can be bought for \$5.00 now. Trax models hold their value due to younger collectors.



David's Ramblings

The Australian Lancia Register on their visit to Boort gave me a copy of 'Clive Beattie Fifty Five Years of Dirty Hands'. Clive was an expert on repairing Lancias and was always available to assist Lancia owners in their restorations and maintenance of their cars. I knew Clive back in the 1960s and visited his workshop several times. He was born in Terang in 1907 and died in 1980. Most old Lancias owe their survival due to Clive's good work.

1929 Lancia Dilambda coupe owned by Clive Beattie at 1965 VDC Calder Sprints / 1934 Lancia Augusta, Clive Beattie at 1968 Vintage Drivers Club Kalorama / Clive Beattie's DiLambda Lancia coupe at VDC Operation Joy Ride 1966



Austins in the UK



Brian Parker from near Christchurch, England recently corresponded with me regarding an Austin 12/4 Hertford 2/4 seater roadster. It originally was delivered to Australia. In time it became a wreck and was restored then sold to New Zealand and now resides in Brian's garage. He was hoping I could help him with its Australian history. I looked through all the Vintage Austin Magazines and found a few articles on the car written by previous owners. He has four Austins these are: 1) His very first car bought from a neighbour of his parents in Bristol at the age of 18. It is a 1954 Austin A40 Somerset (Windsor Grey). It has not been used for many years now and is buried at the back of the garage. 2) A 1928 Austin Heavy 12/4 Saloon (Maroon/Black) that he bought about 4-5 years ago in very

good restored condition and has so far been his main vintage motor. It is on the grounds of Burnley Manor in the New Forest. 3) A 1925/6 Austin 7 Chummy (Maroon/Black) which he bought 2 years ago for his wife to drive. Unfortunately she had an accident in it in August 2017. The car has been professionally repaired and at present advertised it for sale. 4) A recent purchase is the 1924 Heavy 12/4 Hertford Tourer (Cream with Red wheels) that originally came from Australia. Brian is in 3 clubs, the Dorset Austin 7 Club, the Vintage Austin Register and the 3-Counties Vintage and Classic Car Club. The latter covers the counties of Dorset, Wiltshire, Hampshire (and also Somerset) and is a club for all marques up to 1980.

Goulburn Valley Vintage



*Tractors & Farm
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I am writing on behalf of the Goulburn Valley Vintage Tractor and Farm Machinery Club to invite your members to attend our 36th Rally 2019 on Saturday 30th and Sunday 31st of March 2019. Our features for the rally will be all vehicles, engines,

tractors, trucks and anything that comes under "All things English" We are planning to attract as many trucks as we can, with extra area set aside to display them. The Tractor pull is a very popular attraction for our rallies, with 2 sleds to allow for different classes of tractors. With pulling under lights on Saturday night following the evening meal. Our Crossley engine and the Tangyes

engine in the big shed will be started up hourly, this always attracts plenty of onlookers. A Tractor Trek on Saturday morning is another highlight touring the local area by tractor. The Federation picnic is held on the oval adjacent to us on the Sunday there will be a variety of Vintage and Classic cars taking part in this, well worth the look. An added feature for 2019 Wunghnu is the starting point for the Golden Oldies tour, which will attract more Veteran and Vintage cars at the picnic on the Sunday, celebrating 100 years since the end of the Veteran and start of the Vintage car era. Onsite catering and camping will be available all weekend, with security on Friday and Saturday night. Those wishing to attend and have a Saturday evening meal need to return the entry form early, to enable organisers to cater for the meal.

Turn Back Time to When I Bought a Vintage Car

In the days when vintage cars were cheap and available I hunted down my first old car

It was December 1961 when I worked on a Tullamarine chook and goat farm owned by my father's TAA work mate, Wim Wubbin, on Saturdays to get seven shillings and sixpence pocket money.

The Dutchman loaned me a fixed wheel push bike to ride to the farm and home. One day when I was riding the chain cog jammed between the frame and the rear wheel suddenly pulling me up resulting in me flying over the handle bars and breaking my arm. All summer I could not work nor do many physical activities so the gentleman was kind enough to compensate me with a five pound cheque!

I enthusiastically read "The Age" every Saturday to see what vintage cars were for sale. For £14.19.11 I could be the proud owner of a 1928 Melbourne Bodyworks Austin 12 tourer. That's interesting I surmised, the vendor had a local Glenroy telephone number. A little persuasion was needed but dad agreed to take me around to Kennedy Street to see a bright green vintage tourer.

Alas the engine was seized up and it had been well used. The current owner, being a hot rod fan and training to be a graphic artist, had painted white racing strips down the bonnet! Dad was like an Arabian as he is not happy unless he can negotiate the best price, a trait that enabled me to buy my first car for £5!

A week later a vintage car was parked at the back of the garden with a tarp over the back. I had to steer it the few kilometers behind dad's 1951 Standard Vanguard. As I was still at school with no money I could only admire the upright lines of the old classic. We recovered the metal parts of the hood frame from a bon fire at the vendor's friend's house.

The Saturday job however proved its worth as I had my eye on a second 12hp. Our drive out to the other side of town was delayed a few weeks by which time the seller of the 12/4 had stripped the saloon body off

the chassis and dumped it. However for £15 I had a complete chassis with a reasonable engine. He offered to throw in an Indian motor cycle which I declined; what a dill!

My position once again was in the towed car, this time on the base of a driver's seat. The wind lashed tears from my eyes as I nervously clung onto the steering wheel hoping not to shunt dad's Vanguard. He weaved through the traffic waving his arms about, partly to warn other motorist to get out the way or as an indication he was slowing down, turning or taking off. I have a feeling he had never mastered semaphore! Hopefully he wasn't so confusing when he guided aircraft in during his job on the tarmac at Essendon Airport!

Being at school nothing progressed until I was earning my keep as an office boy at Electrolux Pty Ltd located in a decrepit old office building lining noisy Bourke Street, Melbourne. I had just turned seventeen and old enough to hang "L" plates on the over-riders of the Vanguard.

The first priority from my humble pay of nine pounds seven and sixpence a week was to get the Austin going and on the road. That dream was so exciting!

Dad had just got a large brick garage built, financed by my granny for her baby Austin A30. My car was now undercover. In all the years I lived with my parents the double door ways at the front and single at the back were never filled in by doors. A side door by the bench was fitted. One day granny was groaning at dad and wanted to know why the small door was closed, why not open it and let in a bit of fresh air! When he did eventually fit doors would you believe someone broke in and stole all his tools! There must be a moral in that story? Fortunately he had given me his

older spanners and a ratchet set purchased from a young widow whose husband had been a motor mechanic. These quality tools are still in my tool box. A wonder considering the bashing the ratchet has received when grappling with rusty nuts and bolts.

Aged 15 years old, behind the wheel of my new purchase in December 1961.



A 12/4 chassis was purchased for £15. We replaced the seized engine in the tourer with the engine from the chassis and hoped for the best

We had the chassis going down the then unmade bumpy Cardinal Road. A friend Alan Davies helped us get the engine going and we all had turns rattling down the street with loose parts tumbling off in the dust. We removed the old engine from the tourer and transferred the engine from the chassis into the car using a borrowed block and tackle and an A frame. A local friend Robert Bonner, a member of the VDC, helped us attach the gate change gearbox.

My father and I worked intensely for a few months, even into the night in an attempt to have the Austin running, roadworthy and registered in time for the 1964 Kalorama Rally. Failure was not an option!

On the agenda was a grey/black paint job to cover up the green body and white racing stripes. We used Dulux super enamel through mum's vacuum cleaner spray gun. Not a very professional finish, but certainly tidier. Everything got painted included wheel nuts, door handles and lights.

It was out of the question to get a hood made or even the seats recovered in the short time. We merely spread a tartan blanket over the front seat and the rear seat was left out to carry spares in case of a breakdown.

On the Friday before the event dad took a day off and rattled off to the Motor Registration Branch in Melbourne to get the car registered. He came home victoriously with a set of plates and certificate in his hands. The only issue was a loose steering nut which he tightened up on the spot.

Saturday we spent more time preparing the car and filling it up with spare parts (including a cylinder head) and tools. I could not sleep with excitement that night.

For some reason we got into Lansdowne Street just as the cars were moving off. I had previously had rides in other cars to Kalorama before this auspicious



occasion. And auspicious it was as the event was honoured by the presence of Lord Montague and Michael Sedgwick curator of the famous Beaulieu Motor Museum in the south of England.

We trailed behind many boxy American vintage cars, including the Bonner's black Graham Paige. Dad commented it was like Al Capone's funeral!

The Twelve was rather gutless and of course dad had had very little practice driving it, crunching the gate change gears all the way. Just prior to driving up the Mount Dandenong climb to Olinda dad stopped the car and decided to change over the petrol primers on the cylinder head. He felt the engine was losing compression. He was right the car did go a little better and grinding away in third gear we eventually entered the Kalorama reserve to take place on the inside of the fence line of the oval.

I was so proud and over whelmed having my own vintage car present for everyone to see, including the royal guests. Dad of course had a few words with them. Michael, being interested in Fiats knew John Haywood who live near us in Ferndown, Dorset and commented that he had wondered where John got his Australian information from.

Dad had fun driving in the gymkhana events including sprint and stop, bending races and the slow race, competing against Charles Granger in an Austin 12/4 Windsor saloon.

It was one of the high lights of my vintage motoring experiences. I had dreamed for a few years of the day when I would be able to attend in my own car and after a few months of intensive work we got it registered. Finally being there enjoying the day was an absolute triumph!

Before gaining my license I managed to get rides to VDC meeting with different people. A school friend Dennis Healy's father took me to a few VDC meetings in his vintage Oakland tourer and later a 1938 Pontiac. Then the Bonners - Hilbert took me in his 1930 close-coupled Buick sedan and several times Robert in his Graham Paige. Also I went with Graeme Simpson in his late 1940's Rover.

I learned to drive the Austin. I also had driving lessons in an EH Holden with Burton Driving School. I was happy with my abilities however the instructor kept on patting me on the shoulder saying I'll be alright, making me exceedingly nervous when I went for the driving test in Moonee Ponds. My mind was blocked by worry that I would make mistakes which I did and failed. A month later dad and I returned to Moonee Ponds in my vintage car. Even in the mid-1960's vintage cars had become a novelty and apparently the testers drew lots as to

who would accompany us for the test. By then dad had got an upholsterer at TAA to cover the front and the back seats in a very tough red vinyl. No telling where the material came from!

The plod sat on the edge of the back seat breathing down my neck as I went through the motions of the test. This time I had a smile from ear to ear when we left the station. I was free to drive my old crock any where any day. Needless to say my first trip was to a Vintage Drivers Club monthly meeting. Having been too crowded at the Deepdene Anglers Club rooms it was now held at a church hall in Hawthorn. The cool night breeze on the drive home was joy to my soul. The poor lights didn't matter as we lived in the suburbs; though it was evident I needed to adjust the unsatisfactory brakes. I discovered there was a down side to using the effective transmission handbrake and soon learnt how to change a ropy fabric universal that caused the car to vibrate badly at 40mph.

New universals could be purchased at Vanguard's in Elizabeth Street. I can still visualise old Eric thumbing through catalogues for some obscure part number and then disappearing for twenty minutes into the archives and coming back with the prize. What a treasure house that old building was to a vintage car enthusiast.

It was not unusual for my little sojourns in the 12/4 to end up broken down on the side of the road and waiting for dad to rescue me in the Vanguard. As things went wrong I had them fixed.

I seemed to be always blighted by flat batteries and can recall many times recruiting pedestrians to give me a push roll start. We never talked to our corner neighbour who drove a refrigerated van. When I conked out in Buckley Street, Essendon one day he stopped his truck and got me going.

I entered or attended nearly every Vintage Drivers Club event on the calendar. The variety included climbing up Rob Roy, (the slowest time of the day!), sprints at Calder race track, navigation trials, picnics and weekend tours to the country.

The ultimate challenge was the week long Albury National Veteran and Vintage Car Rally in 1967. A work friend Roman Kentler decided to accompany me in the 12/4, recently named Matilda. As usual dad and I spent some time preparing the Austin and on Saturday we had an early start from Glenroy, motoring along the Sydney Road to Albury. The Hume Freeway was yet to be built so we had to drive through all the towns on the route that are now by-passed.

The Austin had one very annoying problem that occurred when ever we would be traveling at 40mph; the fuel would temporarily cut out. I had no idea why and much to our distress we conked out in Wodonga. A very kind motorist towed us to the huge wool store in Albury behind his modern Sunbeam Rapier. Packard owner Wally Forbes fixed the vacuum tank leak.



The Albury National Rally in 1967 was a major adventure that encouraged me to drive the Austin on numerous country weekend rallies

Over the next few years I went on numerous weekend trips with the Vintage Drivers Club. I flogged the Austin trying to keep up with its American contemporaries that coped far better on long trips. I got to see a lot of Victoria. Staying at Myrtleford, Maryborough, Hamilton, Swan Hill, Echuca, St Arnaud, Wedderburn, Ballarat and Bendigo to name a few regional towns.

The distant runs culminated in 1970 with a two week escape to Sydney and back on an International Veteran and Vintage tour, via Canberra. Two thousand miles with few troubles surely must say something about the reliability of a 12/4. A local Ferrari owner garage proprietor even bet me \$100 of petrol that the Austin couldn't do it. A paragraph in the local paper ensured I received the proceeds of the bet.

When I look back on the trials and good times I had in Matilda for 32 years I now feel disappointed that I decided to sell and banish her overseas. Matilda was part of my life and no car has replaced her to create such a long history of companionship. I get a very strange feeling when I see her steering wheel on my study wall, it sends a spiritual message of a car with which I had experienced a long relationship. It has taken a very long time to realize that a part of me went with the car.

It is not to say that I didn't have many disappointments with the car especially its performance. I was frustrated by its granny pace and slow cruising speed when driving home up the gradual climb to Romsey with a head wind. By the time I sold her we had ironed out all the bugs and it was running like a charm. Coming back from Wangaratta, after the 1995 Austins over Australia Rally it flew along at 45mph.

David