

Chapter 9

1993-1997

40 years old, and touring Tasmania for the first time

Planning for our 40th year celebrations began in July 1991, when a meeting of members was held to suggest ideas: from this, the best were adopted. One of the ideas floated was for a Grand Rally 40-day round-Australia epic in A7s (shades of the 21st adventure to Ayres Rock) but this did not gain any support and was forgotten.

By July 1992 the program was settled. A Clubrooms reunion and afternoon run, followed by dinner at Stonyfell Winery on 13 February; a birthday rally at Glenelg on 14 February; the border run on 11-14 June to Nhill and the Riverland Sunseekers' run on 16-23 October – and was released in *Austin 7 Journals 121*.

The commemorative badge design, which had been open to all members, had also been finalised, thanks to Barbara Hogg. In October, an entry form and details for the Birthday Rally at Wigley Reserve Glenelg, organised by Stan Gafney, John Horsell and Bob Cornett were released in *Austin 7 Journals 122*.



The *President's Piece* in *Austin 7 Journals 124* for April 1993 noted, in part:

I want to record my personal thanks to all those who participated and made each part of our 40th Celebrations such a success, particularly those who displayed cars at Wigley Reserve. The attention to detail and the care and craftsmanship shown in restoring those cars is a credit to each and every one of

you; your skills were evident for all to see...and may people did see. But most of all, I again congratulate our organising committee for the time and hard work put into the Sunday: Stan and Bobbie Gafney, John and Rhonda Horsell and Bob Cornett again proved that we do put on a good show. On behalf of all members, a sincere "Thanks".

Also from that issue:

13 February afternoon run (written by Ralph Drage)

On Saturday afternoon by about 1.30 pm there was quite a gathering of members (both local and remote), some ex-members and new members at the clubrooms. The car park was full of "old" cars, which then all headed for Outer Harbor next to the big terminal. On arrival the cars were ushered to park in a horseshoe shape with their backs towards the water, for a photo session.

The 31 cars made a spectacular sight and comprised: A7 – 14, A8 – 2, A10 – 3, A12 – 1, A30/35 – 3, *Chevrolet* – 2 and one each of *A16*, *Swift*, *A/H Sprite*, *MGY*, *Whippet* and *Triumph TR3*.

After an hour of conversations, the cars set off again, with the majority returning to the clubrooms for afternoon tea. Thanks to run organisers David and Michelle Grear.

13 February Celebratory Dinner (written by Barry Frost)

Over 100 members, friends and guests enjoyed the dinner, which was the first of the formal functions for our 40th celebrations. As President, I was pleased to welcome Max Bowden a President from the very early years of our Club, and his wife Jean, and three other past Presidents – Bruce Went, Tony Grove and Bob Piper and their wives. During the short formal part of the night, Tony recounted some of the Club's history and Bruce recalled his adventures on a trip to Lake Eyre for a land speed record attempt in 1961.

I recalled some of the honours which the Club and our members have achieved and concluded the formalities with a toast to the continued success of the Club. Our Anniversary Port was then released for sale and the raffle winners were decided. Thanks go to Barbara Grear, Merawyn Hocking and David Searles for their part in organising the dinner and to all who made the night such a success.

For the rally, a 16-page souvenir program had been printed, which listed over 120 cars in the 11 categories to be judged for awards. On a warm sunny morning, entrants began arriving at Wigley Reserve from 10 am and were assembled in orderly fashion for judging by

fellow entrants from 11 a.m. The trophy presentation followed at 3 p.m. and the winners were:

A7 Vintage (17 entries):

Nadia Addyman – 1930 Chummy

A7 Post Vintage (15 entries):

John Pagnussat - 1936 Tourer

A7 Sports and Specials

(7 entries):

Stan Gafney - 1933 Sports

A7 Unassembled, most optimistic

(2 entries):

Malcolm Lake – 1928 Brooklands Cup Special

A7 Restoration – best attempt so far

(12 entries):

Glen Phillips – 1929 Chummy

Other Vintage Austin (5 entries):

D Graham – 1925 A20 Tourer

Other Post Vintage Austin

(22 entries):

Harry Hewson – 1934 A10 Sedan

A30/A35 (12 entries):

Bruce Williams – 1954 A30

Countryman

Vintage other than Austin

(3 entries):

Mark Franklin – 1930 Chevrolet

Tourer

Post Vintage other than Austin

(3 entries):

Ralph Drage – 1947 MGY Sedan

Other registered cars (2 entries):

Richard Rose - 1955 Morris Minor

The President's Choice trophy caused the President considerable anguish, as there were two outstanding cars in his opinion: the winner was Ian Brock's 1927 Racing car.

Ramblings of Ron from *Austin 7 Journals 124* had the final say:

Our 40th Birthday rally was an outstanding success due to some great organising coupled with equally great weather. The rewarding thing about a rally like this is it brings out vehicles not seen before and others that have not seen daylight for some time.

This was no exception. Among the first-timers we had John Pagnussat's beautiful 1936 Sports, Arthur and Nadia Addyman's magnificent 1930 Chummy, Dave Hall's 1932 Sedan, Merv and Ruth Perry's recently completed 1934 Ten-Four Sedan and Kaye Kolecki's A30.

Among the sports cars Malcolm Lake's Gordon England Cup Model and superb blown motor attracted a lot of attention. There was also intense interest in Bob Phillips' display of miniature pedal cars.

The A30-35 brigade was well represented and difficult to judge and there were some nice cars amongst the larger Austins. Completing the picture was a nice group of non-Austins which included Bob Eglinton's 1925 Vauxhall 14/40; Trevor Clerke's 1928 Whippet, Mark Franklin's 1930 Chev and Richard Rose's 1933 Avon Tourer.

The Kernewek Lowender weekend of 14-17 May also paid tribute to our 40th year. Mary Jervies, the Convenor of the Cavalcade of Cars, had organised a surprise birthday cake at the dinner dance on Saturday night: Jean Gilbert and David Searles duly performed the ceremonial cutting duties. Ken Hislop (A10) and David Grear both won trophies.

The next event on the 40th celebration calendar was the Border Run to Nhill on 11-14 June, with 76 Austineers enjoying a great weekend. A Friday morning start saw SA members braving pouring rain and freezing winds before arriving at Little Desert Lodge by 3.30 p.m. By Saturday afternoon the Victorian contingent had arrived, having battled horrendous driving conditions with blizzards near Ballarat, which was experiencing the heaviest snow falls on record. However, Sunday produced a fine, icy, clear morning and after an early photo session, the cars went on the designated 40th Birthday run to Mount Arapiles.

Bruce Williams' report for *Austin 7 Journals 125* noted, in part, the festivities concluding the run.

Happy hour and a splendid dinner followed. At dinner, we witnessed the cutting of a 40th birthday cake. Ian Jones (SA and 22 Border Runs) and Graeme Logan (Victoria and 28 Border Runs) cut the cake.

Ian spoke about the long history and tradition of Border Runs over nearly 40 years. He spoke particularly and with fondness about the valued contribution of the late Charlie Adams, who died earlier in the year. The Border Run was a highlight of Charlie's life for many years and Ian spoke of a number of humorous events associated with Charlie over that time.

Doug Veel, President of the Victorian A7C and a participant in the first Border Run, speculated on whether after another 37 years, A7s would be gathering at a border town in 2030.

The 11-12 September annual A7C Trophy race meeting recognised the strong support given by Club members and other officials by the presentation to each of a 40th anniversary coffee mug. Another innovation was the Sunday lunchtime parade by invited Vintage and Historic cars and motorcycles. This was a great success and was appreciated by many, other than the drivers and riders who took to the track, led by our intrepid John Wills.

The following are extracts from the race meeting report in *Austin 7 Journals 126*.

The race meeting began on Saturday with a practice session for all competitors, then after lunch one scratch race each, with the day finishing with a relay race for teams of FVeers.

After Saturday's mild weather, the Mallala wind returned and kept everyone rugged up on Sunday.

The Denis Dix memorial for Sports Sedans was being run for the 19th time. A start line incident resulted in three drivers being sidelined with extensive damage and then an engine problem removed Tony Ross after 6 laps, leaving the remaining Sports Sedan of Bob Middleton the winner. This car is the ex-Jarrett Camaro that won the first two Dix memorial races: Jon Finniss won the Club Cars division.

The Garrie Cooper memorial for Sports Cars was run for the 11th time and Brian Randall won from Jim Doig.

This meeting was the second running of the 25-lap HQ Holden Master of Mallala. A near-capacity field of 33 cars roared away from the start, led by Phillip Collier for the first 18 laps, when an engine misfire dropped him down the field. David Lines then took up the front running and he held on to win the race from Gary Baxter and Peter Holmes. Only 22 cars finished the race.

At the end of the 27-event program, trophies were presented to the winners and so concluded another successful race meeting.

John Wills enthusiastically took on the role of organiser of the Riverland Sunseekers Rally, as part of our 40th celebrations. Originally it was to be a weeklong event but this proved impossible to arrange and it was held on the 1-3 October. Leaving at 9.45 a.m. from Craferas and travelling via Karoonda and Kingston-on-Murray, the

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Registrar - Ralph Drage
Publicity - Bob Cornett

Delegates:

CAMS – Bruce Went
FVCC – Jean Gilbert

convoy of 14 cars reached Barmera in the afternoon. Next morning the cars assembled on the Lake Bonney foreshore from where they were escorted by Norm Ellis on a tour of Berri and on to the Historical Village where the Riverland Vintage and Classic Car Club treated them to a barbecue lunch. After John Wills had thanked the Club for their hospitality, the group travelled via Loxton North back to Barmera.

Next morning at 10.30 they assembled for the last time and departed on their various ways to return home. Phil Hutchins' report for *Austin 7 Journals 127* noted that 36 members attended the run, some of the cars experienced minor troubles, and concluded with "Congratulations are in order to John Wills for his efforts in organising the Rally. Thanks also must go to the Riverland Club for their hospitality and in particular, Norm and Gillian Ellis who put in so much preparation for our visit".

This rally brought to a close the special 40th year celebrations; all were well supported, were enjoyed immensely by those who attended and were hailed as great successes.

Prompted by the 40th year remembrances, it was realised that, with the passing of time and original members, the Club's history from our early days would be lost. So in 1995 Bruce Went began to interview older members and record their thoughts: these have been used in this volume.

1993 had begun on a sad note, with the death of Charlie Adams - *Austin 7 Journals 124* reported:

From the *President's Piece*:

On a sombre note, all members will be saddened by the loss of Charlie Adams, who passed away on February 2, after a long illness. Life membership was awarded to Charlie at the January Committee meeting, and although he was unable to publicly receive this honour, he was aware that we had rewarded him for his contributions to the Club, made over a long time and in many capacities.

A resume of Charlie's Club achievements in that issue included the following:

Charlie Adams joined the Club in 1954 and had continuous membership thereafter. He served on committees and was Treasurer in 1984 but his major contribution was the taking-over of a fledgling spare parts system (from Bruce Bridgart) and the production of a sound layout that gave the base for the efficient operation that we enjoy today.

In the late '50s Charlie designed his own version of a sports-racing car and although never blessed with full bodywork, it was raced several times at Mallala and in nine-chain sprints at Gawler. In the early '60s, Charlie persuaded Ian Jones that an A7 should go on the next Border Run and that bold venture prompted the then Secretary Tony Grove to organise a team of A7s to take part in the next one - vintage participation in these runs progressed from that. Charlie, although often appearing to be mild of manner, was strong of character and deep of mind; he had little egotism in his character and he would have been very proud of the attendance at his funeral and the recognition that was given him.

Willisy's Chit Chat had the final words.

The recent funeral of our fellow Austineer Charlie Adams was well attended by Club members, which indicates the respect his fellow members had for him. The church service was most impressive and I would like to make special mention of Ruth Perry who read the lesson and Barry Frost, Ian Jones and Dean Qualmann who prepared and read the Eulogy to Charlie.

Austin 7 Journals 124 had more pleasing and positive news with the acceptance as Club Patron by Freddie Henry, in our birthday year.

He was the last surviving authority on early Austin history who lived and worked right through the era when the A7 evolved and was produced.

In his acceptance letter, he wrote: "Many thanks for your letter and kind invitation to be Patron of the Austin 7 Club of SA Incorporated, which I am honoured to accept. I hope you appreciate that I am in my 83rd year but have a unique record of Lord Austin's history and his personal memorabilia passed on to me when his daughter, Irene Waite, died. I am also chairman and Vice-president of the Austin Ex-Apprentices Association, London.

I wish you and your members a long and happy future".

Freddie continued to correspond with Ron Burchett and the Club on a regular basis until his death on 27 February 1997. Efforts to find someone (ideally a well-known South Australian) who was willing to be Club patron were unsuccessful, and to date, no one has been appointed.

Despite the demands of the coming 40th year celebrations, monthly runs continued during 1993, beginning with a run to Outer Harbor and, for something a bit different, the Port Adelaide art show on 1 January, followed by the traditional "Round the Houses" run on 24 January.

John Wills had taken over promoting A30s within the Club from John Horsell and an A30s-only run to Angaston on 21 March attracted 17 cars. The next specific model run was an A10s-only trip to Strathalbyn on 15 August. This was not as successful, with only six A10s among the 16 cars attending. The Port Adelaide parade concluded the year's runs and started with a breakfast at Len Ward's house - beginning a tradition for the Club which continues to the present (2003), including the attendance of the Clan Gordon Pipe Band, whose music got the day off to a rousing start.

The next years' calendars continued with the pattern of

established runs each month. Some of the reports of the more interesting runs from *Austin 7 Journals* follow.

Brenton Spangler's report on the 13 February All British Day in *Austin 7 Journals 128* April 1994 noted, in part:

Organisation at the oval was very good and Ron and Joy O'Connell had set up the markers early in the morning making parking very easy. We carried our chairs and picnic lunches to the northern side of the oval where all 40 of us sheltered from the warm sun under a huge tree.

Although only about 10 cars travelled on the organised run, it was obvious a lot of our fellow Austineers travelled to the oval at their own leisure. At lunchtime I counted seven A7s, an A8, four A10s, two A16s, an a40, an A90 and Willisy's A35.

However, the 1996 event was held in cool conditions with drizzling rain. Lyn Clerke wrote in *Austin 7 Journals 136*:

There were two A16s, one Humber Hawk, one A35, two A30s, two A8s, two A40s, one A7 fabric saloon and one modern. As it was the first run for his car since it has been restored, Bruce White, a recent member of the Club, met us at the Uraidla Oval and is to be congratulated on the work he has done on his A7 sports - superb job Bruce!

Ken Hislop debuted his A7 at the combined run with the AAAC to Myponga on 13 March 1994. The run attracted nine A7 members, and was a fair mix of cars - three A10s, two each A7s and A30s, one each A35 and A16 and one modern. Ken recorded his thoughts on the day also in *Austin 7 Journals 128*, noting in part:

Being an A10 man for the last four years, I used to be the odd one among the 7s - *Sunday it was different!* It was our first run in our A7: it was great day and I thank the many members of the A7C who helped to make it possible for Sandra and me to make this run in our the 7 - namely Merv and David Gear, Merv Perry, Kevin Gilbert, and the Spares crew to name a few. Thanks to Nadia Addyman for organising the run but I, like the 7, would prefer *Not so Hilly!*

In 1994 and 1995, runs to Port Vincent were held over the October

long-weekend and were enjoyed by all who attended – about 20 in each case. The weekends included trips to the surrounding towns and countryside. The 1995 run was designated “The Peter Monaghan Memorial Run”, as Peter had died in April that year. *Austin 7 Journals 132 reported:*

It is with a great sadness that we record the death of Peter Monaghan on 3 April, after a period of illness. Peter has been an active member of our Club for many years, particularly in recent times as assistant to Dave Hall with Club spares.

His expertise in restoring vintage motorcars and cycles is well known amongst enthusiasts. Peter was also well known for his driving of the RAA A40 van in any rallies that he was asked to support. He will be greatly missed by many of us who he assisted in keeping our Austins mobile.

Two other stalwart members also died in this period: JLG Walsh (1995) and Merv Grear in November 1997. Ron’s Ramblings in *Austin 7 Journals 131*, January 1995 reported on JLG Walsh.

I recently learnt of the death early this year of another A7 racing great, our own Jack Walsh, who achieved what many considered to be miracles back in the ‘50s and ‘60s with his meticulously-built and prepared racing A7. When Jack first appeared on the scene at Port Wakefield, there were many of the MGTC brigade looking for answers when Jack regularly blew them off the track. Most-repeated legend was the time when, after breaking another crank, Jack got himself a solid billet of steel and laboriously hacked it into shape with a handsaw. He acknowledged that at the time he had plenty of time with nothing better to do. His exploits will be remembered for a long time.

In 1996 the October long weekend run was named “The Coorong Explorer Mk I”. Hosted by Andrew Dawes, it was an excellent 3-day rally and was attended by five A7s and two A10s in a field of 12 cars. This was expanded in 1997 when 36 members stayed at “Gemini Downs” station in the Coorong for the 4-6 October weekend.

Doug Hogg’s article on another A7s-only run to Tanunda in August

1996 appeared in the October issue of *Austin 7 Journals 138* and included in part:

In a timely move to prevent the complete loss of vintage A7s from the Club, the first run of hopefully many to include the “babies” was held during an excellent weather “window” during the stormy weekend in August.

Hail, rain, sleet, storm and snow were forecast for the Tanunda run on Saturday 17 August, and mixing my boating experience with motoring, and dare I say it...not believing *The Advertiser* weather report, or the TV on Friday night, I rang the Weather Bureau, which confirmed the bad news. Austineering, like boating, was definitely off, and to us, the Falcon with its heater was irresistible.

None out of 10 was awarded when Barbara and I arrived at the Drage’s house to find a large collection of A7s, and an excellent sunny day for the run. David Searles had arrived with his new acquisition, a lovely 1928 A7 Chummy, to join the others – totalling eight A7s. These consisted of five “babies”, two Rubies, and a special; two MGs joined the group along with one A16, three A30s and three moderns including a “tail end Charlie” with trailer.

Forty people attended the run, enjoying lunch at Bethany before returning home individually. Doug’s story continued:

Sunday was another A7C run (to Strathalbyn Craft Fair) but it clashed with a luncheon event for the “T” Model Ford Club, of which I am a member. Remembering my “0 out of 10” result from the previous day, I was determined not to miss again. I cranked up my “T” and the moment we drove out of the garage is when the rain started and it hailed, stormed and snowed!

Arriving at Birdwood for lunch, we found that out of the 77 starters, we were the only “T” model Ford car there together with a truck! This time we got 11 out of 10, which together with Saturday’s 0 out of 10 puts us mid fleet ... not a bad result!

Chris Frayne resurrected Camp and Capers on 16/17 September 1995. After leaving Marion on Saturday morning, the group lunched at Meadows before moving to the camping area near Kuitpo. From *Austin 7 Journals 134*, October 1995:

There were 26 campers in attendance, with 20 cars (12 of which were historic) and on Saturday night

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there were 30 people around the campfire. It was a great run, topped off with great company, a very relaxing and scenic camping area and beautiful weather.

As enjoyable as this weekend was, no one was willing to organise it again in 1996 and so it reverted to a run to the Fleurieu Peninsula on 14/15 September.

The Biennial Rally held by the Federation of Vintage Car Clubs for 1993 was run on 26 September to Old Tailem Town at Tailem Bend, with over a dozen A7Club members entering.

In March 1995 the Federation’s name was changed to *The Federation of Historic Motoring Clubs*: that year the rally was held on 24 September. In 1997, the rally became *The Birdwood Classic* for vehicles 1945 to 1967. These runs were held on alternative years to the established Bay to Birdwood.

Jean Gilbert had taken on the role of Club delegate to the Federation in 1991 and continued



until the end of 1996, when David Searles took over, a position he still held in 2003. In 1993 there were 50 clubs in the Federation; 46 of these used the Historic registration scheme with 1046 vehicles on it.

In April 1997, the Federation announced that a new scheme of logbook registration, enabling greater use of historic vehicles, would be introduced in 1998. This would remove the need for Clubs to submit yearly calendars of runs and for the issue of single journey authorities. However, in December 1997 it was reported that the logbook issue “*had reached a stalemate.*”

The 1994 Bay to Birdwood began for A7C members on Saturday 24 September when an enjoyable open day at the Clubrooms was held to greet interstate Austineers. Ron Burchett was a spectator/reporter for *Austin 7 Journals 130*.

Sunday 25 September – The Run

From the perspective of yours truly, a non-participating spectator, this was another outstanding success with over 1800 entrants. I won't attempt to provide a statistical breakdown of all the Austins, but there were examples of almost every model produced by Longbridge over the years. Nearly all the Sevens were really flying over the top of the rise where I was, just before Gumeracha. Bob Cornett (1929 A7 Chummy) in bishop's garb and Harry Hewson (1934 A10 Sedan) as a very convincing Methodist minister, complete with book, added an ecclesiastical flavour to the event. George and Phoebe Bell looked resplendent in the Swift, which seemed to be taking the rise in its stride.

John Wills reported that the Club run for non-participants attracted six A30s and one A35, who travelled in convoy ahead of the main body of vehicles along the route and received a very enthusiastic reception from the watching crowd. The group then assembled at the Gumeracha reserve, under the Club flag, to watch the runners and afterwards the party of 16 enjoyed lunch at the Gumeracha Hotel.

The *President's Piece* in *Austin 7 Journals 138*, October 1996 included the following:

Due to production schedules, this is being written before the Bay to Birdwood Run. I am driving Ian Jones'

A7 and will be joining our English members and guests, John and Christine Jewison, who have planned their visit so that they can be a part of this famous run. Thanks to Ralph Drage's generosity, they will be driving his A7 in convoy with Bruce and Tim Williams and others. I am sure that the run and company will provide them with very pleasant memories to take back to England.

As it happened, the run was affected by continual heavy rain, which began to fall as the first vehicles left Glenelg and made the Birdwood finish area a sea of mud. Despite this, our guests enjoyed their stay and the experience and in a letter of thanks to the club on returning to England, wrote “*it enabled us to satisfy a long held desire to take part in the Bay to Birdwood.*”

The May runs to Port Pirie for the PADARC long weekend rallies continued in 1994, when a total of 144 vehicles were attended, and 1996. The 1994 run attracted a strong contingent of members, with four A7s, two A10s, and one each of A30, A35, A40, MGY, Riley, “A” model Ford and Chevrolet making the trip: “*the organisers of the Rally deserves a bouquet ... very friendly people and well run.*”

Similar support from a regular group of members continued for the Kernewek Lowender weekends. In 1995, Arthur Addyman's 1933 A10 won its second Post Vintage trophy. For the 1997 trip, the weather was perfect for the Saturday's festivities but “*Sunday morning was grey and threatening for rain, which it did*”; by afternoon it had cleared.

The 1994 Border Run went to Swan Hill, where 89 people and babies made up the contingent. The only car troubles reported were to the A10s of Merv Perry and David Searles. “*Many thanks to the organisers from both Clubs for all the effort to produce a successful event which must have had the largest attendance for many years.*”

For 1995 the venue was Roses Gap in the Grampians: in 1996 it was to Cape Bridgewater, also in Victoria (“*an enormously successful Border Run, where A7s dominated*”) but in 1997 we had the

shortest distance to travel as the venue was at Desert Park, near Keith. As always, these weekends continued to offer scenic tours in the area coupled with a friendly relaxed atmosphere in which to renew friendships.

In 1992, members enthusiastically accepted a suggestion that a tour of Tasmania in A7s should be considered. A subcommittee of Ralph Drage, Dave Hall and Len Ward was formed in December to organise it for 1995 and on 23 October 1993, a presentation night was held at the Clubrooms to inform members of the details: it was “*all systems go*” from then on!

The “Tassie Rally 95” of southern/eastern Tasmania ran from 23 February to 11 March 1995. When finally assembled in Tasmania, the party comprised 68 (in 32 cars, 18 of which were A7s) - 40 from SA, 18 from Victoria, four each from the ACT and NSW and two from Tasmania. *Austin 7 Journals 132* in April 1995 was the Tour Souvenir Issue and recorded the day-to-day activities, which are summarised in the following.

Wednesday 22 February

An advance party left in perfect weather at 8 am from Glen Osmond and stayed that night in Naracoorte.

Thursday 23 February

All SA participants were together at Ararat for the run to Melbourne next day.

Friday 24 February

Cars and passengers were eventually loaded on to the “Spirit of Tasmania” to cross the Tasman Sea, and after a calm trip, arrived at Davenport at 8.30 a.m.

Saturday 25 February

By 11.30 the tour was under way, with a trip to Burnie, via Ulverstone and Penguin. The first car casualty occurred only 1 km into the tour, when one of the NSW A7s locked the gearbox. This was trailed by “tail end Charlie” and repaired the following night.

Sunday 26 February

Next morning, repairs to a Victorian A7 were affected before setting off via Hadspen, Sheffield, and Deloraine for Launceston, which was the base for the next three nights.

Monday 27 February

After driving to Longford, where the Tasmanian Veteran Car Club joined them, the tour then visited

Clarendon House for lunch, returning to Launceston via Evandale.

Tuesday 28 February

A free day, in which popular tourist sites were visited before gathering for dinner at the club rooms of the Veteran Car Club of Australia (Tasmania).

Wednesday 1 March

Travelling through rain forest covered ranges, the tour took them to the "Pub in a Paddock" and on to Scamander.

Thursday 2 March

A wet day's travel took the group to Bicheno.

Friday 3 March

Another Victorian A7 casualty - a broken crankshaft - saw that car also on a trailer before the start and a few other car problems delayed some during the morning's run to Oxford, but all were repaired. All reached Hobart safely.

Saturday 4 March

The Salamanca Markets occupied most people during the morning before a run to the Botanical Gardens for lunch and then on to Richmond and return to Hobart.

Sunday 5 March

On arrival at Port Arthur, the cars were assembled for a group photo on the grassed area in front of the ruins. The return trip took in the famous tessellated pavement.

Monday 6 March

A day run to New Norfolk and Mt Field National Park was enjoyed in fine sunny weather.

Tuesday 7 March

A morning cruise on the Derwent River took the tour to the Cadbury factory and return in time for an afternoon visit to the Australian Antarctic Division headquarters.

Wednesday 8 March

A morning run to the Huon Valley was completed in heavy rain and then all gathered for the farewell dinner that night.

Thursday 9 March

A long run of 175 miles to get to Davenport, with stops at Ross and Deloraine, was safely completed and all were on board the ferry by 6 p.m.

Friday, Saturday 10,11 March

The ferry docked at 8.30 a.m. on Friday and everyone was eventually assembled in the car park for the final farewells. "Off we roll, back on the mainland, and in the car park to await those who were separated and on the upper car decks. Now it's time to say goodbye to cars from NSW, ACT and Vic. A touch of sadness is felt, so much good spirit and fond memories are shared as we watch the little band of cars wend their way from the Port Melbourne area".

Some took two days for the return journey to Adelaide but by Saturday, all were safely home.

From *WILLSY'S CHIT CHAT* in *Austin 7 Journals 132*.

Well! The great Tassie Tour is over and what a fantastic time we all had. Dave Hall you are our Club hero! Your organising and attention to detail was absolutely superb. Undoubtedly the best and biggest ever organised by any Club in SA.

Four of the SA group stayed behind with twelve Victorians for an extended stay, travelling through the western half of Tasmania, and returned to Melbourne a week after the main party. A Tassie reunion night was held at the Clubrooms in May 1995 and those present decided to do another tour, this time of the West coast, in February 1998; by November, confirmed bookings were already at 56.

Immediately after returning from Tasmania, the next long run was to *Austins Over Australia* in Wangaratta Victoria over Easter, 14-17 April 1995. The cars of Jean and Kevin Gilbert, Ken and Sandra Hislop, Dale and Dianne Palamountain and Ken Darwin were among the 160 entrants. This successful, although wet weekend, was followed by the 1997 AOA rally in Toowoomba, also over Easter. Despite the distance, Geoff Carroll, Ian Jones and Derek Norcott made the trip to represent the Club and be part of the 142 cars entered.

In July 1997, the President announced that the 1999 *Austins Over Australia* would be held in Adelaide, and that an organising sub-committee of Dave Hall, Ralph Drage, Geoff Carroll, Ian Jones and Derek Norcott had been formed. By October, the badge design had been finalised.

The 1997 rally was immediately followed by the 75th Anniversary A7 Hub rally on the Sunshine Coast, Queensland. There were well over 100 entrants, the majority from the Eastern States with just three - Dave Hall, Ian Jones and Ron Burchett - from our Club, despite attempts by Ian, beginning in 1996, to get a larger contingent involved. Ron's report for *Austin 7 Journals 141* included:

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Life membership to Dave Hall

One of the rewarding features of the Rally was the wide array of interesting cars entered. As well as the usual backbone of Chummies and Rubies, there was a large assortment of less common and seldom seen vehicles, particularly among the open sports cars.

The Sunshine Coast was an ideal venue for the various daily runs in perfect warm weather through very scenic countryside.

The enjoyment of longer distance runs had been well and truly established by the Tassie tour. To follow up on this enthusiasm, a leisurely, weeklong tour to Bright and surrounding areas was organised by Ralph Drage for 20-26 April 1996. On Saturday 20 April, thirteen cars including four A10s, two A16s, two A30s and one A35, left for Ouyen. On Sunday, it was on to Echuca and then a leisurely drive next day brought the group to Bright, where they met up with those from NSW, Vic, ACT and Tasmania. Tuesday was spent touring Mt Beauty, Beechworth and Myrtleford and Wednesday featured a trip to the Mt Buffalo National Park. A group photo session was held on Thursday morning before leaving for Glenrowan and Bendigo. Most of the group had returned home by Friday night, although some detoured via Murray Bridge and Mannum, not getting home until Sunday night. All who

attended were full of praise (again) for the organiser's efforts.

As long distance and groundbreaking as these preceding rallies were, they paled into insignificance when compared with Bob Eglinton's European trip in August/September 1997. It was planned by the 750 Motor Club to celebrate 75 years since the production of the first A7. Bob recounted his adventures in *Austin 7 Journals 143*, January 1998, reporting what he saw as deficiencies in the rally and that the attitude of the organisers to any objections was "where is your spirit of adventure?"

In concluding this section on Club tours and rallies, there were the usual short runs each month, like the annual Hills Luncheons. Both John Wills and Dale Palamountain (from March 1996), worked at promoting the A30/A35s and this was reflected in the steady increase in their numbers on runs, particularly the longer distance events. One example is the run to Collingrove Homestead on 16 March 1997, when five A7s, two A10s, two A16s, one A18, four A30s, one A35, A90, Austin Lancer and two MGs attended.

Work continued to complete the spares shed area and in May 1993 the ramp and railings were installed. In October 1996, Dave Hall proposed that a *Special Builders* forum be set up; the first night was on 24 February 1997.

Clubroom improvements continued and the following were installed: in April 1994, an amplifying system; in May 1995, air-conditioning and in March 1997 an irrigation system. Two large gum trees, planted on the opening day on 24 March 1974, had now outgrown their welcome, and were removed in August 1994.

The 1994 Trophy race meeting, at Mallala on 10/11 September included the SA FV Championship, as well as the traditional memorial races, and was another success, for competitors and sponsors alike.

Incorporating superkarts and another FV relay race to conclude

the racing, the meeting had eight practice sessions, 36 races and no accidents or major breakdowns were experienced. This was the last meeting for the Denis Dix memorial, as due to changing circumstances, resulting in loss of support from the sponsor, coupled with a decline in Sports Sedan fields, the award could not continue. Bruce Combe, Mazda was the final winner, and so another piece of Club history came to a close. Stan Keen, driving his Shrike Formula Brabham, won the Garrie Cooper memorial and Bill Lakstins won the HQ Holden Master of Mallala. The main trophies for this meeting were hand-carved from talc.

Our 1995 trophy race meeting on 9/10 September included superkarts and interstate drivers for the "Club Car Cup", in effect the Club Car Nationals. Qualifying races were held on Saturday, setting the grids for the main feature races on Sunday. The 27 entrants in the Club Car Cup preceded the 18-lap race with a parade lap and then assembled on the grid for a photo session: Ken Douglas from Victoria was the winner. Peter Fitz-Gerald won the Garrie Cooper memorial, for Formula Fords and Paul Tucker was the winner of the "SA FV Cup". The HQ Master of Mallala winner was David Lines.

Austin 7 Journals 134 noted in the race meeting report:

32 races were held and 150 competitors entered, which was one of the reasons that the track ran out of Avgas: not, as the Sunday Mail reported, because someone forgot to order fuel – it was just the sheer demand for it!

The committee had worked hard to make our 7/8 September 1996 trophy race meeting something to be remembered and they succeeded, taking it to a new level, as *Austin 7 Journals 138* explained.

As a novel way of promoting this race meeting, Fran Williams came up with the idea of a "Draw your favourite racing car" competition with the Mallala primary school. The school Principal and teachers enthusiastically supported the idea and 220 students entered their

drawings. Fran and the Principal did the judging on Monday 26 August and on Wednesday 28 returned to the school with Tony Morgan and Trevor Pound to present the winners with their prizes of passes to our meeting, Mallala T-shirts, caps and badges and Formula Holden posters, courtesy of Birrana Racing.

The students had been divided into three groups for the judging: all received a certificate from the A7C. Trevor had his Elfin Mono racing car with him and the winners were thrilled to be able to sit in it and have their photos taken; their winning entries were displayed at the track in Glen Dix's garage during the meeting.

The promotion was unique enough to be featured in two local newspapers with photos, so that a wider readership was reached and more interest was created.

Among the competing cars were: the very exotic 1957 Lotus 12, originally driven by Graham Hill; Garrie Cooper's first A7 special and Andrew Dawes A7 being debuted. The Club Cars provided plenty of excitement, with two cars rolling over in separate events; fortunately with no injuries to the drivers. Jim Doig won the Garrie Cooper memorial, for sports cars and Peter Holmes broke the stranglehold which Bill Lakstins and David Lines had had on the HQs Masters of Mallala, by winning — this made up for his loss while leading the 1995 race. As always, such a meeting could not have succeeded without the help of many members and others as the *Austin 7 Journals 138* report concluded.

The presentation of trophies completed the meeting and many drivers thanked the Club for an outstanding two days of racing. There were several very successful drivers but interestingly, at least two of the trophy winners were having their first race meeting: a very good effort.

It was an outstanding effort to get through 49 track events over the two days: this was due in no small manner to the expertise of our trackside officials from SAMROA, under Clerk of Course Geoff Sykes and the scrutineers, timekeepers, fire and rescue drivers and crews and A7 members assisting Tony Morgan, Fran Williams and others in the office, who kept the meeting running. The army of members who assisted Trevor Clerke in the "off track" activities, which included displays of stationary engines and invited cars and

motorcycles, the lunch time parade and the Lotus 12 parade laps, were also a vital part of the meeting and all can bask in the praise that the Club received from many quarters. Our many sponsors support is again acknowledged as is the help we get from Glen Dix at the track.

After such a successful meeting, the problem facing the newly-formed 1997 race sub-committee of Tony Morgan, Fran Williams, Barry Frost and Trevor Clerke, was "How to top that?" The answer was four-fold. Sponsorship was obtained from Shannons Insurance and this, together with added support from John Walker Panel Repairs, enabled the unique Elfin MR9 Formula 5000 racing car to be brought from the Birdwood Mill for display in the paddock area – the first time that it had been taken out of the museum. The meeting was also included as part of the RAA Adelaide International Motoring Festival and riders from the Historic Motor Cycle Register were included for the first time.

The A7C Shannon's Mallala Masters Classic meeting held on 13/14 September, unfortunately wasn't blessed with classic weather, as Saturday's events began on a wet track, which slowly dried towards midday. However, after only three races in the dry, the rain returned making it too dangerous for the bikes and they had to cancel their races for the day. Jim Doig was also a victim of the conditions, spinning off the track on the back straight and hitting a marshal's bunker. This severely damaged his car but he suffered only bruising.

Sunday's racing was also mainly on a wet track which affected the results of the handicap and regularity events. For the first time in its history, the Garrie Cooper memorial was run as a handicap for historic cars. On a drying track, where many drivers exceeded their nominated lap times and were penalised, the winner was Bill Schapel, MGTC Special. In the Mallala Masters Classic for HQs, Peter Holmes continued his top form and won again; of the 25 starters, 22 survived the 25-lap race.

The wet conditions were not only a problem for the drivers, as it caused one of our fire officials to slip and injure his ankle. The far-reaching effects of this accident were unknown at the time but in several years would come back to haunt the Club and cause considerable anguish.

In 1995, in conjunction with the organisers of the other trophy race meetings (the Sporting Car Club and the Formula Vee Association) we proposed to CAMS that points be scored over three trophy race meetings to reward the most successful driver. This was known as the *Tri-Challenge Series* and was different to the existing awards in that points were scored in nominated races for outright placings only. The winners were: 1995 – Shane Kuchel, FV; 1996 – Mark Foster, FV and 1997 – Rob Vanderkamp, Ford Falcon GT.

An innovation made possible by the functions of the timing program, was for race results to be sent to the Internet and the first meeting where this was done was the twilight meeting on 15 November 1997.

In recognition of his outstanding service to the Club in many capacities, Dave Hall was awarded Life Membership at the April 1995 general meeting.

CAMS revived the "Come'n Try Motor Sport Day" idea in 1993. Held on 28 February at Mallala, it enabled drivers to have three laps of the track with a licensed competition driver as passenger to "talk" the entrant around the track. Our Club had a promotional display and Ian Brock was involved in a sprint demonstration with his A7 racer.

In October 1994 the CAMS office moved to premises at 55 Hutt Street, Adelaide. In December that year Bruce Went retired as Club delegate to CAMS, a position he had held for 35 years. *"The President gave Bruce an appropriate oration and Bruce responded. The floor then responded with its appreciation in its normal manner"*. Bruce continued to serve as Chairman of

1996 COMMITTEE

President – Barry Frost
Vice President – Trevor Clerke
Treasurer – Lyn Clerke
Secretary – Trevor Clerke
Assist. Sec. – David Searles
Comp. Sec. – Tony Morgan
Touring Coordinator –
Ralph Drage
Spares - David Hall
Registrar – Kevin Caire
Members - Brian Caire,
Fred Bicknell

Delegates:

CAMS – Tony Morgan
FHMC – Jean Gilbert

the Motor Race Advisory Panel. Tony Morgan was elected as our delegate at the 1994 AGM.

Austin 7 Journals 135 reported on the CAMS Awards night on 6 December 1995.

CAMS takes the awards night as the occasion to also reward officials in recognition of the hours of service that are put into motorsport in many of its disciplines. This year a new category was created to recognise those who have contributed at State level for many years and is called the CAMS SERVICE STAR.

The inaugural recipient of this award was BRUCE WENT: these brief details of his time in motorsport show how deserving he is.

Bruce served on the State Council as A7C representative for 35 years; he was awarded the CAMS Service Award in 1970; he is a qualified timekeeper; is a member of the A7C timing team and has officiated at two Land Speed record attempts (at Lakes Eyre and Gairdner) and at all AGP meetings in Adelaide.

He has built timing equipment for the A7C and SCC and has served on CAMS panels and tribunals. Bruce received his award to the acclaim of all those present.

During early 1995, CAMS underwent a major restructure, resulting in its incorporation as CAMS Ltd on 24 April.

Our Club's involvement in the management of SA motorsport did not diminish with Bruce's retirement. In September 1995, CAMS appointed Tony Morgan as Chair of the *Drugs in Motorsport* Panel: also in September that year

ex-A7C President Bob Piper was elected as State Chairman. In July 1997, Tony was elected as Vice Chairman of the State Council.

The award winners in this period were: Racing Driver of the Year; 1993 – Jonathon Finnis, 1994 – Paul Tucker, 1995 – David Lines, 1996 – Jim Doig, 1997 – Paul Tucker and Peter Wright Memorial; 1993 – Jonathon Finnis, 1994 – Paul Tucker, 1995 – Shane Kuchel, 1996 – Peter Holmes, 1997 – Paul Tucker.

At the AGM in 1996, Barry Frost retired as Club President, a position he had held for 15 years, and Trevor Clerke was elected to replace him. At the December meeting, Bruce Went made a presentation to Barry on behalf of the Club.

Two innovative “Club Days” were held at the Clubrooms in 1997. The first was on 19 April with the theme of “Bondwood”, and *“there was a great line-up of Bondwood caravettes, wooden boats, trailers, canoes and even the wooden remains of an A7”*. The next, on 16 August, had a “collectors” theme: *“members brought along a marvellous array of collectables, ranging from childhood toys (Bruce Williams’ and Merv Perry’s tin plate aeroplanes), vintage radios, model steam engines, teaspoons and model cars to an old record player and a ticking toy bomb!”*

In June 1997, the Club adopted the Hanson Centre for Cancer Research, based at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, as its charity to support.

Although the timing team was no longer part of the World Championship motorcycle scene, the SA and Australian championships at Mallala were still on its program. Local motorsport, together with all Australian car championship meetings, kept the team busy e.g. working at 19 meetings in 1994.

The Australian Touring Car Championship meeting at Mallala on 25 June 1994 was the first timed by the team using Dorian Data-1 automatic transmitters, and this

technology slowly began to be adopted as the standard for championship race timing. A change in the emphasis on touring cars began on 3 June 1995, when the first SA meeting for the new 2 Litre Championship races was held; these continued in 1996 and 1997.

The Superkart AGPs were held as a round of the Australian series from 1993 and from 1996, the Adelaide Superkart Club began to share meetings with the Café Racer Motorcycle Club.

The historic motorcycle racing movement had grown to the stage where they were able to hold the first SA Historic Motor Cycle Championships on 4 April 1993. Similar title meetings followed in 1994, 1995 and 1997, and they held the first Australian Championships on 6 April 1996. These meetings were timed by the Club timing team.

Our NASCAR involvement began again on 23 January 1993 at AIR; unfortunately this revival meeting suffered the fate of being rained out after only one race. Later that year, the team returned to Calder but this arrangement lasted only until February 1995.

On 9 December 1995 we returned to AIR for a Formula Vee Association race meeting, but despite attempts by them to organise others, none eventuated.

A trophy promoting A7s on Club runs was offered for 1996-97 and was won by Andrew Dawes

As reported above, the Dennis Dix memorial trophy did not continue after 1994. The Club’s annual trophy winners were:

1993: Denis Dix Memorial *Bob Middleton*; Garrie Cooper Memorial *Brian Randall*

1994: Denis Dix Memorial *Bruce Combe*; Garrie Cooper Memorial *Stan Keen*

1995: Garrie Cooper Memorial *Peter Fitz-Gerald*

1996: Garrie Cooper Memorial *Jim Doig*

1997: Garrie Cooper Memorial *Bill Schapel*

However, the AGP F1 meetings were still the highlight of the year’s racing calendar.

The 1993 AGP was an historic race: Alain Prost, the new World Champion, had already announced that it would be his last race and it would be Ayrton Senna’s last race for McLaren, as he was moving to Williams for 1994. The race start was aborted twice for stalled cars and then ran for 79 laps, which Senna easily won from Prost and Damon Hill: only 15 of the 24 starters completed the race. (This became the last GP victory for Senna as he was killed at Imola on 1 May 1994). The meeting featured an appearance of the McLaren F1 road car and the “females only” celebrity race (with Dame Edna), which was won by Michelle Fielke from Kirstie Marshall.

Following a change in State Government, continual press rumours about the impending loss of the race to Victoria were confirmed in December 1993, when it was announced that the AGP would be in Melbourne from 1997: this was subsequently moved to 1996. In the meantime, the AGP organisers made sure that Adelaide maintained its hard-won reputation for one of the best in the World.

Run under the theme “Sensational Adelaide”, the 1994 AGP was the 10th in Adelaide and featured the “infamous” coming together of race leader Michael Schumacher and challenger Damon Hill on lap 35, putting both out of the race. Schumacher thus maintained his one point lead over Hill and was the new World Champion. This left the race to Nigel Mansell’s Williams Renault, finally shaking off his Adelaide hoodoo. This time there were 28 entries, with two not able to get through pre-qualifying, leaving 26 starters: only 12 finished.

One of the other major themes of the meeting was a tribute to Garrie Cooper’s Elfins and almost 40 cars were in the Elfin Challenge events.

The 1995 EDS AGP was promoted as “The Grand Finale”

and as a warm up, the organisers held a “Varoomba Parade” the weekend before and Club cars were involved in the parade of vintage and historic cars along the start/finish straight before a large crowd.

The AGP continued to provide drama of the highest order, with Mika Hakkinen crashing in qualifying: his life was saved only by the expertise of the Adelaide Hospital medical staff on the spot.

Entertainment, as always, was high on the agenda and featured the US Marine Corps F/A 18 Hornets to amaze everyone, with a full support program of races.

Schumacher, already the youngest man to be successive World Champion, was aiming for his first Adelaide win. Damon Hill took his first Adelaide pole position and turned that into an easy race win, by two laps, before a Sunday crowd of 205,000. Another accident involving Schumacher (this time with Jean Alesi), caused his retirement after 25 laps: he was one of the 15 non-finishers from the starting field of 23, maintaining to the end Adelaide’s reputation as a car-breaker.

Some facts about the 11 Adelaide Australian Grand Prix.

POLE POSITIONS: Ayrton Senna took six poles, Nigel Mansell three and Damon Hill and Gerhard Berger one each.

RACE WINNERS: (in order) Rosberg, Prost, Berger, Prost, Boutsen, Piquet, Senna, Berger, Senna, Mansell, Hill.

FASTEST POLE (bearing in mind the changes to the cars to slow them down, during the 11 years): Ayrton Senna, McLaren Ford 1-13.371 in 1993

FASTEST LAP: Damon Hill, Williams Renault, in 1993, with 1-15.381.

GERHARD BERGER was the only driver to race in all 11 AGP.

TEAMS: 32 teams competed - 12 scored points

DRIVERS: 92 drivers competed - 29 scored points.

Adelaide had enjoyed being the final GP of each season from 1985, but when the teams returned in 1996 to Melbourne, it was for the first race of the new season. The timing team, along with many Adelaide-based trackside and support officials, continued to work at the AGP.

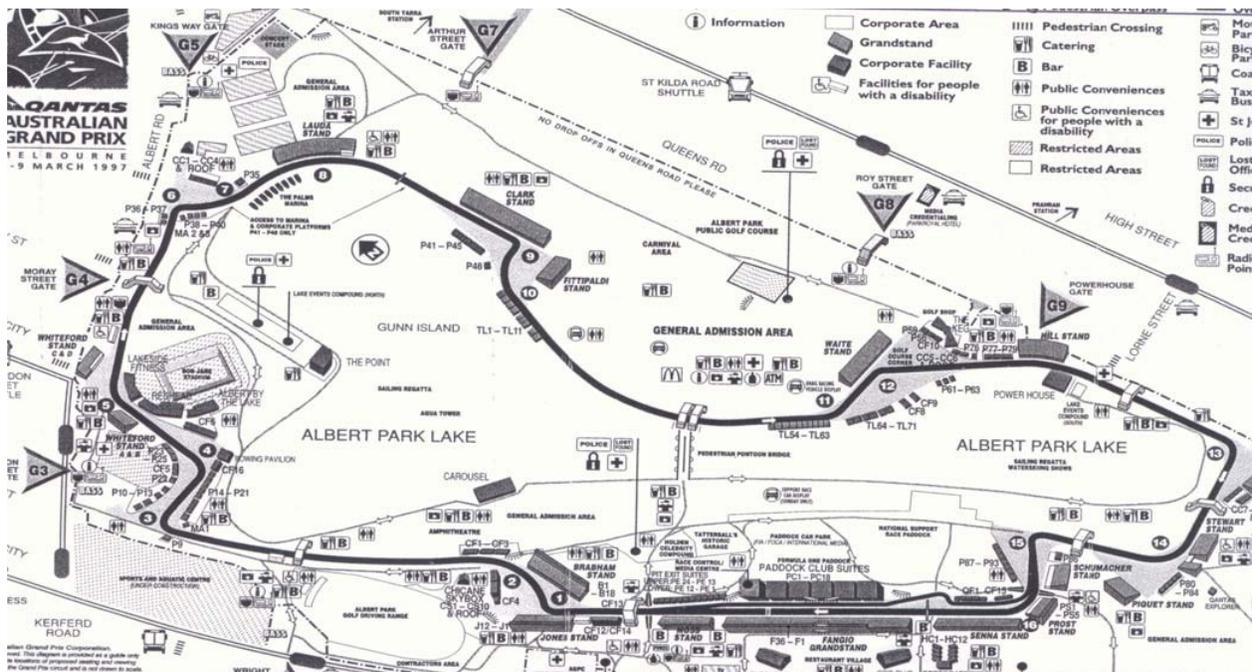
The **Melbourne Grand Prix** track. Set south east of the city centre in Albert Park, which was upgraded with many new trees planted, it is 5.303 km long; racing is clockwise.

1997 COMMITTEE

- President** – Trevor Clerke
- Vice President** – Tony Morgan
- Treasurer** – Lyn Clerke
- Secretary** – Derek Norcott
- Assist. Secretary** - Brian Caire
- Comp. Sec.** – Tony Morgan
- Touring Coordinators** - David Searles, John Wills
- Registrar** - Kevin Caire
- Spares** - David Hall
- Property Manager** – Keith Seidel

- Delegates:**
 CAMS – Tony Morgan
 FHMC – David Searles

The Victorian AGP circuit, like Adelaide’s, was centred on a park – Albert Park – in eastern Melbourne. But unlike Adelaide, there was a team of active protestors who caused disruptions and delays. The track used existing (but upgraded) roads in the park, which was replanted with trees and shrubs and had sporting facilities either refurbished or replaced.



With happy memories of the 11 years of racing in Adelaide still uppermost in many minds, Melbourne hosted the opening race of 1996 with a lot to live up to. It proved a great success, memorable in part for Martin Brundle's remarkable escape after his Jordan vaulted over Coulthard's McLaren at more than 200 kph on the second corner of the opening lap. Damon Hill won his 14th GP, thus equaling his father Graham's tally: he went on to become World Champion with eight other victories. The AGP maintained its reputation as a hard track, as of the 22 starters, only 11 finished.

The 1997 race started with another first corner accident, this time Irvine taking out Herbert and Villeneuve, while Damon Hill, now driving for Arrows, had throttle failure on the parade lap. Coulthard won comfortably and only ten of the 22 starters finished.

Summary

The Club celebrated its 40th birthday with events spread over the year, allowing more members to be involved. The dinner saw the reunion of all the living Club Presidents to that time.

With the success of the Tasmania tour, the Club entered a new phase of touring, where the

emphasis was on longer runs which featured an element of discovery of scenery and history.



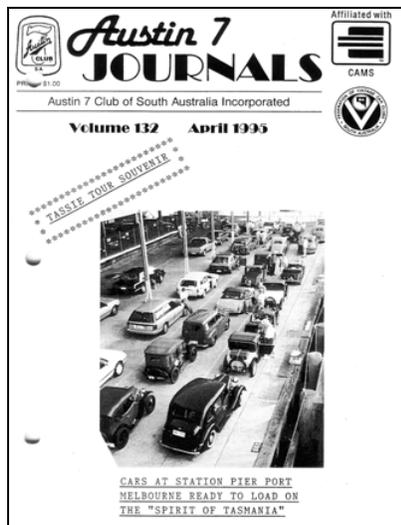
The Tasmanian tour party, March 1995

The growth in membership with new cars and the desire to use them as much as possible, resulted in extra runs being put on at short notice. So the ability to use and enjoy Austin motoring continued to underpin Club membership.

The Club continued to stretch itself in ways to make our race meetings more appealing to competitors and spectators alike. The invitations to other car clubs was one of the successful moves, as was involving the Mallala School in one of our biggest meetings to date.

Club Presidents at the 40th dinner

L to R: Max Bowden (1960); Bruce Went (1961-71); Tony Grove (1974); Barry Frost (1975-76, 1982-96) and Bob Piper (1979-81)





A30's assembled at Angaston, 21-3-93



Rob Vanderkamp at the wet
September 1997 Mallala Masters
meeting.



A10's big day out, Meadows, 15-8-93

Start of the 1993 AGP. Cars of
Ayrton Senna (1), Alain Prost (2)
and Damon Hill (3).



Cars assembled on the wharf at
Outer Harbor, alongside the
"Falie", after a suburban run in
1993.

