

## Chapter 3

### 1963-1967

#### Forging ahead

The incoming committee for 1963 had three main issues to address; the need for a bigger hall to replace St John's, with more seating to hold general meetings in; the setting up of the new magazine and finalising the trailer purchase.

The hall issue was resolved during the year and from the beginning of 1964 all general meetings were held in the Westbourne Park RSL Hall on Goodwood Road.

Barry Frost undertook to have the magazine – called *Austin 7 Journals* – prepared and its first issue appeared in July 1963. Of foolscap size, it ran to six pages with a blue title. The style set is still generally followed today: Bruce Went had a *President's Piece* welcoming members to the new edition, noting that its frequency was still to be determined, and *Past* and *Coming Event* details were given. The *Mallala Murmurs* section – compiled by Tony Grove and Barry Frost – was introduced and reported on Club members' efforts at race meetings at Mallala.



The following extract from issue 1 notes the revival of interest in members' A7 Specials.

Many members will remember some of the A7 specials of the past: J.L.G. Walsh's (with the home made crankshaft) which is still a very fast and regular competitor at Mallala, and Rob Brosnan who had a temperamental and spider-looking vehicle.

Brian Cutt ventured into the realm of supercharging with an A7 motor only to see the block and crankcase separate under acceleration at the start of a 9-chain sprint. A later version had a large clamp arrangement holding the top and bottom halves together.

Murray Lewis's special sported the largest pair of carburettors ever to be fitted to such a small motor, i.e. 2 twin choke Solexes. The car was very low and fast but was prone to breaking crankshafts. Murray took the car to Phillip Island and did very well against the supposedly fastest A7s in Australia.

Denis Overall had the A7 that could lay claim to being the fastest A7 special in Australia. This car has many bits from the Lewis car, including the carburettors and gearbox, which is a three-speed modified to four. Known as "the beer can special", it cleaned up the Victorian contingent on their home ground.

The new brigade of A7 specials includes Ted Thitchener, Bruce Forster, Ian Rogers, Terry Ireland and Phil Moore and a couple of others under construction.

The second issue appeared in October 1963 and from then it was published quarterly. A size change to half foolscap coincided with paid advertising and a cover for the October 1964 issue: this lasted until October 1966 when it reverted to foolscap. To this time, all issues had been commercially printed but rising costs forced the committee to produce it "in house" from the October 1967 issue. (*Note: "In house" literally meant that - the Editor, his wife and assistants spent many nights around the kitchen table, compiling, stapling and addressing each issue. Other Editors were to do this same job over the coming years.*)

The first issue also carried an article on Tony Grove's "Ausford" special: subsequent issues reported on Ian Alexander's "Billancourt" sports car and Doug Trengove and Geoff Vercoe's "Cicada" sports car.

Charlie Adams and Ian Jones were intrepid adventurers even in those days and the following article appeared in *Austin 7 Journals* 9, July 1965.

#### The A7Club surveys for a sprint track

We left Adelaide 9 pm Saturday and drove almost to Iron Knob, where we camped. The equipment was a '48 Chev ute with canopy and trailer, two generators, three 6V batteries – one was to start and keep the ute running and head, park, tail and trailer lamps, horn, windscreen wipers and tachometer. The other two were linked for 12V to run radio, refrigerator, door lamp, 2 canopy lamps and 2 flame

throwers. Petrol was in two 14-gallon tanks with a tap in the cabin plus 8 4-gallon jerry cans, giving a range of over 1000 miles.

On Sunday, we went through Iron Knob, Kimba, Ceduna, Penong and on to Nullarbor. We camped 30 miles before White Wells. The Nullarbor is not completely flat, straight and treeless as we had thought, but has corrugations, dust, bumpy potholes and even some bitumen!

Next day, we had only driven 2 miles when we hit a bump that lifted the lot off the road. The trees up the road disappeared under the bonnet then BANG, down again. Press on regardless to Eucla, an abandoned telegraph station among sand hills in the Great Australian Bight, 8 miles over the Border.

Next camp was between Madura and Cocklebidy. We saw kangaroos, wallabies, crows, a really healthy fox, emus and an eagle with a wingspan of approx 8 feet. 150 miles before Norseman – the end of the Nullarbor and the first town since Penong, 730 miles back. On through Kalgoorlie to Perth, where we spent 4 days at Kings Park.

By this time we had found a broken LHR main leaf, but not to worry. We went down to the SE tip of Australia – Albany, Esperance and back to Norseman (it started to rain at this stage) and on towards Adelaide along the bitumen.

Clatter, clatter. Lift the bonnet – fan belt! Press on to the dirt. Night falls – still raining and now its mud and we are wide-awake. Potholes full of water, flat section of road. The road looks hard but the back keeps breaking away. We blamed the loading of the trailer and are discussing how to reload it when we hit a puddle of water. Ignition is now wet, so we step out and fall flat on our faces. To walk around the vehicle, we have to hang on to the fenders, door handles, bull bar and trailer. The rain eventually stopped and we arrived back in Adelaide on Monday night at 8 o'clock. Change, shave and out to the Club.

Result - a good piece of flat land suitable for a sprint track was seen near Eucla – 819 miles from Adelaide.

Club members took part in the 1964 Ampol "round Australia" trial. Besides John Newmarch (in a Valiant) and Ian Rogers (in a Zeta!), Bob Frost, Denis Dix and John Walker drove an EK Holden for Parade Motors. *Austin 7 Journals* 5, in July 1964, had Bob's report. From Sydney they drove through Lithgow, Tamworth, Newcastle, Lismore, Brisbane, Rockhampton, Marlborough, Townsville, Port

Augusta and Adelaide to reach Mildura nine days later, losing 328 points along the way. Their final day beckoned.

The tenth day is to be our big day! Near Horsham the gearbox goes Phut!! After 4 hours work and £13 the car is underway again, but lasts only for a short while before it breaks again. 2 hours and £20 later, we race into Horsham, 4 1/2 hours late. Then the cam gear in the engine joins the act and the trial is over for us.

*Austin 7 Journals 18*, October 1967 was the first to carry photos; Denis Overall's A7 special, Col Riches' Dodge V8 and the *News-Castrol Safety Drive* start control.



*New mast head for A7J from 1967*

The Club trailer saga was also finalised; after looking at ways and means of adapting existing trailers, the committee authorised one to be built by Trevor Ellis to suit the Club's needs. This was completed, sign-written by Terry Ireland and ready for the 9-chain sprint on 7 June 1964. It then became the "command centre" for every event. The timekeepers set up on top for sprints and results were announced over the PA and posted on a scoreboard for all to see.

Competition events in 1963 followed the established pattern of three 9-chain, two quarter-mile sprints, gymkhanas, trials and a hillclimb with the SCC. A few changes for sprints included the provision of a "Ladies Class" and the adoption of International classes beginning with the quarter-mile sprint on 8 September. These events received strong support: the 9-chain sprint on 17 February had 61 entries, the one on 28 April had 42 and that on 20 October had 41. Quarter-mile sprints on 31 March and 8 September received 48 and 77 entries respectively.

With Mallala now available for sprints, the first circuit sprint at Mallala on 7 July 1963 attracted 30

entries - an innovation was the inclusion of a "flying 1/8-mile" as part of the event. Some of the speeds recorded were: Ian Rogers, (A7) 49.5 mph; Ray Rowlands, (Holden) 78.7 mph; Dud Dansie, (BBM) 92.4 mph and Ian Alexander, (Billancourt) 76.2 mph.

On 1 March 1964, a team of Club members went to Horsham to compete in a quarter-mile sprint.

*Austin 7 Journals 4* reported:

This sprint was held on a closed public road about a mile and a half out of town, in conjunction with a local festival known as "W.O.W Week". Five cars were entered: Ian Bell and Alf Mullins, Dragster; Denis Dix (Ecurie Rapide), Holden; John Walker, Caliban; Tony Grove, Ausford and Dud Dansie, BBM.

The first run was set for 1 pm, with no official practice, (although some did get a run beforehand) and finished at 3 pm after numerous hold-ups. Things improved from then on and four runs were held by the end of the day.

The dragster created much interest and turned in the quickest time of 11.20 seconds; the BBM was also very quick at 13.20. At one stage, after the police had moved everyone back 10 feet from the fence, for the first run of the dragster, they all surged forward after it had passed, only for it to collapse for about 100 feet, leaving about 50 people lying flat on their faces!

By the end of the day, the SA contingent had grown to about 40. We received four trophies at the social presentation at the end of the meeting.

Quarter-mile sprints had grown in popularity and the first South Australian Championships were held on 3 April 1965. *Austin 7 Journals 8* reported on the meeting.

After some hectic work by the committee, and in particular, the President, Secretary and Competition Secretary, this event was held at WRE. Promoted by the AMC, in particular the WREICC, and organised by A7C, the event had 47 starters. This meeting was the first to record times to 1/10th sec.

Repco donated a trophy for FTD, which was won by Don Bradshaw in his dragster, with a time of 12.5 secs, recorded on his first and fourth runs. It seems very fitting that a member of the Club that runs the best sprints in SA should win the first SA Championship in a vehicle specially built for sprinting.

Serge Deluca built a dragster using a Holden 179 motor, and for a car still being worked on at 2 am on Saturday, it

## 1963 COMMITTEE

**President** - Bruce Went  
**Treasurer/VPres.** - Murray Lewis  
**Secretary** - Tony Grove  
**Assistant Secretary** - John Naffin  
**Competition Secretary** -  
Ian Dodd/Rob Brosnan  
**Committee** - John Newmarch,  
Eric Spehr, John Lemon,  
Barry Frost  
**CAMS Delegates** - Bruce Went  
Rob Brosnan

ran extremely well. Serge improved from a practice time of 15.0 to a final run of 13.4 and finished third in class behind Don Fraser's Cooper BRM (12.7) and Dud Dansie's BBM2 (13.1).

Kevin Farissey, Hillman Dragster, could only manage 14.0 and was beaten by the Elfin Monos of Granton Harrison (12.8), Garrie Cooper (12.9) and Bill Pile (13.1). Other class winners were - John Newmarch, Ricardian (14.3); John Jarrett, Elfin (15.1); Peter Goodale, Nemesis (14.3); Doug Trengove, Cicada (14.8); Denis Crowhurst, MGB (17.2); Stan Keen, HD Holden (16.4); Bob Chapman, Cortina (17.6); Cyril Nancarrow, Cooper S (16.4).

Highest speeds recorded at the end of the sprint - 128 mph for Don Fraser, 118 for Don Bradshaw and 112 for Bill Pile and Granton Harrison.

The 1966 SA Championships on 13 March attracted 38 entries in 19 classes. The winner this year was Serge DeLuca's dragster, setting a course record of 11.5 secs. Other winners were - Cyril Nancarrow, Morris Cooper S 15.4; Stan Keen, Holden 15.7; Denis Dix, Delta 16.9; Chris Milton, Holden 15.5 and Garrie Cooper, Elfin Mono 12.2. Fastest speeds recorded were: 132 mph for Serge and 118 for Garrie. Ian Schultz's A7 for comparison ran 18.6 secs and 73 mph.

For the 1967 event, the Club supported the Elizabeth Occupation Centre for Mentally Retarded Children and the Muscular Dystrophy Association of SA.

January 1968 *Austin 7 Journals 19* reported:

51 competitors took part in this Championship. FTD went to Zeke Agars in the Ellers Holden dragster, with a time of 12.1 secs, just beating the

defending champion Serge DeLuca, 12.3. Fastest Sports Car was Malcolm Ramsay, having his first run in his new Elfin 300, at 13.3. Fastest Touring Car – not one, but two - at 15.5 were John Lewis Holden and Cyril Nancarrow Morris Cooper S. Other fast times were: Ian Davis A/Healey 14.6, Alex Smith Valano GT 14.0, Ron Bach Elfin Imp 14.6, John Walker Elfin Mono 12.6 and Kevin Farissey Hillman Dragster 14.1. A good crowd of approx. 2000 attended and we were able to donate \$600 to the two charities.

9 chain sprints continued to be organised and until 1965 attracted a strong entry each time. The 16 February 1964 meeting had 54 entries and Ian Bell set a course record of 7.21 seconds in his Chrysler dragster.

While the quarter-mile sprints were the mainstay of competition, the 9 chain events began to lose favour with drivers and the last held at Gawler Belt was run on 12 February 1967, attracting only 21 entries. From then on, they were run at Mallala as two-lane events, but this still did not bring entries to the same level as enjoyed previously.

The reason for this drop in entries was that the Brooksville Dragway had opened in October 1965. *The Advertiser* reported “More than 4500 people saw Serge DeLuca set fastest time of the day with a sizzling run of 8.2 secs at the SA Hot Rod Association’s opening meeting at the nine-chain Brooksville Dragway at two wells. DeLuca, who drove skilfully in a 179 Holden-powered dragster, also became top eliminator with a run of 8.4 secs.

*Sunday’s event was virtually the first true drag meeting in SA, with two cars at a time pitting their acceleration against each other on parallel bitumen strips”.*

Ron O’Connell was a member of the organising association and he recalls, “*The bitumen strips were laid by the Highways Department as an experimental test but they ended at the end of the 9 chains, leaving a drop down to the ground surface! And when the lease was up, we had to dig up the bitumen and return the land to pasture”.*

The SA Hot Rod Association invited A7Club members to the 14 May 1967 meeting. Tony Grove gave a report at the next general meeting, noting that Ian Schultz had set a class record. (*Editor’s note: the Dragway only ran until March 1969*).

In 1959 CAMS approved regulations, known as Appendix J, under which the new Australian Touring Car Championship would be run; it was to be held each year on a state-by-state rotational basis. The inaugural race in 1960 was at the Gnoo Blas circuit in Orange NSW and was won by David McKay, Jaguar 3.4. Bill Pitt, Jaguar 3.4 won at Lowood, Queensland in 1961 and Bob Jane, Jaguar 3.8 was the winner at Lowood, Tasmania in 1962.

At Easter 1963 it was Mallala’s turn to hold the race and Bob Jane was again successful in his Jaguar, beating the Valiants of Ern Abbott and Clem Smith. This was the last win for the Jaguars, as various Ford models then became dominant: Ian Geoghegan, Cortina GT 1964 at Lakeside Qld; Norm Beechey, Mustang 1965 at Sandown Vic; Ian Geoghegan, Mustang 1966 at Bathurst and again in 1967 at Phillip Island.

Other major Mallala meetings included: 1963 – Australian Gold Star; 1964 – Australian Gold Star and SA Touring Car Championship; 1965 - Australian Gold Star and SA Touring Car Championship; 1966 – SA Touring Car Championship and two rounds of the Australian 1.5 Litre Championship; 1967 - Australian Gold Star and SA Touring Car Championship.

As well as these open meetings at Mallala, the A7C and SCC ran amateur meetings. At ours, all track officials were Club members and friends; for the 19 May 1963 meeting, the Club enlisted the aid of Glen Dix as starter. This 12-event meeting was sponsored by the Emu Wine Company under its “Marie Claire” label and the trophy winners were Clem Smith, Andy Brown and Joe Steele.

Our plans for a second meeting on August 4 were thwarted when track resurfacing made it

## 1964 COMMITTEE

**President** - Bruce Went

**Treasurer/VPres.** – Murray Lewis

**Secretary** – Tony Grove

**Assistant Sec.** – Tony Welfare

**Competition Sec.** – Rob Brosnan

**Committee** - John Newmarch,

Barry Cox, John Lemon,

Barry Frost

**CAMS Delegates** – Bruce Went

Rob Brosnan

unavailable. The May 1964 meeting could not be held for the same reason and this is the only year since we began organising race meetings that we were unable to do so. (The June 15 open meeting was the last on the original layout as the track was then shortened to 1.6 miles (2.2 km) because the surface of the northern section of the main straight continually broke up).

However, the 1965 meeting was a success, as reported in *Austin 7 Journals* 9.

For the first time since 1963, the Club was able to hold an amateur race meeting. 35 entries were received with 29 being able to make it on the day. The main races in Touring, Sports and Racing were for “Marie Claire” trophies – silver trays – donated by the Emu Wine Co. The winners were Cyril Nancarrow, Morris Cooper S, Peter Goodale, Nemesi and John Walker, Elfin who were presented with their trophies by Mrs Kilgour, wife of one of the directors of the company.

Event 3 saw a close race between Ian Alexander and Garry Chapman, with Ian leading until he lost the bonnet of the Billancourt, which slowed him momentarily and cost him first place. This race also had an A7 handicap section, which was won by Bruce Forster, the only finisher, as Ian Schultz broke a crankshaft.

In the minutes from the April 1966 general meeting it is recorded that “*Officials were called for the race meeting and after some persuasion, enough volunteered*”. This meeting was the last to be sponsored by “Marie Claire”.

The 1967 meeting on 7 May had sponsorship from Indianapolis Speed Shop, Parade Motors and Ascot Park Service Station: Cyril Nancarrow, Don Fraser and John

Jarrett won these trophies. This was the last meeting before the track was altered through the Esses and Clubhouse Corner. The first joint Club meeting organised by A7C and MGCC was run on 9 July 1967.

At a Special General Meeting on 3 February 1964, the Club Constitution was amended so that annual subscriptions were reviewed at every AGM, and for female members to pay half that applicable to males.

During 1964, permission to use the Gawler Beach site for gymkhanas was refused; fortunately land belonging to John Lemon's family was made available for the 5 April event and this site became the home of gymkhanas, autocrosse and grass sprints.

Gymkhanas received steady support from members; three were held in 1965 (the 15 November meeting being Ian Schultz's debut in his A7), and two each in 1966 and 1967.

*Austin 7 Journals 14* of October 1966 reported:

Our gymkhana date in August attracts the rain like flies to honey. This year - although not as bad as last year - the organisers had to dream up new events to enable cars to cope with the wet conditions, as normal gymkhana-type events were unsuitable. However, the competitors enjoyed themselves. Results: A7 - Ian Schultz was first, despite Ian Motley's attempts to beat him. Small cars - Bruce Went was able to nose out John Edyvean by one point. Large cars - Colin Morris beat Tom Olthoff by two points.

The first grass sprint was run at the Reynella site on 26 July 1964: A7 winner was Bill Arklay, small car winner was Max Dillon and large car winner was Colin Morris. The name for this type of event changed to Autocrosse in 1965 and 1966 but the enjoyment of drivers and spectators and the ingenuity of car construction did not change.

*Austin 7 Journals 14* again:



**Mallala** race track after shortening to 1.6 miles (2.2 km) in 1964. This map shows development as at 2003.

**1965 COMMITTEE**

- President** - Bruce Went
- Treasurer/VPres** - Murray Lewis
- Secretary** - Tony Grove
- Assistant Sec.** - Tony Welfare
- Competition Sec.** - Rob Brosnan
- Committee** - Barry Frost, John Lemon, Graham Taylor, Barry Cox
- CAMS Delegate** - Bruce Went

Although 12 competitors entered, this was one of the most spectacular and keenly contested events run so far this year. The circuit soon lost any slipperiness and all cars were able to lap quickly. At the end of the third run, Ivor Benneche 1-02.0 led Bruce Went's Special 1-02.8 and Ian Schultz's A7 1-03.0. The next run saw Terry Melville break the minute in his Sprite, 59.2 ahead of Bruce Went 1-00.8. On the fifth run, those with big tyres swapped back to normal tyres and improved their times. On the sixth run, Terry Melville recorded 58.5 secs for FTD - a fine piece of driving. Equal second in the small cars class were Bruce Went and Ian Motley, 59.1 secs.

Ian Schultz 1-01.0 won the A7 class, much to the consternation of the other A7 drivers, beating Bruce Bridgart 1-05.0 and Ian Motley, 1-05.6. The large car class went to Ivor Benneche after an exciting "all the wheels in the air" drive on his final run to record 59.6 secs. Second was Tom Olthoff 1-01.6 from Col Morris 1-01.7. This event was so popular with everyone that the 13 November gymkhana has been changed to an autocrosse.

A change of regulations by CAMS required this event to revert to its original name of *Grass Sprint* for the 20 August and 24 September meetings in 1967. The ongoing rivalry between the A7 drivers continued at these two meetings.

*Austin 7 Journals* again:

20 August. Despite the lack of rain, the ground and grass were as slippery as in previous years and offered the usual challenge to competitors. Ian Schultz again triumphed over Bruce Bridgart in A7 Class.

24 September. A completely different track from the previous month let competitors set fast times which were all very close. Ian Schultz's run of wins was finally stopped by Ian Motley, whose A7 sported the largest piece of downpipe exhaust ever seen. Bruce Went's was the only special and with

some "tail out" driving set FTD. More excitement was to come. On the final reverse run, Ian Motley's A7 broke a LH front axle and the car rolled over on to its side, on a RH bend. Ian was unhurt and after many ribald comments, the car was righted and loaded onto a trailer. However, as the trailer went up a gentle slope, the A7 gracefully slid off the back and the whole loading process had to be repeated.

The Border Runs continued to be held at Mount Gambier in April each year: a report on the 1963 run to the general meeting was via a series of tape recordings made over the weekend. In 1964 "a small convoy went to Mt Gambier for the weekend to meet the Victorian A7C – those who went had a very enjoyable time", but in 1965 no run was held, "due to lack of interest". In 1966, a large contingent that included most of the Committee, attended the run to Mount Gambier and this enthusiasm was maintained in 1967.

Hillclimbs were still popular amongst members and we co-organised a meeting at Collingrove with the SCC on 11 August 1963. In early 1964, another area of land suitable for a hillclimb site was investigated at Blackwood and in July that year a sub-committee was formed, comprising Bruce Went, Tony Grove, Rob Brosnan and Barry Frost, to look closely into the costs etc. for this venture.

By October 1964, things had progressed to the stage where President Bruce Went was able to report in *Austin 7 Journals*:

For those who haven't heard the news, this Club is negotiating with a landowner to obtain a lease on approx. 50 acres of land for the purpose of building a hillclimb track. As the lease is not yet finalised, I cannot disclose the location but it is within 16 miles by road of Adelaide.

The proposed track is 1200 yards of sealed road, rising approx. 250 feet from start to finish, with the pit area adjacent to the finish and the start being reached by access road. Spectator viewing will be excellent with a view of the complete track from practically all positions.

In the ensuing months, this proposal got to the stage of negotiating a lease; a draft was

received in April 1965 but several aspects of the proposal were unsuitable and nothing further eventuated. Following this, another (unsuitable) site at Noarlunga was offered to the Club. At the May 1965 general meeting, the meeting approved that "the Committee be authorised to make any loan to build a hillclimb or drag strip, provided they are satisfied that the loan is properly secured". A vote on members' preferences was in favour of a drag strip. A motion at the October general meeting directed the committee to "look into the possibility of a hillclimb track". Members were advised in November 1965, that two sites had been inspected but neither were suitable. Then in August 1967, two sites at Reynella were inspected with Mel McEwin, who offered to build us a circuit, with a hillclimb.

One of these was selected as the most suitable and in October John Lemon and Barry Frost prepared a plan of the proposed circuit and terms of a lease were discussed with the landowner. Like the others before it, this also lapsed.

(Editor's note: both these areas of land, and indeed all the sites reported above, at the time were virgin country, but eventually became part of suburbia as Adelaide expanded southwards. If any track had been built, it would have suffered with noise restrictions etc. or the land would have become too valuable for us to use and would have been sold for development).

The Club began to be involved with Community events again, starting on 4 January 1967 when members assisted the Boy Scouts Jamboree by acting as driving instructors at the Motorama held at Mallala.

*Austin 7 Journals* again:

The scouts had a chance to drive a few laps around the track, learning to change gears, brake etc. and then drive through a set of markers to get them used to manoeuvring a car. This driving was only part of their course, as they had lectures and films from the RAA and police.

The *News-Castrol Safety Drive* had already been held for several years when in 1967, the Club was

## 1966 COMMITTEE

**President** - Bruce Went

**Treasurer/VPres.** – Rob Brosnan

**Secretary** – Tony Grove

**Assistant Secretary** – Barry Frost

**Competition Sec.** – Ian Motley

**Committee** - John Lemon, Graham Taylor, Tom Olthoff, Colin Morris

**CAMS Delegate** – Bruce Went

*Life membership to Murray Lewis*

approached to be the organisers. Representatives from A7C, Apex Clubs, SA Police, RAA and SA Road Safety Council worked with Public Relations firm Eric White and Associates to run the event on 9 September.

*Austin 7 Journals* gave details.

The problems of organising successful motor sport events can be compounded when these events are for people who have had no association with motor sport and are unaware of its regulations. These problems can be overcome only by careful planning, briefing of officials and attention to detail.

The A7C SA had these problems when organising the 1967 News-Castrol Safety Drive for young motorists under 25. Fortunately Tony Grove and his assistant Barry Frost were able to benefit from their previous experience in organising A7 Club events.

It was decided to send cars off at one-minute intervals so that 200 cars could be handled. To prevent crews banking up at various checkpoints, alternate cars were sent on different routes in the early part of the course.

Because each of the officials on the various controls received full briefing, there were no problems and the Drive ran smoothly, so much so that the placings for the 147 cars that started could be worked out within two hours of all control sheets being received. This was due in no small manner to the hard work of Glenda Grove and Rae Frost.

The A7C feels that the Drive was a worthwhile exercise from several points of view. Firstly it helped demonstrate that motor sport is interested in supporting road safety, it was a good exercise for our members and it did arouse interest in motor sport from a number of young motorists.

Life membership was awarded to Murray Lewis at the February



1966 general meeting. Murray had served on the Committee from 1956-59, as Treasurer/Vice President from 1962-65 and had been a keen competitor in his A7 and Elfin Streamliner.

Bruce Went and Rob Brosnan were the Club's CAMS delegates for 1963-64: Bruce continued alone when only one delegate was required from 1965. With the growth in car clubs and the sport in South Australia, CAMS moved into offices at 414 Unley Road on 7 October 1967, ending years of working from the Secretary's home. CAMS had also begun to license officials and in 1967, Barry Frost was appointed Senior Timekeeper: members of the timing team then completed their qualification tests, becoming the only such licensed group in the State.

With the search for land for a hillclimb or sprint site on the Club's agenda, it was obvious that considerable finances would be needed if we were successful. To work towards this, the Club continued to organise social functions, to cater and sell drinks at all gymkhanas, grass sprints and nine chain and quarter mile sprints, and with the timing team contributing to the Club's finances, earning a fee for each open race meeting at Mallala, the balance had been steadily growing. At the September 1965 general meeting, the Treasurer reported that for the first time our finances had exceeded £1000 and that we had opened an investment account. By the end of 1967, this investment had reached \$2000 (decimal currency began in February 1966).

From 1954, the Club had awarded Annual Trophies for A7s competing in different events, but their declining numbers in Club events meant that by 1963 the original criteria were no longer valid. In June 1964 the committee moved "that they be disposed of". Bruce Forster won the *Lutzow Speed Trophy* for fastest A7 at the October 18 quarter mile sprint and it was presented to him at the 25 January 1965 general meeting.

Nonetheless, there was still a strong contingent of members regularly competing in our events. To reward them, the Goldsworthy Motors Trophy was donated in 1967, for "the most successful Club driver in A7C events" during the year. The inaugural winner was Ian Schultz with 44 points (ironically most of these were scored with his A7!) from Kevin Farrissey, Cyril Nancarrow, Bruce Bridgart and Ian Motley. In all, 64 members scored points.

With the need to plan for future events that would be well supported, in April 1967 the Committee conducted a survey of members to determine their preferences. The results showed that members were generally happy with the level and style of events but several suggestions were made for the Club to have its own clubrooms.

## Summary

During these 5 years, the Club had progressed into community involvement, which had helped to raise our profile and given the committee valuable experience in organisation.

All members had welcomed the rebirth of *Austin 7 Journals*, as it provided a continuing means of communication and contact, and members' competition cars were featured during this period although a continuing theme was for more input from members.

The "Mallala Murmurs" section of *A7 Journals* regularly reported on Club members' successes (and disasters) from racing at Mallala and included the following members and their cars:

### RACING CARS

*Garrie Cooper*, various Elfins; *Dud Dansie*, BBM; *John Walker*, Elfin Catalina; *Graham Lewis*, Elfin Catalina; *Mel McEwin*, Elfin; *Eric Spehr* and *Chris Milton*, FV; *Ian Wells*, Special; *Ian Richards*, Viper Special; *Ron Bach*, Elfin Mono Imp; *Noel Hurd*, Elfin. *Ian Rogers*, *Jack Walsh*, *Bruce Forster*, *Ian Schultz*, *Bill Arklay*, *David Armstrong* all drove A7s.

### SPORTS CARS

*John Newmarch*, Ricardian; *Denis Dix*, Delta; *Ian Alexander*, Billancourt; *Geoff Vercoe/Doug Trengove*, Cicada; *Colin*

## 1967 COMMITTEE

**President** - Bruce Went

**Treasurer/VPres** – Rob Brosnan

**Secretary** – Tony Grove

**Assist. Secretary** – Barry Frost

**Comp. Secretary** – Ian Motley

**Committee** - John Lemon,

Graham Taylor,

Peter Hood, Colin Morris

**CAMS Delegate** – Bruce Went

*Riches*, Elfin Consul; *John/Graham Jarrett*, Elfin Streamliner; *John Naffin*, Mantis; *Rodney Wadham*, MGTC; *Bruce Went*, Elfin Streamliner; *Brian Morrell*, Elfin Mallala; *Bob Burton*; *Tony Alcock*, Elfin Clubman; *Charlie Tuckey*, Nova; *John Kay*; Ricardian; *Trevor Lewis*, Condor BMC; *Jim Bickford*; *Ian Davis*, Austin Healey; *Colin Morris*, Triford; *Eric/Ralph Boord*, Olympus; *David Armstrong*, Mantis and Cicada BMC; *Tony Bowden*, Pegasus; *Terry Melville*, A/H Sprite; *Bob Goldsworthy*, Delta; *Geoff Catlin*.

### SALOON CARS

*Denis Dix*, *Serge Deluca*, *Ray Rowlands*, *Bob Frost*, *Tony Cole*, *Kevin Farrissey*, *Brian Worthley*, *Peter Finch*, *Stan Keen*, *Peter Hood*, *Colin Morris*, *Alan Reid*, *Geoff Smyth*, *Tony Orlando*, *John Lewis*, *Barry Warne*, *Colin Zytveld* all drove Holdens. *Malcolm Ramsay*, Mini; *Colin Riches*, Auschry; *Ken Virgin*, VW; *Cyril Nancarrow*, Morris Cooper S; *Brian Bennett*, Cortina GT, *Graham Bishop*, Morris Minor 1000; *Tony Alcock*, Cortina GT; *John Kay*, Chevy Nova.

A7s were beginning to fade from the scene as only a few were competing in grass sprints and gymkhanas despite continual appeals for more to be entered in events. Tony Grove's article in the July 1967 issue of *Austin 7 Journals* was prophetic as it helped to spark the revival of A7 ownership, which would lead to the setting up of the "Austin 7 Owners Group".

### RESTORING AND PRESERVING A7s

As the Austin 7 Club of SA, it is felt that we should make some move towards the collection, restoring and/or preservation of A7s. As you may know, these machines are becoming extremely rare and difficult to procure.

We would like to see more A7s at Club events – not necessarily competing but more to keep them active and before the general public's eye. They do not need to be immaculate or

concoct cars—just normal A7s will do.

If enough interest is shown, a section could be created for the swapping of information, parts etc., with the view to rallies and runs, which could be used as a means to promote the Club's activities, and to provide more enjoyment for the members concerned. This could lead to more members and a bigger and better Club.

Club life extended beyond speed events, with yearly cabarets, dinners and other social events providing a mix for all to enjoy, and by the end of 1967, consideration was being given to have a Social Secretary on the Committee.

Fund raising was an integral part of these activities and they were always well supported, as evidenced by the growth in our finances. Low-key competition was provided by treasure hunts, economy runs, night trials and country hunts, although they were often run with a handful of entries, and the "chop picnics" had disappeared from the program.

The work that we had done in 1961 for the relocation of the pit counters to Mallala still stood us in credit and this enabled us to keep entry fees for our race meetings at a low level.



Parade Motors 1964 Ampol Trial EK Holden entry, at a Gawler Belt 9 chain sprint, prior to the trial.



**A7C trophy race meeting, 7-5-67.** Touring/GT cars

Strong support for our speed events at the beginning of the period began to wane as the attraction of a dedicated drag strip began to take hold among competitors and we suffered a drop in membership as a consequence. Efforts to find a suitable site for a competition site of our own were

not successful, despite many leads and time spent on site inspections. However, the Committee was undaunted and still hoped to achieve this aim.



**Gawler Belt 9 chain sprint, 1965.** View from the timing trailer, of the large crowd attending and the line up of competing sedans.





**In 1968, Garrie Cooper won the Singapore GP.**

Left: with the winning laurel wreath  
Above: arriving home with the trophy, which is larger than his son Steven, 3 1/2 years old  
Courtesy Lorraine Cooper.



## TWO CLUB CHAMPIONS

**In 1979, John Walker won the AGP at Wanneroo in WA.**

Left: Celebrating with the laurel wreath. Below: The winning Lola T332 Chevrolet





