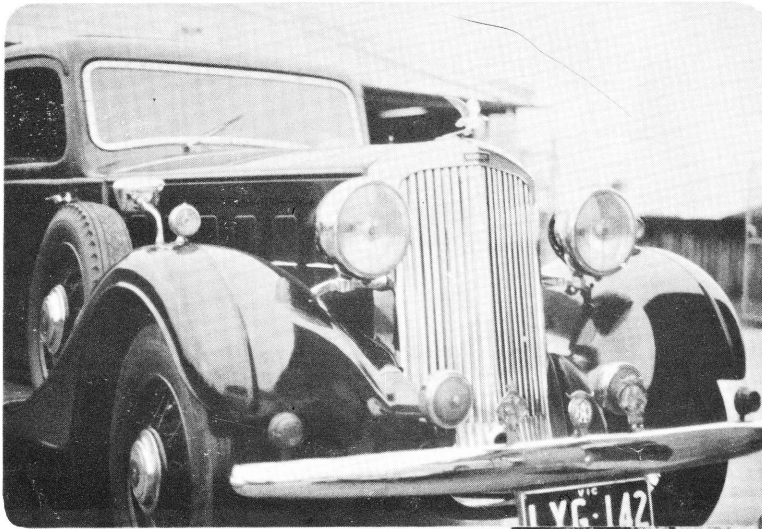


THE HUMBERETTE

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE

August 1977



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HUMBER CAR CLUB OF VICTORIA

AUGUST 1977 ISSUE

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ASST. EDITOR:	RAY EASTON	
SOCIAL SECRETARY:	KAYLYN RAYNOR	791-8151
SPARES & TECH. OFFICER:	BOB KENNEDY	783-3119

NEXT CLUB MEETING

COMMENCING 8.00PM FRIDAY AUGUST 26TH AT THE "THEATRETTE", CAMBERWELL CIVIC CENTRE, INGLESBY ROAD, CAMBERWELL. PARKING AVAILABLE IN THE CAR PARK OPPOSITE.

NEXT CLUB FUNCTION

"MYSTERY" CAR TRIAL ON SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 11TH (FURTHER DETAILS INSIDE).

ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO: THE SECRETARY,
P.O. BOX 35,
FRANKSTON. 3199.

JULY MEETING

THE JULY MEETING WAS OPENED AT 8.20PM BY OUR PRESIDENT, REG HATTERSLEY. THIRTY SIX MEMBERS WERE IN ATTENDANCE AND NEW MEMBERS MADE WELCOME WERE MAX PARSONS, JOHN MILLER, & TREVOR YATES.

ALAN JUDD MOVED THAT MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETINGS BE PUBLISHED IN THE NEXT MONTHLY NEWSLETTER.

ALAN ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE CLUB SHOULD MAKE CONTACT WITH THE ROVER CAR CLUB AS IT COULD BE OF MUTUAL BENEFIT IF WE COULD ARRANGE A SOCIAL FUNCTION BETWEEN THE TWO CLUBS.

TREASURERS REPORT - \$219-60

SOCIAL SECRETARY GAVE HER REPORT (SEE UNDER SOCIAL NOTES).

PRESIDENT ASKED FOR CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS THAT MIGHT IMPROVE OUR SOCIAL OUTINGS.

AMMENDMENTS TO H.C.C.V. CONSTITUTION

- A) TWO EXTRA MEMBERS TO BE APPOINTED TO THE COMMITTEE - MOTION CARRIED.
- B) CLUB OFFICERS TO BE ELECTED AS DEEMED BY THE COMMITTEE - MOTION CARRIED.

MEETING CLOSED AT 9.20PM.

GUEST SPEAKERS

FOR OUR AUGUST MEETING WE WILL HAVE A REPRESENTATIVE FROM AUTO EXHAUSTS PTY. LTD., WHO WILL EXPLAIN EXHAUST SYSTEMS ETC. TO THE MEMBERS PRESENT. THE SEPTEMBER MEETING GUEST SPEAKER WILL BE MR. PETER TUCKER FROM THE PRITCHARD STEAM CAR CO. MOST OF US HAVE READ ABOUT THE PRITCHARD STEAM CAR AND ITS DEVELOPMENT, SO OBVIOUSLY AT THIS MEETING WE CAN JUST ABOUT EXPECT A "FULL HOUSE".

EDITORIAL

AT THE JULY MEETING I CALLED FOR MORE TECHNICAL INFORMATION TO PUT INTO THE NEWSLETTER, TO DATE NONE HAS BEEN FORTHCOMING. ABOUT A MONTH AGO I PURCHASED A SER. VA SNIPE WHICH REQUIRES A GOOD DEAL OF RESTORATION BOTH IN THE MECHANICS AND BODYWORK. THE REASONS I PURCHASED THIS CAR WAS TWOFOLD 1) IT WAS AT THE RIGHT PRICE AND I RATHER LIKED THE SHAPE OF THE SER. V. CARS.

2) MARIE'S SER. 1V SNIPE HAD DETERIORATED FROM "DOWN AT HEEL" TO SOMETHING BELOW THAT - AND THE WIFE BLAMED ME!

ANYWAY, GETTING BACK TO THE SUBJECT OF LACK OF TECHNICAL INFORMATION, I NOW HAVE LEARNT A FEW OF THE PECULIARITIES OF THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SER. 1V AND SER. VA SNIPE, THESE PECULIARITIES MIGHT BE DUE TO THE FACT THAT THE SER. VA WAS ESSENTIALLY A CHRYSLER PRODUCT.

WHEN I INSPECTED THE CAR I PAID CASH FOR IT THERE & THEN AND MARIE WOULD DRIVE THE DATSUN HOME AND I THE SNIPE. FIRSTLY THE BATTERY HAD AS MUCH KICK AS A LAME HORSE, BUT THE CAR MANAGED TO "JUMP START" FROM THE DATSUN. UPON SETTING OFF I NOTICED THE FUEL GAUGE READ EMPTY SO I HEADED FOR THE NEAREST "SELF SERVE" GARAGE AND FORGETTING ABOUT THE BATTERY, I SWITCHED THE MOTOR OFF. UPON TRYING TO RESART THE CAR IT WAS "NO-GO". NOT TO WORRY I THOUGHT I'LL GIVE HER A CRANK START - WELL YOU WON'T CRANK A SER. VA, THAT IS UNLESS YOU SPEAR A HOLE THROUGH THE BOTTOM TANK OF THE RADIATOR FIRST! YET THE BUMPER BAR AND BODY OF THE CAR HAS THE HOLE FOR THE CRANK - PERHAPS ONE OF OUR MEMBERS MIGHT KNOW THE ANSWER TO THIS? AS I MENTIONED EARLIER I BOUGHT THE CAR FOR A MOST REASONABLE PRICE & ONE OF THE REASONS FOR THE CHEAP PRICE WAS THAT THE BRAKES ONLY WORKED FOR "PANIC" TYPE STOPS (THIS WAS OK AS DONT FORGET I WAS FOLLOWING THE WIFE HOME!!) AND WHEN THE BRAKES WERE APPLIED IN THE NORMAL MANNER THE PEDAL WENT STRAIGHT TO THE FLOOR, BUT IF YOU HIT THE BRAKES QUICKLY THEY WORKED NORMALLY. WHEN I GOT AROUND TO REMOVING AND DISMANTLING THE MASTER CYLINDER - YOU'LL FIND THE ANSWER IN NEXT MONTHS NEWSLETTER AND STORY OF SER. VA LWH 701 HAS MORE INTERESTING FACTS TO REVEAL.

SOCIAL NOTES:

RUN TO MACCLESFIELD TROUT FARM

APPROX. TEN CARS ATTENDED THIS RUN. A PRE-REQUISITE SHOULD HAVE BEEN GUMBOOTS FOR THE LADIES AND GENTS WITH SNOW CHAINS AND WINTERTREADS FOR THE CARS. THE ROAD LEADING TO THE FISH FARM WAS THE NEXT THING TO A TORTURE TRACK AND THE BIG DIPPER ROLLED INTO ONE. UPON REACHING THE FARM IT WAS OBVIOUS THE LAWN MOWER HAD GONE INTO HIBERNATION FOR THE WINTER AND THE LONG WET GRASS SOON MADE WET FEET AND TROUSERS. AFTER THESE FEW SETBACKS THE SMELL OF BARBEQUES AND AN ABUNDANCE OF GOOD COMPANY TOOK OVER AND IT BECAME A MOST ENJOYABLE DAY. FISHING EQUIPMENT WAS AVAILABLE ALTHOUGH I DON'T KNOW IF ANYONE WAS SUCCESSFUL.

MEMBERS ATTENDING

FRED & FREDA MAGUIRE
ROGER WELLS & FRIEND
ALAN & GLENIS JUDD
DES & DENISE JUDD
TOM & LYNN McALPINE
BOB & NANCY KENNEDY
REG & MARION HATTERSLEY
HAROLD & ADELAIDE UNDERWOOD
CHRIS JAMIESON & FAMILY

SER. 1 HAWK/SNIPE
SER. 111 SNIPE
SER. 111 SNIPE
SER. 1V SNIPE
SER. 1V ~~ESTATE~~
SER. VA SNIPE
SER. VA SNIPE
SER. V SNIPE

SOCIAL NOTES (CONT.)

MYSTERY TRIAL SEPTEMBER 11TH

MEETING PLACE:- CARPARK OPPOSITE THE MAIN GATES OF THE MELB. ZOO AT ROYAL PARK (TURNOFF FROM ROYAL PARADE).

MEETING TIME:- 10.00AM SHARP.

IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT MEMBERS WHO ATTEND THIS RUN ARE ON TIME AS CARS WILL SET-OFF WITH THEIR INSTRUCTIONS. THE RUN SHALL TAKE IN SOME BEAUTIFUL SCENERY AND I'M ASSURED THAT THE QUESTIONS ARE RELATIVELY SIMPLE. EMERGENCY ENVELOPES WILL BE ISSUED WITH A MAP OF THE FINAL DISTINATION ENCLOSED.

IT IS A B.Y.O. THAT IS BRING YOUR OWN BARBEQUE, CHAIRS, FOOD ETC. ALSO IF YOUR HUMBER IS AS THIRSTY AS MINE HAVE AT LEAST HALF A TANK FULL OF PETROL PRIOR TO STARTING.

SNIPES SNIPPETTS

A "GET WELL" TO GWEN HUMPHRIES, HOPE YOU'RE "BACK ON DECK" SOON GWEN.

NICE TO SEE OUR JORDANS & McALPINES AT THE MACCLESFIELD RUN.

YOUR FIRST CLUB CAR

THIS ARTICLE IS FOR THE MEMBER WHO ACQUIRES A CLUB CAR AND IS NOT IN THE POSITION TO DO A FULL RESTORATION DUE TO TIME OR FINANCE, AND I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THERE ARE QUITE A LOT OF US SHORT ON BOTH.

YOUR ACQUISITION CAN FALL INTO THREE CATEGORIES:-

- 1) AN UNREGISTERED STRAIGHT CAR
- 2) A REGISTERED CAR WITH A ROADWORTHY CERTIFICATE
- 3) A CAR ACQUIRED IN 500 PIECES THAT SOMEONE ELSE LOST INTEREST IN.

I THINK WE CAN DISREGARD THE CAR THAT HAS BEEN BOUGHT IN PIECES, AS MOST PEOPLE WHO BUY THIS VEHICLE INTEND A FULL RESTORATION AS IT SEEMS THE ONLY LOGICAL MOVE WHEN CONFRONTED WITH TRAILER LOADS OF UNCLEARED, UNPAINTED PIECES OF MACHINERY THAT AT FIRST GLANCE LOOK ENOUGH TO BUILD TWO OF YOUR DREAM MACHINES, BUT ON NEARING COMPLETION, YOU START TO WONDER WHAT THE PREVIOUS OWNER HAS DONE WITH ALL THE BITS NEEDED TO MAKE IT DRIVEABLE.

I WILL DEAL WITH THE UNREGISTERED GEM THAT YOU HAVE TOWED AWAY FROM A GARAGE, BACKYARD OR CREEK, OR WHEREVER YOU HAVE BEEN LUCKY ENOUGH TO FIND IT, AND ON ARRIVING HOME, IN THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES YOU HAVE POLISHED THE LAST BIT OF CHROME OFF THE GRILLE, GRAIN OFF THE DASH, AND ALL THE SPIDERS THAT HAVE BEEN QUITE COMFORTABLE UP TO NOW, ARE WONDERING WHAT ON EARTH IS HAPPENING.

AFTER YOU HAVE PASSED THIS INITIAL PROUD OWNER FEELING THAT HAS LEFT YOU ALL AGLOW, YOU ALMOST BREAK A LEG GETTING DOWN THE STREET TO BUY YOUR FIRST BATTERY, AS YOU ARE CONVINCED THAT WITH ALL THAT SHINE ON THE GRILLE, AND THE DASH, ONE KICK AND IT WILL BURST INTO LIFE AND SHE WILL BE REGISTERED THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW.

BY ALL MEANS BUY THE BATTERY, BUT IF THE MOTOR HAS NOT SEIZED THROUGH STANDING, DUE TO CONDENSATION IN THE BORE, IT IS ADVISABLE TO REMOVE THE PLUGS AND SQUIRT A SMALL AMOUNT OF OIL INTO THE ENGINE. THIS MAY HELP THE INITIAL START. BEFORE YOU PUT THAT FOUR GALLONS OF PETROL INTO THE TANK, I SUGGEST THAT YOU PUT IN A SMALL AMOUNT AND SHAKE THE REAR OF THE CAR, THEN REMOVE THE PLUG FROM THE TANK AND YOU COULD BE SURPRISED AT THE WATER AND RUBBISH THERE THAT WOULD BE SUCKED UP TO THE CARBY IF SHE HAD FIRED FIRST GO.

THE SECOND PROBLEM YOU MAY ENCOUNTER IS, AFTER GRINDING ON THE STARTER FOR THREE MINUTES, ON INSPECTION, THE CORK SEAL OF THE FUEL PUMP FILTER HAD DRIED OUT AND SHRUNK, GIVING YOU AN AIR LEAK THAT PREVENTS SUCTION FROM THE PUMP. ON ASSUMING YOU HAVE PETROL TO THE CARBY, SPARK AT THE POINTS, THE NEXT THING TO MAKE YOU WONDER IF YOU SHOULD HAVE BOUGHT THE BEAST, IS CONTINUED COUGHING BACK THROUGH THE CARBY ACCOMPANIED WITH FLAME THAT WOULD SINGE YOUR EYEBROWS, IS DUE TO INLET VALVES STUCK IN THE OPEN POSITION, AND IF YOU SQUIRT AN AMOUNT OF VERY LIGHT OIL DOWN THE THROAT OF THE CARBY WHILE SOMEONE TURNS THE ENGINE OVER WITH THE KEY OFF, AND THIS DOES NOT ALLEVIATE THE SITUATION, YOU WILL HAVE TO REMOVE THE HEAD AND FREE THE OFFENDING PARTS.

NOW ASSUMING YOU DIDNOT HAVE ANY, OR ALL OF THE PROBLEMS MENTIONED, AND THAT GLORIOUS EXAMPLE OF EARLY MOTORING STARTED READILY, THE FIRST THING YOU WATCH ON THAT HIGHLY POLISHED INSTRUMENT PANEL IS THE OIL GAUGE. (IF IT WAS AN AVAILABLE OPTION). IF AFTER YOU HAVE RUN THE ENGINE FOR AT LEAST A MINUTE AND NOTED A LOUSY OIL PRESSURE, ACCOMPANIED WITH OMINOUS RUMBLINGS SWITCH OFF AND BE PREPARED TO REMOVE THE SUMP, FOR THE BEARINGS THAT YOU THOUGHT WERE COMPLETELY NUDE OF ANY WHITE METAL MAY BE QUITE SERVICABLE, BUT THE VERY LOW OIL PRESSURE MAY BE DUE TO THE INTAKE GAUZE TO THE OIL PUMP BEING COMPLETELY CLOGGED WITH SLUDGE LAYING IN THE BOTTOM OF THE SUMP, DUE TO THE MORE MODERN OILS CLEANING ALL THE GUNK THAT HAS ACCUMULATED OVER THE YEARS, AND IF THIS IS THE CASE, A THOROUGH CLEANOUT OF THE SUMP AND CRANKCASE WILL REMEDY THE PROBLEM.

IF YOU HAVE SATISFIED YOURSELF THAT THE ENGINE IS O.K., THE NEXT IMPORTANT STEP IS TO CHECK THE BRAKES AND YOU SHOULD NOT HESITATE TO RENEW ALL WHEEL SYLINDER CUPS AND MASTER CYLINDER CUPS AND BRAKE HOSES, AS IT DOES NOT MATTER HOW GOOD THE CAR GOES BUT MORE IMPORTANT, HOW IT STOPS. REGARDING ALL OTHER ROADWORTHY ITEMS, IT WOULD PAY YOU TO GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR LOCAL ROADWORTHY STATION AND ASK FOR A ROADWORTHY SHEET SO THAT YOU CAN CHECK ALL OTHER ITEMS SYSTEMATICALLY.

COMPLIMENTS OF THE WOLSELEY CAR CLUB.

HANDY HUMBER HINTS

WHEN REMOVING CAR AXLES THE APPROPRIATE WORKSHOP MANUAL OF YOUR VEHICLE WILL PROBABLY RECOMMEND THE USE OF A SLIDING WEIGHT TO PULL THE AXLE FROM THE DIFFERENTIAL AND THE DIFF. HOUSING WITHOUT THIS "SLIDING WEIGHT" TOOL YOU COULD END UP WITH A "LONG WAIT" TO REMOVE THE AXLE, TO AVOID THIS REVERSE THE BRAKE DRUM AND PLACE IT ON THE HUB STUDS THEN PUT ON THE WHEEL NUTS A TURN OR SO AND PULL THE BRAKE DRUM SHARPLY ONTO THE WHEEL NUTS AND PRESTO ONE INBUILT SLIDING WEIGHT.

STAN SPACKMAN

STOP PRESS

I HAVE JUST RECEIVED THE ROUTE INSTRUCTIONS FOR OUR "MYSTERY TRIAL" ON SEPTEMBER 11TH AND THIS CLUB RUN PROMISES TO BE A "BEAUTY" AND WILL TAKE IN SOME OF VICTORIAS FINEST SCENERY WITH ALL FUN THAT GOES WITH FOLLOWING THE CLUES TO THE EVENTUAL DESTINATION. WE HAVE AT SHORT NOTICE INVITED THE ROVER CAR CLUB TO ATTEND, SO WE WANT ALL THE HUMBERS OUT IN FULL FORCE

SEE YOU THERE

DES JUDD

CARS & PARTS FOR SALE OR WANTED:

WANTED BER V DOOR CAPPINGS (VINYL COVERED) ONE GOOD PASSENGER SIDE REAR DOOR. JOHN BROWNE 758-7526.

WANTED DUE TO THE LOSS OF THE FAMILY CAT, WE CAN GIVE A GOOD HOME TO A CAT ~~XXXXX~~ EITHER MALE OR FEMALE ("IN-BETWEENS" ALSO GIVEN CONSIDERATION) PREFER PERSIAN OR CHINCHILLA "FLUFFY" TYPE. BOB KENNEDY 783-3119.

FOR SALE SER 111 SNIPE SEDANS (2 OF) ONE COMPLETE ONE HAS SLIGHT BODY DAMAGE, MECHANICALLY AVERAGE CONDITION MAKE ONE GOOD CAR OUT OF THE PAIR. DES JUDD 783-9743

FOR SALE 1927 HUMBER MODEL 8/20 4 CYL. 3 DOOR TOURER. PARTIALLY RESTORED & PARTIALLY IN PIECES. NUMEROUS SPARE PARTS. CONTACT GREG LAMING 874-4316.

FOR SALE SNIPE SER 1V UNREG. GOOD COND. VERY LITTLE RUST
INTERIOR GOOD \$600 O.B.O. DENNIS WILSON, 72 COPPIN ST,
RICHMOND. 42-1403.

FOR SALE SNIPE SER V REG. NOV 77 82,000 MILES REASONABLE COND.
TRANS. COOLER, HAYMAN REECE HITCH, ROD-BAR, GOOD TYRES BEST
OFFER MRS. GOVERS 211-5228.

FOR SALE HAWKS 2 OF SER ? BOTH AUTO ONE GOOD COND. MECHANICALLY.
POOR BODY OTHER VICE VERSA \$200 O.N.O. S. WIERSMA, 1 LLOYD ST,
LANGWARRIN.

FOR SALE MK 1VA SNIPES TWO COMPLETE CARS WHICH WOULD BOTH
MAKE GOOD RESTORATION PROPOSITIONS. AMPLE SUPPLY OF TECHNICAL
ADVICE AND SPARE PARTS AVAILABLE TO AID WITH RESTORATION. SALE
OF CARS WILL GO TO CLUB FUNDS. ANY OFFERS GIVEN CONSIDERATION.
ENQUIRIES GREG LAMING 874-4316.

CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

IN NEXT MONTHS HUMBERETTE THERE WILL BE AN APPLICATION FORM FOR THE
HCCV CONCOURS. CONCOURS WINNERS OF THE RESPECTIVE CLASSES WILL
BE DISPLAYED AT OUR NOVEMBER OUTING. THE JUDGING OF THE CARS WILL
BE DONE A WEEK OR TWO PRIOR TO THIS OUTING AT BOB KENNEDY'S HOME.
THE DECISION TO JUDGE THE CARS "EARLY" WAS MADE BECAUSE OF THE
TIME NECESSARY TO GIVE EACH CAR A THOROUGH INSPECTION BY OUR
TEAM OF JUDGES. THERE ARE QUITE A FEW IMMACULATE CARS IN THE
CLUB AND IT IS HOPED THAT THE OWNERS OF THESE VEHICLES WILL ENTER
THEM. THE METHODS OF JUDGING OF THE VEHICLES WILL BE DISCUSSED
BY THE CLUB JUDGES AT THE NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING AND ALL APPLICANTS
WILL HAVE THE AVAILABILITY OF A SCORE SHEET TO ~~HEX~~ HELP THEM IN
PREPARING THEIR CARS. AS YET THE VENUE FOR THE NOVEMBER ~~N~~ OUTING
HAS NOT BEEN SECIDED AND IF ANY MEMBERS KNOW OF A RESERVE WITH
LAWN PARKING (FOOTBALL OVAL) THAT THE CLUB COULD HIRE, PLEASE
CONTACT JOHN BROWNE.

Concours

"Some talk about Lagonda, and some smart MG" Donald Swann & Michael Flanders from "Transport of Delight"

By Rob Dunsterville

IT seems to have escaped most people's attention that concours d'élégance are for any well turned out car whether it be little used, well worn or restored. It also seems to have been forgotten that it is a time when enthusiasts can exchange information, experiences and even spare parts and share in the camaraderie that surrounds cars of character.

The concours d'élégance concept has changed little over the years that the automobile has been with us. Oddly, its popularity seems to have waned at times when more and more cars are emerging from garages restored to such pristine condition they are scarcely recognisable as the models that were originally driven or pushed in. In nearly every case the hackneyed phrase "a face lift" would be very far from the truth. "Restored to the last nut and bolt", an equally misused expression, is usually closer to the mark.

Display and Judging

At a concours d'élégance the cars that have entered the competition are separated out as a static display and if there are sufficient numbers they are split into appropriate classes. The divisions can either be by make, style of car or those produced within a defined span of years. Judges inspect the cars and either all look at every aspect or divide the car up and each one concentrates on a separate section. There is not much to choose between either method as it mostly depends on the knowledge of the judges. On a basis of points allocation they single out a winner, which need not be the most spectacular car.

Cars must be operational and the owners may be asked to start them up and put them into motion. There is no doubt that human nature will lean on the side of a car that appears to be used every day and regularly maintained rather than a restored example which does not look as though it has turned a wheel on the highway. This is because slight blemishes in the former will tend to be disregarded while in the latter they will be more eye-catching. In judging concours d'élégance the basic function of a motor car as a form of transport is paramount and over-beautification may be penalised.

As the quality of both amateur and professional restoration work has progressed it has become more difficult to determine a concours d'élégance winner. A judge, who after all is a normal human being, though some think differently after he has declared his choice, may have to decide the day on a minor point. This naturally is disappointing, if not infuriating, for the loser and where animosity towards concours d'élégance may have been creeping in thus reducing the numbers of participating entrants in recent years.

The Beginnings

If difficulties are arising under present conditions what happened when it all began? In the days when motor cars were few and far between, due to bad roads and the fact that not many had been manufactured, it was a tremendous sight to see a group of them parked in relatively close proximity to each other. Now, if all these cars were of the same make or at least similar in style the sight was even more spectacular. No surprise therefore that the people who looked upon the motor car as a subject for their enthusiasm should begin to concur (gather together) and do so with elegance. This after all was the Edwardian style of life for those who could

afford it and motor car owners certainly could. Proof of this is easily recognisable in the motor cars themselves which were as much an exercise in styling as a combination of the necessary functioning parts.

In competitions of speed, style soon gave way to stark necessities. However, in the rallies of the 1930's for production cars, style was not altogether forgotten, as they often included a form of concours d'élégance — a sort of extra beyond the competition itself.

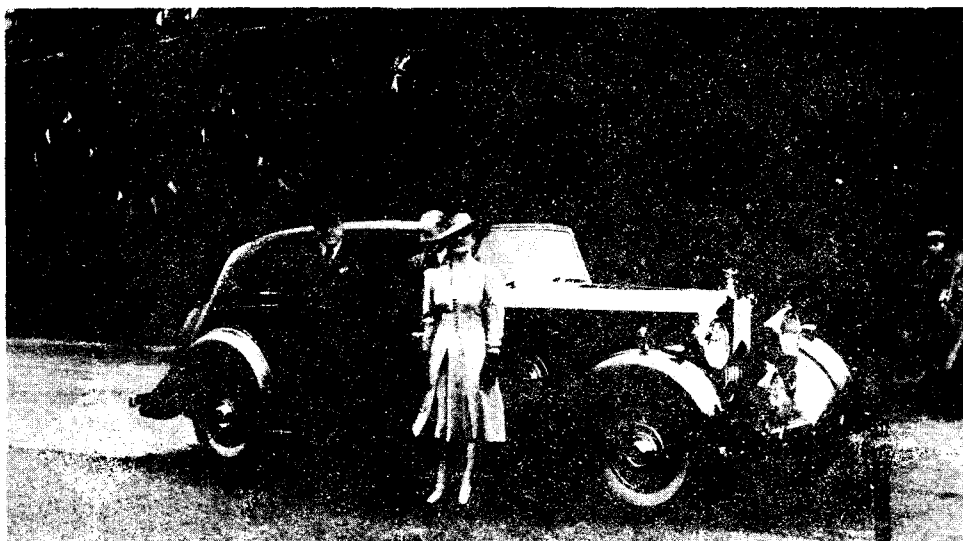
So, if concours d'élégance are to continue with larger and larger numbers of cars on display the game must continue to be played for fun and not degenerate into a tooth and nail contest. Opinions may differ markedly but beauty must always remain in the eye of the beholder.

Original Specification — Guide Line

The recent surge in the price of classic cars has made one thing clear when it comes to entering these cars in concours d'élégance. The closer the car is to original specification the better chance it

has of winning. The reason for this is not because there has been an overwhelming increase in the desire to maintain purity of breed, but because original specification is the simplest standard to go by. On the other hand, this standard should not be considered as the only level upon which to enter a concours d'élégance. A car that was altered in its youth or one that became well known in a non-standard guise are just as good entrants if the alterations were performed in a workmanlike manner and are in keeping with the style of the car. One MG enthusiast bought an early MGA 1500 to rebuild and rather than doing it to normal specification produced a 1955 Le Mans MGA prototype replica. He has done well in concours d'élégance due to the attention to detail and workmanship.

It is easy to understand that not everyone who goes to a competitive event for vintage type cars wants to enter their own car, which they have taken out for a run, as in many cases it is not suitable for the event. Consequently, it has become as interesting to wander around the car park at these meetings as it is to browse around the competitors' paddock.



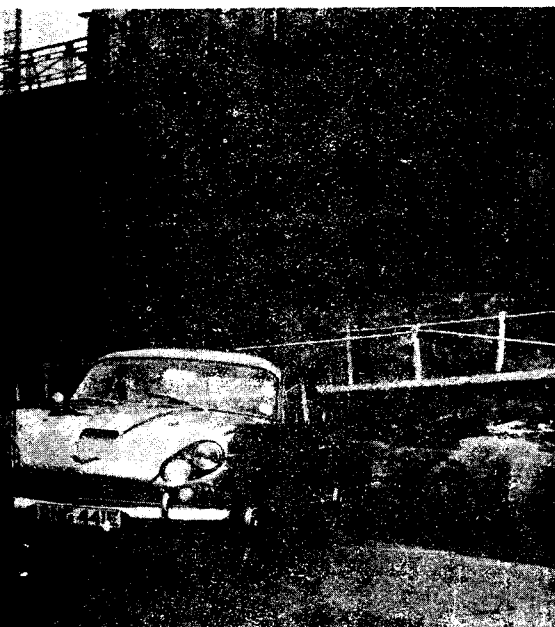
Above, when elegance wasn't only confined to cars, a Rolls-Royce at Brighton in the early post war years. Below, Jensen Owners' Club concours at Blackpool, 1974 and right, YB MG at our own concours at Prescott. Centre Spread, gathering in a splendid setting, a scene at the Thoroughbred and Classic Cars concours at Prescott, 1975.



d'élégance

Alas, the procedure is the same at many concours d'élégance, but here it is mystifying why the car park has any cars of character in it at all. They should all be part of the display as they cannot be said to be unsuitable and, anyway, to join in the display is in keeping with the camaraderie of owning such cars. The car need not actually be judged if the owner does not wish.

One regular concours d'élégance entrant is happy to talk to anyone about his, their or any car in general but finds the same basic questions that are repeated time and again very distracting. He has therefore placed a self answer card on the windscreen and it goes like this. "Yes it is nice isn't it." "No I didn't do all the work myself." and "Yes I did find it in a terrible state." This method can also be used by those who feel that a small explanation is necessary when they display their car in anything but immaculate condition. Perhaps something along the lines of "Bought in this condition three years ago but lack of time and money has prevented any work being done," might ease the mind.



The Practicalities of Concours D'élégance

From experience as an entrant, judge and organiser of concours d'élégances the following comments are put forward to encourage greater numbers of competitors at these delightfully relaxed summer meetings that the whole family can enjoy.

Organisation

Settle the basic outline of the event well in advance (six months) and distribute this information as widely as possible and to your own club members as their support will be needed as competitors and general helpers. When passing on the information to invited clubs make sure the magazine editor has the details as well as the secretary. As far as the Press is concerned it is better to address the information to the right journalist than to flood the media sending the details to no one in particular. Local Press, radio and television and the editors of the national motor magazines are the main ones to go for. More detailed information can be supplied to the same people later on. The more time people are given to plan for an event the more likely they are to attend.

Secure, reliable and knowledgeable judges and, if in the early planning stage, insufficient are available there is plenty of time for a training programme to be instigated within the club. Also have some extra people able to judge or standby in case of absence or illness. Make sure the individuals within the teams of judges know each other before the event so they feel at ease and can discuss the judging problems freely among themselves.

Choose a good location and mark it with additional signposts if necessary. Brief a band of marshals to be at the site early so that they can direct the competitors to form a spectacular display. It is easier for the judges if all the cars in one class are in the same place. This only takes a few minutes at the start of the day but the effect will be appreciated throughout the event. The display of information with boards or printed cards about the cars either by the individual competitor or by the car clubs should be encouraged as it provides greater understanding for everyone.

A good PA system is essential not only for communication of essential information but also for focusing attention and explanations. Another important use is the announcing of results which should be done on the day and down to sixth place where appropriate.

Worthwhile trophies, suitably engraved, can be made from car parts and certificates or dash plaques provide good records of success. If a celebrity can be engaged to donate the awards the final part of the day takes on an exciting atmosphere for winners and spectators alike.

If a programme has been drawn up for the day's procedures it should be adhered to, but if it starts to run late it is better to cancel one part and keep the show on time, or run two parts simultaneously. A timetable together with other information can be handed out as people arrive.

It is the organising club's open day and facilities should be available for new members to join and for the sale of club insignia.

Some form of catering should be arranged and even conducted tours of the display can prove useful to people whose interest in cars has only just been awakened.

As an amusing side line entrants could be asked to arrive suitably dressed to reflect the era that their car was built. This can be modified to head gear only if full dress is seen to be asking too much.

Entering

When buying a car in the first place some thought towards concours d'élégances, if you are interested in this sort of activity, can be well worthwhile. If you buy a rare model you will soon know

more about it than any judge will be reasonably expected to remember and he will be appraising it a little in the dark. A car more frequently seen at concours d'élégances will face many direct comparisons where it might not show up so well. Thus a car between the two probably offers the best choice.

There may be the opportunity to enter more than one class so choose the one that you think offers the greater chance of success. Also there may be awards in addition to class wins. If your car is eligible make sure that it will be judged for these as well.

Sometimes judges scoring sheets are available after the event and these should be read where possible. You might be able to discuss your car with a judge to find out where it lost points but in no event argue, just ask for comments. This information will help you in your preparation for the next concours d'élégance.

Many judges expect to see the tools that were supplied with the car when new and the driver's handbook. They will also look under carpets and into glove boxes to see whether the cleanliness is throughout or just skin deep.

Ensure that the mechanical side of your car is functioning in every aspect, no components are loose and that there are no leaks. As likely as not judges will disregard surface dirt that has obviously been picked up on the journey to the event. Doors are a favourite spot for judges so, above all, these should open and shut correctly. The same applies to bonnet and boot. In the case of soft tops it is best to leave the hood erected together with the side curtains and leave the tonneau cover folded on the seats.

While you are at a concours d'élégance make a critical assessment of other cars and look at the manner in which other entrants have prepared their cars.

It is quite in order to leave a note of explanation on the windscreen if you want the judges to know something particular about your car. A judge is not obliged to read it but curiosity will inevitably be on your side. You may want to explain why a certain part has been fitted or why something is not similar to other cars of its type.

Judging

The allocation of points to different sections (exterior, interior, engine compartment and chassis and running gear) within the total should be agreed between all judges to try and keep the whole competition as even as possible. Also set a time limit which will unfortunately be subject to the number of cars in each class so that each car receives the same degree of inspection.

Assess all the cars in the same class and mentally work out which is the one that seems to be about middle of the road. Judge this one first and award marks that are in the region of 75% of the total. When the other cars are being judged you have a norm to work from which has left you enough room to go up the scale where a car stands out exceptionally well in any section.

Do not be overawed by an outstanding exterior appearance or excessive chroming — look at all the sections as critically as other cars in the class.

Check the operation of as many of the mechanical parts as possible in the time limit.

Observe the areas where normal excessive wear is likely and appraise whether these areas have been well maintained.

Choose some aspect that is usually overlooked and check this on every car, ie oil level in the sump (the cars will have been at rest for at least half an hour). Another test could be to see whether the air pressure in the spare tyre is normal for replacing a road wheel. In this manner you will find out quite simply the more meticulous presentation and this can be a useful guide. These sort of inspections can help to decide a winner when the normal areas leave little variation between entrants. ● 34