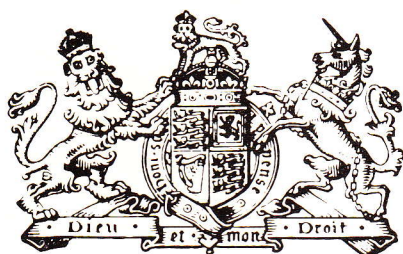


July 1985

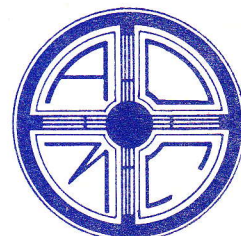
# *The* **HUMBERETTE**



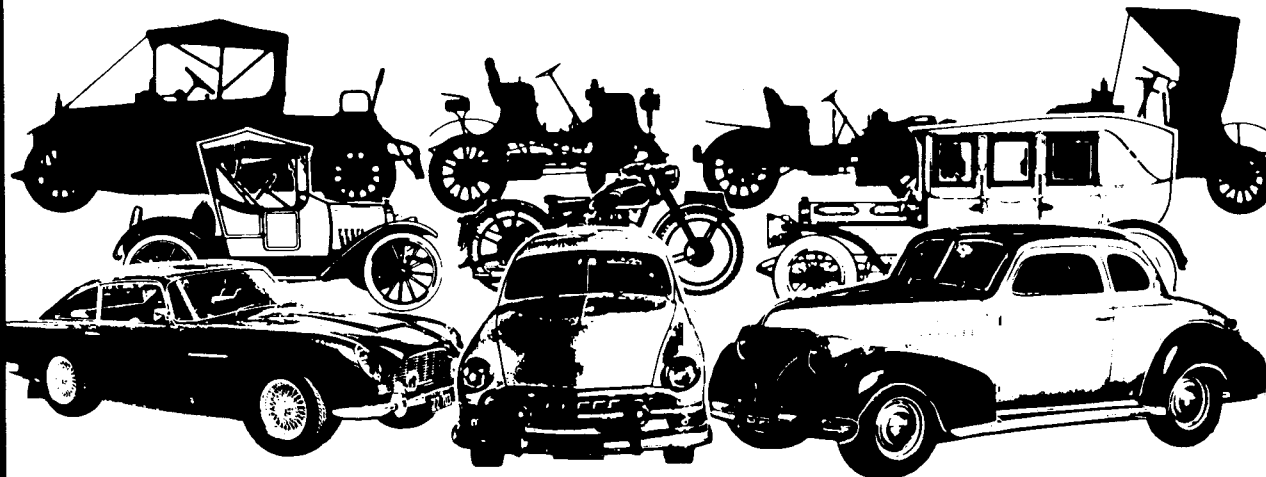
By Appointment to  
The Royal Family

Official Newsletter of the Humber Car Club of Victoria.

Affiliated with the Association of Motoring Clubs



# Sutherland



## Antique Vehicle Insurance

96 Wellington Parade, East Melbourne, Victoria 3002  
(P.O. Box 129)

Telephone: (03) 419 8166

# THE HUMBER CAR CLUB of VICTORIA

P.O. BOX 35, FRANKSTON, 3199  
23 HIGH STREET, WATSONIA, 3087

## COMMITTEE 1985/86

> PRESIDENT	Bob Kennedy	789 5119
VICE PRESIDENT	Bill Holmes	397 7836
SECRETARY	Margaret Willimott	435 6354
TREASURER	Rob Dunlop	439 7059
EDITOR	Barry Bosnich	460 4505
SOCIAL SECRETARY	Barbara Dunlop	439 7059
MEMBERSHIP REGISTRAR	Nancy Kennedy	789 5119
LIBRARIAN	Keith Willimott	435 6354
TECHNICAL ADVISORS	Tom McAlpine	(051)27 4755
	Des Judd	789 6952
PUBLICITY/REGALIA	David Dunlop	439 7059

The Club meets on the Fourth Friday of the month (except December) at 8.00 p.m., in the Deepdene Park Hall, Whitehorse Road, Deepdene.

## 1967 HUMBER SUPER SNIPE ESTATE - SERIES VA.

The car was brought out from England in 1968 after travelling six thousand miles in the U.K. and Europe. Purchased by second owner in 1969 with 19500 miles on the clock. Used daily and was rebored 110,000 miles. Purchased by Rhys Jones in 1980 with 184,346 miles recorded. Reconditioned motor fitted at 189,522 miles. Car is still used daily and has travelled 213,800 miles.



JULY, 1985

PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Kennedy's Klangers)

Well here we are on the second half of the year, time flies when you are having fun.

Only about four months to go till our Concourse, so I advise you now to start polishing up your "metal monsters".

Do not just leave it to a polish, remember to check over and clean up all the running gear, motor, gear box, diff, wheels, suspension etc, etc. If your car is not being entered for judging still give it a clean up, maybe with a good clean your Humber might surprise you.

Looking at our club calendar I notice that we have some very good outings ahead of us. The run to Warburton for lunch with the Chev Club at the "Talholp" restaurant is our next run. And I can assure you that this is a normally well attended run. It is a good family day plus a good day to natter about cars with the boys from the Chev' Club.

Don't forget the C.H.A.C.A. swap meet at Chirnside Park. This is all under cover and is certainly worth the run over to there even if you don't buy something it will still open your eyes to the array of goods on display. I know that I enjoy the meet every time I attend. This time I will not have a stall so I can amble around and try to pick up a bargain or two.

Not far away is our 10th birthday and it is shaping up to be a top event. I'm sure it will be a well attended outing by all past and present members and their friends plus the public.

As you can see we do have a lot on so support your club and the people who have worked hard to arrange these outings by attending as many as you can.

Well once again I think I have "raved on" long enough so till we meet again, HAPPY HUMBERING.

Bob Kennedy.

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MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING OF H.C.C.V HELD ON 28/6/85 AT DEEPDENE HALL:

The meeting was opened by President, Bob Kennedy at 8.23 p.m. and a warm welcome extended to all members and visitors.

NEW MEMBERS PRESENT: Frank & Jenny Hajncl (V.A. S.Snipe), Laurie Hamilton ( Mk. II. S.Snipe), Gregory Miller (V.A. S.Snipe), Fred & Silvia Pieteron (V S.Snipe), Mrs Lainey Ward (V S.Snipe)

APOLOGIES: Nancy Brett, Edna & Cyril Huxstep, Patricia Daly, Barbara Dunlop, Robert & Elizabeth Smith.

MINUTES: As printed in Newsletter accepted as correct; moved P. Davenport, seconded D. Dunlop.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES: Five sheets of signatures obtained in support of petition re: increased import duty on old car parts.

CORRESPONDENCE: In: Shannon & Classic Car Centre, G. McMahon, Sutherland Antique Insurance, Club Journals from H.C.C.A., S.A., N.Z., Classic & Historic Club, Daimler Lanchester, Rover, Wolseley, Austin, Tasmamian Restorers, Broken Hill V.V.C., Chevrolet Standard Vanguard.

Out: Four membership application forms: R. Pepprell, P. Strauss J. McMahon, Sunbeam & Talbot Owners Club, Rootes Car Club, Singer Club, D. Bowker.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Bank balance as at 26/6/85 \$1167.27 plus investment account. Received - moved P. Davenport, seconded P. Sheldon.

EDITOR'S REPORT: 120 Magazines posted. May need to prune back on complimentary copies (currently 17).

SOCIAL SECRETARY: Rob Dunlop reported on Barbara's behalf. Christmas hamper (cane) and Starter contents purchased. Watch "use by" labels if donating semi-perishable goods. Presentation dinner costs \$13.00-\$15.00 single. Payment by installment will be taken. Monash outing with Wolseley Club finalised, suggestion for games welcomed.

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT: Series 1-5 Workshop Manual in Saturdays Age too dear (\$50). Still need another manual and a parts book for late series models. Thanks to Norm Watt for offer of photocopies of early Snipe material.

TECHNICAL OFFICER: Des has information on fuel kits for Humbers \$11.00 each. Des advised against long storage of used fuel pump kits due to deterioration.

#### GENERAL BUSINESS:

##### 1. FOR SALE, MEMBER'S REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS- (Further details from members mentioned).

Series III or IV Ambulance and car-possible restoration. Footscray, \$800.00. (Barry Bosnich).

MK IV Snipe at Healesville, may be restorable. (Laurie Hamilton).

Series III-Glen Iris. Price negotiable. (N. Watt).

Kits for hydraulic steering from J.C. Hydraulics, Cylinders Service Pty. Ltd., 510 Geelong Road, West Footscray, PH:314 3651-Keith Catterall.

Tyre retreads, 670 x 15 \$22.00 each at P.R.D. Harries Tyre Retreads in Reservoir. (Vic Wilson).

For Sale: Two oil filters for MK I or II Snipes-\$5.00 each. (Bill Holmes).  
Series IV Hearse-information from Bill Holmes.

2. Discussion on radials VS. cross ply tyres for MK. Snipes.

3. Incorporation-Proxy Voting Forms. Members returning forms do not have another vote if attending July meeting.

4. Monash Outing-Some cars required for "dry run" to try out new Concours judging sheets.

5. October Birthday Meeting-Sunday October 20th. No meeting on 4th Friday of this month.

6. Presentation Dinner-Date set for November 30th. Treasurer will accept installment payment from this month.

7. Monthly Fund Raising-Italian wine and chocolates. Half of the proceeds will be donated to Tramway Museum Society for restoration work.

Meeting closed 9.10 p.m. and was followed by a film/lecture on early Melbourne cable trams. Presented by Mr. Dean Filgate of Tramway Museum Society. Supper concluded the evening.

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#### SECRETARY'S NOTES:

Following this month's meeting we hope that the Humber Car Club of Victoria Incorporated will soon be a reality. If the resolution is passed, as the committee feels sure it will be, a successful and exciting future lies before the club.

We would like to see as many members as possible at this special meeting but, if you know you are unable to attend, please don't let down your fellow members by failing to return your PROXY VOTING FORM (June Newsletter). Remember that successful incorporation depends entirely upon your active participation in this vote.

Our 10th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS are barely 3 months away now. I hope you have marked Sunday October 20th in your calendar. We plan to make it a memorable occasion for everyone. Festivities include a club car display, reunion for past and present members, display of memorabilia, cake cutting ceremony, guessing games (How well do you know your old Humber!) and much more.

To assist with catering and with arrangement for the display, the birthday Sub. Committee would appreciate an indication of approximate numbers attending and the type of car you will be bringing. We hope to include as many club and ex-club cars as possible, also some vehicles from invited clubs, in an impressive line up around the Deepdene oval.

Any display material (photos, brochures etc) you may care to loan (appropriately labelled and with your name and address or phone number attached) would be gratefully received.

The club has recently had contact with our counterparts in the U.K. - the Post Vintage Humber Car Club. Co-incidentally both they, and the Humber Club in N.S.W., celebrated their 10th birthdays recently. I wonder what it was that suddenly brought all these Humber owners together around ten years ago? Maybe a dissatisfaction with the mass produced "tin cans" of the day or perhaps a realisation that survival of these "classic beauties" depended upon a "common pool" of know-how, technical support and spare part collections. Anyhow what began as a few small gatherings of interested owners has rapidly developed into a world wide link up of people all having a common bond in the appreciation of their Humber Cars.

This brings me to the next point - the THE SPARE PARTS REGISTER. Have you any spares to share? The Register Form is included in this Humberette - please make use of it. This is one way in which we can help each other keep our cars on the road. Did you know that Hillman spares are currently exporting selected spares to Great Britain in order to keep Humbers over there on the motorways?

Despite the bitter weather conditions we all enjoyed the BBQ/Social Outing with the Wolseley Car Club on July 14th. Monash University has much to offer the casual visitor. Fellow member Norm Watts effort in ensuring that it's facilities were at our disposal were greatly appreciated. Who would have thought that one could enjoy a warm swim and sauna with the outside temperature at 12c? Ask Barry - he knows!. Thanks Norm.

Last meeting we took a ride on some of Melbourne's early cable trams, via film and address from Dean Filgate of the Tramway Museum Society. The Society operates a Tramway Museum (Complete with Sunday rides and picnic facilities) at Bylands, near Kilmore. Sounds an ideal spot for a future club outing. There are also other films on various aspects of early Melbourne Tramways available from the society. This last one was so successful that it seems we may acquaintances with Dean Filgate next year.

In the meantime series of motoring videos from R.O.S.T.A. will be the feature at our July meeting.

Hope to see you there,  
Margaret.

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#### FOR SALE

Series III Humber S/Snipe, ex hearse, suit restoration, \$1000.00, P. Dine, 49 Second Avenue, Altona Nth, PH: 391 1205.

Windscreen and surround for MK II or III S/Snipe. Also window glass for front and rear doors (one of each). Three wheel rims, old gearbox, \$40.00 the lot, J. McAdie, 36 Hewitt Street, Ararat 3377. PH: (053) 52 1482.

Plants, books, magazines, wood carvings, car parts, cakes, clothes, odds and ends too numerous to mention. All available from our trading table at our monthly meeting.

1955 MK IV S/Snipe, grey duco, reg. 3186, daily use, excellent condition. Offer L. Brick, PH: 836 9328.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### MONASH UNIVERSITY - B.B.Q. AND SOCIAL DAY WITH WOLSELEY CLUB (Humbers Present)

Lloyd & Pam Hughes	9/20 Tower	Des & Denise Judd	S. VA Snipe
Barry Bosnich	S. II S/Snipe	Arnold Goldman	S. V S/Snipe
Bob Bruce	S. III Vogue	Bob & Nancy Kennedy	MK IV S/Snipe
Ron & Eleanor Forth	S. II Snipe	Ossie & Marie Grande	MK I S/Snipe
David Dunlop	Vogue S. II	Tom McAlpine Jnr.	S. VA S/Snipe
Tom & Lyn McAlpine	S. V S/Snipe	Norm Watt	S. III Vogue
Rob & Barbara Dunlop	S. V S/Snipe	Bill Holmes	S. S/Snipe
Fiona & Mary Barfoot	S. IV S/Snipe	Lainey & Alex Ward	S. VA S/Snipe
Frank & Jenny Hajncl	S. VA Snipe	Roy & Merle Pepprell	MK IV S/Snipe
Keith & Margaret Willimot & Pam Batten		S. II Hawk Estate	

A total of 19 Humbers and 6 Wolseleys.

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JULY 26TH.	SPECIAL MEETING. 8.00PM. : FOLLOWED BY GENERAL MEETING. (R.O.S.T.A. MOTORING VIDEOS).
AUGUST 11TH.	C.H.A.C.A. SWAP MEET. CHIRNSIDE PARK.
AUGUST 18TH.	TALHOF RESTAURANT, WARBURTON. SMORGASBORD LUNCH. (COMBINED RUN WITH CHEV. CLUB.)
AUGUST 23RD.	GENERAL MEETING. 8.00PM. (SPEAKER: CAR INSURANCE.)
SEPTEMBER. (TBA)	PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL.
SEPTEMBER 27TH.	GENERAL MEETING. 8.00PM.
SEPTEMBER 29TH.	"CHARITY RUN". WITH COMBINED ROOTES CLUBS.
OCTOBER 20TH.	SPECIAL CELEBRATION DAY: CLUB 10TH ANNIVERSARY. (DEEPDENE PARK. 2.00PM.)
NO GENERAL MEETING IN OCTOBER.	
OCTOBER 26TH.	"BACK TO THE 50'S" COMBINED CLUBS DINNER DANCE. ELTHAM. (ORGANIZED BY STANDARD/VANGUARD CAR CLUB.)
OCTOBER 27TH.	C.H.A.C.A. CONCOURS. KALORAMA.
NOVEMBER 3RD.	CONCOURS D' ELEGANCE, PRIDE OF OWNERSHIP AND CLUB CAR DISPLAY. DEEPDENE PARK.
NOVEMBER 16/17TH.	BENDIGO SWAP MEET.
NOVEMBER 22ND.	GENERAL MEETING. 8.00PM. (SPEAKER: VICTORIA POLICE.)
NOVEMBER 30TH.	ANNUAL PRESENTATION DINNER. GOLDEN LANTERN RESTAURANT.

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\*\*\*\*\* AUGUST CLUB OUTING. \*\*\*\*\*

WHERE:	TALHOF RESTAURANT, HERBERT AVE. WARBURTON EAST. (PHONE: (059) 662741.
WHEN :	SUNDAY AUGUST 18TH,
TIME:	MEET AT 10.30AM.
MEETING POINT:	CAR PARK. EASTLAND SHOPPING CENTRE, RINGWOOD. (MELWAY REFERENCE, MAP49 H.8.)
	TRAVEL IN CONVOY WITH CHEV. CLUB ARRIVING TALHOF APPROXIMATELY 12.00 MIDDAY.
COST:	\$12 PER HEAD. CHILD UNDER 10 YEARS, \$6. (PLEASE PAY SECRETARY ON ENTERING RESTAURANT.)
DRINKS:	B.Y.O. DRINKS.

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6 Woodward Ave., Hillcrest, Burnie 7320, Tasmania.

(TASMANIA)

Telephone: 004 312894

Hi there fellow Humberites!

This month has been quite hectic what with trying to squeeze Humber duties in between work commitments, workshop building, chasing up Humber spares and so on, I'm lucky to even meet the deadline.

Firstly, my workshop is shaping up niceley with one bench almost completed, the drill press installed and running after being in storage for twelve months. The compressor has been waiting quietly in the wings for six months ready to start sand blasting the MkIII (that in itself is another story!). The chain winch is waiting to do its stuff, namely lifting the body off the chassis (when did you say you were going to have it ready for the road?). I am just about to start holidays and a friend of mine who owns a MIG welder is helping to make up an engine stand (with three engines waiting to be stripped and rebuilt I have no intention grovelling around on a cold concrete floor!!).

In fact the damn workshop is looking better than the house!! "Why don't you move out there with the rest of your stuff" says my very understanding wife. Such splendid accommodation befits motor vehicles of the Humbers ilk. I'm certainly not going to freeze my butt off in some tin shed no sir!! as it is fully lined out and insulated, with the walls painted a light cream, the floor a golden brown and the ceiling white, what more could you ask.

The MkIII has been in storage for two years as of last month and whether I'm ready or not it is coming home at the end of this month. Still it is far better than having it rotting away in some paddock for that time. It is a big enough job as it is without any added problems. Talking of problems I have just received a letter from Joe Caudecourt Spares officer for the PVHCC in the UK regards some spare parts for the MkIII, most of which are unobtainable including wheel cylinders, brake master cylinder or repair kits, front suspension bushes, tie rod ends, carb rebuild kits and jets, these are all practically non-existent over there. They do have brand new timing chains and a couple of camshafts though (new without bearings). If any body has any of these items locally I would appreciate a call. I am still after an alloy cylinder head if anyone out there in Humber land has one they would like to sell.

Rory Shanon and Lou Buchannon of Westbury, two prospective new members, answered an add in the "Mercury" a couple of weeks ago concerning a MkIII Super Snipe for sale at \$500 ono. So jumping into the trusty Sceptre, hitched up the trailer and high tailed it to Hobart whereupon arrival the Snipe was inspected and found to be a goer. With a bit of tinkering and a change of battery the old girl was fired up. After a couple of turns on the starter the engine coughed and settled down to a fast idle (even the auto choke worked). The engine still had the original leads and plugs, according to the owner, probably explains the misfire Rory experienced on the trip home. The old girl cruised home a distance of 140 miles or so at 65-70 mph, with the Sceptre tagging along with a Sunbeam Rapier on board the trailer. It's no wonder motorists were gawking as they cruised along. The Snipe is cream in color with grey leather. It also has a sunroof which has been leaking a little apparently

## TAS NEWS CONT;

caused by blocked drain tubes. Rory says the car averaged around 15mpg on the trip home which is not bad considering the car was cruised near its maximum speed and had not been touched for years. Lets see a modern car do that!!

I have been corresponding recently with David Clark, Editor of the PVHCC magazine "Old Faithfull" concerning developments about the book of Humber that was going to be produced but has come to a stand still at the moment because of several not least of which is distribution and cost. Apparently according to David they had an offer from one publisher to get a book on the stands within a year, but it would be all road tests and the Club had to buy the first 400 copies at £6.95 each! But which road tests would it feature? and would they sell that many copies. The Committee thought not! Stephen Lewis PR director for the PVHCC says he has heard of a couple of other efforts that could get off the ground so all is not lost yet.

Perhaps our Club committee could discuss this topic with the PVHCC and other Humber clubs to see what can be achieved as it would be a pity to let these attempts of immortalising the Humber marque in print go down the tube without any attempt of redemption

While on the subject of books, there is a fine edition on Rootes cars titled "Tiger, Alpine, Rapier" which has a good feature chapter on Humbers. This book is published by Osprey Publishing and written by Richard Langworth and sells in the UK for around £3.00 (\$5.40).

Still on the subject of Humber literature I have just received a brochure from NOSTALGIC IMAGES of 9-11 High Street, Banstead, Surrey SM7 2LZ, UK. This firm deals with period poster art, reproduced in full color, from the original article. On their listings are the following posters of interest to Humberphiles:

Cat. No. BR28	Humber 15.9 Open Tourer	1920
BR29	Humber 15.9 Saloon De Luxe	1920
BR30	Humber 1650 Weymann Coupe	1930

These are available in the following sizes with corresponding prices:

12"X10"	@ £7.95
16"X12"	@ £9.45
20"X16"	@ £14.95

Prints are available in either matt or gloss finish, specify which.

All items despatched to Australia in strong Postal tubes by Air Mail. Allow 14 to 28 days delivery. Be sure to add the following charges to your orders pre-paid to cover postage, packing and handling expenses.

Airmail Australia	1 or 2 prints	£4.45
	3 or more prints	£4.95

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### WANTED TO BUY

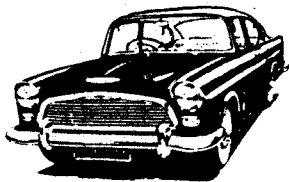
MkIII Hubcaps 2 of, MkIII Rear wheel spats, glove box lid in good condition. Rory Shanon- Westbury - 003 931737.

Series V diff. in good condition. Series V Stromberg carbs complete with manifold. Series V distributor complete. R. view mirror interior light, 2 interior rear lights. Max Heazlewood; Burnie 004-312894.

### WANTED TO SELL

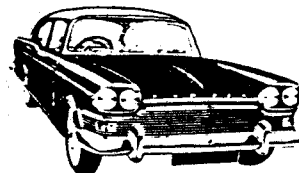
S.V. Hawk head, new \$30.00 Rory Shanon 003-931737.  
Series I SS Rings, standard \$80.00; Rear window glass Series I, II, Hawk, SS. Ross Bromley 003-430446.  
Mark S.V. Hawk head gaskets, new \$10 each

In the ensuing months I hope to introduce members and a profile of their vehicles. Until next month, keep adding to those numbers of Humbers!



# Workshop

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## ENGINE CONSTRUCTION & OPERATION.

### VALVES & VALVE GEAR.

Two valves are set in the head of each cylinder. One lets in the fuel mixture, so it is called the "INLET" valve. The other is known as the "EXHAUST" valve, as it lets out the spent gasses of the combustion process.

The valves are set in the cylinder head which is in light alloy or as in the case of Humbers, high quality cast iron (ever seen a Humber with a cracked cylinder head?). This is usually cast to match the cylinder block. Both block and head have finely machined mating surfaces which are "sealed" with a head gasket.

Cast into the head are water passages, inlet and exhaust ports, a mounting for a thermostat to control water temperature, various holes for push rods (on overhead valve engines), head bolts, and threaded bolt holes for the attachment of rocker arms, manifolds etc.

In the combined operation of piston, valves, and spark plug, precise timing is of the utmost importance. The valves operated by eccentric cams on a camshaft which is geared at exactly half crankshaft speed. The camshaft can be connected to the crankshaft either by direct meshing of gears or as is more common the case chain and sprockets. The eccentric cam lifts a "push" rod which in turn, pushes the valve open. A powerfull spring forces the valve shut again as soon as the camshaft rotates further.

The valve must close tightly on the valve "seat" in order to effect a gas tight seal against the exploding gases during the combustion cycle.

To ensure complete valve closure a "tappet" gap is left between the end of the valve stem and the rocker arm. The gap is precisely specified by the manufacturer. Incorrect clearance will affect valve timing which will result in the loss of power because the valve will not be closed or open at the right time to give a full charge of fuel-air mixture. Too little gap results in the failure of the seal between the valve and it's seat when the valve expands under heat. Too much gap results in excessive noise (tappet rattle) and excessive wear.

Exhaust valves operate under punishing temperatures, anything up to 560Cent. or 1150 deg. Far. When hard driven, the exhaust valve can even become red hot. Though they are made of highly tempered steel

## ENGINE CONSTRUCTION & OPERATION Cont:-

cooling is necessary, water passages pass as close as possible to the valve guides and seats, so that excess heat is conducted away from these areas by the cooling system.

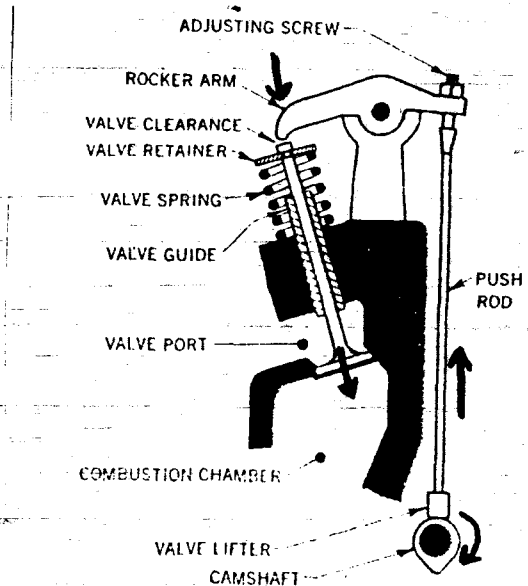
### VALVE OVERLAP

One would assume that when the piston is at the top of its stroke that the inlet valve would open and the exhaust valve close. In fact this is not the best way; valves open and close before or after Top Dead Centre (TDC) or Bottom Dead Centre (BDC).

It may seem odd, but changing the length of the stroke by valve timing actually increases engine power. By the time the piston reaches 45 degrees before BDC the pressure in the cylinder has dropped substantially and the crankshaft throw is not in a position to produce effective turning effort. Therefore it is more advantageous to open the exhaust valve earlier than BDC and allow the remaining pressure to force the exhaust gasses out. Leaving the exhaust valve open a few degrees after TDC and the inlet valve is opened a few degrees before TDC creates an effect known as "scavenging" by the rushing air fuel mixture pumping out the remaining spent exhaust gasses from the cylinder. Leaving the inlet valve open for 45 degrees or so after BDC also utilises the inertia of moving gasses to fill the cylinder more completely. The more mixture that enters the cylinder the higher the volumetric efficiency, hence the more power produced at the crankshaft.

The opening of a valve before TDC or BDC is called valve "lead". Closing of a valve after TDC or BDC is called valve "lag", and when both valves are open at the same time between exhaust and intake strokes this is called valve overlap. The higher the state of engine tune the greater valve overlap is used. Have a close look at the valve overlap diagram in your workshop manual. The Snipe crossflow engine for instance is a very efficient design when you compare it to other more agricultural "crud". Wonders can be worked with a little revision on cam profiles, compression ratios and ignition timing.

Next month I'll put a bit of "zap" into things (bright sparks!!!)



### VALVE OPERATION

Rotation of an eccentric cam lifts the tappet and push rod on the high point of the cam, pivoting the rocker and opening the valve. Further rotation of the cam allows the tappet and push rod to drop under pressure of the valve spring, closing the valve.



## *Autocar* ROAD TESTS 1644

## New Humber Hawk AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION

**Contributor: Robert Wansborough.**

**W**ITH the advent of the new Humber Hawk the Rootes Group have most certainly pulled something out of the hat. The latest model, on which it has already been possible to complete a full Road Test, is destined to meet with very wide approval in the market for which it is intended, not only for the virtues which are obvious but for others which are not apparent on first examination.

Before getting down to detail, however, reference may be made to the confidence in the Humber company which must be engendered by the way in which the model has been introduced. Not for the new Hawk is show-time display followed by months of waiting while teething troubles are sorted out; this test illustrates how the car, on its presentation, has proved virtually free from even so little a fault as a rattle or loose knob. The car under review was in *The Autocar's* hands a week before its announcement; at once it gave the feeling that it was as well constructed as a model which had been in production for a year or more.

Last week a full description was given, in which it was mentioned that with the exception of the engine, which for the most part is similar to that used in earlier cars, the Hawk is entirely new, using unit body-chassis construction instead of the former separate chassis frame. It is easy to identify, in that the grille has a very strong family resemblance to those used on the Hillman Minx and the Sunbeam Rapier, other members of Rootes' range.

Immediate impressions include pleasure at the appearance, which is right up to date, while retaining the lack of ostentation that is one of the highlights of the British industry's

*The shape of the latest Humber is entirely different from that of any of its predecessors. However, there is a family resemblance to other Rootes Group models in the shape of the radiator grille (above). The two-tone colour treatment of the car tested blends well. The petrol filler cap is covered by the reflector at the base of the right-hand-side rear lighting assembly*

products. The shape has excellent balance, aided rather than spoiled by the slight kink in the continuation of the wing level; a kink which, incidentally, enables the line from the top of the front wings to be kept low.

Also impressive are the amount of room inside; the comfort of the seating; the layout of the instruments and minor controls, and the standard of all-round visibility which has been achieved without any conflicting angles of the screen pillars.

The Hawk is available with orthodox transmission, to which overdrive can be added at further cost. Alternatively, Borg-Warner fully automatic transmission may be chosen, again at extra cost. Also, there is a choice of front seating, a bench being standard, with separate seats as alternatives at extra charge. The model provided for test had automatic transmission and separate front seats.

Total seating capacity is remarkably good, probably exceeded only by the really big products of Detroit. With a bench front seat there would be plenty of room for three, and four reasonably slim adults can be seated at the back without real discomfort, or three in luxury. Apart from the armrests on all the doors, the rear seat has a very wide



Reprinted from

*The Autocar*

7 June 1957



*Below the head lamps are winking indicators. The bonnet is opened from the outside by a catch which is obscured by the top-most lateral slot of the radiator grille. As the wipers are hinged well out from the centreline of the car, a deep V-shaped portion is left unwiped*

## New Humber Hawk...

central rest, which helps to steady passengers when only two are sharing the available space.

The upholstery is as comfortable as any yet encountered (with one exception only), and leg room at the rear is ample even for tall people. The front seats have plenty of fore-and-aft adjustment, and the backrests are instantly adjustable for rake. Both may be tilted right back until they make contact with the rear seat cushion, although the seats will not slide forward sufficiently for the backrests to join up, bedwise, with the rear seat. An attraction of this seating is that on a long run the front passenger can lie right back with his or her head against the top of the backrest and, if so minded, sleep in comfort.

A description of the acceleration, and of the maximum and cruising speeds, cannot be given without reference to the automatic transmission on the car tested. Motorists who have never driven a car so fitted will know that gear changes between the three ratios (low, intermediate and top) are made automatically, according to load and road speed. The throttle pedal has two pressures, and if only the first is taken up in the interests of economy, or simply because quick acceleration is not required, the transmission changes into intermediate at 23.5 m.p.h. and top at 34 m.p.h., or at much lower speeds if the throttle is only lightly depressed.

Greater pressure on the throttle pedal results in the transmission changing into intermediate and top at 30 and 51 m.p.h. respectively. This "foot on the boards" position is called the kick down, and automatically it engages a lower ratio if the road speed is not too high. It will change down to intermediate at speeds below 41 m.p.h., and low at speeds below 20 m.p.h. Thus, in all normal motoring the selector is placed in the Drive position and left there.

However, after being baulked on steep hills in such fashion that the low ratio is required for acceleration from 20 m.p.h., or when a similar speed must be used for some distance on a steep slope (either up or down) then the selector lever should be moved to the Low position. The absolute maximum in this ratio, when held in by the lever, is 40 m.p.h.

This 2½-litre Hawk has the smallest engine of any car so far tested with Borg Warner automatic transmission, yet the performance will be considered adequate by the great majority of users. The car encourages relaxed but quite rapid driving. Acceleration is satisfactory as 50 m.p.h. can be reached in 16.2sec and 70 in 34.9sec. (The car reaches 60 m.p.h. in 23.4sec, in which time it has also covered a quarter of a mile.)

With the maximum speed of more than 80 m.p.h., few drivers will be dissatisfied. At full speed the engine does not appear to be in any way distressed but, of course, the second pressure of the throttle pedal must be taken up and m.p.g. goes down accordingly. The cruising speed most likely to be used on suitable roads is more likely to be that provided when only the first pressure is taken up; this is in the region of a true 70 m.p.h.—again plenty for most people.

At this stage of acquaintanceship with the Hawk comes admiration for the attention that has very obviously been paid to silencing of engine, road and wind noise, to which reference was made in last week's description. The engine, of which the bonnet lid is heavily padded to deaden sound, is never obtrusive, rarely noticed audibly. With the windows shut, the noise of the wind is slight, and great success has crowned the efforts of the suspension engineers in reducing to an insignificant level any drumming being transmitted from the road surface. This quietness, coupled with the ease of control and seating comfort, makes the model unusually restful on a long run. After many miles at the wheel the driver gets out still feeling really fresh.

The suspension is very well suited to the character. It is sufficiently firm to enable the car to be driven fast in safety on European roads, yet the ride is certainly not harsh. The complete freedom from pitching, and the level ride even when hump backs are taken quickly, suggest that appropriate care has been taken to ensure a sufficiently different spring rate at front and rear, and that the damping has been given real power up to the point at which harshness is still avoided. The effectiveness of the damping is illustrated by the fact that the noticeable thump when cats' eyes are crossed at low speed, is much less noticeable when cruising.

Steering is precise and incorporates marked self-centring action which makes for effortless control on the open road. On the sharper corners the self-centring makes the steering somewhat heavier than the ideal, although in normal driving, real effort is never required. Manoeuvring in car parks is easily accomplished without undue exertion. Four turns of the wheel are required from lock to lock. When fast corners are taken fast there are no undesirable under- or over-steer characteristics; the car will go round cleanly and with moderate tyre squeal, even in extreme conditions.

On the automatic transmission model the brake pedal is wider than on any car with a manual gear box, so that it may easily be operated with the left foot when required. As drivers become familiar with automatic transmission, they

*The fascia is mostly of steel, painted to represent wood grain. The layout of the instruments is above average and on either a right- or left-hand-drive car the most important dials are directly in front of the driver*





find that the use of two feet on the pedals confers some advantages. When starting from cold, the engine may be kept running at a rate that is clear of stalling point while the brake, operated with the left foot, prevents the car slipping inadvisably quickly past the gateposts. When pulling away after a hold-up on hills, too, the car may be held with the left foot until throttle depression with the right takes up the drive.

The efficiency of the brakes themselves is admirable. The data are set out on another page, but it may be said additionally that even when the wheels are brought to locking point, the car stops completely four-square. Throughout the brake testing the car never veered to either side. The hand-brake lever is located to the driver's right, beside his seat. It is of the pull-up type, is completely positive in action and does not catch the trouser leg when the driver is getting in or out.

There is a special position (Park) on the transmission selector which locks the gear box as an additional safeguard when the car is left on a slope. (It is not recommended that this parking lock should be used as a substitute for the hand brake; if the car should creep so that the locking pawl of the transmission is taking the full load of the car's weight, it may be necessary to start up and move fractionally against the slope before moving off, so that the pawl frees itself.) During the test the Hawk naturally was driven hard, and while the brake testing itself was in progress more deceleration was demanded than normal road driving is ever likely to require, yet there was no trace of fade.

Reference has been made already to the layout of the controls and to the comfort of the driving position. More detailed description is merited. The most important dials are located in front of the driver, regardless of whether the car has right- or left-hand drive. On the other side of the facia is a deceptively large lockable compartment for oddments, and in the middle are a clock, the controls for the

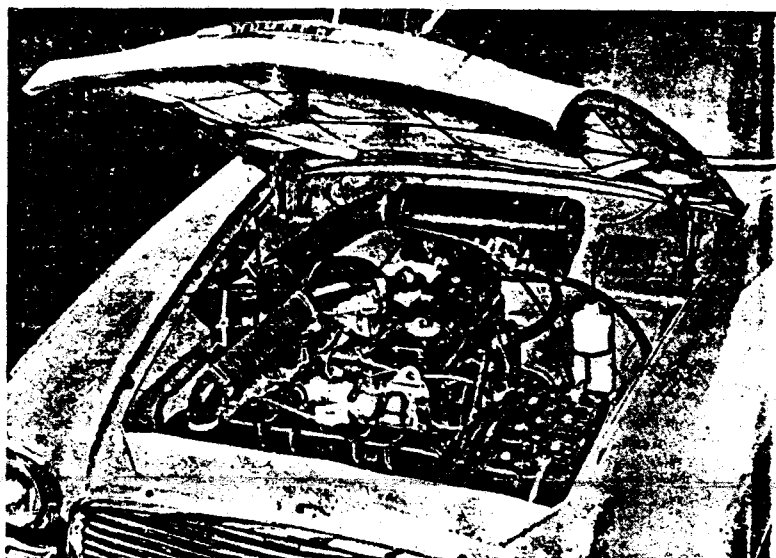
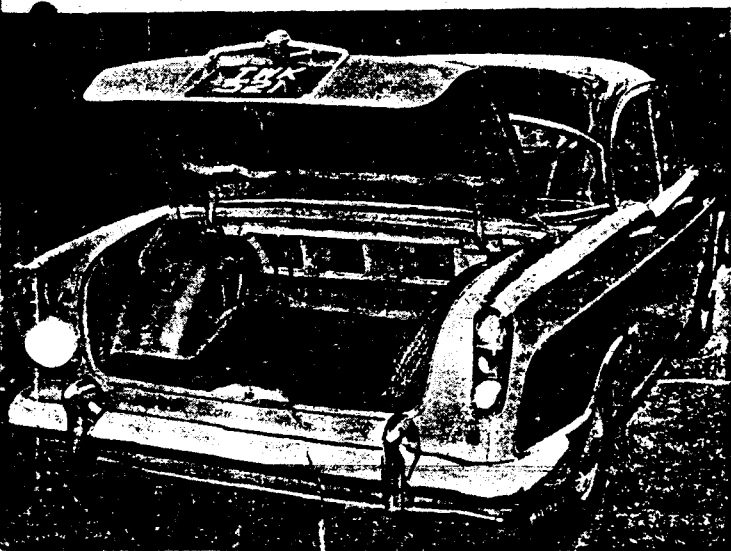


optionally extra Ekco radio, the ventilation distributor and the lights (nearest the driver).

The radio has a second speaker on the parcels shelf behind the rear seat, controlled by a conveniently placed knob. Selectivity, tone and freedom from interference were of a high standard having regard to the price of the set. This radio has a switch giving a choice of three stations, each of which may be changed manually with ease if none satisfies.

Detail fittings include an ashtray placed centrally under the facia and another in the back of each front seat, swivelling ventilator windows in the forward quarters of the front doors, and armrests wherever they are practicable. There is also provision for the fitting of a cigarette lighter.

Left: The luggage locker is so shaped that cases of any shape or size may be stowed without difficulty. Hand tools are installed to the right of the spare wheel. The lid is released by a trigger to the right of the lamp illuminating the rear number plate, above which is a covered keyhole. The lid is counterbalanced. Right: There is a great deal of space round the four-cylinder engine, and access is easy to all filler caps, carburettor, distributor, and so on. Underneath the bonnet lid is a thick layer of material which helps to insulate engine noise



Winking indicators are operated by a lever on the right of the steering column and the horn ring forms a complete circle. The décor of the interior matches that of the appearance as a whole, but for the imitation of wood veneer on much of the facia. Those who are familiar with the best use of cellulose metalwork in interiors will probably agree that in a car of this character, steel painted to look like wood seems out of keeping, although the work itself is well done.

When a car is provided for test (as opposed to general description and assessment) even before its announcement,

it is received with some trepidation. For the Hawk it may be said that the only fault, which adjustment would remedy, proved to be a slight looseness in the transmission selector, which in some circumstances, had to be held in Low or Reverse positions.

Few entirely new models have passed a full test with more honour. In the market for which it is intended the car will win wide respect—and quickly—for its appearance, accommodation, comfort and quality. It is economical to run and, not least, moderately priced.

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## THE 3-LITRE HUMBER SUPER SNIPE

### A British Car of High Quality

**F**OR MOTOR SPORT Easter was divided between the latest Humber Super Snipe Mk. II and the much-discussed Chrysler Valiant—that is after the appalling London traffic chaos on the day before Good Friday had been negotiated in, respectively, a Wolseley 1500 and the Morris “minibric.”

After driving two small cars it was a change to stretch the legs and spread the chest in the Super Snipe, which is a car that contrives to be extremely spacious without being unwieldy. The latest Mk. II version with 3-litre engine is distinguished by a wide “flash” down the body sides. In the case of our Easter test-car this smartly set off the very attractive navy blue finish. Full marks to Rootes for this very handsome colour scheme.

Last January twelvemonth we reported on the then-new Super Snipe in detail and, as the interior and mechanical arrangements of this dignified British car remain virtually unchanged except for the larger engine (it has grown from 2.6-litres to a six-cylinder of 87.3 × 82.5 mm., or 2,965 c.c., the power output going up from 112 b.h.p. to 129.5 b.h.p., the increase being achieved at a peak crankshaft speed 200 r.p.m. lower, or at 4,800 r.p.m.), there is no need to recapitulate.

Suffice it to remark that the engine has lost none of the smoothness and quiet-running previously remarked upon but that the extra power is noticeable by reason of even better acceleration and a top speed which, instead of stopping at 95 m.p.h., surges on to above “the ton.”

The power unit, an imposing under-bonnet inmate, has cross-push-rod actuation of inclined o.h. valves and accepts the Laycock overdrive from absurdly low speeds, so that this can be virtually a one-gear car.

The imposing kerbside appearance of the modern Humber Super Snipe, ruggedness being suggested by the substantial bumpers, wide grille and big wheels, is matched by particularly well-thought-out and comprehensive interior equipment, which extends to folding burr-walnut tables, twin ash-trays and cigar-lighter for the back-compartment passengers. The fascia is also in burr-walnut, with door cappings, but not sills, to match, with sensible instrumentation and a big, lockable cubby-hole to supplement deep wells in the front doors. The doors shut with the quality-action beloved by vintage-car devotees, they have sill interior locks, and the wrap-round screen does not impede entry, while bonnet and luggage-boot lid open automatically on being released. Heater controls are sensibly arranged, a clock is provided, the rapid action of winding-down the driver's window was appreciated, and the floor is lavishly carpeted. A full horn-ring sounds a “Col. Trumington” warning of approach.

In brief, this Humber is a sensibly and luxuriously-equipped 100-m.p.h. saloon. It will presumably be driven mostly by big-boned businessmen in bowler hats, who will appreciate its top-gear ability to reach 80 m.p.h. very quickly indeed but who, we must hope, will not be too critical of its steering and roadholding characteristics,



*SIDE ELEVATION of the latest Humber Super Snipe, distinguished by the “flash” along the body side. It has Girling brakes on the front wheels and the capacity of the cross-push-rod engine has been increased to 3 litres.*

or mind a steering-column gear-change which isn't exactly finger-light or silky to operate—incidentally, it controls a three-speed gearbox but the overdrive multiplies this to five forward speeds, control here being by finger-tip stalk, as is direction-flashers operation.

The steering is relatively heavy, is too low-geared (4½ turns, lock-to-lock) and not nearly sensitive enough, so that the Humber has to be steered continually even along straight roads. Against this there is only the faintest kick-back action and no column vibration, but the castor return action, although vigorous, does not centre the steering sufficiently. These factors add up to unpleasant control characteristics in a car which rolls somewhat too much on corners, causing oversteer, particularly at moderate speeds. The Super Snipe is, no doubt, a better proposition in Borg Warner automatic transmission/Hydrosteer power-steering form. The tyres protest mildly merely because a corner is sharp, not because it is being taken quickly. The car is certainly not under-tyred and this may have much to do with the unfortunate steering characteristics—it runs on 70 × 15 six-ply Dunlop “Gold Seal” tubeless covers.

The suspension gives a very comfortable, slightly lively ride and only mild tremors penetrate to the body structure. Road noise is absent, the car is mechanically silent save for very faint transmission sounds, and wind noise is negligible except for a hiss past the quarter-windows. The engine was somewhat reluctant to start promptly when cold.

Another innovation on the Mk. II car is Girling disc brakes on the front wheels. These pull up this 30-cwt. car extremely well for negligible pedal pressure but for part of the test pulled disconcertingly to the near side. The right-hand hand-brake is well located. A minor criticism we made in the case of the 2.6-litre model, namely that the scuttle-mounted rear-view mirror obstructed the near-side wing, has been rectified by fitting a pendant mirror.

We had no opportunity to check petrol consumption but this appears to be little better than 17 m.p.g., dropping towards 15 m.p.g. if you hurry, giving a dubious range of less than 200 miles. The petrol filler is disguised as the off-side rear reflector.

This latest Super Snipe is a significant model in the Rootes' range, individualistic, extremely comfortable and modestly priced at £1,453 inclusive of purchase tax.

T. H. White, one of my favourite authors, in “England Have My Bones” states frankly that his England “is not that of the *Saturday Review*, nor is it authoritative like that of the *Field*. It is not stately enough for *Courtesy Life*, nor experienced enough to bear comparison with the works of A. G. Street or Adrian Bell. I hope it is not the kind of country that is inhabited by Mr. Beverley Nichols.”

I can say that my Motoring does not call for a Facel Vega, nor is it skilful enough to justify a Ferrari. It is not staid enough for a Rolls-Royce, nor on a plane to call for a Porsche or Maserati. I find it does not regard the Humber Super Snipe as the most enjoyable form of expression.

That is not to say that many successful and talented people will not find this impressive and comfortable 3-litre Humber very close to the ideal. An excellent instruction book is issued with the car.

W. B.



**COMPACT BUT WITH A WEALTH OF DIGNITY.**—The Humber Super Snipe is a big-boned handsome carriage for sporting City gent.

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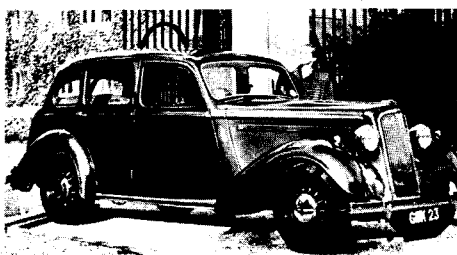


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