Riley in Australia

November 2018

A Magazine for all Riley Enthusiasts

Editorial

The Caloundra concept was for a one-off national magazine to replace the Riley club magazines around Australia for one month this year. The concept came from a meeting of Riley Editors at Caloundra during the National Rally and the suggestion was put to all clubs to consider. I put my hand up to do the editing and picked November because it was six months away from last May and six months out from the 2019 Fleurieu National Rattle of Rileys in May 2019.

I thought it would be something novel and an opportunity to relieve hard-working Editors for a month of the need scrounge up material and put a magazine together. It would also give you, the readers, something different with a national flavour containing original material or content that had not been seen widely before. Some of those aims have been achieved.

Somewhere along the line the concept got a little skewed and, while "Rileys in Australia" will indeed replace the Torque Tube in Queensland for November, the same won't happen in other places. The A.C.T. doesn't have a magazine now. They have a regular emailed "What's on". Here in South Australia we don't have a magazine or emailed equivalent so it'll be our lot for November. The bi-monthly Riley Gazette will still be produced as normal as will the Blue Diamond and the WA magazine for November and Rileys in Australia will be a bonus.

You can see where the contributions have come from. That Reluctant Editor in Sydney and the Energetic and Enthusiastic Editor in Queensland have done most of the hard work. But with contributions from all over it's all come together nicely. Thank you to all the contributors.

We have a National Rally and follow-on Adventure Tour coming up here in May of next year. See page 7. There's a chance we might do something by way of a multi-region magazine again to mark the occasion.

Anyway, while I sit here and ponder what might happen next year have a good Riley read.

Leigh Johnson

Cover Photo:

You're right, it's not an Australian scene but what a wonderful photo! Taken by Ian Goodfellow, a member of the UK Riley RM Club at their National Rally this year, it features a dozen Roadsters at the Elleray Campus of Windermere School in the heart of the Lake District which was the base for the Rally.

Rileys in Australia was produced by Ford Avenue Productions for all Riley enthusiasts in Australia and elsewhere.
Ford Avenue Productions is just bit of fun. A hobby; not a business. So between clanking the keys on the typewriter and some artistic airbrushing the CEO and Editor-in-chief has been out sweeping up the leaves, cleaning the gutters and working on his Rileys.

Comments can be directed to the Editor at FordAvenueProductions@adam.com.au.

Ford Avenue Productions is pleased to announce that its most - recent addition to its cinematographic hardware is an unmanned aerial vehicle. They prefer to call it a drone; it's far more simple. Available for Riley events with notice it promises to enhance your Riley experience with vision from a perspective you've never seen.

If you're attending the 2019 Fleurieu National Rattle of Rileys or follow-on Adventure Tour, keep your eyes peeled. If you'd like to see the Chief Pilot-in-training click here. Yes, he does look stressed but that's not unusual these days.

Underlined parts of this magazine, if not email Addresses, are clickable links to web pages.

Rileys at the Official Canberra Residence

by John McNair on The Sapphire Coast

The shape of the cars is familiar but probably not the building. It's Government House, Canberra. So how does it come to pass that a collection of Rileys parks itself outside "Yarralumla", the Governor General's official residence?

The ACT Riley Club has been quietly going about its business for 50 years, and the consensus was that the anniversary should be celebrated on the day with a run around Canberra and lunch at a nice venue. This was duly organised. Event organiser Judith Dorrell wanted something to make the event truly special and memorable. Working on the old principle that if you don't ask, you don't get, she made the phone call to Government House and received a reply in the affirmative.

You don't just drive into the house. Security procedures and timetables had to be followed, which was a bit of a stretch for Riley owners. Judith thought it was like herding cats. Step one was to line up in our given order in front of the iron gates, with their 24 hour security guards. A contingent of very friendly security people checked our identity against a list that had been previously supplied, and at the appointed hour we motored down the long driveway. Each car was individually photographed in front of the doors by our professional photographer, after

After a time we were surprised and delighted that Sir Peter Cosgrove come out with his AdC, admired the cars, chatted to us and gave a lovely informal speech.

A truly memorable event for the ACT Club and some old friends who joined us on the day.

It's the first photo I've seen of a Riley taken from an unmanned aerial vehicle. The Governor - General is in the group and the photo (appropriately air-brushed) was taken by one of his staff. Ed

Upcoming Events

November	Date	2018
Qld	1	Run to RAAF's Amberley Heritage Centre followed by lunch in Ipswich.
Vic	2	Club Night – Member Presentation
Vic	3-6	Cup Weekend at Camperdown
A.C.T.	3	Classic Yass
N.S.W	5	Club Meeting 7.30pm, Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club
W.A.	6	Monthly Meeting at Rowland & Georgie's
A.C.T.	7 and every Wed.	Thomo's Shed. From 9.30 to midday.
N.S.W	11	Working bee at Riley Spares, Berowra. Noon
W.A.	11	Birthday Celebration for all the "8's.
S.A.	22	Club Meeting
S.A.	25	Pop up Run
Vic	25-26	Wandin Draught Horse and Machinery Festival
Vic & S.A	30	Ford Avenue Productions should release the 2017 Millicent Border Rally video. Only 12 months late
December		
W.A.	2	Christmas lunch to follow the 11.00am meeting at the Crawley home of John and Elizabeth Picton-Warlow.
N.S.W	3	Club Meeting 7.30pm, Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club
Vic	7	Trophy Presentation Night followed by Guest Speaker Dick O'Keefe from Performance Ignition
N.S.W	8	Christmas Lunch. Rouse Hill
S.A.	8	Christmas Picnic Setup day at Rosalie & Mike`s 1.30PM
S.A.	9	Christmas Picnic at Rosalie & Mike`s, 9 Mawson Crescent, Lockleys from 12.00 onwards
N.S.W	9	Working Bee at Riley Spares, Berowra. Noon
Vic	9	Annual Christmas Picnic Lunch at Rob & Anne Russo's orchard at Officer.
January		2019
Vic	9	Midweek Picnic Lunch
February		
N.S.W	4	Club Meeting 7.30pm, Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club
S.A.	10	All British Day
N.S.W	10	Breakfast run to Berowra. Meet at McDonalds at Old Pacific Highway, Mt Colah at 8.00am to leave at 8.30am.
S.A.	22	Club Meeting
April	Mid	The Antill 90th Anniversary Run
May	5-10	The Fleurieu National Rattle of Rileys
May	12-22	The Riley Adventure Tour

The A.C.T. 50th Anniversary Gathering

by Phil Soden, Canberra visitor

Canberra (a converted sheep paddock south of Sydney) has a Riley Club. And it turned 50 years old earlier this year. They are a good mob (the Riley owners, not the pollies) and we like going to visit. Especially for the Collector Pumpkin Festival, which often features Rileys. I know that is odd, but at least it is not the lemon festival.

And often the first sight of civilisation as you roared the old Riley around the Lake George road was the giant syringe on the horizon signalling "I'm almost bloody well there". The symbolic landmark of Telstra Tower was originally called Telecom Tower, but it never really mattered what it was called because everyone called it Black Mountain Tower.

The locals call the city "Civic". Walter Burley Griffin called it the "Civic Centre" in his 1911 ACT plans, but then Prime Minister Stanley Bruce didn't like the name and settled with City. "Civic" stuck.

Kambah Pool, Canberra's only nude bathing area, has a number one rule: keep left if you're wearing swimmers and right if you're not. Very orderly. And talking of water, Canberra might have the nation's biggest pay packets and its most highly educated population, but what really matters is that it has the most tasteless water (note: this has not been scientifically proven).

But there are downsides to being 600 metres above sea level and 150 kilometres from the coast. I had carburettor icing in the Riley Roadster in Canberra, a feat only matched in winter near Cradle Mountain, Tasmania. Again, in the Riley. Despite the city's notoriously harsh winters it also gets bloody hot, and the golden rules according to our ACT Riley owners, is to keep your heater off until Anzac Day and avoid planting tomatoes until Melbourne Cup Day.

And did you know the Canberrans love roundabouts? The locals don't think it excessive to have one for every thousand people. What this really means is you are forever turning the steering wheel in the Riley and wondering whether you need a shoulder operation.

So, on Wednesday 28 March, the Canberra Riley Club declared they had been there for 50 years. And there were over 20 Rileys there to prove it.

The weather was perfect. Beyond nice, it was sparkling and warm. The Rileyites enjoyed coffee and cake at the Hyatt before a short drive to Government House. Here, each Riley was given a large sheet of cardboard to absorb oil.

The Governor General came out for a Blessing of The Fleet, escorted by gold braid and drones. Then all the Rileys rumbled off after stuffing oil splattered cardboard into boots and we had a delightful lunch at the Yacht Club.

I think my Roadster really enjoyed the trip. We left after lunch but the Riley enjoyed Canberra so much it stayed there, having broken a diff and losing all drive to leave. I went back to Sydney by train (a most enjoyable trip and cheaper than Riley petrol) and the Riley proudly rode a tow truck to a differential repair joint.

(See more on Roundabouts and Roadsters in Canberra on Page 24 Ed.)

The 8/90 Eight Cylinder Adelphi

by Phil Wyllie in Queensland

The eight ninety is basically two Riley nine engines melded together at approximately a 30 degree angle to make an eight cylinder Riley engine. It was fitted into a big 4 chassis with an Adelphi body.

The particular 8 cylinder Riley that is the focus of this story is a 1937 example, engine number 8A-211 and chassis 87A-211. It is one of only 25 made and possibly only one of two that were exported to Australia.

Three other 8 cylinder Adelphi's exist in the UK. It is known that Neil Brandt, a Queensland Riley enthusiast, was in possession of a 8/90 engine in the 90s, the remains of one of the 8/90s exported to Australia. When he died, the engine was sold out of the estate and purchased by Stephen Figgis, a member of the NSW Riley Motor Club.

The second 8/90 was sold by Tom Cox Motor Co Ltd of Cambridge to a Royal Navy officer who came out to Brisbane in 1939. He kept it for some time and then sold it to a Dr Kroll, who sold it to a Dr Foote and then it came into the hands of Jack Downing, the Queensland Riley Agent. It was 1944 and the Riley had done 33, 000 miles.

According to the April 2018 edition of "The Automobile" magazine the car sat in a shed for over 30 years with the body rotting away. The magazine article then goes on to say that the engine had been filled with diesel to preserve it. In the 1950s Linden Thompson photographed it while it was in Ipswich. During the 1970's the 8/90 was seen by Russell Sinclair and he took the time to take photographs and copies of these images are now in the possession of Paul Baée.

In 1977 it came into the possession of Jim Kahill in Victoria. By that time the car was in poor condition. It was then sold to Ian McDowell and sold back to Jim Cahill in 1982. During this period, the engine and pre-selector gearbox were taken out of the vehicle and work was done on the Solex carburettors and the pre-selector received new seals. After the engine and gearbox were refitted the engine was fired up and it ran.

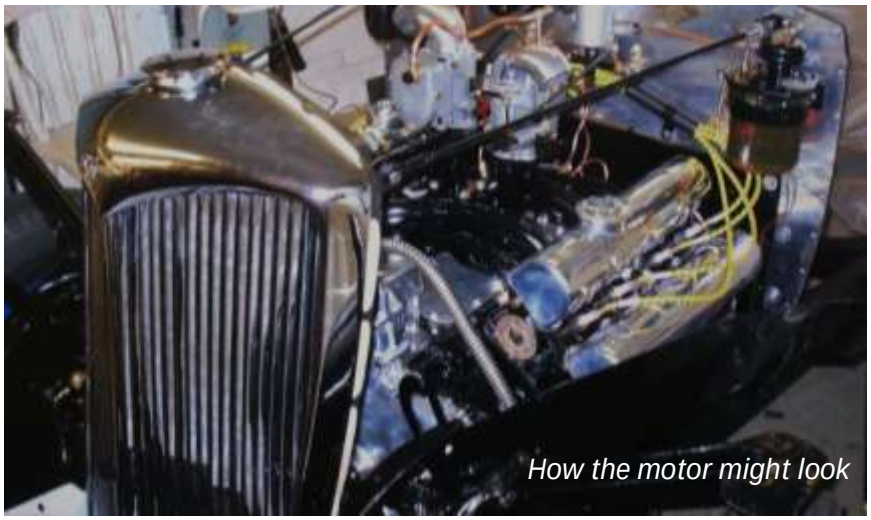
The trail then leads to Noel Wyatt who purchased it to prevent it from being turned into a special. By that time many of the body parts had disappeared. It was then sold to David Snell on the proviso that he restored it to its original form. Sadly, David died before commencing the work and he left it in his will to Paul Baée. It came into his possession in 2009 and he has stored it in his garage for the past eight years.

The 8-cylinder Riley was first introduced in October 1935 and the manufacturer advertised that it was available with an Adelphi or Kestrel body, although as far as Riley historians know, no Kestrel bodied vehicles ever existed. The engine has two down draft zenith carburettors, one on either side of the engine and each supplying fuel to the four cylinders on the side of the engine that it is fitted to. The rockers were mounted on the head.

The crankshaft has three main bearings. There are three cam shafts; one for the inlet valves and the two on either side of the engine for the outlet valves. The engine is gear-timed and so is the water pump. The transmission, much larger than those fitted to the 12/4s, is a Wilson preselector gearbox.

During a period of study at TAFE, the guards, running boards and boot lid were panel-beaten and over the past months the scuttle has been bumped back into shape and the areas replaced where rust had eaten through the metal. Currently the radiator and bonnet are being fitted. This has turned out to be more difficult than expected as the heights and angles of the panels are unknown.

The edge around the scuttle for the bonnet halves is completely missing. Many other mysteries are yet to be resolved, as well, such as the positioning and make up of the 'B' pillar bottoms, the



How the motor might look

found. In all, it took eight years to source all the parts that could not be manufactured.

The current project is to assemble all the body parts with the view to getting them to fit together as they had when the car came off the assembly line. To date, the first fit up has included the scuttle, radiator and side pieces. Yet to be done is the body, getting the doors fitting correctly and assembling the tub section with the boot lid.

It is hoped that the next article written on this very rare 8/90 will be a description of the body fitted together and painted. Maybe in the next years the engine and transmission will be rebuilt and the Australian Riley community will see the 12/80 Adelphi on the road.

The doors

Signs I've Seen

Adelaide, South Australia: September 2018.
The success of the business method referred to on the sign is probably exemplified by the lack of fuel pumps on the premises.

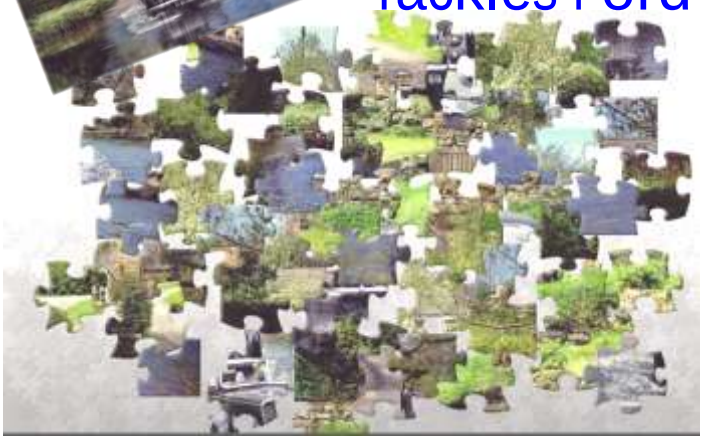
Original salesman's badge

strengthening of the floor pan sides and whether there is timber between the 'A' pillar and the 'B' pillar. It is hoped that friends in England may provide technical information and provide solutions to these and other mysteries that are yet to be encountered.

The project is not without helpful friends. For example, Rod Richards has been restoring a 12/4 Adelphi and bought a burnt out car belonging to Bill Parks. He had two pre-war car bodies and out of these there was a spare floor pan. It was in fairly good condition and only required a boot floor with its trap door to access the battery. It consists of the front floor, wheel wells for passengers in the rear, wheel arches and the boot floor.

Paul has been fortunate to get this floor pan and over the past years he has collected headlamps, driving light, control box, SF 35 semaphores, regulator box, big four radiator, wheel surrounds, Louvax shock absorbers and horns. Some came from Victoria and others were sourced over the internet. While two English friends were in Australia to attend a National Rally the sun visors were noticed and examples of these were added to the list of items to be

1953 RME Tackles Ford



Look very closely at the pieces and you can see a hint of Riley. Someone spotted this fine photo on Facebook and decided to make it into an online jigsaw.
Taken by Ian Goodfellow in the UK, it is of his spouse Fiona Johnson Linney in 1953 RME, FJL 169. The caption said she'd taken "to the river to cool down". It's here if you'd like to try. More of Ian's work is on the cover.

Noosa Classic Car Show

30 September

by Wendy Lonie

Photo by Phil Wyllie

The weather was rotten, constant rain with the occasional gale- force wind. Sloshy ground, brollies everywhere. Unfortunately the weather impacted on the numbers of people attending.

3 of our Rileys pulled out. Graeme Bourne's steering wheel came adrift whilst he was driving (fortunately slowly) and he hit a bus stop. Damage to front of car? Peter Lee's RMD had a driveshaft issue and Carl Harries' Riley ignition failed to proceed. 12 Rileys made it and made a very impressive line-up. 1x 1933 Monaco - Ken Lonie; 1x Roadster - Ian Henderson; 3x Dropheads - Malcolm King, Chris Reynolds & Chris Stafford; 2 x RMF's - Brian Jackson & Chris Stafford; 1x RME - Chris Stafford; 2x RMB's - Ken Porter & Ken Lonie; 1x Pathfinder - Chris Stafford; 1x Riley Sports Special - Ken Lonie and Trevor Taylor in his Jaguar.

Thanks to Chris Stafford for the invitation and arranging pride of place for the Riley lineup.

Considering the gloomy weather, the Riley contingent thoroughly enjoyed catching up with each other and discussing the magnificence of our Rileys, and the challenges! I believe other than the 3 casualties which did not make the meeting, the rest of the Rileys performed well and experienced no mishaps to or from the event.

Reflections on The Southern Highlands Rally

18-20 October

By Phil Soden, visitor to Cooma

Cooma
Population: near 6800
Elevation: 800m
Established: 1849
Derives its name from the Aboriginal word *coombah,* variously meaning "lake," "sandbank," "one," or "big swamp."
Proclaimed a municipality in 1879.

Last time I drove the Riley to Canberra I broke an axle. (See page 3) When the Southern Highlands Rally came along, my Riley had the engine out, so I didn't take it. Just as well, as the ACT Riley Club have some vague ideas on geography and for some reason held the run around Cooma, some 280 kms further south than what a sane New South Welshman would call the Southern Highlands.

I like Cooma. Rod Richards' Roadster came from the wrecking yard there. You get a really decent breakfast in Cooma. And it has history. The local council could not afford a speed camera, so they put up a sign saying: Slow down Old People's Home. It had no effect.

At the next meeting they decided to play on the paternal instincts and put up a sign: Danger - Children at Play. The result was no discernible reduction in traffic speed. Then the Chairman had a brain-wave and suggested they try a sign with: "Nudist Colony". As a result of the Nudist Colony notice, white vans and lorries crawl through Cooma. But not Riley drivers – they are much too smart and know the nudist colony isn't there because it is too cold.

The Silo Run

18-20 September

by Heather Stuart visiting The Mallee

The "Riley" magazine invited us to come along,
The meeting place would be, "Marong".
Thru the "Mallee" we would meander,
To view the silos, and take a gander.

The "Rileys" congregated in a line,
All shone up, and looking fine!
At Warracknabeal, we viewed items of steel,
And for the gardener's among us, they held great appeal!

At the town of Beulah, we sampled the Vanilla slice,
And all voted it to be really, - "EXTRA NICE".
At " Woomelang" a shearing shed made of tin,
So we all hopped out, to take a look in.

The town of Hopetoun was our base,
Its tree-lined lake, a pretty place,
Alas it had no bed for the night,
Leaving some (unnamed people) in a plight!

We travel across the land impacted by drought,
Their communities anxious and worried, there is no doubt,
With no income for the coming year,
The people there have much to fear.

Still no sign of rain, across the plain,
So we drive on and on again,
The silo art portrays a theme,
Although, each has a different scene.

However, it succeeded in portraying to our rally,
Just how tough and challenging it is to live in the Mallee,
With a vote of thanks, to our leader John Paul,
And round of applause, for arranging it all!

Photos by Keith Morrison

Cooma is the closest railhead to Mount Kosciusko. It was selected in 1949 as the headquarters of the massive Snowy Mountains Scheme.

During the peak years of construction it acquired a population of more than 10,000 but with the completion of the project in 1972, the town experienced reduction in growth. Its economy today is based on lumbering, joinery work, steel fabrication, sheep and cattle farming, and tourism based on the Alpine region, including Kosciuszko National Park, and the dams, reservoirs, and aqueducts of the Snowy Mountains project.

The region is the home of the mighty Snowy River and the many associated stories of heroism and romance. Many claim that "The Man" in Banjo Paterson's iconic poem was inspired by local horsemen. The poem's imagery continues in the current day through the presence of brumbies in the region, in particular in the Kosciuszko National Park. The Snowy River winds its way through the region before meeting the Southern Ocean near Marlo (Vic). (See Jack Thompson reciting Clancy of the Overflow here with orchestra and more about Banjo on Page 24. Ed)

People attended the Rally in all sorts of cars, from all parts. A group started discussing their medical problems at the Thursday dinner. "Do you realise," said one, "My arm is so weak I can hardly hold this coffee cup." "Yes, I know." replied the second, "My cataracts are so bad I can't see to pour the coffee." "I can't turn my head," rejoined the third, "because of the arthritis in my neck." "My blood pressure pills make me dizzy," commented the fourth, adding, "I guess that's the price we pay for getting old." "Well, it's not all bad." piped up the first, "We should be thankful that we can still drive our Rileys."

(Photo on page 15. Ed)

The National Rally and Adventure Tour

by Graeme Pinkney in Pages Flat, S.A.

Since the wonderful Caloundra Rally we have been busy beavering away on the organisation of both of these events. We have been delighted with the number of "Expressions of Interest" received so far. Never the less, please encourage your fellow club members to participate. Especially regarding the hire of a steam train (see below), the more starters we get, the cheaper for all entrants!

While May 2019 might seem a long way off, for us time is really rushing along but we are pleased to say that the majority of both events have been organised. Now, for us, it's just knowing numbers of people attending and such matters as how many cups of coffee are needed at the morning tea stop!

It is expected that in late December or early January we will be in a position to confirm all costs and we will be asking for firm entries with a deposit payable by the end of February. Final full payment will be required middle March.

5-10 May 2019
The Riley Motor Club of SA's Fleurieu National Rattle of Rileys based in McLaren Vale

If you were at Caloundra you might remember it was mentioned that for our Rally we will copy a number of other car clubs and just have a single "all inclusive" cost per person for the event. This single cost will include all provided meals, morning and afternoon teas, activities and entry fees. ***This cost will not include accommodation*** and also lunch on two days. With the exception of morning and afternoon tea/ coffee and the scheduled visit to two wineries ***all other liquid refreshments will also be excluded*** (including if you buy from the cellar door). There will be no Rally Entry Fee this year. It is expected that the overall cost to entrants will be similar to the Philip Island and Caloundra Rallies.

Outline of the event

5th May Sunday - Sign-In and Welcome Dinner at Bowls Club

6th May Monday - Orientation Drive, Lunch at Penny's Hill Winery Barn, Dinner in McLaren Vale Memorial Hall

7th May Tuesday - Boat Trip to Murray River Mouth, SteamRanger Heritage Rail (Steam) trip Goolwa to Victor Harbor & return, Self-catered lunch in Victor Harbor, Dinner at Mt Compass Hall.

8th May Wednesday - Winery Day, tasting, tour & entertainment at Wirra Wirra and d'Arenberg (The Cube) Wineries. Lunch if required self-catering. Dinner will be a Pub Meal spread between 3 pubs in Willunga.

9th May Thursday - Fleurieu winding roads to lunch at "One Paddock" Currency Creek then a guided tour of facilities at Australia's newest Motor Racing Track, "The Bend". See here. All this followed by dinner at McLaren Vale Bocce Club where you will have the opportunity to play the game.

10th May Friday - Aldinga Airfield, "Games & Planes" at a small country airport with attitude! Fun games, lunch, the opportunity for flights in a Tiger Moth or other bi-wing aircraft and just maybe a demonstration of aerobatic flying by Chris Sperou who was Australian Aerobatic Champion 13 times After lunch it's off for us to play at the traditional Conrod Trophy competition. For those not involved in the gymkhana activities, other interesting things are organised! Farewell dinner at the glamorous Serafino Winery & Function Centre.

11th May Saturday - Departure or free day for those participating in the Adventure Tour.

Videos from some past National Rallies

Beechworth, Burra, Mittagong, Phillip Island, Caloundra

Follow the links here.

12-22 May 2019
The Riley Adventure Tour commencing at McLaren Vale and finishing at Wilpena Pound

The Adventure Tour, limited to 70 people is designed to provide entrants with an Adventure that takes in a lot of the best Tourist regions of South Australia. The largely self-drive tour takes in the German town of Hahndorf, The Barossa Valley, the Clare Valley and Wilpena and Arkaroola in the Outback Flinders Ranges.

We have opted to stay in the best accommodation available to our group, eat and drink at the best restaurants and wineries and to do our best to pamper you while showing you the unique South Australian countryside and Outback. For the final stage from Wilpena to Arkaroola we are hiring coaches to take our party north to Arkaroola as the unmade roads are not nice to our wooden-framed Rileys. The Rileys will be parked with security at Wilpena. The cost for this Tour is still being negotiated but is expected to be in the region of $2500 to $3000 per head including all meals & accommodation.

If you have any further questions please feel free to contact us / me on mobile 0419 802 446, graemepinkney1@bigpond.com or via the Club email address, rileymotorclubsa@gmail.com.

Graeme is the Co-Ordinator of The Rally & Adventure Tour.

If you've never thought about attending a National Rally
think about

The 2019 Fleurieu National Rattle of Rileys

on the fabulous Fleurieu Peninsula just south of Adelaide.

5 to 10 May, 2019

Followed by the 11 day Adventure Tour taking in The Barossa and Clare Valleys as well as The Flinders Ranges all the way to Arkaroola.

Full details on our website here.
https://tinyurl.com/rattle2019
Email us at rileymotorclubsa@gmail.com to register your interest.

It'll be great!

From the Archives

Le Mans - the Place, the Race and the Roadster.

THE RILEY 3-SEATER OPEN TOURER. - This 100 BHP. Riley tourer produced for export is based on the chassis design of the post-war 2½-litre model with body modifications to meet specialized overseas requirements. Attaining speeds up to 100 mph., and reaching 70 mph. from rest in 20.8 seconds, it provides a performance superior to many of the best American cars at a competitive price.

Outstanding features likely to appeal to overseas buyers include "Torsionic" independent front suspension, twin carburation, cross-flow cooling, Girling hydro-mechanical brakes, and an extra-large luggage boot.

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE NUFFIELD ORGANIZATION PUBLICITY DEPT. (NEWS SECTION)

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Little more remains to be told. When the tumult and the shouting had died down, and the weary teams had slept the clock round, every one of the Rileys that did so well was driven home under its own power, running even better than at the start of the race. Proof conclusive of the fact that the Riley is, from every point of view, the finest small car in the world.

Le Mans: The Place and The Race

A Few Facts from the Past

Contributed by Propshaft

No International Motor Race holds such a unique position in the imagination of the general public as the annual twenty-four hour race at Le Mans. Cars of all nations have established or ruined their manufacturers' reputations on this famous circuit, and the Automobile Club de l'Ouest have made themselves and the quaint old French town world-famous in the process.

Some years ago—in 1921 to be exact—the Grand Prix was run at Le Mans over a total distance of 321.7 miles and won by a big American Duesenberg. Then in 1923 the whole nature of the race altered so that a French Chenard-Walcker won at an average speed of 57.2 m.p.h., while a British Bentley, handled by Clement, put up the fastest lap. In 1924 England scored her first victory when Duff and Clement drove the 3-litre Bentley into first place at an average of 53.78 miles per hour. A Lorraine car was second and scored its revenge by being first the following year although chased home by a Sunbeam driven by Chassagne and Davis.

In 1926 the firm of Lorraine took first three places and seemed almost invincible.

The following year provided the most sensational and dramatic crash in the history of the race. During the night a French car went out of control at White House Corner and crashed, blocking most of the road on this very blind corner. Collingham, at the wheel of one of the big Bentleys, had little chance of getting through and in a wild swerve, turned his car on its side thus barring the other half of the road.

In a matter of moments four other cars ploughed into the wreckage, one of them, a Bentley, subsequently being extracted, lashed up with rope and wire and then driven to what must have been the most merited win of all time. And now Rileys are carrying England's flag to victory, and every motoring sportsman will join in wishing them a continuation of the success they have so deservedly gained.

AEN 10 at Le Mans

The Roadster was known to have been used in only one major event-Le Mans 1950.

AEN 10, was entered by Geoff Beetson and co-driven by a Mr Lawrie. It covered 2,878 kilometres (1,799 miles) during the 24 hours at an average speed of 74.22 mph, finished 17th out of 60 starters, took fourth place in the 2,000 - 3,000cc class and placed 8th in the Rudge-Whitworth Cup.

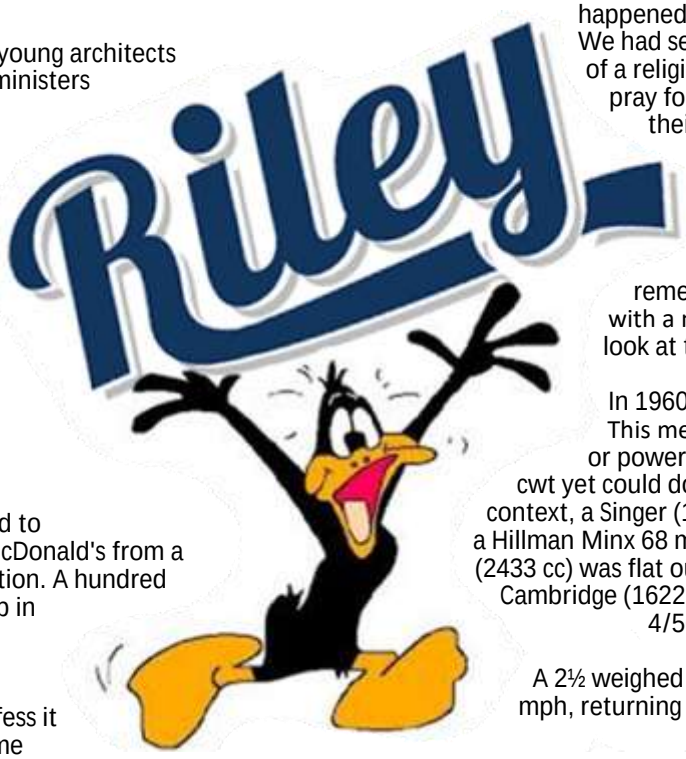
As James Taylor noted in his book Riley RM Series: "Although the car's performance in the race was creditable rather than outstanding, its placing gives very little idea of its capabilities as compared with a standard car."

From: Rileys in Australia by Phil Soden
https://phil.soden.com.au/roadster2.html

The Duck

by Phil Soden in Sydney

Back in 1961 I joined the Riley Club, full of bearded men who shed beery tears over their cars. The young architects in the club really wanted Saabs. The ministers wanted to change Sundays to say, Tuesdays so they could go race their prewar Rileys on the weekend. The rest would meet in wooded covens and wave blackened fingers at passing Jag drivers. An interesting lot, very friendly. In today's society they'd probably be jailed under suspicion they were dangerous, leftist or riotous.



They still believe new cars were wasteful. Oil did a lot of good sitting in the ground for millions of years. We're told cars should be replaced with mass transportation. But it's hard to reach the drive through window at McDonald's from a train. And we're told cars cause pollution. A hundred years ago city streets were ankle deep in horse excrement.

Being deep in horse shit seems like a useful link to my first car. I must confess it was a Riley. The memory still leaves me numb from the toes down. If the car is driving today it would be like Bob Hope when he said: "I still chase women, but only downhill". The Riley was very fast downhill.

Back in 1950 car colours were different. Paint technology was primitive and pigments earthy. Which is why my Riley was that faded, drab sandy shade known as dirt. And undercoat. Not sure if they were the official colour names though. It could have been 'Ivory' and it could have been 'Laguna Beige' but if it was 'Duck' it was a sorry colour for a creature.

My friends called it "The Ruptured Duck". Yes, there was a reason. We were kids so naturally thought we knew everything. But didn't know the Duck's wayward handling (hence the name) was more to do with a broken trunnion bearing than racing oversteer.

To be honest, we didn't know what a trunnion was. Possibly something our parents grew in the backyard. Who'd have thought Riley would use a word from the Old French "trognon" to describe an invisible part under a car? Pas moi?

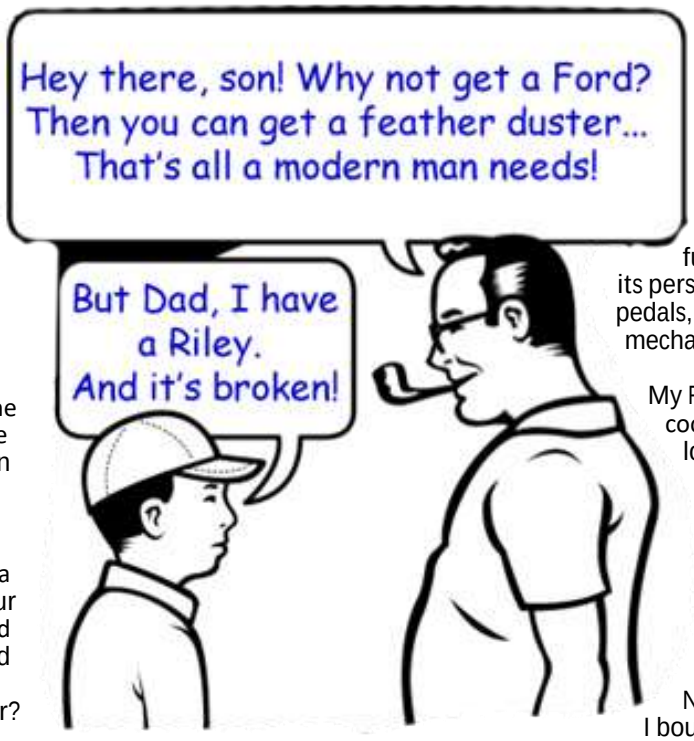
No, none of us studied old French. Or, as became obvious, had any mechanical knowledge. But my Riley was different to the cars of my friends. It could move under its own power. And when it couldn't, we could pretend to be knowledgeable mechanics, preparing an exotic car for the next Grand Prix. The reality was we had trouble fitting the only car accessory we could afford back then, and that was one of those rubber static straps that were supposed to cure car sickness. Undoing a rusted bolt at the back of the Riley to attach it meant something very heavy falling down. I had to use the rubber strap to reattach the fallen bit….

But the Riley was fast downhill. Because of the wayward location of the back axle caused by the broken trunnion, applying the brakes was fraught with adventure. Sometimes the axle would shift and the back brakes would lock. Sometimes nothing happened at all, including any loss of speed. We had several gentlemen in the Riley Club of a religious persuasion and they would pray for us, or more prosaically shake their heads and suggest fixing the problem.

Back in its day the Riley was good at its job. But its day had gone. Now that you are remembering those days (probably with a mix of nostalgia and horror) let's look at the cars.

In 1960 Rileys were still seen as sporting. This meant it didn't have a heater, aircon or power anything. An RME weighed 24 cwt yet could do 81 mph and produce 26 mpg. In context, a Singer (1497 cc) could only do 74 mph and a Hillman Minx 68 mph. A 1955 Daimler Conquest (2433 cc) was flat out at 81 mph and an Austin Cambridge (1622 cc) could do 80 mph. A Wolseley 4/50 (1476 cc) managed 78 mph.

A 2½ weighed 28 cwt and was good for 90+ mph, returning around 20 mpg. A new Humber Hawk (2267 cc) would do 80 mph flat out and a Ford Zephyr 6 with a similar capacity could do 81 mph, much like the Holden of the day. You can see why Rileys appealed to certain type of enthusiast, members who saw the value in a car which was faster than a 3½ litre Mark 5 Jag yet cost much less. I paid 300 pounds for this RMB and thought it was really expensive. For what it was, it was.



What are we missing in modern cars? Call it simplicity or purity, maybe even character, born not of wear or time, but of freedom of design. And an obsession with the fundamental quirks that give a Riley its personality. Things like floor-hinged pedals, or doors whose latches feel deeply mechanical, like the cocking of a gun.

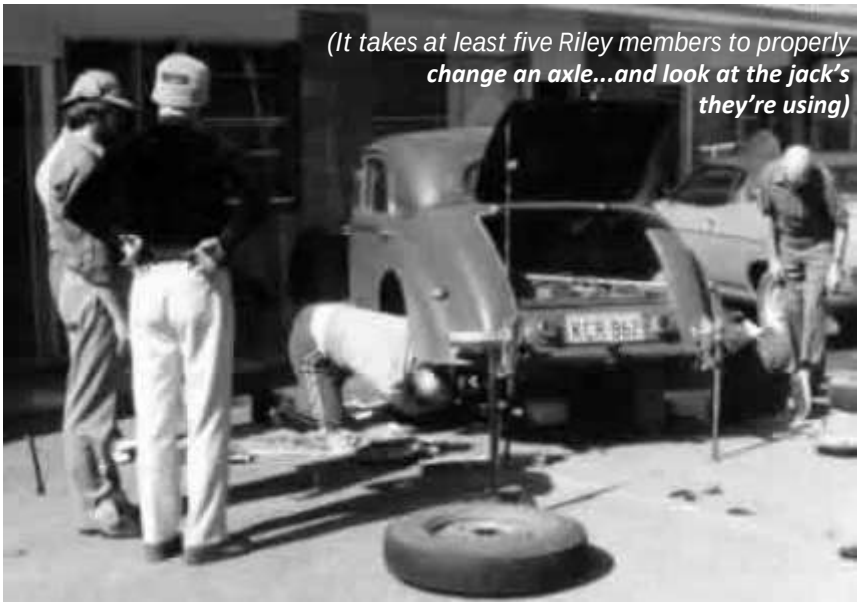
My Riley missed out on the gun-cocking doors. The 'A' pillar wood had long been rotted by water leaks and dry rot, so the screws were, to say the least, insecure. Slamming the door could fire these out and they had long been replaced with bigger and bigger wood screws in an endeavour to find some solid wood. Fat chance, of course.

Now remember, back in 1961 when I bought this Toonarf it was only 11 years old but in the manner of English cars of the day, it was WORN OUT. In technical terms, as my mate Chris Lamacraft said, "it was stuffed". Chris was way smarter than me. He bought an RMB back then (still has it) and put it in a shed. For decades he has had all the bragging rights of Riley ownership but never had to get dirty finger nails…

My father was a man proud of his total lack of mechanical knowledge. He was the possessor of only one item in his tool box, and that was a feather duster. Seriously. Of course, he did appreciate quality and was proud of his latest Ford V8, so the feather duster was a good one….

My father refused to ride in the Riley. No, he wouldn't be so crass as to call it 'The Duck' but he would tell all and sundry it was 'A Deathtrap' whenever it was going. And an oil leaking 'Waste of Space' when it wasn't. Which was more than occasionally. He also said "Never lend your car to anyone to whom you have given birth" so mum wouldn't lend me her car either.

I would point out Riley's rarity, in a world where 60 million cars are produced every year. That's 115 a minute, right? He would shake his head slowly and say "There would be a reason for Rileys being rare. Because sane people don't want them…"
And then, being a logical man, he would point out the odds of dying in a car crash were around 1 in 5,000 but were probably higher in the Riley, whereas the odds of dying in a plane crash were 1 in 11 million. Was I supposed to fly to work or the pub?



*(It takes at least five Riley members to properly **change an axle…and look at the jack's they're using)***

My father always said, "A car can't be any better than the day it leaves the factory". He would look at the Riley and say "That's REALLY old, isn't it"? Yes, it was; 11 years would really age you…

Anyway, my friends had strange cars like Austin 7s. They were all studying or working to make enough money so as not to have to drive Austin 7s, I think. One was a medical researcher and was working on the latest birth control pill for men. The idea was you would take it the day after and it would change your blood type to make you untraceable. After his mother found out he couldn't even drive his Austin.

Another drove a 1948 Holden, back when they were not fashionable. He was studying to be a mechanical engineer but said understanding a Riley's mechanicals were beyond human comprehension. He did teach me the difference between a mechanical engineer and a civil engineer; mechanical engineers build weapons; civil engineers build targets. His old Holden didn't go very well, either.

So, my first car, the Riley, was worn out. It needed a mechanic, it needed a carpenter. It needed religious intervention. Do you remember Theo Bennet, a NSW member from the past? At one time he was driving a Jag Mk 5 which, if possible, had worse wood problems than my Riley. As you drove along, the inside of the door would take bites out of your arm as it opened and closed over bumps. He called it 'The Shaggy Jag' but a better name would have been 'The Mutilator'. I think Theo knew even less about timber than me, but back in those days it was legal to hang an elbow out the window and indeed, obligatory if you were trying to corner in a great whale of a Jag with shiny seats and arm-chewing doors. The Riley was better, so Theo eventually bought one.

Nowadays I know something about wood. I build model boats from the stuff and they don't leak. But back in the 1960s I was really into the new thing, fibreglass. I invented a way of inserting new wood and fibreglass posts in the Riley's A pillars which to my surprise, worked. Of course, it was not as easy as doing the job properly, but it was success of sorts. The front doors didn't fly open on corners any more and that was a good thing…

My girlfriend of the time complained her hand got cold holding the door shut and used this excuse at the most inappropriate times.

As all the wood in the roof had turned into dust my project at Tech was to make a new roof for the Riley. Our patient teachers taught me how to band-saw a new frame and make a black roof from fibreglass with an almost exact copy of the original texture and seams. I set fire to the new timber frame by being over-enthusiastic with a grinder, but it added character in the form of a burnt smell. I thought it better than the mildew, oil and wood rot smells at the time.

The old back window had fallen in. I found a Mk 4 Jag back window and made a new frame for it – it was the same as the RMB window but a few inches wider. Did anyone notice? I think it improved the looks of the car…. But then, I haven't seen it for over 50 years and today would probably be mystified why I'd done it. Has anyone in the Riley Club ever been able to name those large pinkish mushrooms that grew on the rear parcel shelf when leaks start?

The Reluctant Editor's first ever Riley. Yes, he is still on medication.

But like most of we young Riley owners, I was broke. There was a bloke called Pedro at Brookvale who owned a tyre shop and he would help us out with cheap 'Hardie Highway Horribles' which were regrooved tyres. Don't knock it, they worked! You would have an old paint brush and a pot of tyre black and gloss up these ancient and dangerous creations. As the regrooving often went down to the canvas a lot of paint was needed…. Each came with oversteer, understeer and no warranty.

I had a collection of these. (A large collection)

So, we lived in a world where tyre blow-outs and axle breakages were well known. Did I tell you I once broke an axle at the Sydney Harbour Bridge toll booths on a Friday night, peak hour in the rain? We got pretty good at replacing these breakages and most of us kept a spare axle and brake assembly in the boot, along with the tin cup nailed to a broom handle used to catch the broken bit as you thumped an old steering shaft down the axle tube from the opposite side to release it.

That Riley could pass everything but a petrol station. And you'd keep the spare fuel in an old oil can rolling around in the boot because who knew when the fuel pump would start a death rattle announcing it was pumping air instead of petrol. Or stop entirely. The spare fuel tin would then be roped to the roof with clothes line and a length of rubber hose attached to the carburettors and gravity would work its magic. For about 16 miles, when the fuel tin would run out, as did my options.

I always had a spare fuel pump in the boot. It would have freshly filed points and a clean filter and would run perfectly on the bench. Like all S.U. pumps, once installed it would then immediately take on the faults of the pump just replaced and work just long enough to get you into heavy traffic, then expire.

I fitted a Japanese pusher pump in the fuel line down near the tank. This was the answer as it was strong enough to flow right through a dead S.U. pump and keep the car running. In reality, it had a bit too much pressure as it overcame the worn float valves in the carburettors and caused them to leak. The only consequence was fuel usage fell to around 14 mpg and there was a high risk of fire.

The answer was those wonderful polished brass fire extinguishers we all carried. In 1911, Pyrene patented a small, portable extinguisher that used carbon tetrachloride (a by-product of chlorine and chloroform). The extinguisher consisted of a brass bottle with an integrated hand pump that was used to expel a jet of liquid toward the fire. As the container was unpressurised, it could easily be refilled after use. There were a lot of Rileys with these polished brass things under the dashboard. And a lot of burnt bonnets, too. *(See Page 25 too for a laugh. Ed)*

Apart from being ozone depleting, the contents of these extinguishers caused exposure to high concentrations of carbon tetrachloride and affected the central nervous system, degenerated the liver and kidneys, and prolonged exposure lead to coma or death and cancer. Still, to penniless Riley owners like me, these were minor risks compared to losing a Riley to fire.

The Riley boot always had a spare clutch rod, because these could break at any time. We Riley pilots had to learn to double declutch or rev match from first to top in practice for the exciting moments it broke. You would then find a relatively safe spot to stall and jack up the car with heavy traffic missing you by inches.

The jacks were worn out too, but not as much as the various jacking points so life was an adventure. Oh, and sometimes you would offer up the replacement rod from a precarious position under the car only to find it was the top, longer one which broke. None of us had spares for this….

In the 1960s Rileys became cheaper and cheaper. People would give you a non-runner. I bought a reasonably good prewar for 12 pounds because I needed a battery. The battery didn't fit so after a few months and just prior to the rego expiring I sold it. For 12 pounds.

Rileys were cheap because they had a reputation for being mechanically bizarre. The earlier wheels would crack between the stud holes and the wheels could then break off and roll away. They always landed hubcap down, too, which dented them. Riley fixed the problem by making the wheels thicker. But didn't tell anyone the earlier ones were crap.

Polished brass Pyrene

The only way to tell if the wheel is going to crack is by weighing them. I'm sure there were many divorces caused by worried men removing Riley wheels and standing them on the bathroom scales, as all six of the Dunlop variants had the same part number (#5591, 4 $^{1/2}$ J x 16") The best advice was to use wheels which weighed 22 lbs and avoid the ones which weighed 19 lbs.

I broke three wheels. In the greater scheme of things this was a minor problem (if you owned a Riley) but the last breakage was on the Big Dipper, the fast-downhill stretch over Roseville Bridge. A back wheel left the car which promptly deposited the Riley on one brake drum and the car facing the river… I might even have been speeding because it was downhill….

Since that first Riley I have owned all sorts of these, from prewars to Dropheads. Apparently, it is some type of dreadful affliction and could well be based on the contents of those early fire extinguishers we had. What's *your* excuse?

Photos by Phil Soden.

The Antill 90th Anniversary Run

A run from Fremantle to Sydney for Nines only to mark the 90th Anniversary of Peter Antill's record-setting drive across Australia.
Mid to late April 2019.
Being organised by Brian Graham brisue100@gmail.com

The original Antill car and Phil's Ute, Coorong National Park, 2009
Photo by Phil Evans

Lucas Smoke is Real

No doubt you would have heard many times the Prince of Darkness jokes about Lucas smoke escaping from electricals. But I'm here to tell you that Lucas smoke is real. I've now seen it myself.

It was during the process of trying to identify the source of a severe ignition problem that it happened. This problem persisted despite replacing each one of the relatively few items that could cause such a problem one by one. The story's a long one and I won't go into it but, at the end of the day, the result appears to have been not one but two items operating poorly together but not always at the same time.

Having replaced a distributor plate with its 70-year-old condenser at a point that it was believed the condenser might be the problem (it often is) I set about the task of removing the soldered-on condenser. Just because I could.

I applied heat with my extraordinarily large soldering iron but it wasn't up to the task. There was no harm in applying a bit more heat because the plate wasn't going to deteriorate and that condenser wasn't needed anymore so I fired up the flame. The solder started to melt very quickly but so too did the screw end of the condenser. Whatever that end was made of it wasn't the same as the rest of the body of the condenser.

So that quickly melted and, within a microsecond, the sound of rapidly escaping gas could be heard from a hole perhaps only a pinhead size as the contents of the condenser converted to Lucas smoke and spread throughout the shed. And I mean *THE WHOLE SHED.* It was like a smoke machine at the Rocky Horror Picture Show..but better.

It was probably carcinogenic and I'll probably die more quickly than I would have had I not been mucking around with the flame but boy it was fun. I plan to do it again; this time with the camera rolling. If it happens I'll let you know. Watch this space.

Back in "the day" whatever day that was, oils weren't oils. (See Page 20. Ed.) Condensers weren't condensers either. But things have changed. Should you be thinking of replacing a condenser (which is probably a very good idea in one sense) you'd think it would be an extremely simple process. I thought I'd just go down to the local parts outlet and get one off-the-shelf.

I went to 3 outlets with a part number or three. None of them had anything. At one relatively large outlet the guy went out the back and came back with all of the condensers he had in stock.....all three of them.

So the next day I was at the local auto electrician's; another quite large business, having something done to the Mazda (an expensive air-conditioner problem). I took the opportunity to ask him about a condenser for a Riley to which he responded "To be honest mate, we just put in what fits."

He confirmed my thoughts that condensers, unlike oils, these days are just condensers. Once upon a time there were a zillion different condensers for all the different ignition systems. These days it seems to come down to one or two.

My searching on the internet and with the RM Club Forum further confirmed my thoughts. But worse; one excellent article I read described the process someone had gone through to test some brand-new condensers off-the-shelf. What he found was that they were mostly rubbish inside with very poor connections and he concluded that it was for those reasons condensers often failed within a very, very short time.

His advice was to get a new condenser, test it to make sure it works but don't put it in the car. Just keep what's in there until it goes wrong and then if you have to replace it you can do it with one which you at least know was working at the time you tested it.

So here we are in 2018 and you can't even be sure that you can get a condenser that will work for more than 10 minutes.

All the best advice is to go to a reputable supplier and get what fits. I found what I'm told is a reputable supplier in the UK. The Green Spark Plug Company. Click Here. But how could you trust an outfit that describes the capacity of a condenser in microfarods with an "o" (Michael Faraday with an "a"would be rolling in his grave) and describes its dimensions as 440mm long? If I were running a business with a website exposure of my products I'd be checking the text just a little bit more closely. But then, that's the way I am. Many people don't care.

The bottom line is. You can get a condenser that looks a lot like the soldered-in one that came with your RM originally. You just can't be sure how long it's going to last. And in all probability it won't be 70 years.

Upgrading an Air Silencer to a real Air Filter

by Neville Sharp in Renmark, S.A.

As I embarked on my RMA rebuild I was concerned that the air intake to the motor was not an air cleaner but a silencer. In a damp country such as England this would be OK. But in a hot and dusty country such as Australia it seems folly to run a nice new rebuilt motor without an air cleaner.

To this end I decided to fit an air cleaner and try to make it look authentic. I took the original air intake and lightly ground the two end cap flanges to remove them from the unit . Then I removed the insides of the soon to be Air Cleaner.

I purchased two Donaldson air filters (P/N P527530). I then removed the outer steel flange to fit the inside diameter of the air cleaner. I cut two sheet metal blanks 113 mm o/d x 60 mm i/d and welded a bar 15mm wide x 4mm thick x 80mm long across the hole and then drilled a 6mm hole in the centre of the bar.

After pushing the discs into the casing 93mm from each end I brazed them in place. I drilled a 6mm hole in the centre of the two end caps and the centre of the two filters. I cut a 6mm screwed rod 440mm long and pushed the rod through the flat bars in the casing and secured it with a nut each end so it is located centrally within the casing. Then I welded 6 tabs protruding out of each end of the casing to locate the end caps.

Then I pushed the air filter cartridges in from each end and secured them with nuts. I cut slots in the end cap to match the other end. I finished off by refitting the end caps and securing them with wing nuts.

If you like this idea and need help or more Info please contact me or if you think I've got it all wrong please contact me also. You can contact me at insharp@bigpond.com Or thru the Riley Club of South Australia.

This instantly-recognisable vehicle was drawn by "Stonie". John Stoneham is described as one of Australia's most talented and witty motoring commentators. His work, which is seen regularly in Auto Action and Unique Cars, is variously described as "quirky, unique, irreverent and down right offensive" but, overall, very funny. Now, as old as most of us he's been doing cartoons since he was 11, starting out as cartoonist for his local scout group and at school. He worked as a cartoonist at The News in Adelaide in the 80's when S.A. still had two dailies. The cartoon is included in Rileys in Australia with his kind permission.

Out and About With Rileys Around Australia

Grand Ridge Road on the Strzelecki Ranges, West Gippsland: Victorian Rileys on an October run Photo by Keith Morrison

Kambah, A.C.T. Wednesday mornings in *Thommo's Shed* are a Tradition.
Photo by Jenny Thompson.

Adelaide S.A. Father Brown (Mike Quinn) complete with brolly and Mrs *McCarthy's younger* sister (Rosalie Haese) got dressed up for the September Bay to Birdwood.

Photo by Leigh Johnson

Perth W.A. A morning breakfast meet is an annual event on the Club calendar. This year it was at the Zephyr Cafe in East Fremantle on the Swan River.
Photo by: Greg Morris

Noosa Heads, Queensland. Ken Lonie, Ros and Peter Lee also had their brollies out. The Noosa Beach Classic Car Show this year was a bit wet.
See page 6.

Photo by: Phil Wyllie

There was movement in NSW and the ACT as the folk met at Cooma for The Southern Highlands Gathering in October. Phil Soden succeeded *in keeping this "mob in sight" and wheeling them "to the right" for* a photo.
See page 6.
And here for the poem.

The Way We Were

Look around you at the next Club meeting. You'll see a mixture of old faces and new ones. And human nature being what it is, you'd imagine that there would be some interesting stories around. There are.

Some time ago Matt Robinson owned a 2½ called the Jolly Green Giant which spent most of its time getting its engine rebuilt. Matt lost his watch in the gearbox and destroyed it whilst moving the gear lever looking for it.

Lindsay Stewart had a perfectly good Drophead but around 1973 completely dismantled it looking for a rattle in the back. He never found it - the chassis and bits were sold to Peter. (Please don't embarrass Peter by asking about pennies in hubcaps).

Massimo Perrotti bought a 1951 2½ from Matt Robinson, and couldn't understand why his driver's seat was so much lower than the passenger's until it was pointed out that the O/S rear spring had collapsed.

Ron Prendergast who after a very heavy drinking session whilst installing his Pathfinder engine, was heard to say "You've got to float these motors in".

Greg Morris, when travelling to Echuca for the 1986 Rally in the Peter Hocking Roadster, spent most of his time on the CB radio. He spent a day trying to raise Richard Creed who had switched off after the umpteenth call from ROMEO MIKE CHARLIE (RMC) to ROMEO MIKE ALPHA (Richard's RMA) until "Kenworth Ken" suggested that he get off the airways. This had such a profound effect on Garrulous Greg that he was silent for the next half hour - the longest recorded silence for Greg that we know of.

Easter seems to be a popular time for Easter rallies (not surprisingly) and this year there were several. Two of us had decided to travel over to NSW for the National Rally but we were frightened by reports of severe wombat infestations on the Plain. It was decided to go to Albany (WA) instead, to participate in a Rally organised by the great Southern Section of the Vintage and Veteran Car Club.

About a mile out of Albany there was a small clang from beneath the car; as everything seemed all right and it had been a very small clang, we kept going. As we approached the roundabout there was a much louder clang and Peter decided it warranted further investigation. Walking back along the verge a high tensile bolt was recovered from the middle of the road. A gentleman from the Datsun agency who had watched the performance with some amusement called out "Losing your nuts and bolts eh, ha haa"! I was sorely tempted to ask him if he wanted some spares for his Nutbuckets but left it at that. Investigation revealed that the bolt came from the starter motor. Replacement was effected immediately.

We proceeded into Albany in search of the New World car park. After a few minutes searching we decided to ask for directions. The prize for intelligent answer must go to a garage attendant: New World Car park? Behind New World.

This document was found some years ago in a locked drawer of a filing cabinet at a used office furniture shop in Osborne Park, W.A.

It was passed on to Ford Avenue Productions because if its significant public interest. It appears to have its origins west of Ceduna and was written some time ago by a person or persons unknown.

***It's said that The WA Police** Commissioner released a statement at the time of the find saying that Officers from the Very Petty Crime Branch would, in normal circumstances, have gone to investigate the find but, unfortunately, their pushbikes were pinched from outside Maccas in William Street while they were having brecky so they had nothing to go on.*

We departed for Perth at 10.45pm. At Mount Barker Peter handed over and went to sleep. South of Williams we came upon vast numbers of rabbits crossing the road. One of them stood out because he was 5 foot tall and had a long thick tail. He, or she, was just missed but a dull thump from the rear suggested that the tail may have suffered a little. The look on Peter's face was rather interesting when he asked if anything had happened and I said "No, we just hit a tall rabbit".

……

In 1984 Beryl and Cliff Goodman travelled to Melbourne on a coach in the hope of buying a Riley that they could drive to the National Rally a few days later. Fortunately, they were able to buy their black 1951 RMB complete with a boot-load of spares including a gearbox. After a quick engine service, carburettor overhaul, a couple of new tyres and a new rear axle oil seal, they headed off to the National Rally in Mudgee. This was their first of many experiences of Riley friendship and generosity as they'd not booked any accommodation or events.

When they arrived in Mudgee they stayed in a motel with Greg Morris, Richard Creed and Ron Predergast. Unfortunately the gearbox was still full of oil which had been leaking out all over the boot and finding its way out through the boot and spare wheel lids! To drain the oil, Richard and Cliff carried the gearbox at a run across the motel car park to the car-cleaning bay. On the way they were spotted by another Riley owner who asked what they were doing. Richard replied that they were just doing "a quick gearbox overhaul for the following day's street parade"! The gearbox lived in the motel room's ensuite for the duration of the Rally and, much to Cliff's surprise, they were never asked to remove it by the management!

After an exceptional Rally experience they headed for home in company with Ron who was driving his overdrive Pathfinder. They were making such good time across the Nullarbor when they reached the SA/WA border they decided to "set the stage" for a photo shoot with Ron under the car. Cliff, who took the photo, said some years later that they were "chancing providence" but they were very pleased that they all got home without any major mechanical breakdowns.

A Christmas in July Event in The West

by Elizabeth and John Picton-Warlow in Perth

Each year the Western Australian Riley Motor Club holds a weekend event to celebrate "Christmas in July". This year was no exception and the party was held at York. Very old members may recall the town as the site of a National Rally. It is also the home of a well-known Motor Vehicle museum.

Glen and Jim Runciman organised our event and, as always when they are involved, it went off flawlessly. Twenty-two members drove in various vehicles to the York Palace Hotel for dinner and the overnight stay. There were two Falcons (the Gillbanks and the Runcimans), one Big 4 (Peter and Edwina Carter), three RME's (Peter Withers, Peter Galvin, and Rowland and Georgie) and two BMC's (Bob and Val Smillie in their Elf and Richard and Kay Creed in their Kestrel).

The Picton-Warlows have a family tradition by which each Christmas a Quiz is held (conducted by Elizabeth) with help from one or another of her Grandchildren. So instead of other possible distractions and amusements she decided, with Glenys, to hold a dinner quiz at the event.

The idea was to have questions about Christmas and about Riley history. Elizabeth called Leigh Johnson for help with Riley questions and he contributed a number of ideas. Introducing the quiz, John advised that the Quizmaster (himself) would entertain no disputes and attempts to dispute answers would be penalized whether the objection was correct or not!

Some of the questions and answers were as follows.
Q: Who had the first Christmas tree in England?
A: Queen Victoria (Prince Alfred introduced the tradition to England).

Q: Where and when was the first exhibition of Riley Cars shown to the world?
A: Olympia, London 1908.

Q: Who supplies the Christmas tree shown each year at Trafalgar Square? And Why?
A: Norway. As thanks for the British efforts to defend Norway in 1940.

Q: How many Big Four Riley models were made between 1937 and 1940?
A: 9.

How much was the cost of posting a Christmas card in 1837?
A: One Penny

Q: Question: If Father Christmas had a Riley what model would it be and why? Answer: Elf ...because Santa always has Elves.

Q: RM Riley models, depending on the year, had what size diameter steering wheels? Answer 17" or 18"?

Q: All I want for Christmas is a new brass impeller for my RM water pump. You'll have to save up for it because it's about $70. But how much was a phosphor-bronze one worth 40 years ago? A: $13.

Q: What is Riley Motor Car's connection with the SAS?
A: The commander of the SAS at the end of WWII was Paddy Mayne who was killed driving his red 1950 Riley Roadster in Northern Ireland. (*See page 15 in this link here. Ed*)

This was the only one that caused a dispute and of course the wrong answer prevailed, it is great to be a quizmaster!
Q: Polished or painted, used welsh plugs can make very attractive Christmas tree decorations. If you were to remove them from your RMB, depending on the year of your RMB, what would be the maximum number you might encounter?
A: 10

We all had a wonderful weekend, instead of a white Christmas in York, England; we had a very wet weekend in York, Western Australia.

Tyres for your Post-War Riley

by the Reluctant Editor in Sydney

I know, a boring topic. However, if you have just speared off the road in your Riley and been surprised by this, you should read on.

And yes, economy and looks are important (a woman invented these criteria) but I think the most important topic is what contributes to grip - and what does not. Some of you go quite fast in your Rileys despite the cart-spring suspension and less than modern brakes, and grip is the one factor you can't have enough of if you want to go around corners and stop when you must.

That grip comes from three areas of the tyre; construction, compound, and the tyre pattern itself. It's the construction of a tyre that determines its shape with respect to the height of the tyre and its width. And it's here where the contact patch is formed. When talking about the stickiness of a given tyre, you're describing its compound. A low-rolling resistance tyre and a high-performance track tyre will have very different compound compositions.

Before we start, let's make some assumptions:
You are running on Riley 16" wheels (preferably the later ones which don't crack. If in doubt, weigh the wheel. If it weighs around 22 lb it should be fine, but the 19 lb version will probably crack. And no, you can't tell by looking as they all have the same part number)

Your Riley is aligned correctly. All RM's A to H have Nil Toe-in, i.e. they are set parallel although many aligners add a fraction. Having radial tyres makes no difference. Note however, that altering the torsion bar height will alter the toe-in. As the suspension height adjustment is altered the alignment will also be altered.

Surely you are running radials? Cross plies are good on wheel barrows, but the world moved on. Standard Riley tyres were 6.00 x 16. The specified size for 1½s was 5.75 x 16. Most RMs these days seem to sport 175 or 185 x 16 radials, which are skinnier but handle well. Other members have put 205 or 215 radials on, and these work well, but may look a little strange. If you get up to 215 radials they don't fit the spare wheel cavity.

The Riley wheel came before tubeless tyres. Not all radial tyres have been designed to be used as tubeless tyres although I expect all recent designs must be. The period-style Michelin X 185R16 Radial, with its traditional tread pattern, is marked on the sidewall "Radial Tube Type".

Grip does not necessarily improve with wider tyres.
Some members have fitted 6" rims. They probably think wider tyres have a larger contact patch than narrow tyres. But neither the width of the tyre nor the profile is the main influence - the size of the tyre's contact patch is related to:
- the weight on the wheel
- the tyre pressures.

For example, let's assume you have a laden RMB or Pathfinder and that the weight on the tyre was 900lb, and the tyre pressure was 10 psi. That internal pressure means that each square inch of area can support 10lb. So, in this case, the contact patch will be 90 square inches. If the tyre pressure was 30 psi, the contact area would be 30 square inches, and if the pressure was 90 psi, the contact area would be 10 square inches. This has been found to be almost correct for most tyres (the exceptions being run-flat tyres, or tyres with extremely stiff sidewalls, neither of which is practical in a Riley). For most other tyres, carcass structure will have an effect, but by far the major factor is tyre pressure.

So the size of the contact patch of a tyre is not related to the width of the tyre - it is, in fact, proportional to the tyre pressure. What will change with the fitting of a wider tyre is the shape of the contact patch - it will get wider, but shorter longways.

Is size important? Does a larger contact patch mean more grip? Of course, Riley drivers believe that if you have "more rubber on the road" you will have increased grip. Sorry to say this, but the size of the contact patch is irrelevant. The actual grip that a tyre can generate is dictated by the coefficient of friction of the rubber compound used in the tyre. The higher the coefficient, the more grip which can be generated. The relation that is used is called Amonton's Law, and the equation is: F=uN, (No, I am not making this up) where F is the force generated, u is the coefficient of friction, and N is the weight on the surface considered (in our case, the weight on the tyre).

So, if you increase the weight on the tyre, then the frictional force will increase as well, in proportion to the increase in weight on the tyre - but the coefficient of friction will remain the same. The level of grip of the tyre (forgetting about suspension niceties - we are only discussing tyres here) is totally dictated by the coefficient of grip of the tyre and the weight acting on it - not the area of the contact between the tyre and the road.

Is this why some members advocate narrower tyres, then?
So why not simply have narrow, high profile tyres which are usually cheaper and use less fuel? The simple answer is heat (remember, we are simply talking grip here, not the niceties of handling). The point is that, to get a contact patch of a certain size on the road, you need a certain portion of the tyre to be flat. Taking the contact patch to be basically rectangular (though it is actually partially oval in shape), then the area of that patch will be its length times its width. Now, for a narrow tyre, the contact patch will be quite long compared with a wide tyre.

This introduces two problems. First, to get that long flat section to give the required contact patch, the sidewall of the tyre needs to deform quite a lot. This deformation causes the bending and unbending the rubber of the sidewall as it flattens and then the tread curves again. This bending and unbending process results in a lot of heat being generated. (Think about bending and unbending a piece of wire rapidly, and how hot it gets as you do so. If you bend it less, but at the same frequency, less heat will be generated). Obviously, the more it needs to bend, the greater the amount of heat generated.

The second relates to the length itself. There will be a greater percentage of the tyre tread in contact with the road than if the

contact patch length were shorter; this reduces the amount that the tread can cool. Also, there is a greater percentage of sidewall at any given time that is under bending stresses, again resulting in less opportunity to cool.

Can you take the heat?
So, how much extra bending do you really get, and how much is potential tread cooling reduced? Let's use a theoretical example and take a 155-width tyre compared with a 225 tyre of the same circumference. Agreed, this is an extreme example, but Riley drivers are experimental by nature. Assume that the wheel/tyre-unloaded circumference is 60cm. Assume the tyre pressure is 30 psi, and that the weight on the wheel is 600lb, giving an area of 20 square inches (or 129 square cm). Assuming that the contact patch is rectangular, with the wider (225) tyre, the patch will be 5.73cm long, and with the 155 tyre, the patch will be 8.32cm long. Now, the circumference of the wheel-tyre combination is 188cm, so the 225 is heating for 3% of its cycle, and cooling 97%, whereas the 155 is heating for 4.5% of the cycle and cooling for 95.5%. So, you can see that the narrower tyre is generating heat 50% longer than the 225 and is not spending so much of its cycle cooling.

Now, as far as heating of the tyre is concerned, simple geometry shows us that the 155-tyre bends by 0.29cm, and the 225 bends by 0.14cm. Now, if the heating of the tyre is roughly proportional to the deformation, this is what happens. We will multiply the deformation by the percentage of time the tyre sidewall is under stress and divide this number by the percentage of time that the tyre is being cooled. Multiplying the resulting numbers by 100, we get a figure of 1.37 for the 155 tyre, and 0.43 for the 225. Dividing the 155 tyre's number by that of the 225, we find that the heat generation of the 155 is 3.2 times that of the 225! This is quite an amazing result, given that the 225 is only 45% wider than the 155.

As a result, on this increased generation of heat, and the reduced capacity for self cooling, the tyres need to be made of a harder rubber compound that is more able to resist heat. This harder compound will, of necessity, have a reduced coefficient of friction, particularly when cold. The tyres that are wider can have a softer compound with better frictional properties. Due to the reduced bending stresses, and greater cooling opportunities, the tyre will tend to stay within a narrow temperature range quite consistently, giving greater cold grip, while managing to have a reduced propensity for overheating. Obviously, this makes for a better performance tyre.

On the issue of wheel size (the diameter, not the width), it is therefore clear that increasing the wheel/tyre diameter combination is beneficial. The reason for this is that the tyre will not have to deform so much to get the required contact patch length, and the percentage of the tyre tread in contact with the road will be less than for a smaller diameter combination.

So, what about tyre pressure? Obviously, tyre pressure plays a very important part, but there are clearly limits on both sides of the tyre pressure equation. At the higher end, there is the maximum tyre pressure that can be sustained before there is damage to the carcass. At the low end, you don't want the sidewall almost collapsing, generating massive heat, and have the tyre slipping on the rim. So, you can play around with tyre pressures to optimise your set-up, but there are limitations. Many of you run at pressures around 32 to 36 psi to make low speed steering in Rileys a little easier. If I had to park a lot in the suburbs I'd be looking for a power steering conversion!

A simple way to find out approximately what pressure is optimal for your combination is to draw a chalkline across the width of the tyre, drive for a bit, and look at the wear pattern of the chalkmark. Wearing more quickly in the centre indicates pressure that is too high, and wear on the edges indicates too low a pressure.

One issue to consider is that, for wet weather driving, despite what you may have heard, it is better to increase your tyre pressure, not reduce it. The reason is that there is a relationship between tyre pressure and the speed at which there is the onset of aquaplaning. In the Imperial system, the equation is 9 times the square root of the tyre pressure. So, if your tyres are at 25 psi, if you drive into a puddle that is deeper than your tread depth, you will aquaplane at 45 mph (72 km/h), whereas if your tyre pressure was 36psi, you would aquaplane at 54 mph (87 km/h). The advantages are obvious.

As far as tyre profile is concerned, the main benefit is one of handling - the lower sidewalls give reduced sidewall deformation under lateral loading, which results in improved steering response and a more stable contact patch.

What happens when tyres get old?
There has been a lot written on this. Tyres have a shorter life in hot areas. A tyre that's been in service for five or six years should be replaced regardless of tread depth, according to Daimler Chrysler. A tyre which is more than seven years old should not be used, even if it has never been on the road! I had a much-loved spare (well-polished and painted!) on my Riley for years. When I finally used it this blew bits of rusty wire out the sidewall and caused a minor panic, 50 kms outside of Tennant Creek. By the time I was ready to replace the tyre an enormous brown snake had claimed the shade under the Riley...

What brand tyre should you buy? My advice is always buy the best you can. Our annual Riley mileage is down, so softer compounds for better braking won't mean they wear out fast. And your Riley needs the best grip you can give it to manage modern traffic. I bought Pirellis last time and they are fine. Remember, always look at better grip in the wet and dry over long life – those tyres only must save you once and they are worth whatever you paid for them.

Conclusions
What factors are important in terms of tyre grip?

1. Tyre width has no direct relation to the amount of grip generated; the width basically relates to cooling potential for the tyre compound that can be used.

2. The size of the contact patch has no bearing on the amount of grip generated at all, apart from the extreme of where the compound is getting so hot that it no longer acts as a solid (and therefore doesn't follow Amonton's Law).

3. The tyre pressure has no direct bearing on the level of grip (apart from aquaplaning), but it does have a bearing on the heaviness of the steering and heating and cooling characteristics of the tyre.

4. Having a lower tyre profile gives improved handling through reduced sidewall stress and improved contact patch shape stability but may make your Riley look 'not right'.

5. Rileys don't stop or corner like a modern car. They need all the help you can give them in today's traffic, so *do not drive on old tyres,* no matter how much tread they have!

Thoughts on Lubrication

by Robin Hull in Queensland

I have made some observations on lubrication that may be of interest to Riley enthusiasts. I am not an expert, I am willing to learn more but these thoughts on lubrication represent my learnings up to the present time. Hopefully these thoughts will also stimulate others more expert than me to offer their observations.

The considerations referred to below apply to all engines; pre-war as well as post-war Rileys. There are several areas to consider such as what viscosity, what classification, what type and what brand of oil to use in specific applications. There are also several systems of classification or grading under which oils are tested to ensure that they meet the requirements of nominal grades. The main ones include "A.P.I." (American Petroleum Institute), "I.S.L.A.C." (International Lubrication Standardisation) and "A.C.E.A," (Association Des Construleurs Europeans d' Automobilels). Apart from these there are others.

In Australia we have generally followed the American or API ratings. The current rating system was introduced in 1970 although there were systems in place before that date. The current system was applied retrospectively to the oils that had been marketed previously so that the rating of engine oils available in 1950 were S.A or S.B. The "S" refers to oils specifically for gasoline fuelled engines and the A and B through to the current N is the sequence of improvements in the oils. The latest rating (that I am aware of) is SN which was introduced in 2010.

What this means in general is that any oil rated SJ (introduced in 1989) or higher is very much better than the very best oils available when our Rileys were new. Those of us who can recall working on engines in the 1950s remember that there always was a thick coat of black sludge on the internal parts of any engine, and to obtain 100,000 miles from an engine without having it rebored was the stuff of dreams only. The API rating is expressed in two parts such as SL/CH where the second part (CH) refers to a grading for diesel engines. Where the oil is primarily rated for diesel engines then the rating is expressed as CH/SL.

Which brand should I use? For the most part if it is a reputable brand then I am only concerned with the rating and grade or viscosity. What "viscosity" Mr Riley specified for the engine for tropical use down to 0 degrees Celsius was a straight grade of 30, and down to minus 18 degrees Celsius a 20/20W. Single grade oils are somewhat hard to find these days. But why wouldn't you take advantage of modern multigrade oils?

Multigrade refers to an oil with the viscosity of the lighter grading at 40 degrees Celsius and the viscosity of the heavier oil at 100 degrees Celsius. A popular choice seems to be Penrite HPR 30 which is rated at SM/CG4 or SN/CG4 and is 20/60 viscosity. Personally, I am inclined to consider that 20/60 viscosity is rather too high (too thick) and since the original requirement was for 30 weight oil then perhaps 10/40 or 15/40 should be satisfactory and certainly any 15/50 or 20/50 would be.

Apparently, the section of the engine suffering from the severest lubrication requirement (as far as extreme pressure rating is concerned) is between the cams and the cam followers. This requirement for an extreme pressure rating has usually been provided by an additive, Zinc Dlithiophosphate (ZDTP). Due to emission concerns this additive has been limited in some oils. Penrite advertises that their oils have added ZDTP. To counter the reduction of this additive a wear test has been introduced in the latest API (SM/SN) requirements. And in some oils the ZDTP has been to some extent replaced by other additives.

Considering the transmission, gear box and differential, the original requirement was for 140 E.P. down to -12 degrees Celsius and 80 E.P. below minus 12 degrees Celsius. I consider that 140 is too heavy for the gear box and such as 75 W 90 will provide excellent lubrication.

A further consideration is to protect the brass components (synchromesh rings, bushes and thrust plates). Historically, to achieve the required extreme pressure rating sulphur-based additives were used in gear oils. Gear oils with an API rating of GL 5 would normally destroy these brass components. So, what do we use?

Some modern gear oils no longer use sulphur-based additives and are considered to be brass friendly or any GL 4 rated gear oil may be used. The GL4 has somewhat half of the EP additive of the GL5 and so will have considerably less harmful impact on any brass internals. The distinctive smell of gear oils was the sulphur content. A problem with some of the alternatives to sulphur additive is that some of the newer additives will not tolerate any water content.

It has always been considered unwise to mix different oils, this may not have any deleterious consequences with engine oils, but it is certainly not a good idea to do so with transmission oils. So, a good principle is never top up differential oils but change the oil completely when required.

A suitable gearbox oil may be Caltex easy shift 75 W 90 which is rated at GL 4 and is supposedly brass friendly. For the differential, I consider that 85 W/140 GL 5 is probably the way to go. Why? Because the 140 gives the wear protection required and the 85 W gives considerably less fluid friction on cold start-ups. Another consideration is that the modern full synthetic range of oils that are available are considerably better than the mineral oils. The only down side is the additional cost involved.

Oils aint Oils. ***You remember. But would you believe it's been 40 years since Sol (and his*** *gangster mates) first discussed oils in the presence of his daughter who used GTX 2* ***(or GTX also) in 1988. If you'd like to re****-live the experience click here. Ed.*

Reframing RM's

by Phil Wyllie in Queensland

Currently a rear window frame for a 1948 RMB is being fitted and the complete framing for a 1951 RMB is being made and fitted. Previously four other RMs have been framed. So, the purpose of this article is to describe the sequence that I use to assemble an RM frame.

One of my many past mistakes was copying a timber part and thinking that it would fit any RM. But I should not have been surprised that Mr Riley was not stagnant about the slight developments in framing and the variations inherent in hand-built coach work. No two sets of doors are necessarily the same, some are longer than others. Rear corner blocks have slightly different amounts of timber in their making. Later RMs have slightly simplified timbering while the external appearances became slightly more complex. So, one learning gained over the years is to make and fit a frame that works for the particular Riley that is being built.

Prior to starting the rebuilding process everything that could be stripped from the vehicle was removed. This includes the bonnet, guards, engine and gearbox, the seats and anything else left of the interior including the dash, the doors, the windows, boot lid, spare wheel door, the floor panels and all the electrical wiring and components. When everything had been stripped out of the car the two welds at the front and rear of the sill were cut with a thin cutting off blade on only one side of the Riley, the retaining bolts that hold the body onto the chassis were removed and finally the two bolts that hold the 'B' pillar to the sill were removed. The Riley was then ready for rebuilding.

The first step, I have found, is to replace the sills, one sill at a time in precisely the same position where the originals were located taking care to ensure that the originals had not collapsed or shifted during their years of use. The reason for this is that the sills are the foundations for the RM. If the foundations are correct, then the whole build has the potential to be correct.

To facilitate the accurate change of sills on the '51 RM, the distance between the outside edge of the chassis and the outside edge of the sill at the front, middle and rear was measured. The distance between the front edge of the tub to the 'B' pillar and from the 'B' pillar to the quarter panel was also noted. The angle and location of the 'B' pillar on the sill was also carefully noted. Of vital importance is that when the sills are replaced the front 'B' pillar fixing bolt passes through the sill at the angle on the side of the sill. If that is not done, later when the car is assembled the hinges will bind when trying to close the front doors and the sills will have to be refitted or better replaced.

Ideally, if the body is mainly intact, one side of the body can be lifted with a scissor jack sitting on the rear wheel. The body is lifted just high enough for the sill to slide past the front edge of the tub section; that should be about 2 inches. The sill is then withdrawn towards the back of the Riley and away. The new sill is placed back into the original position of the old sill with the same height of packing and the same distances between the outside edge of the sill and the chassis.

In the case with the 51 RM, the packing under the 'K' panels, 'B' pillar and the front side of the tub were replaced with pieces of an old plastic kitchen cutting board. Counter sunk bolts were then fitted through the base of the 'B' pillar and secured to the sill, the front of the tub was secured to the sill with four screws and four ¼ inch bolts were fitted and secured through the 'K' panel to the sill.

The foundation of one side of the Riley was now fixed into its correct position. The same procedure was then performed on the other side of the Riley and when both sides were done the sill was temporarily re fastened to the chassis with bolts of the same size as the originals through the tub, "B' pillar and 'K' panel. This was done to ensure a firm foundation for the timber frame to be built above the sill.

There is a small weld on either side of the front window frame adjacent to the battery box and tool box to prevent cracking between the front window surround and the quarter panel and these were cut. Then, using an LPG torch, the lead wiping covering the seam around the front door jam and the quarter panels and window surround was taken off. When built, the RM door jams had a small weld at the bottom of the jam to hold it in place but frequently this has rusted away so sometimes a thin cutting off blade may be required to separate the door jam from the quarter panel. The door jams were then removed.

Sometimes there is either no or very little timber left in these locations, so it comes off easily. Other times rusty portions of nail must be removed from rotten bits of timber and a great deal of care needs to be taken to take off the door jam without bending or breaking it at points where rust has compromised its

integrity. During this stage lots of hours need to be given to repairing sections of the steel skin. This is particularly the case with the bottoms of quarter panels and door jams.

After that, the roof, front window surround, and the front quarter panels were removed with all the timbers that make up the front-end frame. The roof is fixed in place with nails and often the roof is loose. The 'A' pillar is rotten and either falls apart or comes off in portions. And in most cases, the top windscreen rail was so badly rotted that it could not be used even as a template.

The bottom rails were usually intact except for the ends that screw to the 'A' pillar and the door posts and knee timbers were rotted out. The quarter panel timbers were usually good enough to be copied. The cant rails were usually too nail sick to re-use and so were the trafficator blocks. On previous rebuilds the whole of the rear window frame was replaced but I think that the top portion of a window frame could be re-used but the rest replaced.

When the windscreen surrounds were removed with their attending rotten or nail sick timbers it was a convenient time to repair and repaint the scuttle. Often previous owners cut into the scuttle to fit heaters or radios or it suffered corrosion. After re-fitting the scuttle, the bottom window rail, front surround timbers and quarter panel timbers were screwed to the scuttle. Then the 'A' pillars were fitted being careful to refit them exactly where the originals were.

Generally, the bottom of the 'A' posts were not screwed to the sill until the top window rail and front roof rail with their connecting pieces were fitted and cant rails were fitted at the top after the new trafficator blocks were fitted and the quarter panel trial fitted to make sure that the angles were correct.

The doors were then trial fitted. If the assembly had gone well and all of the parts were fitting well, the 'A' pillars were screwed to the sills, the knee blocks fitted and the quarter panels fitted into place and the window surround was then folded back over the 'A' pillars. The door jams were then re-fitted making sure that the doors fitted neatly up to the quarter panel and the window surround.

The rear corner blocks were sometimes intact and could be re-used and fitted and the new rear window frame was then fitted with the parcel shelf and the top plywood corner pieces. The roof timbers were then fitted and the roof skin replaced.

Making and fitting the timber frame takes a lot of time. The first time a frame was made, it took a year working mainly on my day off, but on that occasion the timbers were almost entirely missing so it was largely a recreation of the originals using hand tools. It then took another year to fit them so that the doors fitted.

With templates and the confidence gained by that experience and others since, making and fitting the timbers for a RM is now a lot easier and quicker. One strategy that has always worked for me was to have a step that could be achieved each time work was done on the build. The last completed build took about six weeks but that was with timber parts that had been made over the month prior to the build.

Rear window timber in framing box

B pillar fixed to new timber

Nail - sick cant rail

Scuttle

Parcel shelf

Frame laid out on the floor

Knee piece in place

The writing's on the floor

An RM Roadster – Beauty in the Eyes of the Beholder

The responsibility for my recent purchase of a Riley Roadster rests fairly and squarely with the late unlamented Hermann Goering. Such a pronouncement, no doubt greeted with scepticism by some, requires I believe a hasty "please explain" on my behalf.

The Reichmarshal's personal bullet-proof Mercedes Benz Grosser went on tour throughout Great Britain in 1948. This expressive example of a W.W.2 reparation prize was tangible evidence to the people of Britain of the complete humiliation of the Nazi regime.

I remember well, as a tousle-haired schoolboy in Edinburgh, taking a No.9 tramcar to Princes Street, then walking the short distance to a Shandwick Place motor dealer's showroom, in which the swastika-embellished Mercedes Benz was on display. I was astonished by its gargantuan proportions, but also mature enough to comprehend the historical significance of its presence.

The following day I persuaded my father to accompany me on a second visit to Shandwick Place. But upon our arrival at the showroom the big car was conspicuous by its absence. We were informed that it was en-route to Dundee on the next leg of its grand tour. However in its place, stood one of the most stylish and desirable cars I had ever set eyes upon. We gazed in admiration at the newly-released, magnificently-sleek, Riley Roadster!

The second occasion I was favoured with a sighting of a Riley Roadster occurred a year or so later, at Turnhouse R.A.F Airbase (now Edinburgh International Airport). A disused corner of the base, which a few years previously was home to the R.A.F. City of Edinburgh 603 Spitfire squadron, was leased to The Midlothian Gentlemen's Sporting Car Club. It was there, on a glorious Sunday afternoon in 1949, that my senses were again excited by seeing a bright yellow Riley Roadster, this time completely eclipsing an assortment of lesser sporting cars competing in various car gymkhana events.

The Riley, with its hood down and windscreen folded flat across the bonnet, was being driven by a rakish fellow complete with gauntlets, tweed cap, a flowing yellow scarf, a pipe clamped in his mouth and, believe it or not, a monocle. To me he looked the typical "silly ass" upper crust young playboy. I was amused to note that at the conclusion of each event, puffs of smoke continued to emit from the "chap's" pipe and the monocle remained firmly in place.

The Riley Roadster had the highest top speed of any of the cars that day at Turnhouse. In fact it was one of an elite few British cars of the period capable of delivering a genuine 100 m.p.h. (160 k.p.h.). The 2½ litre twin cam Riley engine developed 100 b.h.p. and, having the longest stroke of any British car engine, had the sort of torque back-up one might expect from the Queen Mary. There is no doubt, the Riley engine was several decades ahead of its time.

It was to be more than half a century before I was to sight my next Riley Roadster. An acquaintance with whom I had discussed the rarity of Riley Roadsters just a short while previously, phoned to tell me that a Canberra-based Riley Roadster was about to come onto the market. Within half an hour I had successfully negotiated a purchase subject to inspection with the vendor and a short while later Margery and I were heading south down the Pacific Highway in the general direction of Canberra.

There was a high degree of urgency in our hurried action, because the next day the vehicle was scheduled to be advertised for sale in a popular classic car magazine. I knew there would be an immediate clamouring response from collectors, anxious to purchase such a rare and desirable motorcar.

From the outer approaches of the A.C.T. I phoned our "usual" Canberra hostelry only to be advised that there was no available accommodation and that the city was booked-out owing to the visitation by the U.S. President the following day. I considered it incredibly un-sporting of President Bush to have selected what was to be my "day of the Riley" for his Canberra invasion.

There was an immediate imperativeness therefore to consult the N.R.M.A. Accommodation Guide starting at "A". My first call was to The Ambassador Hotel which fortuitously had just received a cancellation, so a bed for the night was assured.

The following morning, it was not only President Bush's impending arrival that tended to gridlock the traffic around Parliament House. The spectacle of a bright cream Riley Roadster competing for space alongside the modern cars, was sufficient reason for the normally easy flowing roundabouts, of which there are countless in the A.C.T., to become choked as drivers deliberately slowed their vehicles to a crawl, in order to obtain a better view of the old car. Drivers honked, waved and flashed headlights to indicate their approval of such a fine classic in their midst.

Only the legions of visiting U.S. Security Marshalls frowned as we progressed in front of Parliament House. Their diligent searching under bushes and in waste receptacles was a serious business and they had no time for such frivolities as classic British sports cars - although, overhead, a military helicopter seemed to stalk us for a while !

The experience in Canberra of finally sighting a Riley Roadster after 54 years of abstinence and then actually folding myself in behind the wheel and driving the thing - was possibly, for me, the highlight of 2003. Certainly, beauty is in the eyes of the beholder, but the ardour I felt way back in 1948, has endured and perhaps intensified, particularly now that I have experienced the sensuous delights of the vehicle's performance.

The car is a tribute to the British design engineers of so long ago. Built at a time when few cars could achieve more than around 70 m.p.h. (116 k.p.h.), the torsion bar front suspension provides a rock-steady road holding characteristic equated by only the best of modern vehicles. The leather seats and walnut facia belong to a past dignified era.

This story is believed to have been written by Brian Johnston in ***the ACT early this century. It's not known whether it was published. But it's a great story and deserves a read in the RM Roadster's 70th Anniversary Year. Ed***


Banjo Paterson

Banjo Paterson, Waltzing Matilda and The Riley Connection

According to Grantlee Kieza's biography of Banjo Paterson "Banjo" it was in 1895 on Dagworth Station near Winton in Queensland that Banjo wrote the words to Waltzing Matilda as Christina Macpherson, a friend of his fiancé's with whom they were holidaying, played on the zither the tune that has become our second national anthem. Banjo and Christina worked closely on the verses; so closely that Banjo's engagement became "dead in the water". According to relatives he was given his marching orders. His fiancé was Sarah Riley.


Sarah Riley

Saving Service by Slingsby

*This little book of only **79 pages is just 3½" X 4¾" and 5/16" thick. Titled "Saving Service by Slingsby" it was published by** Riley Coventry. Described on Page 1 as "Being Service Notes reprinted from The Riley Record", it contains 62 numbered pieces of advice.*

A series of articles written by T.W.Slingsby appeared in "The Riley Record" from about May 1929 through to 1931. They were numbered pieces of advice on various subjects and questions received by the Riley Service Department. It appears that this popular section of the Record resulted in a booklet being produced with all or some of the queries.

Why it would be produced in such a small size is mystery. Perhaps it was pocket-sized so a Riley owner could pop it in his pocket and whip it out whenever a quiet reading moment occurred. Phil mentions fire extinguishers in his article on ***Page 11. I'm sure he would have relished a real Riley one with "sufficient contents to handle two or three fires".***

No. 51. FIRE EXTINGUISHERS.

Most Riley owners by now will be aware that shortly it will be compulsory to carry a Fire Extinguisher of some description in every garage. To overcome this we suggest that the better method is to carry a Fire Extinguisher on the car, thus serving the dual purpose of safe guarding both the building and the vehicle from possible damage resulting from fire.

In order to assist, as we have had many enquiries, we have now been in touch with the well-known manufacturers of fire fighting appliances and they are arranging for supplies to be delivered to us shortly suitable for the purpose.

These Fire Extinguishers are quite neat, finished in either black oxidized or nickel, complete with bracket, at 30s., also obtainable in chromium finish, complete with bracket, at 35s.

This extinguisher is operated quite easily by turning a cap, when the contents are automatically ejected. It is guaranteed against leakage or evaporation, and, furthermore, the chemical will not harm the most delicate of bodywork or interior upholstery. After a fire has been extinguished the cap can be turned off and the machine will be ready for use again.

There are sufficient contents in an extinguisher to handle two or three fires without the necessity of refilling. Furthermore, we are making arrangements whereby once an extinguisher has been emptied it can be exchanged at a nominal cost for a full one, thus you will see that you will be assured of service in this direction.

Some people may be interested to learn that we have given a demonstration, wherein a car was set on fire, and when the engine was fully alight with flames also burning on the ground, the fire extinguisher was turned on and the fire put out in a few seconds. No damage had been done, and on enquiring we were given to understand that the same car, for demonstration purposes, had been set on fire many hundreds of times. This seemed remarkable, as actually no damage was visible.
We would add that the extinguisher will have a very neat Riley label attached to it so as to make it part and parcel of the Riley car.

No.38. STEERING - CONTROLS RATTLING.

On earlier models this unfortunately was occasionally experienced, but I am glad to say that it has now been overcome by means of fitting spring damper devices.
If, therefore, any owner is in trouble in this direction, and will apply direct to the Works, I shall be happy to see that a set of these damper devices is sent on, complete with fitting instructions, and quite free.

No. 33. TRIPLEX GLASS.

From time to time it is reported to us that breakages occur, inasmuch that glass cracks badly. We have taken this matter up very care ully with the manufacturers, and we are assured that this trouble is not caused by any manufacturing defect. Actually, we are inclined to agree with the makers, and attribute the trouble to other directions.
We ourselves are always careful to see that a door is mounted correctly, and that when the glass is fitted there is no twist upon it. This can be proved by the fact that the glass moves freely up and down in its runners.
From our experience we have found that owners, or more particularly passengers, are apt to slam doors excessively. Care should be exercised in this direction, and we would like to impress upon all concerned the necessity of avoiding excessive slamming. There is no necessity for this, and it is quite likely that this action may start a crack and that this will rapidly develop if this slamming is repeated once or twice.
We speak feelingly on this point, as we have tried this at our works and have noted exactly as to what has taken place.
Again, if at any time you find the glass binding in the guides and not working freely, ascertain the cause. Generally speaking, the reason for this is that the glass which is sealed with a solution might possibly work out slightly and cause the window to stick in the bottom edge of the felt guides. If this is the case the windows should be removed, and this substance generally scraped from it on the outer edges only, care being taken to see that the substance in between the glasses is not disturbed.
We feel certain that if owners will watch these points, troubles such as have been experienced in the past can be considerably minimised.

No. 34. GARAGE OILING AND GREASING CHARTS.

We are happy to inform owners that we now have a large supply of garage oiling and greasing charts. These have been carefully prepared and give all oiling and greasing details, which are so essential to the upkeep and general running of a car. We shall be more than pleased to supply these on application, and feel certain that they will be found not only useful but helpful in keeping the Riley in proper working trim.

For Sale

15 inch Rims (Five) with Riley stud pattern. Complete with 195/75 radials thrown in for free. *(See page 18 for advice on old tyres Ed)* All offers considered. Located Adelaide. Contact Leigh Johnson 0417 856 804 or leighj@adam.com.au

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SU Carb Tops $25 per pair including postage
Contact Jim Runciman 08 9295 4592 or runcimans@westnet.com.au

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Lucas 462 fog lamps (set in to bodywork). Used in the RME & Pathfinders and other applications including 1950s Jaguars. In a a dry box for over 30 years. Good chrome, complete with rear shields and rubbers and in good condition (One globe blown and one lens is half cracked). $195 the pair.

Riley RMB 100mph speedo (Later gold-faced). $40

SU carbies - for the RMB and RMF and many more 1950s vehicles besides (no linkages). Pistons 'sigh' freely but some play on spindles - for rebuild. $120 for the pair.

Rear bumper for (Farina) body shared by the Freeway, Wolseley (15/60 and 24/80), Oxford, the rare Riley 4/68 or 4/72 and the last MG Magnette). Rear bumper is straight - $40. Rear window louvres for same body type - rare and sought after, straight but some surface rust - needs paint - $60.

Two pairs of Lucas L488 indicator lamps with amber glass lenses. Unused new old stock in original Lucas boxes. These recessed body-mounted indicators were used in many classic cars. They are not the (cheap) plastic ones. $140 for the four or $80 a pair.

Located Adelaide. Contact Paul Stark 8339 7237 or rta20597@bigpond.net.au

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Wiring Loom for RMB
Brand new for RMB 2.½ litre 1950-51- with square instruments. Bought for restoration that did not happen. Manufactured as per original with cotton woven cover, black with yellow fleck. Cables all plastic with bullet and eye ends as needed; copper sizes as needed. Additional double connectors included. I used an identical loom for my own cars restoration; everything fitting OK. (Brown label on packet is Catalogue C, Type A, RY19C T, Parts 3 and on reverse 2762.) Current loom from www.vinloom.com.au costs AU$924 inc GST. My price AU$ 700 plus p&p.
Lopcated Adelaide. Contact: Peter Sydenham 0404 083 339 or Sydenham@senet.com.au

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RM Steering Wheel A re-creation from parts. Refurbished in black locally in SA. Measures close to 16.5 inches or 42 cm in diameter which is about half an inch smaller than the standard RM wheel.
Excellent condition. Comes with unique fabricated metal centre boss.
Located Adelaide. Contact Moss Upton 8331 8695.

RMB 1949 59S 4657.
Purchased 2014 from Swan Hill (Vic.) in ordinary condition for $7,000. Much work done over last four years.
Resprayed Old English White. New valves in head. Runs very well, no oil leaks. Timber in good order. Not registered. Asking $12,000
Located Boorowa NSW. Contact Dave Gillespie (02) 6384 6424.

RMB
Excellent condition, a regular traveller on the roads in the North East. Has for several years been the transport for a local WW2 veteran in the local Anzac parade. The vehicle is available after November 24, a friend has asked if she can be taken to her wedding in it. $17,000.
Located Victoria. Contact Bruce Vine 0409 468 230.

Riley 9
via a Clearing Sale at Rochester, Victoria Sunday 18th November
Account: B & M Love (Ex-Club Car)
For details to go to: http://www.khre.com.au/clearing-sale/rochester-5afd044da1654

Riley Bits
Original radiator and surround in very good shape.
This was surplus to requirements as I used a cut down radiator on the special. I think there may be a few other bits and pieces including a post war block and a crank.
If there is any interest I am happy to accept a modest sum to help with the rebuild on my 1929 M Type MG which I has been in constant use for the past 40+ years.
Located Victoria. Contact Ian Mawson 0412 302 560 or imawson@vicbar.com.au

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RMB
This car has a long history with Riley clubs. Fully restored in 1980s, it has been upgraded and maintained conscientiously. Located Buderim, Qld. Contact Ken Porter 07 5477 1642 or kenport@bigpond.com Seeking offers over $20,000.

Two RM's at
Collectable Classics Strathalbyn S.A. Click here.

1951 RMA $19,999.

1951 RMA $12,999

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