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Issue No. 334

The Journal of The Vintage Sports Car Club of Western Australia (Inc.)

# VINTAGE METAL

[www.vscwa.com.au](http://www.vscwa.com.au)

## PERKOLILLI NEWS



**PLUS:** Middle Swan Airfield (aka Caversham Airstrip)  
Morgan Farewells the +8  
Book Reviews: Fast Times of Albert Champion  
Scarab – Race Log 1957-1965

**April General Meeting – Monday 8th April 2019**

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# OFFICE BEARERS AND OFFICIALS 2018/19

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## OF PRESIDENTS AND COMMITTEES

After several months of running without a president, the VSCC now has a person in the driving seat. Former member Glenn Swarbrick has been tempted back into the fold and has consented to serve as president. His membership and presidency were confirmed at the management committee meeting on March 12.

There are many clubs that are having trouble filling executive positions, so the VSCC is not alone in having this problem. We must be grateful to Glenn for taking up the challenge. We must support him in his work as President. It seems that we are burning out our presidents and this is possibly because the membership tends to leave the president to run the show. It is our show and we should step up and help the club officials, taking some of the load off their shoulders.

We must not forget that Paul Wilkins stepped up as vice-president when there seemed little prospect of filling the top seat. Paul has not enjoyed the best of health recently, so he was not able to commit to doing the president's job. We know, none better than Paul himself, that he does on occasion ruffle a few pin feathers, but he did volunteer his services, for which we must thank him.

It isn't just presidents. We have lost several treasurers in recent years, and the present incumbent, Graeme Robson, is retiring to the country. He will be relinquishing the position at the 2019 AGM in November. If there are any prospective treasurers out there, please give some thought to throwing your hat into the ring when we call for nominations later in the year.

At least we have a treasurer. Since last November the club has not had a competition secretary. Pressure of business has forced Paul Bartlett to step down from this position. As with the presidency, this can be a very demanding position and it has been suggested that the work done by Paul in recent years should be done by a team of members. Perhaps what we need is a competition secretary who can lead a team of volunteers so that he or she can enjoy events, perhaps even compete in them, with tasks delegated to others in the team.

The club has more than 300 members. There must be a number of prospective treasurers and competition secretaries among you. If you think that you can help with either position, discuss the possibility with members of the committee. Maybe a group can get together to form a competition sub-committee, chaired by the competition secretary, sharing the work that has devolved on Paul Bartlett in recent years. Paul would be more than willing to mentor such a group, passing on the benefit of his years of experience.

November seems a long way off, but it will be upon us all too soon. We all enjoy our membership of the VSCC, but the club needs the leadership of an enthusiastic committee. You could be the very person needed to help lead the club into the future. If you think you can help, think hard about nominating for the management committee.

The club faces many challenges in the future. Don't leave it to others to do all the work. Jump in and help your club to grow and prosper.



Glenn exercising his Macon AF2 car at Collie in 2015

# VINTAGE SPORTS CAR CLUB OF W.A. (INC)

## Minutes of General Meeting

held at the Clubrooms, Caversham, 11 March 2019

1. **Meeting opened:** 8:00 pm, 25 members present, Paul Wilkins presiding.

2. **Apologies:** Graeme Robson, Ron Fabry, Mark Jones.

3. **New Members and Guests:** nil.

4. **Adoption of minutes:**

**Moved:** David Moir      **Seconded:** Ivan Okey that the minutes of the February meeting be accepted.      **Carried**

5. **Business arising:** nil

6. **Treasurer's Report:** Sheryl Swarbrick reported the current balances on behalf of Graeme Robson. Current balances and other cash amounts are available to members from Sheryl or Graeme.

**Acceptance of the Treasurer's Report:**

**Moved:** Paul Blank      **Seconded:** Mark Duder      **Carried**

7. **Secretary's report:**

**Correspondence In:**

- a. C Campbell (Dept of Communities) re electricity invoices (SS & GR)
- b. Pre-Emptive Strike – invoice for Albany website (VC, SS, GR)
- c. National Motor Museum newsletter (BC & MJ)
- d. Best Drop Tavern – query re NMSF 2019 (DM)
- e. Westnet – anti-virus notice (DM)
- f. Eric Riberi – query re Albany Classic (RO)
- g. Donington Auctions – promo
- h. North Metro TAFE – confirmation of use of workshop (PB)
- i. Matt Turner – eligibility query for Volvo (DM & PB)
- j. WASCC – 50th anniversary meeting display (MB)
- k. CMC – December bulletin (GW & BC)
- l. CMC – promo for cruise and motorcycle show
- m. CMC – agenda for Feb meeting (GW)
- n. Wheatbelt Volunteering Hub – training (RB)
- o. Australia Post – invoice for Gwelup PO Box (SS & GR)
- p. Bendigo Bank – term deposit statement (SS & GR)
- q. Shire of Northam 2020 community grants (PB & RB)
- r. Ross Oxwell – temporary membership arrangements (SS)
- s. eV Challenge – use of Caversham D Circuit (DM)
- t. Glenn Swarbrick – membership application and payment (SS)
- u. Associations Branch – receipt for annual info statement (DM)
- v. Doug Peyman – query re NMSF vehicle eligibility (DM)
- w. WFMA – advice on resumption of support for VSCC (PB)
- x. CMC – Everything Chrysler Day (31 March)

- y. CMC – minutes of Feb meeting (GW)
- z. CMC – calendar of events (BC)
- aa. CMC – AHMF motoring festival 2020 (BC)
- bb. CMC – vintage motorcycle swap-meet 24 March
- cc. Nathan Hadlow – pedestrian bridges for Albany (MC)
- dd. Wheatbelt Safetywear – payment advice (SS & GR)
- ee. VCCQ – newsletter (BC & MJ)
- ff. Tactico – invoice for website maintenance Dec – Feb (SS & GR)
- gg. Dept of Communities – progress report on Caversham lease (BE)
- hh. CAMS – track licence renewals (PB, RO, MP)
- ii. Rare Spares – loyalty statement
- jj. Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club – invitation to display at Vintage Car and Vessel Day (SS)
- kk. CAMS – insurance certificates (PB, RO, RB, VC)
- ll. Robin Falconer – change of address (SS)
- mm. Shire of Northam – remittance advice for \$27,500 sponsorship (PB, RB, SS & GR)
- nn. VSCC Vic – newsletter (MJ)
- oo. CAMS – statement (SS & GR)
- pp. Westpac – cash reserve statement (SS & GR)
- qq. ACMA – invoice for radio licence renewal (SS & GR)
- rr. Shire of Northam – liquor approval (PK, RB, VM)
- ss. Leigh Mitchell – query re NMSF 2019 (DM)
- tt. ATDW Online – NMSF 2019 listing (DM)

**Correspondence Out:**

- a. North Metro TAFE – use of workshop for scrutiny (PB)
- b. CAMS – appointment of Ed Farrar as alternate VSCC delegate (DM)
- c. Matt Turner – eligibility query for Volvo (DM)
- d. eV Challenge – use of Caversham D Circuit (RF, BE & DM)
- e. Associations Branch – annual info statement (DM)
- f. Doug Peyman – query re NMSF vehicle eligibility (DM)
- g. Members – WASCC 50th anniversary display (SS & MB)
- h. WFMA – thanks for resumption of support for VSCC (PB)
- i. Members - Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club invitation to display at Vintage Car and Vessel Day (SS)
- j. Dept Planning Lands & Heritage – Caversham lease (BE)
- k. Leigh Mitchell – query re NMSF 2019 (DM)

**Acceptance of the Secretary's Report:**

**Moved:** David Moir      **Seconded:** Len Kidd      **Carried**

**8. Vice-President's Report:** Paul Wilkins reported that:

- We have received six new applications for membership which will be considered at the Management Committee meeting tomorrow night.
- We had a successful display of cars at the WA Sporting Car Club's 50th anniversary

meeting at Barbagallo Raceway earlier in the month.

**9. State of Play Reports:**

**a) Competition:**

- Northam Motor Sport Festival (6 & 7 April) – 60 entries received so far and officials have been assigned.
- Albany Classic – Rob Ozanne reported that organisation was progressing well with assistance from Thierry Michot and Michael Grogan, but he would be calling for additional helpers next month.

**b) Workshop:** Graeme Whitehead reported that:

- Work on the Ford Model A for Lake Perkolilli is proceeding well.
- He has entry tickets for those displaying cars at the Classic Car Show and the club will have 12 cars on display.

**c) Library:** nil.

**d) Social:** Michael Broughton reported on the Phillip Island Classic race meeting he attended last weekend.

**e) Regalia:** Ivan Okey reported that the club's display at Wanneroo had generated some interest in the club but little regalia was sold.

**f) Caversham:** Brian Eyre gave the history of the club's recent efforts to secure a tenancy of the clubrooms, including meetings with Peet Ltd and the Dept. of Communities; a new agreement for a short-term lease and an assessment of the building are expected soon.

**10. General Business:**

- Paul Blank reported on the "Cars and Coffee" run to Northam leaving Stirling Gardens on Sunday 7 April, including a parade lap of the Northam circuit for up to 30 cars at lunchtime and a display at the festival.
- Andy Friend offered to donate a steering wheel for the Caversham Car.

**11. Guest speaker:** Doug Todd spoke about the Ballott Special which he has rebuilt and which was on display at the meeting.

**12. Next Meeting:** Monday 8 April.

**13. Meeting Closed:** 8:53 pm.



The Dad's Army boys get a preview of Doug Todd's Ballott Special at the Workshop Saturday on January 19

# VSCC OF WA CALENDAR 2019

## April

6	Minson Ave Motorkhana, Northam	
7	Northam Flying 50	Club Regularity Ch'ship Rd 1
8	General Meeting	
9	Management Committee	
13	Workshop Saturday	
15	Competition Group	
16	Dad's Army Working Bee	
23	Dad's Army	

## May

4	Workshop Saturday	
6	General Meeting	
14	Management Committee	
20	Competition Group	
21	Dad's Army Working Bee	
28	Dad's Army	

## June

1	Mt Clarence Hillclimb	Club Hillclimb Championship Rd 1
2	Albany Classic	Club Regularity Championship Rd 2
8	Workshop Saturday	
10	General Meeting	
11	Management Committee	
17	Competition Group	
18	Dad's Army Working Bee	
25	Dad's Army	

## July

1	General Meeting	
6	Workshop Saturday	
9	Management Committee	
15	Competition Group	
23	Dad's Army Working Bee	
30	Dad's Army	

## August

3	Workshop Saturday	
5	General Meeting	
13	Management Committee	
19	Competition Group	
20	Dad's Army Working Bee	
27	Dad's Army	

# DAD'S ARMY NEWS

## A Visit from the Ballott

No, we haven't spelled that incorrectly. After a dispute with CAMS over the naming of the recreated special, Doug Todd christened it Ballott, which CAMS accepted.

Regular readers will be familiar with the description of the Ballott in the February 2019 issue of *Vintage Metal*, but there is nothing like seeing the car in the metal...and Dad's Army had that opportunity on Saturday January 19 at the Dad's Army Workshop Saturday. All of the Dad's Army members who were present pored over the Ballott and discussed it in detail with Doug. (See photographs on page 6.)



Doug Todd (left) and Terry Le May discuss the Ballott and old times.

One man who was particularly interested was Terry Le May, and not just because of the car. Terry and Doug were apprentices at City Motors at the same time, Terry as a mechanic and Doug in the panel shop. Their meeting was in the nature of a reunion and they obviously enjoyed catching up.

Nobody was unkind enough to ask how long ago the two were apprentices, and it would be more than unkind to suggest the days of cone clutches and crash gearboxes. However, it was certainly when Holden meant one model, vacuum wipers and six-volt electrics and City Motors was a Holden dealer situated in the city.

## Model A Update

The troops have been busy with the Model A Ford and the engine has been test fitted, the scuttle and windscreen frame are painted and ready to go and the front brakes just need to be connected to the brake pedal. As the brake pedal swings off the bell housing, that means that the brake installation cannot be completed until the engine and gearbox are in place.

The whole car is being painted black, except the engine, which is a fetching shade of green with a



▲ The engine being test fitted in the chassis.  
◀ Denny painting the scuttle and windscreen frame.





Kevin busy wiring the flywheel bolts. The gearbox sits by his right foot ready to fit.

yellow cylinder head. Hmmmm...

Kevin bolted the newly machined flywheel to the back of the engine and wired the bolts in place. The gearbox is ready to be fitted after which the engine and 'box can be installed in the chassis.

The whole car is coming together nicely and should be ready for the Lake Perkolilli Red Dust Revival in September. A progress report on the Revival by Heza Henry is on page 24.

### Other Work by Dad's Army

As usual, Dad's Army is keeping the clubrooms clean and tidy for the monthly club general meetings and other club functions. The editor's camera caught Dad's Army regular Mark Duder on the business end of a broom sweeping out the kitchen

(below).



### Model A Restorers Club Visit

The Model A Restorers Club of WA Inc plans to visit Dad's Army on Tuesday May 21. They are meeting at Stirling Square in Guildford before trundling up West Swan Road into Harrow Street and thence to the VSCC Clubrooms where we shall welcome them for a tour of the clubrooms followed by morning tea.



A Model A Restorers Club member's Model A Tudor (that's what Ford called it).

### Travelling Man

Dad's Army Convenor Ron Fabry spends a lot of time travelling to speedway meetings across Australia. Below are two photos of historic speedway cars in SA that are still being raced.

He also visited Tailern Bend and The Bend Motorsport Park. In addition to the race track which has already hosted the Supercars, there is a museum and accommodation for club members





and their cars. It is a business model becoming more common in the USA, but The Bend is the first of its kind in Australia. Built on the former Mitsubishi Motors Australia test track, the complex has



a 7.77 km, 4.9 km and 3.4 km bitumen racing circuits, drag racing strip, and a 3.9 km drift racing circuit.



The race circuits are of a high international standard and licensed by the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) for car racing and the Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme (FIM) for motorcycle racing. More



details can be found on Wikipedia or the web site at [thebend.com.au](http://thebend.com.au).

Ron took a few photographs of the buildings and displays, shown on this page.

## DAD'S ARMY DATES – 2019

	WORKSHOP SATURDAY	WORKING BEE TUESDAY	DAD'S ARMY TUESDAY
APRIL	13	16	23
MAY	4	21	28
JUNE	8	18	25
JULY	6	23	30

**NOTE! DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES AND ADVERTISEMENTS FOR THE JUNE 2019 ISSUE IS MAY 11, 2019.**

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## Guest Speaker for April

The guest speaker at the April general meeting will be Ray Hudson. Ray is a friend of Brian Eyre and is a bit of a historian regarding WA speedboats of the 1960s.

Brian told us: "I have previously suggested that I could get a friend of mine, Ray Hudson to bring along two speedboats to our guest speaker night.

"I know they are not cars! But I think members will find them (and their story) interesting.

"Both boats are now fully restored to near original condition from the 60s and once held numerous State and National speedboat titles and speed records.

"They are both fitted with the original class winning highly developed Peugeot engines.

"Tempo was built in the 50s by Clive Stannard and has a very distinguished history, she was the chase boat for Bluebird down at Lake Dumbleyung.

"Cindy was prepared by the Gascoine family and is the best of class with a very good race history."



## Vintage Car and Vessel

The Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club has invited our club to participate in their Vintage Car and Vessel Day on Sunday 14 April.

You are invited to take your vintage or classic racing or sports car along to the club for display alongside vintage and classic boats.

There will be music, entertainment and food available so please contact Debbie Hanrahan at the RFBYC on [pr@rbyc.asn.au](mailto:pr@rbyc.asn.au) or 0417 968 869 if you can attend.



## 50 Years Racing at Wanneroo

It's 50 years since racing began at Wanneroo Raceway Park, which became Barbagallo Raceway for sponsorship reasons. The WASCC held a commemorative race meeting over the weekend of March 2 and 3 and the VSCC was invited to show some of the club member's classic and historic cars.

Michael Broughton organised the display and he provided the following photographs of the display. Michael said: "Here are a few quick shots of our VSCC Marquee display, situated on the grass at turn 1 for Saturday and Sunday at Wanneroo.

"Lots of interest and a big thank you to all who participated. Thanks Ivan for our Saturday set up and Glenn Swarbrick for transport home."



## VSCC Members Off to Phillip Island

Once again, the VSCC was represented at the 30th Phillip Island Classic Festival of Motorsport, held at the Phillip Island Grand Prix



Circuit on March 10. Michael Broughton supplied a couple of photographs of the transporter preparing to leave for the island on the previous weekend.



### Northam Festival of Speed Accommodation

Northam Self Contained Apartments has contacted the club offering accommodation for the weekend of the Festival of Speed. Details are advertised on page 27.

## EDITOR'S RAMBLINGS

### The VSCC Now Has a President

Glenn Swarbrick has renewed his membership and taken up the position of president.

We welcome Glenn back to the fold as a returning member of the VSCC and thank him for taking on the duties of president.

### Disgruntled Buyer Takes Direct Action

Back in 1951 in the "Big Easy", a dissatisfied car buyer took direct action against the car salesman who sold him what he considered to be a lemon. The brief report shown below appeared in Motor Sports World's first issue on June 15, 1951.



#### Buyer Sours on Deal When Sold A Lemon

NEW ORLEANS—A disgruntled purchaser shot an auto salesman in the back here during an argument over a car the buyer considered a "lemon."

The salesman is recovering.

The motor sports newspaper was published in Los Angeles and I have electronic copies of early editions courtesy of American friend of the VSCC, H Don Capps.

The New Orleans salesman was reported as "recovering". We don't know what happened to the pistol packing purchaser.

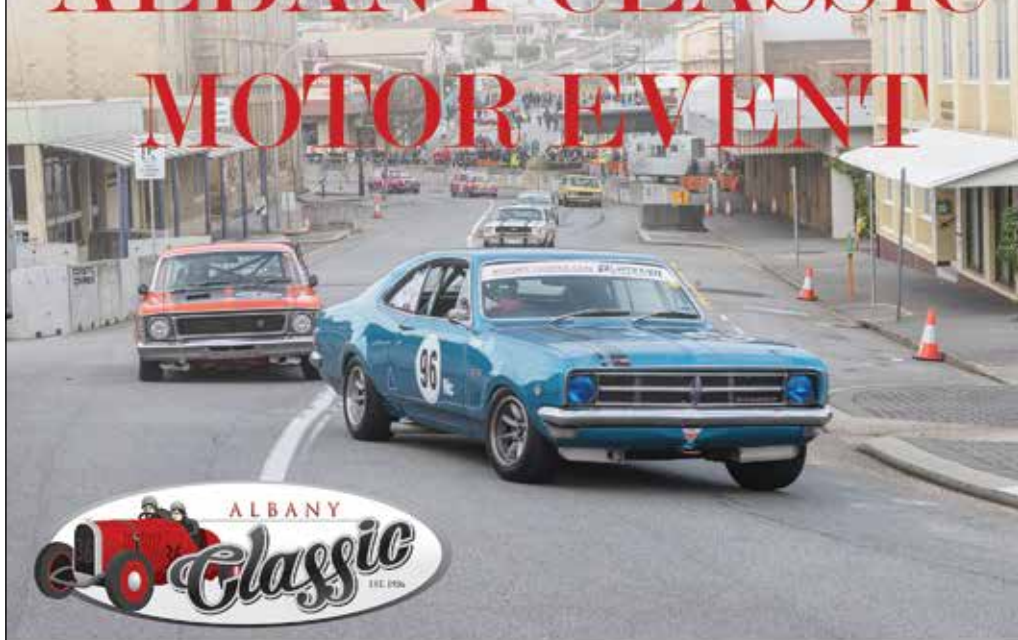
*Bob Campbell*



Albany Advertiser



# ALBANY CLASSIC MOTOR EVENT



## Vintage & Classic Cars Festival & Entertainment



# 1-2 JUNE 2019

For more information, visit [www.albanyclassic.com](http://www.albanyclassic.com)

# MIDDLE SWAN AIRFIELD

## (AKA CAVERSHAM AIRSTRIP)

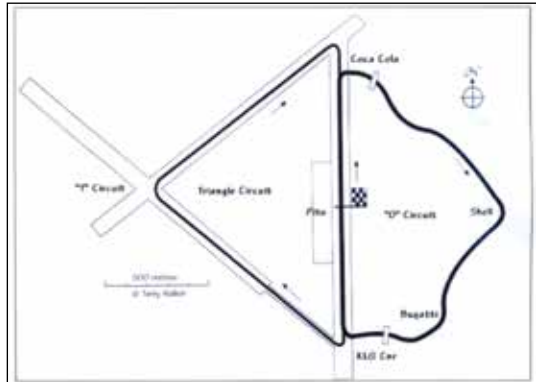
### MATERIAL RESEARCHED BY BRIAN EYRE

The Middle Swan Airfield was just one of a number of temporary airfields established in WA during World War II. Airfield construction began in late 1942 for the U.S Fleet Air Arm of the 7th fleet and the US Army Air Corps. The airstrip was also to be used as a backup airstrip for the nearby Pearce airstrip. The land for the airstrip was “borrowed” by the Defence Department from local farmers M L Whiteman and A E Marshall (and some others too).



▲ Diagram showing main runway and aircraft taxi and dispersal road. Note: aircraft staging points (green) and machine gun posts (black)

The flat and level area was further cleared and the three runways 18/36, 13/31 and 05/23 were constructed in a triangular pattern using a limestone base and gravel topping by the Main Roads Department. Caversham allowed air traffic in three different directions and on the eastern side, a loop joined the north and south ends of the main runway and was used as an aircraft taxi and dispersal side road. (This has become known as the ‘D’ section). The main strip was then later bituminised to accommodate heavy aircraft.

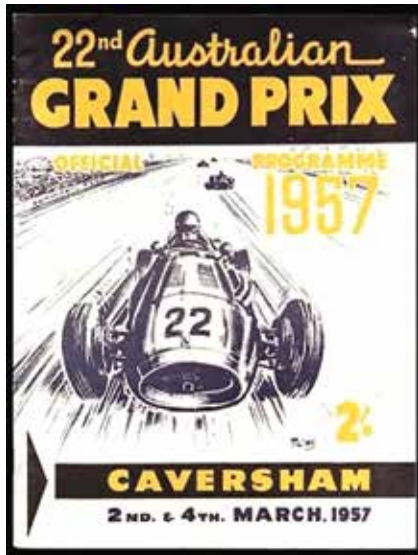


Caversham consisted of three circuits: The D-Circuit, to the right, was the one most frequently used. The Triangle Circuit was used for the first Six Hours Races. The T-Circuit, at the junction of the two gravel runways to the west was used probably only twice. In addition, there were two variations based on the D-Circuit. Once, a chicane was placed in the main straight; on another occasion the main straight alone was used for a “Southport” race, in which the cars U-turned at either end, making a long, narrow oval. *Plan and words courtesy Terry Walker.*

### WASCC

In early 1946 Clem Dwyer of the WA Sporting Car Club (WASCC) drove around the airstrip and its runways. The area was then used as Perth’s first major motor race circuit. The first official motor race was the “Victory Grand Prix” on 7th April, 1946, held by the WASCC. In the West Australian newspaper, it was reported: “the circuit of the airstrip and dispersal strips will be connected by field telephones and the Royal Automobile Club will supply technicians and officials for judging and timing”.

The WASCC then conducted various car races on various configurations at Caversham.



In 1953, the WASCC was granted a lease over part of the now-disused site, and began conducting working bees to bring the circuit into a state where it could be used for competition, which was primarily for cars. It was a hard fight, as the area was scrubby and sandy, which caused the tar surface to come apart easily.

The WASCC also ran the Six Hour Le Mans races at Caversham from 1955 to 1968. The WASCC conducted its first AGP (Australian Grand Prix) at the Caversham race circuit in 1957 and then again in 1962. The programmes from those meetings are shown at left and right.

#### 1945 to 1968

After the war, the Department of

Defence occasionally allowed motor racing to take place at Caversham and the airstrip was used intermittently by the Perth Gliding Club from 1945 to 1968. The airstrip seems to have been de-commissioned in 1968.

In 1956 a small portion of the disused airfield was taken over by a secretive and classified Government Department. (see also 1968 to present)

The Caversham airstrip race circuit remained in regular use for motor racing until 1968.

Then the military wanted the Caversham site back, and the WASCC was marched off to the new Wanneroo Circuit, taking what little racing infrastructure existed at Caversham with it.

#### 1968 TO PRESENT

What happened at the airstrip during the period 1968 until 1980 remains a bit of a mystery. The W.A police were known to have used the airstrip area for driver training and high speed pursuit trials.

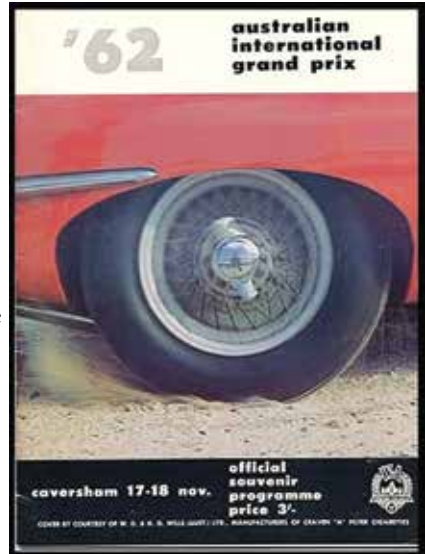
The area that had previously been taken over by a Government Department was “re-activated” as a military facility in 1968. (Army? / Department of Defence? / RAAF?)

A fenced compound was set up in the inner part of the airstrip. The compound contained a facility that consisted of a combined amenities and communications building, transceiver equipment, power house, engineering workshop, pump house, chemicals store and a communication tower.

A number of antenna arrays was set up around the communications building, these antennae consisted of fixed and rotating assemblies. One of the sites was a fixed wide band antenna array to the North East of the complex. Other sites were prepared for fixed and /or rotating antenna arrays.

#### DCA

The Department of Civil Aviation apparently then used the same complex in the 1980s as



part of an early aircraft landing system for Perth airport. The remaining antenna stand seems to be a remnant of this operation.

The location appears to be directly on the line of the main North / South runway at Perth Airport, so there could have been a middle marker there which causes a light to flash in an aircraft using the Instrument Landing System to indicate a distance of 5 nautical miles from touchdown.

### BUSH FOREVER



Lot 801 and 802 (200) bush forever

Early in 2007 the land was transferred to the State Government of W.A who made the area around the race circuit a permanent “bush forever” reserve. Being of significant historical value the D-Circuit track has been placed on the heritage list.

### VSCCWA

*The following extract is from the VSCC website:*

The Vintage Sports Car Club of W.A. Inc (VSCC) was officially incorporated in August 1986. Today the VSCC is the largest historic race/sports car club in

Western Australia with a membership base spilling over into the various other marque clubs throughout the region.

The objectives of the club are for “the organisation of events to cater for older sports and racing cars and to especially celebrate the original ‘round the houses’ racing which was held on street circuits in many country towns in the 1930s, 40s and 50s”. These objectives remain unchanged today.

Regularity speed trials, hill climbs and other club events are held through-out the year, giving owners of historic cars and racing cars, plus those interested in such vehicles, the opportunity to exercise these cars and feel the exhilaration of running such fine machinery, or just to be involved close by.

The VSCC typically caters for historic cars meeting the requirements of the CAMS 5th Category group of cars in Australia, or other invited classes of cars.

At various meetings you may see open wheeled racing cars, flashy racing sports cars. Formula Ford, Formula Junior, Touring Cars and Appendix J’s plus specials from the 1920s to the 1980s. Some of these cars were and still are driven by well-known racing identities intent on keeping their hand and eye in.

The VSCC has successfully managed and run more than 30 ‘round the houses’ re-enactment events in Albany, Northam, Narrogin, York and Midland. In addition to



Google Earth view taken in 2012 showing Caversham airfield and its runways, now no longer surfaced, see also visible disused antenna array areas (ground zero), and aircraft dispersal road (D-circuit)



'round the houses' events the club hold regularity trials at Barbagallo Raceway and race/regularity events at the Collie Motorplex. The club also runs a competitive hill climb series.

In 2008 the Vintage Sports Car Club of Western Australia (Inc) moved into the then abandoned complex at Caversham and set up its clubroom there. The first club general meeting held at the "new" clubrooms was in April 2008.



The approach to the Shell Hairpin, adjacent to the proposed clubrooms site – July 2018.

The VSCC has now been at the disused complex for 11 years. During this time they have restored, maintained and adapted the old wireless complex to suit their needs as a clubhouse and have established a storage area, and workshop area on the site.

The VSCC is currently negotiating with the State Government to gain a permanent lease over a patch of land adjacent to the old "D circuit" contained in the bush forever area.

VSCC has also been involved in some restoration work to the old race circuit

and plans to erect a new clubhouse near the old race track and hopes to make the race track available for limited use in the future.

**Note:**

Some of the information for this article was obtained from the internet and may or may not be accurate.....

Link to additional resource:

<http://www.speedwayandroadracehistory.com/perth-caversham-raceway.html>

**Note:**

*Brian has pointed out that there is a lot more to the history of the clubrooms and we hope to cover that history in future issues of Vintage Metal. BC*



Exit from Coca Cola Corner at end of main straight – October 2018. Note bridge abutments.



Exit from the Shell Hairpin. Proposed clubrooms site is to the photographer's left – July 2018.



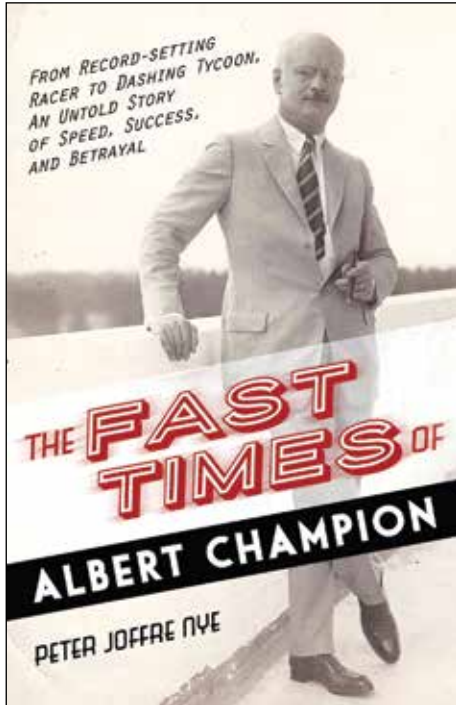
Looking from Bugatti Corner towards KLG Corner and the main straight – October 2018.

## BOOK REVIEW:

# THE FAST TIMES OF ALBERT CHAMPION

BY PETER JOFFRE NYE

REVIEWED BY BILL BUYS



Champion spark plugs are among the world's oldest and most popular.

But they're just a brand name. Or so I thought.

However, it turns out that they were originally made by a Frenchman of that name, Albert Champion, who later lost the right to use his name on the products - so he switched to making better ones, which he registered as AC spark plugs, the letters being his initials.

Details of the intricate spark plug saga are in *The Fast Times of Albert Champion*, a 460-page hard cover by Peter Joffre Nye and published by Prometheus Books.

It's a lot more than a yarn about auto electrics.

Rather, it's a most comprehensive and intriguing tale that takes in the development of pneumatic tyres, the origin of the motor car and how an urchin from the slums of Paris in the wake of the Franco-Prussian war rose to become one of the wealthiest and most powerful men in the automotive world.

Albert Champion was born in 1878, before the first motor car arrived on the cobblestoned streets of Paris.

As a 12-year-old, he earned a few francs riding a monocyte to attract crowds to city shops. He later became a bicycle racer, in an era when that sport attracted huge crowds to the velodromes.

His gritty performances won him a place with Clement Cycles, then the most innovative of bike manufacturers, where Adolphe Clement taught him the fundamentals of business and publicity.

He was soon winning races of national and international importance, including the French national cycling championship, and was the first to use petrol engines, from DeDion-Bouton, in his pacing bikes.

That aroused the interest of a US motorbike maker, who invited Champion to join his company, and to bring a few of those French engines along.

It also allowed young Albert to illegally escape national service in France, and he arrived in the US at a time of the birth of a new global transportation era, with boundless opportunities for an ambitious and able lad with a devilish genius.

*Continued on page 20*

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Government of Western Australia  
Department of Regional Development

*Continued from page 19*

Spark plugs were to be his anchor and he poured time and resources in developing components to suit the ever-increasing demands of engines for cars, motorbikes, boats and aircraft.

It's a non-glamorous under-the-bonnet area unfamiliar to most people, but he was part of the club that included the likes of William Durant, Henry Ford, Walter Chrysler, Charles Nash and Louis Chevrolet.

Champion had many crashes in races on two and four wheels, but he became immensely successful - and always had an eye for a pretty girl.

He married his childhood Parisian sweetheart, but that didn't stop him from approaching Chevrolet's wife, and a few others too.

Peter Nye has done a tremendous job in this first biography of Albert Champion, which comes with full notes, a bibliography, and an index.

Champion died in 1927 after another of his amorous adventures that went wrong.

But he lived every day of his life in the fast lane and this book will appeal to anyone interested in the first acts of the history of the motor car - tyres, batteries, lights, motorsport and how far behind Europe the US was in its first cars.

The book was written five years ago, but it's as exciting a read as if it were produced yesterday.

Well worth scouring the bookshops or the internet for.



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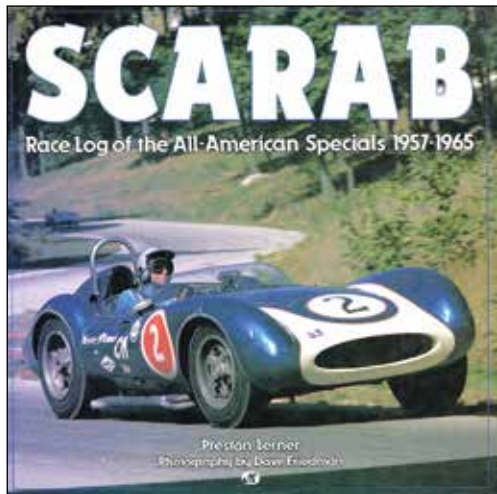


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# COLLECTORS' BOOK REVIEW: SCARAB – RACELOG OF THE ALL-AMERICAN SPECIALS 1957-1965 BY PRESTON LERNER PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVE FRIEDMAN



If you look up scarab in the dictionary, you will find it is a dung beetle that was held to be sacred by the ancient Egyptians, or it could be a gem carved in the shape of a scarab with hieroglyphs carved on its underside.

Wikipedia has a disambiguation page that includes: “Scarab (constructor), an all-American sports car and open-wheel race car constructor”, which is the Scarab we are looking at here.

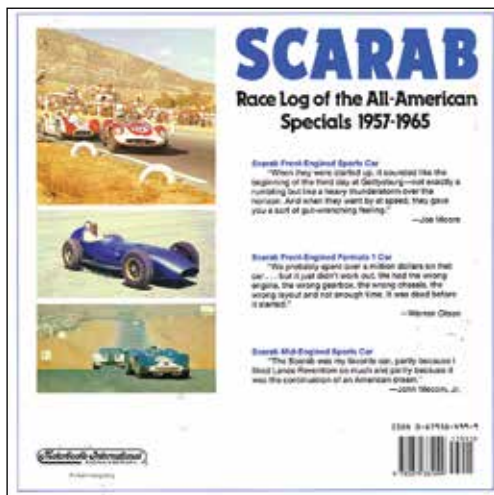
This excellent book by Preston Lerner, with most of the photography by Dave Friedman, tells the story of Lance Reventlow’s company, Reventlow Automobiles Inc. (RAI), that built only eight cars but made a name for itself as a constructor of excellent sports cars and old fashioned Formula 1 cars.

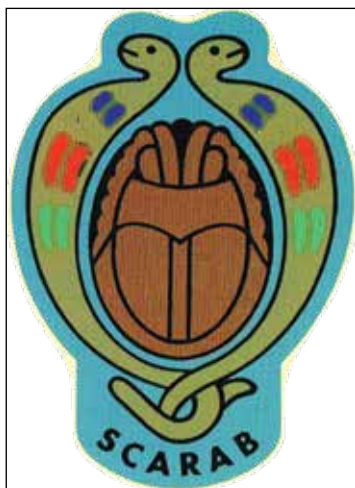
Lance Reventlow was the only child of Woolworths heiress Barbara Hutton. His father was the second of her seven husbands, Count Kurt Heinrich Eberhard Erdmann Georg von Haugwitz-Hardenberg-Reventlow. Hutton’s divorce from Reventlow gave her custody of their son after a bitter court dispute. She left the raising of her child to a governess and private boarding schools.

Lerner plays mythbuster, not least over the widely held belief that Reventlow inherited \$25 million when he turned 21. That, he says: “was a figment of the media’s overactive imagination”. He goes on to say: “His mother continued to command the family pursestrings until Reventlow was long out of racing. In fact, it was her money, not his, that financed the first, and all future, Scarabs.”

The Scarab came about because Reventlow was not happy with the cars available from overseas. His original thought was to slot a small-block Chevrolet V8 into a Lister chassis, but after visiting the Lister factory he said to old friend and travelling companion Bruce Kessler: “That thing’s a piece of junk.”

He went on: “It’s an antiquated chassis. We





The Scarab logo with 2 snakes encircling the Egyptian dung beetle known as the scarab

could build a better chassis than that.”

And that’s exactly what they did.

Lerner describes how RAI was set up and, perhaps more interesting, how Reventlow got into racing. It seems that, enthusiastic though he was about setting up his racing team, he was not a natural racing driver and worked very hard to be competitive.

His dream of producing a world-beating sports car ran into a major problem when the FIA limited sports racing cars to a maximum capacity of three litres, which didn’t fit with Reventlow’s plan to use the small-block Chevrolet V8. His alternative of a three-litre Offenhauser engine was a total failure, so Scarab became a very large fish in the pond that was North American racing in the late 1950s.

Lerner tells us in some detail how Scarab dominated sports car racing before going on to Reventlow’s attempt to build an all-American Formula 1 car. Unfortunately that project turned out to be too little, too late and the rather elegant Scarab single-seater was overweight and underpowered

compared with the competition in 1960.

While the Formula 1 car was doing not very much, the Scarab sports cars, now sold on, were still winning races in the USA. Lerner covers their spectacular post-RAI careers.

Next project for RAI was a car for the much touted Formula Intercontinental (FI), designed to use the desmodromic valved 4-cylinder engine from the Formula 1 car. When FI fizzled, the new rear-engined single-seater was fitted with a modified aluminium alloy Buick V8 and shipped to Australia to race in the then Formula Libre Tasman race at Sandown Park. Lerner mentions the suggestions that the Scarab was a copy of the Cooper-Climax. Stirling Moss suggested that it was built under licence. Arnold Glass bought the engine and the Scarab went home.

That was the end of the FI Scarab’s career, but there was one more Scarab to come, but RAI was finished before the last car came along. Lerner explains that between Barbara Hutton turning off the money supply and the Internal Revenue Service threat to reclassify the company as a hobby after five straight years of losses, RAI was shut down in early 1962.

That last car was a rear-engined sports car, powered first by an alloy Oldsmobile V8 then by a Chevrolet small-block V8. Sold to John Mecom and driven by A J Foyt then by Walt Hansgen and Augie Pabst, it was very successful through to 1964.

Lerner only took the story to 1965 in this book, which was published in 1991. More up to date information can be found through Google. The rear-engined single-seater, complete with Oldsmobile V8, is currently owned by Australian Dan Cotter.

The book is available through Amazon.com, Amazon.co.uk or AbeBooks.com.

With only 3 of the original front-engined sports cars built, you are unlikely to be able to buy one, but you could get this beautiful diecast model of chassis number 2 as driven by Augie Pabst in August 1963 at Denver where he scored the front-engined car’s final victory driving for the Meister Brauser team.



*Bob Campbell*

# JKANDL SQUARE RIGGERS UPDATE

## PERKOLILLI NEWS



Wayne Murray of GWM Steel Fabrications will bring his Ford Model T/A to the lake

The Lake Perkolilli Red Dust Revival 2019 is taking on a life of its own with the 60th Expression of Interest for motor cars being received in mid-March. The interest has been nothing short of amazing.



Graeme Lockhart's 1926 Model T "Gow Job"

It is fantastic to hear that some cars such as the new replica Ballott will be kicking up the dust at Perkolilli just like the original Jack Nelson car from the 1930s. Peter Harrold has been working hard to make his Chrysler look just like the 1926 Chrysler of Cady and Attwood which challenged the Australian 24-Hour Record.

Peter Harrold was eagerly spreading the word at the Phillip Island Historics and he sent this update: "Most people with the age correct cars were very interested. More than a few had heard of the event. A friend of mine was commentating for the day. I had told him earlier about Perkolilli so he called me up to the commentary area and

interviewed me about Perkolilli and it was broadcast around the the track. I'll get in touch with the VHRR secretary tomorrow and pass on the details. Hopefully they will put a few lines in their magazine."

Graeme Cocks attended the Sydney Harbour Concours d'Elegance on the same weekend and the interest was also there. Justin Hills — probably Australia's most acclaimed car customiser — even thought he would build a car if he had the time. Google him at <http://>





Rob Read's 1925 Gwynne 8

[hillsandcocustoms.com/customs/](http://hillsandcocustoms.com/customs/). He's an amazing guy.

The Rattletrap beach racing group has also hooked-in to news of the event.

A producer who makes shows for the Velocity Channel in the USA which is a part of the Discovery network said he was interested in shooting the event for a programme they are working on called Car Nirvana. The presenter is James Nicholls who was the presenter of a series called Car Chronicles for Discovery Channel Australia.

With all the interest and the large number of potential entries, the organising group of Greg Eastwood, Graeme and Cathy Cocks, and Lyn

and Ross Oxwell have been working hard on the event organisation. The Lake Perkolilli Motor Sports Club Inc. which was formed to run the event is now affiliated with MotorcyclingWA and the bike events will be run under that umbrella. The motor car events on three and four wheels (yes, we have have a Morgan three-wheeler coming along) will be run under the auspices of the VSCC.

The City Of Kalgoorlie Boulder has a track plan to soften the corner at the far end of the course. The Eastern goldfields Historical Society is taking a hospitality tent with images from the Goldfields for display.

Accommodation in Kalgoorlie is getting tight so if you are planning to come it would be a good idea to book your room now. Of course, camping at Perkolilli is free and if you want a good spot it in the bush it is first come first served.

It is still all about the drivers and the cars and bikes and getting out on the clay, getting some dust in the veins and having fun.



*Heza Henry*

For Red Dust Revival information go to [www.motoringpast.com.au](http://www.motoringpast.com.au) or email Graeme Cocks at [perkolillimc@gmail.com](mailto:perkolillimc@gmail.com)

# MORGAN FAREWELLS THE +8

## BY BILL BUYS



**M**organ, makers of hand-built sports cars since day one back in 1909, is about to launch a new model next month to replace the V8 engines it has been using for the past 50 years.

The Malvern (UK) company has always used donor engines for its classic cars, among them Peugeot, Fiat, Standard, Coventry Climax and Triumph, and fitted its +4 with a Rover 3.5litre V8 in 1968, calling it the +8.

In later years it swapped the Rover for a 4.8litre BMW V8.

Alongside the V8-powered models it kept

producing its other cars, the +4, Roadster and 4/4, the latter the world's longest running production car.

It was introduced in 1936 and has charmed owners around the globe for more than 80 years.

The tiny company – it has only 177 employees and builds about 1200 cars a year – will keep the last two V8 models in its heritage collection, but has released a short video that pays tribute to the long-serving motor and also provided an idea of what will replace it.

The last are a silver Aero 8 and a sky blue +8.

The video features chief test driver of the past 18 years Keith Dalley at the wheel and has a look at some notable Morgan V8s launched through the years, before closing with the sound effects of the engine for 2019.

“It’s a sad thing to see that V8 engine disappear,” Dalley says.

“I’ll miss the car.”

The 2019 car has a snap, crackle and pop, rather than the roar of a V8, suggesting it might be a turbocharged V6, maybe a V12, and there are suggestions Morgan could have been the mystery buyer of Aston Martin’s Vanquish data.

“The car is not designed to be a direct replacement for the outgoing +8 and Aero 8, but it will naturally fit into the space in the Morgan product range left by both,” the company said.

“This car will use an all-new bonded aluminium fabricated chassis designed by Morgan which will be twice as stiff as the aluminium chassis used on previous flagship Morgans.

“This chassis, combined with a performance powertrain never before installed in a Morgan, will result in the most dynamically capable production Morgan ever.”

Those in the know reckon that’s another clue that there could be quite a lot of Aston Martin technology in the ‘wide body’ Morgan.

Whatever, it will, like all previous Morgans, be a great car.

*At the 2019 Geneva Motor show, Morgan introduced the +6, powered by the latest turbocharged BMW B58 3.0 liter straight-six, as used in the new Toyota Supra.*

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Copy closing date: 11th of the month prior to month of issue. Eg Copy for February issue due January 11.

Magazines are in members' mailboxes by the last week of the month prior to month of issue.

Of course, VSCC members can advertise cars and automobilia free of charge. Contact Editor Bob Campbell, 0419 849 835 or robertcampbell4@icloud.com for members' ads.

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