

The history of the Club; a personal perspective Part 1 by Peter Rayment

I bought my MGTC in July 1965 for £180 from Mal Willis who lived only half a mile away from home at Hamilton. I knew of the MG Car Club of Queensland, but I didn't know where it met. I first went to 620 Wickham Street Fortitude Valley clubrooms with two work mates, Bruce Toms (AH Sprite IIA) and John Moorehead (MGTF 1500), in October 1966. I put in my application to join the club that night. The next week I said to them "Are you going to the club?" and they said, " No, there is nothing on." So I went off anyway and there were all these old members, the eldest would have been at least 25 years old ! Anyway I kept turning up and got to know who most were. Some of these old members were John Fraser, Kerry Horgan, Geoff Hawley, Geoff Gettons, Will Charlton, Jon McCarthy and Ray Lovejoy, to name just a few. This then occupied my Friday nights for the next 30 odd years except for when I was out of town, Delia was in hospital or I was crook.

Here are a few **first** events I tried with the club in those early years.

- The first was a Touring Assembly with Bob Mallon as a navigator. The club used to have 12 touring assemblies a year in those days.
- The first speed type event was a driving school out at Lowood Racing Circuit. What a fun day, and we learnt a lot. Somewhere, in our new shed, I have some standard 8mm movies of the day.
- My first working bee at Mt Cotton was in 1966. There was no bitumen to be seen anywhere. The access road came in from the bottom of the hill; you can't make it in that way at present.

- My first official speed event was at the second club event at Mt Cotton. That was on the 28 April 1968 and I recorded a time of 67.9 seconds in the MGTC. I had been working up-country when the previous events were held.



Peter with David Miles at the hillclimb

- My first All Night Run was in 68 also. It ended up at Somerset Dam. It was great fun in the middle of winter.
- The 1968 Annual Presentation Dinner was my first; it was held at the Yacht Club at the end of the Story Bridge. Don Webster won the T Type trophy, so next year I decided I was going to have a go at winning it. So in 69 I ran in as many club events as I could including touring assemblies, motorkhanas and hillclimbs. A good result for 1969, as I won both the T Type and the best MG for the club. All three of us (myself, Delia and Samantha) have done fairly well over the years at the Annual Trophy Presentation Night. We usually entered any event the club ran.

In 1969 I bummed a lift in a Cessna 170 from Townsville and saw Peter Holinger do an incredible 47.4 in his Holinger Vincent at the Queensland Hillclimb Championships (QHC). By this time I was involved with Will Charlton and Jon McCarthy with their Centaur Clubman cars.

About 1971 I joined the committee when most a number of 'old' members disappeared overseas. I had already been involved in helping set up at the hillclimb. This involvement lasted until about 1990. I became Vice President in 1971 or 1972 and then President in 1974.

1971 saw my first electronic (TTL) timing clock being used at the hillclimb. This ran in parallel with the mechanical clocks for some time. Occasionally we had some problems from cars whose ignition radiated too much. The electronic clocks went through many modifications including new technology (CMOS) and this eliminated the problem. These worked for many years until I introduced another new timing clock and new sensors. These sensors were later upgraded to an infrared unit as they

used less power but to improve reliability I still took the old sensors and spare clocks to each meeting, because no timing, no hillclimb. The club used my equipment until 2005 when the club purchased the present system.

Following working bees at the hillclimb we would end up at Ann Thomson's place for a sausage sizzle and to play 500 until the wee hours of the morning. We could nearly have had a committee meeting any Sunday night as there were enough there to form a quorum.

May 13 1973 saw me equal the under 1500cc MG Class with a 59.3 in the TC. Wanting a bit more grunt, I bought the ex- Tim Harlock (my technical racing guru) Cooper Ford from David Tait and, at the QHC, did a 49.6 sec, an improvement of 10 seconds in one meeting. I broke the closed record with a 48.7 sec in November that year. The Cooper Ford last ran in 1988 when I blew up the clutch. At present it is now in the shed, awaiting re-assembly, after we finish building our new home. A bit like Dave Robinson's Cheetah.... One day!

When I lived at home Mum had to know details of the club events so she could answer questions from callers. When I shifted to The Gap in 1974 that task fell to Delia once we got the telephone on.

I first met Delia in 1966 whilst working at Hervey Bay at the Radio Station. The attraction then, I believe, was my funny little old red sports car apparently (MGTC). We still have the TC today. We saw each other periodically over the next 8 years but it wasn't until 1974 that we truly got back together again and I introduced her to the club. She joined in February 1975 and until the 90s acted as my navigator in Touring Assemblies etc. Then, when her eyes and stomach played up, our daughter Samantha took over. Samantha's previous experience was that of being thrown around in the back of the car or of being left asleep on the clubroom floor in the charge of the director of the event.

From the late 1970's to the mid 1980's Delia worked as Secretary of the Meeting at Mount Cotton, though, like me sometimes, she could not be a named official as she competed as well. During this time we helped conduct not only closed events but also Queensland and Australian Championships. Besides being Secretary of the Meeting Delia was involved in PR work through the Redlands Bay paper and others as well as obtaining sponsorships for these events.

Neil McNeil (President) and I used to take holidays in the week before the Championships for many many years and scrub up the hillclimb with little expence to the club. Steve Austin (deceased) used to organise the grader from the Redland council to do the road on the Friday. At this stage I was trying to set up a new house at The Gap. Most of the earthworks, retaining walls etc at home was done at night, the only free time I had. Our tent was used for many years as the canteen where Mum could also be seen helping feed the hordes. After each hillclimb the tent would have to be re-erected at home and washed down to get rid of the food smells and cooking grease etc. This was until Bev Cossor ably took over the role. The Cossors put up the old canteen from bits and pieces. Jeannie Robinson then looked after the canteen and now it is Pat Walker's turn. I remember one championships Joan Tighe and I cut up

2½ sacks of onions. Peter Tighe used to work the bar b que with fireproof gloves so as not to burn his hands.

For about a decade Samantha and Delia would physically muck in with the boys with their trusty rakes, shovels etc at working bees at the Hill. I remember at one championships, on the Saturday night, we were out with torches until about 10 pm painting a white line around the edge of the track, where some new bitumen had been laid. It was certainly pleasant camping down there but the mossies were often so insistent that they would wake you up with their buzzing and banging on the mossie net!

One person who deserves more credit for the tireless work done at Mt Cotton is Barry Smith (Ford V8 Special). Barry planted many trees and plants and made walls out of tyres. He was always trying to improve the hillclimb surrounds with no money but just sheer hard work, recycling and determination. At championship meetings he organised the parking and used to get lots of cars parked quickly, efficiently and safely.

1976 saw me win the first actual Castrol Ironman competition. It started at Castrol's depot at Winstaines for the Night Run with Delia navigating for me. Then there was the sprint and motorkhana at Lakeside and the Hillclimb at Mt Cotton. I have since run at every Ironman competition. For a few years previously we had had Sprints at Lakeside and the hillclimb the next day. I devised a new scoring system for the Touring Assembly after crunching many times for the competitors over the four events. This was all before computers. Later the best two times were used for the hillclimb also.

1976 saw me record the slowest FTD time at the hillclimb 66.0 seconds. It was fairly wet and most of the track was still pebble bitumen and as a result it was a wee bit slippery.

The timing shed has become a second home to us during the last 40 years as we've helped people like Jim Peters, Bob Wilkinson. Joan and now Ann. We weren't the main timekeepers because we wanted to compete.

The history of the Club; a personal perspective Part 2 by Peter Rayment

CLUBROOMS

Neil McNeil, Delia and I saved what we could from the old Clubrooms in 1976 at 620 Wickham Street. Things were at rock bottom in terms of interest in the club by club members. The new landlord, who wanted us out, threw some of the club's possessions onto the street. We still have some of this furniture in the clubrooms today. One item that was left in the back corner of the storeroom was the Club's silk flag (lovingly made by Joan Appleby), all dirty and wet. Mum and Delia worked on the flag to save it and to remove the stains. This stuff was stored at our place for years as the Club found only temporary meeting places such as the New Farm Park Kiosk. Committee meetings, however, were held at our place and Delia took the minutes, typing them up in between meetings. At this stage Delia asked if she could go on the Committee as she was surely doing enough work. She was informed that in the then

constitution no two people from either the same business or the same family could be on the Committee! Delia just continued to work.

Wanting to get some room back at our home as all the Club furniture was stored there, we kept an eye out for possible clubrooms. Our treasurer didn't want to spend too much on rent, as the Club had nearly gone bankrupt due to the initial cost of the Hillclimb. Money had been sourced only a few years previously from other MG Car Clubs and individual member's contributions (myself included) to keep the Club afloat. Eventually Delia saw a shop front at the RSL rooms at Rosalie which we shifted into. From there, years later, we shifted across the road into rooms being vacated by CAMS and owned by Coral Scott. It is wonderful to see that after all these years we now have clubrooms, which we can call our own.

MOTORKHANAS

All three of us (P, D & S) were involved with the running of club Motorkhanas at various sites for approximately twenty years including many Ironman Motorkhanas on the hill at Lakeside. After a problem where one member protested because some of the events were not the correct length (there was difficulty dodging holes, trees etc) the individual events were just called 1,2,3 etc. We still have the drawings of many of the events that had to be tailored to suit the ground. QMSC initially ran the first few Ironman motorkhanas, then us and now HSCC organise them. Samantha first learnt to drive in the TC on the hill at Lakeside on the grass and she improved her driving skills by competing in regularities there also.

We still remember the first bitumen Interclub motorkhana at Booval. There was much worry about the surface and tyre wear. As it turned out it was better than dirt and you came home not looking like "BLACK PETE"(my knick-name those days). We used to have fun at Speed Week at Surfers Paradise Racetrack with the motorkhana on Thursday nights on the main straight. One Australian Motorkhana was also on the straight after a Formula 5000 meeting the previous week. The wear rate on the tyres of the Minis was such that they would have lasted for about 10 minutes running. A bit severe! A month before at the Interclub Motorkhana wear had been negligible. We have been avid participants in this form of motorsport and still believe it is a wonderful sport particularly for both novice and skilled drivers.

HISTORIC RACE MEETINGS AT LAKESIDE

Whilst Joan Appleby and Carl Stecker did most of the organising of these events Delia worked in the Scrutineering shed checking documentation and I was Dogsboddy. Sometimes I went flagging, collecting money for pit entry or working the dummy grid. It was go go go all the time. Finally I decided to compete at these meetings in regularities as, back in those days, we could take passengers. Samantha and I logged up over 100 miles in the poor old MGB in one meeting.

DAY RUNS

We were instrumental in getting day runs going in the 1980's and set a lot of the runs right up until the late 1990's when Pat Walker kindly took over organising a roster of

people to set the runs. We're still organising them, the latest being in September this year.

MGCC NATIONAL MEETINGS

I ran the TC at the first MG National Meeting in Sydney in 1970, but broke a stub axle on the way back. I have missed only three since 1970. Since 1975 Delia has helped fly, with pride, the Queensland flag at these meetings. Delia has missed only one National Meeting in that time. And except for the last couple of years she has always been a very competitive entrant at these events, sometimes beating me at various events in the Motorkhana. Samantha has attended 21 meetings flying the flag not only as an entrant in later years but also as our Miss MG entrant a few times. She actually won the title of Miss MG Australia at the Hunter 1994 National Meeting. This was the final Miss MG. Silly sexist crap knocked out the event.

For our club's 1990 National Meeting we were heavily involved in all areas from its conception. We came up with the initial designs for the poster and logo. However, these were taken out of our hands and in the process we feel that, in the final execution, they lost their initial impact. During the years before this meeting Delia kept the planning committee's minutes. For the event proper Delia was in charge of the Accommodation and the Regalia, plus helping wherever necessary. The year prior to the meeting we silk-screened promotional shirts for our contingent to wear at the 1989 Shepparton National Meeting.

For our club's 2004 National Meeting Delia helped on the social committee and was in charge of the Photographic and Magazine Competitions whilst I acted as Chief Eligibility Officer and Judge at the Concours etc. Judging at Concours is a job that I have been involved in for years. Despite my lack of concours cars (I prefer to use my cars), I still know what is needed, having restored several cars. My judging expertise has been called upon not only at Club level but at a National level as well. From 1975 until 1997 Delia had acted as the co-cordinator for the National Meetings organising the accommodation for our contingents as necessary etc. This started as a tent in Adelaide. We then progressed to overnight caravans before going 'upmarket' to motels. Working bees were often held at our home to print/make outfits for the Theme nights e.g. convict outfits. Prior to Perth in 1995 we had a working bee to install CB two way radios, under my instructions, in all the cars that were going. This certainly helped with moving people around in the convoy.

Attendances at the National Meetings by our members over the 37 years have been on the up and up but at the 1987 meeting Delia and I were the only attendees from the State of Queensland. Our members who attend now see our Club at its best to the point that it has only been in the last 6 years that we have been in a position to win the Wratten Trophy. This last meeting has made us extra proud of the Queensland contingent. Congratulations to you all. One group of this contingent which needs special mention is the - let's call them the - "The Bushrangers", Graeme and Bev Hoyle (Bowen), Jim and Sandra Armstrong and Julie and Gary Kunst (Moura), and Wayne and Kerrie Kirwan (Biloela). Without them, I am sure we would not have made it for the Wratten Trophy this year. Most of us had only a further 1000 kilometres to make it home from Sydney, once our ferry arrived from Tasmania but they had three to four times this as they travelled to and from Melbourne! Looking at

the Mulders in the GT reminded us of when the three of us would go camping for a month around the 84 National Meeting.



Newcastle National Meeting 1985



1996 Shepparton National meeting

The history of the Club; a personal perspective Part 3 by Peter Rayment

THE OCTAGON

In about 1976 Delia bought a trusty Remington typewriter with a wide carriage and became my co-editor of the Club's magazine "The Octagon." That meant that she organised and typed the magazine content and I turned the handle of the Gestetner to print it. This job continued for about 20 years off and on. We realised its importance as a means of communicating details of coming events and of reports of events just held to members. The magazine was generally a monthly publication with articles then having to be typed onto stencils. These were run off manually on the Gestetner. As I cranked the handle of the Gestetner on Octagon nights at the Clubrooms Delia would get out the address-o-graph plates and print out the wrappers with the members' names on them. Frequently Delia would have to hand write members names on the wrappers as it cost money to make the plates! In the beginning years there was just a few of us but later on when the Stranges, Walkers and Lenny Melrose joined, these evenings became quite social affairs as we chased each other round and round the tables to collate the magazines. In the 90s we got a motorised Gestetner and a power stapler from work which meant I could join in the congo-line. We tried photos on David Miles Renotronic Machine at his work when he was not in the club but it was difficult to get the pictures to work out well. Things improved when I ended up with a good photocopier at work.

A lot of the information for the calendar etc was collected and typed by Delia on the day of publication so that it would be up-to-date on the who, what, when and where of the events. In later years Delia sold advertising space to make the publication more presentable and to help cover the cost of the publication. (Money, or the lack of it, has always been an issue.) We finally achieved that goal of having the magazine pay for itself. Photographs for the magazine were often taken by ourselves and in later years our budget (Delia and mine) was saved as Ian Connell and Alan McConnell used to help with the printing of these photos. Alan and Keith McConnell, John and Rob Clatworthy and Ian also contributed photos themselves. We still have these photographs in a box in the shed somewhere. Once we finish building our home, we will put them into some form and order suitable for the club's library.

Starting in 1986, I entered the club-member's address details onto computer, initially on floppy discs on work's computer until I forked out \$2200 to buy my own in 1989 so I could control the records more easily. We used sticky labels for the addresses. It was sheer bliss. Also they came out of the computer already sorted into postcode order. All we had to do was just bundle them up after they had been wrapped. Super. Certainly credit should go to Bruce Mutch for his drive to get the magazine professionally printed. It is a pleasure to receive and read our award-winning magazine these days.

CONCOURS

Delia and I successfully resurrected the club's concours in the middle 80's. It was many years earlier (before my time) that the previous one had been held. Scott Ramsey won the day with his green MGA. At that stage they were run in conjunction with the Marque Sports Car Club at Anzac Park (Combined Sports Car Association to some). At these events Delia acted as the sign-on and PR person. The Brisbane City Councils FREEPS (Free entertainment in the Parks) program in the Courier Mail even wrote the event up after Delia had chased them up. What a crowd turned up that year. The changing attitude towards these events has, at long last, enabled us to have our concours where it should be, in the heart of Brisbane.

REGALIA

In the late 1970's we learnt how to silk-screen onto cloth so that we could print the Club T shirts ourselves and save the Club money. Shirts were sourced from various wholesalers around town. Before the 1979 Australian Championship meeting we printed hundreds of T shirts which depicted a diagram of the circuit and date. Not all sold, so we overprinted them with a Qld header instead of the date, for the next Queensland meeting and they sold. We continued doing T shirts for the championships for years. The Club made reasonable money and publicity from these activities. Besides Hillclimb championship T shirts, we printed a range of Club T shirts for continuous sale. The old cream and brown (club colours) T shirts ran for many years. Around 1984, I designed the club logo in the Q that the club uses as its logo now. For special events, like the 1990 National Meeting when we knew that there would be people around who would buy souvenirs, Delia would make up bar towels or calico bags, and print tile club logo on items to sell. This would then make more money for the club. We enlarged the MG at one stage and printed it onto curtains that Delia had made for the Nash Street Clubrooms. Some of these are now in

use again at the clubrooms. I have lots of printed dust cloths etc still from when we used to do test runs before actual printing. Delia was in charge of the Regalia until the mid 90's when again Pat Walker stepped into the breach. There had been no club regalia since badges and ties etc came from BMC or Home Centre! We still have the screens that we made.

SOCIAL BBQs

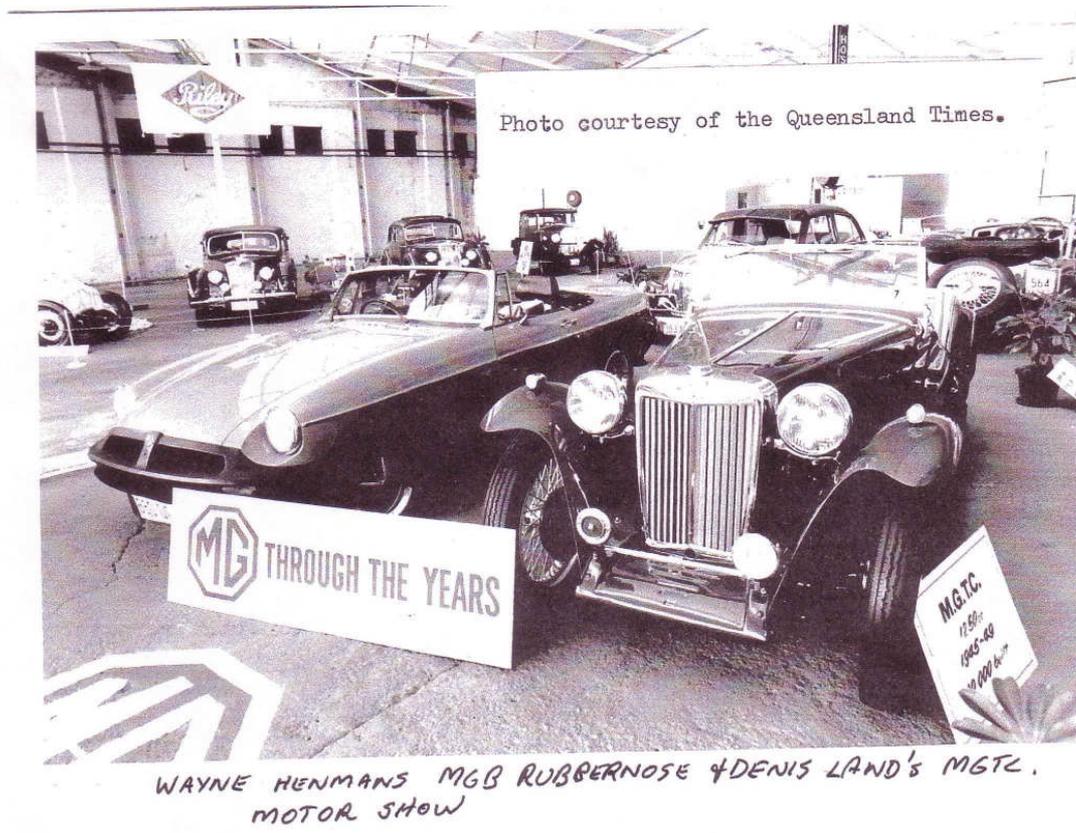
These were held regularly at our home at The Gap for about 15 years. We even used the next door spare block as either a parking lot or to hold outdoor film/slide nights as the back neighbour had built a wonderful block wall which they had painted white and this made an ideal screen. I remember one frosty night when we dug a square of the grass out of the front lawn for the barb-que. When the cooking was over the members just sat around the fire and chattered. When everyone finally went home in the early hours of the morning, we found that we had Eskys full of grog. They had bought their own for themselves (it was BYO) but it was too good just sitting round the cozy fire. We then had to get rid of the grog. It wasn't any use to us, we don't drink the stuff.



RNA MISS SHOW GIRL COMPETITION, PARADES & THE MTAQ MOTORSHOW

For about ten years, Delia organised most of the cars for this parade for about as well as for a variety of other events when clubs like football clubs etc wanted cars for a parade. They are too numerous to remember. I got the job, Delia usually did the phoning! The RNA parades were great fun and at that time the ring events were on a tight schedule. If we were short of time we had to take the girls around fairly quickly. If we had more time we would do more laps. It was fun out on the track. Afterwards we would go in a group to the Dodgems or the like. The attendants always made sure we had a safe place to park the cars in the grounds. This was a good PR exercise for the Club, as they would advertise any up coming events we were to have over the PA as we drove around.

For well over 10 years again, Delia helped organise the cars and set up the display for the MTAQ Motorshow at the RNA Showgrounds, as well as the roster of members to man the stand. We (PD & S) all helped man the stand. One attraction that the visitors to the stand really enjoyed was Tony Jay's videos of the clubs events. One year they even used our TC, Samantha, Jeannie Robinson, Kimberley Robinson and Mandy Tighe as models on their advertising poster. We got to see many old members at the show. I got to be very fast in doing the MG logo on the floor of the displays with a 3" roller. They used to turn out very well.



ODDS & SODS

We felt that there was a necessity for New Members Nights in the 90s, so Delia organised and ran these at the Nash Street Clubrooms (ex CAMS). These lasted for several years, and were held quarterly on different facets of Motorsport and the Club. Delia had to organise programs, booklets, guest speakers, advertisements in The Octagon etc. I feel that they were very successful. Delia has also done her share in sourcing many of the locations used for the Presentation Nights and bands etc. over the years getting on the blower chasing up members to attend to help make the night a success. The club was very sporting for years and not very social. This has partly reversed these days with old members coming back into the fold and just wanting to have fun but not necessarily to compete in competition.

Over the years, we have made suggestions to improve the club but they have often fallen on deaf ears. I had tried like heck to have some of these suggestions

implemented, but found it a hard task, due to opposition from some of the Committee. Persistence eventually paid off and we have moved with the times. A few of these include name badges, credit card payments and even the club member details on computer. Imagine what it would be like without them these days. We're not on the Internet at the moment but I feel that a lot of the club's present success falls on Glenda Crew's club website and the new look magazine. Cheers for modern technology. After putting the members' details on the computer since 1986 to help with the sending out of The Octagon, I took over as Membership Secretary from Paul Strange in 1995 and am still doing it. Certainly utilising the computer helps to speed things up a lot. The paper-folding machine is a great help when it comes to sending out the renewals. I am not sure how long I have been doing the points score for, but it's a long time. I can't tell you exactly as our records are in a box somewhere in the shed. Mal Spiden used to do them when Delia was doing the magazine and the results would turn up on old envelopes, grocery lists, old bits of cardboard etc. They were correct however. Now that it is on a computer it certainly makes it easier, except if you have forgotten a member. This happened recently to my nephew Brant's new wife Selina. There were a lot of ripples to correct. She actually went on to win the Touring Assembly Navigator's Trophy for the year.

Another hat I have been wearing for a long time is the one of Club Captain. During that time I have helped both the members and the club in whatever way I could. All in all both Delia and Samantha have been helpful and understanding team members in this game of life, also. If you balanced it out, there hasn't been a day gone by for the past 30 years that the telephone has not rung in this household with some sort of query about MGs or the Club. Usually Delia is the one who answers the telephone. I hate talking on it. I prefer to talk face to face with people.

We have had, and will continue to have, the best interests of the club at heart, having seen the club at both its lows and its highs through 4 decades of continuous membership and service. We know the club will continue to grow as we have grown from our involvement with this club. We have made many friends throughout the world, all because of our involvement in this club. The two letters MG have opened many doors for us and we are sure they will continue to do so.