

“OCTAGONE” or A RIDE DOWN MEMORY LANE by Elaine Hamilton

I have been reading through the Club’s collection of *Octagons* and, while doing so, have noted some interesting snippets of information.

So, did you know that

- the first *Octagon* was published in January 1957. Prior to that, a newsletter had been published. The Octagon was printed using a spirit duplicator but, fortunately, the print has not faded even though the smell has!
- the December 1958 edition of the *Octagon* carried a report that the clubrooms (then in Wickham St) had had a visit from the licensing squad and from then on were able to sell only soft drinks! Thanks were expressed to those members who helped to pay the fines imposed as a result of this visit.
- Sept 1957 – Two new members were welcomed to the Club; they were Brian Tebble and Ray Lovejoy.
- the First national meeting of the MG Car Club was held in Sydney from 9-11th January, 1970. (The event was reported in Jan 70 *Octagon*.)
- a filler in the September 1972 *Octagon* had this ‘spark of wisdom’ :
Conversation - The trouble with telling a good story is that it usually reminds the other fellow of a dull one.
- Patron of the Club in the early years was Viscount Nuffield, G.B.E.
- The March 1957 *Octagon* had an article on Shell Racing fuels – no less than 6 types!
- The *Octagon* of November 1958 is the first we have that had commercial advertisements. They may have appeared earlier in the year but this is the first in the club’s collection of *Octagons*. It was also the first we have which was commercially printed.
- March 1972 *Octagon* lists among the new members a David Robinson, owner of a Holden HG.
- In the January 1973 *Octagon* it was reported that “Ivan Tighe has indicated his retirement officially – Ivan of course has had a long and successful racing career over nearly two decades – sorry to see another ‘oldie’ going.” *Did someone forget to tell Ivan????*
- And another interesting spark of wisdom - Stubbornness – *Stubbornness does have its helpful features. You always know what you are going to be thinking tomorrow.*
- It’s now new!! As early as 1957 ‘it’s’ was incorrectly used instead of ‘its’!

- The Club became the owner of a Post office box (1847W) at the GPO in March 1957.
- May 1959 – The name V Appleby first appears. He drove a Pontiac at the Strathpine Sprints.
- Sept/Oct 1978 Octagon article shows that the more things change the more they stay the same! It says “We are currently looking for new clubrooms. If you are able to provide any assistance by either knowing of somewhere that is not too expensive or providing funds to enable us to develop them please contact a member of the committee now.”
- May-June 1983 OCTAGON has an article by Arthur Holloway in which he outlines his idea – and the approaches he made to various people - for a street race to be held on the Gold Coast!
- And another spark of wisdom! Ignorance – If ignorance is bliss, why place such a bright light above the mirror?
- This is a collection of interesting pseudonyms adopted by contributors to the Octagon who obviously tried to remain anonymous –

Dust E Throat (reported on a gymkhana in 1959)

Ripoff Tredsky (reported on a 1960 gymkhana)

A Clue (reported on a Scavenger hunt 1961)

Mud Bath (reported on a gymkhana 1961)

Teddy Boy (reported on the ATC held at Lowood in 1961)

I spy (reported on a Treasure hunt in 1961)

A Member (reported on various activities)

Annie Ominous (reported on the Beat night held at the clubrooms in Aug 1965)

I Spin (reported on a Motorkhana in 1966)

Crumpetcatcher (a prolific contributor in the early 70s)

Other regulars included – Henry Money III, Featherfoot, Jolly Roger, Spinner Thomas and Ace Junior Scoop Reporter

Scratchy Penman

-And you may be interested to know that Richard Croston was “rambling” in the Octagon as early as 1978
- In a report of a gymkhana in the August 57 Octagon, there were events called ‘Forward Bending with water’, ‘Horn blowing’, ‘Car finding’ and ‘Two bob for a ding’! (*Would some of the members of this era like to enlighten us as to what constituted these events?*)
- *Was there a specialised recruiting campaign?* Jan/Feb 1967 Octagon – Listed amongst the new members were – Tim Harlock, Vern Hamilton, Barry Lock and Ivan Tighe!

- First mention of John Davies found in May/June 1976 Octagon – ‘After delays the meeting finally got under way with John Davies and his Robb Holden singing ‘Here we go gathering nuts in April’ on his way to the hairpin whereupon the air controls on the front of his car decided they did not like it there. A bit of hacksaw work saw the car ready for its runs proper.’
- July 1977 Octagon – This is the first time that Delia Rayment’s name appears – as Delia Rayment. Maybe Delia finally decided to make the typist’s job easier as her previous name must have been spent with every combination of Ms and Ns possible!
- First person to break the 40 sec barrier at Mt Cotton was Kym Rohrlach at the Australian Hillclimb Championship held on 31st May 1987.
- The Octagon was registered as a periodical with the PMG (*Australia Post to those not age challenged*) as early as March 1957.
- A report in the Octagon dated 7th May 1957 – ‘The good news is, of course, the club rooms. This acquisition, with the facilities they can provide, will be the vital link between members. Successive committees have searched in vain, but thanks to the perseverance of Ernie Ansell, the Centre has a place to hang the ‘charter’ and to call its own – our sincere thanks, Ernie.’
- Gymkhana 18th August 1957 -- ‘The Centre has acquired a new ground at Aspley – the experts consider this to be one of the best grounds in the Brisbane area – organiser (John Muller) has, in his own words, ‘cooked up the best gymkhana yet.’ The assembly point is the Chermshire Tram Terminus (you know this new ‘Drive in Shopping Area’ place). (*We now know it as the oldest Drive In shopping centre!*)
- In the Jan 1958 Octagon it was reported that the first edition of the CAMS Year Book “Motor sport in Australia 1958” will be available next month in limited quantities only.
- June 1959 – the first photographs appear in the Octagon.