

WESTERN

A MODEL NEWS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE MODEL A RESTORERS CLUB (WESTERN AUSTRALIA BRANCH) INC.

Next Meeting : SATURDAY 12th May, 1984

Starting at Centreways Car Park
Midland at 1.45 p.m. and taking
a short run around the area,
ending up at Mussel Pool at
approximately 3.00 p.m. for
afternoon tea and meeting.

Unfortunately a change had to be made to the meeting date, due to the fact that it is also the date of the V.C.C.W.A.'s Autumn Rally and several of our members wished to attend. (6th May). The following Sunday (13th) is Mother's Day, which may clash with family commitments.

CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE 1984 - ASCOT RACECOURSE

We had six of our 'A's on display for this event, unfortunately we were mixed in with the Veteran Car Club's display, so we weren't able to give the Club much publicity by our presence. The newly restored cars of the family's Cooke, Spencer, Letch and Bennie were on display along with Eric Richard's Tudor and Ray Mahony's Phaeton. We congratulate Bill Bennie on gaining second place in the 1926-1935 category, and thank Kelvin Pepper and Ray Mahony for their contribution in the judging of all the vehicles. A group of our members attended a social evening on the 3rd April to see Bill receive his trophy at the Rose and Crown in Guildford.

CONGRATULATIONS

are due to John and Filomena Luca who successfully increased the size of our little Club with the safe arrival on the 8th April of Benjamin John, little brother to Michael,

and also to Stan Guignard, our visitor of late last year from Canada, who saw fit to take a little of the best of the West with him on his travels from now on by way of a new wife, Hazel. They were married on the 2nd April and members congratulations and best wishes were forwarded to them both by way of telegram.

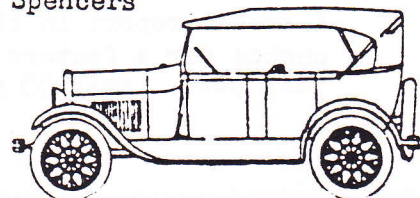
SYMPATHY

is extended to Tony Parin and all his family on the death of his daughter Sandra recently.

REMINISCENCES OF A DAY TRYING TO FIND A CAMEL FARM!

Bill Bennie

What a fantastic day our last run turned out to be in the end. Beginning with a fair turnout of Model A's and an equal number of modern cars, about 10 family groups left Morley and drove to Mundaring picking up further members and then on to Clackline in an effort to locate the Blue Fum Camel Farm. Several enquiries from locals told us - you can't miss it - its on the Spencers Brook Road - well, as Julie Bennie said, it must have been well CAMELFLAGED as we all went past at a great rate and finally ended up in the front bar of the Spencers Brook Hotel. The locals all bearded and quietly sipping sin ging syrup said "Its there alright mate - about 7 mile back!" So after giving the hotel lady the best Sunday's trade she had had in years, we all embarked on an about face trek to find yonder



lost camels. Kel Pepper, our experienced bushman and camel tracker went on ahead and then returned meeting us halfway and said he had found where they lived, but there was no one home and only one solitary camel hiding behind a tree. Not wishing to put that camel to any excess with some 20 adults and untold children wanting to ride, a hurried roadside meeting decided that the last oasis was the best spot for dusty miles and so the vehicles turned around and descended on the good old Spencers Brook pub.

The one barbie was stoked up, tables and chairs and shady trees occupied and double gees avoided. A quick rush to the bar before it closed and we all settled down to feeding the famished multitude. Later the meeting was held and various social dates were decided (these will be announced later).

Tony Parin and Bill Bennie will provide a trophy each for members to compete for, and an attendance trophy will be organised. We would also like to see as many 'A's out at runs as possible and to this end a rally will be held at which the aim will be to get 100% attendance of 'A's, plus as many A owners not yet in the Club. This run could take the form of a drive say from Perth to Fremantle with a finish possibly back at McCallun Park and a display of our cars never before seen in Perth. Many of us know someone who owns an A but is not in the Club, so rack your brains and phone Toni Mahony and give her some phone numbers or addresses.

Two nights out are planned between now and Christmas; more details later.

Interesting to see five 'A's on the run to the camel farm. Bill and Mavis Spencer in their Sports Coupe and Bill and Dorothy Bennie in their Phaeton were on their first Club run with newly restored cars. Both were endeavouring to shake out any problems before going to the 8th National Rally at Kiama in a few weeks time.

Mike and Laurel Cooke had their Tudor out, and hopefully they will be going to Kiama too if pressure of work allows. The Tudor seems to be running perfectly.

Ross and Alma Letch had their Phaeton out for its second run and Ross has perfected a method of catching the otherwise lost oil from the rear main bearing. The only problem is he hasn't hooked up a pump to pump it back to the sump. Ross - all model A's leak at the rear main - if they don't then you've assembled it wrong. Before the mechanics in the Club throw up their hands in despair, there are ways to minimise the loss and we would be delighted to publish your ideas.

Laurie and Bonnie Stevens recently sold their Tudor to Reg and Coral Blewett (no relation to that Medicare bloke) and they came along in the Tudor to meet the Club and, we hope, to join us on a permanent basis. Reg and Coral you are more than welcome and we hope you both enjoyed yourselves on the run and look forward to many more with us.

So what with new cars and new faces the Club is going from success to success and growing.

Tony and Rita Parin finally found us and arrived just in time for the meeting in their A pick up (we don't call them utes anymore!!). They informed us that the camels and their owners were down at the Mundaring Show, so that solved that mystery. Someone said they were over at the camel humpers getting their camels re-humped - what next?!!

John and Filomena Luca's Tudor is currently in at Crawfords having its interior decorated and should possibly be on the road for our next meeting.

And whilst on the subject of Tudors, Steve Read says it wouldn't take a lot of effort to get his finished and on the go.

OVERSEAS

A recent report in the American "Model A News" said that response to supply of photos for a feature on the 1928 models, that is from the early AR upwards was very poor. Only 35 photos were sent in as opposed to some 300-400 for an article

on 1930 cars. They then compared the statistics on 1928 cars entered in National Rallies over a number of years and found the same trend applied. They have formed the opinion that the older cars have not survived as well as the later models and in fact are now considered scarce enough to become more of a collectors car than was previously thought. From records available here in Australia the exact opposite seems to be the case. No doubt there are many theories why this should be. One is that with the impending clouds of depression coming, many 1928 A owners decided here in Australia to really look after their cars and thus help the survival rate, whereas the attitude in the U.S. (long a consumer type market) may have been to run the cars into the ground in the hope the depression would resolve itself and life would continue as normal. In fact, how a car survives for 56 years always seems amazing to me. If any member would care to put pen to paper and tell the story as they know it about their car or cars, we will be more than happy to publish it. To start the ball rolling, I offer the following about my newly restored 1928 A.R. Phaeton.

Doing what most vintage enthusiasts do on the weekend, I was searching the "Sunday Times" Reader's Mart "Vintage" column and spotted an ad for a Model A Ford 'complete'. Phoned the owner - "yes, come and see it!" Turned out to be a chap I had helped and advised some years earlier so good rapport straight away. He wanted to see so he could put the roof on the new addition to his house. The new roof was to cost \$2,000 so that was the price of the car. The car was disassembled and located in 3 garages some few miles apart. The inspection took a while, in the end I had made a mental stocktake of what was there and was sure it was complete. Quick consultation with Dorothy then a half hearted attempt at a haggle on price, and I wrote him a cheque for \$2,000.

Finally it was all home in the garage. Inspection proved me right, absolutely complete except the horn (as usual). Almost no rust in the car and no real signs of wear in gears, bearings or anywhere else; I was amazed.

I then asked some questions around the Club to locate the original and any subsequent owners. The original owner was a Mr. James Turnock of Northam. His son was visited and supplied several photos of Mr. Turnock, the car in the early 1930's and also in 1960 plus an article that was printed in the "Sunday Times" in 1966. His son told of his father's love for the car and the meticulous way he had looked after it including having recorded every mile and gallon of petrol (and cost) for the period from late 1928 to early in 1962 when Mr. Turnock died.

In 1962 it was sold to a local garage owner in Northam for £60.0.0. He did a top overhaul and made a few readjustments but nothing serious. This man is still alive and remembers the car well and regrets ever having sold it.

From 1964 to 1966 it had two other owners who did not apparently use it much. It was then purchased and used for only a few months by Mr. Tony Stafford, well known in the vintage car scene (and who recently passed away). About this time it suffered its only recorded damage which was a collision with the back of a truck in which the right front mudguard was badly crumpled below the headlight.

With the change to a new owner, this time a car dealer, the damage was repaired and the body painted. Original colour was dark navy blue with pale blue trim and a blue pinstripe with a grey peper and salt hood and side curtains (this detail supplied by original owner's son and was also under paint when restored by me). The dealer painted the body a deep burgundy shade with no trim or stripe. From the dealer to yet another owner who supplied me with much of the above information. He kept the car for quite a few years before selling to Mike O'Brien, who sold it to me.

Mike stripped the body from the chassis and had the engine rebuilt by Ross Legge who is well known to vintage car buffs here in Perth. Ross is an old time craftsman who really knows what he is doing and when I heard he had reworked the engine it was good enough for me, I decided to buy it.

Veem Engineering balanced all necessary parts and apologised that the front pulley was three thousandths out of round but said it shouldn't matter. Re-assembled and installed in chassis the whole lot sat in the garage part finished until July last, when Mike Cooke said why not finish it and go to Kiama in Easter '84. Well why not!! So feverish activity - down the garage every night, all weekend, days off, public holidays, with a "finished by" deadline of January which became February and was realized at last in March!

There are hundreds of small side stories I could tell but I am sure most restorers have been through it all. There are magic moments when she fires up and runs for the first time and frustrations like the three weeks of constant hassle to try and get the doors to hang right - but in the end its all worth the trouble.

The engine and chassis numbers on this car match - C.A5897. As an early 1928 or as is often referred to, an A.R model. I was unsure what colour to finish it in. We already have a dark blue car in the club in Ray Mahony's phaeton, and in order to preserve some individuality I did not want to repeat my cars original colours so after writing east to Canberra I was advised that any colour that reflected the vintage era was acceptable. Many cars arrived in Australia in the "white" or undercoated condition and were painted here to the factory or owners choice. So I decided to use a deep wine red body with dark burgundy trim and a dove grey stripe. Upholstery is dark brown artificial leather and the hood and side curtains are in salt and pepper cloth which is grey.

To those unaware I have another 1928 phaeton but slightly earlier with engine number C.A 2071. This car will be the next restoration. I think it will be a little quicker as I have learnt how to do it now.

Bill Bennie.

VEHICLE EXAMINATIONS

Would anyone who has had their vehicle examined by the V.C.C.W.A. or V.A.A. this year, let Ray Mahony know the result of such examination as soon as possible please.