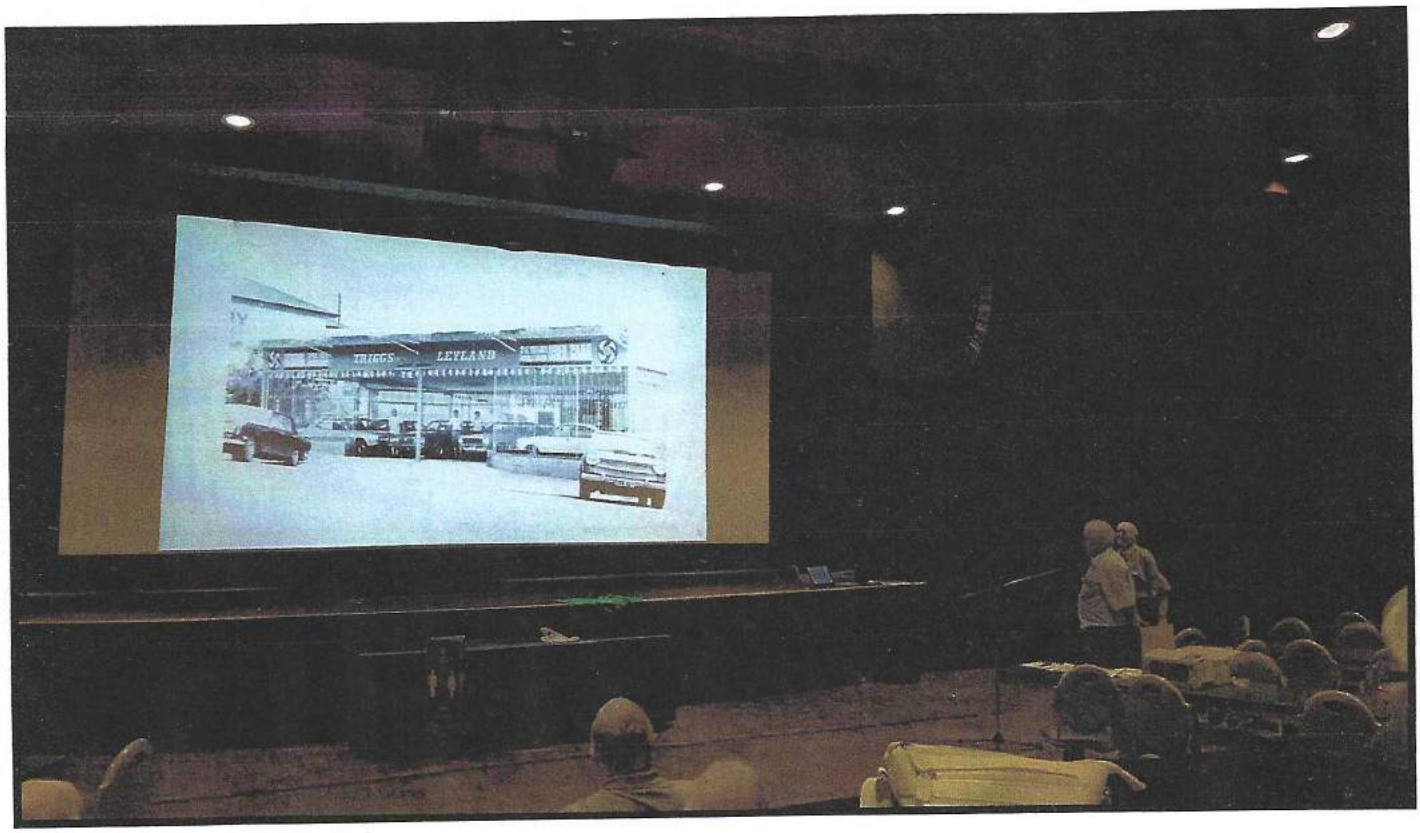
BMC-Leyland Australia Heritage Group Inc.

August 2021

www.bmclaheritage.org.au

A non-profit association of some hundreds of former employees and interested persons whose mission is to preserve the heritage of BMC–Leyland Australia and its associated companies as a significant part of Australia's automotive manufacturing history.

NEWSLETTER
ISSUE 77



In This Issue

Everything is cancelled!
2021 Film Afternoon
Castrol Collection

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Heritage Group Merchandise

DVDs
The Car Makers
Horses to Horsepower
Austin Freeway Around Australia & 9 ½ Days
Member Price all $20 each.

CD
Heritage Group CD 3rd Imprint — **$20**
Photos, powerpoint presentations, reports and stories.

Books
Building Cars in Australia — **$40**
P76- The Inside Story (2nd Edit.) — **$20**
BMC-Leyland Australia Vehicle Reference 1950-1982
List Price $85, Members @ $45 limit of 1 per member
Secrets of Style — **$30**
Leyland Cars in Australia — **$50**
A Chronicle

For sales and details of postage contact Roger Foy on 02 9449 1524 or email rogerfoy1@bigpond.com

Or visit **www.bmclaheritage.org.au**

Another Saturday night in the house and I just realized, even the trash goes out more than me.

From the President

I hope this finds you covid safe and you have been able to get vaccinated. This is the 'Everything is Cancelled' edition. As the Covid situation continues to head in the wrong direction events are being cancelled or delayed, some multiple times. So you can ignore the calendar printed in past newsletters and I am not even going to try to include one in this issue. Following is the current situation for events that should be happening in 2021.

Minis Down Under
21st November, 2021 Celebrating 60 years of the Mini in Australia following its release in 1961. This is the third attempt to hold the event. The Heritage Group is sponsoring trophies for Best Original class.

Shannon's Sydney Classic and the **All British Day** have been cancelled for the year.

Heritage Group AGM has delayed until further notice. Fair Trading are very sympathetic at this time and we have 18 months from the last AGM which puts us into 2022.

Annual Reunion Lunch will also be delayed. Rather than cancelling it we will move it to early in 2022. Once we are allowed to meet and it is deemed safe, a date will be set and we will let you know. This is probably the most important event each year for the group so in 2022 we will have two, one early and one at the normal time at the end of the year.

2022 Membership Renewals are now due details are on the reverse of the address sheet. If you are sending a cheque please use our new address.

Greg Kean

Please note that the Heritage Group has a new mailing address:
12 Acacia Drive Glenhaven, NSW 2156

On the Cover

2021 Film Afternoon. Making use of the big screen, 'Freeway Round Australia' was shown before Hal Moloney entertained with many stories of rallies around Australia, supported by his extensive collection of photos.

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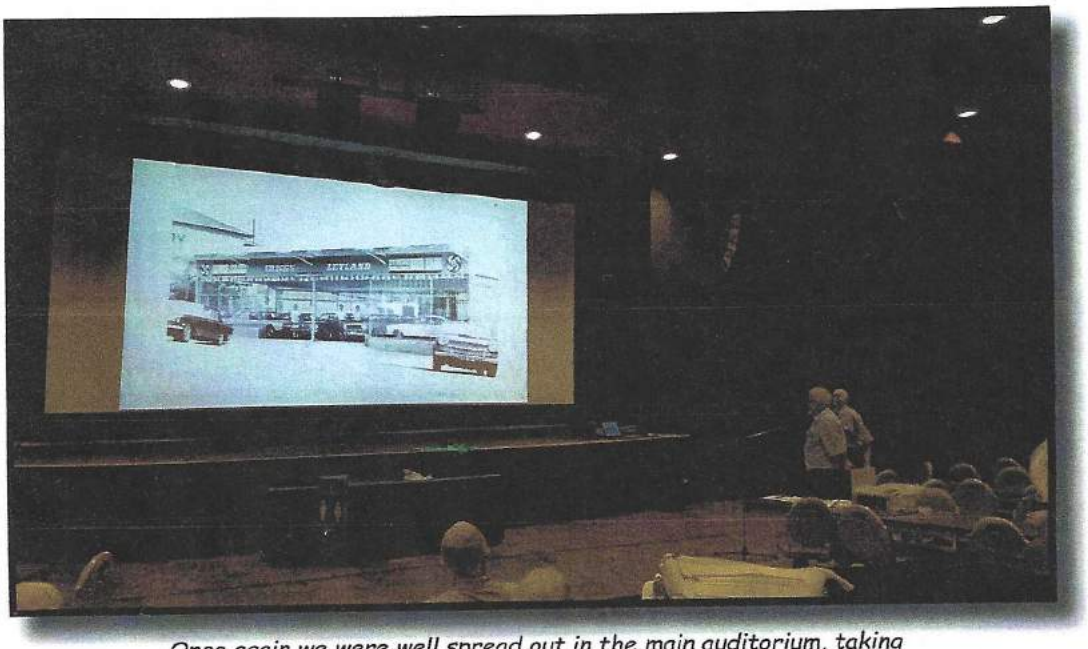
2021 Film Afternoon
Rallies Around Australia



Once again we were well spread out in the main auditorium, taking advantage of the large screen.

2020's Film Afternoon was delayed until 2021and fortunately, it was one event that did manage to go ahead. Douglas Godwin from the Morris Register of NSW was one of the attendees.....

On the 13th March 7 Morris Register members attended the BMC-Leyland Australia Heritage Group Inc. movie afternoon & what a great afternoon it was. Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club was the venue & the clubs auditorium was the place to be. Plenty of undercover parking, the only difficulty was actually finding someone to sell us drinks before the show.

After a welcome from the Heritage Groups President our very own Mr Kean, the rest of the afternoon was handed over to MC Will Hagon who gave an introduction to the movie "Freeway round Australia" it was a very interesting movie on the Austin Freeway & it's trip around Australia in record time 8 or 9 days & boy did they put the car through its paces everything from heat & dust to mud, slush & floods. They certainly drove some long distances at high speeds on roads that could only be described from good to fair to terrible. Obviously this was before stop revive survive.

After a short break for lunch it was into the main event a presentation by Hal Moloney of his "Rallies Round Australia. It was a wonderful afternoon of listening to stories from Repco Reliability Rallies to Ampol Rallies right up to Mobil rallies & this was all done with hundreds of photos of the various rallies & their competitors. Hal started his rally career in the 1964 Ampol trial in a Ford Angla & progressed through different cars such as Ford Falcon to Mitsubishi Colt & onto a Leyland P76. He raced against the likes of Peter Brock & Sir Jack Brabham & was quite successful. It was great to see so

Left: Austin team ready for the REDeX
Below: June Dally Watkins' Ampole Trial Entry

many pictures of Morris & BMC cars from side valve Minors to series one Majors & even Austin A30'S & 40'S right up to P76 Targa Florio's.

All in all it was a great afternoon to sit & listen to someone so very passionate about what he loves. Hal is described as the pre-eminent historian of rallying in this country & having seen & heard him speak I can certainly understand why. So many photos, so little time to enjoy. I am certainly looking forward to the next BMC-Leyland Australia Heritage Group afternoon.

Douglas Godwin

Peter Brock in Hal's P76

Winifred Conway, her Austin and the 1953 Redex

Winifred Conway approached Austin Dealers, Larke Hoskins, for sponsorship as she had entered her Austin A40 in the 1953 Round Australia Redex Trial but she was told that they "...had already sponsored two teams, that the roads were too rough for a woman of my age and that I was mad'. Some motoring journalists at the time (mainly men) declared that the trials were no place for grandmothers, these were dangerous roads that required skill and strength to meet the challenges. By the time the trial was completed she was declared the most popular entrant and Austin Dealers gave her more prominence in advertising than one of their Austin entrants which finished in the top ten.

Granny Conway, as she became referred to, may have finished in the middle but finish she did and along the way won the hearts of the press and more importantly their readers. At the Rockhampton check point she arrived late due to bad weather and rough roads. Reporters asked her if she was concerned, and she replied that she was only competing for the prize of the automatic pop-up toaster offered to the best Austin entrant.

Winifred always wore a hat and gloves while driving, arrived at the end of the rally with a fresh blue -rinse and ruffled a few feathers when she suggested that a few of the roll overs and cars leaving the road were because they were being driven too fast. She also stated that she didn't meddle with her engine, saying 'My motto is never touch the engine. You always strike trouble when you start lifting the bonnet.' Apparently, she was of the opinion that many of the men fiddle with their cars so they travel quickly to the next stop so they had time to work on their cars again.

"For years I have wanted to drive to Darwin and through Central Australia, but I was too afraid to go alone. I realised I would be perfectly safe on this trial, as the other drivers would provide a wonderful escort. As I mainly wished to see the country, take photos and enjoy myself, I have not worried about losing points. We have had picnics on the way." She talked to as many people as she could, signed many autographs and Austin must have loved it when she was quoted saying 'Men should have more confidence in the engineers who build cars. 'Leave it to the makers, they know what they are doing—that's my maxim.'

Winifred completed the 1953 trial with Margaret Bruce, as co-driver and navigator (she was a former army driver) and a male driver, Denys Tanner. She did manage to arrange some sponsorship before the event but after as the 'Galloping Grandma' she appeared in many different advertisements. And the pop-up toaster? She received 3, one from Women's Weekly, one from the Redex Trial organisers and one from Larke Hoskins.

Winifred at the end of the 1953 Trial- note the toaster on the front seat!

Gerry & Matt celebrate another win

Gerry Crowns exploits behind the wheel of a P76, with Matt Bryson as his navigator have frequented our newsletter over the past years- particularly his very timely win of the Paris to Peking in 2013-right on time for the 40th anniversary of the launch of the P76. Sadly, in March this year Gerry passed away after a battle with a particularly aggressive brain cancer.

Gerry emigrated to Australia in 1957 following his friend, Vic Andrews. They formed a company 'Crown and Andrews' which initialy sold gadgets and then toys. It was with toys that they excelled at. Some of the success included Sketch-a-graph, Test Match, Sale of the Century, Neighbours board game and more recently 'The Chaser'. He was awarded an OAM in 2004 for his charity work. He also was a singer, performing in the 'Messiah' for 15 years.

But for us, he will be remembered as the driver in his 80's, who with Matt Bryson, successfully rallied a P76 in some of the toughest rallies in the world. In 2019 Gerry said, after another win in the Paris to Peking, "this is our third win in the Leyland and it was the toughest yet, but it was also very enjoyable. What we really needed though was a few more 87 year old's in the field to keep me company!'

Gerry, Matt and their P76

Some of his achievements in a Leyland P76 include
2nd 2012 Trans- American Challenge
1st 2013 Peking to Paris
2nd 2015 Road to Mandalay
6th 2016 Peking to Paris
6th 2017 Samurai Challenge- 1st in Class
2nd 2018 Road to Saigon
1st 2019 Peking to Paris

There would be few fans of the British motoring industry that did not have at least 1 of Graham Robson's books on their shelf. He was a prolific writer before and after his retirement. In an interview for Classic Car Weekly in 2005 he was asked what he would do in his retirement. His reply was "I am not going to stop if I can help it. I am not a pipe and slippers man". When he passed away on August 5th he was 70,000 words into his next book. On top of his books there is a plethora of magazine articles.

Graham started his career in 1957 when he joined Jaguar as a Graduate Trainee. "I was a Grammar schoolboy,' he said. 'I talked my way into the Graduate Training Scheme. I was there for about three years, doing little bits of E-type, and then moved to Standard-Triumph". Here, as a Development Engineer, he worked closely with Harry Webster on the Vitesse and the TR4 projects. He was then asked to run the re-opened works Motorsport Department in 1962 which he did until 1965.

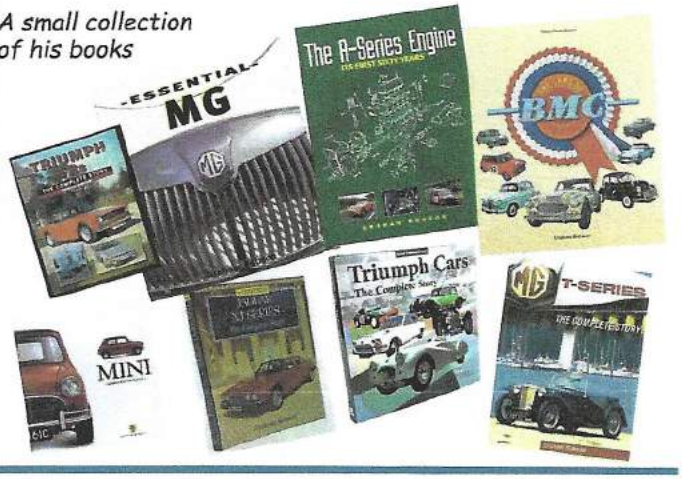
After being head hunted by Autocar magazine writing took over. Graham described his last 'real job' as working for Chrysler UK, then in the process of being rationalised by the Americans, making mass-production cars like the Avenger at the time. "It was all good fun, but I spent half my time in meetings and there wasn't much time for writing."

Asked about his favourite TR model he responded with "I love the TR3a for the numbers it sold, I thought the fact that it was a facelift worked remarkably well, and I think that's the car I love. However, I personally would love to own a very nice TR8 convertible - if it had gone on sale when it was supposed to, it would have been a much, much more successful car."

If you would like to see an interview with Graham Robson, recorded in 2008, go here on youtube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6Vnz_JGPKg

A small collection of his books

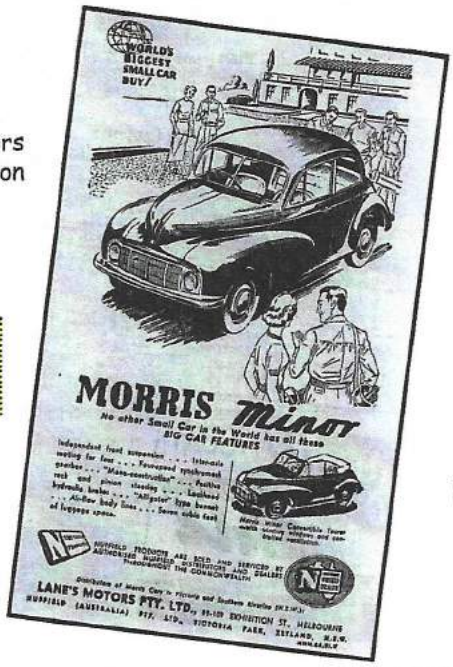


REAR VISION

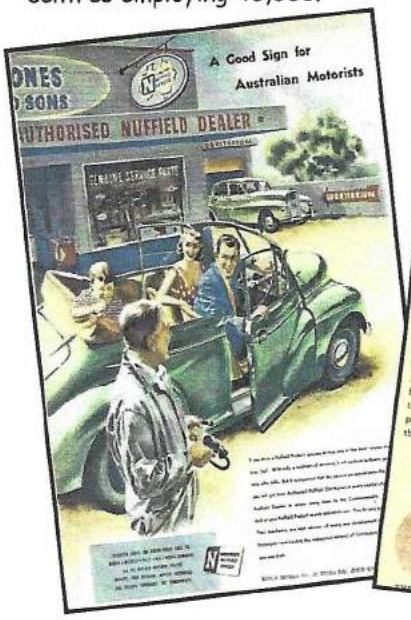
Looking back at some of the events of the past.....

Leyland Motors purchases Albion Motors

1951

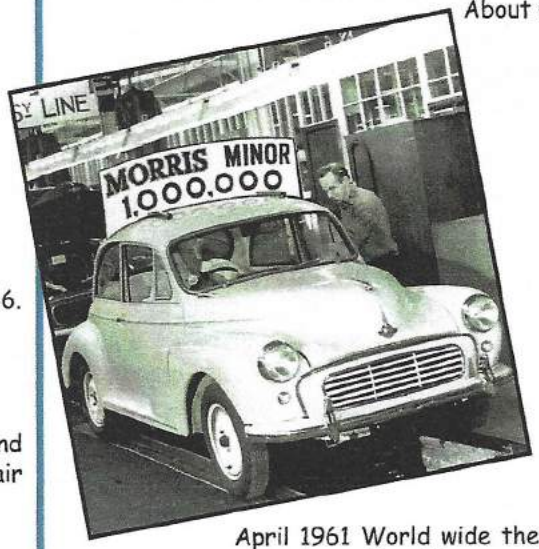


Australia has 65 production assembly plants employing 9,066. They are spread across the country as follows:
NSW -19, Vict- 17, Qld- 9, SA- 8, WA- 7, Tas- 5
There are 413 body plants employing 14,982:
NSW- 158, Vict- 139, Qld- 53, SA- 29, Tas- 19, WA- 15.
124 factories manufacturing components, parts and accessories employing 5331 and 10,676 service and repair centres employing 40,000.



To alleviate Sydney's parking problem, the NSW Government announces that it will build a five story car park in the Domain, and underground parking stations at Hyde Park, Belmore Park, and Prince Alfred Park. Control of on street and off street parking is handed to Sydney Council.

4th of January the **1,000,000 millionth Morris Minor** rolls off the production line in England . It should have been in late 1960 but strikes slowed the production line. About 60,000 of these were built at Zetland.



1961

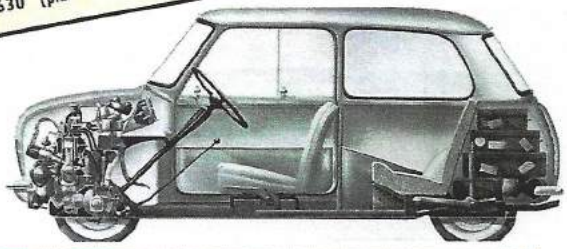
April 1961 World wide the car industry was in a slump. The US reported 1.000.000 cars in stock at dealers, British manufacturers continued to be affected by strikes, French manufacturers laid off 3,000 workers and moved to shorter working weeks as did others in Europe and locally BMC, Borg Warner, Ford, GMH, Lucas and Volkswagen all reported laying off workers.

President Kennedy bans American Serviceman in Britain buying British cars tax free. They must now buy American.

BIRTHS

MORRIS (nee Mini-Minor): Early this morning at the British Motor Corporation's Sydney Plant, after ten years' development a sturdy youngster.
(Name: Morris 850.)
—All wonderful.
Visitors welcome from tomorrow.

At the Melbourne Motor Show **Austin A60** Stationwagon makes an appearance while for Morris, the 850 makes its first local appearance.



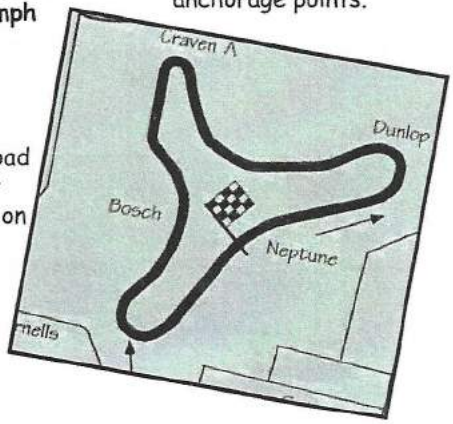
Capable of accommodating 9 students the **BMC Mobile Training Classrooms** go into service. Powered by a 5.1litre 6 cylinder diesel driving through a 5 speed gearbox and two speed axle the units are air-conditioned and weigh 5.25 tons. They cost £7000 each including £2000 worth of equipment.

BMC announces that, in line with their passenger cars, commercial vehicles will now be subject to Australian testing and modifications before being released to the market. Austin 2.45F and 3.34F are the first to benefit.

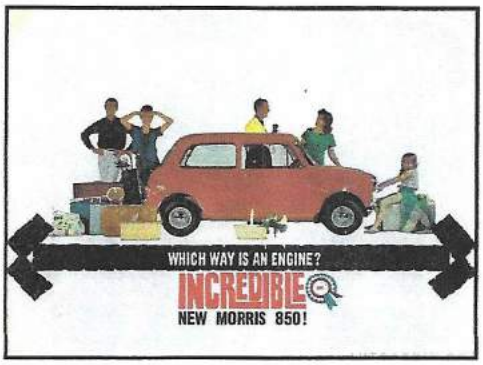
E-Type Jaguar arrives

BMC announces that all production cars are now fitted with seat belt anchorage points.

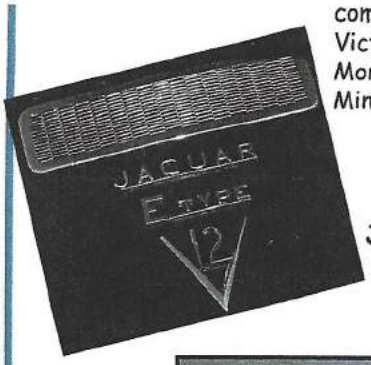
Leyland purchases **Standard-Triumph**



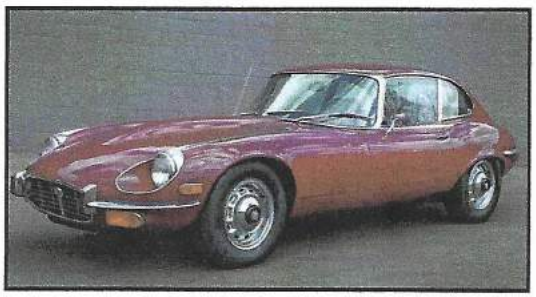
Catalina Park Road Racing Circuit at Katoomba opens on February 12



1971 Wearing seat belts becomes compulsory in NSW after Victoria's successful lead. Milton Morris was NSW Transport Minister



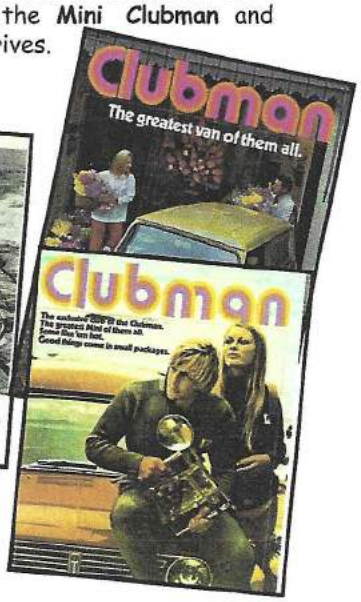
Jaguar E-Type Series 3 arrives with a V12 option



Dramatic claims in **Wheels** magazine that British Leyland is dropping FWD!

1971

Maxi Savings on **Mini** as the round nose bows out and the **Mini Clubman** and **Clubman GT** arrives.



The future **Morris Marina** is photographed outside the factory wearing 'Korella' badging.

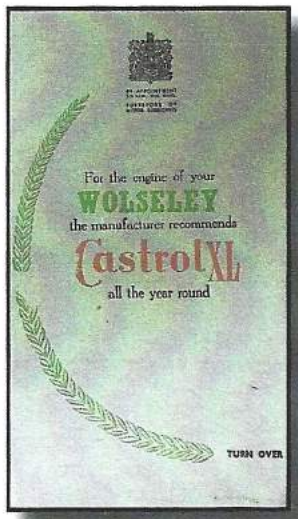
Back in 2018 the Heritage Group showed Crossroads Alice at our Film Afternoon. I had contacted Castrol to see if they had any information regarding that marathon trip that could add to our event but it turned out that there was little local knowledge of the journey. They were, however, very interested in what we were doing and sent a rep to our event as well as suppling posters and caps for those who attended. Later, Castrol requested a copy of the film so we donated a copy to them. When I visited their office in Guildford to drop it off I found they have an extensive collection of Castrol memorabilia, photos and brochures tracking the company's history. BMC is well represented and now they have a copy of 'Crossroads Alice' which was shown to reps at a conference later that week.

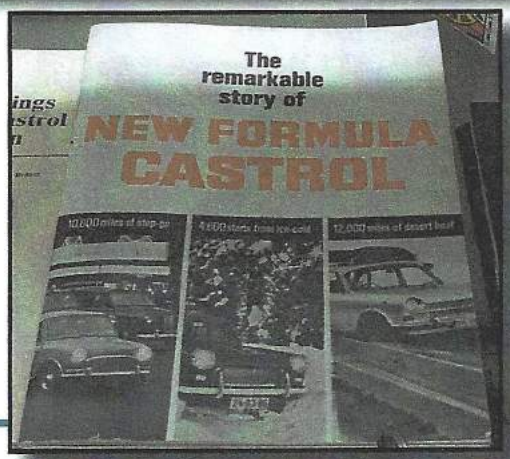
Greg Kean

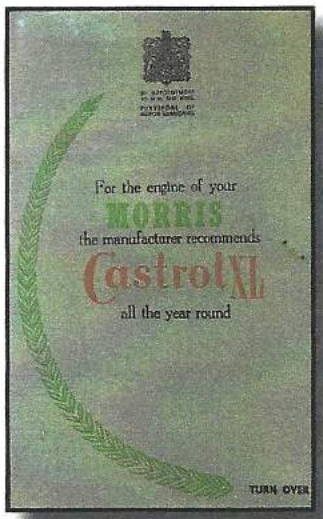
Left is Castrol's Director for Victoria signing the car in at the end of the marathon.

Above: Evan and Jack at a refill during the marathon.

Above is Pilot Anne Carter, Evan Green and Jack Murray before the Morris 1100S race against a plane.







A great place to park a Mini, 18 Morris Grove Zetland