

SWALLOW TALES



The Official Newsletter for the Members of the
SIMCA CAR CLUB AUSTRALIA Inc

VOLUME 19

NUMBER 2

July 2012

**The only
room for
argument**



**is which
Simca!**



**...THE NEW FAMILY ALL-PURPOSE SIMCA STATION WAGON, OR THE
SIMCA 5-SEATER SEDAN...BOTH POWERED BY SIMCA'S
FABULOUS "RUSH" ENGINE...HOLDER OF 114 WORLD ENDURANCE RECORDS!**





SIMCA CAR CLUB AUSTRALIA Inc.

Dedicated to the preservation and restoration of SIMCA cars for the purpose of maintaining the Simca marquee as part of the motoring history of Australia.

The Club was formed to provide technical information and spare parts assistance to Simca club members.

The Club has an affiliation with Simca owners and clubs throughout the world, permitting a global update of Simca activities to our members.

The Club maintains a register of Simca owners through our specialist Registrar for both Simca and Simca Vedette.

The views or opinions offered by members in this newsletter – Swallow Tales may not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the Committee of Management.

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT (as elected at the 2011 AGM)

President:	Morrie Barrett	Ph: (02) 9686 9719
	Email: morriebarrett@optusnet.com.au	
Secretary:	Geoff Rose	Ph: (02) 4473 6220
	PO Box 3087	
	TUROSS HEAD NSW 2537	
	Email: geoffrey.rose8@bigpond.com	
Editor:	Rob (Lois) Lewis	Ph: (08) 9529 2926 Mobile: 0438 329880
	47 Donald Drive	
	SAFETY BAY WA 6169	
	Email: lois.lewis@iinet.net.au	
Public Officer:	Margaret Barrett	
	54 Disraeli Road	
	WINSTON HILLS NSW 2153	
State Representatives:		
NEW SOUTH WALES	Barabara Scanes	Ph: (02)4571 2238 Mobile: 0427 527708
	Email: dbscanes@bigpond.com	
QUEENSLAND	Wayne Yeo	Ph: (07) 5534 5330
	Email: wyeo@optusnet.com.au	
SOUTH AUSTRALIA	Graham Powell	Ph: (08) 8563 3090
	Email: sarahjb@chariot.net.au	
VICTORIA / TASMANIA	Stephen Maloney	Ph (03) 9584 6180
	Email: Stephen_maloney@hotmail.com	
WESTERN AUSTRALIA & Life Member	John Pickles	Ph: (08) 9535 5023
	Email: jpickles@dodo.com.au	
NEW ZEALAND	Colin Smith	Ph 0011 6468 440212
	Email: lucol@clear.net.nz	

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE – from Morrie Barrett



Hi to all Members it is with regret that I advise of the passing of Charles Grimwood, condolences were forwarded to his family on your behalf. Charles will be remembered and missed at all the events he regularly attended in NSW.

Also we send our warm regards to Max Hollingsworth's family on the passing of their father. Stuart Hollingsworth has advised that he will be taking over his dad's membership.

John Pickles has also been on the sick list, however he is well on the way to recovery and whilst he is not running I understand that John has started his daily walks.

I travelled to Inverell to catch up with the long distance travelers Rob and Lois Lewis on their return journey to WA and was able to introduce them to Bruce and Barbra Holder and Ken and Ruth Clayton at Bundara.

Whilst driving to Inverell on Tuesday 17th July, I noticed a Simca at Guya stopped and had a talk to the passengers guess who Ken and Ruth from Bundara, it's a small world.

Whilst at the French Car Day Silverwater Park last Sunday two enquires were made regarding membership and the purchase of P60's, I contacted a chap in Kempsey who has a P60 Stn Wagon on full registration and wishes to sell it, I will check the vehicle out in the next week or two hopefully as the Grand Large is being driven Home.

Margaret and I enjoyed our river cruise and can recommend you put it on your bucket list.

We look forward to catching up at Albury our AGM on Saturday 27 October 2012.

Morrie Barrett



From the Editor's Desk – Rob (and Lois) LEWIS



Hello again to all our SIMCA enthusiasts!

Our Life Member, John Pickles, had some health problems while we were away but tells us he is well on the mend now. We send him our love and best wishes for a speedy recovery.

How time flies when you are on a trip! 15 weeks travelling and over 15,000 kms I am now back in Perth to put this edition together (with Lois's help). Our trip started when we left Perth on March 14 and drove across the Nullarbor to South Australia. We drove through South Australia to Mt Gambier and then on to Warnambool. We then headed inland to Queenscliffe (near Geelong) to stay for a few days. In the planning of this trip we wanted make sure that we attended the French

Car Day in Melbourne. It was wonderful to catch up with other members and enjoy a sausage sizzle and cup of coffee. We had the chance to put some faces to names of people we had not previously met as well as have a chat with Stephen Maloney the Victorian Representative. Pat Smith mentioned that she had not been that well, so we send her our best wishes and hope she is feeling much better now.



Our big trip included a visit to Tasmania to visit family and friends. While we were there I called in to say hello to Iain and Leila Dyer. Iain mentioned he has a number of projects to get finished. He told me these were a

Fangio style race car as well as some other cars including a Mark II Jaguar and some boats. It appears he will be kept very busy! Iain and Leila were in good spirits and I had an enjoyable time with them.



After one month in Tassie we sailed back across Bass Strait on the Spirit of Tasmania and headed north along the east coast towards Tuross Head to see Geoff and Ros Rose for a few days. We left our caravan at Geoff and Roz's home and drove to



Canberra to stay for a few nights. Canberra was a highlight of our trip. Whilst we were there we managed to visit the National War Memorial where Rob was able to source some information regarding his father's service history as a navigator in the Royal Australian Air Force during World War II. His father served in the 100 Squadron (Beauforts) in New Guinea.

Roz and Geoff were incredible hosts and we thoroughly enjoyed spending time with them and getting to know them both. It was hard to say goodbye after such a great time. We had lots of laughs and some delicious meals whilst we were there. I am sure Geoff and Roz will be lifelong friends and we will make sure we keep in touch. We headed north up the coast to Wollongong. People who live in Australia have a fabulous coastline to holiday on – right from South Australia through to Noosa Heads (this is as far north as we went). We had a couple of weeks in Brisbane staying with Rob's sister and her husband before heading towards Inverell where we met up with Morrie.



Morrie was excited to show us his Grand Large – all painted and re-trimmed. We also had the chance to meet up with Bruce and Barbara Holder at their farm in Inverell. Bruce has a large shed full of Simca cars and parts - I (Rob) felt like a kid in a lolly shop! Morrie also drove us to Bundarra where we had the opportunity to meet new members Ken and Ruth Clayton. Ken and Ruth recently purchased a 90A from Bruce and they were very excited to show it to us. Ken mentioned that 55 years ago he owned a 90A and fondly remembers the great feeling when driving this car.



We then left Inverell and headed south through the country towards Parkes, Forbes and then onto Mildura. In Mildura we stayed a gorgeous caravan park sitting on the banks of the mighty Murray River. The Murray is the world's seventh largest river and one of the world's longest navigable rivers, the Murray River has a long and important history to the people of Australia. We took an enjoyable and very interesting morning cruise on the paddlesteamer PS Melbourne. Our next overnight stop was at Nurioopta where we managed to meet up and have a meal at the local pub with Graham and Sarah Powell. Graham and Sarah are the newly appointed South Australian representatives- it was a great night filled with lots of laughs and happy memories.



We then made tracks for home, stopping at Quorn (near Port Augusta). It was now time to make our way to Ceduna and the trip towards home across the Nullarbor. It blew and poured with rain all the way to Ceduna.



Rob was very keen to complete the Nullarbor Links Golf Course (the World's Longest Golf Course) on our way home so we purchased the entry cards at the visitor centre in Ceduna.



According to the Nullarbor Links website it states: *The 18-hole par 72 golf course spans 1,365 kilometres with one hole in each participating town or roadhouse along the Eyre Highway, from Kalbarrie in Western Australia to Ceduna in South Australia. Each hole includes a green and tee and somewhat rugged outback-style natural terrain fairway. The*

course provides a quintessential Australian experience and a much-needed activity/attraction for travellers along the renowned desolate highway. (Or so they say!!!!).

After travelling 15,350kms we can honestly say we feel so lucky and blessed to have been able to complete this amazing trip. We have managed to catch up with family and some old friends on our travels. As well we have been so fortunate to make some new friends along the way including a number of Simca enthusiasts. We have managed to see so much of this beautiful, amazing country – but really we have seen such a small amount – there is still so much to see! Providing we have the health and finances in the coming years – hopefully we will have the opportunity to see more and meet more of you on our next travels. *Our apologies to those members where time or distance did not allow us to call in and say hello.*



With Barbara & Bruce Holder at Inverell



With Ruth and Ken Clayton at Bundarra



PS... I saw this truck for sale near Clare in South Australia – Anyone interested in doing a restore??? - Only Joking!!!

The picture on the cover of this issue is from a Simca brochure given to me by Bruce Holder. You will notice the price of the cars at the time – how things change! In this next issue I will include some information from the brochure.

SECRETARY'S REPORT by Geoff Rose

Got back last night from a very enjoyable, sunny French Car Day in Sydney; hosted as always by the very active Peugeot Car Club of NSW. During the course of the day there was mention made of the upcoming AGM on 27th October in Albury and what issues people might like to raise for discussion/decision. Please give some thought to matters that concern you and pass them on to me so they can be included on the agenda (not that you can't bring it up on the day but some important stuff might need a little time for thought!).



As mentioned in my last report, I did indeed get Rob and Lois's help to produce new Club Membership Cards - done in the comfort of home while they passed through with their van on their epic "west to east and back trip of a lifetime!" All should now have received them and noted that they do not have the year on them - your receipt for your annual subscription shows that and when you don't get Swallow Tales anymore you will get the message, hopefully, that you are no longer "financial".

Things on the Logo front seem to have settled with lawyers writing to lawyers, as they do, and charging money for it. Let's hope all that stuff is behind us and we can just be a group of people that enjoy each other's company and the French cars we own!

The use of Electronic Fund Transfer into our club bank account seems to be working well and an increasing number of members have used this method since they were advised of the details.

(Bendigo Bank BSB 633-108 Account Number 135 350 668 with name so I can work out who it's from)

We are now also able to transfer funds to any account thereby saving on postage and the hassles of posting things.

Finally, as use of the internet grows and search engines seem to be able to find just about anything, the Club is receiving copious amounts of snail/ email information and invitations to attend meetings and rallies etc. Rather than try to identify which members would like to know what, I am going to start sending this stuff to State reps for their info and decision. I don't expect our New Zealand friends will need to know too much about Oz events and I am certain that they have plenty of their own events to keep them occupied!

Safe motoring Simcaites,
See some of you at the AGM,

Geoff Rose

Secretary/Treasurer

16 July 2012



As retired Service Manager, Rob Lewis was driving his old SIMCA down the freeway, his mobile phone rang. Answering, he heard Lois's voice urgently warning him, 'Rob, I just heard on the news that there's a car going the wrong way on the freeway. Please be careful!'

'Botheration, 'said Rob, 'It's not just one car. It's hundreds of them!'



NEW ZEALAND REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT by Colin Smith

Greetings fellow 'somecaringthings'

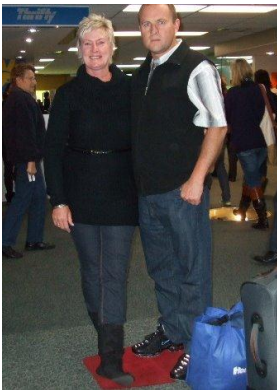
Firstly I must thank John and Evelyn Pickles for taking Ivan under their wing while he was in WA. To use Ivan's own words "a very lovely couple" - Aren't all Simca owners? It was big experience for him.



On the 11th March we attended annual display by the British and European car clubs. We had a new stand this year - thanks to Morrie Barrett we flew the club's banner. I think that was the reason we won best individual display. On the 25th March New Zealand came into line with Australia and changed give way rules at intersections. That is how I learnt them at age 15 when I got my first licence.



On the 18th April I was in the shed working on another Austin 7 when I heard a familiar sound and up the drive came a green 1501 station wagon with Peter and Quinn grinning from ear to ear. It was good to see them in a happy state. Richard Davies has the motor out of the Versailles and attending to its internals. In between Simcas, I have been panelbeating, fitting a new clutch gearbox to a boarding Austin (7). In late March I spent an hour in the cardiac department at hospital and I watched and listened to my ticker on a computer screen. Interesting but nothing out of place because I've heard nothing since!



Things came to a head in the middle of May for Ivan. We had to get him back to start a job on the 21st. So another visit to travel agent - the best deal was to leave Perth at midnight 19/20th. Fly to Sydney then to Christchurch and arrive at Napier at 8pm - onto the red carpet then home for a little sleep. Then on the job at 7am, of course the v8 had to be used for the state occasion.

On the 2nd July after a short battle with cancer of the blood our shih-tzu poodle cross 'Goldie' of 11 years passed away. So you can see that we have had a very up and down time lately. Goldie is sadly missed by our other little blind dog at 13 years - a cousin to Goldie.



Some of you may have seen some photos of three Simcas in a shed covered with bird droppings. They are now in residence at Simca Owner's Place. Two will be dismantled, while the white 1301 will be returned to service as it is a 'lefthooker' - very rare in this part of the world.



Cheers Colin / Lucy and Ivan / Jan

NSW REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT by Barbara Scanes

Hi from NSW - On Sunday July 15 quite a few of our members were in attendance at the French Car Day at Silverwater Park in Sydney. The weather was great and there was an excellent roll up of cars from an Amilcar, Citroen, Peugeot, Renault, Simca and a Facel Vega to name just a few.

John and Madeleine Brown and Jan and Ian Powell were there with their Matras, Keith Reddacliff with his Vedette and Morrie Barrett, Geoff Rose and Barbara and Don Scanes in their Arondes. It was great to



see the three cars side by side again as they were so often on the WA Trek. We caught up with Geoff Lee who had driven his Renault Caravelle down for the day. It was lovely meeting up with our South Australian members Mel and Gelske Rogers who had come over from Whyalla especially for the French Car Day and to meet up with us NSW members. Morrie and Geoff met up with them on Saturday and went out to for a meal. Mel is restoring a Vedette and Keith was able to give him lots of pointers. The quote of the day from Mel "I should have flown over so as to get back quicker to start work on the Vedette." Rosemary and Ian McKill also came in their modern as Ian is having problems with the brakes on his car.



Morrie Barrett reports that his Grande Large is almost finished and is only weeks away from coming home. Congratulations to Margaret and Morrie on the arrival of their first Grandson named Nathaniel. Our best wishes go to Roger Skeers who has recently had a triple by-pass and we wish him a speedy recovery.



It is with regret that we announce the loss of a great friend and member Charles Grimwood. Charles had a passion for old cars and sailing. He had a Simca Aronde and an MGB and actively participated in both clubs. He was sadly missed at the French Car Day this year as he was a regular attendee of this day. Our thoughts are with Yvonne in the months ahead.



Don and I are participating in the Bay to Birdwood run this year in our Austin 7 and hope that we might catch up with members in South Australia while we are in the area. The following week we will be in Tanunda for the Austin 7 Rally.

Looking forward to our weekend in Albury for our AGM on October 27th and hope to see many of you there.

Happy motoring! *Barbara Scanes* – NSW Representative



Western Whispers – WA State Representatives Report - By John Pickles

Greetings to our fellow members across the sandy desert and further across the wet ditch. How this last four months has quickly slipped by and non-other to appreciate this would be our now famous members of "The Ro & Lo Travelling Caravan Show", Rob and Lois Lewis. For those fortunate enough to have received the emailed six part episode of their journey across Australia would by now have experienced the warmth and humour of this wonderful couple who we are fortunate to have not only as fellow club members but editors of our "Swallow Tales".

I must make an apology to those good friends and fellow members who I may have neglected over the last couple of months and also thank the many who offered their wishes for my speedy recovery. For some time I had experienced a back problem that had only got worse and the time had come when it required surgery, I was admitted to hospital on the 4th June for the surgery and what was to be a 4 - 6 day stay. Well, as they say one can be the unlucky player, unfortunately the surgery did not go to plan, bad for me the nerves were cut and a blood clot developed on the nerve end resulting in an extremely painful time until they decided after twelve days to take me back into surgery to remove the clot, what a relief that was. A month on and I still have very little feeling from the waist down on the right side and it will still be a few weeks before I should be able to drive. The most frustrating part of all this is in the fact that I have a Vedette motor sitting upside down awaiting a crankshaft regrind. I had finally sorted all the problems on the "Versailles" and had got it licensed on the Friday afternoon, on Saturday I took it out for a maiden run only to hear a slight knock in the motor which we have found to be a big-end bearing or more to the point a worn crank, the motor is now out of the car. I have by good information been told that two fellow club members are coming to assist (more likely to perform) the act of repairing and installing the motor.

As previously mentioned our good friend and fellow New Zealand club member Ivan Smith spent the best part of three months working in Perth and during that period he spent a number of days with Evelyn and me attending the "All Aussie" car show at Pinjarra. Just a couple pictures of time spent together. Believe Ivan and Colin have now rescued another three Simca's so they are going to be two very busy boys in the months (or is it years) to come.



IVAN & EVELYN



IVAN & JOHN

A question frequently asked by so many people in Western Australia "How is that guy down south getting on with putting that Ford engine in the Vedette"? Well, to answer the question I best show some proof of the progress and point out that it not only the mechanics that has the treatment but the whole bodywork as well. I give you the email contents that I received on the 14th July.

Hello John,

Well, this morning son Dale came across and gave a hand to fit the motor to the Vedette. The front cross member, engine mount adapters and front suspension struts have now been sandblasted and painted in black 2 pack. The Ford C10 auto trans goes into a local auto trans specialist here in Bunbury on Monday to be serviced and have a shift kit added. The Ford 9 inch diff (from a 1959 "Tank" Fairlane) has also been painted in black 2 pack, and if all goes well should be under the car within the week. All of the window rubbers have been ordered from Scotts Old Auto Rubber, the windlacing from an American upholstery

supplier and reproduction outside door handles from Dennis Carpenter Ford restoration parts, who has 1952-1956 Ford door handles which are identical to those on a Simca Vedette. I will keep you up to date as progress continues.

Regards,
Ian.



DALE & IAN



We have been privileged to have received an invitation from the Peugeot Car Club of WA to join with them for a display of French cars at the coming "Busselton Motorfest" to be held on Sunday, November 25 in Busselton. The Peugeot Car Club proposes to make it a weekend event over the 24-25th November with the club organising a local run on the Saturday followed by an evening dinner, they are looking into the motel accommodation, looks as if Rob, Ian and John are interested and if you would like more information best call Kerry Torpy on 0431301784.



Both Ian Williams and I have regular contact with a Vedette Enthusiast in Canada by the name of Jim Marr. Jim sends us regular updates on the scene in that country and of the progress on his Vedette Beaulieu which originated from Belgium. I have attached the latest pictures I have received just to illustrate that nice Vedette's do exist in the most unlikely places.



I ask you to spare a thought for our long serving member John Wilyman who at this very moment suffering severely from the dreaded influenza virus that is sweeping the country. Like our cars, as we get older we find it more difficult to maintain the speed.

I believe Darrel Manning attracted a lot of attention with the Simca P60 racer at the “Albany Round the Houses” held over the long weekend in June. While the car was a little slow out of the corners it performed with total reliability throughout the event and apart from the “I had a Simca” comment received much attention from people asking what it was.

Guess we can't be disappointed with the survival rate of the Simca in Australia compared with the number of cars sold in the UK.

ENDANGERED SPECIES				
Neil Campbell attempts to make sense of the official figures for five less fashionable – and therefore rare – 1980s classics				
178 LEFT ON ROAD				
TAGORA 1980-1983 TAXED: 3	SOLARA 1980-1986 TAXED: 28	SAMBAA 1981-1986 TAXED: 71	ALPINE 1980-1985 TAXED: 29	HORIZON 1979-1987 TAXED: 47
1 GL 4dr saloon 2136cc	1 LE 4dr saloon 1294cc	26 Cabrio 2dr convertible 1360cc	1 LS 5dr hatchback 1442cc	9 LS 5dr hatchback 1118cc
1 SX 4dr saloon 2464cc	1 Minx 4dr saloon 1294cc	13 Style 3dr hatchback 934cc	1 LE 5dr hatchback 1592cc	6 GLE 5dr hatchback 1294cc
1 GL 2dr convertible 2136cc	1 SX 4dr saloon 1982	11 LS 3dr hatchback 954cc	1 LS 5dr hatchback 1592cc	4 LS 5dr hatchback 1294cc
	1 GLS 4dr saloon 1592cc	9 Rallye 3dr hatchback 1360cc	2 LS 5dr hatchback 1294cc	4 GLS 5dr hatchback 1294cc
	3 SX (Other) 1592cc	6 LE 3dr hatchback 954cc	2 S 5dr hatchback 1592cc	4 GLX 5dr hatchback 1442cc
	3 GL 4dr saloon 1592cc	3 GL 3dr hatchback 1124cc	2 LS (Other) 1592cc	4 Pullman 5dr hatchback 1442cc
	6 Minx 4dr saloon 1592cc	1 LS 3dr hatchback 1124cc	3 GL/GLS 2dr convertible 1442cc	3 LX 5dr hatchback 1294cc
	6 Rapier 4dr saloon 1592cc	1 LS 3dr hatchback 1124cc	3 GL/GLS 5dr hatchback 1442cc	3 LS 5dr hatchback 1442cc
	8 LS 4dr saloon 1592cc	1 LS other 1124cc	4 GL/GLS 5dr hatchback 1592cc	2 GL 5dr hatchback 1118cc
		1 GLS 3dr hatchback 1360cc	5 Minx 5dr hatchback 1592cc	2 LE 5dr hatchback 1118cc
			6 Rapier 5dr hatchback 1592cc	2 LE Special 5dr hatchback 1118cc
				2 LS Ultra 5dr hatchback 1294cc
				1 GL 5dr hatchback 1442cc
				1 SX 5dr hatchback 1442cc
LATE-SERIES TALBOT CARS TAXED: 178 SORN: 156 TOTAL: 334				
1980-1987 TALBOTS When did you last see a Talbot Solara, Samba, Tagora, Alpine or Horizon? They used to be on every corner in Britain yet now they've almost all gone. So for this Endangered Species feature we've inspected them in minute detail. We've found a few minor errors in the supplied data, like the intriguing prospect of a Tagora Convertible. We also found that 70 Tagora GLS models had been registered new in 2010 – clearly not correct, so we've omitted this from our figures.				
 				
SORN: 156 TAGORA: 5 ALPINE: 16 SOLARA: 18 HORIZON: 54 SAMBA: 63				

Iain' Progress - Email from Leila Dyer (Tasmania)

Hi All,

Iain is continuing to progress slowly. He is walking with the aid of a stick. He went to physio on Friday and they were really pleased with his progress. He is continuing with his exercises everyday so all in all he is progressing slowly but surely. You never know we might see you all at the AGM. It was so nice to catch up with Rob Lewis in April, Iain really enjoyed the chat and company.

Cheers Leila



A traffic cop pulled alongside a speeding car on the motorway. Glancing into the car, he was astounded to see that the young lady, who was driving, was knitting.

Realising that she was oblivious to his flashing lights and siren, the policeman wound down his window, turned on his loudspeaker and yelled, 'PULL OVER!'

NO', the young lady yelled back, 'IT's A SCARF!'

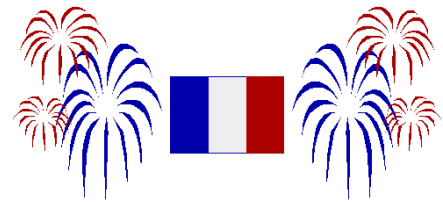


SOUTH AUSTRALIA REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT by Graham & Sarah Powell

Deux Francais Automobiles - Bastille Day 2011

The players: Aronde 90A - Henri & Celcille Montblanc

Renault 4cv - Francois Petit Miam & Claudine Neux Vetemens



The day was turning out to be pleasantly sunny and yet slightly chilly. The SIMCA Aronde and the Renault 4cv were parked and ready for a mystery jaunt through the Adelaide hills in our European jollopies.



Some weeks/ months before it was decided, after a few evening ports, to take our two French cars for a spin together and what more perfect a day than Bastille Day (14/7). The time flew, of course, and the day was almost upon us and still last minute repairs touch ups, etcetera to be done. The Renault, in its resplendent yellow makeup and named Buttercup, had had its engine and box overhauled by the owner Francois early that year. Buttercup had been purchased recently (6 months prior) and hadn't travelled farther than Angaston, a distance of 20 kilometres.

Henri had acquired the Aronde (90A) a few years previously in a slightly worn state. Last date of registration being 1984! Since then it had been parked in a barn in Tarlee (SA) and left to slowly return to the earth. Would it still start after sitting for so long – sure it would! A good battery and a bit of juice and it started straight away eager to do some miles. But a few minor things like brakes, exhaust, tyres and cooling system overhaul/ repairs were required, amongst other things, before the bitumen would glide gracefully by. Not to mention a stunning trio of colours hurriedly sprayed on just for the day – red, white and blue stripes, of course! What else???



The picnic baskets were packed, full of all things yummy and gastronomic (in a French style of course), Claudine and Cecille were looking resplendent in their French attire and the day was brightening up. The first destination, Chateau Barossa (Lyndoch), a distance of 12 k was the morning tea break. Buttercup had earlier malfunctioned due to a faulty fuel gauge and had run out of the all important 'go-go juice'. Having topped up (on the road) and again at the meeting place, in Tanunda, it was all systems go. Reaching our daunting top speeds of 80 kph (down-hill) we were soon upon the chateau ready to celebrate with a bottle of French champagne. It was truly a banquet fit for kings and queens – duck pâté, brie, baguettes, chicken rillette, Paris Creek camembert, raspberry friends and to top it all off tiny cup

cakes with little French flags flying made by Claudine. Time for a quick shop, in the fabulous French gift shop at the Chateau (sadly now closed and moved to Pt Elliott) as one does, and then off to our roast lunch destination on the edge of the Barossa. To keep us in a French mood, while driving, we listened to Jacques Brel, Edith Piaf and the French Kiss soundtrack on a sophisticated setup of ipod and external speaker.

The first breakdown for Elysee (check this) happened just after leaving Lyndoch. Henri popped the bonnet and peered at the 1300 Flash engine for clues as to what might be the issue. It was determined again that a fuel problem was to blame so more was purchased and it seemed to fix the fault – Henri was not convinced. We managed another 6 kms and again the poor (7 hp??) SIMCA engine was being starved. So again the bonnet was popped and the two French garbed monsieur's poked around while the Mademoiselles were wondering if their pantihose were needed to fix the beast. It was discovered that a blocked jet, which was easily removed, was the culprit. And so using a paper clip, which

was found in the glove box and only put there that morning, the said blockage was removed and the two French cars, with hungry driver/passengers sped off toward the destination.



Grand Cru, 24 kms distant, was reached with no mishap except for the odd fogging up of Elysee windscreen created by steam from radiator overflow being drawn into the heating circuit. The beautiful day continued with wine and a wonderful meal consisting of bowls of steaming French onion soup with gruyere croutons, roast beef and two chickens with vegetable accompaniments which was undoubtedly the best ever tasted! Dessert was a delightful tarte au tatin, with crème fraiche and of course, cheese flushed down with some wonderful Grand Cru wine!!

With full bellies it was decided that a hasty retreat home was necessary due to fading light - neither the SIMCA nor the Renault had particularly brilliant lights. The carburettor blockage did rear its ugly head again but because it was known it was quickly and easily cleaned. Later it was determined that a lot of rust/dirt had been dislodged in the tank and lines getting past a new fuel filter and sitting happily within the carb.

A thoroughly gay day was had by all and it was hoped to be repeated – same time next year (that day is nearly upon us and still with a dirty tank!).

Total kilometres travelled - 91

Time taken - 7 hours

Breakdowns - 4

C' est Fantastique!!!



VICTORIA/TASMANIA REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT by Stephen Maloney

The French Car Festival has been the highlight of this year so far. We had a good turnout of members from both Victoria and New South Wales with a visit from Rob and Lois Lewis (WA) on their trip. Rob Verhagen who arrived with Morrie Barrett and Geoff Rose was another of the interstate visitors. It was good to see a selection of Simcas for the people to view. There was a lot of interest in the Vedettes of Vince Parisi and Peter Walker, Morrie Barrett's P60 Wagon and Geoff Rose's P60 Sedan and lastly the lovely presented 90A of Ray Hodge to finish off the display. Notable for their absence was the Bagheera of John Brown and last year's winner the Vedette of Roger Skeers. All in all a superb turn out for a vehicle that has not been available in Australia for nearly 50 years.

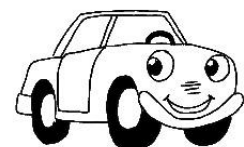
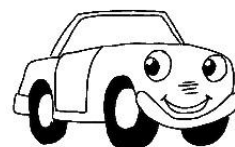


Everybody enjoyed the day with lunch being supplied by John and Pat Smith (hamburgers were very tasty) with wine, cheese and bread stick supplied by myself. Vince Parisi won the best Simca prize for the day and was featured in the Citroën Car Club of Victoria's Magazine front cover as the photo shows.

All in all a very enjoyable day was had by all who attended.



FRENCH CAR FESTIVAL - MELBOURNE



Letter to the Editor - Richard and Lorraine Laney

Something that happened recently has blown my mind. Before I explain this, I must go back to Easter 2011.

On a trip up North to Crescent Head, at South Kempsey we spotted a blue Simca Vedette for sale (Doug Simmons – Car Club member)./ I duly had the Vedette brought home to San Remo (promise to Lorraine – “last restoration” – have any other wives heard this promise?)

Restoration started slowly – lots of caravan trips! Fast forward to February 2012 when the Laney's were holidaying at “Happy Hallidays” at Hallidays Point, just north of Forster (mid north coast of NSW). We met members of the Great Lakes Car Club and during a discussion it was mentioned that a member had a Simca Vedette for Sale. I went to look at the said car, decided to buy and the offer was accepted! Anybody out there ever experienced this situation?) At this stage I must ask “why are we here? – because we love our Classic Cars and the people who own them, whose company we enjoy”. Great Lakes Car Club has been involved with the Zephyr Club of NSW and Twin Lakes Classic Auto Club Inc. for many years, both of which Lorraine and I are members. (At one stage we organised a few “Christmas in July” weekends at Bucketts Way Motel, Gloucester.)

So the scene is set like people. Club member Great Lakes sells Simca Vedette to member Twin Lakes Classic Auto Club, Zephyr Club NSW, Simca Car Club. (Sorry, have to set scene for other things to come.) Another member of the Great Lakes Club offered the use of a car trailer to bring the car home; the caravan was taken to Crescent Head ready for Easter Holidays so the 4-Wheel Drive was free to tow the trailer with car to home.

I hope I have painted a picture of inter-club co-operation. However, this was only part of the story. The first Simca (blue car) was missing a lot of small parts. I made some phone calls to Vince Parisi in Melbourne and John Pickles in W.A. (fellow club members I have not met). Vince and John put together my wish list for missing parts and fittings. The second Simca (green car) has the engine disassembled and so needs a gasket set to re-assemble the engine. The gaskets were purchased from Jim Withers in Melbourne, picked up by Alec Mead (Victorian Zephyr Club) and taken to the home of Vince Parisi. Vince then took the parts and gaskets set to the All French Day in Melbourne and gave them to Morrie Barrett, who then brought them back to Sydney. Also at the All French Day, were Robert and Lois Lewis from W.A. who had brought along some parts from John Pickles. These parts were also given to Morrie Barrett. Morrie emailed us to say that he was going North to Dorrigo to visit his mother and would call in for coffee and deliver all the parts.

This story I had to tell because it demonstrates the mateship of people in car clubs and how we can co-operate with each other.

So now everybody knows why this has blown our minds about friendship and co-operation between car clubs. We hope to have the green Simca ready for the Sydney All French Day in July.



Letter to the Editor – Article sent in by Wayne Yeo (QLD)

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO SIMCA?

Of the marques dragged under by a maelstrom of mergers 30 years ago, this French firm was the least deserving. **Richard Bremner** explains why a raft of innovations was unable to keep it afloat

PHOTOGRAPHY TONY BAKER





Once as common as the swallow on their logo, Simcas, too, have almost vanished. A stroll down the main street of any west-European town in the 1970s would flush out several – that distinctive tappet-chatter song audible at 50 paces. Yet, just three decades after this popular French marque disappeared in 1981, it's in danger of becoming extinct – only 183 survive in the UK, according to howmanyleft.co.uk, and very few appear even on French ebay.

Forty years ago, in Simca's heady zenith, it built Europe's best-selling car, scored a hat-trick of Le Mans 24 Hours victories, offered a radical, three-seater, mid-engined coupé, and developed an early example of the breed that became the 'crossover'. It had also launched the first hot hatch in 1974, though rarely wins credit for it. By the end of the following decade, however, this fast-burning firework was flaming out, the crude name-change applied by new owner Peugeot failing to capitalise on the momentum gained.

That was triggered in 1934, when the Société Industrielle de Mécanique et Carrosserie Automobile was founded by Italian Henri-Théodore Pigozzi. He had met Fiat founder Giovanni Agnelli in '22, and from that encounter stemmed a profitable arrangement that had him shipping scrap cars to Turin for recycling. He secured Fiat's French distributorship 12 years later, and

'AMBITIOUS SIMCA BOUGHT TRUCK-MAKER UNIC IN '51 AND FORD'S FRENCH ARM IN 1954'

began building its 6CV under licence in '35, in a factory in Nanterre that had once been occupied by SA des Automobiles Donnet. For its first five years, Simca built rebadged Fiats and had achieved Pigozzi's aim of making 20,000 cars in a year by 1938. A certain Amédée Gordini was tuning them, too, winning the 1939 Index of Performance at Le Mans.

Simcas were produced at a diminishing rate during WW2, and it would not be until 1949 that its pre-war production record was surpassed, by which time the marque's most popular model was its 1200cc Huit range. The car that catapulted it into the big time arrived in '51, sales of the front-engine, rear-drive Aronde mushrooming to 93,000 units by '53, which is when it scored a mighty record by averaging 100kph for 100,000km. By the time that it was deleted in '64, almost 1.5 million had been sold.

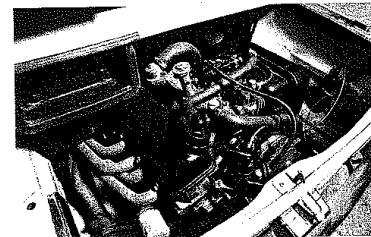
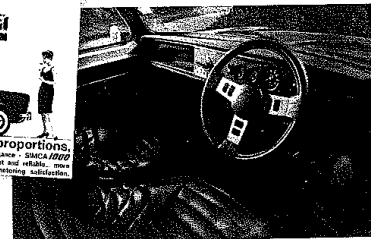
Ambitious, expansionist Simca acquired truck-maker Unic in 1951 and Ford's loss-making French subsidiary in 1954. With the latter came the Poissy plant, near Paris, and the mini-American 2.2-litre V8 saloon that was the Vedette. Simca developed a less flamboyant version called the Ariane, using its own 1290cc engine. It also bought the British-financed Talbot company in 1959, but its efforts to revive this competition-rich marque soon foundered. The name would resurface many years later, however, in rather sorry circumstances that were born of Chrysler's purchase of the 15% share set aside for Ford but never taken up.

Simca's next big hit was the rear-engined

October 2011 Classic & Sports Car 151



Clockwise, from main: rear suspension squats under load; seats have Italianate quality; happy road



1000. Launched in 1961, this boxy but oddly pretty car was already technologically dated compared to the front-drive Renault 4 that arrived the same year, but it rapidly became a strong seller. Powered by a new, five-bearing 944cc engine, it had a full-synchromesh four-speed gearbox and independent suspension all round. Simca peddled almost 1.5 million of them – more than three times the Hillman Imp's tally.

Small, hot, rear-engined racers were more the province of Renault in the 1960s, modded by the same Gordini who had once breathed on Simcas. It was only when La Régie's R8 began to fade that the Simca 1000 Rallye appeared in 1970, a car that seemed ludicrously old hat given the Mini Cooper's appearance nine years earlier. But, as the Porsche 911 demonstrated, a well-sorted rear-engined car can be quick and wieldy, and the 1000 was already starring in a one-make challenge. The first Rallye was little more than a sticker-and-badge job, although it benefited from the '69 switch to rack-and-pinion steering. It had a not-terribly-brisk 53bhp 1118cc engine but, in 1972, that grew to 1294cc and 60bhp to create the Rallye 1, a pair of twin-choke Webers swelling this to 82bhp for the Rallye 2.

That's the specification of this wonderful avocado example. It belongs to Simca Club man Mick Ward who, with brother Kev, unearthed the quartet of cars that you see here. Given the reputation of rear-engined machines for scenery-visiting gyrations, it's hard not to be wary of this car, small or not. It has all the period trimmings of revvy speed: tiny Veglia rev-counter, matt-black bonnet, er, boot, go-faster stripes and bullet mirrors. Better still are the vinyl bucket seats that look like refugees from a 1973 Italian furniture fair. These turn out to be comfortable and unexpectedly supportive as your confidence and cornering speeds increase in parallel.

It feels absurdly small by modern standards, its cabin confined, but you soon forget that, thanks to its addictive mix of direct steering, zesty noise and well-planted stance. You realise why budding racers loved them, and why a good one costs north of £10,000 today. You have to work at it to go fast, but that's absolutely a part of this car's appeal. It goes, steers and stops with a busy, honest mechanical connectedness that's hard to resist. Yes, it would fold like a collapsible chair in a crash, but the smile factor makes it impossible to be anything other than carefree.

SIMCA 1000 RALLYE 2

Sold/number built 1973-'78/n/a

Construction steel monocoque

Engine iron-block, alloy-head, sohc 1294cc 'four', twin Weber carbs; 82bhp @ 6000rpm;

80lb ft @ 4400rpm Transmission four-speed

manual, driving rear wheels Suspension

independent, at front by double wishbones,

lower arms, transverse leaf spring, anti-roll

bar rear semi-trailing arms, coil springs

Steering rack and pinion Brakes discs

0-60mph 11 secs Top speed 104mph

Price new n/a Price now £15,000

SIMCA 1100 Ti

Sold/number built 1974-'78/2,188,737

(all 1100s) Construction as Rallye 2

Engine as Rallye 2 Transmission four-speed

manual, driving front wheels Suspension

independent, at front by double wishbones,

longitudinal torsion bars, anti-roll bar

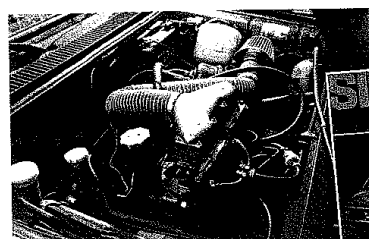
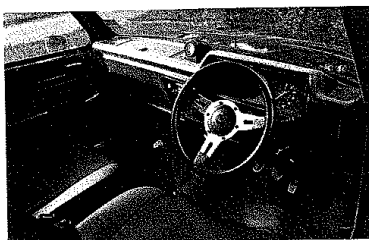
rear trailing arms, transverse torsion bars,

anti-roll bar Steering rack and pinion

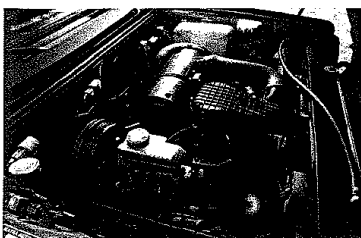
Brakes discs/drums, with servo

0-60mph 13 secs Top speed 100mph

Price new n/a Price now £4500



Clockwise: tweaked 1100 has Ti underpinnings but lacks ornamentation; 'four' now up front; sporty cabin



Suspension independent, at front by wishbones, longitudinal torsion bars, rear trailing arms, transverse torsion bar
Steering rack and pinion **Brakes** discs/drums, servo **0-60mph** 14.9 secs **Top speed** 89mph
Price new £5939 (1980) **Price now** £3500

From top: style over content – the original 'soft-roader'; groovy brochure; roomy interior; stretched four-struggles

The Matra-Simca Rancho that is ingeniously based on the 1100 is, in contrast, simply hard

ork, the combination of its enlarged 1442cc engine and its extra bodywork making its steering sweatingly heavy at parking speeds. On the one hand, that weightiness lifts, allowing you to enjoy the commanding driving position and obviously airy cabin of Charles and Pauline Robinson's well-preserved 1982 example. The ancho was inspired by the Range Rover, a big it with wealthy Parisians, and a Spanish Simca dealer's conversion of an 1100 into an ultra-practical device called the Campero.

Simca had taken control of Matra in '69, and its innovative engineering company was given the task of developing and producing the part-fibre-bodied Rancho on the pick-up version of the 1100. The result was a stylish, high-roofed three-door estate that resembled an off-roader but was actually a front-driver. The press liked it, but the customers didn't. They liked cavernous interior that would eventually be offered with seven seats, and the fact that it had the class and presence of a Range for less cash. Like the 1100, it rides well and, despite the bulk of its glass-and-glassfibre rear end, it performs adequately, although the story doubtless changes when there's seven aboard.

Its extra ground clearance and toughened hell allowed the Rancho a little more off-road capability than you might expect, while its wing-mounted, swivelling spotlights – fun, if pointless – proved Matra's flair for design, as did the roof-rack, body cladding and integral bull-bar.

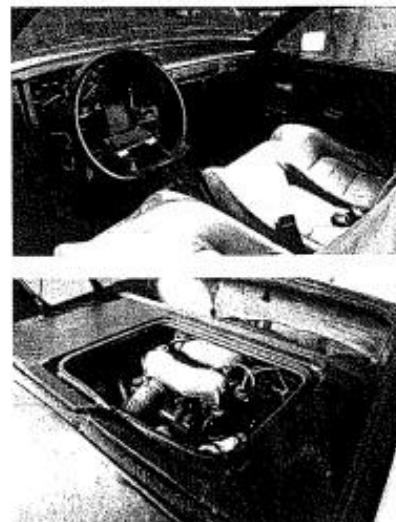
By the time that the mid-engined Bagheera – another innovative design – appeared in 1973, Matra-Simca's sporting credentials had been confirmed by back-to-back Le Mans victories. Its 670 would win again in '74. The Bagheera was essentially a cleverly rearranged Simca 1100, the transverse powerpack located behind a

three-abreast cockpit. Even the 1100's torsion bar-sprung, double-wishbone front suspension was used, the mechanicals bolted to a pressed-steel monocoque whose eventual silent crumbly bits were hidden by its glassfibre body.

You must bend low to enter the glowing-green womb of this S1 Bagheera, its seats still looking ultra-modern and provoking thoughts of new-wave films featuring a suave lead and a couple of chic chicks, who would proceed to earn an X-rating and critical acclaim for their vigorous sex and existential agonising. The Bagheera is resolutely of that era, intriguing with its green instrument pack and pistol-grip gearlever. It's lissom on the road, riding well, and, although it isn't blisteringly quick, you get the impression that this endearing machine would be effective point-to-point if you committed to it.

Commitment of another kind began to waver in the mid-1970s. Chrysler, battling to find the money to launch its lifesaving K-cars in the US, sold its unprofitable European arm to Peugeot in '78. In retrospect, it's hard to work out why the 'Lion' bought it. The following year it rebranded go-ahead Simca as stopgap Talbot and, although the company had just won the Car of the Year award with its 1100-based Horizon – and had recently collected the same prize for the bigger Alpine – its slide into oblivion began. This was accelerated by a shortage of decent new products – Talbot Solara, anyone? – and its overlap with Peugeot, which occupied similar territory.

Talbot limped on until 1987. There were Simca echoes in the Peugeot 309, which included the old 1294cc engine, those tappets finally silenced, while the Horizon-based US-market Dodge Omni survived until 1990. After that, though, it was all over for one of France's success stories of the 1970s.



MATRA-SIMCA BAGHEERA

Sold/number built 1973-'80/47,796

Construction steel monocoque
pint, glassfibre panels

Engine as Rallye 2, 84bhp @ 6000rpm;
78lb ft @ 4400rpm

Transmission four-speed manual,
driving rear wheels

Suspension independent,
at front by double wishbones, longitudinal
torsion bars, anti-roll bar rear trailing arms,
transverse torsion bars, anti-roll bar

Steering rack and pinion **Brakes** discs
0-60mph 12.3 secs **Top speed** 109mph

Price new £5370 **Price now** £5000



From top: three-abreast
seating; mid-mounted
'four'; Bagheera evolved
into Murena: slippery
shape enhanced top speed



MOTORFEST – Brisbane (Rob Lewis)

My Brother-in-law (Brian) spotted this Simca at the Motorfest in Brisbane and took a couple of photos and sent to me. GREAT looking car!



FOR SALE

1965 Simca 1000 Bertone Coupe LHD Imported from California. Inertia seatbelts, reconditioned four wheel disc calipers, recond suspension, Two pack paint. \$5,000 or best offer.

1965 Simca P60 Sedan Peugeot 307 Bucket Seats with Seat belts. The Wheel cylinders and Master cylinder have been sleeved and drums skimmed and new linings. The boot and under the bonnet has been painted and New Spare wheel and four rims also painted. \$1,500.

There are many photos that I can email to anybody who is interested. I only really want to sell one of the cars but job of doing the two is getting a bit much.

John2309@optusnet.com.au. Tel. 03 9561 1167. (John Smith – VIC)



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PS - from the Editor.....

The next issue is planned for October 2012.

A very big thank you to everyone who contributed to this issue of Swallow Tales – very much appreciated.

If you have any articles, items or photos that you think others members of the club would be interested in reading or seeing please send them to Rob Lewis at:

lois.lewis@inet.net.au.

Reminder : BOOK NOW!

Members are reminded that the Annual General Meeting will be held:

Albury – Hume Inn Motel - Conference Room
(406 Wodonga Place, Albury Ph:0260212733)
on **Saturday 27 October 2012 at 2:00pm**

When making your booking please mention the Simca Car Club. Looking forward to seeing you there!

