



SWALLOW TALES

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

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One family owner, NZ P60 sedan



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.

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK – *by Iain Dyer*

Hi all,

Writing my report means we are all three months older, pretty scary, I haven't caught up with the previous three months yet.

This edition I have featured Gerard and Yvette Crombie's P60 which resides in Auckland. I mentioned last edition, I had the pleasure of catching up with both car and owners. An original P60 is a thing of joy and I must admit, that whilst I prefer the 90A shape, I would like to own one.

To my horror, it came to my notice recently, that Morrie Barrett spent the day with an Escort. His new knee must be working well, because I believe the Escort became quite hot and flustered. Would I dob? Absolutely not, of course if money was involved.....

To preserve Morrie's impeccable reputation, I must explain, there was an Escort involved, a 1971 Ford Escort 1100, which did become quite hot and flustered. Quite appropriately the colour was "wild plum". Morrie and a friend drove down from NSW to Tassie in it and it boiled on the way down and developed a miss. Amazingly the car made it to our work shop without expiring. When we took the distributor cap off, there were ominous signs of metal filings on the base plate. Upon pulling the distributor out it was on the point of self-destruction. We had to use the oxy to remove the shaft. To cut the story short we had the parts in stock to recondition the distributor. Martin our Engineer, said the car was running about 40o advance and amazed it made it. If it had been a modern car the dash would have with enough lights to light New York and gone into limp home mode.



Morrie, Don and Barbara Scanes and a bus load of their friends were down for machinery show. It was great to catch up for an evening at our place. Speaking of which, Rob and Ina and Fred and partner will be down this week, so it's fire up the oven again. They are both driving Austin's, so they won't get the full silver service. Actually I love A95's, which I believe Fred is driving.

The Crimson Hussey!!

I must thank Morrie for his tireless efforts in helping get my car on the road. Also Geoff Rose. Speaking of Mrs Roses little boy Geoff, breaking news tonight informs me, he and Ruth have set a date for June 7. Great news guys. We all wish you every happiness in the world. Ruth slow him down a bit if you can, please. The rest of us might be able to keep up.

Talking of slowing down a bit, not something our President is doing any time soon. Talk about the life of Riley. Circuit racing one of his many Alfa's, terrorising old ladies on his Ducati and furiously building the best, possibly only, racing Vedette. See

recent photos. Whatever Vince does it's always premium quality. I can't wait to see the Vedette.

Speaking of quality fanatic's Launceston has been shaken to the core. Super Rob has arrived in town. He slipped into a phone box in Perth, took him ages to find one, donned his cape and flew into Launceston. Landed without clearance of course. Husbands are shaking in their boots and women around town have noticeably shorter skirts. I am speaking of course of Rob Lewis who has come back to live in Tassie. There is a sombre side to this, in that Lois has remained in Perth. Thankfully, Rob assures me, they are still good friends. I would like to extend the Club's best wishes to Lois and once again thank her for all the work she did, in producing Swallow Tales.

Rob is great company and he is going to put the Simca back together. It's very pleasing to have someone of his ability and knowledge on hand. When the car is finished, it is going to be no garage queen. Between the two of us, we are going to do our best to wear it out. On behalf of the Club I would like to wish Rob much happiness, in his move back home.

This month we have a remarkable submission from John Pickles. Apart from the W.A. news, there is a stunning story about a much re-villed Hillman called "Betsy". Mum had a 52 Minx, same shape, but side valve, in pea green, which we had from my early days until I was a teenager. It gave sterling service for years, with trips to Katoomba, Gosford, and all the Sydney beaches. Mum finally traded it in on a new Triumph Herald in which I learnt to drive. Our family still remember old A.E.D with great affection. Come Adelaide, its walking sticks at dawn, Pickles!

Good health and usually a spare bedroom,
Iain and Leila.



**Dinner at
our place.
It looks
like we
have run
out of
wine!!**

PRESIDENTS REPORT – by *Vince Parisi*

March 2015

Well I know I've said it before.... But I'll say it again.... "How time flies" what it's nearly April, Easter, Anzac day and the second quarter of the year is upon us, well I guess I have been just so busy I haven't noticed..... I hope that I find you all well and healthy and that you have been enjoying our summer wherever you may be and also that you have enjoyed your hobby whether it be driving, rebuilding, tinkering or polishing that chrome.

Of course I have spent countless hours on the build of "The Racing Vedette"; I have sanded myself into oblivion and back and am glad to say that by the time this newsletter gets to you the Vedette should be in its full color once again. Although the body was in excellent condition it is hard to imagine how much metal is in a Vedette especially with doors and guards of the vehicle (I'm sure the 2 rear guards and boot would produce 3 Hyundai's).... So it will be back home and assembly will start ASAP with the Flatty not to far away, I hope you enjoy the pic's.

In my other life I have purchased a 1966 Alfa Romeo Giulia Super and competed in the 2015 Phillip Island Historics in the first week of March, what a great 3 day event this is, it must rank up with some of the great Historic meetings around the world and what a spectacular arena for a race, It was also great to bring the Alfa back in one piece after a couple of minor scares, Oh but of course I have just rebuilt the head as I managed to bend a couple of valves two weeks before at a sprint meeting at Calder Park... that's another story for another day, and yes I will be doing some "work" on the Super but I intend it to be a Daily... I also found a couple of days to go of with a few mates on our Motorcycles and enjoy lunch in the Yarra Ranges.... But I must say that I felt so guilty that I was not working on the Vedette that I just had to get back as quick as I could so as I could continue working... this build has some sort of spell on me as I am enjoying every moment of it....

It was great to catch up with Morrie on his way to Tassie something bout a Machinery meeting or some such, Also great to meet the President of the Machinery Club (Michael) who explained that they have some 400+ members..... Wow. They both motored down in a little Escort which I understand was much quicker on the way back due to some repairs carried out down in Launceston arranged by our Editor who informs me that his project is nearly "finished" and will be ready for our AGM in Adelaide..... So with 5 full months to go there should be plenty of Simca's at our AGM it would be absolutely fantastic to have a large number attend as Simca's will have the primo position during Bay to Birdwood Rally.....

OK..... I've got to get back to the Vedette.. So much to do..... Stay safe and healthy and enjoy those Simca's....

Vince

(Vinny Vedette)

SECRETARY'S REPORT - *by Lorraine Laney*

Secretary's Report for Swallow Tales - March 2015

As the new Club Secretary/Treasurer I am finding my way, "bit-by-bit", through the various jobs and responsibilities of this committee position. Thank you to those whom I have contacted seeking help and information – it has all been greatly appreciated.

We are pleased to welcome a new member: Chris Buckner from Brisbane. Chris' story: *"I presently don't own any Simcas. I am keen to buy a Vedette. Morrie is on the lookout for me. My first car way back in 1969 was a Simca Vedette (1960) which I later traded in regretfully. My dad thought I was mad wanting to buy an imported V8 as my first car. I have a photo in my office of it and I thought for nostalgic reasons, I would try and acquire one."* A warm welcome to Chris and all the best as you search for your ideal Simca.

On behalf of the Committee and Club members, I would like to extend our heartiest congratulations to Geoff and Ruth on their engagement. We wish them all the very best for their continued happiness – wonderful news!

To the members who have not yet paid their membership renewal fees for 2015, this is just a friendly reminder that fees for 2015 were due on 1st January (\$45 family membership, \$40 single membership) and fees must be paid by the end of June for you to remain a financial member. It would be greatly appreciated if you would please pay your fees ASAP, (if at all possible, sooner rather than later), as Secretary/Treasurer records must be finalised at the end the financial year, i.e. 30th June 2015.

Remember to please also send in your completed Membership Renewal Form which is included in the Swallow Tales newsletter.

Don't forget the National Simca Rally 8th-28th September and to let me know if you are (or are not) planning to attend all or part of this. There is a form attached to this newsletter. While we are in Adelaide, our AGM is to be held on Saturday 26th September - the official notice of the meeting will be in the next issue of Swallow Tales.

Have you checked out the club website recently? On the gallery page, there are some recent photos from Colin (a N.Z. member) and a couple of entries on the Calendar re events in Queensland. The website address: www.simcacarclubaus.org

I would like to wish all members and their families a safe and happy Easter.

Lorraine Laney
Hon. Secretary/Treasurer

QUEENSLAND REPORT - *by Luke Huntley*

Greetings to all members.

Another year is upon us and already it is flying by.

On Sunday 22 March, some members attended the *Super Swap and Show and Shine on the Gold Coast*. This was a basis to meet with northern members to see if there is sufficient support for us to organise periodic outings. We look forward to reporting on these outings as they occur.

The Chrysler Owners Club of Queensland has a monthly outing and a standing invitation to SCCA members to join in, singly or as a group. The next outings are:

- am 29 March *Chryslers on the Coast* at Burleigh Town Tavern – a show and shine meet.
- am 19 April Rally to Old Petrie Town Museum
- am 17 May Rally to Beenleigh Historic Village

You could meet the COCQ at these venues, or travel with us. For details contact Doug Murphy on 0402 845 925. This is a good opportunity to keep the cars active and join in socially with others clubs to spread the word about Simcas.

If you have Simca parts but don't know what they are or what they fit, Doug Murphy's friend, David Sutton has access to the manuals which contain every Simca parts references. He says he is willing to help you, if you supply the part numbers. David is a very willing and cooperative person. Contact Doug Murphy.

Doug is looking for a Vedette, preferably restored. Do you have one or know of one, can you let him know? He is also looking for headlight reflectors, in reasonable condition or as new, for his 62 Aronde.

We welcome another new Queensland member Christopher Buckner. It is great to see the club growing with new members.

Also below is an update from Kerry and Josephine Ryan on the progress of their 1959/60 Aronde Deluxe ASA1 2A.

We wish everyone a safe and happy Easter.

Kind Regards,

Luke and Michelle Huntly

Update from Kerry and Josephine Ryan

Just a quick update on the progress on my Simca which Josephine and I hope to travel to Adelaide in September this year to attend the AGM and take part in the Bay to Birdwood Rally.

I am driving a 1959/60 Aronde Deluxe ASA1 2A. It is the last of the 90A shape which was sold alongside the new P60.

The car is very original and has low mileage.

I have carried out the following:

- Full re-paint in what can only be described as Chrysler pink. (It was probably described as beige in the catalogue.)
- Engine refurbished complete with a Flash Special head and manifold. The engine was in very good condition according to the engineer.
- Gearbox re-built. Courtesy of Alan who is a good friend of Wayne Yeo.
- Fuel tank cleaned and restored.
- Springs restored with new shackles, shock absorbers etc all new
- All chrome work re done and currently waiting to be installed.

I need registration, full service of suspension, exhaust system, seat belts etc to complete. I will probably need to re-visit the brakes as well. The car remains to be run in.

This car is probably one of the few left with the Chrysler decorative chrome strips to the bodywork.

It originally came from the first owner in Orange NSW and is a very original example of the make.

Interior is in very good original condition as well and has no evidence of rust damage whatsoever.

I look forward to getting it on the road. I will probably fit a CD / Radio for the long journey from Brisbane.

Josephine and I have made our booking at the recommended caravan park and we look forward to catching up with everyone again.

I believe that Skip has been working toward getting his 1962 Simca Wagon ready for the trip as well. He is opting for a set of Peugeot seats for the front which should make the journey more comfortable for him.

Best wishes

Kerry and Josephine Ryan

WESTERN WHISPERS – WA STATE REPRESENTATIVE’S REPORT –*By John Pickles*

Pleasing to hear we all survived the festive season and looking forward an eventful new year, for many planning is under way and arrangements are being made to attend the National Simca Meet in Adelaide which is now only six months away.

As usual there is very little to report from the orphan state where apart from the Dyna Panhard the Simca must be the rarest car on the road in the West. Having said that, I have had three reports come to me of beige Simca Aronde being seen on the roads down South which by now most would know is Rob Lewis’s old car. Rob has now moved to Tasmania and managed to sell his car before leaving the state.

It is pleasing that Rob’s Aronde remains in the West and I would like to welcome Kim Morrow to the wonderful world of Simca’s. Kim dropped in to see me on her way down south after taking possession of the car, must say she was full of joy in being able to own such a unique and nice car which is intended to be her daily driver. I have also received a phone call from her mechanic in Dunsborough who has taken on the responsibility of maintaining the car; this is an indication of how serious Kim is in keeping the car to a high standard.



Our good friends of the Peugeot Car Club WA have extended an invitation to the Simca Car Club to join them on their annual “Weekend Away” event on the 22-23rd August which this year takes them to Qindanning (near Boddington) 181kms from Perth. Accommodation is being booked at the Quindanning Inn with the modest room charge

of \$65.00 single with full breakfast (\$55.00 with continental) and doubles at \$95.00 with full breakfast or \$75.00 with continental breakfast, the hotel has a nice dining room and log fire which is idea for the evening meal. Programmed for the weekend is a visit to Jesse Martin's museum where his farm has been transformed into a village. The Peugeot Club is ever supportive of our club and this could be an opportunity for us Simca Car Club members to get together and to meet new friends as well? Give me a call or speak with Kerry Torpy of the Peugeot Club on (08) 9754 3016.

After many years I have renewed an acquaintance with an old friend Milan Dobes who is the President of the Chrysler Club Czech Republic, Milan sent me a copy of a private publication published by two members of the Simca Club Czech Republic on the International Simca Meet they partly organised in 2006. The interesting thing about this magazine was each page divided three columns, each column being in a different language with English being one of them. Reading the article gives an insight into the challenges and difficulties confronted in organising a Simca Meet to attract owners from all over Europe and how two clubs joined forces to meet the challenge. As a separate article I have included part of the magazine and only the English columns.

I believe most would be aware that my Vedette Beaulieu was promised to my grandson Hunter who has now gained his drivers learners permit. Hunter and I have had serious discussion on the future of this car and Hunter indicates he would not do justice to the car and would prefer an everyday driver. After much consideration I have decided to keep the "Beaulieu" and now intend to place the black "Versailles" on the market which will give Hunter money for a modern car, members are given the opportunity to express an interest in this car before I place it on the open market.

Many would have read or know of the novels written by Tim Winton especially "Cloud Street". My eldest daughter and Tim's brother Michael worked together in their early years and Michael was a frequent visitor to our home, his parents were also guests of ours on many occasions so it was no surprise that "Cloud Street" was based on the area in which Eve and I grew up as children. An article of interest to us older motorists written by Tim Winton appeared in "The Age" newspaper on the 14.03.2015 and while it does not refer to the Simca it could well have done so.

An elderly gentleman had serious hearing problems for a number of years. He went to the doctor and the doctor was able to have him fitted for a set of hearing aids that allowed the gentleman to hear 100% The elderly gentleman went back in a month to the doctor and the doctor said, 'Your hearing is perfect.. Your family must be really pleased that you can hear again. 'The gentleman replied, 'Oh, I haven't told my family yet. I just sit around and listen to the conversations. I've changed my will three times!'

Hillman hustle: Tim Winton recalls a dour little family sedan

Illustration by Christopher Nielsen. *Photo: Christopher Nielsen*

My dad's father was the only one of my four grandparents who ever drove a motor vehicle. As a pastry chef and shopkeeper, Les Winton's chief mode of transport was the '35 flatbed Chev he used for deliveries. But as a muso and paterfamilias he favoured the Harley. The ancient bike had a sidecar the size of a Zeppelin's gondola and could accommodate his band and instruments or his family and camping gear, including firearms and tackle. As a kid I loved to hear stories of him riding home from a gig at the Blue Room while his ventriloquist dummy rode shotgun, gums flapping in the wind, beside him.

For a few years after the war he sported a Depression-era Rugby tourer, whose side curtains were X-rays salvaged from the repat hospital around the corner - a vehicle worthy of his vaudevillian spirit. So I never understood why he purchased the dour little sedan he called Betsy, for it was an inexplicable departure. It was as if he'd suddenly surrendered to convention. Perhaps this was the point at which he realised it was time to put away the nose flute and give up his shadow life as an entertainer, because a conveyance dowdier than the 1954 Hillman Minx could hardly be imagined.

By the time I knew him, most of his japes and jalopies were the stuff of myth. The only thing ever I saw him drive was Betsy. That car was an aesthetic travesty and an offence to youth. And her tenure was not fleeting. Heavy of haunch and whiffy at close quarters, she became a family fixture, an embarrassing relative who lingered dismally and could never be quietly seen off.

The Hillman was a dumpy colonial sedan of unmistakably English provenance, a testament to modesty and low expectations, with a paint job of cardigan grey. In 1955, introducing a later model, the manufacturer crowed about the two-tone paint job called "the gay look", but Pop seems to have spurned this zany innovation and resigned himself to the sobriety of the model at hand. On a good

day, the interior smelt like an abandoned cinema. The bodywork was bulbous and cumbersome. Under the hood, like a cowering cockroach, lay a tiny 1300cc engine. At the other end a lofty back seat afforded passengers an excellent view of the driver's balding pate, a glimpse of the gunmetal bonnet and little else. And to port and starboard there were toy-like signal arms with which the driver might semaphore his intentions. These last accessories should have been charming. Now, of course, I smile at the memory. But back then, they were badges of shame.

Advertisement

I always dreaded being seen in the Minx. Slotted into her low asbestos shelter behind the chookhouse, Betsy was beautifully camouflaged - grey on grey, quite hard to see, which was just how I liked her - but on the streets of Perth she felt all too visible. And Pop's antic driving didn't help. On the road, as in religion, he was a trenchant nonconformist, and being his passenger certainly kept you protestant and prayerful. Was I the only kid to wince when *Mr Magoo* came on the telly?

Old people were bores and obstacles. I didn't see the point of them. Even so, I prided myself on my forbearance. Some dull Sunday afternoons I could even work up a spasm of interest in oldish things. Behind Nan and Pop's shop, for example, there were many ancient marvels: prehistoric tools and weapons, prostheses, musical instruments. You could encounter these in private. You weren't required to sport them in public. They couldn't trap you and define you. Which is not to say that every old car was a threat to one's reputation, but in matters of carriage a fellow needed to be discerning and I knew style when I saw it.

My cousins from Margaret River had a '38 Ford coupé called Henry that exuded gangster swank even as it squeaked and farted along a dirt road. Uncle Bill in bogan Carlisle had a '59 Chev Bel Air the size of an aircraft carrier - surely the most glamorous vehicle to ever grace the bitumen - and not even the Batmobile could shade it.

I'd learnt a few things about cars in my time, many of them through a gap in the fence at home. The sociopath next door had a grease pit in his garage and a street rod that he and his mates worked on day and night. That jalopy was chopped, pinched, ported and polished. Some evenings it sounded like Satan clearing his throat. Even though my parents were unimpressed, I thought his hot rod was deadly. It later transpired that he was, too, but that's another story.

The point is, I knew old cars were not to be dismissed out of hand. Driven the right way, some could be cool. Within a few years, it'd be nothing to see a beaded hippy at the wheel of a '55 Wolseley or a punk moll lurching from a '59 Anglia. But I knew Pop's Hillman would never be cool. Even today no beardy hipster will go there, for even irony has frontiers. The tragically misnamed Minx would never outlive her homeliness. I didn't just hate riding in her; I was offended by her very existence.

You couldn't even give Betsy a pass on the grounds of eccentricity. I knew something about oddness - after all, I was a Winton. My Nan had a certain local reputation. She lived in a tent in the backyard while Pop shared the bedroom with the kids and the in-laws. She tied 20 yards of twine to Pop's big toe so she could be alerted to developments indoors. All he had to do was yank on the string and his

crash cymbal would shimmy cacophonously along the back path. I guess you can't run a family and a business without a communications system. Every Sunday as we left their place after the ritual visit, Nan stood in the street and waved us off with a long and jaunty waggle of her right leg. Always and without fail - it was her signature move. Knee stockings and all. The neighbours were inured to it. To my mind such behaviour was unusual, but it wasn't actually shameful. Owning a car like Betsy, though, that was crossing the line. It put a dent in the family's honour.

But here's the thing: Betsy endured. She was a fixture. And she wasn't leaving any time soon. The Minx was no kitten when Pop bought her. Even so, she managed to outlast him. By the early '70s, even a carriage as sedate as Betsy was too much car for him to manage. For a while she brooded undriven in her asbestos hutch and before long Nan and Pop were forced to give up the shop and move into care. That was a sad day. But there was worse news to come. Nan and Pop thought Betsy should move in with us.

Such were the giddy means by which we became a two-car family. Dad drove the Minx to work and left the Falcon at home with Mum. When we moved to the country and I began high school, Dad insisted on driving me, even though I could see the grounds from the front verandah. He thought a lift in the mornings might steady my nerves in the first few weeks. Which was kind, I know, but the gesture was wasted on me. I spent those brief trips finding new ways to slide so low in the passenger seat as to become invisible. I didn't know a soul in town but I was still making sure no one would recognise me. As the old man hoisted the natty indicator-arm and set sail for school at a pace that was plausibly nautical, I'd press my lower back against the seat springs and take a passionate interest in the inner seams of my bag. As if the choice of ride wasn't shame enough, Dad always expected a kiss goodbye at the school gate. This was delivered in-car, at great speed and very low altitude.

Eventually I broke free of the morning delivery. I did everything in my power to distance myself from the Minx. When I finally made friends and brought them home, I denied all connection to the portly conveyance in the drive. Months later, when my mates took to squatting in the front yard to howl at their distorted reflections in Betsy's double-D hubcaps, I was still huffing and bluffing, but no one bought my excuses. That car was a perpetual laugh at my expense. I feared it would do me permanent damage.

Unlike most country boys, I wasn't anxious to get my driver's licence. For one thing, I had ghastly forebodings about having to learn in Betsy. While other kids kangaroo-hopped their mums' Datsuns and dads' farm utes up the main street, I'd be trundling along in something that looked like a slow-combustion stove. No, I was in no hurry to experience that.

I wasn't alone in my antipathy to Betsy. It was a rare patch of common ground between my younger siblings and me. We mounted a years-long campaign to convince Dad to put her out to pasture. I suggested we take her to a friend's farm and give her a real Sam Peckinpah send-off: expend a couple of boxes of shotgun shells, maybe a Molotov cocktail if it wasn't fire season. But Dad said Betsy was no trouble. In all these years, he hadn't had to spend a cent on her. It'd be a waste to let

the Minx go. At the mere mention of her name, a dreamy smile came to his face. I don't think he had any special affection for the old bus. He'd come to enjoy the discomfort she produced in us. She was a goad to our youthful vanity. Besides, as he said, the old girl continued to work: you just turned the key, pressed the old-timey starter button and she sputtered to life.

My last vivid memory of Betsy was of the day we moved back to the city after three years of exile in the country. Before we left town we had a rare nosh-up at a Chinese joint. Then we hit the road, Mum and my sister and baby brother in the Falcon, my brother and I hostages as much as passengers in the dreaded Minx.

The day was brutally hot. It was a five-hour trip in a decent car, but Betsy added a stately hour just by tagging along. The harvested paddocks either side of the highway were brown. We were shirtless. Dad wore his signature singlet, a saggy old thing whose days of whiteness were but a memory. The wind through the open windows was dry and fleecy, and as the seats heated up beneath us they released the stench of church halls, courthouses, railway waiting rooms: odours of weariness, boredom and advanced age.

From boyhood I knew my father to be a man of kindly nature but irritable bowel. And for him, Chinese was not ideal road fodder. So it was no surprise when, about three hours into the journey, he pulled over, snatched a handful of tissues from the glovebox and vaulted across a farm fence for the shelter of some piled logs. Accustomed to this kind of behaviour, my brother and I sat in bovine silence as the engine ticked and the stench of old people rose from our very skins.

Eventually our father returned at a jog, trailing a comet-tail of flies, tucking the singlet back into his shorts as he came. He got in, turned the key, pressed the endlessly embarrassing starter-button, and off we went at 36 miles per hour. Which may have been quite a clip in the days of Menzies, but not so impressive to a teenager in 1975. It certainly wasn't enough to blow the flies clear of the cabin.

Only a few metres down the road, I caught a whiff of something vile. Worse than old people, this was the smell of death. It seemed that 400 flies were onto something. I tried to bring this to Dad's attention but, like his gaze, his mind was fixed firmly on the road. And the stink got worse. My brother began to whinge, but the old man wasn't having any of it. Once he was on the bitumen he was hard to stop. He drove on with the baking wind in his face, squinting through the blowflies, noticing nothing, conceding less, until my brother began to gag. Even then Dad smelt nothing. But the prospect of a puker had him standing on the brakes. He reefed Betsy to the road's edge and, given the stiffness of the suspension and the trolley-like steering, it was a manoeuvre as jerky and sped-up as a scene from an Ealing comedy.

The moment Dad got out, the offending stench went with him. Which seemed significant. A rapid examination of his person - conducted, of course, in full view of the rural motoring public - established the unpalatable facts, the finer details of which needn't be gone into here. Suffice it to say that in the event of an unscheduled roadside comfort stop, a long and saggy singlet is not helpful attire. It will

surprise nobody to learn that, given the shortage of water and tissues, the remainder of the trip was a test of character for all.

To this day, my father refuses to attribute the disappearance of the 1954 Hillman Minx to this little misadventure. But I believe that afterwards he saw Betsy in a different light. The rest of us had always associated that car with foulness, ridicule and lingering shame, and it was as if the scales had finally fallen from his eyes - or perhaps his nose. Naturally he denies this. But the vagueness with which he speaks of Betsy's retirement is telling. Neither he, nor any other member of our family, can fix a date to her demise, or the circumstances under which she left our employ. She certainly didn't get the paddock shoot-up I'd dreamt of. For all her sturdiness, her grey, implacable utility, she faded away without valediction.

Her replacement, a pinky-brown '59 Austin Lancer, was no filly, either. But she was a game old bus. She had, everyone agreed, a bit of poke. Betsy had been supplanted by a frisky cousin, a dame with a bit of colour left in her cheeks, and daggy as she seemed, the Austin was a bit of a giggle. Old, yes, but not socially damaging.

Still and all, Betsy - the old Minx - had been a sturdy and faithful car. Even if in her dullness she epitomised the Menzian era whence she sprang; she saw out the Malayan Emergency, the Vietnam War, the Space Race and the Whitlam revolution. In our time of instant obsolescence, her endurance is sobering, and as I age I wonder if perhaps I was a little hasty to spurn her. We're such merciless judges in our youth. And she'd be a vintage ride now. But I have to admit that if I came upon her tomorrow, abandoned in a cow paddock, I'd set fire to her in a heartbeat. Provided, of course, it wasn't fire season.

FOR SALE

1957 Simca Vedette "Versailles": Expressions of interest are invited for the purchase of my restored Versailles which is the only one known to be on the road in Australia. Phone John on 08 9535 5023 or email: jpickles3@bigpond.com



VICTORIAN/ TASMANIA REPRESENTATIVES REPORT – *by Stephen Maloney*

Vic Tas,

Things have been very quiet here I have attended the R.A.C.V. Grand Rally and the All European Car day, it was good to see a very large turn out of vehicles for both these events in excess of 200 cars at each event. The Aronde was the only Simca in attendance and caused more than the usual interest, with favorable comments from every one that stopped to look.

i would like to see more Simca's out and about so I do not get so lonely at these events all by myself.

Regards

Stephen.



Racing Vedette at the beauty salon.



Ready to paint, no more sanding!

SOUTH AUSTRALIA REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT - *by Robert Stapley*

Hi all from S.A.

Well preparations are progressing well for the National Simca Rally in September. The dates and itinerary were presented in the last Swallow Tales and apart from the odd alteration all is printed. Anyone intending to attend should have filled in their form and sent it off to our secretary with \$50. to cover trophies and miscellaneous costs. You should also be considering your accommodation requirements at the Semaphore Park.

Ina and I made a quick trip to Sydney in late January to deliver some gear to Ina's brother in Gosford, and took the opportunity to catch up with Morrie and Margaret and Richard and Lorraine over lunch at Woy Woy. Of course a very enjoyable couple of hours talking Simcas and Citroen. We then travelled down the coast to Tuross Head and spent 2 days with Geoff and Ruth. What an Idyllic part of Australia they live, peaceful surroundings beautiful garden, plenty of birdlife and good food wine etc.

We went on from there to Melbourne where we called in on Vince Parisi to pick up some Vedette parts for John Pickles. Once again a pleasant couple of hours catching up with club news etc. At this stage it was Friday am so we travelled into Melbourne and visited our daughter in Middle Park and then onto Sunshine for Saturday morning Austin spare parts day with the A40 club. Back in Adelaide by Sunday night, about 3,500 kms in 8 days.

Coming up for us and Fred is the Austin's over Australia Rally in Devonport Tasmania at Easter. We are looking forward to a couple of weeks in Tasmania with another 133 Austin's and about 250 rally participants doing rally things as you do. We will look up Iain and Leila while we are there, perhaps the 2017 rally could be held in Tasmania. Someone will have to nominate a venue for 2017 at our AGM so get to it.

All for now.

Cheers Robert Stapley



A Westminister same as Fred Scodde's is on his way to Tassie in. Bet this one has better welsh plugs than his.

NEW SOUTH WALES REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT – *by Morrie Barrett*

Hi all, as mentioned in my last report, Rob and Ina Stapley we met with Rob and Ina Stapley and Richard and Lorraine Laney for lunch next to the water at Woy Woy.

I travelled to Inverell with Geoff Rose to finally take stock of our purchase at Bruce Holder's property, Geoff's partner Ruth travelled with us as far as Tamworth.

Whilst at Bruce's place we caught up with Kerry Ryan who had come to retrieve his 1961 P60 see the photo it's in very good condition and will be an easy resto for Kerry, among the many Simcas there are a number which are quite restorable and a former NSW Simca Car Club member Max Sthal and His wife inspected the Simca,s.

Geoff and I spent Three Days sorting and culling documenting the contents of the sheds so now we have some idea of what we have so if you are looking a 90A ,P60 or parts we might just have what you are looking for.

After sorting through the majority of boxes we had almost filled a 6 x 4 box trailer for the Scrap metal man (see photo) to be continued on our next visit.

For Australia Day I displayed the Grand large at the 3rd Settlement Park at Toongabbie along with other Members of the Sydney Antique machinery Club (SAMC) all our exhibits drew much attention.

I have decided to sell my P 60 Wagon some time later this year and it will be open to offers. On 25 February I travelled to Tasmania with the President of SAMC in his Purple Escort 1000 to attend the National Historic Machinery Rally at Carrick about 20minutes from Launceston, Don and Barbra also attended, unfortunately the little Escort developed a severe electrical problem and requires attention otherwise it was staying in Tasmania more on that from our Editor.

Whilst we were there we were invited to Ian and Lila's home for Sunday Dinner along with Rob Lewis Lila had prepared a great roast dinner followed by desert, a very enjoyable evening,

I must Thank Ian and Lila for their generosity in providing a Peugeot 306 sedan to travel to and from the event and also have a look around Barbra became quite attached to the little Pug.

Congratulations to Geoff and Ruth who have decided to go down the aisle and we wish Geoff and Ruth all the very best.





All these cars and hundreds of parts are available through Morrie Barrett or Geoff Rose

NEW ZEALAND REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT – *by Colin Smith*

Hi Everybody from a wet and windblown kiwiland. Now that the bad weather has passed it is back to the grindstone? Following on from last notes I did catch up with the old fire engine in Gisborne there has been some progress there is a new roof installed and the brakes overhauled and it is being primed. The district nurse was here to redress my leg an ongoing thing since Nov last year after I gashed it. On the 24th of Feb she noticed that I was having trouble getting enough air and with the chest pain I had she called the ambo so I spent the rest of the day and the night in Hosp putting up with all sorts of tests and xrays etc and as usual nothing was found. On the 25th Jan Ivan and I with Ivan's girl Kristy along with My greatgrandson Logan attended the annual gathering at the tui brewry picking up the best club display some more of the sponsors products would this be the first for four generations in the biggest little car club?. We didn't go to the Dannevirke show this Feb due to very bad weather. The 8th of march we went to the British & European car club's show and shine at Windsor park where we had Richard's car on display driving for the first time under it's own steam. The first time as far as we know for at least 30 years thanks to Keith Marshall for his donation of the wiring loom and Peter Langbroek for his time in sorting out the wires. Unfortunately Richard was unable to attend due to family commitments .I first met Richard's car when i started on the restoration of the Ariane back in the last century 98' I used this car as a pattern for the underside and here am I restoring the underside of the Versailles. I still have to sort out the dashboard wires and reinstall the radio hopefully it will still go. we have also fitted new brakeshoes to the green etoile and reconded the master cyclinder and replaced both rear axle oil seals. that's another one sorted. I have been using the 01 s/w as a daily driver and the blokart lives in the back of it so I can go at any time. Went sailing last Sunday in the rising breeze prior to the arrival of cyclone Pam with others from the local club we had lots of fun and a wild ride. It was nice to have friends of John Pickles Jill and Jim Mather staying with us for the Artdeco weekend. Had lots of fun and Jim drove the fire engine to town and back. We all had tea at Ivan's on the Sunday night be for they departed for other places on there way to Auck. Speaking of John Pickles both Ivan and I wish we could go over and help him with his Versailles. We send our best wishes to Evelyn for a speedy recovery from her current illness. And thank you John for the parcel you sent. Best I get away and restore everything I removed for the cyclone which incidentally was a fizzer thank god however it is better to be ready than not. And prepare for the return of Don and Jenny's Austin 7 as they return to the UK next week. Catch up with you folks later in the year.

To the AU committee for the plaque commemorating the first international Simca meet down under

Thank you

Colin / Lucy

Ivan / Jan





Is that Sir Stirling Smith?



simca's on show at harvey normans
with store manager who Hail's from
Mildura



Gerard & Yvette's Simca Etoile

See Cover Photo

Although we were in Napier for the AGM last year we didn't have our Simca there with us, but Iain and Leila visited us while in Auckland and they got to have a short run around Hobsonville in it. Ours is a Simca Etoile and Iain was impressed by its original condition and having had just one family owner. Yvette and I have had the car for 35 years now, although Yvette has been part of it for all of its 53 years since it was her father's car before us. For this reason we know the car's history very well.

The car is a 1962 model and is mostly original, cream colour with blue upholstery. It still has the original AM radio to which we fitted a plug to run an MP3 player. It's still running cross ply retreaded tires which have plenty of tread but due to a couple of the retreads lifting the tyres will need changing before the next Warrant of Fitness. It will soon therefore be running radials.

The car has only done 88,000 miles or average 1600 miles per year. Since most of that was travelled in its early years it's now doing less than 500 miles per year. In my terms even a repair done 10 years ago was only done a "few" miles ago! Jobs on the car are more likely to be age related than distance related. One of these was the relining of all the brake cylinders which was done about 15 years ago and is more a factor of age than usage.

The most major mechanical issues have been a cracked cylinder head and engine bearings. The cracked head was about 20 years ago, that followed soon after a burst radiator hose so I think the engine overheated then. The head was not repairable at the time and we obtained a replacement head through Phil Butcher. The engine bearings were replaced with standard bearings, done without removing the engine, about 5 years ago.

We had rust in doors and sills repaired 20 years ago and recently some of the paint in the areas of the repairs has started peeling so we are going to need to get some repainting done in the near future. Wonder how long the warranty on the paint job was!!!

As you know the Simca interior has a lot of plastic fittings. One of the items that weren't made to last when new were the interior plastic door handles. These were replaced early on with similar shape Peugeot ones. One of my early memories of the car was going on a fishing trip with Yvette's father from Auckland to Piahia when we ran over a large rock on the road that launched the car into the air. Fortunately it landed on all 4 wheels and unscathed!

Surprisingly we are not aware of any other Simcas on the road in Auckland (we know of one or two in storage). To enjoy our car more some years ago we joined an Auckland Car Club. We chose the Humber Car Club because of the Chrysler connection in the 1960's. We considered Peugeot since they ultimately owned and discontinued Simca but chose Humber. We regularly go on club outings, activities and displays. Last year we had a weekend away in Whangarei and previously to Dargaville and Raglan.

One of recent outings was to participate as a history of motoring display at the opening of a new road and tunnel in the Auckland suburb of Panmure. The display was restricted to maximum of 40 cars so being only a relatively small number on display we had a great deal of interest in the Simca. A cold

wind was blowing through the tunnel where the cars were parked so although it was hot outside we needed jackets on by the cars.

Our next planned outing is next weekend which is a day trip to Thames for a Heritage Festival.

Long term Simcaites - Some car this Simca

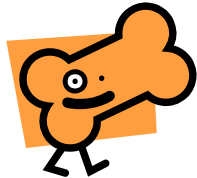
Gerard & Yvette Crombie



For Sale

New re-manufactured Helical Oil Pump drive gear to suit Simca Vedette. Three available. \$140.00 ea Ph Peter Walker 0400 840 834

General News: Peter Walker has purchased John and Pat Smith's Simca 1000 Coupe. Lucky Coupe, look at the quality of his Vedette restoration.



Funny Bones

A priest, a minister, and a rabbi want to see who's best at his job. So they each go into the woods, find a bear, and attempt to convert it. Later they get together. The priest begins: "When I found the bear, I read to him from the Catechism and sprinkled him with holy water. Next week is his first communion." "I found a bear by the stream," says the minister, "and preached God's holy word. The bear was so mesmerized that he let me baptize him." They both look down at the rabbi, who is lying on a gurney in a body cast. "Looking back," he says, "maybe I shouldn't have started with the circumcision."


A Spanish captain was walking on his ship when a soldier rushes to him and exclaims, "An enemy ship is approaching us!" The captain replies calmly, "Go get my red shirt." The soldier gets the shirt for the captain. The enemy ship comes in and heavy rounds of fire are exchanged. Finally, the Spaniards win. The soldier asks, "Congrats sir, but why the red shirt?" The captain replies, "If I got injured, my blood shouldn't be seen, as I didn't want my men to lose hope." Just then, another soldier runs up and says, "Sir, we just spotted another twenty enemy ships!" The captain calmly replies, "Go bring my yellow pants."

A boy with a monkey on his shoulder was walking down the road when he passed a policeman who said, "Now, now young lad, I think you had better take that monkey the zoo." The next day, the boy was walking down the road with the monkey on his shoulder again, when he passed the same policeman. The policeman said, "Hey there, I thought I told you to take that money to the zoo!" The boy answered, "I did! Today I'm taking him to the cinema."

Photos Just In, Freshly Painted Race Car
Absolutely Gorgeous



The Happy Couple



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QUEENSLAND
Unit 5, 305 Montague Road, West End 4101

SOUTH AUSTRALIA
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PS - From the Editor...

Please remember any contributions welcome or suggestions.

Reminders:

The 2015 renewal of membership is due on January 1st 2015. If you are overdue, please pay now. Don't forget members can pay their subscriptions by bank transfer or to the club secretary.

Electronic Funds transfer (EFT)
BSB: 633-000 Bendigo Bank (branch at Braidwood NSW)
Account number: 135350668

Please identify who is paying and for what if possible in the reference section with name and subs amount.

Don't forget to fill out Renewal Form attached so that all your details are correct/current. Please don't copy them from the previous year.

Breaking News

Welcome

Gary Schoenrock, Alaska, USA.

1956 Simca Aronde Elysee.

I have featured car previously.

Feature next issue.

**SIMCA CAR CLUB AUSTRALIA Inc.
CLUB MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

Surname: ----- Given names: -----

Membership No: ----- Please print both names for family membership

Address: -----

Please print full postal address

Contact Details:

Home: -----

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Email: -----

Please indicate (x) in the email box to receive your club newsletter via email.

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Any more/fewer cars than last year? If yes, then please let us know below.

Annual Membership SubscriptionsFees are set at each Annual General Meeting for the period 1st July – 30th June the next year.

Annual Subscriptions are currently:

Single \$40

Family/Joint: \$45

Signature: ----- Date: -----

(Both signatures required for Family/joint membership)

Signature: ----- Date: -----

Please pay Cheque/money order to Simca Car Club Australia Inc and post to:

Secretary/Treasurer
Simca Car Club Australia Inc.
Lorraine Laney
36 Kallaroo Rd
San Remo NSW 2262

