

AUSTIN-HEALEY OWNERS CLUB OF QUEENSLAND

1970



2020

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Pittsworth Showground February 14th 1971



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A Welcome from the Club President

It is a great honour and a privilege for me to serve as President of the Austin-Healey Owners' Club of Queensland in the year of the 50th Anniversary of our Club. It is very rare for any club to have current members who can say that they attended the inaugural meeting in 1970 and formed the Austin Healey Owners club of Queensland. To keep a club growing for 50 years certainly means that members before me demonstrated tenacity and willpower in the days of purchasing a house and providing for growing families, at the same time as owning an Austin-Healey sports car.

I am a very proud club member who has had the pleasure to know members from the first meeting to members who over the fifty years have provided solid stewardship for the club through the club committee to ensure great camaraderie between Austin-Healey owners, along with a solid financial base for the club to operate successfully for many years to come.

On behalf of the AHOCQ members we thank Paul Blake and Alwyn Keepence for their hard work and dedication to ensure that both the inaugural and current members come together to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of our Club.

This booklet of memories from the '70s onwards has been compiled by Joe Jarick and Alwyn Keepence who have painstakingly sourced old photos from their libraries, as well other members so that all members, past and present can enjoy and reminisce of days gone by.

Enjoy the booklet and Happy Healeyding.

Neil Tregear



**Queensland became known as the "100S State".
Here we see six Austin-Healeys at Lowood in 1974.
Three of them Sebrings!**



AUSTIN HEALEY OWNERS CLUB

AS AN AUSTIN HEALEY OWNER YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND A MEETING OF FELLOW AUSTIN HEALEY OWNERS ON THE 9TH. SEPT. AT FLAT 4, NO 6 DYNE ST., RED HILL. THE AIM OF THIS MEETING IS TO FORM A QUEENSLAND BASED CLUB EXCLUSIVELY FOR BIG HEALEYS, AS YOU KNOW THESE CARS ARE NOT MANUFACTURED ANY MORE AND IT IS THE AIM OF THIS CLUB TO ASSIST WITH TECHNICAL ADVICE & LOCATION OF SPARES AS WELL AS SOCIAL ACTIVITIES. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION RING JOE JARICK ON 22133 EXT. 76

AHOC. OF QLD.

The birth of the Austin-Healey Owners Club of Queensland

My interest started in the 1960s when at my high school one of the teachers would occasionally arrive in an Austin-Healey 100. On the car's front guards 'Canberra Speed Shop' was neatly painted, a pointer to its racing history. I would often spend lunchtime in the car park, looking over this Healey's details. An Austin-Healey was a rare sight even then, but from time to time I would catch a glimpse of it on the road. It left an impression on me and I was hooked!

For over a year I would scan Saturday's *Courier Mail* classifieds, when a Healey appeared, I would look at the car and take it for a drive. As a result, I knew many of the Austin-Healeys around Brisbane. In May, 1968 I purchased an Austin-Healey 100 of my own, a BN1, NRW 030.

Whenever I saw a Healey, I would try to talk to the owner. I was stopped in my tracks once when I came across an immaculate, interstate registered ice blue over white 3000 outside the Regent Theatre in Queen Street. Compared to my 100, it seemed to me to be so low, shiny and sleek, it was like a spaceship!

Not long after I was surprised to see a pair of ice blue 100s parked in Queen Street. The Victorian owners were on their way to Cairns. They mentioned that there was an Austin-Healey club in Victoria and that one had recently been started in New South Wales.

It wasn't long before I was in touch with the Austin-Healey Owners Club of NSW and during a holiday trip to Sydney, met Alan Jones. Alan took me for a ride around his home town of Sydney in his 3000 Mk 1.

Alan suggested I should consider starting a similar club in Queensland, starting by canvassing local owners to see if there was enough interest. Alan even offered to include a page for Queensland news in the NSW club magazine, then titled *Torque*.

By my 21st Birthday in August, I had a 3000 Mk II. Once behind the wheel of this Tri-Carb, I began to canvass known Austin-Healey owners. Ray & Jean Perry had recently moved to Brisbane, bringing their 100-Six from Sydney. Their Red Hill flat was conveniently central and they offered it as the venue for a meeting. A date was set for September 9th, 1970.

Prior to the meeting, I drew up an invitation *flyer* and drove all over Brisbane, leaving them under windscreen wipers or in letterboxes. I still have the original flyer, a copy of which is shown on the previous page. Clearly, I wasn't expecting many replies; I wasn't allowed personal calls at work!

The inaugural meeting went ahead with seventeen Austin-Healey owners present. It's hard to believe today, but many in the room were surprised there were that many 'big' Austin-Healeys in Brisbane!

The owners who attended, as listed in the meeting minutes were as follows;

Joe Jarick, Kees Koppenol, Ray Perry, Neil Whiteman, Arthur Glasby, Rick Scouller, Rod Luhrs, Jim Bonham, Rhys Davies, Noel Cook, Sandy Gilliland, Matt Robbins, Doug Carter, Doug Creagh, Ian Stewart, Jim Watt and Peter Richards.

Agreement was quickly reached to proceed with setting up an Austin-Healey club. However, we needed advice on how to go about it, so another meeting was arranged at the MG Car Club on September 23rd, chaired by the President of the MG Car Club,



Above: Pittsworth Motor Body Works. Joe Jarick and another early club member Peter Thomas check their cars before a fast run through the Southern Darling Downs.

Will Charlton. Kees Koppenol was racing his Austin-Healey 100 in Queensland and for some time I had been in his pit crew. It seemed logical that Kees should be elected President, with Jim Bonham Club Secretary and I became Vice President.

The first club run was to Pottsville in New South Wales, leaving from Garden City at Mt Gravatt which, in those days was the southern extremity of Brisbane. There were a few more new faces, with Alwyn Keepence joining in for what became a rather 'fast' run. Today, it's not unusual to see up to 200 Austin-Healeys

on display at a National Rally, but that first time, to be on the road with several other Austin-Healeys was an unforgettable experience. Not unnaturally, some were keen to see how fast a 3000 was compared to a modified 100 (the above mentioned 'Canberra Speed Shop' car).



Right: Ray Jorgensen works on the refurbishment of 100S (AHS 3807) which Joe Jarick found in Portugal

This event, and the following one, a navigation rally from the Centenary Bridge at Jindalee to Pittsworth followed by a gymkhana on the showgrounds, demonstrated enough enthusiasm and a willingness to make the club work. Negotiating the club's first Constitution was a bit fraught, but we managed to get there.

In January 1972, we met with NSW club members at Coffs Harbour followed in April by the first National Rally, held in Sydney at Easter. It only took a few years for other AH clubs to want to host a National Rally, and in 1977 our handful of members got to host everyone in Queensland.

A club is comprised of a community of people, who in this case just happen to be Austin-Healey enthusiasts. This club's longevity is very much due to all those volunteers stretching back to 1970 who have taken committee positions and, by doing so, have provided the glue which keeps our Austin-Healey family together.

Joe Jarick

Founding & Life Member



Above: At Coffs Harbour in January 1973. The second interstate rally between AHOC of Queensland and New South Wales.

Right: Austin-Healeys line up at an early McLean Bridge Meet (1976).



The Early Years Alwyn Keepence tells some of the history of our club

I missed being one of the founding members of our club, joining shortly after its formation. In those early days, members of the fledgling club would drop an invitation under the tonneau cover of Healeys seen parked around town. I found mine when I returned to my car one Saturday night. I was just in time to go to the club's first "day run" the following Sunday, October 25th, 1970. Starting from Garden City at Mount Gravatt we headed for the Gold Coast and we forgot to stop until we ran out of bitumen somewhere south of Pottsville on the Tweed coast! There were eight 'big' Healeys on this run and I had my first close look at a Healey Six that day!

Another memorable early event was the club's first Navigation Rally. On February 14th, 1971, we gathered at the southern end of the Centenary Bridge at Jindalee, then from Gatton took various back roads to Pittsworth. A barbeque was followed by a motorkhana at the Showgrounds.

Ray Jorgensen, who operated a service station & smash repair business in Pittsworth, was the sort of '*Club Patron*' in those days and later became the club's first Life Member. What seemed like terminal mechanical problems were easily overcome with advice from Ray, and repairing Healey bodywork was a breeze, in the days when most repairers were unable (or unwilling) to tackle the idiosyncrasies of these cars.

The club was formed out of necessity. Although a simple car mechanically, most "Big" Healeys were suffering from years of abuse and neglect and they had a fearsome reputation among sports car enthusiasts. MGs were by far the most common sportscar, and their mediocre performance was considered acceptable when offset by light, nimble handling. 'Big' Healeys had never conformed to this pattern, but by this time, worn out shockers, sagging springs and questionable brakes but still strong engines meant that to drive one quickly required a certain amount of bravado, or if you like, insanity! To the owners of these machines, there was a profound feeling of being "under siege". Spare parts were still readily available, but Brisbane's main dealer, UK Motors was more interested in selling filters for Minis or Morris Majors and it was a battle to even get the blokes on the spare parts counter to dig out the 100 parts catalogue. "What kinda Sprite did you say it was, mate?" was a common whine. Consequently, "pesky" Sprites weren't very well thought of by "big" Healey blokes, even though it was hardly their fault! Because Sprites were more closely aligned with the MG type of sports car, even *their* owners shunned the "Big" Healey owners. Marque loyalty & the classic car scene were yet to develop.

The Austin-Healey 3000 had only recently ceased production, used Healeys were rare in Brisbane and good ones were like hen's teeth. Either we formed a club, or the big Austin-Healey would not survive and the world would forget about a great sportscar!

As Joe has said, interstate involvement was a feature of the club right from the start with National Rallies beginning in 1972, a development of the interstate event held on that year's Australia Day long weekend, between our club and New South Wales at Coffs Harbour, and similar meets between the Austin-Healey Owners' Clubs of Victoria South Australia at Swan Hill. (You read that right, only two months were needed to organise the first National Rally!) Sydney at Easter was the venue, followed by Melbourne the next year. It was originally intended that the event should alternate between these major centres but the smaller clubs in South Australia and Queensland soon wanted to host a rally too. In 1976 South Australia held their first Rally and this was followed by Queensland in 1977. Western Australia got into the act in 1979 and the rotation continues to the current day.

Apart from saving the marque from obscurity and becoming a vital part of the Australian Austin-Healey scene, a significant thing achieved by the creation of the Austin-Healey Owners' Club of Queensland is that it led to the start of the now-thriving British Sports Car "culture" in southeast Queensland. The 'MacLean Bridge' meet in May, where hundreds of British Sports Cars are displayed is the proof. This event has been organised by the Triumph Sports Owners' Association for many years, but it was members of the AHOCQ who started it.

From the beginning, the club had welcomed sports car enthusiasts who owned "orphans", British Sports Cars which then had no dedicated club (including a Sprite owner!). They found the MG Car Club's (understandable) focus on competition for more modern cars disappointing, which led these enthusiasts towards the AHOCQ. Eventually they drifted away to form their own clubs. In 1975, a meeting at the home of an AHOCQ member saw plans drawn for a mass get together of all types of Sports Cars. The event was promoted with leaflets and by word of mouth and over 120 Sports Cars assembled at Tully Memorial Park at MacLean Bridge. That day in 1975 led to a loose association being formed, which became known as the Combined Sports & Classic Car Association.

From this association came "The Marque Sports Car Club" after CAMS had relaxed its ruling about how Competition Licenses were issued and the 'CAMS Basic License' created.

While our club is no longer close to the C.S.C.C.A., the fact remains that it was the AHOCQ that got things moving. Furthermore, the MG Car Club is today much more focused on the MG car. Perhaps we had something to do with encouraging that change as well?

In its half century the AHOCQ has grown steadily. From that handful of young enthusiasts in 1970 there has been a steady increase in interest in Austin-Healeys (and, like other classics this has been accompanied by an increase in the cars' value!). At first, the focus was on finding (and restoring) Australian delivered cars but these have always been uncommon, particularly in Queensland. Helped by the importation of restoration projects we passed the 100 membership barrier in 2008, Today the club can boast of over 130 memberships, usually comprising several family members.

For a while, the AHOCQ was known as "the 100S State"! Thanks to Joe Jarick, Ray Jorgensen, Rick Scouller and others we can claim to once leading the world in recognising the importance of the model, having had nine Sebrings in our club over the years. At the 1974 National Rally, 100% of the Queensland contingent were 100Ss! And at a speed event at the old Lowood circuit, of the six Austin-Healeys present, half of them were Ss!

Thanks to the efforts of Frank Vanderworm, who became Club President during his stay on the East coast, Sprite owners were finally accepted as full members in the early 1980s, correcting an anomaly that needed fixing. Our club was modelled on the NSW and Victorian clubs, where big Healeys are comparatively plentiful while the club we perhaps should have copied was the AHC of WA which has always welcomed Sprite owners.

For a comparatively small club, we often punch above our weight. When it was agreed that the 1977 National Rally would be hosted by the AHOCQ, I'm sure there was doubt in some quarters in our ability to pull it off, but with the commitment of well led organising committee, it was a great success. When Rallies changed from a few members billeting dozens of visitors to resort style accommodation, the attractions of Queensland's tourist centres on the Gold Coast & Sunshine Coast made our state an irresistible destination but it still took competent organisation to make those events successful.

Another factor that had influenced the AHOCQ came about because of our sparsely distributed population. The club started in Brisbane but the open roads of the Darling Downs have always attracted Austin-Healeys. Then the Gold Coast became the home to a growing number of club members. By the late '80s this led to the setting up of the Gold Coast Register.

Because it is important to have a cohesive state club instead of smaller locality based clubs, the AHOCQ has developed Regional Centres, first on the Gold Coast and later around the Sunshine Coast.

Who knows what the future holds? One thing is certain, the Austin-Healey Owners' Club will still be here providing support and entertainment for Austin-Healey enthusiasts.

Alwyn Keepence AHOCQ Life Member

An enthusiastic Austin-Healey driver starts his run at a motorkhana. Rocklea Showgrounds, sometime in 1974.



When the AHOCQ started the same badge as used by NSW & Victoria was adopted but with a black fill. When we learned that the South Australian club already had the same colour, we changed to a dark green fill.



AHOCQ members in the pits awaiting their next run at Toowoomba's Echo Valley Hillclimb. The ex Ray Perry 100-Six then owned by Dave Shannon.



The Cars!

The minutes of that inaugural meeting of the Austin-Healey Owners' Club of Queensland, held on September 9th, 1970 record that seventeen people arrived at the Red Hill home of Ray & Jean Perry. All male, the minutes do not record the presence of any ladies, even though a couple of the fellows were married, and Jean probably wrote the notes!

Of that group, two are current club members: Joe Jarick & Rick Scouller. Some were elected to the first committee and stayed as members for a few years, several stayed in the club until the mid '70s, but some were never heard from again!



Kees Koppenol 100 Racer. *This car was not actually driven to the Red Hill meeting. The club's first President had owned this car since his school days and, having gone through the purple metal-flake hot-rod phase, Kees progressed to racing at Lakeside and Surfers Paradise. He developed the car extensively and it eventually became merely a 'silhouette' of a Healey with a light-weight tubular chassis and powered by a Ford Falcon Six. Now located in Victoria, fitted with a Ford V8. Seen here at the MG Car Club's Mt Cotton Hillclimb in the late '60s.*

Photos by Malcolm Campbell.



Joe Jarick 3000 MkII BT7 Yellow with black vinyl covered hardtop. Joe bought this car from **Don Marsh** (who had christened the car 'Yella'), and later commenced a restoration, returning it to the car's original Colorado Red. In 1973 Joe sold it back to Don who completed the restoration, then it was sold in 1980. After the 3000 languished for decades in a collection, **Don & Lyn** were recently re-united with the car he still calls "Yella".



Rick Scouller 100 BN1 White. This car was scrapped soon after, due to the failure of the rusty chassis front cross-member. Rick bought another 100 soon after, which he entered in the club's first competition event, the Pittsworth rally/gymkhana. That car was sold to buy the ex-Perry 100-Six. Then he bought this 100S, '3909'. As I don't have a photo of the 100 this will have to do! Rick also owned the Ford V8 powered 100 Six behind the S.

The Cars!

Arthur Glasby 100-Six BN4 Metallic Green. This car was later dismantled for a restoration that Arthur did not proceed with. He then sold the project to **Noel & Helen Standfast** who did a great restoration which they completed in time for a trip to Melbourne for the National Rally in 1980. Owned for several years by a club member in Toowoomba, it is currently located in Victoria.

Sadly, Arthur passed away several years ago.



Ray & Jean Perry 100-Six BN4 Navy Blue. This is the well known car that **Paul & Helen Blake** have owned for many years.

Rick Scouller owned this car briefly in the early '70s and for a short time, it became known as the "Scouller Fueller" after Rick's outstanding performance in Sprints.



Sandy Gilliland 100 BN1 Red. Soon after, Mr Gilliland sold this car to stalwart club members **Robert & Pam Pierce** who enjoyed it for many years. This now dismantled 100 is currently owned by club members **Adrian & Marita Joseph**.



Then

Above: The way we were! Don Marsh puts "Nuccie" through it's paces at a motokhana in 1971



Now



The Cars!

Rhys Davies 100-Six BN4

White. This was the first car in the club to be restored and it was then painted black. Rhys later moved to live in North Queensland, selling the car some time before he went. The car subsequently had a hard life, being stolen at least twice and crashed. It has been owned by a former club member for many years and is currently in a shed (we hope) on the Gold Coast.



The way we were! Rhys Davies at Echo Valley Speed Hillclimb Toowoomba in 1972.

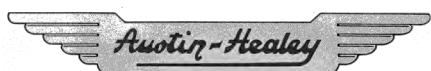
Graham Ruckert Photo



Jim Bonham 100 BN1, Red.

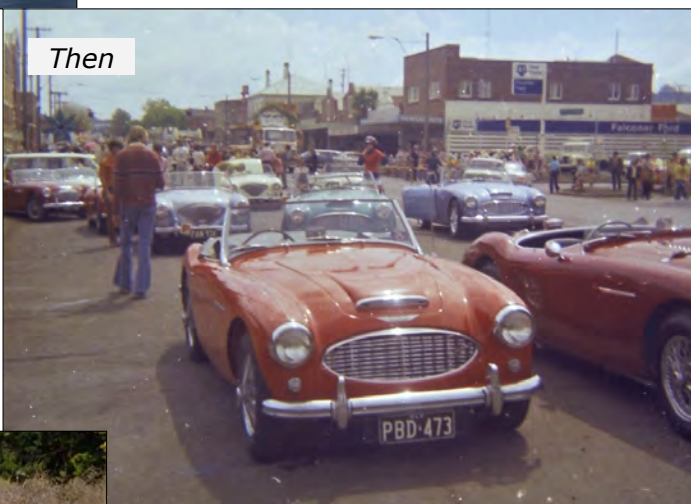
Sold in 1972 to David Christianson then **Phil Cuthbert**, this car is currently owned by **John Anderson** and is now metallic dark green.

John is pictured in action recently on the Noosa Hillclimb.



Peter Richards 100-Six BN4 Red. This car was sold soon after to Stuart Lutton, who subsequently became an active & well-known club member. Pictured here at the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers in 1976, Stuart sold the car in the '80s. After spending many years in NSW, it is currently located in Victoria.

Then



Left: the ex Richards/Lutton 100-Six as it is today.

The AHOCQ has adopted this stylish new logo in recent years.



Now

The Cars!

Ian Stewart 100-Six BN4, OEW over Charcoal. Once the property of **George Goss**, this car was later owned by **Don Marsh**, Carl Stecher & Bob Webb. Currently owned by a member of the AHOC in NSW.



Then (1965)



Graham Ruckert Photo

Later (1972)

Another great Graham Ruckert photo shows Don Marsh powering out of Echo Valley's Fir Tree bend in 1972 in his now blue & white, steel wheeled 100-Six.



Matt Robbins 100 BN1 Dark blue. Later owned by another club member and last known of in Toowoomba. The current location and status of this car is unknown.



Doug Carter 100 BN1 Yellow over Black. This was **Joe Jarick's** first Austin-Healey, sold to Doug so Joe could buy the 3000. It passed through several owners, including Olympic Gold Medallist Mark Tonelli. Left dismantled in Upper Kedron for many years, it was finally restored by a specialist in Victoria, returned to its original Spruce Green, then sent to the UK for auction.



Doug Creagh 100 BN1 Nothing is known about Doug's 100 and it is believed to have been dismantled and parted out. Very soon after, Doug bought this **3000 MkIII BJ8**, Black (later with red side). Doug sadly, also passed away some years ago.

Rick Scouller (who took the car to Mt Isa) and also Ernie Clark cared for this car which is now owned by Frank Vanderworm in Western Australia.

The Cars!



As with Rick Scouller's first 100, no photos are available of the other cars at that first gathering.

Neil Whiteman 100 BN1 (the Jag-Healey), Red (later with white side). A car into which a Jaguar 3.4 twin cam six had been shoe-horned! Neil crashed it soon after (not surprising, I rode in it once, it was *lethal*!) and it was written off. The wreck was dismantled and parted out and used in the restoration of other cars. The engine returned to a Jaguar.

After the Jag-Healey, Neil owned the **Prad-Healey**, albeit by then reverted to more or less standard form but with an ugly 'fastback' coupe body. Now back in roadster form, this car still exists and is located in Victoria.

Rod Luhrs 100 BN1 Healey Blue. Rod soon sold this car (Rod had previously owned the Jag-Healey, so perhaps he was disappointed with the performance of a standard Austin-Healey?) and the new owner sent it to Ray Jorgensen for restoration. The last known owner is David Montgomery of Too-woomba, but it has been unheard of for many years. Current status & location is unknown.

Jim Watt 100 BN1 Pale Blue over Navy Blue. This car was damaged in 1971 while parked at the kerb in Taringa. Repairs were commenced but never completed. Alwyn Keepence purchased it in 1974 but then sold it on. A curious case, this 100 has been in its dismantled state for nearly fifty years but has survived pretty much intact despite several changes of ownership! Now located in **NSW** and still not on the road!

Noel Cook 100 BN1 Noel owned several BN1s and it is not known if any of them were driveable. The identities and current whereabouts of any of them are unknown.

The three Austin-Healeys on display at the VCCAQ Clubrooms tonight are cars that were present at that fateful meeting in 1970:

John & Pauline Anderson's 100

Paul & Helen Blake's 100-Six

Don & Lyn Marsh's 3000.

Seven AHOCQ members have been recognised with Life Membership:

Ray Jorgensen (Dec'd) Joe Jarick Alwyn Keepence Peter Cowen

Noel Standfast Paul Blake Rod Shepherd

Autographs