

ELFIN

OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.

NEWSLETTER



NUMBER 130 - September 2013



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ELF – IN



❖ Small, slight, and delicately - made or proportioned, quick, agile and delicate (as in movement or thought), having an otherworldly, unearthly or magical quality.

- Webster's Dictionary.



ELFIN OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.

EDITORIAL:

The Elfin legacy lives on strongly in South Australia, a fact that was certainly brought home to me while reading through back issues of "Wheel Spin", the excellent publication of the Sporting Car Club of S.A. It is fitting that a major section of our September newsletter is devoted to the cars and the Elfin people who play such a significant role not only in the S.C.C.S.A. but in the running of motor sport in that state. Enjoy "Crow Corner"!

Now that Daniel Ricciardo has been officially announced as Mark Webber's replacement in the Red Bull F1 team, the E.O.D.C. has more or less an affiliation, as Daniel's father, JOE is a member of our club. I sent Joe an e-mail and asked him to pass on our congratulations in the hope that from time to time we can bring some latest news through Daniel's media liaison.

On a sadder note, we learnt of the passing of Brian Chynoweth, brother of our patron **LORRAINE COOPER**. A sympathy card was sent to the Cooper family from the E.O.D.C., and a tribute to Brian follows.

The motor sport fraternity was also saddened to lose a truly great Australian recently with the death of 93-year old Tony Gaze. Tony's life was remarkable, (although he never owned or raced an Elfin!) Not only was he a highly decorated WW2 Spitfire ace, but was also Australia's first Formula One Grand Prix driver, and the motor racing fraternity turned out in force at his memorial service at Geelong Grammar School chapel. Tony's life will also be celebrated at the Victorian Historic Racing Register's Historic Sandown meeting on November 8-10. This will be the first major Historic meeting since his death, and as he was a member of the VHRR, the organisers plan to honour him accordingly. Don't be surprised to see a Spitfire flypast.... (yet to be confirmed).

The EODC has been approached about providing a display of Elfins for next year's Clipsal '500' meeting in Adelaide. I'm currently in contact with the organisers and will keep members informed of developments. We did something similar at one of the last Formula One Grand Prix meetings when our display was organised so well by the late **JOHN BLANDEN**. It would be nice if we can make a return visit with a cross section of our Elfins.

Thanks to the Sporting Car Club of SA we were reminded of the important role an Elfin played when Donald Campbell established a new world land speed record at Lake Eyre back in 1964. Read about this piece of motor sport history, along with lots of other good things in our latest issue of the newsletter.

Brique

EODC DIRECT CREDIT DETAILS

Bank Account No. 5003785

BSB 633-000

Bendigo & Adelaide Bank

Make sure your **NAME** appears on the transaction so your payment can be identified.



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BITS 'N' PIECES:

WARWICK FOLETTA: Cold & foggy in Melb... Not much better at Silverstone, hopefully improves over the next few days and for Goodwood. Looking forward to reading (the newsletter) on my return.

MONO MYSTERY - the plot thickens....!

The letter from **GRAHAM HOINVILLE** explaining the 'missing Mono' has created plenty of interest, and **BARRY CATFORD** has followed up with this article....

On reading **GRAHAM HOINVILLE's** interesting theory concerning the missing Elfin Mono M6447, an image immediately flashed into my mind of Deane Clough also end - over - ending his Mono at Mallala, but Deane's big one occurred at the end of the boomerang back straight. Deane was ejected from his Elfin as it flipped three times and he ended up in hospital. Because I recalled Deane acquiring the ex Bill Pile Mono, I immediately thought it was the same car involved in a similar type of accident on the same circuit, albeit in a different place.

On checking the Elfin Mono register I noticed Deane had not only sold his Mono to Tony Maw in 1968, but had bought it back from the then owner Brink Auto Service (John Silman) in 1972. He was later offered **GARRIE COOPER's** Mono, a Mk2B, MD6755, and a place in the Elfin works team which maybe came as a surprise to Deane as it was the rear wheel of Garrie's Mono that Dean unwittingly tried to drive over and that launched his Elfin into the air. Deane sold his first Mono, again, this time to Phil Alexander. Was it perhaps that later ex Cooper Elfin that was the car in which Deane Clough had his accident?

A phone call to Deane confirmed it was, so not the weird coincidence I first thought.

However the mystery of the missing M6447 is not the only Mono not accounted for.

During a phone conversation with **JOHN WEBB**, the man responsible for all of the Elfin Mono tubs, he insisted that he had built a Mono tub that, without suspension or any other running gear but with a chassis number, was stood on its end in a back corner of the Elfin factory and remained there for some time until one morning when he arrived for work it had disappeared. John said he never did find out where it went. It wasn't the Bob Mills Mono, of that John is certain. What chassis number did that Mono carry?

Another mystery has arisen from John Webb insisting that he built 20 Mono tubs, but the register only accounts for 19 including the Bob Mills car, which has no chassis number. The 'exercise book' lists 18 and no record of the Mills Mono.

BARRY CATFORD

Barry has also been in contact with a well known Mono owner/driver at the time, Deane Clough, and adds....

"After Deane's Mono was repaired Garrie took it to Mallala for testing, and when he dropped the clutch it burst into flames! It seems like both of Deane's Monos had attraction to fire.

"Deane raced a third Elfin, a Type 700 in F3 form. He competed in 90 races in the Elfin over a three-year period, finished in every one, and according to Deane "it never got bent".





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BITS 'N' PIECES:

Back to the Monos - just how many were built? We may never know the correct answer.

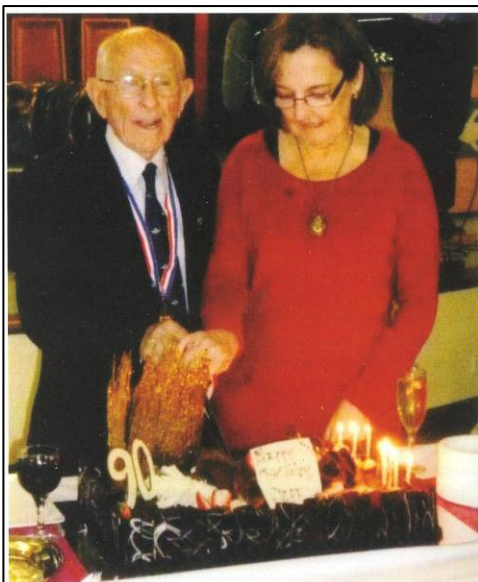
RON GUPPY: I remember that story and the hole in the roof. It was there for a while.

IAN HOBBS: Very interesting story from Graham about his Mono. I heard that story about 12 months ago from **JOHN WEBB**, and laughed. John has many interesting stories. I've got my photos out but haven't studied them yet to see if I can pick up any points to add credence to Graham's story. Sounds reasonable though!

Crow Corner: Elfin members are well to the fore in South Australia, as evidenced by their endeavours in "Wheel Spin", newsletter of the Sporting Car Club of S.A. President of the club for the past two years has been **KEN MESSENGER**, and during his term there have been many highlights and many challenges, making it (in his own words) "....pretty much a full time job". Another E.O.D.C. member who have played a key role in S.A. is **PETER WHELAN** who chairs a working committee to organise 'The Adelaide Motoring Festival'. This will be a major event leading up to next year's 'Clipsal 500' meeting. Peter's son, **SEAN WHELAN** has been treasurer of the Management Committee for the last six years and is stepping down for a well earned rest. Both father and son are keen competitors on the track as well - maybe Sean will now have more time to devote to his own racing activities. We congratulate these members for the great contributions they have made to motor sport in S.A.

Elfin book author **BARRY CATFORD** always comes up with a challenging brain teaser in the magazine, and readers look out keenly for his next challenge....(*loved the one about Nigel Mansell's excuse board, Barry*).Ed.

Another tireless worker for the Sporting Car Club of S.A. is **JOAN SHEARER** and she has been rewarded with life membership of that club. In fact the entire Shearer family have devoted themselves to serving the club, and earlier this year a plaque was unveiled at Mallala to acknowledge their many years of dedicated service.



Elfin members are also mentioned for other reasons, and a very good reason is when you turn 90 years of age. This landmark was actually celebrated last year by **JEFF GRANSDEN**. Jeff has been a member of the SCCSA for more than 57 years, and it was appropriate that his 90th party was celebrated at the clubrooms in King William Road, Unley. (*If you get the chance, visit the clubrooms, and check out the library*).Ed. Jeff had a long working association with **GARRIE COOPER** when his factory was next to Elfin Sports Cars, and has plenty of stories to tell - (some of which may even be true!) He was presented with nine bottles of red at the party organised by wife Lorraine, with each label representing a decade of Jeff's life. He is still competing, and is eagerly looking forward to the next bottle! Belated congratulations, Jeff from the members of the Elfin Owners & Drivers Club.



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BITS 'N' PIECES:

Some members may not be aware that an Elfin played a significant role in the successful land speed record attempt by Donald Campbell's Bluebird in 1964. The Elfin Catalina (#6313) was purchased by Dunlop and used for tyre testing at over 100mph on Lake Eyre prior to Campbell's attempts. It was fitted with special wheels and tyres (Dunlops, naturally!) and was driven by Andrew Mustard.

Late last year, Ian Patrick from the SCCSA brought along some colour photos to the clubrooms taken at the dry salt lake at the time. His neighbour, Ken Smith owns the photos, and as a youngster Ken travelled with his parents to the location back in 1964. There didn't appear to be any restrictions on visitors, even though a highly dangerous world speed record attempt was about to happen after a series of frustrating delays due to unsuitable weather and track conditions. The photo shows Campbell alongside the Elfin holding aloft a wind speed meter, with the massive Bluebird to the right. Ken is the young fellow standing with hands behind his back to the left. Not only was he allowed to be so close to the action, but also helped push Bluebird back into its shelter at night.

Donald Campbell was a brave man - the course was not ideal, and each day after the trial runs a heavy steel railway track was dragged behind a truck to level out the ruts. Campbell eventually set a new world land speed record at 403mph (almost 645km/h). Sadly he was to lose his life in an attempt to set a new world water speed record on Lake Coniston in 1967.



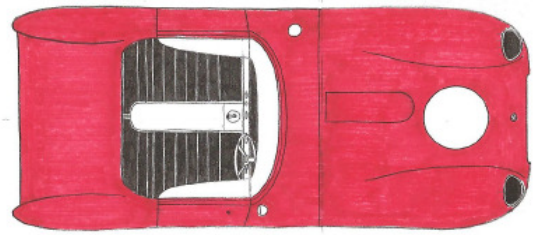
Welcome home to **MARTIN DUNLOP** who has just spent a year in Africa with Medecins Sans Frontieres. Martin is now back on track as a club member and says "I'm itching to get my 600FF back on the track". We look forward to seeing you and the Elfin in action again soon.



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ELFIN STREAMLINERS - an update from IAN HOBBS' meeting of owners....

The Streamliner Geschwindigkeit column



As usual, the Friday prior to the 2013 AGP was the annual Elfin BBQ hosted by Bill Hemming at the Elfin Heritage Centre. As usual, it was a wonderfully enjoyable evening. As usual, Brique Reed convened the AGM for the EODC. As usual, Cheryl organised him. Lorraine and Barry your apology was noted and your presence was missed.

Unusually, after the AGM a covert gathering was convened for the dedicated owners of the first (and most important) Elfin model, the silky, sensuous, scintillating, Streamliner. In attendance was Bill Atherton, John Becker, Peter Fffrench, Colin Sullivan and Ian Hobbs (ah yes that's me). Bill Hemming, who I was told, was filling up a glass of wine at the time, was with us in spirit. The reason for meeting was to generate a bit of comradery between the stylish, sexy, swanky Streamliner owners. If we were to have a charter it might read something like the following; To nurture the passion for the Elfin Streamliner and to foster the sharing of technical information, gossip, innuendo and lies about the Streamliner and their owners. I imagine that this charter could be changed at any time at the whim of any Streamliner owner, while totally ignoring any comments from drivers, hired help and/or volunteers.

Skirting the stories from Peter Beasley, we decided to share contact details, produce a Club Streamliner polo shirt (with and without pockets) and to write a regular Streamliner column in our quarterly newsletter. Continually interrupted by laughter from the incessant stories for Peter Beasley the meeting was closed. Peter then continues stories about his Elfin, the last FF.

Yours staunchly Streamliner
Ian Hobbs

It was appropriate the SCCSA used three Elfins to help promote its 60th anniversary meeting at Collingrove Hillclimb in September last year.

The very out-of-shape Clubman is being manhandled by Greg Mobbs. If anyone knows his whereabouts, let's know as we would like to invite him to join the EODC - that's if he ever managed to straighten out this impressive slide!

The middle photo shows **JOHN McCORMACK**, multiple Gold Star champion powering up the hill in his Elfin MR5 Formula 5000, and on the right is **STAN KEEN** in the potent Globe Elfin 400. Collingrove's location is right in the Barossa. Not surprising there was wine tasting after the meeting to add to the ambience.



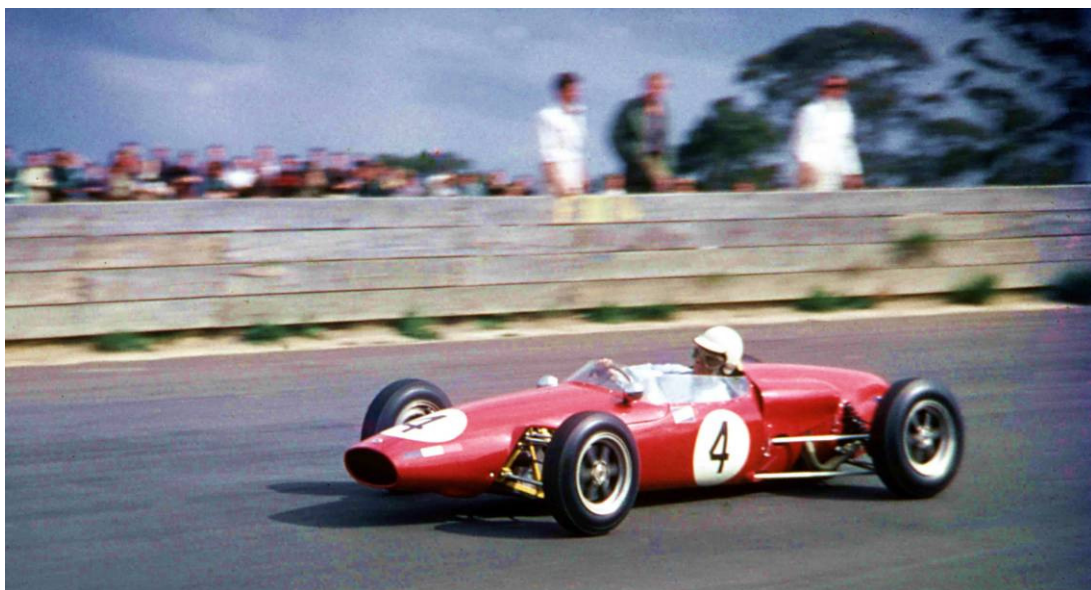


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Originally published in the Autumn 2013 issue of The Oily Rag - The journal of the Historic Sports and Racing Car Association of NSW.

The ex-Frank Matich Elfin Formula Junior

By Patrick Quinn



Frank Matich on his way to win the 1962 Australian Australian Junior Championship in the Elfin at Catalina Park, Katoomba.
Photographer Bruce Wells. Courtesy autotopics.com.au

If you were at last November's Tasman Revival at Sydney Motorsport Park you may have wandered into the Memorabilia Marquee. Perhaps it was a coffee you were after and perhaps a change to sit down in the shade. While there you would have had the opportunity to get up close to a number of cars on display, or even chat with one of Australia's motor racing legends.

As you walked in, I wonder how many noticed a smallish red open wheeler on the right? With the huge number of delectable racing cars out in the pits I would be surprised if many just walked past this car without a second glance. However if you did stop and had a look, you would have been pleased to see that it was an Elfin FJ belonging to **CHARLIE MITCHELL** of Western Australia.

Charlie had towed the car across Australia with the hope of debuting the Elfin after its restoration. Besides being a rather pretty car, its history is not insignificant as being the same car that Frank Matich drove to win the 1962 Australian Formula Junior Championship.

Unfortunately for Charlie there were problems with engine that was rebuilt for him and he was destined not to run last November.

We caught up with Charlie at Phillip Island to hear about this piece of Australian Motor Sport History.

TOR: So apart from warm feelings Charlie, how did you feel about towing the Elfin across Australia?

CM: There was certainly more than that as I had the chance to sit down with Frank Matich for a couple of hours. As you know Frank drove the car for the Elfin factory and won the 1962 Australian Formula Junior Championship. He told me a few things about the car and a few tricks that I will try out when it's going. It was great as Frank was really helpful and said that he would like to do a little plaque for the car that he'll sign for me. I thought about putting it on the body, but Frank suggested the dash as I am bound to damage the body.

TOR: How come the car ended up in your hands?



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CM: It's been in WA for most of its life. When **GARRIE COOPER** took it to Warwick Farm for its testing, he went around to Frank's workshop on the following Monday saying that he would like to leave the cars there saying that Frank should use them whenever he wished. So Frank entered it in the FJ championship and a few later events. It then went back to the factory and a guy called Noel Potts bought it and raced it at Bathurst in 1965. Noel later came to live in Perth where he still does. He ran it at Caversham and sold it to Jack Rowe of Albany. It then went through various hands until it became non-competitive and probably in need of a rebuild. One of the owners was **STUART KOSTERA**.

Garrie Cooper knew the car was in WA and he contacted Stuart to see if he knew where the car was as he wanted to buy it back. Anyway that happened and the car ended up back at Elfin in SA where Garrie started restoring it. Unfortunately while doing so he died and then it stayed at **LORRAINE COOPER's** place for some time. Stuart said that he was going to buy it back, but never did. He eventually approached me asking if I was interested. Needless to say I jumped at the opportunity.

So I did a deal with Lorraine and what I got was a bare chassis and lots of boxes full of bits. Interestingly most of the bits were new and had GC written on them, so I guess that Garrie must have gone around the Elfin factory saying that he would have one of those and one of that. So it took me quite some time for me to nut out what went where. There was one other Junior in WA that **DAVE SULLIVAN** had bought, but that was after Elfin had stopped making them. So looking at lots of photos soon showed me that every Elfin FJ was unique, but I can say that it was really pleasing that the car wasn't bastardised around to any great degree. Everything was there like the steering wheel, fuel tank, wheels, suspension and the chassis which Garrie had rebuilt.

TOR: So how did you find yourself at the Tasman Revival?

CM: The car had been sitting at home in what could be called a $\frac{3}{4}$ finished state without an engine. Then the HSRCA asked if I could bring it over for the Tasman Revival as Frank was going to be the patron of the meeting. I agreed and after Easter last year I started in earnest and worked for four months solid to get the car ready for an engine. I had chosen an engine builder in Sydney with a good reputation, but no way would there be time to have it put together and sent to Perth, so I decided on the next best thing which was to fit it in Sydney. As happens in motor racing, unfortunately the engine gave up while on the dyno. So he has very kindly agreed to build me another engine which should be with me in about a month. So it will finally be back on the track after about thirty odd years.

TOR: What did Frank Matich say when he saw the car?

CM: He was just over the moon and he said what a fantastic car it was to drive. Very predictable, plenty of room and it would go exactly where you pointed it. One of the things he was quite clear about was not to try and kill the car. Just let the car drive itself.

When Noel Potts had it and took it to Bathurst it was clocked at 136 mph down the straight, so I guess that it will be a quick little car.

TOR: What about in comparison to the car you have here, at Phillip Island?

CM: The Elfin is certainly different to the TS Special that has lots of power and no brakes and no handling, while the Junior won't have a lot of power, but it will have handling and brakes. It will be a totally different car to drive.

I think Garrie built all his cars to sell, so they were very basic motor cars that he tried to make as simple as he could. Certainly they were light as is my car. Cars were being imported such as Lotus and Lolas which meant that he was up against some stiff opposition. It really is surprising at how many parts are in the car that are peculiar to Elfin, but they all used such things as Triumph Herald uprights and Standard 10 pedal box, but Garrie tweaked all the bits so that his cars performed just that little bit better. They were probably Australia's first properly manufactured race car. There is no doubt that the Elfin certainly made some magic car.



ELFIN OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.

MEMBERSHIP:

We welcome the following new member...

No. 607 - MELINDA PRICE (Vic.)

After an absence of seven years, Melinda will be back behind the wheel of a race car, having a "one off" drive at Wakefield Park in **KIM SHEARN'S** Lotus while Kim is overseas. Like so many others, Melinda began her racing career driving go-karts, and graduated to an all-girl team in 1994 for the 12-hour race at Bathurst. Gary Rogers was team boss and the car was a Nissan Pulsar SSS. She later competed in various enduros as part of the UltraTune team, and spent two years in V8 Supercars driving for Larry Perkins' "Cougars". She casually mentioned driving for Ross Palmer and competing at the Nurburgring in Germany and Misano in Italy. Not a bad CV! She would like to return to racing and hopes to compete at the Historic Sandown meeting (November 8-10).

We hope you have a long and happy association with the EODC.

ELFINS ON DISPLAY:

Our thanks to the small number of members who offered to display their Elfins at Sandown's round of the State Championship Series. Unfortunately the response was minimal, due partly to the fact that members were required to pay an entry fee to display their cars and the weather at that time of year is decidedly "iffy" at Sandown.

However, a much better response is anticipated if plans proceed to have a representative cross-section of Elfins on show at the 2014 Clipsal '500' meeting in Adelaide from February 27 to March 2. The organisers are wanting around 15-20 Elfins showcasing various models from the beginnings through to the last F5000. Hopefully parade laps can also be scheduled subject to V8 requirements. I'll be working with the organisers and will have more information as the race program is developed.

VALE - BRIAN CHYNOWETH

It is with regret we note the passing of Brian Chynoweth, brother of our patron **LORRAINE COOPER**. Although he didn't race cars himself, he was always very interested in the sport and loved cars. In fact, Lorraine has inherited his little dog that goes by the name of "Henry Ford". According to Lorraine, this little fellow is "absolutely my best friend". Brian (pictured at right with Garrie), died in July after a brief illness. He was aged 79 years. A sympathy card was sent on behalf of the EODC, and to Brian's family and friends we send our sincere condolences.





ELFIN OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name (PLEASE PRINT)

Address

Postcode.....Fax No.....Mobile No

Phone No.....(home)(work)

Email.....

I am an owner/ex-owner/entrant/driver/mechanic/enthusiast of Elfin cars. (Please circle)

CAR.....YEAR OF MANUFACTURE.....

CATEGORY.....CAPACITY.....

ENGINE.....ENGINE NO.....

CHASSIS NO.....COLOUR.....

Any other significant mechanical details?

- HISTORY OF CAR -

EVENTS CONTESTED (include results and dates)

PREVIOUS OWNERS (and years)

◆◆◆ Please include a photograph of your car ◆◆◆

I wish to become a member of the Elfin Owners and Drivers Club, and

☐ have enclosed a cheque for \$20 - membership fee (no cash please).

☐ have paid my membership via direct credit -

Bank A/C No. 5003785 BSB 633-000 (Bendigo & Adelaide Bank)

Signed

Please return to Brian Reed
Box 447
AIREYS INLET 3231

or email brianreed.motorsport@yahoo.com.au

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