

# ELFIN

**OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.**

# NEWSLETTER



**NUMBER 134 - September 2014**



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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 winter months have given us time to prepare our Elfins for the better weather ahead, and hopefully you have some important meetings coming up in your part of the world. In Victoria, the next major event will be Historic Sandown on November 8-9.

This meeting will be special in 2014 as the Victorian Historic Racing Register will pay tribute to its late patron, Sir Jack Brabham. More than 40 events over the weekend will cater for more than 400 racing, sports and touring cars and included will be a fine display of Brabhams. Also, some 300 collectable cars will be on static display for the public to enjoy. It's going to be a top weekend!

As promised, we begin an excellent article on the Elfin 300 compiled by IAN HOBBS. Ian's research is always detailed and thorough, and I'm sure you'll enjoy reading about what is arguably GARRIE COOPER's most beautiful sports car.

Speaking of attention to detail, BRIAN LEAR has sold his Elfin Mono, has signed up the new owner GEOFF VAREY and paid his first year of membership. Not only that, but Brian has sent along a summary of the Mono's history and a photo for inclusion on Geoff's page of the club Register. Hopefully others will follow this procedure – when Elfins change hands it's important the ownership trail is maintained, and it's a small but nice gesture to pay the \$20 fee.

Also in this issue, one of GARRIE's earliest race cars is now on the market, and details follow. Here is a rare opportunity to acquire a piece of famous racing history. Read on!

Congratulations from the EODC were sent to Australia's latest Formula One star, Daniel Ricciardo after he won his first F1 Grand Prix in Canada. His father, JOE RICCIARDO is one of our club members in WA, and since then Daniel has added victories in Hungary and Belgium. It's a great start to his maiden season with the Red Bull team and hopefully more successes will come his way before season's end. His parents, understandably, are very proud of Daniel's achievements, and Joe's reply to our e-mail is included in this newsletter.

If you haven't already done so, now is the time to purchase some of the latest Elfin merchandise. Our new range includes smart polo shirts and caps, and how to order follows. A reminder, too, that lapel and cloth badges are available along with EODC decals.

Enjoy the September issue, and I hope to see you at Sandown.

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.



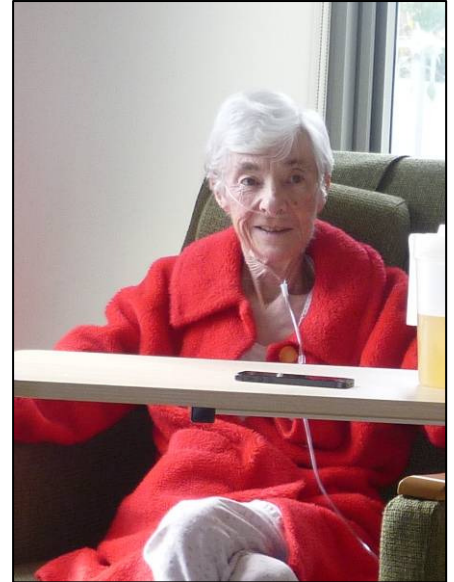


# ELFIN OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.

## BITS 'N' PIECES:

In mid-June this year our Club patron **LORRAINE COOPER** was admitted to the Flinders Medical Centre with a serious respiratory problem. Since then she has made steady progress such that on the 5<sup>th</sup> of August she was able to be transferred to a recently completed modern rehabilitation and restoration establishment which Lorraine now calls her new home.

The good news is that, although she still relies on an additional oxygen supply - albeit at a much reduced rate from the full on hospital one, Lorraine has completely accepted her situation and continues to be her usual positive self.



LORRAINE in her new "home."



Her address is ACH Group ViTA, Room 87, Rockville Ave, Daw Park, South Australia 5041.

Lorraine's last public appearance at a motoring event - the "Adelaide Motorsport Festival" earlier this year. She is pictured here with **JOHN BOWE**.

### JOE RICCIARDO REPLIES....

Following our congratulatory message to Daniel Ricciardo via his father and EODC member, **JOE**, our club received the following reply....

*"Hi Brian. Sorry for the late reply, big thank you to you and all at Elfin Owners & Drivers Club for your good wishes, look forward to meeting you again soon and it's probably time I got myself an Elfin.*

*Best,*

**JOE RICCIARDO**

We'd love to see you behind the wheel of an Elfin, **JOE**. (ed.)

## EXCITING NEW CLUB MERCHANDISE NOW AVAILABLE!

Now is the time to purchase your smart new Elfin polo shirt and matching cap.

Sizes S - XXXL available.

In the interests of club members, costs have been kept to a minimum - \$35 for shirts, \$20 for caps, or \$50 for both. \$10 postage.

To place your orders,

email Cheryl (reidywithchampers@yahoo.com.au) or phone - 0419 581 815

Payment by cheque or via EODC DIRECT CREDIT

Bank Account No. 5003785 BSB 633-000 Bendigo & Adelaide Bank





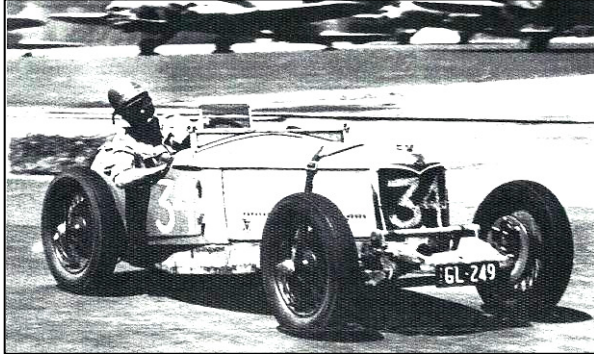


## ELFIN OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.

### FORMER 'CLUBMAN of the YEAR' CELEBRATES LANDMARK

The 2001 'Elfin Clubman of the Year' **BILL PROWSE** recently celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in Melbourne amongst family members and many friends from the Historic racing fraternity. Despite reaching his four-score-years-and ten, **BILL's** passion for cars and motor sport have never diminished. He still enjoys an opportunity to take part in Regularity events and has a 'hot' little

Alfa Romeo on order - a limited edition car with only a handful earmarked for Australia.



**BILL** raced immediately after World War 2 and here, (at left), he is shown behind the wheel of his Riley at Ballarat aerodrome.

He was presented

with a large wall hanging showing him in action at Ballarat when he was a special guest at the 'Festival of Motoring' and this provided an appropriate backdrop at his birthday celebration.

Congratulations, **BILL**, and keep those wheels turning!



## VAN OWNERS

**HOLDEN, VANGUARD, AUSTIN, PEUGEOT, etc.**

Have armour plate or safety glass vision windows fitted to the sides of your van, either fixed or sliding. **GUARANTEED WEATHERPROOF.** Convert your panel van to an ESTATE CAR with folding rear seats.

We can replace those awkward BUCKET seats with a comfortable BENCH seat.

For easier access to your van, let us fit A SIDE ENTRANCE DOOR.

For BODY ALTERATIONS of ANY TYPE SEE

## COOPER MOTOR BODIES

Manufacturers of ALL TYPES of Commercial, Truck and Van Bodies

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712 SOUTH RD., EDWARDSTOWN. Phone LF 4101

Another of our senior members, **GRAHAM HOINVILLE** has sent in a copy of "some early memorabilia". Graham writes....

"Recently I was perusing some early programs, including the 1955 AGP which was held at Port Wakefield in October 1955 and I came upon the enclosed full page advertisement for Cooper Body Works.

"Of course, it pre-dates ELFIN - perhaps by a year or two.

Regards and best wishes for now".

**GRAHAM HOINVILLE**

**GRAHAM** went on to explain that cheaper purchase prices and registration rates applied to vans, and some enterprising owners would then have them converted. Where better to go than **CLIFF COOPER** of Cooper Body Works to have your "awkward bucket seat" replaced, a side entrance door fitted, or your sports and racing car bodies "built to order".





## ELFIN OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.

### FOR SALE:

#### COOPER AUSTIN:

**JOHN HAZELDEN** has made a difficult decision to part company with the famous Cooper Austin, seen here on the left, one of **GARRIE COOPER's** first attempts at building a race car. Along with the Cooper Butler, the Cooper Austin preceded the Elfin name - (Garrie wasn't able to adopt the name 'Cooper' for his cars as it was already being used by Charles and John Cooper in England).

**JOHN HAZELDEN** said he no longer has the time to race the Cooper Austin and do it justice, so he is prepared to pass it on to "the right person". "I see it as a very historic and significant car, and would love to see it in the right hands", he said.

Further information can be obtained by phoning **JOHN** on 0425 007 733.



When **PETER BRENNAN** bought his MR8, he was given this bottle with the message..."you may need a stiff drink after driving the F5000!" Never a truer word was spoken!

The label reads...

#### MR 8 PORT 1976 - 77 VINTAGE

A dicey Port especially prepared for those with 180 mph pallet (*sic*).

*Selected from a spritely grape possessing magical powers grown in the north corner of the Elfin factory just near the toilet block. The ingredients were picked by the Ansett Team Elfin crew and support staff at the height of a South Australian dust storm, using multigrips and 5/8 ring spanner. The grapes were crushed with a conrod in pit six by Garrie Cooper during a prolonged pit stop and allowed to mature for 1 ½ minutes in 5 litre racing fuel drums on flight 293 from Adelaide. This fine selection is to be drunk only in the open air with a fire extinguisher at hand. Can also be used an engine degreaser or racing fuel. Bottled by the Elves of Edwardstown, South Australia for your pleasure. With thanks to Ansett Australia, B.P. Girlock, Budget, Hollyhock and Elfin Sports cars.*





**ELFIN OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.**

# **ELFIN 300**

## ***Fast That's Past***

Ray Bell – Motor Racing Australia

*In 2014 Ian Hobbs edited the text and added the photos.*

Built to take the place of the Lotus 23 in small capacity sports car racing, the Elfin 300 was a success in all things. But it never sold well.

*The Lotus 23 must stand as one of the most successful production sports racing cars of all time. While 131 were built of the three types, the 23 (1962-64), 23B (1963-65) and the 23C (1966) for sale worldwide, there would have been a large number of replicas built in some countries because of their appeal and their racing successes.*

*From the moment the first Lotus-Ford twincam turned the racing world upside down at the Nurburgring 1000km race in 1962, there was no other car to have if you wanted to run 1600cc or less in a racing sports car.*

*Sure, Brabham's BT5 might have made inroads had the Brabham/Taurenac combination seriously marketed the car, but Lotus had this class by the throat and kept on building cars. Interestingly, the Lotus website has a short description of the model, "Definitive mid-engine sports racer, giant killer." And it was.*

*A Lotus 23B won the 1965 Australian Tourist Trophy, for instance.*

*But for the most part in Australia, these cars were bit players. They ran squabbling with the Ferrari 250LM and other bigger cars while the more rapid big Climax and later V8-powered machinery of the 'big boys' romped off into the distance. This meant they picked up a lot of minor placings, of course, and were there to capitalise when the bigger cars failed - as at Lakeside with that Tourist Trophy.*

*Racing amongst themselves was often very entertaining stuff, too. Greg Cusack and Ian Geoghegan were the principal protagonists at this and many times they were covered by the proverbial blanket for the whole race.*

*The point, however, is that a car that was introduced into racing in the skinny-wheel era of 1962 (first appearance here was October 14 that year) should not still be dominant five years later. But it was.*

*So Garrie Cooper set out to do something about that. Economically this would have been sound thinking, for there was about seven or eight of the 23s and copies (Ayers' MRC, the Sterling) running at the time and a more modern car would undoubtedly appeal to anyone wanting to upgrade. Once a better car appeared, it would surely eclipse the performance parameters of the 23 and force serious racers to buy a new car.*



*Dennis Uhrane, Elfin 300 (SS67-6), followed by a Lotus 23 at Warwick Farm 1970 ©Autopics*



*Brabham BT5 – two were built in 1963*





## **ELFIN OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.**

### **ELFIN 300 – Fast That's Past continues...**

*Elfin had already produced two rear engined sports cars. The Mallala had been a some-time 23 competitor, but being based on a car that was more like the Lotus 18 than the 22 upon which the 23 was built meant it was limited in its prospects. The 400 was the V8 sports car that started the big sports racing class on its path to outright lap record setting.*

*The 300 was to look a lot like a scaled down 400, but without the brutality. I have to say that I feel there's never been a sweeter looking and more balanced sports car made.*

*The car was built, like the Lotus, to take engines any size from 1100cc through to 2-litres. Most were fitted with the very popular 1500cc twin cam Ford-Lotus similar to those in Lotus-Cortinas and Lotus Elans. The classes of the day were 1100cc and 1500cc, but very few took notice of the smaller category and it was generally left to Clubmans and other (older) single cam Climax-engined machines.*

*Cooper apparently had an order at the time from Carl Haas in America if he should build a car to match the 23. Haas had been impressed, apparently, with the 400 and saw a market for a 23 replacement in the USA. But when the car was finally built, in September 1967, (frame number SS67-4) Cooper sent the first one straight to New York distributors Donald Mansell and Chuck Krueger.*

*He'd tested it at Mallala prior to flying it out, lapping the tight circuit in 1:20.2 with only a 1150cc Holbay downdraft Ford in the back. This was over two seconds quicker than Alan Hamilton's record in the 2-litre class with his Porsche.*

*The second (SS67-5) of the initial batch of two cars was equipped with a 2-litre Coventry-Climax FPF engine and Hewland FT200, then it was despatched to South Africa where Tony Jeffries used it to push the Ford GT40s hard until a clash with Frank Gardner's Lola put it out. Garth McGilliwie was to race this car as well, then it went to Zimbabwe and Ron Watt took it over.*

*Coincidentally, an early production Mallala had also been sold to South Africa.*



*Kevin Bartlett testing the prototype Elfin 300 (SS67-4)  
at Mallala, South Australia*

*The second pair of cars was then laid down, they being completed around the end of 1967 so that both appeared at Calder on January 21, 1968. In the hands of Malcolm Ramsay (SS67-6) and David Robertson (SS67-7) they both slashed the Ian Geoghegan Lotus 23 lap record, Ramsay taking 1.6 seconds off it, but both failed to finish the race.*

*These cars came with twin cam Lotus Ford engines and Hewland 5-speed gearboxes of the VW case variety. They were sleek and new at this meeting, attracting a lot of attention, and they wore 8" and 10" wheels.*

*The chassis of the car was somewhat similar in layout to that of the 400, but smaller. It did feature stressed skins in the section outboard of the cockpit, with the fuel tank within the left side's 'pontoon' to help balance the driver's weight on the right. A full width rollover bar was incorporated into the chassis build.*





# ELFIN OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.

## ELFIN 300 – Fast That's Past continues...

*Suspension was similar to many cars of the time, particularly Brabhams, with upper and lower links at the front located by trailing arms at the bottom and leading arms at the top. All rose-jointed, of course. At the rear there was trailing arms top and bottom, with a reverse A-arm for the bottom wishbone and a single upper link.*

*Coil springs were located in the regular manner over the usual Armstrong AT9 externally adjustable damper units, within the 'wishbones' and sharing their top mounts with the top links. Anti-roll bars were provided at both ends of the car and were adjustable.*

*Elfin cast magnesium rear hub carriers were used, while at the front modified Triumph uprights with aluminium hubs were employed. Brakes were, naturally enough, discs all round with alloy racing callipers. Cars ordered with the larger engines, like the Coventry-Climax unit that went to South Africa, had bigger front discs.*

*All of these components were easily fabricated but as the 300 was a totally new car only the suspension uprights were part of regular Elfin production used for the late model Monos they still had in their catalogue. They remained the same through some of the production run of the 600 too as Cooper rationalised on the spares situation to the benefit of his clientele.*

*The first car, as was usual for many cars of this type, had an aluminium body. Later cars were principally made of fibreglass. The body was something of a forerunner of what was to be the usual shape for a lot of racing sports cars over the next several years. A hint of the wedge shape, cleanly lined and a neat spoiler across the back.*

*Headlights were faired in somewhat inboard of the extremes of the front point of the car, there was a large radiator exhaust ahead of the windscreen. The wheels were magnesium castings designed by Elfin and cast at Commonwealth Aircraft Corp in Melbourne. At their centres they had the distinctive Elfin badge on a cap.*

*So Elfin had produced a car that could be said to be a very workmanlike unit that set standards in the areas of clean design and aerodynamic thinking. But how did it perform?*

*Probably the best way to gauge that is to look at its performance in terms of lap records as it went racing. And bearing in mind that there was only two cars, one in Melbourne and the other in Adelaide, it would take time for them to cover many of Australia's far flung circuits.*

*After taking the 1500cc record at Calder, Ramsay entered the Australian Tourist Trophy on a hot Mallala day the following week. He was fourth on the grid for this race and inauspiciously dived with the very rudimentary Cicada Ford of Geoff Vercoe for the next placing behind the bigger cars for much of the race. But he retired when a bearing failed, though the lap record had come to him at 1:20.8 during his run.*

*Four weeks later Robertson raced at Sandown, dicing with Glyn Scott's 23 but not taking the record. At Winton a fortnight later, however, he did slice four seconds off the record before spinning in the main sports car race, and he took second place in a handicap.*

*Robertson also equalled Ramsay's time at Calder on March 24, following this up by claiming the Hume Weir class time with a 51.3 at Easter. Mallala was on the Easter Monday and saw Ramsay demolish his own record with a 1:18.7.*

*But Robertson had crashed that day at Hume Weir and subsequent performances were well short of what would appear to be his limit in the car. Whether it was the driver or the car that needed 'adjustment' is unclear.*

**(This article to be completed in the December issue).**



# ELFIN OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.

## MEMBERSHIP:

The following new members have joined our club....

### No. 617 GEOFF VAREY (NSW)

Geoff is the proud new owner of the ex-**BRIAN LEAR** Elfin Mono (#MB6550), the prototype Mk.2B which first appeared at Mallala in 1965. Successful drivers apart from **GARRIE COOPER** included Ian Cook and **ALFREDO CONSTANZO**. The Mono was re-acquired by **GARRIE COOPER** in 1979 who planned to restore it for Historic racing. Following **GARRIE'S** death, #MB6550 was sold to **PAUL JOHNSON** and later to **BRIAN LEAR** whose excellent restoration returned it to its 1965 specification.

### No. 618 PHILIP CARTER (SA)

The ex-**MOS KAESLER** Elfin 700 (#76649) has been bought by **PHILIP CARTER** so the car remains in South Australia. Built in 1976, the 700 is powered by a Volkswagen Golf engine and runs in Group R in Historic events.

### No. 619 DAN JEFFRIES (SA)

Dan's enthusiastic letter to us on joining the EODC read "I've bought **IAN BROCK'S** Streamliner and take delivery next week (very excited). Look forward to having as much fun with it as Ian did - wouldn't mind if it's as long either."

Welcome to our new members and we hope you have a long and happy association with the EODC.



As a token of appreciation, a signed poster showing the Elfin family tree was presented to Graham Juttner by EODC member **MARK GOLDSMITH**. Graham is a member of the Sporting Car Club of S.A. and was invaluable to all Elfin members who exhibited their cars at this year's Clipsal'500' meeting in Adelaide.

## VALE:

### LEIGH VINE

Former CAMS Queensland State Council Chairman and EODC member, **LEIGH VINE** passed away peacefully on Sunday 13 July 2014, aged 72. Leigh was an avid motor sport enthusiast, competing in the Formula 3 and Sports Car categories during the 1960's, 1970's and 1980's before becoming a Scrutineer.

As State Council Chairman in 1996 and 1997 and a throughout his time as Technical Commissioner for Sports Cars, he worked hard to improve motor sport in Queensland. Leigh was also involved in the Motor Race and Speed Events Advisory Panel during 1998 and had been on the Scrutineering Advisory Panel since 2001. Never hesitating to contribute his time and knowledge to the sport he loved, Leigh was formally recognised in 2003 when he was awarded the CAMS Service Award. Leigh will always be remembered for his passion and dedication to motor sport and to the many friends he made within the motor sport community, including his association with the EODC.

Leigh was the much loved and cherished husband of Vicki and loving father of Bill, Jack and Ben.





# 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](mailto:brianreed.motorsport@yahoo.com.au)

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