

ELFIN

OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.

NEWSLETTER



NUMBER 137 - June 2015



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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 Owners & Drivers Club has suffered a terrible blow with the loss of our much loved patron **LORRAINE COOPER**. After a long illness, Lorraine's brave fight ended on 8th May, and, typical of this modest, self-effacing lady, she passed quietly and peacefully from this world. Our club was represented at the private family service in Adelaide on Friday, 15 May.

Those who attended the EODC Grand Prix barbeque only a few short weeks ago were amazed by Lorraine's incredible video message filmed at her retirement village bedside. It was a message full of optimism and courage, and an inspiration to all present.

A notice was placed in the Adelaide Advertiser on behalf of the club, a card was sent to the Cooper family, and **BARRY CATFORD** has written an obituary for this newsletter.

Sadly it also notes the passing of others connected with our club or with the Elfin name, including the outstanding racing driver and constructor, Frank Matich.

Fortunately there has also been a brighter side to life over the past few months, and some of these moments have been captured in this issue. In fact, some material has to be held over until our September newsletter, so my apologies to those who continue to send in so much good stuff to keep us all interested and excited by all things Elfin.

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.

In a first for an Australian art institution, the National Gallery of Victoria hosts an exhibition of cars in 2015. "Shifting Gear: Design, Innovation and the Australian Car" presents some of our most iconic vehicles as objects of art and design. This exhibition celebrates Australia's important and proud history of automobile design and engineering. It also looks to the future of the automobile industry in this country and the shift from manufacturing, which has primarily serviced a local market, to being a global contributor through specialist expertise.

The exhibition traces the development of the family car from its earliest form, as a steam-powered 'horseless carriage', through to its present-day role as a major design object and highly refined and efficient means of transport. It presents the stories behind the development of some of the great Australian vehicles and reveals the designers who styled them. It also considers the significant contribution Australian designers and engineers have made, and continue to make, to the car industry through specialist design capacity and expert knowledge. The show is on until 12 July - well worth a visit.



Elfin Sports Cars is represented by **BILL HEMMING'S** 1961 Streamliner, and our club is also represented by the late **LOU MOLINA'S** MM Special, a car formerly owned and raced by **BRYAN THOMSON**.



ELFIN OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.

THE ELFIN SPIRIT WILL PREVAIL

A few years after his son's untimely death, **CLIFF COOPER**, when questioned further on matters relating to the history of Elfin Sports Cars, said, "Elfin died when **GARRIE** died." For sure Cliff knew that the name would survive, if for no other reason, because of the 250 Elfin sports and racing cars his son had designed and built. He was referring to the spirit of Elfin. Time has revealed that this prophecy has not come to pass and that is mostly due to three people absolutely passionate and loyal to the marque.

BRIAN (Brique) REED, second longest serving Elfin enthusiast of the three, founded the "Elfin Owners and Drivers Club" in 1978. Brique has tirelessly been an ambassador for Elfin to this day and hopefully for some time in the future.

BILL HEMMING, who with **NICK KOVATCH**, in 1997 took on the task of keeping the Elfin spirit alive by acquiring Elfin Sports Cars (after brief ownership of the business by two previous owners) and designing and building a range of Elfin sports cars and maintaining the original Elfin sports and racing cars. In 2007, ownership of ESC moved to the **TOM WALKINSHAW** organisation. Passion unabated and having set up the Elfin Heritage Centre, Bill set about finding and acquiring one each of as many of the 27 different Elfin types that Garrie had designed.

Unchallenged at top of the list is the late **LORRAINE COOPER**. The 'silent partner' and wife of Garrie and a power of strength, not only for her husband, but for everyone associated with ESC, whether it be a quick cup of tea, sandwiches and tea in the middle of the night for the factory, a meal at their modest home or, at times, a bed for what was left of the night.

Lorraine was always there for Garrie, always positive, never neglecting her role as a loving mother of her two children, Julie and Steven, Julie's husband Joakim and grandson Jordan and always ready to lend a hand or listen to problems of, not only her neighbours, but many people she came into contact with (and considering the business Garrie was in, they were numerous). Even after the shock of and grieving over Garrie's death at just 46 years of age, she continued to care for her aging father-in-law and mother Hazel, and brother Brian, the only other sibling in the family, when he was diagnosed with cancer and he too passed away. The loss of Brian, particularly was heart breaking for Lorraine. Through all that, when she was also hospitalised with, first cancer of the oesophagus, for which she underwent massive surgery, then lung cancer, and was finally confined to a residential rehabilitation establishment, Lorraine readily accepted that she would never again be able to set foot in the home she had made since getting married and loved to spend time in. Her room there was tagged by the staff as "the party room" such was the gaiety that emanated from within. Lorraine had numerous visitors who shared many memories and laughter with her.

Lorraine's inner strength was brought to the fore, when she agreed to making a video address for the recent Elfin BBQ., a task that would she would have normally enjoyed in person. Despite her fading voice, Lorraine insisted on doing a second take of the video because she said she had missed thanking someone. That video was even longer the first.

Lorraine Joy Cooper passed away at age 76 with positivity, grace and dignity, the way she had faced all challenges during her life. Her love of family, power of friendship and genuine caring for all those around her will be a lasting legacy.

It was a privilege to have known her and shared part of her life.

Through the passion and dedication of Brique, Bill and EODC members and lovers of Elfin cars, the spirit of Elfin will continue to live.

BARRY CATFORD





ELFIN OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.

ELFIN BBQ

Our major social event for 2015 held during the Formula One Grand Prix carnival was generally regarded as the best for many years. Approximately 80 members and guests attended and were treated to excellent food - (thanks **DEB**, **CHERYL** and master chef **ARTHUR**!) - convivial company and the great venue - Bill's Elfin Heritage Centre. A highlight of the evening was presentation of the 2014 Elfin 'Clubman of the Year' award to South Australia's **MARK GOLDSMITH**, but of even greater significance was the wonderful dissertation by our patron **LORRAINE** only two months before she succumbed to her illness. It was a privilege to hear and see her video message.



FEELING THE PASSION

Elfin Sports Cars has been part of my life since I was a child. I have fond memories of visiting **GARRIE COOPER** at the Elfin workshop in Edwardstown with my dad, **BARRY CATFORD**. I can still recall the smell of the workshop and the many treasures that lay within. I have also had the pleasure of growing up with **LORRAINE COOPER** as a close family friend.

When dad asked if I would like to accompany him to the Elfin Grand Prix Barbeque at the Elfin Heritage Centre in March 2015, I jumped at the chance. The trip gave us the opportunity to spend some quality daughter and father time together and to share in dad's passion for all that is Elfin. When we arrived at the Heritage Centre in Moorabbin I was very warmly welcomed as a newcomer and instantly felt at home. As dad introduced me to the many dedicated Elfin members, what struck me time and time again was the



sincere passion each person has for Elfin. Hearing my dad talk to the individual members about the history of the many Elfin cars with such clarity and in depth knowledge gave me a new respect for the legacy of Elfin Sports Cars. When Elfin Owners and Drivers Club Inc. Patron, When **LORRAINE COOPER'S** video address was played on the big screen (see photo at left) there was complete silence and everyone was transfixed. As **BRIQUE REED** said, "You could have heard a pin drop."

It was an honour to be a part of the annual BBQ and I look forward to going back next year.



ELFIN OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.

ELFINS AT THE 2015 AGP



March 12th to 15th 2015 was the Australian GP and the EODC put together a display for the Australian Grand Prix Corporation's (AGPC) Automotive Avenue of Car Club Displays.

2013 was the last time we displayed our cars at the GP as 2014 we were invited to Adelaide for the Clipsal 500. For the 2015 GP the weather was very kind to us, though very hot on Saturday (about 30°C), we had 12 Elfins on display representing a pretty good cross section of cars, both race and road.

The club members with cars on display were:

JOHN ANDERSON - 1955 Cooper Butler,

GRAEME WRIGHT - 1963 Mallala,

LAURIE BENNETT - 1970 600B F2,

CHRIS REEKS - 1971 Elfin Malmarm FV (Chris was a Fire Marshall for the 4 days of the GP),

SHANE HUGHES - 1972 600 FF (thanks Jeff for transporting Shane's car for him),

MARK JUDD - 1999 Type 3 Clubman,

DAVID DOWN - 2007 MS8 Streamliner (just purchased and new club member) and

BILL HEMMING - 2007 MS8 Clubman.

PETE FFRENCH - Bill Hemming's 1961 Type 1 Clubman,

PETER JOHNSON - 1963 Catalina FJ,

JEFF BROWN - 1972 622 F2,

MIKE BARKER - 2005 Type 3 Clubman,



Our display was one of the few, so far as I could see, who provided people to not only keep an eye on the cars but also spend time talking with the spectators about the Elfins on display and providing a bit of history about **GARRIE COOPER** and Elfin as a manufacturer of road and race cars. As a result our display had a lot of interest from the spectators who were appreciative of the time taken by our club members to talk with them.

Adem from the AGPC organized trailer parking close to our display and also windscreen stickers. Much appreciated. The 4 days of the display went very well, thanks to the effort put in by those displaying their cars. We had only 1 minor issue for the 4 days - for some reason the people on gate 5 would not let **LAURIE BENNETT**'s tow car in on Sunday to pick up his trailer. In the end **JEFF BROWN** was able to assist Laurie by loading the 600B into the trailer and taking it out to gate 5 (again, many thanks Jeff).

A big thank you to all those who provided cars for display and also to those who were able to provide time on the display to look after the cars during the day, chat with the spectators and also, importantly, to cover and uncover the cars at each end of the day. **MIKE BARKER**



.... (and thank you, Mike!)



ELFIN OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.

ELFIN NEWS FROM QUEENSLAND

Not all Queensland Elfins are lying down; a few of them are being agile and spritely, having a fun life. The photograph at right taken at Carnell Raceway in Stanthorpe at the final round of the Short Circuit Motor Sport Association Qld-NSW Challenge showing L to R: The Elfin 623 of **VERN HAMILTON**, **DAN MCCARTHY's** Elfin 622 (first owned by Vern Hamilton) and the Elfin Malmark of **GEOFF COHEN**.



The Malmark Vee of Geoff Cohen carried him to overall 1st place in the 2014 six round hillclimb series at the MGCCQ Mt Cotton venue. Geoff got to grips very smartly with the beautiful ex-Ross Rundle car. By amassing maximum class points and getting closest to the class record, he carried off a couple of major awards.

In that same competition, second place went to Vern Hamilton in the 623 F3. Vern was also fourth in the Top Six competition, a separate category based on the shootout at the end of each hillclimb. Now don't be misled here! The saying "When the hares are away or have gammy legs, the turtles will play" tells part of the story. In addition, the 623 was very helpful in landing the John Eldridge Perpetual Trophy for historic cars at the Hamilton house, presented by Bronwyn for the Short Circuit Motor Sport Association of Qld.

The third car in the photograph, the ex-**MALCOLM MILLER** 1973 622 F2 is doing what an Elfin should, providing its owner with enjoyment and success, in this case mainly at Morgan Park and Carnell Raceway. Dan McCarthy has brought this vehicle back to Qld - its first home - after many decades. Elaine and Vern enjoy seeing it whenever they can.

Meanwhile the Mallala built for Scuderia Veloce/Greg Cusack has been in the enthusiastic and capable hands of **JOHN DEVITT** and **BEVAN BATHAM** since 1971. Its most regular outings are at the annual Leyburn Sprints. It is a credit to the marque and to the sport, as are the two gentlemen, John and Bevan.

The Aero FF flies the flag for Elfin, mainly at HRCC events including racing. **ROBERT FRY** is the first class peddler of this unique vehicle. He has sold the 1967 Type 500 to **NEIL SIVYER**; dad **CHRIS'** 1982 NG has also transferred to Neil's garage via John Torr.

The 500 Vee, chassis 6719, was driven by Neil at most GEAR days as well as in the Regularity event at Historic Queensland. This machine also showed its calibre in the Wakefield Park HSRCA Historic Spring Regularity. NG, chassis 8216, ex-Shane Hart, has been aired at Lakeside. Neil was pleased with this car/driver combination.

He has a busy schedule planned for these two Elfin Vees in 2015, too detailed to be described at this time. Suffice to say that 6719 will be off to Wakefield for the 50th anniversary of FVee in Australia, 8216 is being prepared for the Historic section of the Qld F Vee championship as well as for the Retro Speedfest meeting in Sydney.

VERN HAMILTON



ELFIN OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.

ELFIN 622 No 73427

Vern Hamilton has asked me to write a few words on this car in order to keep the members in the south up to date with what some of the old Elfins in Queensland have been doing.

MALCOLM MILLER had the car for sale and in mid 2010 I flew to Adelaide to have a look after first meeting Vern and sitting in his 623 to make sure my large frame would fit. A few weeks later Malcolm was kind enough to bring the car up to Parkes where we took delivery.

The car was built as an F2 for **VERN HAMILTON**. Vern sold it a year later as a roller and it raced as both an F2 and F3 over the years. The official ownership history is as follows: 1973-74 V. Hamilton; 1974 - J. Thompson; 1974-76 S. Hooper; 1976- **B. DALZIEL**; 1976-82 C. Litfin; 1982-84 D. Goode; 1984-86 B. Dalziel; 1986 R. Harwood. The historic COD was issued to Richard in 1994 as an F3. Malcolm Miller purchased the car in 2001 and in 2003, with supporting evidence from Vern, had an alteration to the COD approved to allow it to run a Lotus Ford Twin Cam 1598cc.

Apart from Vern the only other early owner I have spoken to was Bruce Dalziel who told me he had a McLaren Ford 1600 push rod fitted but circumstances prevented him from actually racing the car both times he owned it. It would be interesting to hear from other owners as to the configuration of the car when they owned it and what events it competed in.

Apart from a couple of rather forgetful attempts at rallying in an LC Torana prepared on a student's budget I had never done any motor racing. I had always been a keen follower of motor racing from the mid sixties to the early eighties but had slowly become detached due to time pressures and Australian motor racing largely becoming a procession of touring cars behind a pace car. My interest was rekindled when my friend John Wishart, a long time Alfa driver and club competitor, bought a Welsor Clubman and invited me to a few historic events.

I ran a few practice days at Morgan Park in early 2011 and realised I was way out of my comfort zone. I entered the Queensland super sprints at Morgan park where over the next couple of years I progressed from starting with the JKL type Indy cars to the slow FF pack to the faster FF pack and on to the main F2, F3 historic racing car group.

In 2013 I entered both the HRCC events at Morgan Park. Unfortunately the Autumn round ended in an accident where I spun and was hit by a following car. Later that year in practice a trailing arm attachment point pulled out of the frame due to metal fatigue. At the end of 2013 the car was stripped to a bare frame, the high stress areas replaced with new metal, some other old injuries repaired, sandblasted back to bare metal to check all welds and completely rebuilt with new rod ends, wheel bearings, clutch, adaptor plate, engine refresh and body repainted.

In 2014 I also ran both rounds of the HRCC events at Morgan Park. I have also attended Leyburn Historic sprints which is a great fun event.

My other venture away from Morgan Park is to super sprints at Carnell Raceway in Stanthorpe run by the Short Circuit Motor Racing Association. These events have a great country atmosphere and it is great to line up beside Vern in his 623. I think our cars are evenly matched because even though I have a 1600 TC to his 1300 Holbay Ford, I carry about a 40kg weight penalty. So far he has always managed a better time but I am looking forward to this year.

Also looking forward to heading south for a few events over the next few years.

DAN MCCARTHY

PS from Vern: Dan has already motored off to a very good start at the HRCC super sprint held at Morgan Park in February.



ELFIN OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.

MEMBERSHIP:

No. 626 - LYALL MOYES (NSW)

Lyall is the owner/driver of Elfin Formula Vee #8118 which he purchased in 2011. The car raced in Victoria (1981-'83) and in Q'land. (1984 - 2006).

No 627 - SEAN O'HAGAN (Vic.)

Sean has the first Malmark Elfin Vee, the cars built under licence by Ian Hill in Melbourne. It was raced originally by **BOB PRENDERGAST** in 1970 and competed regularly in Victoria and SA. Its fifth owner was **KEITH POOLE** (SA).

No 628 - DAVID DOWN (Vic.)

David is proud owner of the ex-**ARTHUR NEILL** Elfin MS8 powered by a 5.7-litre V8 engine and fitted with a hard top. (Sports cars are not meant to have tops, David).

No 629 - MIKE FFRENCH (Vic.)

The son of keen member Pete, Mike lists 'Streamliner' as his car, so hopefully there will be more room at the Elfin Heritage Centre when this long term project is concluded.

No 630 - NIGEL TAIT (Vic.)

Nigel had such a good night at the Elfin BBQ he just had to join! A former key figure at Repco, he is custodian of the Matich SR4 sports car and was heavily involved in the restoration and custodianship of Jack Brabham's famous BT19.

No 631 - DAVID NICHOLS (NSW)

David owns a C3 Clubman built in 2007 (chassis No. 70). The car is BRG with gold stripe, and was formerly owned by Gary Healy (2007-'14).

No 632 - GRANT BINGLEY (Tas.)

Grant has provided detailed information about his Elfin 600 (#72015), its previous owners and race history. The car contested the Australian Formula Ford C'ship. in 1972 before **BRIAN BOWE** converted it to F2 specs. It raced in Tasmania for the next 15 years or so, and amongst its drivers was **JOHN BOWE**.

No 633 - JOHN TURNER (SA)

John has the ex-Kevan Peters Type 3 Clubman (chassis No. 042) built in 2004 and powered by a 1.6-litre Toyota 4 Age engine.

No 634 - MATT SCOTT (Vic.)

Matt is the proud owner of the ex-**PAUL BUDA** Elfin NG Vee built in 1984.

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

ELFIN MERCHANDISE

Our latest range of polo shirts come in all sizes from S to XXXL and are available for \$35. Our new Elfin caps are \$20 each, or you can purchase both items for \$50. (Add \$10 for postage). Lapel badges (\$8), key rings (\$12) and decals (\$2) are also available.

Please contact **CHERYL** - reidywithchampers@yahoo.com.au or **0419 581 815**.





ELFIN OWNERS and DRIVERS CLUB Inc.

VALE

JAMES GUTHRIE:

What a great moment for James to drive **BILL HEMMING'S** Elfin 300 at last year's AGP Historic Demonstration laps. Although terminally ill, James married Bill and Deb's daughter, Celia the day before he died, and the day after his death their baby was christened. A very sad time for the Hemming family, and we offer our sincere condolences to a brave young man.



GEOFF PERRY:

Geoff passed away over the Easter period after suffering a major stroke. He was 74. To say he led a colourful life would be an understatement. He grew up in Melbourne where his father owned market gardens around Moorabbin Airport. He later joined the Police Force and was actively involved in the Police Motor Sports Club especially with racing drivers Allan Mottram and Fred Sutherland. Geoff wrote a book called "Away From the Divvy Van", a 50-year history of the Police Motor Sports Club, and raced a variety of cars especially Mazdas. (I co-drove a Mazda RX-3 with him in the 1973 Hardie-Ferodo 1000). A man of many parts, Geoff at various stages ran a restaurant, built houses, lived in a hotel near the Windsor, was a JP., worked in real estate and was married three times. To son Kaine and the family we extend our sympathies.

FRANK MATICH:

Australia has lost one of its unsung motor racing heroes with the death of Frank Matich, following a long illness. Matich, born in 1935, won a string of titles and became a formidable racer and car builder through the 1960's and 1970's. He won a long list of races including Australian GT and Australian Drivers titles, the 1970 New Zealand Grand Prix and the Australian Grand Prix in 1970 and 1971. His battles in the glory days of the Tasman Series saw him engage in wheel-to-wheel battles with the likes of Jim Clark and Bruce McLaren.

Frank also had a major association with Elfin and the late Garrie Cooper, having been appointed the first NSW distributor of Elfin Sports Cars. Matich won the first Australian Formula Junior Championship in 1962 in an Elfin FJ setting a new lap record at Catalina Park on the way. Although out-powered, he drove impressively in an Elfin 1500cc in the 1963 AGP at Warwick Farm, and later in his career he ordered an Elfin 400. In this car he won (amongst other races) the 1966 Australian Tourist Trophy title. His passing is another sad loss for Australian motor sport.



FOR SALE:

- **1961 Elfin GTS Coupe** - Due to a previous sale not eventuating, **GEORGE SPANOS** is again looking for a new custodian of this unique Elfin (see Dec. 14 Newsletter for details). George has owned and raced this car from new. Serious offers only. Phone (03) 9885 7130.
- **Cooper Austin** - **JOHN HAZELDEN** seeks a new owner for one of **GARRIE COOPER'S** very first cars, the Cooper Austin (see Sept. 14 for details). Phone John on 0425 007 733.
- **1974 Elfin MS7 Repco V8** - Winner of 1975 Austn. Sports Car C'ship (**GARRIE COOPER**), 1976 Austn. Tourist Trophy (**STUART KOSTERA**) and many Historic events since. Further details: **ROBERT TWEEDIE** ibcholdings@bigpond.com or 0408 162 762.



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 \$25 - 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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