

# BADGE OF

On 23rd May 1963 I drove out of Peter Manton Motors at the top of Elizabeth Street in a brand new Austin Healey Sprite Mk 2A. In was Nurberg White, registered HUB 321. The *Passport to Service* booklet, which I still have, notes that the first 500mile service (one week later), cost £2.16.6. (about \$5.65)

I was a full-time student and to put costs into perspective, each Friday night I could fill up the tank, buy three bottles of beer for a 'big weekend' and still get a few pence change from a one pound (\$2) note!

There being no Austin Healey Club, I continued as an associate of the MG Car Club, as did many Sprite owners. It seemed rather an enigma that no specific club existed, considering the growing popularity of the Sprite. More so, rather indignant that Sprite owners were encouraged to join the Morris 850 car club as associates.

This club was sponsored by Peter Manton Motors, which was the major Melbourne dealership and meetings were held above the showrooms.

The need for a specific club dedicated to the Sprite became evident. By 1965 I had upgraded to a brand new Mk3a Sprite with factory fitted hardtop, again from Peter Manton.

I ran off leaflets using an ancient Gestetner copier and placed them under the wiper blades of all the parked Sprites I saw.

My then brother-in-law Chris Lawson assisted with this and we scheduled a meeting to form a club. The meeting was held in the residence at the back of the pharmacy I was managing in Gaffney Street Coburg, and five people attended – Chris, his wife, my wife, my 10 day-old daughter and myself!

There thus being a 'quorum', the club was formally born and in a remarkable political coup, I was elected president unopposed!!



# HONOR

As we gathered a few members, meetings moved firstly, to a loft above the garage of a private home in Malvern and hence to a variety of larger venues.

The first 'event' was a motorkhana held at Fisherman's Bend and I have 8mm movie film, of somewhat less than Holly-wood standard, of that and several events which followed. (If these small film reels have not been given to the club decades go, they will be at home here somewhere!)

The car badge was designed by tracing the outline of a Mk1 Sprite and incorporating the gearshift pattern for the letters AHSDC.

Mike Hogg organised someone he knew in the 'badge game' to produce them and it is interesting to note that the wording did NOT include 'INC', which is on the current badges. I often feel this addition spoils the badge and of course it was never a requirement for an incorporated body. (I still have my original one, the very first, virtually unscathed.)

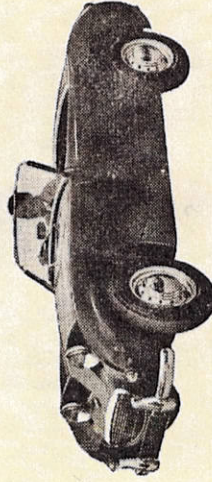
Other event venues in the early days were held at Ripleys Bridge near Bacchus Marsh, the Belmont Common at Geelong and a large oval at Hurstbridge, which at the time was 'way out in the bush'.

Before 1966 I had already become involved with vintage cars and owned a 1922 H6b Hispano-Suiza for 20 years. I sold it in 1986 and with the proceeds purchased a Cessna 172M which I have flown for the past 30 years – around Australia several times, to Norfolk and Lord Howe Islands, across Torres Strait to the coast of PNG, and recently to Kupang in Indonesian West Timor, and Dilli in East Timor.

I still look forward to the monthly Goblins' Gazette and wish the club every success for the next 50 years. Perhaps I may get to catch up with a few fellow fossils during the 50<sup>th</sup> year celebrations.

Alan J. Elliot

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#### 1959 Victoria Police Winter Trial—

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*1st Outright*

#### 1959 Rob Roy Hill Climb (Sept.)—

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