TORQUETUBE

Magazine of the Riley Motor Club Queensland, Australia Inc.

September 2020

www.rileyqld.org.au

Trevor Taylor and his new acquisition, perhaps the best example of an RMB restoration in Australia

Editorial

The RMC is an interesting and unique thing. The column gear shift mechanism that the editor has been playing with this month is quite clunky. It could be made to work and it did but it was hard to line up the gear shift mechanism in the gearbox using it. So, it was decided to remove the column gear shift mechanism altogether to re-bush the worn shaft ends and renew the connecting balls and sockets. In the meantime, the story about Raymond, the RMC's horn push mechanism will be an eye opener to many readers.

Thank you to Trevor Taylor for his story about the new life of Bridie, the Riley and also to Bev Bunt who provided some background to the story. Thank you also to Paul Baee who has provided an update to the restoration story about his 8/90 Adelphi, a thing of real interest to Riley enthusiasts everywhere in the world.

During the month a telephone call was received from Philip, who purchased Robert and Dulcy Spiers' RMA. He is interested in re-introducing the Riley to a timber frame. It will certainly make his Riley happy .

Another call from Bill White was of keen interest not only to me but also to many of us who do not drive at night. The committee is exploring the idea of day time meetings on alternate months. No doubt more about this venture will appear in Torquetube over the following months.

The Editor appreciates receiving articles by the 21st of the month

THE 2020 QUEENSLAND RILEY MOTOR CLUB COMMITTEE		
PRESIDENT:	Chris Reynolds	0418 204 336 reynoldschrisj@gmail.com
VICE PRESIDENT:	Bill White	07 3289 4282 thewhitehouse7@bigpond.com
SECRETARY:	Mathew French	07 3353 0532 mgwfrench@bigpond.com
TREASURER:	Rod Longden	0438 980 374 longdens7@bigpond.com
CLUB CAPTAIN:	Wendy Lonie	0417 857 075 kenlonie@bigpond.com
SPARE PARTS OFFICER:	Mark Baldock	07 5491 5409 norest1@bigpond.com
ASSISTANT SPARE PARTS OFFICER:	Carl Harries	0448 499 570 digicarl@hotmail.com
LIBRARIAN:	Di Phillips	0411043974 diannephillips1@optusnet.com.au
REGISTRAR:	Peter Lee	0403 179 458 peterrosslee@me.com
EDITOR:	Philip Wyllie	07 5499 9826 philip.w.wyllie@gmail.com
WEB COORDINATOR	Mathew French	07 3353 0532 mgwfrench@bigpond.com
SHED COORDINATOR	Trevor Taylor	0407 717 853 trevor.taylor@ymail.com

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August Breakfast Run by Chris Reynolds

Well what a delightful place for a breakfast picnic with friends. And there were 12 of us who turned up in our various cars: four Rileys (Bill White RMD special, Trevor Taylor RMB (below)

Greg and Yvonne May RM coupe special

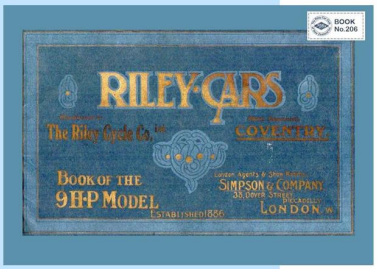
(Above) and myself RMD), three MGs (Graham Moore MGA coupe, Elizabeth and Katherine Collins MGB (below),

and Daryl Scott MGB) and one Chevrolet (pictured below belonging to Michael and Jodie Ferguson).

Most of us enjoyed using the barbeque for our sumptuous breakfasts, and unlike many barbeques this one actually worked really well!! Both the company and the weather were very good and the place is just a delight; uncrowded and, I think, unknown to many. Calm quiet water views yet within sight of the M1.

Librarian's Report - August 2020

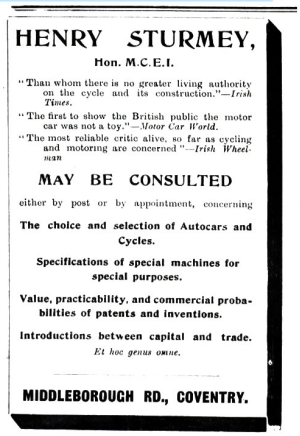
Two very early books from the days of the Riley Cycle Company's first venture into making motor cars have been added to the library. Neither of them have practical use in today's world but both offer a fascinating insight to the thinking of the day and the way early motor cars were promoted.



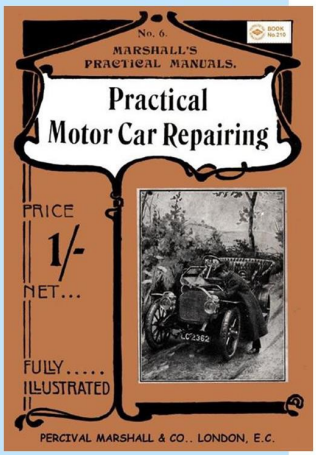
Book No.206 is a sales brochure published by the Motor Division of the Riley family's Cycle Company in 1908 to promote an improved version of the first Riley '9' which had been introduced the year before. The engine was one of Percy's 'V' twins which preceded his famous 4 cylinder.

Much is made of the mid-engine mounting and direct chain drive to the adjacent rear axle with which Riley was competing with an ever growing number of cars with front engine linked to rear wheel drive. Mr Henry Sturmey who was Editor of Autocar and offered his expertise as a consultant is prominent in the brochure heaping wordy praise on the car's design and decrying the inefficiency of right angle drives.

Henry was the other half of the Sturmey-Archer bicycle hub gearbox fame, although that was in fact an unhappy alliance after some protracted patent wrangling between the two who were rivals. It seems Frank Bowden Chairman of Raleigh Cycles their biggest potential customer persuaded them to co-operate to stop Henry going off to a competitor.


HENRY STURMEY,
Hon. M.C.E.I.
"Than whom there is no greater living authority on the cycle and its construction."—*Irish Times.*
"The first to show the British public the motor car was not a toy."—*Motor Car World.*
"The most reliable critic alive, so far as cycling and motoring are concerned."—*Irish Wheelman*
MAY BE CONSULTED
either by post or by appointment, concerning
The choice and selection of Autocars and Cycles.
Specifications of special machines for special purposes.
Value, practicability, and commercial probabilities of patents and inventions.
Introductions between capital and trade.
Et hoc genus omne.
MIDDLEBOROUGH RD., COVENTRY.

The cost and risks of contemporary motoring is illustrated both by the Riley's 160gns price (£20,000 in todays money) and the meagre One month guarantee. Riley did not issue any Instruction books until much later (See Book No.70 issued for the 11/40 side valve cars) and although in the brochure they claim their new car does not need an engineer to keep it going they recommend and offered for sale "Practical Motor Car Repairing".



"Practical Motor Car Repairing" (**Book No.210**) was published by Percival Marshall to cater for owners who wanted to keep their cars going themselves. Percival Marshall published a range of practical help books and this one was written by Eric Walford who covers everything from batteries to how to bandage a punctured tyre. The book is general in nature and Riley is mentioned only once on page 38 as having the best type of coolant water pump. For those interested in the trials and tribulations of those early days it makes a great read.

I don't think we have any Rileys quite as old as the first 9 H.P. in New Zealand but the two linked books provide an insight into the history of motor car development and the shaking down of which designs did or did not work. Although extolling mid-engine and direct drive at this stage Riley quickly moved to front engine models such as the Sportsman of which there is a fine example in the Drury Museum collection of Rileys.

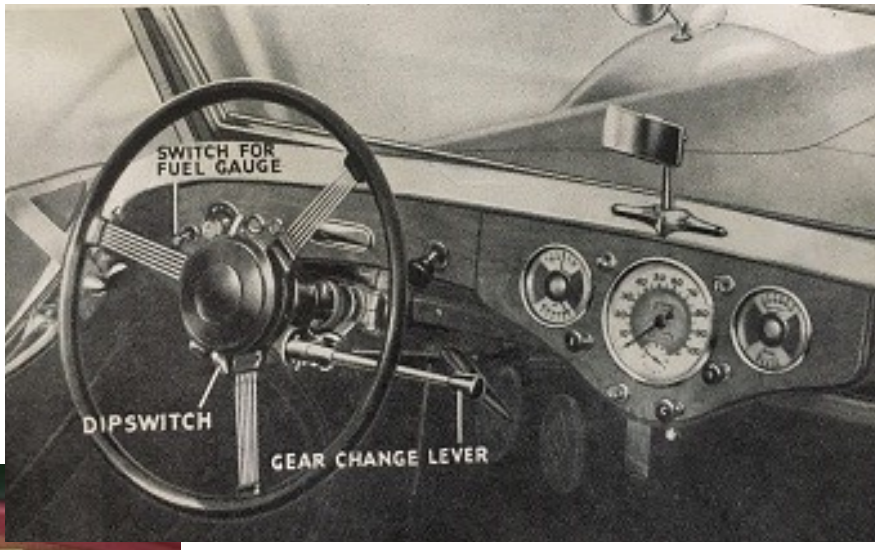
Lindsay Stephens
Historian.RileyCCNZ@gmail.com

Letters to the editor

Hello Philip,

I have enclosed some pictures of my Riley and will answers some of the questions you asked me about my RMC.

The headlamp dip switch is on the right of the steering wheel and left of the ignition switch. To the left of the ashtray was a headlamp switch - my Riley had/has three spotlights - I thought the centre one was/is illegal, so I disconnected it and the only modification on my car is an electric fan in front of



the radiator. You cannot really see it and I hid the wiring and wired it up to the headlamp switch, so everything looks normal.

Pictured is the gear stick on the floor and the shiny object down by the seat is a Fire Extinguisher. It was there when I bought the car ....so I left it there

The Black and White pic is the photo in the Handbook I have the original and it shows a 'Left Hand drive' Riley.

Now, that big old jack came with the car along with the normal Riley jack .. this big ol thing is worked by inserting the starting handle into the socket and moving it up and down…. the thing weighs a ton !!! by the way, that starting handle is not the Riley one just a spare I have .. I have the original starting handle in the Boot of the car - just stuck that one in for the photo.

Tom Finnis
Texas, USA

Hi there Philip

I thought I had shed most of my tears when the last of the beautiful cars went, but there were a few more after reading your article just now – what a wonderful tribute to a very special man who loved his cars and me too.

As I said earlier on the telephone, I have some great l memories to look back on, along with some caring friends, some of whom were made as you mention due to the cars, so I feel myself to be most fortunate. Thank you for honouring Bill & his car passion in this way.

With my kindest regards,

Beverley Bunt
Townsville

September activities and future events

Tuesday Morning 1st and 8th: Riley Tinkerers at the Clubhouse, Samford. Restoration activities, friendship and technical advice. BYO lunch and drinks. Tea and coffee provided.

Thursday 10th 8 PM: Monthly Meeting of the RMCQ at the Riley Clubhouse, 38 Showgrounds Drive, Highvale 4520, Samford Show Grounds.

Tuesday Morning 15th: Riley Tinkerers at the Clubhouse, Samford. Restoration activities, friendship and technical advice. BYO lunch and drinks. Tea and coffee provided.

Wednesday 16th and Thursday 17th: Bunya Mountain trip. Details on the last page

Tuesday Morning 22nd and 29th: Riley Tinkerers at the Clubhouse, Samford. Restoration activities, friendship and technical advice. BYO lunch and drinks. Tea and coffee provided.

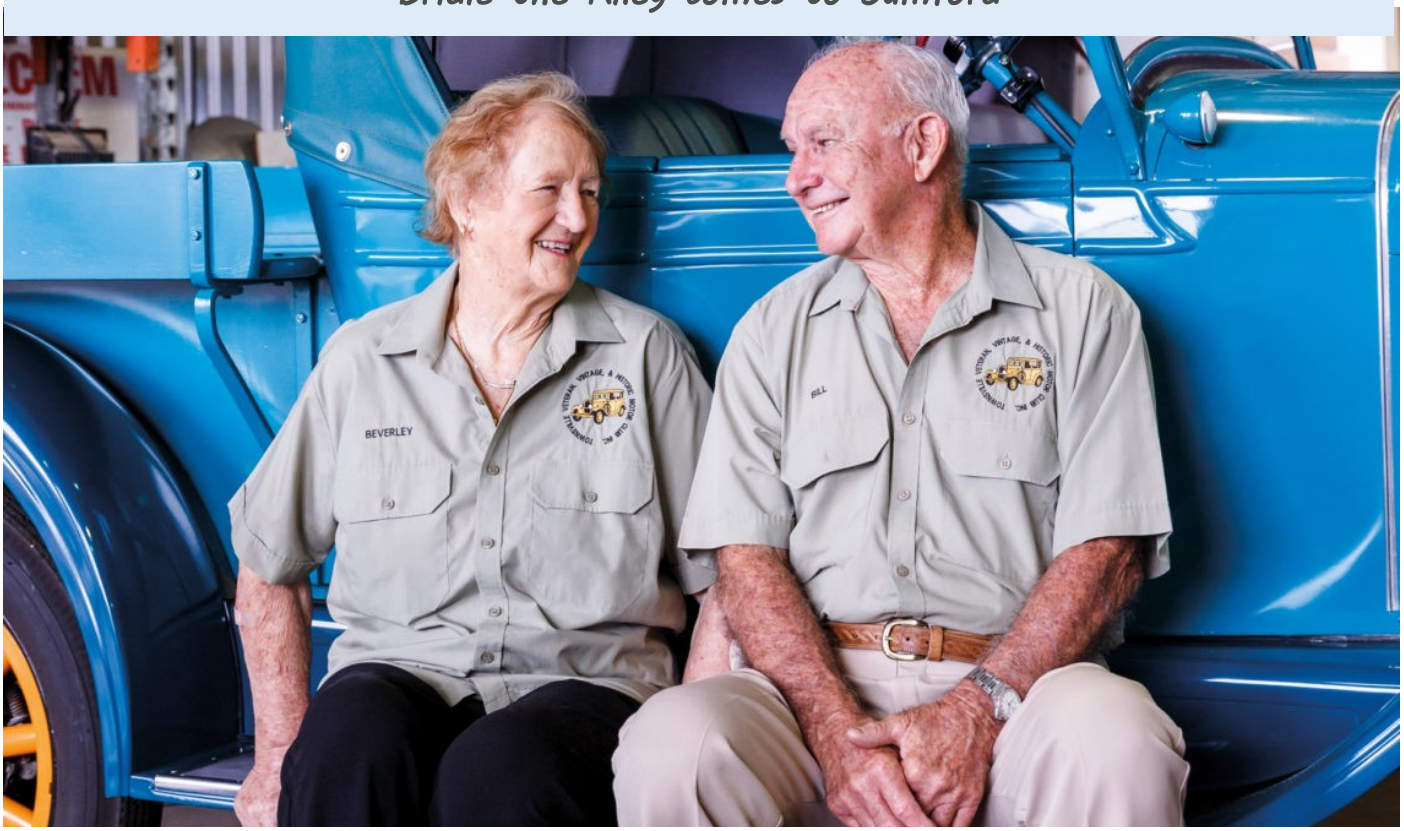
Following considerable creative thought about enhancing the life of the club, the committee plans to conduct our monthly meetings on alternate Thursday nights and Tuesday mornings. The next monthly meeting will be held at the usual time of 8 PM on Thursday 10th. The October monthly meeting will be held on the second Tuesday of October at 11 AM . The morning monthly meeting will be part of the program of activities that take place every Tuesday.

The idea is to enhance the social life of the club, encourage maintenance activities on our Rileys, MGs and other treasured vehicles and to offer participation to a wider group of Riley enthusiasts in the business of the club.

A sausage sizzle will be offered as part of the Tuesday activities at 12 noon.

Further conversation about the idea will be conducted during the next two monthly meetings.

Bridie the Riley comes to Samford



Above: Beverly and Bill Bunt sitting on the running board of one of their many restorations

Bridie the Riley moves to Samford Valley by Trevor Taylor

This 1950 RMB was previously owned by Bill and Beverley Bunt from Townsville.
She is known as 'Bridie the Riley' after Bill's late mother and I will continue with that name.
Restored to a very high standard by Bill, Bridie is in immaculate condition and according to his daughter Robyn, that was typical of Bill

who was a perfectionist and passionate about his cars.
I contacted Bill's widow Beverley and the process was undertaken to get the car to Samford Valley. A covered car transporter was used, and after arrival in Brisbane the car was driven home. On the same transporter was one of Bill's other cars - an old style (Willies) Jeep - going to Bill's daughter Robyn who lives in Brisbane.

The RMB is now safely stored in my new shed with the outstanding company of a '66 Jaguar S Type and a '53 MG TF as well as my '51 RMA Woody project. Bridie is currently on full rego so she will be used accordingly. A few minor jobs will keep her reliable, I hope. Beverley was very helpful with the sale process and I believe there were up to 11 cars in their collection at one time!

Regards.
Trevor.

Here are some things that were told about Bridie by Bev Bunt: She came as a rusted-out basket case with no bones. Two other Rileys were purchased as donor cars but they were in as poor a condition as Bridie so many of the parts were sourced from various locations around Australia and the chief provider of new mechanical and brake parts came from the Queensland Riley club through Jack Warr. He sold mechanical parts to Bill and provided many second-hand bits as well. Bev said that Jack was very obliging and he used the postal service to send the parts that Bill requested. In those days no monetary offer for parts was ever refused and many body parts were secured for what the custodian offered. Bill was a recipient of this value system and advice and the fact that the car is now on the road is a testimony to the support and help that any enthusiast can receive from the club.

Bill was an enormously talented artisan. He did all of the panel beating, he made a number of the rear body parts. The timber frame was made by him. The painting of the car was completely done in his workshop. He did all of the wiring himself. He built the engines and the gearboxes. There was only three things he did not do; the electro plating, the machining and the upholstery. The machining was done by a mate in Townsville. The upholstery was done in Eyre by an auto upholster who was both deaf and dumb. He was married to a girl who had the same disabilities and Bill and Bev communicated with them by writing on a note pad. The work was immaculate, and it matched the quality of Bill’s workmanship.

Many wonderful adventures were experienced in Bridie whilst in the care of Bev and Bill. On one occasion Bev drove Bridie from Charters Towers to Townsville after an Easter Rally. Because the peddles were so close together Bev says she took her shoes off and sometimes drove in socks or bare feet. The editor thinks that this was a real testimony to the adventurous qualities of the Bunt family and proof that gender and size is no obstacle to driving a magnificent Riley. They greatly enjoyed the Caloundra rally and enjoyed the fellowship of other Riley custodians in the persons of Ron and Heather Anderson during the trip to the rally and while there developed their friendships with many other Riley custodians, particularly the Lonie family.

As Trevor said the Riley was named after Bill's mother and each of the other cars had personal names as well. A number of the other cars were named after near relatives. At one time Bev commented to Bill that he had sold Bev's sister, Lyndie. You see, Lyndie was a left-hand drive vintage vehicle named after Bev's sister that had been special to them both, but of course there are only so many vehicles that you can squeeze into one shed. He also sold his mother-in law and eventually the shoe was on the other foot and Bev sold Bill's mother to Trevor Taylor. That puts an enormous responsibility on Trevor's shoulders who now has the care of this representative of Bill and Beverly Bunt's family

8/90 8 Cylinder Adelphi: Restoration and story told by Paul Baee

Readers with outstanding memories will recall the November 2018 story about Paul Baee's restoration of an 8/90 Adelphi. This is a continuation of the yet to be completed restoration. The power plant in the eight ninety is basically two Riley nine engines melded together at approximately a 30-degree angle to make an eight-cylinder Riley engine. It was fitted into a big 4 chassis with an Adelphi body. This 1937 Riley, engine number 8A-211 and chassis 87A-211 is one of perhaps only 25 ever made and is possibly only one of two that were exported to Australia. Three others 8-cylinder Adelphi's exist in the UK.

It is known that Neil Brandt, a Queensland Riley enthusiast, was in possession of an 8/90 engine in the 90s, the remains of one of the 8/90s exported to Australia. When he died, the engine was sold out of the estate and purchased by Stephen Figgis, a member of the NSW Riley Motor Club.

The second 8/90 was sold by Tom Cox Motor Co Ltd of Cambridge to a Royal Navy officer who came out to Brisbane in 1939. He kept it for some time and then sold it to a Dr Kroll, who sold it to a Dr Foote and then it came into the hands of Jack Downing, the Queensland Riley Agent. It was 1944 and the Riley had done 33, 000 miles. According to the April 2018 edition of "The Automobile" magazine the car sat in a shed for over 30 years with the body rotting away. The magazine article then goes on to say that the engine had been filled with diesel to preserve it. In the 1950s Linden Thompson photographed it while it was in Ipswich. During the 1970's the 8/90 was seen by Russell Sinclair and he took the time to take photographs and copies of these images are now in the possession of Paul Baée.

In 1977 it came into the possession of Jim Kahill in Victoria. By that time the car was in very poor condition. It was then sold to Ian McDowell and sold back to Jim Cahill in 1982. During this period, the engine and pre-selector gearbox were taken out of the vehicle and work was done on the Zenith carburettors and the pre-selector received new seals. After the engine and gearbox were refitted the engine was fired up and it ran. The trail then leads to Noel Wyatt who purchased it to prevent it from being turned into a special. By that time many of the body parts had disappeared. It was then sold to David Snell on the proviso that he restored it to its original form. Sadly, David died before commencing the work and he left it in his will to Paul Baée. It came into his possession in 2009 and he has stored it in his garage for the past eight years.

The 8-cylinder Riley was first introduced in October 1935 and the manufacturer advertised that it was available with an Adelphi or Kestrel body, although as far as Riley historians know, no Kestrel bodied vehicles ever existed. The engine has two down draft Zenith carburettors, one on either side of the engine and each supplying fuel to the four cylinders (two on each side of the engine) that it is fitted to. The rockers were mounted on the head. The crankshaft has three main bearings. There are three cam shafts: one for the inlet valves and the two on either side of the engine for the outlet valves. The engine is gear-timed and so is the water pump. The transmission, much larger than those fitted to the 12/4s, is a Wilson preselector gearbox.

During a period of study at TAFE, the guards, running boards and boot lid were panel-beaten and over the next months the scuttle was bumped back into shape and the areas replaced where rust had eaten through the metal. At that time the radiator and bonnet were trial fitted. This turned out to be more difficult than expected as the heights and angles of the panels were unknown. The edge around the scuttle for the bonnet halves was completely missing. Many other mysteries were yet to be resolved, such as the positioning and make-up of the 'B' pillar bottoms, the area between the 'A' pillar and the 'B' pillar. It was hoped that friends in England might provide technical information and provide solutions to these and other mysteries that are yet to be encountered.

The project is not without helpful friends. For example, Rod Richards was restoring a 12/4 Adelphi and bought a burnt-out car belonging to Bill Parks. He had two pre-war car bodies and out of these there was a spare floor pan. It was in fairly good condition and only required a boot floor with its trap door to access the battery. It consists of the front floor, wheel wells for passengers in the rear, wheel arches and the boot floor.


The Floor Pan

Paul was fortunate to get this floor pan and over the past years he has collected headlamps, driving light, control box, SF 35 semaphores, regulator box, big four radiator, wheel surrounds, Louvax shock absorbers and horns. Some came from Victoria and others were sourced over the internet. While two English friends were in Australia to attend a National Rally the sun visors were noticed and examples of these were added to the list of items to be found. In all, up until Nov 2018 it had taken eight years to source all the parts that could not be manufactured.


The Motor

About one year ago Western Australia Riley enthusiast, Jim Runciman purchased a number of Riley parts in South Africa and arranged them to be shipped to Australia. This included an Adelphi body that may have fared fairly well in the South African climate. Paul put a bid in for this body but with the covid19 pandemic with its devastating effects on the people of South Africa, the ship may not sail for some time or may never sail. With this reality in mind, Paul has put on hold the restoration of the Adelphi body and has focused on the engine. And after that the chassis in the hope that the South African Adelphi body will make it to Australia prior to work needing to be done on the Adelphi body in Paul's garage.

Above: The Adelphi V8 block

Again, around a year ago, Paul disassembled the engine and took a close look at the radiator. The radiator in these pre-war Adelphi's are similar (but different) to the post-war RMs in that the radiator is separate from the grill. The grill is bolted to the radiator and the radiator itself is mounted on rubber mounts. The construction is something between the honeycomb makeup of the Riley 9s and the RMs. Sadly, with this particular radiator, the core and bottom tank had rotted out. Previously, holes in the bottom tank had been filled with silastic and this may have hastened the decline of the radiator as many silastics have acidic content. The vehicle may also have lived near to the sea as the corrosion was very significant. In the end the bottom tank, the radiator core and the mounts needed replacing. Fortunately, people in the Auto restoration business were able to put Paul into contact with a vintage radiator specialist and it is expected that when it returns to Paul's garage it will look the same as if did when it was new, but built with modern materials and of modern construction. In the future it will also be possible to fit an electric fan to cool the radiator just as is the case in many RMs.

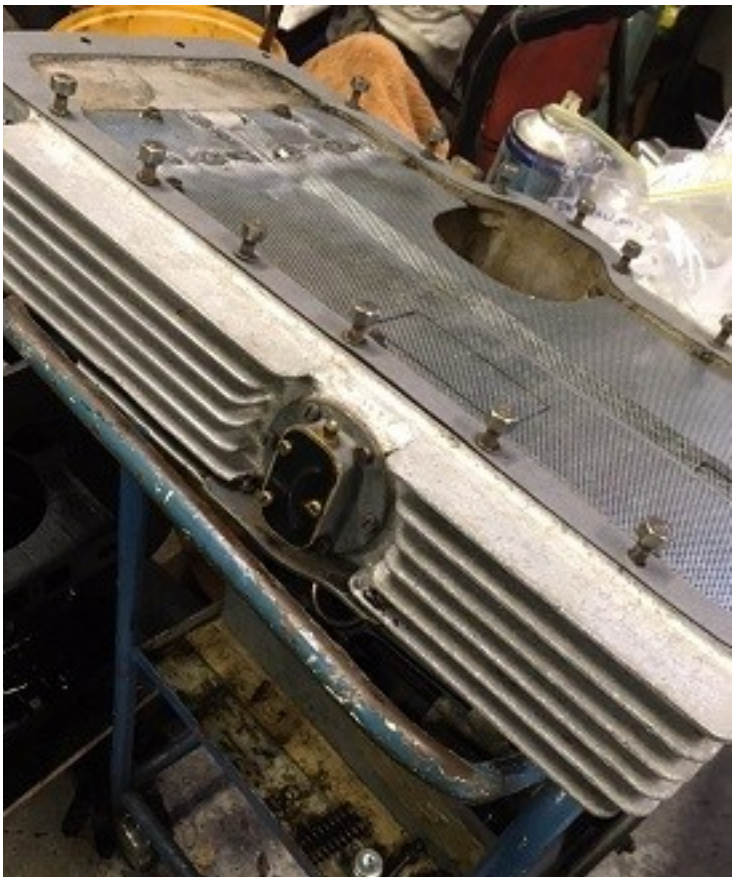
Above: The radiator is similar to the one above with a grill fitted for appearance.

The engine heads had 18 mm diameter spark plug threads except for the front drivers' side head and this had a bung fitted into it making the spark plug thread 14 mm. When the bung was removed it was discovered that there was a porosity hole behind it. To solve the problem, it was decided to re-machine the offending spark plug thread and fit a sealing bung to it. Bungs were also made for the other spark plug openings so that they would all accommodate 10 mm, long reach spark plugs. Such plugs were thought necessary as the original 18 mm plugs only reached halfway down the plug tube requiring the fuel air mixture to travel up the tube from the combustion chamber to combust. The only difference in the look from the original plugs is that the plugs will be of a narrower hexagon. Filling the hole with a weld was considered but the head would have required heating and there was no confidence that a weld fix would work because the location of the hole into the water jacket was half way down the spark plug opening.

Above: Once again the heads are similar but different to the post war RMs.

The 8/90 Adelphi engine has multiple gaskets each having its own unique shape. For example, the inlet manifolds each require 8 different gaskets. To get the gaskets, it was decided to have gasket dies made. The dies consist of a rubber base with a sharp cutting edge that runs around the outside edge and around the inside openings. These are then fitted to a machine that stamps out the gasket shape. In his role as spare parts officer for the NSW club Paul has had dies made for many Riley applications and so the idea of having a die made was not as big a drama as it is for the Torquetube editor. The unique thing about these dies is that the gaskets that come from them are unique to the only three or four V8 Riley engines that currently exist in the world. Of particular interest to the editor is that the rocker cover gasket. It has a complex shape and is only useful for these unique Riley Adelphi's. The head gasket is yet to be made. So, the sanity of the NSW spare parts officer may be in question.

It took a whole day to clean and repair the sump. It had an incredible 4 inches of crud in the bottom. Like the 12/4s it has a sender unit fitted to the side of the sump that measures the amount of oil that is in the sump. It was likely to have had water in it at some time. The sulphur accumulated from the old oil also had its effect. The protective mesh that is fitted to all Rileys was rotted out. Paul found a person who sold a mesh material, so a new protective mesh was made. A new sender unit, mesh and a clean ready to use sump and gasket is now ready for fitting.



Above: The sump repaired and ready for fitting

The oil pump was in reasonable order and BMW oil filters in series have been fitted into the oil filter canister.

Above: The oil pump and below, the canister with BMW filters in line

There are two water pumps fitted to the Adelphi V 8s. They are driven from the exhaust cams and once again they look similar to the 12/4s, but their shape and internal arrangement are unique. A drive dog runs from the front of the exhaust cams into the water pumps. They are sealed from the engine oil with 3-inch diameter carbon rings.

The impellers live inside the pumps and are driven by the cam shafts. There is a nut that fixes the mechanism together at the front of the pump with a copper washer to seal the water in the units. To disassemble them 3/16th of an inch holes were drilled into the impellers and a tool was made to hold the drive dog and via this method it was possible to disassemble the units. The inlet opening for the water were both rotted out . The internal mechanism on one of them was rotted out. Both of the units had cracks, and both required Speedy seals to line the drive shaft. The seals in both pumps were worn to unusual sizes. To meet this challenge, Paul found a company that sold graphite, and this was machined to produce the two seals required. New aluminium tubes were welded to the units to receive the water hoses.

Above: A carbon ring and below the finished water pumps

The valves and collets are the same as the Riley 9s and the double springs are the same as the 12/4s and these are on their way from the Riley Register. The pistons are the same as the Riley 9s, but these won't be requested until a liner is fitted to one of the bores and the sizes of the bores are confirmed. The crank looks good. The cams are visiting Clive cams so that the cams lobes can be cleaned, and the profiles reground. The cam followers are keeping them company and will come back with new faces.

Above: Riley 9 valves, and collets and 12/4 double springs are suitable for the Adelphi

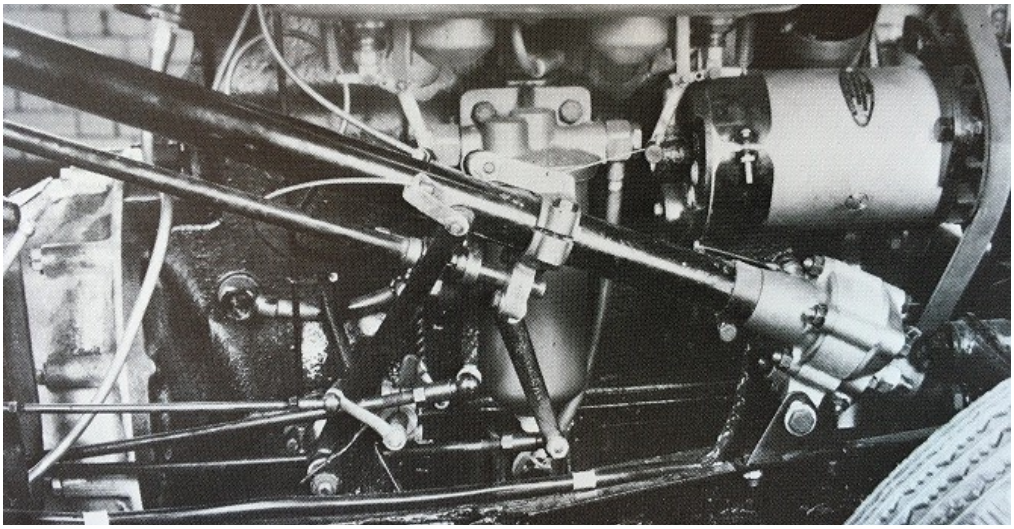
Once the engine has been rebuilt, work will be done on the chassis while waiting for the Adelphi body to arrive from South Africa. In the meantime, Paul has been discussing the uniqueness's of his Adelphi with Cliff Goodman, a long time Riley enthusiast and Big four custodian who lives in Western Australia. Cliff's brake lever is the same as that in Paul's Adelphi but the rachet is not so. Paul has needed to design and make one to suit his Riley. Colin Clifford also has an Adelphi V8 in England. Once again, many components are different from the ones in Paul's Riley. Cliff's steering box was made by the Bishop company and Paul's steering box is a Burman box. You would think that they would be the same, but they are not. It can only be concluded that they were made individually, and parts were purchased by the Riley company as they were required from different suppliers.

The clutch used in the 8/90 is a type 3 which is the same as the 12/4. As the original covers are made of diecast a new cover machine from aluminium was purchased from the Western Australian club. For those of an inquiring mind, the clutch is deemed to be sufficient as the V8 has a power output of 90 BHP while the 12/4s had an output of 70 BHP.

Above: The clutch and pressure plate are ready to fit

It is hoped that the next article written on this very rare 8/90 will be a description of the South African body fitted onto the chassis and painted. Maybe the engine and transmission will be completed, and the exhaust system fitted, and the Australian Riley community will see the very rare 12/80 Adelphi on the road.

Below: The engine and gearbox set up



RMC Horn push, trafficator switch and high/low beam

Above: The tops and bottoms of the RMC and RMB base plates. The plates have the same dimensions, same holes and channels. The only difference is that the RMC has a high and low beam switching mechanism that can be replicated.

Not all parts that came with the Riley were Riley bits. There may not even be some parts that are Riley but they appear to be. Inside the steering tube there was a wiring tube with an olive and the classical slot for the top part of the tube to be adjusted up and down according to where the steering wheel was fixed. That was likely to be Riley. There was an unfamiliar top on another tube that came with the RMC but it did not have a self-cancelling finger on the turning disk that you could say was Riley. There was another tube and horn push that was definitely not Riley and it was so badly smashed that at first it was thought that nothing could be salvaged from it for the current project. There was a horn push backing plate with switching mechanism for the high low beam but no trafficator mechanism. In the horn push storage box (of scavenged bits) was also a horn push of unknown species or gender but it had the same high/low beam switching mechanism as the one that came with the Riley. In the storage box there were also an assortment of mostly broken RMB horn push bits. Have you got the picture yet? An attempt was going to be made to match what was not broken to build up an RMC assembly with its high/low beam mechanism, a trafficator mechanism and a horn push. Just a reminder at this point; it is assumed that the base plate is an RMC specimen.

A description of some little facts are also in order at this point; the RMB wiring tube is 7/16th of an inch in diameter. The RMC tube is 5/8ths of an inch in diameter. That is why you can't fit the extra standard diameter wires through the RMB wiring tube. It is too narrow. The tube length has to be at least 54 inches long. The RMC tube with the adjustment slot was 44 ½ inches long so another 10 inches was needed to get the required length. The RMC tube did have its own olive and there was a locking nut in the end of the steering tube so potentially all of the parts required were available. All of the electrical connections were 6 BA and the construction nuts were 4 BA on all of the bits that, lay in the bench in front of me.

Above: The olives and locking nuts from the RMC and RMB are clearly of different sizes

Above: On the right is the bottom side of an unknown horn push base with the same Lucas high low beam switching mechanism as are found in RMCs. They must have been used in many different makes and models of British motor cars. The wiring tube is 5/8ths of an inch in diameter.

Last week, it was noticed that the RMB Riley horn push base plate was of exactly the same design as the RMC base plate. The only difference was that the RMB base plate was missing the switching mechanism for the high low beam. That makes sense really, as the designers of the RMC mechanism would want to use as many RM parts as possible and if my theory is correct only the top plate and horn push disk is unique to the RMC. So, last week an RMB trafficator mechanism and horn push mechanism was fitted onto the RMC base plate and the RMC cover plate and horn push disk was cleaned and mounted onto it. All of the holes for the fixing bolts and tracks for the wiring were the same and it all went together quite nicely. Unfortunately, however there was no self-cancelling finger or disk on the wiring tube. So, a proposition was put to Mal (the new custodian of the RMC) that he allow me to perform significant surgery on the mechanism, remove the top plate from the wiring tube and replace it with an RMB top plate with the self-cancelling finger. Of course, the experienced Riley wisemen amongst the readership will be thinking that the mechanism may have worn out anyway so the self-cancelling mechanism may not work anyway. Afterall, how many RMB custodians are out there who have to remember to cancel the turning mechanism after turning a corner? Lots, I suspect.

The first issue considered was whether to fit the self-cancelling finger and disk to the existing top plate on the wiring tube that came with the Riley or whether the centre tube should be drilled out of a Riley mechanism and the whole thing silver soldered onto the RMC wiring tube?

Above: The wiring tube removed from the top disc.

In the end it was decided to go the safe root and use all of the familiar Riley bits. The first thing done was that the four tabs that connect the rotating disk with its self-cancelling finger were straightened and the disk was removed. On the outside is a soft felt ring and on the inside was another ring that operated as a bush and could be replaced with a plastic ring to allow the disk to rotate without significant friction. After taking off the turning ring with its self cancelling finger, the Riley top tube with its top disk was mounted into a lathe and the tube was drilled out using a half inch drill and then a round file was used to open the drilling so that a tight fit could be achieved when the top was pressed onto the RMC 5/8th of an inch tube. It was then fitted like the RMB mechanisms were and the join was secured by using silver solder. The rotating disk and finger were then refitted and the tabs turned back to lock it into place. Instead of the slot to extend the tube it was decided to solder two tubes together to make up the required 54 inches. This was done for two reasons, first the RMB tubes often crack and break from the end of the slot and second putting the pressings into the bottom tube and making the tube adjustable seemed too difficult to achieve. Instead the location of the olive was relied upon to make minor adjustments.

Above: Drilling off the top disc from the wiring tube

The RMC horn push with it's seven wires were then fed through the tube and the horn push was fixed to the top disk with the three countersunk 2BA bolts. The RMC is a convertible Riley so the hood was put down and the horn push on its wiring tube was fed down the steering tube and fitted into position. As always the three retaining bolts on the steering wheel inner hub were missing. The steering wheel had also been painted so a 2BA tap was used to clean the threads out and a long bolt was cut into three sections and slotted to take a narrow screw driver to fix the steering wheel into place. At the bottom end the olive was fitted and the fixing nut was fitted into place.

Above: The RMC horn push requires seven wires; three for the trafficator; left, right and power, one for the horn push and three for the high/low beam switch; high beam, low beam and power. No brownie points for those who guess what the purple wire is for

When the wiring harness was made, the previous custodian must have thought that an RMC horn push might not have been possible with the broken and missing bits so the trafficator circuit finished in the cockpit next to the steering wheel for retro-fitting an indicator mechanism. This was re-routed along the steering tube down to the bottom of the secondary steering box. The high/low beam wires and the horn push wires were then routed to the same location and a terminal box was fitted into the inner skirt for the driver's side wheel and the wires were connected together. The rest of the wiring was fairly standard with the two flasher cans fitted onto the side of the battery box allowing the trafficator arms to rise and the indicator lights to come on together. The horn push wiring was as always and the high/low beam mechanism was proved to work. A happy day at the office.

PS. There is a second RMC horn push base and a horn push of unknown origin with the high/ low beam switching mechanism making it possible to build two more RMC horn pushes, one with the RMC cover and horn push and the other with an RMB cover and horn push. Using a Dremel a slot has already been cut into an RMB base plate and cover to take the switching mechanism from the unknown horn push. A picture of the mystery horn push has been included in the article in case one of our readers recognises the make of car that it comes from so more switching mechanisms can be sourced. Do you recognise it? If you do, please let the Torquetube editor know.

Below: The top of the unknown horn push

For Sale and Wanted

Wanted RMC steering box

I have purchased Norm Evan's RMC. The car has an electric power steering mechanism from a Suzuki. I would like to restore the car back to its original condition.

I therefore need to locate an original RMC steering gearbox and associated steering bits. Do you have any such parts in your possession? Or perhaps you know of someone who has these parts. If you do, please contact George Monios email: **gvmonios@gmail.com**

Thanks a lot.
George Monios

Club Spare parts for sale

There are two reconditioned cylinder heads, other second hand gearbox, diff and engine parts as well as many body parts available to club members.

Mark Baldock

Bunya Mountains trip

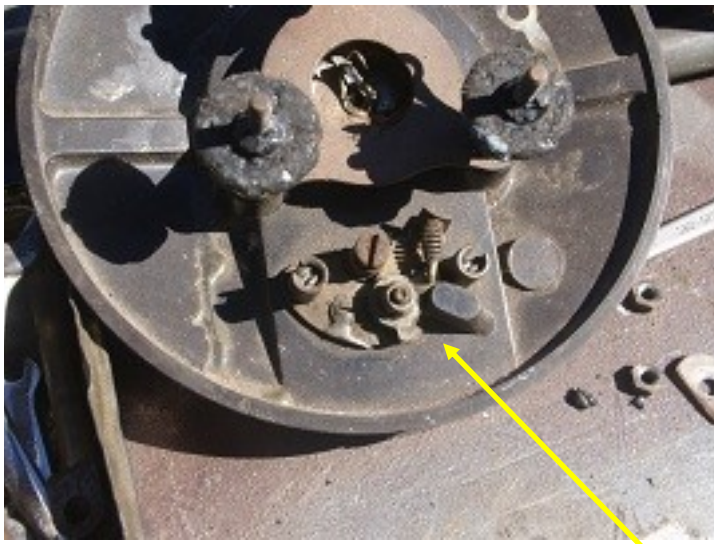
Hello Queensland Rileyites and MG Friends.

We have had to change the date of our Bunya Mountain trip to mid week: Wednesday 16th – Thursday 17th September are the revised dates, a two night stay in the beautiful Bunya Mountain Village. Being mid week, there is ample accommodation available compared to the weekend. There are ten of us booked in at this stage and we would love you to join us – the more the merrier!

We are booked into Bunya Mountains Lodge and I suggest if you can come you ring the Bunya Mountain Accommodation Centre Ph: 46683126, let them know where we are staying and they will suggest an accommodation in close proximity to us. Feel free to bring family and friends. I will put together a program which will be entirely flexible to suit your needs
Let me know if you plan on coming please, it will be fun.

We will be adhering to Covid 19 advice.
Kind regards,
Wendy Lonie
Club Captain – Queensland Rileys
Mob: 0417 857075

RMC Horn push, trafficator switch and high/low beam continued



They say small things amuse small minds. Well, the switching mechanism for the high/low beam can be seen above on the unknown base plate and also on the RMC base plate. It is small, but you can see that it is also exactly the same in both instances.

In fact, the only difference between them is that the RMC horn push has thin brass connections that follow the channel in the Bakelite base plate to the electrical connection points.

The point of this comment is that the Lucas switching mechanism must have been used in a number of applications and it should be possible to locate other specimens that could be used to build a replica RMC horn push with trafficator and a high low/ beam switching mechanism using the RMB trafficator mechanism.

Adjacent: The top cover for the RMC and RMB horn push